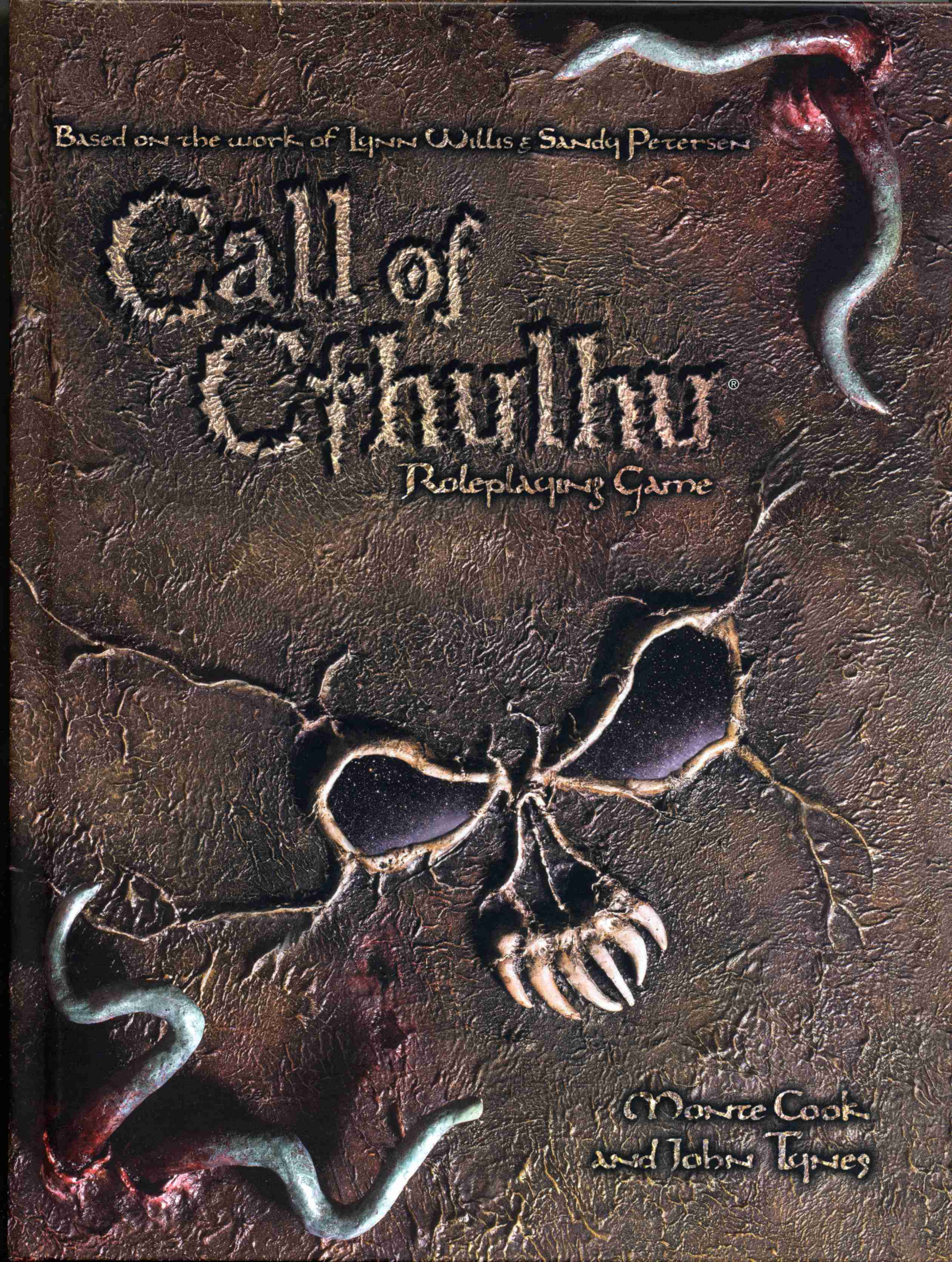

Based on the work of Lynn Willis & Sandy Petersen
Call of Cthulhu®
Roleplaying Game
Monte Cook
and John Tynes

CREDITS

DESIGNERS:
MONTE COOK AND JOHN TYNES

BASED ON THE WORK OF LYNN WILLIS AND SANDY PETERSON

ADDITIONAL DESIGNERS:
BRUCE R. CORDELL, JOHN D. RATELIFF, JOHN CROWE, KENNETH HITE, DENNIS DETWILLER, ADAM SCOTT GLANCY, MICHAEL TICE, ERIC ROWE, SHANNON APPEL, BRUCE BALLON

DEVELOPERS AND EDITORS:
BRIAN "CHAINSAW" CAMPBELL AND JOHN D. RATELIFF

COORDINATING EDITOR:
DALE DONOVAN

CREATIVE DIRECTORS:
THOMAS M. REID AND CHRISTOPHER PERKINS

TYPESETTER:
ANGELIKA LOKOTZ

VICE PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR OF RPG R&D:
BILL SLAVICSEK

VICE PRESIDENT OF PUBLISHING:
MARY KIRCHOFF

BUSINESS MANAGER:
ANTHONY VALTERRA

PROJECT MANAGERS:
DOUGLAS STEVES, JUSTIN ZIRAN, AND MARTIN DURHAM

ART DIRECTOR:
DAWN MURIN

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS:
ROBERT CAMPBELL
DAWN MURIN

COVER ARTISTS:
ANN KOI AND JASON SOLES

INTERIOR ARTISTS:
TOREN "MACBIN" ATKINSON
PAUL CARRICK
HEATHER HUDSON
ANN KOI
KEVIN "THE DOG ATE MY HOMEWORK" MCCANN
DAVID MARTIN
RAVEN MIMURA
STEPHAN MISSAL
PUDD'NHEAD
ADAM REX
WAYNE REYNOLDS
RICHARD SARDINHA
CHRISTOPHER SHY

CARTOGRAPHER:
TODD GAMBLE

PRODUCTION MANAGER:
CHAS DELONG

INSPIRED BY H.P. LOVECRAFT

This WIZARDS OF THE COAST® game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without written permission.
To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 System License, please visit www.wizards.com/d20.
This d20 System game utilizes mechanics developed for the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker , and Peter Adkison.

D&D, DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, WIZARDS OF THE COAST, and the Wizards of the Coast logo are registered trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc, a subsidiary of Hasbro, Inc. The d20 System logo is a trdemark owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ©2002 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All Wizards characters, character names, and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Distributed to the hobby, toy, and comic trade in the United States and Canada by regional distributors. Distributed in the United States to the book trade by Holtzbrinck Publishing.
Distributed in Canada to the book trade by Fenn, Ltd. Distributed worldwide by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and regional distributors. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America.
Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental.

Visit our website at **www.wizards.com/callofcthulhu**

Call of Cthulhu is a registered trademark of Chaosium Inc. Chaosium Game Mechanic ©2002 Chaosium Inc. ©2002 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Delta Green is © 2002 and ™ the Delta Green Partnership, and is used with permission. The Gilchrist Trust is © 2002 Dennis Detwiller, and is used with permission. All rights reserved. Made in the U.S.A.

U.S., CANADA, ASIA, PACIFIC, & LATIN AMERICA
Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
P.O. Box 707
Renton WA 98057-0707
(Questions?) 1-800-324-6496

EUROPEAN HEADQUARTERS
Wizards of the Coast, Belgium
P.B. 2031
2600 Berchem
Belgium
+32-70-23-32-77

SUPPLEMENT and SCENARIO INQUIRIES:
Chaosium Inc.
900 Murmansk Street, Suite 5
Oakland CA 94607

620-88644-001-EN
9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 First Printing: March, 2002

CONTENTS

Introduction 4
Call of Cthulhu as a Game 5
Melding Two Games 5
What Is a Roleplaying Game?

Chapter 1: Character Creation 6
Your Ability Scores 6
Abilities 7
Strength 7
Dexterity 7
Constitution 8
Intelligence 8
Wisdom 8
Charisma 8
Example of Generating and Assigning Ability Scores 9
Changing Ability Scores 9
Characters and Levels 9
Level-Dependent Benefits 10
Choosing Core Skills 11
Fleshing Out Your Character 12
Vital Statistics 12
Profession Templates 12
Other Details 14
Variant: Defense Bonus 15

Chapter 2: Skills 16
Skills Summary 16
How Skills Work 17
Acquiring Skill Ranks 18
Using Skills 19
Skill Descriptions 23

Chapter 3: Feats 38
Acquiring Feats 38
General Feat Descriptions 39
Psychic Feats 43
Psychic Feat Descriptions 43

Chapter 4: Sanity 46
Loss of Sanity 46
Sanity Points 47
Getting Used to Awfulness 48
Insanity 49
Insane Insight 49
Recovering Sanity 50
Treatment of Insanity 51
Mental Disorders 52
A Psychiatric Glossary 56
Addictions 56
Medications and Treatments 57

Chapter 5: Combat 58
How Combat Works 58
Combat Sequence 60
Combat Statistics 60
Combat Basics 61
Weapon Proficiency 61
GM Advice: Save or Check? 63
Initiative 64
Actions in Combat 65
Injury and Death 68
Movement and Position 70
Combat Modifiers 71
Special Initiative Actions 75
Special Attacks and Damage 75
Grenadelike Weapon Attacks 80
Firearm Attacks 80
Special Considerations 82
The Environment 85
The Drowning Rule 85
Variant: Opportunity Attacks 88
Variant: Desperate Situations 89
Suffocation 90
Character Condition Summary 91

Chapter 6: Equipment 92
Melee Weapons 92
Firearms 93
Modern Armor 94
Expanded Firearms Rules 95
Highlighted Firearms 97
Firearms and the Law 111
Explosives 112
Investigative Gear 113

Chapter 7: Magic 118
Artifacts and Tomes 119
Casting Spells 125
Learning Spells 129
Special Abilities 129
Spells 130
Spellcasting and Ability Loss 130
Variant: Unmastered Magic 151

Chapter 8: Creatures 152
Reading the Entries 152
Creature Feats 156
Animated Corpse 158
Byakhee 159
Colour Out of Space 159
Chthonian 161
Dark Young of Shub-Niggurath 162
Deep One 163
Dhole 164
Dimensional Shambler 165
Elder Thing 165
Fire Vampire 166
Flying Polyp 166
Formless Spawn 168
Ghoul 169
Gnoph-keh 170
Great Race of Yith 171
Gug 172
Hound of Tindalos 173
Hunting Horror 173
Insect from Shaggai 175
Lloigor 175
Mi-go 176
Nightgaunt 178
Rat-thing 179
Serpent People 179
Servitor of the Outer Gods 180
Shoggoth 181
Spectral Hunter 183
Spider of Leng 183
Star Vampire 184
Tcho-Tcho 185
Terror from Beyond 187
The Worm That Walks 188
Cultists 189
Templates 190
Animals 199

Chapter 9: The Cthulhu Mythos 202
Humans and the Cosmos 203
Humans and the Mythos 203
The Cosmic Narrative 204
Space and Time 204
About the Cthulhu Mythos 204
True Gods 205
False Gods 205
Beasts 207
Avatars 207
Dreams 207
The End Times 207
Heresies and Controversies 208
Elements of the Mythos 208
Cults 208
Books 209
Magic 210
Gods and Monsters 210
Mysterious Secrets 211
Sinister Clues 212
Horrible Families 212
Strange Places 213
The Taste of Ashes 214

Chapter 10: The Gamemaster 216
Storytelling 217
Atmosphere 218
Fear, Shock, and Horror 220
The Supernatural 222
Refereeing the Game 224
Using the Rules 225
NPC Attitudes 225
Experience and Improvement 226

Chapter 11: Stories 228
Adventures 228
The First Story 235
The Journey into Mystery 236
Campaigns 238
Red Herrings 240
Nonplayer Characters 241
Campaign Player Characters 242

Chapter 12: Settings 244
Time and Place: The Big Picture 245
Time Periods 246
Subgenres 249
Plot Hooks 251

Adventure 1: The End of Paradise 260

Adventure 2: Little Slices of Death 272

Appendix 284
Lovecraftian D&D Campaigns 284
Playing on the Dark Side 284
Using Call of Cthulhu Material in a D&D Game 285
Deities and Great Old Ones 289
Divine Qualities 289
A Brief Conversion System 314
Characters 314
Gods and Monsters 315
Recommended Reading List 315

Sample Characters 317

Index 318

Character Sheet 320

LIST OF TABLES

1–1: Ability Modifiers 7
1–2: Average Strength Scores 7
1–3: Average Dexterity Scores 7
1–4: Average Constitution Scores 8
1–5: Average Intelligence Scores 8
1–6: Average Wisdom Scores 8
1–7: Average Charisma Scores 9
1–8: Base Save and Base Attack Bonuses: Defense Option 10
1–9: Base Save and Base Attack Bonuses: Offense Option 10
1–10: Experience and Level-Dependent Benefits 11
1–11: Aging Effects 13
1–12: Random Height and Weight 14
1–13: Profession Modifiers to Income 15
1–14: Starting Money and Income 15
1–15: Defense Bonuses by Level 15
2–1: Skills 18
2–2: Difficulty Class Examples 19
2–3: Examples of Opposed Checks 19
2–4: Synergy Bonuses 22
2–5: Examples of Ability Checks 23
3–1: General Feats 39
3–2: Psychic Feats 43
4–1: Duration of Temporary Insanity 48
4–2: Short-Term Temporary Insanity Effects 49
4–3: Long-Term Temporary Insanity Effects 49
4–4: Random Indefinite Insanity 50
5–1: Two-Weapon Fighting Penalties 67
5–2: Other Actions 68
5–3: Creature Size and Scale 71
5–4: Attack Roll Modifiers 72
5–5: Cover 72
5–6: Concealment 73
5–7: Size and Armor Class of Objects 76
5–8: Substance Hardness and Hit Points 77
5–9: Weapon Hardness and Hit Points 77
5–10: DCs to Break or Burst Items 77
5–11: Object Hardness and Hit Points 77
5–12: Multiple Ranged Attacks 79
5–13: Random Diseases 83
5–14: Detecting Invisible Creatures 83
5–15: Poisons 84
5–16: Wind Effects 87
5–17: Damage from Falling Objects 90
5–18: Random Weather 91
6–1: Melee Weapons 94
6–2: Melee Weapon Prices 94
6–3: Generic Firearms 95
6–4: Generic Armor 95
6–5: Specific Firearms 98
6–6: Handgun/Submachine Gun Damage 101
6–7: Rifle/Automatic Rifle Damage 104
6–8: Shotgun Damage 107
6–9: Firearm Prices 109
6–10: Ammunition Prices 109
6–11: Weapon Accessory Prices 110
6–12: Explosives 113
7–1: Strange Events 120
8–1: Creature Advancement by Type 157
10–1: Attitude Adjustment 226



INTRODUCTION

Howard Phillips Lovecraft (1890–1937) was a writer of "weird tales." Part horror, part science fiction, part philosophical treatises, his works have been remembered for the better part of a century. But why Lovecraft? Others from his time wrote similar works of pulp fiction, but we remember few of them. Three possible reasons deserve consideration.

The first is verisimilitude. Lovecraft's stories are created to seem like actual accounts, with references to (usually fictional) books, events, myths, and people. His writing is almost in the manner of an academician or a journalist. To further strengthen these imaginary proofs—all the more to make the horror seem real to the reader—he used the same references repeatedly. We read of the *Necronomicon*, Cthulhu, and the Esoteric Order of Dagon in one story, and the names carry credibility because we know we read them somewhere else, even if we can't quite remember where.

This collaboration led to a wonderful happenstance. Lovecraft's friends—very much with his blessing—began to use the same references in their own weird tales, as well as creating their own strange books, people, places, and gods. And others not only used Lovecraft's references, but also his friends' ideas, until the results became an intricate web of tales called the Cthulhu Mythos. Not a "shared world," it is instead a "shared gestalt" through which to view the world. The Cthulhu Mythos is a communal conceit, one that allows writers to create stories sharing a sort of secondary reality known and loved by an audience eager to learn more. Every new bit of fiction that uses this shared reality, even the book you are reading now, becomes a part of the ever-growing web of the Cthulhu Mythos.

The second reason Lovecraft is still read and remembered is because his stories contained a certain *weltanschauung*: a way of viewing and interpreting the world. Lovecraft's cosmic modern realism, including his self-described "mechanistic materialism," places humanity as an inconsequential speck in the unimaginably vast sea of space and time. His rather bleak outlook is strongly communicated in stories where his protagonists are worse off for knowing the truth of the universe. Stories with the same "Lovecraftian" philosophy are thus part of the Cthulhu Mythos. Not all stories that mention Rl'yeh or Azathoth are Lovecraftian, and not all Lovecraftian tales use the Cthulhu Mythos. With the form and mood of his stories, Lovecraft started some truly major movements in fiction, primarily horror fiction.

Finally, Lovecraft's stories are still read because they're enjoyable to read. It's easy to get caught up in the wonder of the Cthulhu Mythos. His approach to the universe appeals to the darker nature in us all. Lovecraft's stories aren't just horror because of gore, or terrible monsters with big claws. They horrify because they state that we are not—as we would love to believe—at the center of everything. We are not vital and important. We cannot accomplish anything significant. We will not live forever. That's horror.

Mythos into a standard fantasy game. In this sort of game, the heroes eventually can attain the power to drive off or destroy the cosmic horrors presented to them. While this isn't truly Lovecraftian, it's fun nonetheless.

This book offers all these options. Do as thou wilt.

CALL OF CTHULHU AS A GAME

So how does this all make for a good roleplaying game? Actually, that's for you to decide. *Call of Cthulhu* is a horror roleplaying game, one where the protagonists of your story are normal people menaced by tentacled monsters, the living dead, dire cultists, and even cosmic entities. This is standard "sudden discovery" horror, as in "I have suddenly discovered that Old Man Murray is actually an Inhuman Thing!"

If you like, it can also be a more Lovecraftian game—one that's still clearly horrific, but doesn't stress tentacles and slimy goo as much as the true insignificance of the heroes (and in fact, of all humanity). With this approach, it becomes a horror game of slow realization, where normal people discover the truths of reality itself. Investigators of the unknown learn that the best that they can do is survive, if only for a little while longer, against forces so unimaginably vast that mankind has not even roused their interest.

As an alternative, you can use the material described in the appendix to introduce elements of the Cthulhu Mythos into a standard fantasy game. In this sort of game, the heroes eventually can attain the power to drive off or destroy the cosmic horrors presented to them. While this isn't truly Lovecraftian, it's fun nonetheless.

This book offers all these options. Do as thou wilt.

MELDING TWO GAMES

This version of *Call of Cthulhu* is a synthesis of two great roleplaying games. The original *Call of Cthulhu* has been around for two decades, and has been loved by the gaming hobby since its inception. The DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game is even older, and its most recent edition has introduced the concept of the d20 rules system: a rule set simple and straightforward enough to be applied to genres beyond medieval fantasy.

For the most part, what you hold in your hands is the story, the places, the concepts, and the people from the *Call of Cthulhu* game as seen through the lens of the d20 rules. We have attempted to retain every aspect of play from the original *Call of Cthulhu* game while using the new rules.

Some aspects have been retained from the existing *Call of Cthulhu* game almost unchanged. Primarily, these include the rules for Sanity and the Cthulhu Mythos skill. Several reasons for this exist. First, they're great mechanics that simulate Lovecraft's fiction well. Second, they preserve the feel of a game that people have loved for years. Finally, by allowing them to work differently than other d20 mechanics, they feel all the more different, alien, and "wrong" during gameplay. Even experienced players familiar with the d20 system will be surprised and (hopefully) fascinated by the slow deterioration of their heroes' Sanity scores. Madness will have a strange effect on their characters and the game.

We have assiduously compiled the insane insights within this tome. Now it's your turn to peruse them, use them to create stories, and bring them to life.

WHAT IS A ROLEPLAYING GAME?

If you have never played one of these games before, you're in for a wild ride. In a roleplaying game, you take on the role a character in a story, interpreting her actions through the use of rules. Playing a roleplaying game involves sitting around a table or room telling a collaborative story with a group of players. The story can easily be like something from a film (even a horror film), except that all the action takes place in your imagination.

If a roleplaying game is like a film, then the players are the stars. In this type of movie, the characters they portray are all heroes investigating the supernatural—we call them investigators. They're often referred to as player characters or PCs. Because this game is based on Cthulhu Mythos stories, some characters die horribly; others live long enough to make it to a sequel.

Acting in this story involves a bit of improvisation, because there's no script, other than the notes or outlines used by the Gamemaster. The Gamemaster, or GM, is like the director of this film, but also plays other roles as well. The GM decides what the story is about, describes the locations the heroes see, and unleashes the occassional horrible monster. The Gamemaster also keeps track of the rules, interprets the outcome of actions, and describes what happens.

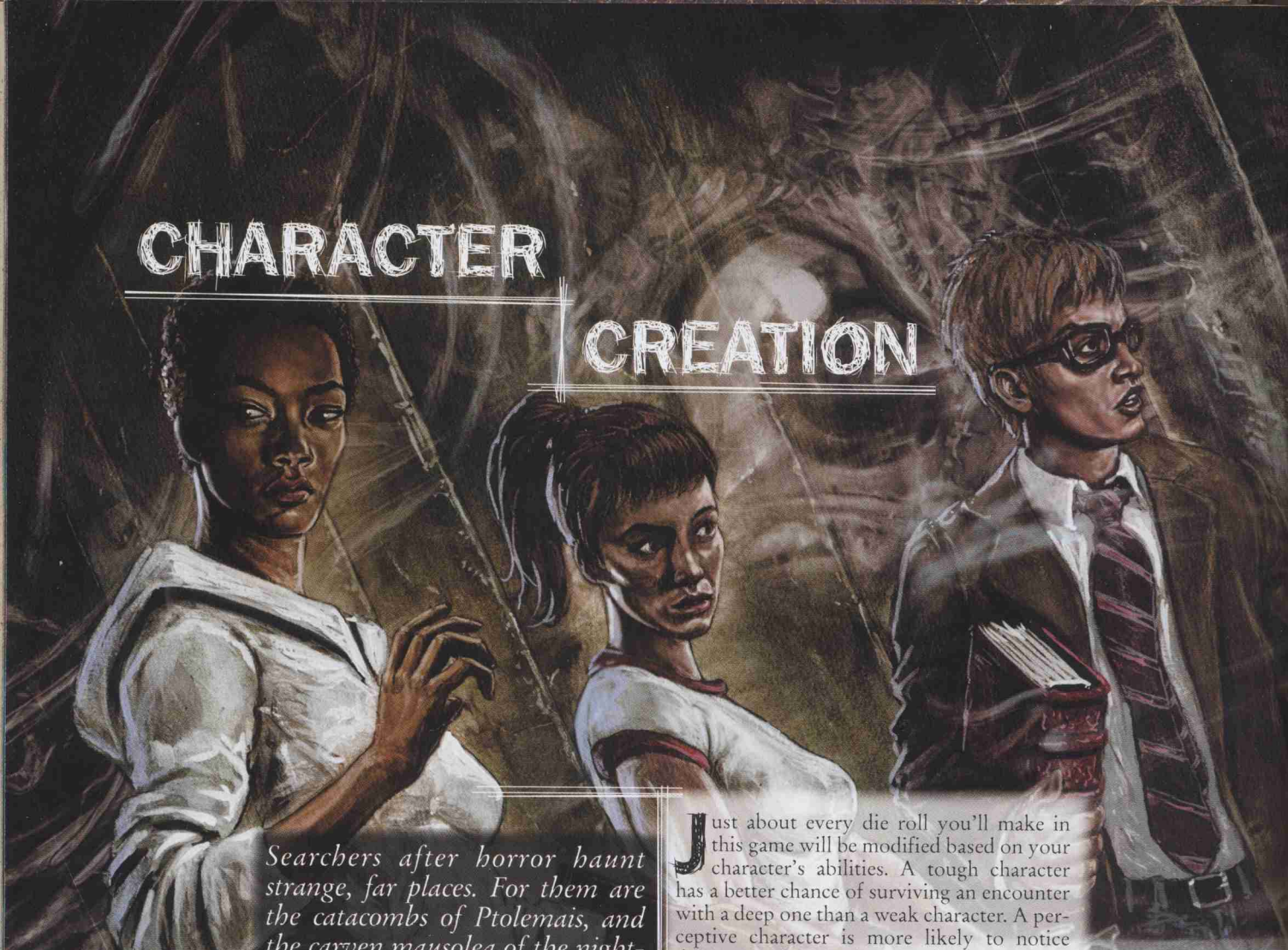
In addition to all these responsibilities, the GM also plays the roles of other characters the heroes encounter. These "extras" are commonly known as nonplayer characters or NPCs.

Unlike any movie or horror novel, roleplaying isn't passive entertainment. The Gamemaster and players tell a story collaboratively, and the events of the story are up to them.

What Do I Need to Play? To join a *Call of Cthulhu d20* game, you'll need this book, a copy of the character sheet, and a pencil and scratch paper. You'll also need some dice, the kind that are usually available in bookstores or game stores that carry roleplaying games. A game that uses the d20 system (such as this one) typically requires a four-sided die (d4), several six-sided dice (d6), an eight-sided die (d8), a twelve-sided die (d12), a twenty-sided die (d20), and two ten-sided dice (d10). The ten-sided dice are also sometimes referred to as "d%." This means that you should roll both d10s, reading one as the tens digit and the other as the ones digit; this generates a number between 1 and 100 (00 on the dice). It is preferable to use dice of different colors when rolling d%, and designating which die represents the tens digit (before you roll) is important. Don't worry: If all you have is this book, you can probably borrow what you need from another player or the GM.

We also highly recommend reading at least one or two stories involving the Cthulhu Mythos before you begin, such as the original "Call of Cthulhu" short story by H.P. Lovecraft. Again, you can probably find an appropriate anthology at a bookstore or game store such as the one where you found this game.

CHARACTER CREATION



Searchers after horror haunt strange, far places. For them are the catacombs of Ptolemais, and the carven mausolea of the nightmare countries. They climb to the moonlit towers of ruined Rhine castles, and falter down black cobwebbed steps beneath the scattered stones of forgotten cities in Asia. The haunted wood and the desolate mountain are their shrines, and they linger around the sinister monoliths on uninhabited islands.

— H.P. Lovecraft, "The Picture in the House"

Just about every die roll you'll make in this game will be modified based on your character's abilities. A tough character has a better chance of surviving an encounter with a deep one than a weak character. A perceptive character is more likely to notice drug-crazed assassins sneaking up from behind him than a witless buffoon. A stupid character is less likely to find the secret door behind the bureau than a brilliant academic. Your character's ability scores tell you what your modifiers are for rolls based on these sorts of situations.

Your character has six abilities: Strength (abbreviated Str), Dexterity (Dex), Constitution (Con), Intelligence (Int), Wisdom (Wis), and Charisma (Cha). Each of your character's above-average abilities grants a benefit on certain die rolls; each below-average ability imposes a disadvantage on other die rolls. At the start of the game, you'll roll six ability scores randomly and assign them to your character's abilities in the order you like. Later in the game, you'll have the chance to raise them as your character advances in experience.

YOUR ABILITY SCORES

To create an ability score for your character, roll four six-sided dice (4d6). Disregard the lowest die, and total the three highest dice.

This roll gives you a number between 3 (terrible) and 18 (excellent). The average ability score for the typical person is 10 or 11, but your character is not typical. Your investigator is above average, someone with the potential to excel. The most common ability scores for player characters (PCs) are 12 and 13.

Make this roll six times, recording the result each time on a piece of paper. Once you have all six scores, assign each score to one of your character's six abilities. You'll need to know what kind of person your character is going to be in order to know where best to place your character's ability scores.

ABILITY MODIFIERS

Each ability will have a modifier, ranging from –4 to +4 for starting characters. Table 1–1: Ability Modifiers shows the modifier for each ability based on its score.

TABLE 1–1: Ability Modifiers

Score	Modifier
1	–5
2–3	–4
4–5	–3
6–7	–2
8–9	–1
10–11	0
12–13	+1
14–15	+2
16–17	+3
18–19	+4
20–21	+5
and so on	

The modifier is the number you add to a die roll when your character tries to do something related to that ability. For instance, you add your Strength modifier to your roll when you try to break down a door or hit someone with a chair. You also use these modifiers with some numbers that aren't die rolls, such as when you apply your Dexterity modifier to your Armor Class.

A modifier can be positive or negative. A positive modifier is called a bonus; a negative modifier is called a penalty.

REROLLING OPTION

If your scores are too low, you may scrap them and roll all six scores over. Your scores are considered too low if your total modifiers add up to 0 or less, or if your highest score is 13 or lower.

ABILITIES

Each ability partially describes your character and affects some of your character's actions.

The description of each ability includes a list of examples, along with their average scores in that ability. Not every creature has a score in every ability, as you'll see when you look at the lists that follow.

STRENGTH (STR)

Strength measures your character's muscle and physical power. It's most important to those intending to get into hand-to-hand combat.

You apply your character's Strength modifier to the following:

- Melee attack rolls.
- Damage rolls when using a melee weapon or a thrown weapon. (Exceptions: An off-hand attack or two-handed attack will change this modifier; see Damage, page 62, for more details.)
- Climb, Jump, and Swim checks. These are skills that have Strength as their key ability.
- Strength checks (for situations such as breaking down doors).

TABLE 1–2: Average Strength Scores

Race or Creature	Average Strength	Average Modifier
Incorporeal spirit	—	—
Shan	1	–5
Rat-thing	2–3	–4
Child	4–5	–3
Elderly person	6–7	–2
Weak person	8–9	–1
Average person	10–11	0
Fit person	12–13	+1
Strong person	14–15	+2
Weightlifter	16–17	+3
Olympic athlete, deep one	18–19	+4
Ape	20–21	+5
Dark Young of Shub-Niggurath	30–31	+10
Dhole	42–43	+16
Shoggoth	44–45	+17

DEXTERITY (DEX)

Dexterity measures hand-eye coordination, agility, reflexes, and balance. If you want your character to be a marksman or good at avoiding damage, put a high score in Dexterity.

You apply your character's Dexterity modifier to the following:

- Ranged attack rolls, including attacks made with guns, bows, throwing knives, and other ranged weapons.
- Your Armor Class score, provided your character can react to the attack.
- Reflex saving throws, for avoiding explosions and other attacks that you can escape by moving quickly.
- Balance, Drive, Escape Artist, Hide, Move Silently, Open Lock, Operate Heavy Machinery, Pilot, Ride, Sleight of Hand, Tumble, and Use Rope checks. These are skills that have Dexterity as their key ability.

TABLE 1–3: Average Dexterity Scores

Race or Creature	Average Dexterity	Average Modifier
Plant	—	—
Snail	1	–5
Shoggoth	2–3	–4
Klutz	4–5	–3
Clumsy person, Yithian	6–7	–2
Accident-prone person	8–9	–1
Average person	10–11	0
Graceful person	12–13	+1
Bat, Leng spider	14–15	+2
Circus acrobat, nightgaunt	16–17	+3
Rat-thing	18–19	+4
Formless spawn	20–21	+5
Shan (Insect from Shaggai)	22–23	+6

CONSTITUTION (CON)

Constitution represents your character's health and stamina. Since a good Constitution improves hit points, it's important to everyone.

You apply your Constitution modifier to the following:

- Each Hit Die (though a penalty can never drop a Hit Die roll below 1; that is, a character always gains at least 1 hit point each time she goes up a level).
- Fortitude saving throws, for resisting poison and similar threats.
- Concentration checks. This skill, important to investigators who use magic, has Constitution as its key ability.

Constitution also determines how long a character can hold her breath (for example, when trying to avoid drowning).

If a character's Constitution changes enough to alter his Constitution modifier, his hit points also increase or decrease accordingly. This applies even to Hit Dice gained from previous levels.

TABLE 1–4: Average Constitution Scores

Race or Creature	Average Constitution	Average Modifier
Mummy	—	—
Bedridden or dying person	1	–5
Invalid	2–3	–4
Frail person	4–5	–3
Puny person	6–7	–2
Spectral hunter	8–9	–1
Average person	10–11	0
Healthy person	12–13	+1
Horse	14–15	+2
Elder thing	16–17	+3
Bear	18–19	+4
Chthonian	20–21	+5
Dhole	28–29	+9
Shoggoth	30–31	+10

INTELLIGENCE (INT)

Intelligence determines how well your character learns and reasons. If you want your character to have a lot of skills and be smart, put a high score in Intelligence.

TABLE 1–5: Average Intelligence Scores

Race or Creature	Average Intelligence	Average Modifier
Animated corpse	—	—
Snake, spider, shark	1	–5
Cat, dog, most mammals	2	–4
Minimum human intelligence	3	–4
Shantak	4–5	–3
Shoggoth	6–7	–2
Dimensional shambler	8–9	–1
Average person	10–11	0
Sharp-witted person	12–13	+1
Clever person	14–15	+2
Mi-go	16–17	+3
Genius	18–19	+4
Star-spawn	20–21	+5
Yithian	36–37	+13

You apply your character's Intelligence modifier to the following:

- The number of languages your character knows at the start of the game.
- The number of skill points gained each level (your character always gets at least 1 skill point per level).
- Appraise, Computer Use, Craft, Demolitions, Disable Device, Forgery, Knowledge, Read Lips, Repair, Research, Search, and Spellcraft checks. These are skills that have Intelligence as their key ability.

Creatures of humanlike intelligence have scores of at least 3.

WISDOM (WIS)

Wisdom describes a character's willpower, common sense, perception, and intuition. While Intelligence represents one's ability to analyze information, Wisdom is more a case of being in tune with and aware of one's surroundings. An "absentminded professor" has low Wisdom and high Intelligence. A holy hermit might be unsophisticated (low Intelligence) yet still have great insight (high Wisdom). If you want your character to have keen senses or a sense of spirituality, put a high score in Wisdom.

Wisdom also determines a character's starting Sanity (see the Sanity chapter).

You apply your character's Wisdom modifier to the following:

TABLE 1–6: Average Wisdom Scores

Race or Creature	Average Wisdom	Average Modifier
Foolhardy investigator	6–7	–2
Shoggoth	8–9	–1
Average investigator	10–11	0
Elder thing	12–13	+1
Serpent person	14–15	+2
Lloigor	16–17	+3
Shan, human guru	18–19	+4
Hound of Tindalos	20–21	+5
Yithian	28–29	+9

- Will saving throws (for negating mind-affecting spells).
- Heal, Innuendo, Listen, Psychic Focus, Psychoanalysis, Sense Motive, Spot, and Wilderness Lore checks. These are skills that have Wisdom as their key ability.

Every creature has a Wisdom score.

CHARISMA (CHA)

Charisma measures a character's force of personality, persuasiveness, personal magnetism, leadership ability, and physical attractiveness. It represents actual inner strength or strength of personality, not merely how one is perceived by others in a given social setting.

TABLE 1–7: Average Charisma Scores

Race or Creature	Average Charisma	Average Modifier
Animated Corpse	1	–5
Crocodile	2–3	–4
Camel	4–5	–3
Dog, cat	6–7	–2
Shy or unassuming person	8–9	–1
Average person	10–11	0
Attractive person	12–13	+1
Take-charge type	14–15	+2
Lloigor	16–17	+3
Natural-born leader, nightgaunt	18–19	+4
Hunting horror	20–21	+5

You apply your Charisma modifier to the following:

- Animal Empathy, Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Gather Information, Handle Animal, Intimidate, and Performance checks. These are skills that have Charisma as their key ability.
- Checks that represent an attempt to influence others.

Every creature has a Charisma score.

CHANGING ABILITY SCORES

Over time, the ability scores your character starts with can change. Ability scores can increase with no limit.

- Add 1 point to any one score at 4th level and every four levels your character attains thereafter (at 8th, 12th, 16th, and 20th level).
- Many spells and magical effects temporarily increase or decrease ability scores. For instance, the *voice of Ra* spell temporarily increases a character's Charisma, while the *curse of Chaugnar Faugn* reduces it. Sometimes a spell simply hampers a character, effectively reducing her ability score.
- Poisons, diseases, and other effects can harm an ability (temporary ability damage). Ability points lost to damage return on their own at a rate of 1 point per day for each damaged ability.
- Certain horrible creatures drain abilities, resulting in a permanent loss (permanent ability drain). In *Call of Cthulhu*, no spells can restore this loss.
- As a character ages, some ability scores go up and others go down. (See Table 1–11: Aging Effects, page 13.)

When an ability score changes permanently, all attributes associated with that score change accordingly. For example, when Claire becomes a 4th-level character, she decides to increase her Intelligence to 16. That increases the number of skill points she gets per level from 10 to 11. As a new 4th-level character, she can get the skill points after raising her Intelligence, so she'll get 11 points for achieving 4th level. She does not retroactively get additional points for her previous levels (that is, skill points she would have gained if she possessed an Intelligence score of 16 starting at 1st level).

EXAMPLE OF GENERATING AND ASSIGNING ABILITY SCORES

Jonathan wants to create a new character. He rolls four six-sided dice (4d6), getting a 5, 4, 4, and 1. Ignoring the lowest die, he adds up the rest and records the first result on scratch paper: 13. By doing this five more times, he gets these six scores: 13, 10, 15, 12, 8, and 14. Jonathan decides to play a smart college professor and begins assigning his rolls to abilities.

Intelligence gets the highest score, 15. His character has a +2 Intelligence bonus that will grant him extra skills.

Wisdom gets the next highest score, 14. This gives him a +2 bonus on important skills such as Spot and Listen, and better Will saving throws.

Jonathan decides to put his lowest score, 8, into Dexterity. He figures his character is a bookish sort that wants to stay out of a fight, one who doesn't have a natural affinity for firing guns or dodging blows. Jonathan would rather play an academic.

Jonathan has two bonus-range scores left (13 and 12), plus an average score (10). Constitution gets the 12 (+1 bonus). That gives him an extra hit point each level and a bonus on his Fortitude saving throws. Charisma gets the 13 (+1 bonus). That helps with intrapersonal skills, such as Diplomacy (see Table 2–1: Skills, page 18).

Strength gets the 10 (no bonus or penalty). Jonathan thinks his character may need to use a melee weapon, perhaps a knife, if all else fails. His average Strength won't hamper him, but it won't help much, either.

Jonathan records his character's ability scores and ability modifiers on his character sheet. Looking them over, he decides that his first character, Kristof, will be an assistant history professor at the local university.

CHARACTERS AND LEVELS

An attack roll, saving throw, or skill check is a combination of three numbers, each representing a different factor: a random factor (the number you roll on 1d20), a number representing the character's innate abilities (the ability modifier), and a bonus representing the character's experience and training. This third factor depends on the character's level. The Base Save and Base Attack Bonuses tables on the next page summarize the figures for this third factor.

When you create a character, you either choose the Defense Option or the Offense Option. The Defense Option provides for better saving throws, but a poorer attack bonus. Conversely, the Offense Option offers a better attack bonus, but poorer saving throws.

Base Save Bonus Progressions: On each of the following tables, three columns apply to saving throws. You must assign each of these progressions to a saving throw category (Fortitude, Reflex, and Will) when you create your character. Once these progressions are assigned, you keep the same progression for that category as you advance in level.

TABLE 1–8:
Base Save and Base Attack Bonuses: Defense Option

A Defense Option character begins play with two "good" saves (starting at +2) and one "bad" save (starting at +0). The three saving throw progressions are assigned (in any order) to Fortitude, Reflex, and Will during character creation. Base attack bonus begins at +0.

Level	Base Save Bonus Progression 1	Base Save Bonus Progression 2	Base Save Bonus Progression 3	Base Attack Bonus
1st	+0	+2	+2	+0
2nd	+0	+3	+3	+1
3rd	+1	+3	+3	+1
4th	+1	+4	+4	+2
5th	+1	+4	+4	+2
6th	+2	+5	+5	+3
7th	+2	+5	+5	+3
8th	+2	+6	+6	+4
9th	+3	+6	+6	+4
10th	+3	+7	+7	+5
11th	+3	+7	+7	+5
12th	+4	+8	+8	+6/+1
13th	+4	+8	+8	+6/+1
14th	+4	+9	+9	+7/+2
15th	+5	+9	+9	+7/+2
16th	+5	+10	+10	+8/+3
17th	+5	+10	+10	+8/+3
18th	+6	+11	+11	+9/+4
19th	+6	+11	+11	+9/+4
20th	+6	+12	+12	+10/+5

TABLE 1–9:
Base Save and Base Attack Bonuses: Offense Option

An Offense Option character begins play with one "good" save (starting at +2) and two "bad" saves (starting at +0). The three saving throw progressions are assigned (in any order) to Fortitude, Reflex, and Will during character creation. Base attack bonus begins at +1.

Level	Base Save Bonus Progression 1	Base Save Bonus Progression 2	Base Save Bonus Progression 3	Base Attack Bonus
1st	+0	+0	+2	+1
2nd	+0	+0	+3	+2
3rd	+1	+1	+3	+3
4th	+1	+1	+4	+3
5th	+1	+1	+4	+4
6th	+2	+2	+5	+5
7th	+2	+2	+5	+6/+1
8th	+2	+2	+6	+6/+1
9th	+3	+3	+6	+7/+2
10th	+3	+3	+7	+8/+3
11th	+3	+3	+7	+9/+4
12th	+4	+4	+8	+9/+4
13th	+4	+4	+8	+10/+5
14th	+4	+4	+9	+11/+6/+1
15th	+5	+5	+9	+12/+7/+2
16th	+5	+5	+10	+12/+7/+2
17th	+5	+5	+10	+13/+8/+3
18th	+6	+6	+11	+14/+9/+4
19th	+6	+6	+11	+15/+10/+5
20th	+6	+6	+12	+15/+10/+5

Base Attack Bonus: On an attack roll, apply the bonus from the appropriate column on the table appropriate to the option you have chosen. Numbers after a slash indicate additional attacks at reduced bonuses: "+12/+7/+2" means three attacks per round, with a base attack bonus of +12 for the first attack, +7 for the second, and +2 for the third. Ability modifiers apply to all these attacks normally, but bonuses from ability scores do not grant extra attacks.

Saving Throw Example: Jennifer is playing a combat-oriented character named Sam. During character creation, she chooses the Offense Option. This gives her character one "good" save (a +2 modifier) and two "bad" saves (each with +0 modifier). She assigns Sam's +2 bonus on Fortitude saves, so both Reflex and Will have a base save of +0. When Sam rreaches 2nd level, his Fortitude base save bonus becomes +3, but his Reflex and Will won't increase to +1 until 3rd level.

Attack Bonus Example: When Sam is 5th level, he has a base attack bonus of +4. With a melee weapon, he adds his Strength bonus (+2) for a total of +6. Even though a +6 base attack bonus would grant an additional attack at +1 (and be listed as +6/+1 on the table), raising his total attack modifier from +4 to +6 via ability modifiers doesn't grant Sam an additional attack.

LEVEL-DEPENDENT BENEFITS

In addition to attack and saving throw bonuses, all characters gain other benefits from advancing in level. Table 1–10: Experience and Level-Dependent Benefits summarizes these additional benefits.

XP: This column shows the experience point total needed to achieve a given character level.

Core Skill Max Ranks: The maximum number of ranks a character can have in a core skill is equal to her character level + 3. Core skills come from a character's profession template (see page 12). Core skills cost one skill point per rank (see below).

Noncore Skill Max Ranks: The maximum rank for a noncore skills (skills not associated with the character's profession) is one-half the maximum for a core skill. The half ranks (1/2) indicated on Table 1–10 don't improve skill checks; they simply represent partial purchase of the next skill rank—they indicate the character is training to improve that skill. Noncore skills cost two skill points per rank (see below).

points, add 1 to your character's hit point total anyway. It is not possible to lose hit points (or not receive any) when gaining a level, even for a character with a low Constitution.

Feats: Each character starts with two feats at 1st level and gains another feat at every level divisible by three (3rd, 6th, 9th, 12th, 15th, and 18th). The list of feats is on Table 3–1: General Feats on page 39.

Ability Increases: Upon gaining any level divisible by four (4th, 8th, 12th, 16th, and 20th), a character increases one of her ability scores by 1 point. The player chooses which ability score to improve. The ability improvement is permanent, and the character immediately gains all benefits of having the higher score.

Hit Points: Each character begins with 6 hit points, modified by her Consitution modifier. Each time a character gains a new level, that player rolls 1d6 (a Hit Die), adds or subtracts a Constitution modifier to the roll, then adds the result to her hit point total. A character has the same number of Hit Dice as levels.

For example, Sam starts out with 6 hit points and adds his +3 Con bonus, giving him 9 hit points. When he reaches 2nd level (and every level thereafter), Sam's player rolls 1d6, adds his Constitution bonus, and then adds the total to Sam's hit points.

If your character has a Constitution penalty and gets a result of 0 or less when rolling for additional hit

CHOOSING CORE SKILLS

Every character gets twelve skills from the skill list (Table 2–1: Skills, page 18) as core skills. These are the skills acquired most easily by that character—they have a cost of one skill point per rank. All other skills cost that character two skill points per rank. Each rank gives +1 to a skill check.

When you create a character, you can choose one of the profession templates on the following page. If the Gamemaster allows it, you have the option of creating a new profession, either by customizing one of the professions given in this chapter, or by listing 12 skills that profession would require.



Keep in mind that core skills should be thought of as those used in a character's profession, daily life, hobbies, and so forth. Since every character is different, even the profession templates below allow you to choose three skills to personify your specific character.

For example, Bruce wants to create a character who is an old man, well-studied in history and lore. He decides to choose a few skills that are important to his concept, starting with Knowledge (history) and Research. Then he notices that both the antiquarian and professor profession templates (listed below) might be a good match for his character concept. He decides he does not want his character to be in a university, so he chooses antiquarian. Keeping the two skills he has already picked (since they're part of the template), he gains Appraise, Forgery, Gather Information, and Speak Other Language as core skills (they come with the template). He decides his additional language will be Latin. He also has to select specializations for three Knowledge skills, so he chooses Knowledge (local), Knoweldge (geography), and Knowledge (occult).

As his three additional skills of choice, he picks Hide and Move Silently (he used to be an avid hunter in his younger days) and Knowledge (philosophy). These make up his twelve core skills. Bruce asks the Gamemaster if he can trade Forgery for Wilderness Lore, and the GM approves. After all, the profession templates are provided as a guide only.

Designing a New Profession: You can use these templates as sources for ideas for other sorts of characters. For example, you could choose some of the skills on the criminal list and some from the technician list to get a computer hacker. The

TABLE 1–10:
Experience and Level-Dependent Benefits

Character Level	XP	Core Skill Max Ranks	Noncore Skill Max Ranks	Feats	Ability Increases
1st	0	4	2	1st, 2nd	—
2nd	1,000	5	2 1/2	—	—
3rd	3,000	6	3	3rd	—
4th	6,000	7	3 1/2	—	1st
5th	10,000	8	4	—	—
6th	15,000	9	4 1/2	4th	—
7th	21,000	10	5	—	—
8th	28,000	11	5 1/2	—	2nd
9th	36,000	12	6	5th	—
10th	45,000	13	6 1/2	—	—
11th	55,000	14	7	—	—
12th	66,000	15	7 1/2	6th	3rd
13th	78,000	16	8	—	—
14th	91,000	17	8 1/2	—	—
15th	105,000	18	9	7th	—
16th	120,000	19	9 1/2	—	4th
17th	136,000	20	10	—	—
18th	153,000	21	10 1/2	8th	—
19th	171,000	22	11	—	—
20th	190,000	23	11 1/2	—	5th

Illustration ©2001, Jason Soles. Used with permission.

doctor combined with the soldier gets a combat medic. The archaeologist template with different Knowledge skills might yield a geologist or a chemist.

Before you design a new profession template for your character, get the approval of your Gamemaster. Ask if it would work with her campaign. If you choose something unusual for your new profession, such as Knowledge (occult) for a cab driver or Demolitions for a ufologist, your GM might not allow it unless you have a strong rationale for it as part of your character concept.

The era in which your campaign is set also influences some skill choices. For example, Computer Use is a relatively common skill in a modern-day game, but if you wanted to set an adventure in Victorian England, it would need to be swapped out.

Cthulhu Mythos is the only skill that cannot be chosen as part of a profession template. No starting character may buy ranks in this skill, as it represents insights gained over the course of gameplay; use Knowledge (occult) or Spellcraft instead.

FLESHING OUT YOUR CHARACTER

What does your character look like? How old is she? What sort of first impression does she make? What's her religion? What's her family like? What led her to this point in her life? If she has knowledge of the occult, why did she pursue such an esoteric field of study?

Establishing your character's identity is important. These details make your character more lifelike, like a main character in a novel or a movie. For many players, the action lies here, in defining the character as a person to be roleplayed. It's also easier to become involved in the horror aspect of the game if you're aware enough of your character to become attached to her.

When you first play a character, it's fine to leave the details sketchy. As you play the character over time, you'll get a better sense of who you want her to be. You'll develop her details in much the way that an author develops a character over several drafts of a novel or over several novels in a series.

VITAL STATISTICS

This section offers advice as you determine your character's name, gender, age, height, and weight. Start with some idea of your character's background and personality, then use that idea to help you add the details that bring your character to life.

PROFESSION TEMPLATES

These are the core skills for each profession and the ability score to which each skill is keyed [in brackets].

AGENT

Bluff [Cha]
Computer Use [Cha]
Forgery [Int]
Gather Information [Cha]
Hide [Dex]
Innuendo [Wis]
Move Silently [Dex]
Open Lock [Dex]
Sense Motive [Wis]
+ three more of the player's choice

ANTIQUARIAN

Appraise [Int]
Forgery [Int]
Gather Information [Cha]
Knowledge (history) [Int]
Knowledge (any one) [Int]
Knowledge (any one) [Int]
Knowledge (any one) [Int]
Research [Int]
Speak Other Language [Int]
+ three more of the player's choice

ARCHAEOLOGIST

Appraise [Int]
Climb [Str]
Knowledge (archaeology) [Int]
Knowledge (history) [Int]
Knowledge (any one) [Int]
Research [Int]
Search [Int]
Speak Other Language [Int]
Spot [Wis]
+ three more of the player's choice

ARTIST/MUSICIAN

Bluff [Cha]
Craft (any one) [Int]
Diplomacy [Cha]
Innuendo [Wis]
Knowledge (art) [Int]
Listen [Wis]
Performance [Cha]
Sense Motive [Wis]
Spot [Wis]
+ three more of the player's choice

BLUE-COLLAR WORKER

Climb [Str]
Craft (any one) [Int]
Disable Device [Int]
Drive [Dex]
Gather Information [Cha]
Operate Heavy Machinery [Dex]
Repair [Int]
Spot [Wis]
Use Rope [Dex]
+ three more of the player's choice

CRIMINAL

Bluff [Cha]
Disable Device [Int]
Escape Artist [Dex]
Forgery [Int]
Hide [Dex]
Innuendo [Wis]
Move Silently [Dex]
Open Lock [Dex]
Sleight of Hand [Dex]
+ three more of the player's choice

DETECTIVE (POLICE OR PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR)

Gather Information [Cha]
Hide [Dex]
Intimidate [Cha]
Listen [Wis]
Move Silently [Dex]
Open Lock [Dex]
Search [Int]
Sense Motive [Wis]
Spot [Wis]
+ three more of the player's choice

DILETTANTE

Diplomacy [Cha]
Drive [Dex]
Gather Information [Cha]
Innuendo [Wis]
Knowledge (art) [Int]
Knowledge (local*) [Int]
Pilot [Dex]
Ride [Dex]
Speak Other Language [Int]
+ three more of the player's choice
* *Choose any one city*

NAME

Invent or choose a name that fits your character. A name is a great way for you to start thinking about your character's background. For instance, a character named Cindy Landowski might come from a Polish background, while Nathan Running Fox is probably Native American. Ethnicity is often more important to characters in the early part of the 20th century than later on, but it sometimes plays a major role in a character's family life, no matter what the era is.

GENDER

Your character can be either male or female.

AGE

As your character ages, her physical ability scores (Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution) decrease and her mental ability scores (Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma) increase, as detailed on Table 1–11: Aging Effects. The effects of each aging step are cumulative. However, a character's ability score cannot be reduced below 1 in this way.

For example, if Kristof survives until he is 50 (middle-aged), his Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores each drop 1 point, while his Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores each increase 1 point. When he becomes 65 (old), his physical ability scores all drop an additional 2 points, while his mental ability scores increase by 1 again. So far he would have lost a total of 3 points each from his Strength, Constitution, and Dexterity scores and gained a total of 2 points to each of his Wisdom, Intelligence, and Charisma scores because of the effects of aging. Should he live to reach 80, his physical ability scores will each drop by another 3 points (for a total loss of 6 points each from his youthful prime) and his mental ability scores each increase by another 1 point (for a total of 3 points each).

When a character becomes venerable, the Gamemaster secretly rolls 3d10, adds it to the number from the Venerable column on Table 1–11 (80 years) to determine her maximum age, and records the result, which the player does not know. This represents the limit of the character's natural lifespan, the point

TABLE 1–11: Aging Effects

Middle Age*	Old**	Venerable†	Maximum Age
50 years	65 years	80 years	+3d10 years

*–1 to Str, Con, and Dex; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.
**–2 to Str, Con, and Dex; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.
†–3 to Str, Con, and Dex, +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

DOCTOR/NURSE

Computer Use [Int]
Diplomacy [Cha]
Heal [Wis]
Knowledge (biology) [Int]
Knowledge (medicine) [Int]
Knowledge (any one) [Int]
Listen [Wis]
Research [Int]
Spot [Wis]
+ three more of the player's choice

PARAPSYCHOLOGIST

Bluff [Cha]
Gather Information [Cha]
Knowledge (history) [Int]
Knowledge (occult) [Int]
Knowledge (religion) [Int]
Listen [Wis]
Search [Int]
Sense Motive [Wis]
Spot [Wis]
+ three more of the player's choice

PRIEST/CLERGYMAN

Concentration [Con]
Diplomacy [Cha]
Knowledge (religion) [Int]
Knowledge (any one) [Int]
Knowledge (any one) [Int]
Listen [Wis]
Sense Motive [Wis]
Speak Other Language [Int]
Spot [Wis]
+ three more of the player's choice

PROFESSOR

Concentration [Con]
Diplomacy [Cha]
Gather Information [Cha]
Knowledge (any one) [Int]
Knowledge (any one) [Int]
Knowledge (any one) [Int]
Research [Int]
Speak Other Language [Int]
Spot [Wis]
+ three more of the player's choice

PSYCHOLOGIST

Bluff [Cha]
Diplomacy [Cha]
Gather Information [Cha]
Heal [Wis]
Knowledge (medicine) [Int]
Knowledge (psychology) [Int]
Psychoanalysis [Wis]
Research [Int]
Sense Motive [Wis]
+ three more of the player's choice

SOLDIER

Climb [Str]
Hide [Dex]
Jump [Str]
Listen [Wis]
Move Silently [Dex]
Spot [Wis]
Swim [Str]
Use Rope [Dex]
Wilderness Lore [Wis]
+ three more of the player's choice

TECHNICIAN

Computer Use [Int]
Craft (any one) [Int]
Disable Device [Int]
Knowledge (any one) [Int]
Open Lock [Dex]
Operate Heavy Machinery [Dex]
Repair [Int]
Research [Int]
Search [Int]
+ three more of the player's choice

WHITE-COLLAR WORKER/ BUSINESSMAN

Bluff [Cha]
Computer Use [Int]
Diplomacy [Cha]
Forgery [Int]
Intimidate [Cha]
Knowledge (any one) [Int]
Listen [Wis]
Sense Motive [Wis]
Spot [Wis]
+ three more of the player's choice

WRITER/REPORTER

Craft (photography) [Int]
Craft (writing) [Int]
Diplomacy [Cha]
Gather Information [Cha]
Innuendo [Wis]
Knowledge (any one) [Int]
Knowledge (any one) [Int]
Research [Int]
Sense Motive [Wis]
+ three more of the player's choice

at which her body simply wears out, and she dies of natural causes. A character, especially a *Call of Cthulhu* investigator, may die of violence, accident, or disease before reaching her personal maximum age. Once a character reaches that maximum, she dies of old age at some time during the following year, as determined by the Gamemaster.

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT

Choose your character's height and weight. Think about what your character's abilities might say about these traits. If she is weak (low Str) but agile (high Dex), she might be thin. If she is strong and tough (high Str and Con), she might be tall, or just heavy.

TABLE 1–12:
Random Height and Weight

Gender	Base Height	Height Modifier	Base Weight	Weight Modifier
Male	4 ft. 10 in.	+2d10 in.	120 lb.	×2d4 lb.
Female	4 ft. 5 in.	+2d10 in.	85 lb.	×2d4 lb.

Alternatively, roll randomly on Table 1–12: Random Height and Weight. The dice roll given in the Height Modifier column determines the character's extra height beyond the base height. That same number multiplied by the result of the dice roll given in the Weight Modifier column determines the character's extra weight beyond the base weight.

For example, Sam stands 4 feet 10 inches tall plus 2d10 inches. Jennifer rolls 2d10 and gets 12, so Sam stands 5 feet 10 inches tall. Then Jennifer uses that same roll (12) and multiplies it by the weight modifier. His 2d4 roll is 5, so Sam weighs an extra 72 pounds (12×6) on top of his base 120 pounds, for a total of 192 pounds.



OTHER DETAILS

You can detail your character to any degree you like. As you play the character, you will probably come up with more details you will want to add.

APPEARANCE

Decide what your character looks like. Characters with high Charisma scores tend to be better-looking than those with low Charisma scores, though a character with a high Charisma score could have strange looks, giving her a sort of exotic beauty.

Your character can be right- or left-handed (the Ambidexterity feat allows her to use both hands equally well; see Ambidexterity, page 39).

You can use your character's looks to tell something about her personality and background. For example:

- Derrick has a long scar on his cheek that is the result of the violent life he led among the street gangs he knew growing up.
- Monica has an ankh tattooed on the inside of her forearm to show her devotion to her pagan faith.
- Barry wears bright, flamboyant clothes to attract attention. He is always very interested in his appearance.

PERSONALITY

Decide how your character acts, what she likes, what she wants out of life, what scares her, and what makes her angry. Stereotypes (the absent-minded professor, the brash young street punk, the intrepid reporter, and so on) are fine starting points, but move on from there. Every person is a little bit of a stereotype, but no one can truly be summed up so easily.

A handy trick for making an interesting personality for your character is including some sort of conflict in her nature. For example, Kristof is quiet and sedate, but he is also very interested in arcane research. His interests force him into strange situations that his sedate nature finds uncomfortable.

Perhaps one of the most important choices you can make about your character's personality is how she'll react to the horror she'll confront throughout the game. Will she attempt to rationalize it all as having some reasonable explanation, or will she embrace the idea that science is wrong and magic really works, or that ghosts really exist and monstrosities move within the shadows? Will she be terrified of the dark knowledge of the Mythos, or will she be intrigued?

Your character's personality can change over time. Just because you decide some basic facts about your character's personality when you create the character doesn't mean you need to abide by those facts as if they were holy writ. Let your character grow and evolve the way real people do.

Illustration ©2001, Jason Soles. Used with permission.

Example: Dave is playing a private eye in a 1930s campaign. He rolls 1d6 and gets a 5. Applying the modifier from Table 1–13 for his profession (–1), this gives him a result of 4. According to the appropriate line on Table 1–14, this gives him a yearly income of $4,000 (4 × $1,000) and $8,000 in savings (4 × $2,000). By contrast, the same character in a modern-day campaign would make about $40,000 a year and have $24,000 in savings.

BACKGROUND

Decide what your character's life has been like up until now. Here are a few questions to get you thinking:

- How did she decide to take up her profession?
- What is her family like? Does she stay in contact with them? What do they think of her?
- What sort of education does she have? (See below for more on this.)
- Do any of her personal items have special significance to her?
- What's the worst thing that's ever happened to her?
- What's the best thing that's ever happened to her?

TABLE 1–14: Starting Money and Income

Era	Starting Money (savings)	Yearly Income
1901 to 1920	$1,000	$500
1921 to 1940	$2,000	$1,000
1941 to 1960	$4,000	$4,000
1961 to 1980	$4,000	$8,000
1981 to 2000+	$6,000	$10,000

EDUCATION

Education is important to your character, because what you know is vital to your survival against the mysterious horrors of the Mythos. Education is something for you to determine, although your character's skills and occupation may suggest or even dictate some standards. For example, a professor has certainly gone to college, and in the modern era almost certainly has a Ph.D. A character with a lot of Knowledge skills probably went to a fair bit of school but could be self-taught. Some people are "book-smart," having gone to school for many years, while other people are "street-smart," receiving an education based on experience—the school of hard knocks.

Did you finish high school and go on to college and then complete graduate school, or did you drop out to support your family? Were you good in school, or did you learn what you know on your own?

TABLE 1–13: Profession Modifiers to Income

Profession Template	1d6 Roll Modifier
Agent	–1
Antiquarian	–1
Archaeologist	0
Artist	–2
Blue-collar worker	–1
Criminal	–1
Detective	–1
Dilettante	+1
Doctor	+2
Technician	+2
Parapsychologist	–2
Priest	–1
Professor	0
Psychologist	0
Soldier	–2
White-collar worker	+1
Writer	–1

STARTING MONEY AND INCOME

You start out with a salary and savings based on your chosen profession. This can be modified by the Wealth feat (see page 42). Roll 1d6 and modify the result based on profession (see Table 1–13); the minimum result is 1. (If you're not using one of the templates, pick one that most closely resembles your character and apply its modifier). Multiply that result by the amount of money on Table 1–14, based on the era of the campaign.

VARIANT: DEFENSE BONUS

In Lovecraft's stories, investigators are often ordinary people, and powerful creatures can dispatch them quite readily. If your Gamemaster prefers a campaign that feels a little more like "pulp adventure," particularly one that features human opponents more than creatures, this variant rule may take down the body count a little bit.

In this variant, each character has a "defense bonus" that can be added to her Armor Class. (Only investigators get this bonus; ordinary people do not.) A character's defense bonus increases every five levels. While this modifier may not be enough to save an investigator from a rampaging shoggoth, it does make high-level characters tougher than the average cultist.

To balance the two options, an Offense Option character also receives an extra Weapon Proficiency feat at 1st level.

TABLE 1–15: Defense Bonuses by Level

Level	Defense Option	Offense Option
1st	+2	+0
2nd	+2	+0
3rd	+2	+0
4th	+2	+0
5th	+3	+1
6th	+3	+1
7th	+3	+1
8th	+3	+1
9th	+3	+1
10th	+4	+2
11th	+4	+2
12th	+4	+2
13th	+4	+2
14th	+4	+2
15th	+5	+3
16th	+5	+3
17th	+5	+3
18th	+5	+3
19th	+5	+3
20th	+6	+4



SKILLS

When Dr. Trask, the anthropologist, stooped to classify the skulls, he found a degraded mixture which utterly baffled him. They were mostly lower than the Piltdown man in the scale of evolution, but in every case definitely human. Many were of higher grade, and a very few were the skulls of supremely and sensitively developed types. All the bones were gnawed, mostly by rats, but somewhere others of the half-human drove.

—H.P. Lovecraft, "Rats in the Walls"

Marie can quietly walk up to a door, put her ear to it, and hear a cultist on the other side casting a spell. If Kristof were to try the same thing, he would make so much noise that the cultist would hear him. He might, however, identify the spell the insane priest is casting. Actions such as these rely on the skills that characters have (in this case, Move Silently, Listen, and Spellcraft).

SKILLS SUMMARY

Your skills represent a variety of abilities, and you get better at them as you go up in level.

Getting Skills: At each level, you get 8 skill points you can use to buy skills (your Intelligence modifier adds to this number). A 1st-level character gets four times this amount. If you buy a core skill—one of the twelve listed as part of your profession—you get 1 rank (1 rank equals a +1 bonus on your skill checks) for each skill point spent. If you buy noncore skills—any skill outside your twelve professional skills—you get a half-rank per skill point spent.

Your maximum rank in a core skill is your level +3; your maximum rank in a noncore skill is half of this number (do not round up or down). For instance, a 1st-level character can have up to 4 ranks in each core skill and up to 2 ranks in each noncore skill.

Using Skills: To make a skill check, roll

1d20 + skill modifier
(Skill modifier = skill ranks + ability modifier + miscellaneous modifiers).

The higher the roll, the better you do.

Skill checks fall into two categories: opposed and unopposed. Unopposed checks are those where you're trying to accomplish a certain task and succeed by rolling higher than the Difficulty Class (DC) the Gamemaster assigns to that task. As a rule of thumb, easy tasks are DC 10, average tasks are DC 15, difficult tasks are DC 20, extremely difficult tasks are DC 25 or higher.

Opposed checks are ones where you're trying to beat another character's check. For instance, to sneak quietly past a cultist, Marie needs to beat the cultist's Listen check with her own Move Silently check.

Most skills can be used even if the character has no ranks in the skill (see Table 2–1); this is known as using an untrained skill or making an untrained skill check. A few skills can only be used if you have ranks in them—these are called trained skills (again, see Table 2–1).

The ability modifier used in the skill check is the modifier for the skill's key ability (the ability most associated with the skill's use). The key ability of a skill is noted in its description and on Table 2–1: Skills. All skills (except Cthulhu Mythos) have an associated key ability.

Miscellaneous modifiers for a skill check can include a creature's racial bonus, an investigator's armor check penalty (for those who insist on wearing modern armor), or a circumstance modifier.

HOW SKILLS WORK

This extended example shows how skills work. Detailed rules follow the example.

Character Creation: William Duprey, a professional musician, gets 8 skill points per level. Since his Intelligence score is 12, he gets +1 point per level, for a total of 9 skill points. As a 1st-level character, William gets four times this number, or 36 skill points.

At 1st level, his maximum rank in a core skill is his level +3, or 4 ranks; his maximum rank in all other skills is half that, or 2 ranks. With 36 points, he can "max out" nine core skills—that is, put 4 ranks in each one—or he can spread out his ranks and pick up some useful noncore skills as well.

William starts out with nine skills: Bluff, Craft, Innuendo, Intimidate, Knowledge (art), Listen, Performance, Sense Motive, and Spot. For Craft and Performance, he must also choose a specialty; each specialty is a separate skill. For his three remaining core skills, he chooses Gather Information and two more Performance skills. He decides to max out eight core skills at 4 ranks each and scatter the remaining 4 points among three other skills. Once he has taken the relevant ability modifiers for each skill into account, the skill section on his character sheet looks like this:

Craft (songwriting) and Knowledge (art) are Intelligence skills, so when William makes a check for any of these skills, he adds 4 for his rank and +1 for his Intelligence bonus, for a total skill modifier of +5.

Listen, Sense Motive, and Spot are Wisdom skills, so when he makes a check with one of these skills, he adds his 4 ranks and his –1 Wisdom penalty for a skill modifier of +3. With Innuendo, although his single rank and ability penalty seem to cancel each other out, this simply means William gets a straight d20 roll when using this skill. Innuendo is a trained skill, so he could otherwise not use it at all without having purchased that single rank.

Skill	Ranks	Ability Modifier	Skill Modifier
Craft (songwriting)	4	+1 =	+5
Gather Information	4	+2 =	+6
Innuendo	1	–1 =	+0
Intimidate	4	+2 =	+6
Knowledge (art)	4	+1 =	+5
Listen	4	–1 =	+3
Performance (guitar)	4	+2 =	+6
Performance (singing)	2	+2 =	+4
Performance (piano)	1	+2 =	+3
Sense Motive	4	–1 =	+3
Spot	4	–1 =	+3

The remaining skills—Gather Information, Intimidate, and his three Performance skills—are all based on Charisma, so he gets his +2 Charisma bonus for each. For Gather Information, Intimidate, and Performance (guitar), the 4 ranks in each and the Charisma bonus give him an overall skill modifier of +6. For Performance (singing), the 2 ranks and +2 Charisma bonus give him a +4 modifier. For Performance (piano), his 1 rank and Charisma bonus give him a +3 modifier.

Skill Check: When William makes a skill check, he rolls 1d20 and adds his skill modifier (ranks plus ability modifier plus any miscellaneous modifiers). The higher the result, the better William does. On average, a 1d20 roll will result in a 10 or 11, so on the things William is best at—Performance (guitar), Intimidate, and Gather Information, each with an overall +6 modifier—he'll regularly get a check result of 16 or 17.

It's this total check result that matters, not the original roll. A result of 17 on a Hide roll by a character with no ranks or ability bonus (that is, a character who just rolls a 17 on her d20 when making the skill check) is just as good as a roll of 10 bumped up to 17 through ranks and ability modifiers. It's the final number, not how you got it, that counts.

Opposed Check: William is jamming with an NPC named Ozzy Orne in a recording studio. They set up an impromptu contest to see who's a better guitarist. William's player rolls 1d20+6 for his Performance (guitar) check and gets a 22. The Gamemaster secretly makes a Performance check for the NPC, and the result is a 19. The GM tells William's player that the other musician was pretty good, but most of the people listening in the control room preferred William's performance.

Check against a Difficulty Class (DC): Later, William gets the chance to play his guitar for a big-time producer. He suspects her record label and cult of groupies are actually fronts for something more sinister, so William desperately wants to impress her and infiltrate the cult.

The GM has secretly decided that this gruff producer is actually a minion of Y'golonac who has become jaded after years of decadence and debauchery. This makes her hard to impress, so the Gamemaster sets the DC at 20. William's player rolls a 9 on 1d20, for a result of 15 (9+6). This result would be enough to impress most people, but it's not enough to intrigue the degenerate cultist. The GM tells the player that the producer watches William's performance with disinterest.

Untrained Checks: Unsuccessful at winning the producer's favor with music, William tries to sway her with words. He explains that he always plays better with his band, and that if they were here, she would be very impressed. He asks her for another audition.

William tries to use the Diplomacy skill, which he doesn't have (he has 0 ranks in Diplomacy). He doesn't get to add any ranks to his skill check, but he does get to add his +2 Charisma modifier. (Diplomacy is an untrained Charisma-based skill.) The GM secretly sets the DC at 20, and William's player rolls 19 on the d20 for a result of 21. The producer smiles and agrees to listen to William and his band. She even invites him up to her estate for a "personal performance." William doesn't realize that the producer has already marked him as a potential sacrifice to her god.

Before William disappears, he leaves a message on a friend's answering machine. Marie gets the message, and calls her associates to help her find him before it's too late.

ACQUIRING SKILL RANKS

Ranks indicate how much training or experience your character has with a given skill. Each of your skills has a rank, from 0 (for a skill in which your character has no training at all) to 23 (for the 20th-level character who has increased a skill to its maximum rank). When making a skill check, you add your skill ranks to the roll as part of the skill modifier, so the more ranks you have, the higher your skill check will be.

ACQUIRING SKILLS AT 1ST LEVEL

Pick skills for your 1st-level character as follows:

1) Determine the number of skill points you get. This number is 8 plus your Intelligence modifier, multiplied by 4. For example, Marie is a beginning character with an Intelligence score of 14 (+2 Intelligence bonus). At the start of play, she has 40 skill points to spend (8+2=10, 10×4=40).

2) Spend the skill points. Each skill point you spend on a core skill gets you 1 rank in that skill. Core skills are the skills found in your character's profession template in the Character Creation chapter (plus three other skills you designate as core skills for your character). Each skill point you spend on a noncore skill gets your character a half-rank in that skill. Noncore skills are all skills not found on your character's core skill list. Half-ranks do not improve your skill check, but two half-ranks equal 1 rank. At 1st level, your maximum rank in a core skill is 4; in a noncore skill, it's 2.

- Table 2–1: Skills lists all the skills available during character creation (and one skill that is available only after the game begins).
- Spend all your skill points. You can't save them to spend later.

Cthulhu Mythos is the only skill a character cannot buy during character creation; it's also the only skill with no maximum rank (see Cthulhu Mythos, page 27).

TABLE 2–1: Skills

Skill	Untrained?	Key Ability
Animal Empathy	No	Cha
Appraise	Yes	Int
Balance	Yes	Dex††
Bluff	Yes	Cha
Climb	Yes	Str††
Computer Use	Yes	Int
Concentration	Yes	Con
Craft*	No**	Int
Cthulhu Mythos†	No	—
Demolitions	No	Int
Diplomacy	Yes	Cha
Disable Device	No	Int
Disguise	Yes	Cha
Drive	Yes	Dex
Escape Artist	Yes	Dex††
Forgery	Yes	Int
Gather Information	Yes	Cha
Handle Animal	No	Cha
Heal	Yes	Wis
Hide	Yes	Dex††
Innuendo	Yes	Wis
Intimidate	Yes	Cha
Jump	Yes	Str††
Knowledge*	No	Int
Listen	Yes	Wis
Move Silently	Yes	Dex††
Open Lock	No	Dex
Operate Heavy Machinery	No	Dex
Performance*	No**	Cha
Pilot	No	Dex
Psychic Focus	No	Wis
Psychoanalysis	No	Wis
Read Lips	No	Int
Repair	No	Int
Research	Yes	Int
Ride	Yes	Dex
Search	Yes	Int
Sense Motive	Yes	Wis
Sleight of Hand	No	Dex
Speak Other Language*	No	Int
Spellcraft	No	Int
Spot	Yes	Wis
Swim	Yes	Str††
Tumble	No	Dex††
Use Rope	Yes	Dex
Wilderness Lore	Yes	Wis

* This skill requires a specialization; see the skill's listing for details.
** At the Gamemaster's discretion, some specializations of this skill may be usable untrained.
† This skill cannot be taken during character creation.
†† Armor check penalties apply.

SKILLS AT HIGHER LEVELS

When your character reaches a new experience level, follow these steps to gain new skills and improve those you already have:

1) Determine the number of skill points you get. This number is 8 plus your Intelligence modifier. A character gets at least 1 skill point even if she has an Intelligence penalty.

TABLE 2–2:
Difficulty Class Examples

Difficulty	DC	Example	Skill
Very Easy	0	Notice something in plain sight	Spot (Wis)
Easy	5	Climb a knotted rope	Climb (Str)
Average	10	Hear a security guard approaching	Listen (Wis)
Tough	15	Disarm an explosive device	Demolitions (Int)
Challenging	20	Track an escaped madman on a rainy night	Wilderness Lore (Wis) (and the Track feat)
Formidable	25	Break into a secure computer system	Computer Use (Int)
Heroic	30	Leap across a 30-foot chasm	Jump (Str)

2) Now that you have gone up a level, you can improve any core skill that you have previously maxed out by 1 rank, or any noncore skill that you have previously maxed out by a half-rank (see Table 1–10).

3) If you have not previously maxed out a skill, you can spend extra skill points on it and increase its rank further. First, find out what your maximum rank in the skill is. If it's a core skill, your maximum rank is your new level +3. If it's a noncore skill, your maximum rank is half of that number (do not round up or down). You may spend up to the number of skill points it takes to max out the skill (provided that you have that many skill points to spend).

4) If you want to pick up a new skill, you can spend up to your level +3 skill points on it (provided you have that many skill points available to spend). These skill points buy 1 rank each if the new skill is a core skill you didn't put points in earlier, or a half-rank each if it's a noncore skill.

USING SKILLS

When you use a skill, you make a skill check to see how well you do. The higher the result on your skill check, the better you do. Based on the circumstances, your result must match or beat a particular number to use the skill successfully. The harder the task, the higher the number you need to roll.

A number of circumstances can affect your check. If you're free to work without distractions, you can make a careful attempt and avoid simple mistakes. If you have lots of time, you can try over and over again, assuring that you do your best. If others help you, you may succeed where otherwise you would fail. The rules for these situations are described below.

SKILL CHECKS

A skill check takes into account your training (skill ranks), natural talent (ability modifier), and luck (the die roll). It may also take into account other factors (see Favorable and Unfavorable Conditions below).

To make a skill check, roll 1d20 and add your skill modifier for that skill. The skill modifier incorporates your ranks with that skill, your ability modifier for that skill's key ability, and any miscellaneous modifiers you may have. The higher the result, the better you do. A natural 20 is not an automatic success, and a natural 1 is not an automatic failure.

DIFFICULTY CLASS

Some checks are made against a Difficulty Class (DC). The DC is a number set by the Gamemaster that you must match or beat on your skill check to succeed. For example, climbing the wall of a Mayan temple might have a DC of 15. To climb that wall, you must get a result of 15 or better on a Climb check. A Climb check is 1d20 plus Climb ranks (if any) plus your Strength modifier, plus any other modifiers (for example, having the proper equipment might make the climb easier).

OPPOSED CHECKS

Some skill checks are opposed checks. They are made against a number, usually another character's skill check result. For example, to sneak up on a guard dog, you need to beat the guard dog's Listen check result with your Move Silently check result. You make a Move Silently check, and the Gamemaster makes a Listen check for the guard dog. Whoever gets the higher result wins the contest. If your result is higher than the Gamemaster's, you successfully sneak up on the guard dog. If the Gamemaster's result is higher then yours, the guard dog hears your PCs approach and reacts accordingly.

For ties on opposed checks, the character with the higher key ability score wins. For instance, if a Move Silently check used against a Listen check results in a tie, the skulker's Dexterity would be compared to the listener's Wisdom. If these scores are the same, flip a coin.

TABLE 2–3:
Examples of Opposed Checks

Task	Skill (Key Ability)	Opposing Skill (Key Ability)
Sneak up behind someone	Move Silently (Dex)	Listen (Wis)
Con someone	Bluff (Cha)	Sense Motive (Wis)
Hide from someone	Hide (Dex)	Spot (Wis)
Tie a prisoner securely	Use Rope (Dex)	Escape Artist (Dex)
Win a horserace	Ride (Dex)	Ride (Dex)
Pass as someone else	Disguise (Cha)	Spot (Wis)
Steal a wallet	Sleight of Hand (Dex)	Spot (Wis)
Create a false ID	Forgery (Int)	Forgery (Int)

RETRIES

In general, you can try a skill check again if you fail, and can keep trying indefinitely. Some skills, however, have consequences of failure that must be taken into account. Some skills are virtually useless once a check has failed on an attempt to accomplish a particular task. For most skills, when a character has succeeded once at a given task, additional successes are meaningless.

For example, if Marie misses an Open Lock check, she can try again. If, however, a computerized alarm

system tied to the lock goes off if she misses an Open Lock check by 5 or more, then failing has its own penalties.

Similarly, if Claire misses a Climb check, she can keep trying, but if she fails by 5 or more, she falls (after which she can get up and try again, assuming she survives).

If Sam is at negative hit points and dying, Kristof can attempt an untrained Heal check to stabilize him. If the check fails, Sam probably loses another hit point, but Kristof can try again in the next round.

If a skill carries no penalties for failure, you can assume that if you go at it long enough, you'll succeed eventually (see Checks without Rolls, page 21).

UNTRAINED SKILL CHECKS

Generally, if you attempt to use a skill you don't possess, you can make a skill check as normal. You don't have any ranks to add to the 1d20 roll, but you do get your ability modifier and any miscellaneous modifiers that might apply.

However, some skills can be used only if you are trained in the skill. If you haven't put points in Knowledge (geology), for example, you just don't know enough about rocks to identify that unusual specimen Professor Danforth brought back from Antarctica, regardless of your ability scores and experience level. Skills that cannot be used untrained are marked No in the Untrained column on Table 2–1: Skills.

For example, Sam's 4 ranks in Climb make his Climb check results 4 points higher than they otherwise would be, but even Claire, with no Climb ranks, can attempt a Climb check. Claire has a skill modifier of +0 (she has no ranks and no Strength modifier), but she can give it a try. However, Claire's ranks in Tumble let her do something that she otherwise couldn't do at all. Sam, with no ranks in the skill, can't make a Tumble check, even at a penalty.

ACCESS TO SKILLS

These rules assume that a character eventually can find a way to learn any skill while gaining a level. For instance, if Kristof wants to learn Swim, nothing in the rules exists to stop him. However, the Gamemaster is in charge of the game, including decisions about where one can and can't learn certain skills. While Kristof is working on an archaeological dig in the Sahara Desert, for example, the Gamemaster can decide that Kristof has no way of learning how to swim. It's up to the Gamemaster to say whether a character can learn a given skill in a given setting.

Cthulhu Mythos is (as usual) the exception. This skill can only be acquired through reading Mythos tomes and encounters with Mythos entities, limiting the circumstances under which a character can deliberately set out to gain extra ranks.

FAVORABLE AND UNFAVORABLE CONDITIONS

Some situations may make a skill easier or harder to use. This might add a bonus or penalty to a skill check or change the DC. It's one thing for Kristof, with his Wilderness Lore skill, to hunt for food while he is camping for the day in the middle of a forest, but foraging for food while traveling across a barren desert is an entirely different matter.

The Gamemaster can alter the odds of success to take into account exceptional circumstances:

1) Give the skill user a +2 circumstance bonus to represent circumstances that improve performance, such as having the perfect tool for the job, getting help from another character (see Combining Skill Attempts, page 22), or possessing unusually accurate information.

2) Give the skill user a –2 circumstance penalty to represent conditions that hamper performance, such as being forced to use improvised tools or having misleading information.

3) Reduce the DC by 2 to represent circumstances that make the task easier, such as having a friendly audience or doing work that might be subpar, but will do on a temporary basis.

4) Increase the DC by 2 to represent circumstances that make the task harder, such as having a hostile audience or doing work that must be flawless.

Conditions that affect your ability to perform the skill change your skill modifier. Conditions that modify how well you have to perform the skill to succeed change the DC. A bonus to your skill modifier and a reduction in the check's DC have the same result: they create a better chance that you will succeed. But they represent different circumstances, and sometimes that difference is important.

For example, Marie wants to ask the regulars at a sleazy nightclub a few questions. She has heard rumors about a musician named William who's gone missing in the area. She'll need to use the Gather Information skill; the GM sets the DC for the check at 15.

Before she starts asking around, Marie watches the crowd for a while. She could just confront a random stranger and demand to know where William is, but instead she tries to be subtle. A local band is playing, so she decides to hang out by the bar and ask a few questions about the music. Then she'll mention a friend of hers who was going to meet her here, casually say that he hasn't shown up yet, and ask if anyone has seen him around.

The GM decides that this approach improves her chances, giving her a +2 circumstance modifier to the skill check. She rolls a 6 and adds +8 for her skill modifier (4 ranks, +2 Charisma modifier, and a +2 circumstance modifier.) Her result is 14.

The locals are in a good mood because the performance is going well—the GM reduces the DC to 13. However, the most attractive guy in the group, a pale young man in black leather, has heard that some outsiders have been snooping around town. He has a reason to be suspicious of Marie's motives. The DC to question him is higher than normal: 17 instead of 15.

Marie's skill check (14) is high enough to get the locals talking (DC 13), but not the suspicious young man (DC 17). The locals offer to let her sit down at their table, but the man in black watches her carefully.

TIME AND SKILL CHECKS

When time is a factor, the time it takes to use a skill is measured in rounds; each round is about 6 seconds in length. A skill check might require part of a round, several rounds, or no time at all.

Some skills require a specific type of action: a move action, an attack action, or a full-round action. (These terms are defined in the Action Types sidebar.) The

type of action required defines how long it takes to perform, usually measured against the framework of a round. If a skill takes more than a round to use, its skill description specifies how long it takes.

Other skill checks represent reactions to an event or are included as part of another action; these checks don't take any additional game time.

A few skill checks are used as part of movement. For example, the distance you cover when making a Jump check is part of your movement, so making a Jump check is considered part of your move action (again, see the sidebar for more details).

CHECKS WITHOUT ROLLS

A skill check represents an attempt to accomplish some goal, usually with some sort of time pressure or distraction. Sometimes, though, you can use a skill under more favorable conditions and eliminate the luck factor.

Taking 10: When you are not in a rush and not being threatened or distracted, you may choose to take 10. Instead of rolling 1d20 for the skill check, calculate your result as if you had rolled a 10, then add your skill modifier to get your result. For many routine tasks, taking 10 makes them automatically successful. Distractions or threats make it impossible for a character to take 10.

For example, Sam has a Climb skill modifier of +6 (4 ranks, +2 Strength modifier). The steep, rocky slope he is climbing has a DC of 10. With a little care, he can take 10 and succeed automatically. But partway up the slope, a cultist begins shooting at him. Sam needs to make a Climb check to reach the cultist, and this time he can't take 10, due to the distraction of being shot at. If he rolls 4 or higher on 1d20, though, he succeeds.

Taking 20: Taking 20 takes twenty times as long as making a single check would take. When you have plenty of time (generally 2 minutes for a skill that can normally be used in 1 round), and when the skill being attempted carries no penalties for failure, you can take 20. In other words, eventually you will get a 20 if you roll long enough. Instead of rolling 1d20 repeatedly for the skill check, calculate your result as if you had rolled a 20. Taking 20 means you are trying until you get it right.

For example, Sam and Claire are trying to climb a rocky cliff near an old family mansion. Sam attempts to take 10 on his Climb check, for a result of 16 (10 plus his +6 skill modifier). But the DC is 20, and the Gamemaster tells him that he fails to make progress up the cliff. (His check is at least high enough that he won't fall; see Climb, page 25.) Sam cannot take 20 because there is a penalty associated with failure (falling, in this case). He can try over and over, and eventually he may succeed, but he might fall one or more times in the process.

Claire has better luck. She not only climbs halfway up the cliff, but also finds a cave while she is climbing. She decides to use her Search skill. The Gamemaster sees in the Search skill description that each 5-foot-square area takes a full-round action to search. She secretly assigns a DC of 15 to the

ACTION TYPES

The following types of actions define the time frame for how long certain activities take to complete. In a typical round, you can perform a move action and an attack action (see below).

REACTION

Some skill checks are instantaneous. They are reactions to an event, such as making a Drive check to swerve and avoid a tree that's just fallen in front of your car. Some are tests of what a character might notice or recognize, such as a Listen check to notice the madman with an axe sneaking up on you from behind. You can make as many of these checks in a round as the situation requires. (However, you still only get one check on a particular skill to respond to a given event; for instance, you can't make multiple Listen rolls to hear the same footstep.) In game terms, these checks take no time and are not considered actions.

FREE ACTION

Free actions consume so little time, and have so minor an impact over the span of a round, that they are considered to take no time. You can perform one or more free actions while taking another action, although the Gamemaster puts reasonable limits on what you can do for free. Calling out to your friends for help, for example, is a free action; reading aloud several pages from *The Necronomicon* is not.

ATTACK ACTION

An attack action allows you to do something: make an attack, cast a spell, or use a skill or feat (unless the skill or feat requires a full-round action to perform; see below). During a round, you can perform an attack action and move your speed (a move action; see below). You can perform only one attack action a round, so if you use an attack action to do something other than attacking, you cannot attack someone in that same round.

MOVE ACTION

A move action allows you to move your speed in a round or perform a similar action used in place of movement. For instance, you could draw a weapon, pick up a book, or move a heavy object as a move action.

In a combat round, you can perform an attack action and move your speed as your move action, or you can move first and then perform an attack action. If you prefer, you can perform two move actions in a round without attacking, using the second move action in place of an attack action. If the actions you take during a round result in you moving no actual distance, you can also take a 5-foot step (you can move up to 5 feet).

FULL-ROUND ACTION

A full-round action consumes all your effort during the round. The only movement you can take during a full-round action is a 5-foot-step before, during, or after the action. Attacking more than once per round (if you have multiple attacks, or if you're firing a multishot weapon) is a full-round action. So is using a skill that requires a full round to accomplish, such as using Search to examine a 5-foot-by-5-foot area.

LONGER THAN A ROUND

Some skills take more than a round to perform. When this is the case, the skill description specifies how long the skill takes to use. Such activities as crafting a sculpture of an ancient demon, riding a camel across the desert, or spending an evening flirting with an attractive occultist can be handled by skill checks, but the times involved are beyond the scope of round-by-round or even minute-by-minute timing.

attempt. She estimates that the floors, walls, and ceiling of the cave make up about twenty 5-foot squares, so she tells Claire's player that it takes 2 minutes (20 rounds) to search the whole cave. Claire's player rolls a 12 on 1d20, adds no skill ranks because Claire doesn't have the Search skill, and adds +0 because that's Claire's Intelligence modifier. Her Search check fails.

She then decides that she is going to search the cavern high and low, for "as long as it takes." Since it took 1 round to quickly search each 5-foot section of the cave, taking 20 means it takes 20 rounds to exhaustively check every section. Therefore, the Gamemaster takes the original time of 2 minutes and multiplies it by 20, for 40 minutes. That's how long it takes for Claire to search the whole cave in exacting detail. Claire's player treats her roll as if it were 20, for a result of 20, since she has no ranks and no Intelligence modifier. That's good enough to beat the DC of 15. Claire finds an old, mysterious carving on one of the walls, covered in grime and dirt.

Ability Checks and Caster Level Checks: The normal take 10 rules apply for ability checks when these are routine untrained skill checks or when there is no skill associated with the check, such a breaking down a door (see Checks without Rolls, page 21). The normal take 20 rules apply to all ability checks. Neither rule applies to caster level checks involved in certain spells.

COMBINING SKILL ATTEMPTS

When more than one character tries the same skill at the same time and for the same purpose, their efforts may overlap.

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

Often, several characters attempt an action, and each succeeds or fails on her own. For example, Sam and each of his friends need to climb a cliff if they're all to get to the top. Regardless of Sam's roll, the other characters need successful checks, too. Each character must make a separate skill check.

COOPERATION

Sometimes individual PCs are essentially reacting to the same situation, but they can work together and help each other out. In this case, one character is considered the leader of the effort and makes a skill check; each helper makes a skill check against DC 10. (You can't take 10 on this check.) This is known as a cooperation check. For each helper who succeeds, the leader gets a +2 circumstance bonus. In many cases a character's help won't be beneficial, or only a limited number of characters can help at once. The Gamemaster should limit cooperation as she sees fit for the given conditions.

For instance, if Sam has been badly wounded and is dying, Kristof can try a Heal check to keep him from losing more hit points. One other character (in this case, Claire) can help Kristof. If Claire makes a Heal check against DC 10, then Kristof gets a +2 circumstance bonus on the Heal check he makes to help Sam. The Gamemaster rules that more than two characters couldn't help Kristof at the same time because a third person would just get in the way.

As a variant rule, a character who's trying to help with a skill check may not need to use the same skill. This is allowable with the permission of the GM, but increases the DC for the cooperation check by 5. For instance, if Kristof is trying to use his Heal skill to treat someone with a disease, someone else could make a Knowledge (medicine) check to advise him. A successful check against DC 15 would add a +2 circumstance bonus to Kristof's Heal check.

SKILL SYNERGY

It's possible for a character to have two skills that always work well together, such as when someone with Handle Animal also has Animal Empathy. In general, having 5 or more ranks in one such skill gives you a +2 synergy bonus on skill checks with its related skill(s), as noted in the individual skill descriptions and Table 2–4: Synergy Bonuses.

TABLE 2–4: Synergy Bonuses

Five ranks in:	Grants a +2 Synergy Bonus to:
Animal Empathy	Handle Animal
Bluff	Intimidate
	Sleight of Hand
Handle Animal	Ride
Knowledge (medicine)	Heal
Knowledge (psychology)	Psychoanalysis
Sense Motive	Diplomacy
Tumble	Balance
	Jump

As a variant rule, the GM can allow a character to make a skill check with one skill (DC 15) to add a +2 synergy bonus on a second skill check. (It's like a cooperation check, but both rolls are made by the same player.) This should work only in a situation where the first skill might help with the second skill. For instance, the GM might decide your character can attempt a Computer Use check (DC 15) to add a +2 synergy bonus on your Demolitions check to defuse a bomb, but only if it has computerized components. This is known as a synergy check.

As another example, suppose Marie is writing a magazine article on the occult. She really wants to impress her publisher, so she wants to use

BONUS TYPES

A modifier is a bonus or penalty that applies to a die roll. A positive modifier is a bonus; a negative modifier is a penalty.

Modifiers with specific designators (such as an armor bonus) generally do not stack with others of the same type—only the best bonus or worst penalty of that type applies. For example, if one item provides a +1 deflection bonus and another a +2 deflection bonus, using both items at the same time would only grant a +2 deflection bonus. Exceptions to this rule are that dodge bonuses stack with each other, and circumstance bonuses stack with each other.

Modifiers without specific designators can be added together. A modifier without a specific designator can stack with a modifier that has one.

Examples of typical designators are: aptitude, armor, circumstance, competence, deflection, dodge, enhancement, insight, luck, morale, natural armor, and synergy.

her Knowledge (occult) skill to get a +2 synergy bonus on her Craft (writing) check for the article. The GM approves the idea that Knowledge (occult) can give a +2 synergy bonus on Craft (writing), but only when the character writes about the occult, and only if she makes the skill check against DC 15. This variant rule can slow down game play, so use discretion.

PRACTICALLY IMPOSSIBLE TASKS

Sometimes you want to do something that seems practically impossible. In general, to do something that's practically impossible requires that you have at least 10 ranks in the necessary skill. The attempt also entails a penalty of –20 on your roll or +20 on the DC (which amounts to the same thing).

Practically impossible tasks are hard to delineate ahead of time. They're the accomplishments that represent incredible, almost logic-defying skill and luck. Picking a lock by giving it a swift kick, swimming up a waterfall, or convincing a byakhee to stop attacking by speaking nicely to it are potential examples of practically impossible tasks.

The Gamemaster decides what is actually impossible and what is merely practically impossible. Characters with very high skill modifiers are capable on occasion of accomplishing incredible, almost unbelievable tasks.

EXTRAORDINARY SUCCESS

If you have at least 10 ranks in a skill and beat your DC by 20 or more on a normal skill check, you have completed the task extraordinarily well. For example, Claire has reached 10th level and has 13 ranks in Performance. She has increased her Charisma score by 2 points (once at 4th level and again at 8th level), so she now has an ability modifier of +3, giving her a total skill modifier of +16.

Claire has been invited to perform at a private gathering. She doesn't know that most of the people in attendance are actually cultists in the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign. As she begins to portray the role of Cassilda, the Gamemaster decides the audience is very receptive. She assigns a DC of 15 to the skill check. Claire's player rolls a 19 on 1d20 and adds her +16 skill modifier for a result of 35!

The audience likes the performance so much that they experience an epiphany and decide she is actually a manifestation of one of the characters from *The King in Yellow*. The Gamemaster decides that from now on, the cultists will periodically beseech Claire to give return performances, refusing to accept no for an answer. They may, from time to time, track her down individually and implore "Cassilda" for guidance.

ABILITY CHECKS

Sometimes you try to do something to which no specific skill applies. In these cases, you can make an ability check. Making an ability check involves rolling 1d20 and adding an appropriate ability modifier. Essentially, you're making an untrained skill check. The Gamemaster assigns a Difficulty Class or sets up an opposed check when two characters are engaged in a contest using a specific ability score. An initiative check in combat, for example, is essentially a Dexterity check (the character who rolls highest goes first).

In some cases, an action is a straight test of a character's ability, with no luck involved. Just as you wouldn't make a check to see who is taller, you don't always make a Strength check to see who is stronger. When two characters arm wrestle, for example, the stronger character simply wins. In the case of identical scores, flip a coin.

TABLE 2–5:
Examples of Ability Checks

Task	Key Ability
Breaking open a jammed or locked door	Strength
Threading a needle	Dexterity
Holding your breath	Constitution
Navigating a maze	Intelligence
Remembering to lock a door	Wisdom
Getting yourself singled out in a crowd	Charisma

SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

This section describes each skill, including common uses and typical modifiers. Characters can sometimes use skills for purposes other than those given here. For example, you might be able to impress a group of occultists by making a Knowledge (occult) check.

Here's the format for skill descriptions:



SKILL NAME
(KEY ABILITY; TRAINED ONLY; ARMOR CHECK PENALTY)

Headings that do not apply to a particular skill are omitted in that skill's description. The skill name line includes the following information.

Key Ability: The abbreviation of the ability whose modifier applies to the skill check.

Trained Only: If "Trained Only" is included in the skill name line, you must have at least 1 rank in the skill to use it. If this header is omitted, the

skill can be used untrained. If any special notes apply to trained or untrained use, they are covered in the Special section (see below).

Armor Check Penalty: Apply any armor check penalty to skill checks for this skill.

Description: The skill name line is followed by a general description of what using the skill represents. After the description are three other types of information:

Check: This section discusses what you can do with a successful skill check and typical check DCs. This section may also describe how long it takes to make a skill check (see the Action Types sidebar).

Retry: Any conditions that apply to successive attempts to use the skill are listed here. If this paragraph is omitted, the skill can be retried without any inherent penalty other than consuming additional time.

Synergy: If this skill grants a synergy bonus, this section gives the other skill that receives it.

Special: Any extra facts that apply to the skill, such as rules regarding untrained use or notes regarding different eras or settings are given here.

ANIMAL EMPATHY (CHA; TRAINED ONLY)

Use this skill to keep a guard dog from barking at you, get a wild bird to land on your outstretched hand, or keep a bear calm while you back off.

Check: You can improve the attitude of an animal with a successful check (see the Attitude Adjustment table, page 226, for more details). To use the skill, you and the animal must be able to study each other, noting each other's body language, vocalizations, and general demeanor. This means that you must be within 30 feet under normal conditions.

Generally, influencing an animal in this way takes 1 minute (ten full-round actions). As with influencing people (via Diplomacy or Intimidate), it might take more or less time.

This skill only works only on animals (that is, creatures with the "animal" subtype), not people or monsters.

Retry: As with attempts to influence people, retries on the same animal generally don't work (or don't work any better), whether you have succeeded or not.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Animal Empathy receives a +2 synergy bonus on Handle Animal checks.

APPRAISE (INT)

Use this skill to tell an antique from old junk and high-quality jewelry from cheap stuff made to look good.

Check: You can appraise common or well-known objects within 10% of their value (DC 12). Failure means you estimate the value at 50%–150% of the actual value. To derive the false value, the Gamemaster secretly rolls 2d6+3, multiplies that by 10%, multiplies the actual value by that percentage, and tells you that value for the item.

Rare or exotic items require a successful check against DC 15, 20, or higher. If successful, you estimate the value at 70%–130% of its actual value. The GM secretly rolls 2d4+5, multiplies by 10%, multiplies the actual value by that percentage, and tells you that value for the item. Failure means you cannot estimate the item's value.

A magnifying glass or similar tool gives a +2 circumstance bonus on Appraise checks involving any item that is small or highly detailed, such as a gem. A scale gives a +2 circumstance bonus on Appraise checks involving any items that are valued by weight, including anything made of precious metals. (Since these are circumstance bonuses, they stack.)

Appraising an item takes 1 minute.

Retry: Not on the same object, regardless of success.

Special: If you are making the check untrained, for common items, failure means no estimate (you have no idea what the item is worth). For rare items, an untrained success means an estimate of 50%–150% (2d6+3 times 10%).

BALANCE (DEX; ARMOR CHECK PENALTY)

You can keep your balance while walking on an uneven floor, a ledge, a narrow beam, or even a tightrope.

Check: You can walk on a precarious surface as a move action. A successful check lets you move at half your normal speed along the surface for 1 round. A failure means that you can't move for 1 round. A failure by 5 or more means that you slip and fall. The difficulty varies with the surface, as shown on the table below.

Accelerated Movement: You can try to walk a precarious surface more quickly than normal. If you accept a –5 penalty on your Balance check, you can move your full speed as a move action. Moving any faster than this in a round requires an additional check for each doubling of your speed.

Attacked while Walking a Tightrope: Attacks against you on a tightrope are made as if you were off-balance. Attackers gain a +2 bonus on their attack rolls, and you lose your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (if any). If you have 5 or more ranks in Balance, then you can retain your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (if any) in the face of attacks. If you take damage, you must make a check again to stay on the tightrope.

Surface	DC	Surface	DC
6+ to 12 inches wide	10	Uneven floor	10
2 to 6 inches wide	15	Surface angled	+5*
Less than 2 inches wide	20	Surface slippery	+5*

*Cumulative; if both apply, use both.

BLUFF (CHA)

You can make outrageous or untrue claims seem plausible. The skill encompasses acting, con-artistry, fast-talk, misdirection, prevarication, and misleading body language. Use a bluff to sow temporary confusion, get someone to turn his head to look where you point, or simply to look innocuous.

Check: A Bluff check is opposed by the target's Sense Motive check. Favorable and unfavorable circumstances weigh heavily on the outcome of a bluff. Two circumstances can weigh against you: if the bluff is hard to believe, or if the action the target must take goes against her self-interest, nature, personality, orders, or the like. If it's important, the Gamemaster can distinguish between a bluff that fails because the target doesn't believe it and one that fails because it just asks too much of the target.

Example Circumstance	Modifier to Sense Motive
The target wants to believe you.	–5
"This old book hasn't been stolen. I just need some quick cash, so I'm offering it to you cheap."	
The bluff is believable and doesn't affect the target much.	+0
"Dead body? I don't know what you're talking about. I'm just here to watch the play."	
The bluff is a little hard to believe or puts the target at some risk.	+5
"You guys wanna fight? I'll take you all on!"	
The bluff is hard to believe or entails a large risk for the target.	+10
"Of course that's not a real human head in my trunk, officer. It's just a stage prop. Realistic, isn't it?"	
The bluff is way out there; it's almost too incredible to consider.	+20
"You might find this hard to believe, but I'm actually an alien from another world. Can you please lend me some of your local currency so I may travel in one of your ground transports?"	

For instance, if the target gets a +10 bonus because the bluff demands something risky on her part, and the Sense Motive check succeeds by 10 or less, then the target didn't so much see through the bluff as prove reluctant to go along with it. If the target succeeds by 11 or more, she has seen through the bluff (and would have done so even if it had not entailed any demand on her).

A successful Bluff check indicates that the target reacts as you wish, at least for a short time (usually 1 round or less), or believes something that you want him to believe. Bluff, however, is not a skill that gives you control over someone's action. For example, you could use a bluff to put someone off-guard by telling him his shoes are untied. At best, such a bluff would make the target glance down at his shoes. It would not cause the target to ignore you and fiddle with his shoes while you picked the lock of a door the target is guarding.

A bluff requires interaction between the character and the target. Creatures unaware of the character cannot be bluffed. A bluff always takes at least 1 round (and is at least a full-round action) but can take much longer if you try something elaborate.

Feinting in Combat: You can also use Bluff to mislead an opponent in combat so that he can't dodge your attack effectively. Doing so is an attack action. If you are successful, the next attack you make against the target does not allow her to use her Dexterity bonus to her Armor Class (if any). This attack must be made on or before your next turn.

Feinting in this way against something inhuman is difficult because it's harder to read a strange creature's body language; you suffer a –4 penalty to the skill check. Against a creature of animal Intelligence (1 or 2) it's even harder; you suffer a –8 penalty. Against a nonintelligent creature, it's impossible.

Creating a Diversion to Hide: You can use Bluff to help you hide. A successful Bluff check can give you the momentary diversion you need to attempt a Hide check while people are aware of you. See the Hide skill for more details.

Retry: Generally, a failed Bluff check makes the target too suspicious for you to try another bluff in the same circumstances.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Bluff receives a +2 synergy bonus on Intimidate and Sleight of Hand checks.

CLIMB (STR; ARMOR CHECK PENALTY)

Use this skill to scale a cliff, get to the window on the second story of a house, or climb out of an old basement after falling through a rickety floor.

Check: With each successful Climb check, you can advance up, down, or across a slope or a wall or other steep incline (or even a ceiling, if there are handholds), moving at one-half your normal speed. This is a full-round action. You can move half that distance (one-fourth your normal speed) as a move action. A slope is considered to be any incline of less than 60 degrees, while a wall has a 60-degree or steeper incline.

A failed Climb check means that you make no progress. A check that fails by 5 or more means that you fall from whatever height you attained before you made that check. You may be able to reduce the damage by using Jump or Tumble.

Any time you take damage while climbing, you must make a Climb check against the DC of the slope or wall. Failure means you fall from your current height and sustain the appropriate falling damage (1d6 points of damage for every 10 feet you fall).

Appropriate climbing gear (see Outdoor and Travel Gear, page 116) gives a +2 circumstance bonus on Climb checks.

The DC of the check depends on the conditions of the climb, as outlined on the table below.

Accelerated Climbing: You try to climb more quickly than normal. As a full-round action, you can attempt to cover your full speed in climbing distance, but you suffer a –5 penalty on Climb checks and must make two checks each round. Each successful check allows you to climb a distance equal to one-half your speed. By accepting the –5 penalty, you can move half your speed as a move action rather than a full-round action.

Attacked while Climbing: Since you can't move to avoid a blow while climbing, each attacker targeting you gets a +2 bonus, and you lose your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class.

Making Your Own Handholds and Footholds: You can make your own handholds and footholds by

DC	Example Wall or Surface
0	A knotted rope with a wall to brace against.
5	A rope with a wall to brace against, or a knotted rope without a wall.
10	A surface with ledges to hold on to and stand on, such as a very rough wall or a ship's rigging.
15	Any surface with adequate handholds and footholds (natural or artificial), such as a very rough natural rock surface or a tree. An unknotted rope.
20	An uneven surface with some narrow handholds and footholds, such as a typical wall in a ruined castle.
25	A rough surface, such as a natural rock wall or a brick wall.
25	Overhang or ceiling with handholds, but no footholds.
—	A perfectly smooth, flat, vertical surface cannot be climbed.
–10*	Climbing a chimney (artificial or natural) or other location where you can brace against two opposite walls (reduces DC by 10).
–5*	Climbing a corner where you can brace against perpendicular walls (reduces DC by 5).
+5*	Surface is slippery (increases DC by 5).

*These modifiers are cumulative; use any that apply.

pounding pitons into a wall. Doing so takes 1 minute per piton, and one piton is needed every 3 feet. As with any surface with handholds and footholds, a wall with pitons in it has a DC of 15. In the same way, a climber with a handaxe or similar implement can cut holds in an ice wall.

Catching Yourself When Falling: It's practically impossible to catch yourself on a wall while falling. Make a Climb check (DC equals the wall's DC + 20) to do so. A slope is a lot easier to catch yourself on (DC equals the slope's DC + 10).

COMPUTER USE (INT)

Use this skill to operate computer systems and write or modify computer programs. Computer Use enables you to access computer programs and files, networked computer systems, or the Internet.

Check: Most simple tasks, such as checking your e-mail, don't require a skill check. However, when creating or modifying programs, breaking into secure systems, or when time is of the essence, a skill check is required, against a DC related to the task (see table).

DC	Task
15	Modify existing program
20–30	Create new program
25	Break into secured system

Modify Existing Program: Modifying an existing computer program can change its purpose, add information that didn't exist, or delete information that does exist. If the program to be modified is protected within a secure system, you must first break into the system (see below).

Create New Program: Creating an entirely new program is more difficult than modifying an existing one. Common programs that a character might want to create include task-related programs for computer systems, defensive programs to protect computer systems, and viruses to disable cultists' computers.

Break into a Secured System: Extracting guarded information from a system is perhaps the computer expert's most valued ability. Defeating security measures to gain access to restricted data or vital programs can be extremely difficult.

Particularly complex programs or well-designed security systems can modify the DC of a task by +5 or more. You may need to beat an opposing computer programmer's Computer Use check result.

Computer Use requires at least a full-round action. The Gamemaster may determine that some tasks require several rounds, several minutes, or even longer to accomplish, depending on complexity and the quality of available equipment.

General Tech: This skill can also be used to operate or program electronic devices, such as programming a cell phone, accessing data from a palm pilot, finding your position with a GPS system, or even programming your new VCR. Keep in mind that an untrained Computer Use check is essentially an Intelligence check to figure out high-tech devices.

Research: An investigator accessing information on the Internet can substitute Computer Use for Research. However, some information just can't be found on the Web. For this reason (and others), this skill cannot be substituted for a Research check against a DC above 15. Your Gamemaster may decide that a particular piece of information isn't available over the Web.

CONCENTRATION (CON)

You are particularly good at focusing your mind.

Check: You can make a Concentration check to cast a spell despite distractions such as taking damage, getting hit by an unfriendly spell, and so on. You can also use this skill to maintain concentration in the face of other distractions or on other things besides spells, such as eavesdropping on a conversation despite distractions from other people, keeping awake, or focusing completely on your studies.

The table below summarizes various types of distractions that cause you to make a Concentration check. See the Magic chapter for more information on spells and spellcasting.

Retry: Yes, although a success doesn't cancel the effects of a previous failure. In the case of spellcasting, a failure almost always results in the loss of the spell being cast or the disruption of a spell you concentrated on.

Special: Concentration can be taken as a starting skill, but since no player character begins the game knowing spells, the skill initially represents your ability to focus your mind on mundane tasks.

DC	Distraction
10	Vigorous motion (on a moving mount, bouncy car ride, small boat in rough water, belowdecks in a storm-tossed ship)
15	Violent motion (galloping horse, very rough plane ride, small boat in rapids, on deck of storm-tossed ship)
15	Casting on the defensive (see page 74 in the Combat chapter, and page 128 in the Magic chapter)
15 + damage dealt	Taking damage or failing a saving throw during the casting of a spell (for spells with a casting time of a full round or more)
15 + damage dealt	Taking damage from a readied attack (for spells with a casting time of one action)
15 + half of continuous	Suffering continuous damage (for example, casting spells when you are on fire)
25	Grappling or pinned during spellcasting*

*The only spells that could be cast under such conditions are those without somatic components whose material components are in hand.

CRAFT (INT)

You are trained in an art, trade, or craft. Craft is actually a number of separate skills, each with its own specialization. You can have several Craft skills, each with its own ranks. Each one is purchased as a separate skill.

The Gamemaster can create additional Craft skills for her campaign. The most common specialties are listed here, along with some examples of when you might use them.

- Carpentry (woodwork)
- Chemistry (analysis, forensics, mortuary science)
- Clockwork (gears, watches, timers)
- Electronics (computers, surveillance "bugs")
- Gunsmith (repairing and modifying firearms)
- Photography (digital, video)
- Sculpting (pottery, ceramics)
- Songwriting (melody, lyrics, ballads)
- Writing (fiction, nonfiction, journalism, poetry)

Item	DC
Very simple item (ashtray)	5
Typical item (iron pot)	10
High-quality item (crystal vase)	15
Complex or superior item (timepiece)	20
Very complex item (clockwork orrery)	25

Check: You know how to use the tools of your trade, how to perform the craft's daily tasks, and how to handle common problems. These uses do not require checks.

The basic function of the Craft skill allows you to make an item of the appropriate type. The DC depends on the difficulty of the item created. The time required varies greatly depending on the task and is determined by the Gamemaster.

In addition, you can recognize skilled work from shoddy work in your own field. On a successful skill check (DC 10), you can guess the approximate ranks of the person who created the item: 0–5 (amateur), 6–10 (journeyman), 11–15 (skilled), 16–20 (masterful), 21+ (brilliant).

Most crafts require appropriate tools to give the best chance of success. If improvised tools must be used instead, the check is made with a –2 circumstance penalty.

Retry: Yes. However, if multiple rolls are necessary, and the character misses a Craft check by more than 5, the raw materials are ruined, and he must start work all over again.

Special: Craft (chemistry) can be substituted for Knowledge (chemistry). Craft (electronics) can be substituted for Knowledge (electronics).

At the Gamemaster's discretion, some specializations of this skill may be usable untrained. For instance, the GM may decide that anyone can write a poem, craft a melody, or take a photograph. With these specialties, an untrained Craft skill is an Intelligence check; artists and craftsmen add their Craft bonus for that specialty because of years of experience.

If a character isn't completely building something from scratch, the Gamemaster may allow a general Repair check instead of a specific Craft check.

CTHULHU MYTHOS (NONE)

You know things that Should Not Be Known. You have had horrible supernatural experiences and read forbidden tomes, learning truly dark secrets that have challenged everything you thought you knew. Since these revelations defy logic or commonly accepted fact, it does not matter how intelligent or wise you are when using this skill—only how much exposure to the Cthulhu Mythos itself you have experienced.

Check: You can recall or access knowledge pertaining to the Cthulhu Mythos, particularly details about monsters, deities, spells, or rites pertaining directly to them or the effects they have had on history. You may have insights or speculations about phenomena you are experiencing for the first time.

Special: You cannot gain ranks in this skill through spending skill points. You may only gain ranks through reading Mythos tomes or through experiences with the Mythos itself. Each rank you add to this skill permanently reduces your maximum Sanity by 1 point. The more you know about the horrible truths underlying reality, the less capable you are of leading a normal life.

You cannot take Cthulhu Mythos during character creation, nor can you declare it as a core skill. However, there is no maximum rank; your level does not limit the number of ranks in Cthulhu Mythos you can acquire.

DEMOLITIONS (INT; TRAINED ONLY)

Sometimes an adventure requires the efficacious application of dynamite. Use this skill to create, set, and disarm explosive devices.

Check: Lighting a stick of dynamite does not require a check, but almost every more complicated task involving the use of explosives does.

DC	Task
10	Set explosive device
15	Disarm explosive
25	Build explosive from scratch
Opposed	Disarm scratch-built explosive

Set Explosive Device: While just about anyone can push a detonator, it takes skill to put an explosive in the optimum location for maximum blast efficiency. A failed skill check indicates that the explosion was poorly placed; targets gain a +4 circumstance bonus on their Reflex saving throws to avoid damage.

Disarm Explosive: Disarming a manufactured explosive is a dangerous task. If the character has the explosive's schematics available, add a +5 bonus to the skill check. If the character is rushed, add +5 to the DC. Failure usually indicates the explosive detonates immediately.

Build Explosive from Scratch: Creating a scratch-built explosive device is usually the work of terrorists, violent anarchists, or desperate investigators. The given DC assumes that useful materials are readily available; if not, add +5 (or more) to the DC. On a failed check, the device is ruined and the materials are wasted. A check that fails by 10 or more means the explosive detonates during construction, dealing 20% to 50% ([1d4+1]×10%) of its intended damage to the person building it.

Disarm Scratch-Built Explosive: Disarming an explosive device built from scratch is an opposed skill check. The disarming character's skill check is opposed by the Demolitions check result achieved during the device's construction. If the disarming character equals or exceeds the builder's check result, the device is disarmed. Otherwise, it detonates immediately.

DIPLOMACY (CHA)

Use this skill to persuade the county clerk to let you see the property records of that strange old house, negotiate a deal between corporations, or convince the evil cultists who have captured you that they should ransom you back to your family instead of sacrificing you to Tsathoggua.

Diplomacy includes etiquette, social grace, tact, subtlety, and a way with words. A skilled character knows formal and informal rules of conduct, social expectations, proper forms of address, and so on. This skill represents the ability to give others the right impression, negotiate effectively, and influence others.

Check: You can change others' attitudes with a successful check (see NPC Attitudes, page 225). In negotiations, participants roll opposed Diplomacy checks to see who gains the advantage. Opposed checks also resolve cases when two advocates or diplomats plead opposite cases in a hearing before a third party.

Diplomacy only works when someone is willing to listen to you and can understand the language you're speaking. To make a more immediate impression, try Intimidate.

Retry: Generally, retries do not work. Even if the initial check succeeds, the other character can be persuaded only so far, and a retry may do more harm than good. If the initial check fails, the other character has probably become more firmly committed to her position, making a retry futile.

Special: Charisma checks to influence NPCs are generally untrained Diplomacy checks.

DISABLE DEVICE (INT; TRAINED ONLY)

Use this skill to disarm a trap, jam a lock (open or closed), or rig a car's brakes to give out. You can examine a fairly simple or fairly small mechanical device and disable it. The effort requires at least a simple tool of the appropriate sort (a pick, crowbar, saw, file, and so on). Attempting a Disable Device check with makeshift tools carries a –2 circumstance penalty.

Check: The Gamemaster makes the Disable Device check so that you don't necessarily know whether you have succeeded. The amount of time needed to make a check and the DC for the check depend on how tricky the device or task is (see the table). Disabling a simple device takes 1 round (and is a full-round action). Intricate or complex devices require 2d4 rounds. You also can rig fairly simple devices such as car brakes or a steering wheel to work normally for a while and then fail or fall off some time later (usually after 1d4 rounds or minutes of use).

Disabling (or rigging or jamming) a fairly simple device has a DC of 10. More intricate and complex devices have a higher DC. The Gamemaster rolls the check. If the check succeeds, you disable the device. If the check fails by up to 4, you have failed, but can try again. If you fail by 5 or more, something goes wrong. If it's a trap, you spring it. If it's some sort of sabotage, you think the device is disabled, but it still works normally.

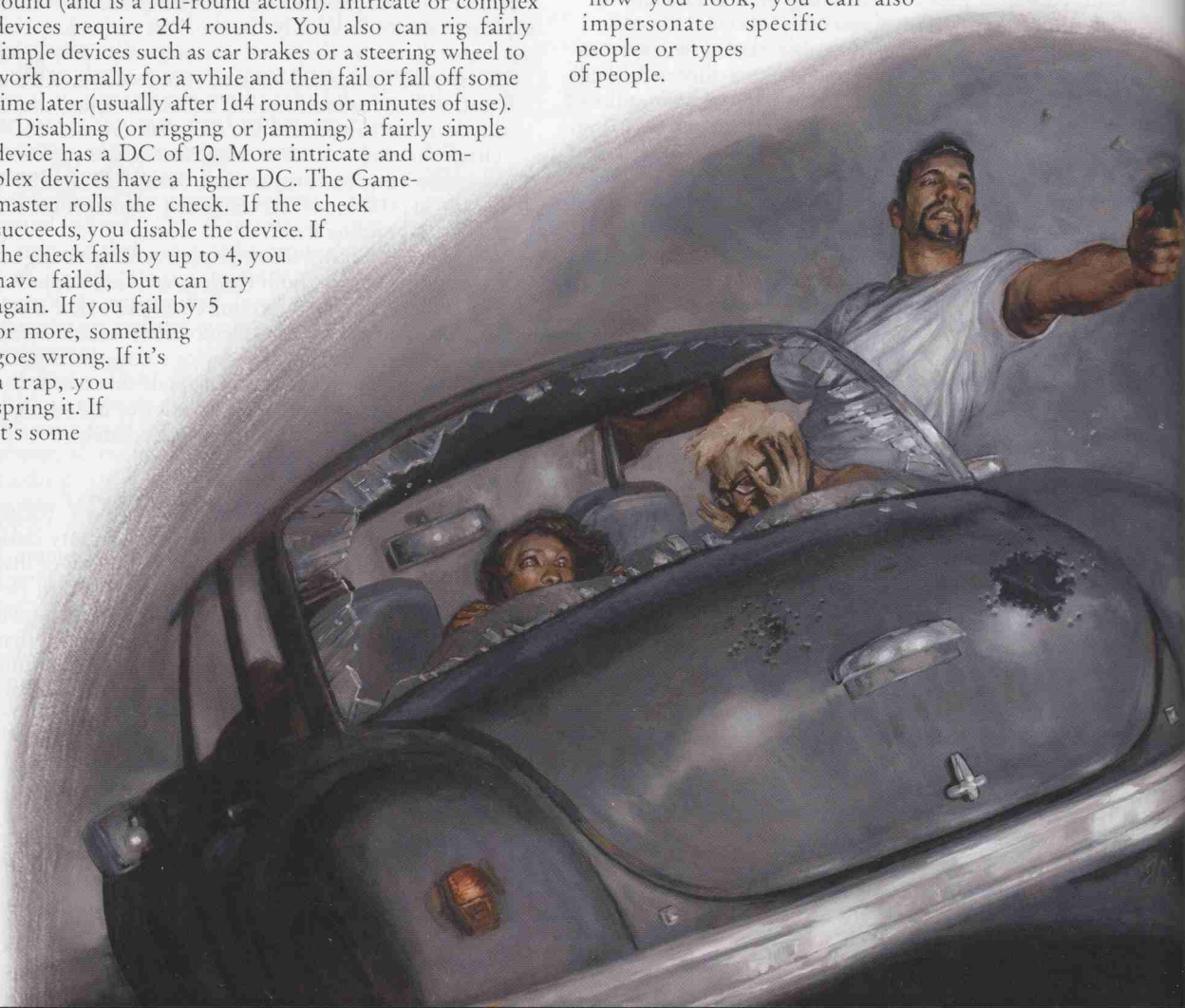
Retry: Yes, assuming the device was not a trap that you have already inadvertently set off. You must be aware that you have failed before you can try again.

Device	Time	DC*	Example
Simple	1 full round	10	Jam a lock
Tricky	1d4 rounds	15	Sabotage a car wheel
Difficult	2d4 rounds	20	Disarm or reset a trap
Wicked	2d4 rounds	25	Disarm a complex trap or cleverly sabotage a mechanical device (such as a car)

*If the character attempts to leave behind no trace of the tampering, add +5 to the DC.

DISGUISE (CHA)

Use this skill to change your appearance or someone else's. The effort requires at least a few props, some makeup, and 1d3+10 minutes of work. The use of a disguise kit provides a +2 circumstance bonus on the Disguise check. A disguise can include an apparent change of height or weight of no more than one-tenth from the original. Besides just changing how you look, you can also impersonate specific people or types of people.



Disguise	Modifier
Minor details only	+5
Disguised as different sex	–2
Disguised as different race	–2
Disguised as different age category	–2*

*This modifier applies per step of difference between your actual age category and the disguised age category (adult, middle-aged, old, and venerable).

If you are impersonating a particular individual, those who know what that person looks like are automatically considered to be suspicious of you, so opposed checks are always invoked, and such people get a bonus on their Spot checks.

Familiarity	Bonus
Recognizes on sight	+4
Friend or associate	+6
Close friend	+8
Intimate	+10

Check: Your Disguise check result determines how good the disguise is. The Gamemaster makes your Disguise check secretly so that you're not sure how good it is. It's opposed by others' Spot checks. You can only make one Disguise check, even if several observers make individual Spot checks.

If you don't draw any attention to yourself, however, others do not get to make Spot checks. If you come to the attention of people who are suspicious (such as an alert security guard who's watching people entering and exiting an office building), the Gamemaster can assume that those observers are taking 10 on their Spot checks.

The effectiveness of your disguise depends in part on how much you're attempting to change your appearance.

Usually, an individual makes a check for detection immediately upon meeting you and each hour thereafter you remain in contact. If you casually meet many different people, each for a short time, check once per hour using an average Spot bonus for the group. For example, if a character is trying to pass as a clerk in a store, the Gamemaster can make one Spot check per hour for the people she encounters, with a +1 bonus on the check to represent the average of the customers (that is, most people with no Spot ranks and a few with good Spot skills).

Retry: A character may try to redo a failed disguise, but once others know that a disguise was attempted they'll be more suspicious, gaining a +2 circumstance bonus on opposed checks against further attempts for the remainder of that day.

DRIVE (DEX)

Use this skill to drive a car, avoid collisions, or lose someone chasing or tailing you while you're in a car.

Check: Driving a car is a move action. Simple tasks, such as driving to the library, do not necessitate a check. Make a check only when some unusual circumstance exists (such as an icy road, someone chasing or shooting at you, or a byakhee on the roof). Some sample DCs are listed below.

Retry: You can make another attempt after a failed check to lose a tail. Otherwise, most driving checks have consequences that suggest a retry is impossible (such as a spinout or crash).

Special: Drive is a rare skill in the 1890s, but common by the 1920s, having largely replaced Ride as a means of transport.

Maneuver	DC
Forty-five degree turn	10
Ninety degree turn	12
Bootlegger reverse (180 degree turn)	25
Keeping to a narrow track	15
Avoiding a moving obstacle	20
Modifiers to DC:	
Dirt or gravel road	+2
Wet surface	+4
Oily surface	+6
Icy surface	+8
Recovering from a collision	+10
Vision reduced (rain or snow)	+2 to +4
Vision obscured (fog, duststorm, downpour)	up to +10
Moving between 20 and 30 mph	+2*
Moving between 31 and 40 mph	+4*
Moving between 41 and 50 mph	+6*
Moving between 51 and 60 mph	+8*
Moving over 60 mph	+2 for each 10 mph*

*The loss of a windshield doubles these penalties.

CARS AND OTHER VEHICLES

People in cars have three-quarters cover (one-half cover for convertibles). A typical modern car body has 10 hit points and a hardness of 6 (fiberglass). An older (steel-bodied) car has 20 hit points and a hardness of 10. The car as a whole has 60 hit points and an Armor Class of 14. A large truck (a semi tractor and trailer) has 200 hit points and an Armor Class of 16.

A car has a move of 10 for every mph of speed it is traveling. For every 10 mph over 20 mph, add +1 to its Armor Class (+1 at 30 mph, +2 at 40 mph, +3 at 50 mph, and so forth).

Tires are the most vulnerable part of the machine. A modern car or motorcycle tire has 2 hit points, an Armor Class of 12, and a hardness of 2 (for every 10 mph over 20 mph the vehicle moves, add +1 to its Armor Class). Older rubber tires have 1 hit point and a hardness of 0.

If a car strikes anything, it deals 1d6 points of damage per 10 mph it was traveling over 10 (1d6 at 20 mph, 2d6 at 30 mph, 3d6 at 40 mph, and so forth). The car itself (and any occupants) takes half damage.

Reverse this effect if the object the car strikes is significantly larger than the car itself (for example, a car running into a brick wall would take full damage itself and deal half damage to the wall). If the two objects are roughly the same size, both take full damage. If two objects of roughly the same weight or mass run into each other head-on, the speeds should be added together. By contrast, if one car rams another going in the same direction, the speed of the slower car should be subtracted from that of the faster car.

Thus, a car going 100 mph that runs down a deep one deals 9d6 points of damage on the unfortunate deep one and 4d6 upon itself. If the same car rammed a Dark Young, the car and its occupants would take the 9d6 points of damage and the Dark Young 4d6.

ESCAPE ARTIST (DEX; ARMOR CHECK PENALTY)

Use this skill to slip bonds or manacles, wriggle through tight spaces, or escape the grip of a monster holding you.

Restraint	DC
Ropes	Opponent's Use Rope check +10
Net	20
Handcuffs	30
Tight space	30
Grappler	Opponent's grapple check

Check: Making a check to escape from being bound up by ropes, manacles, or other restraints (other than a grappler) requires 1 minute of work. Squeezing through a tight space takes at least 1 minute, maybe longer, depending on how long the space is.

Ropes: Your Escape Artist check is opposed by the binder's Use Rope check. Since it's easier to tie someone up than to escape from being tied up, the binder gets a +10 circumstance bonus on that check.

Net: Escaping from a net is a full-round action.

Handcuffs: Handcuffs, shackles, and other manacles have a DC set by their construction.

Tight Space: This is the DC for getting through a space where one's head fits but one's shoulders don't. If the space is long, as in a chimney, the GM may call for multiple checks. You can't fit through a space that your head does not fit through.

Grappler: You can make an Escape Artist check opposed by your enemy's grapple check to get out of a grapple or out of being pinned (so that you're just being grappled). Doing so is a move action, so if you escape the grapple, you can take another action in the same round (see Wriggle Free, page 80).

Retry: Given time, you can make another check after a failed check, even if you're squeezing your way through a tight space. If the situation permits, you can make additional checks or even take 20 as long as you're not being actively opposed.

FORGERY (INT)

Use this skill to fake an ID, sign someone else's signature on a check, try to produce a duplicate of a rare tome, or detect forgeries that others try to pass off.

Check: Forgery requires writing materials (paper, parchment, vellum, inks, nibs, and so on) appropriate to the document being forged, enough light to write by, wax for seals (if appropriate), and time. Forging a very short and simple document takes about 1 minute. Longer or more complex documents take 1d4 minutes per page. To forge a document on which the handwriting is not specific to a person (military orders, a business ledger, or the like), the character needs only to have seen a similar document before and gains a +8 bonus on the roll. To forge a signature, an autograph of that person to copy is needed, and the character gains a +4 bonus on the roll. To forge a longer document written in the hand of a particular person, a large sample of that person's handwriting is needed.

As with Disguise, you don't even need to make a check until someone examines the work. Your Forgery check is opposed by the Forgery check of the person who examines the document to check its authenticity. The reader gains bonuses or penalties to her check as described in the table below.

Condition	Check Modifier
Type of document unknown to reader	–2
Type of document somewhat known to reader	+0
Type of document well known to reader	+2
Handwriting not known to reader	–2
Handwriting somewhat known to reader	+0
Handwriting intimately known to reader	+2
Reader only casually reviews the document	–2

As with Bluff, a document that requires risk on the part of the person checking the document, or one that contradicts standard procedure, existing orders, or previous knowledge can increase that character's suspicion (and thus create favorable circumstances for an opposed Forgery check).

Retry: Usually, no. A retry is never possible after a particular reader detects a particular forgery, but the document created by the forger might still fool someone else. No reader can attempt to detect a particular forgery more than once—if that one opposed check goes in favor of the forger, then the reader can't try using her own skill again, even if she's suspicious about the document. However, every time a new reader examines the document, he gets to make a Forgery check.

Special: To forge documents and detect forgeries, one must be able to read and write the language in question. Hence, this skill is language-dependent.

GATHER INFORMATION (CHA)

Use this skill for making contacts in an area, finding out local gossip, rumormongering, and collecting general information.

Check: By succeeding at a skill check, taking a few hours, and spending a little money (on drinks and such), you can get a general idea of local events. This assumes there are no obvious reasons why the information would be withheld. The higher the check result, the better the information.

If you want to find out about a specific rumor ("Which way to the Esoteric Order of Dagon?"), ask about specific item ("What can you tell me about *Unnamed Cults?*"), obtain a map, or something else along those lines, the DC varies from 15 to 25 or higher. If the information you're seeking is simply not known to the people you're asking, even a successful check elicits only negative information ("Never heard of the place.").

Retry: Yes, but it takes a few hours for each check, and characters may draw attention to themselves if they repeatedly pursue a certain type of information.

HANDLE ANIMAL (CHA; TRAINED ONLY)

Use this skill to drive a team of horses pulling a carriage through the streets of Victorian London, teach a dog to stand guard, or even raise a wolf as a devoted pet.

Check: The time required to get an effect and the DC depend on what you are trying to do. See the table on the following page.

Time: For a task with a specific time frame, you must spend half this time (at the rate of 3 hours per day per animal being handled) working toward completion of the task before you make the skill check. If the check fails, you can't teach, rear, or train that animal. If the check succeeds, you must invest the remainder of the time before the teaching, rearing, or training is complete. If the time is interrupted or the task is not followed through to completion, any further attempts to teach, rear, or train that same animal automatically fail.

Handle a Domestic Animal: A character with this skill can command a trained dog, drive beasts of burden, tend to tired horses, and so forth.

"Push" a Domestic Animal: An animal handler who "pushes" a domestic animal can get more work out of it than it usually gives, such as commanding a poorly trained dog or driving draft animals for extra effort.

Teach an Animal Tasks: This is similar to teaching a domestic animal some tricks. Each time you acquire a rank in this skill, you choose one type of animal you can train to obey commands and perform simple tricks. Animals commonly trained include dogs, horses, mules, oxen, falcons, and pigeons. You can work with up to three animals at one time, and you can teach them general tasks, such as guarding, attacking, carrying riders, carrying packets, hunting and tracking, and performing heavy labor. An animal can only be trained for one general purpose.

Teach an Animal Unusual Tasks: You can use this aspect of Handle Animal to train an animal to perform specialized tricks, such as teaching a horse to rear on command or come when you whistled for it, or teaching a falcon to pluck objects from someone's grasp.

Rear a Wild Animal: An animal handler might specialize in rearing wild or deadly animals. This involves raising the wild creature from infancy so that it is domesticated. A handler can rear up to three creatures of the same type at once. A successfully domesticated wild animal can be taught tricks at the same time that it's being raised, or it can be trained later. In either case it responds to the trainer's commands and no one else's. The creature is still wild, though usually controllable.

Task	Time	DC
Handle a domestic animal	Varies	10
"Push" a domestic animal	Varies	15
Teach an animal tasks	2 months	15
Teach an animal unusual tasks	2 months	20
Rear a wild animal	1 year	15 + HD of animal
Train a wild animal	2 months	20 + HD of animal

Retry: For handling and pushing domestic animals, yes. For training and rearing, no.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Handle Animal receives a +2 synergy bonus on Ride checks.

Special: An untrained character can use a Charisma check to handle and push animals.

HEAL (WIS)

Use this skill to keep a badly wounded friend from dying, help her recover faster from her wounds, keep her from succumbing to snakebite, snap her out of a temporary episode of insanity, or treat a disease.

Check: The DC and effect depend on the task you attempt.

First Aid: First aid usually means saving a dying character. If a character has negative hit points and is losing hit points (1 per round, 1 per hour, 1 per day, or whatever), you can stabilize her. The character regains no hit points, but she does stop losing them. Attempting first aid is a move action (see Injury and Death, page 68).

Immediate Psychological Aid: When someone suffers a temporary episode of insanity, you can attempt a Heal check to bring her out of it—calming her terror, snapping her out of her stupor, or whatever else is needed to restore the person to the state she was in before the temporary insanity. This is a full-round action; attempting this untrained is a Wisdom check.

Task	DC
First aid	15
Immediate psychological aid	15
Long-term physical care	15
Treat poison	Poison's DC
Treat disease	Disease's DC

Long-Term Physical Care: Providing long-term care allows you to treat a wounded person for a day or more. If successful, you let the patient recover hit points or ability score points (lost to temporary damage) at twice the normal rate. If the patient is performing only light activity, long-term care recovers 2 hit points per level and 1 ability score point per day. If the patient is getting complete rest (see Healing, page 69), he recovers 4 hit points per level and 2 ability score points for each day. You can tend up to six patients at a time. You need a few supplies (bandages, antiseptics, and so on) that are easy to come by in civilized regions but may be hard to come by in remote or isolated spots.

Giving long-term care counts as light activity for the healer. You cannot give long-term care to yourself.

A first aid kit (see the Equipment chapter) gives a +2 circumstance bonus on Heal checks.

Treat Poison: By treating poison, you can tend a single character who has been poisoned and who is going to take more damage from the poison (or suffer some other effect). Every time the poisoned character makes a saving throw against the poison, you make a Heal check. The poisoned character uses your result in place of her saving throw if your Heal result is higher.

Treat Disease: Treating a disease involves tending to a diseased character. Every time the diseased character makes a saving throw against disease effects, you can make a Heal check. The diseased character uses your result in place of his saving throw if your Heal check is higher.

HIDE (DEX; ARMOR CHECK PENALTY)

Use this skill to sink into the shadows and proceed unseen, approach a cove filled with deep ones under the cover of brush, or follow someone through a busy street without being noticed.

Check: Your Hide check is opposed by the Spot check of anyone who might see you. You can move up to one-half your normal speed and hide at no penalty. Moving more than one-half your full speed incurs a –5 penalty. It's practically impossible (a –20 penalty) to hide while running or charging.

For example, Marie has a speed of 30 feet. If she doesn't want to take a penalty on her Hide check, she can move only 15 feet as a move action (and thus 30 feet in a round on a double move).

Bigger and smaller creatures get size bonuses and penalties on Hide checks: Fine +16, Diminutive +12, Tiny +8, Small +4, Large –4, Huge –8, Gargantuan –12, Colossal –16.

If people are observing you, even casually, you can't hide. You can run around a corner or something so that you're out of sight and then hide,

but others then know at least where you went. If your observers are momentarily distracted, you can attempt to hide.

Creating a Diversion to Hide: You can use the Bluff skill to help you hide. A successful Bluff check gives you the momentary diversion you need to attempt a Hide check while people are aware of you. When the others briefly turn their attention from you, you can attempt a Hide check if you can get to a hiding place of some kind (as a general guideline, the hiding place has to be within 1 foot of you per rank you have in Hide). This check, however, is at –10 because you have to move quickly.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Bluff, receives a +2 synergy bonus on Intimidate checks.

INNUENDO (WIS)

You know how to send and understand secret messages while appearing to be speaking about other things. Two investigators, for example, might seem to be talking about a trip to the supermarket when they're really planning how to break into the library's restricted holdings.

Check: You can get a message across to another character or understand one someone is trying to send you. The DC for a basic message is 10. The DC is 15 or 20 for complex messages, especially those that rely on getting across new information. You can also try to discern the hidden message in an overheard conversation between two other characters who are using this skill. In this case, the DC is the skill check result of the character sending the message, but you gain no circumstance bonuses from the sender's ranks. For each piece of information that the eavesdropper is missing, that character suffers a –2 penalty on the check. For example, if your character eavesdrops on people planning to assassinate a visiting politician, you suffer a –2 penalty if you don't know about the politician. Whether trying to send or intercept a message, a failure by 5 or more points means that some false information has been implied or inferred.

Retry: Generally, retries are allowed when trying to send a message, but not when receiving or intercepting one. Each retry carries the chance of miscommunication.

INTIMIDATE (CHA)

Use this skill to force a hostile person to back down, threaten someone to reveal information, or extract a confession. Intimidation includes verbal threats and body language.

Check: You can change one person's behavior with a successful check against a DC of (15 + the character's level). This only works on NPCs, however, not player characters or creatures. Unlike Diplomacy, Intimidate can work even if the person you're trying to affect is unwilling to listen to you.

Circumstance modifiers apply as the Gamemaster sees fit. The situational nature of Intimidate is its chief advantage over Diplomacy—it's hard to become more diplomatic by sticking a gun in someone's face.

Retry: Generally, retries do not work. Even if the initial check succeeds, the target can only be intimidated so far, and a retry doesn't help. If the initial check fails, the target becomes more firmly resolved to resist the intimidator, and a retry is futile.

JUMP

(STR; ARMOR CHECK PENALTY)

Use this skill to vault low fences, leap over sacrificial pits, or reach a tree's lowest branches.

Check: You can jump a minimum distance (based on the type of jump) plus an additional distance depending on the amount by which your Jump check result exceeds 10. The maximum distance of any jump is a function of your height.

The distances given on the table below are for characters with a base speed of 30 feet. If you have a lower speed (from weight carried, for instance), reduce the distance jumped proportionally. If you have a higher speed, increase the distance jumped proportionally, but not the maximum distance.

For example, Claire has a Jump skill modifier of +12 at 7th level (10 ranks, +2 Strength bonus) and a base speed of 30 feet. While chasing a shadowy figure, she recklessly attempts a running jump from one rooftop to another. She needs to leap over a 10-foot-wide alleyway to keep going. Her player rolls a 6, for a result of 18. That's 8 over 10, so she clears 8 feet more than the minimum distance, or 13 feet. However, Claire is only 5 feet 8 inches (round down to 5 feet), so she can't jump father than 11 feet (the maximum distance is her height + 6 feet) She clears the 10-foot alleyway, lands on the other side, and keeps running.

Distance moved by jumping is counted against maximum movement in a round normally. For example, Claire could run 20 feet toward the chasm, leap 10 feet over it, and land next to a cultist. She could then attack, since she can normally move 30 feet and make an attack in the same round.

If you intentionally jump down from a height, you might take less damage than if you just fell. If you succeed at a Jump check (DC 15), you take damage as if you had fallen 10 feet less than you actually did.

Type of Jump	Minimum Distance	Additional Distance	Maximum Distance
Running jump*	5 ft.	+1 ft./1 point above 10	Height + 6 ft.
Standing jump	3 ft.	+1 ft./2 points above 10	Height + 2 ft.
Running high jump*	2 ft.	+1 ft./4 points above 10	Height +1 1/2 ft.
Standing high jump	2 ft.	+1 ft./8 points above 10	Height
Jump back	1 ft.	+1 ft./8 points above 10	Height

*You must move 20 feet before jumping.

KNOWLEDGE (INT; TRAINED ONLY)

Like the Craft skill, Knowledge actually encompasses a number of specialties; each specialty is a separate skill. Knowledge represents a study of some body of lore, possibly an academic or even scientific discipline. The twenty-three standard fields of study for *Call of Cthulhu* are listed below.

Special: When several characters are listening to the same sound, the Gamemaster can make a single 1d20 roll and use it for all the listeners' skill checks.

DC	Sound
0	People talking
10	A person walking at a slow pace (15 ft./round) trying to be quiet
19	A cat stalking; An owl gliding in for a kill
+1	Per 10 ft. from the listener
+5	Through a door
+15	Through a stone wall

- Accounting
- Anthropology
- Archaeology
- Architecture
- Art (painting, literature, music)
- Astronomy
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Electronics
- Engineering (buildings, bridges)
- Geography (lands, terrain, climate, people, customs)
- Geology (earth science, seismology, volcanism)
- History (royalty, wars, migrations, founding of cities)
- Law (criminal, civil, contract)
- Local* (legends, personalities, inhabitants, laws, traditions)
- Mathematics (theory, geometry)
- Medicine (performing diagnosis, prescribing medication)
- Meteorology (seasons and cycles, weather)
- Occult (ancient mysteries, magic traditions, arcane symbols, cryptozoology)
- Philosophy (philosophers, philosophies)
- Physics
- Psychology (human nature, psychoses, dreams)
- Religion (dogma, ecclesiastic tradition, holy symbols)
- Streetwise (basic criminology, street life)

* *Choose any one city for Knowledge (local).*

With your Gamemaster's approval, you can invent new areas of knowledge; however, most situations that come up during a game are variations on the specialties listed here.

Check: Answering a question within your field of study has a DC of 10 (for easy questions), 15 (for standard questions), or 20 to 30 (for really tough questions).

Retry: No. The check represents what you know, and thinking about a topic a second time doesn't let you know something you never learned in the first place.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (medicine) receives a +2 synergy bonus on Heal checks.

A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (psychology) receives a +2 synergy bonus on Psychoanalysis checks.

Special: Knowledge (chemistry) can be substituted for Craft (chemistry). Knowledge (electronics) can substituted for Craft (electronics).

LISTEN (WIS)

Use this skill to hear approaching enemies, detect someone sneaking up on you from behind, or eavesdrop on someone else's conversation.

Check: Make a Listen check against a DC that reflects how quiet the noise is that you might hear (see the table). The Gamemaster may choose to make the Listen check secretly so you don't know whether you failed to hear something or there was nothing to hear.

In the case of beings trying to be quiet, the listed DCs could be replaced by Move Silently checks, in which case the listed DC would be the average result (or close to it). For instance, the 19 listed for a cat stalking means that an average cat has Move Silently +9. (Assuming an average roll of 10 on 1d20, the skill check result would be 19.)

Retry: You can make a Listen check as a free action every time you have a chance to hear something in a reactive manner. As a full-round action, you may try to hear something you failed to hear previously (assuming the noise is continous).

MOVE SILENTLY (DEX; ARMOR CHECK PENLATY)

You can use this skill to sneak up behind an enemy or slink away without being noticed.

Check: Your Move Silently check is opposed by the Listen check of anyone who might hear you. You can move up to one-half your normal speed at no penalty. At more than one-half speed, you suffer a –5 penalty. It's practically impossible (a –20 penalty) to move silently while running or charging.

Special: Following someone on foot without being noticed uses the Hide skill. Tailing someone in a car without being noticed uses the Drive skill. Sneaking up on someone without being heard uses the Move Silently skill.

OPEN LOCK (DEX; TRAINED ONLY)

You can pick padlocks, finesse combination locks, and disarm electronic locks. The effort requires at least a simple tool of the appropriate sort (a pick, pry-bar, skeleton key, wire, and so on). Attempting an Open Lock check without the proper tool carries a –2 circumstance penalty and is impossible without at least an impromptu tool.

Lock	DC
Very simple lock	20
Average lock	25
Good lock	30
Amazing lock	40

Check: Opening a lock entails 1 round of work and a successful check; this is a full-round action.

Retry: Yes.

Special: Untrained characters cannot pick locks, but they might successfully force them open (see Breaking Items, page 77).

OPERATE HEAVY MACHINERY (DEX, TRAINED ONLY)

Use this skill to operate a crane, a forklift, a bulldozer, a tractor, an industrial sheet-cutter, or similar large machine.

Check: Make a check when there is some unusual circumstance, such as moving a very delicate crate full of ancient artifacts or operating a machine while people are shooting at you.

PERFORMANCE (CHA; TRAINED ONLY)

You are skilled in some form of artistic expression, and you know how to put on a show. Like the Craft and Knowledge skills, Performance actu-

Check Result	Performance
10	Routine performance
15	Enjoyable performance
20	Great performance
25	Memorable performance
30	Extraordinary performance

ally encompasses a number of specialties; each specialty is a separate skill.

Possible specializations for Performance include singing, dancing, acting, stage magic, storytelling, and performance art. Performance is also used for musical instruments, but each instrument must be bought as a separate skill (piano, guitar, saxophone, and so on). Gamemasters may allow additional specializations.

Check: You can impress audiences with your talent and skill.

Retry: Retries are allowed, but they don't negate previous failures, and an audience that has been unimpressed in the past is going to be prejudiced against future performances. Increase the DC by 2 for each previous failure.

Special: At the Gamemaster's discretion, some specializations of this skill may be usable untrained. For instance, the GM may decide that anyone can sing a song or tell a story. In such cases, an untrained Performance skill is a Charisma check; professional performers add their Performance modifier for that specialty because of years of experience.

At the GM's discretion, if you have skill with a particular musical instrument (for instance, piano), you might be able to play a similar instrument (a harpsichord) at a –2 penalty, or a more complex or different instrument (a full pipe organ) at a –5 penalty.

PILOT (DEX; TRAINED ONLY)

Like the Craft skill, Pilot actually encompasses a number of related but distinct skills. Use this skill to pilot a plane, a hot air balloon, a sailing ship, or a space shuttle. Vehicles available to pilots vary according to era. Possible types of the pilot skill are listed below.

- Small aircraft
- Hot air balloon
- Hang glider
- Helicopter
- Motorboat
- Large/jet aircraft
- Dirigible
- Cable car
- Sailboat/sailing ship

Check: Simply taxiing on a runaway does not require a check. Make a check only when there is some unusual circumstance (such as when there's a powerful storm, someone is shooting at you, something is chasing you, or there's a hunting horror tearing at the aircraft's fuselage).

Special: It's not possible to pilot a complicated machine without at least basic instruction (1 rank). In desperate situations, or with very simple vehicles (for example, motorboats), a generous Gamemaster may allow an untrained Pilot check to avoid immediate disaster for easy tasks.

PSYCHIC FOCUS (WIS; TRAINED ONLY)

Use this skill to focus your willpower to perform amazing psychic feats. This skill is only useful to characters with specific psychic feats (see Psychic Feats, page 43). If a power is sensory (or extrasensory), the GM may roll for you secretly so that you don't know whether you succeeded.

Retry: Yes, but each try has a cost involved that depends on the feat.

Special: You can only take this skill if your Gamemaster is using psychic feats as part of the campaign.

PSYCHOANALYSIS (WIS; TRAINED ONLY)

Use this skill to help another person after a bad fright or a terrible shock.

Check: The DC and effect depend on the task you attempt.

Immediate Care: When someone suffers an episode of temporary insanity, you can bring him out of it—calming his terror, snapping him out of his stupor, or whatever else is needed to restore the person to the state he was in before the temporary insanity. This is a full-round action.

Long-Term Care: Providing long-term care means treating a mentally disturbed person for a day or more. This requires you to spend 1d4 hours per day doing nothing but talking to the patient. If successful, the patient recovers Sanity points at a rate of 1 point per week. You can tend up to six patients at a time; each extra patient beyond the first adds 1 hour to the total time devoted to therapy. You need a place to talk quietly, away from stress and distractions. The check must be made each day for each patient. A roll of 1 on the Psychoanalysis check indicates that the patient loses a point of Sanity that day, as she regresses mentally due to horrors suddenly remembered.

Task	DC
Immediate care	15
Long-term care	20

You cannot give long-term care to yourself.

Untrained Use: A character may susbsistute the Heal skill for Psychoanalysis when attempting immediate care; if he does not have the Heal skill, he can attempt it as an untrained Wisdom check. It is not possible to give effective long-term care untrained, but it is possible to calm a panic attack, help someone "snap out of it" during an episode, or help a person briefly repress a phobia.

Special: As a variant rule, a roll of 1 on an untrained Psychoanalysis check means you have blundered, doubling the Sanity loss for the unfortunate patient. If increasing the Sanity loss is inappropriate, the Gamemaster should increase the severity of the temporary insanity in whatever way she thinks appropriate—the acquisition of a permanent phobia, the deepening of a condition that already exists, and so on. See the Sanity chapter for possibilities.

READ LIPS (INT; TRAINED ONLY)

You can understand what others are saying by watching their lips.

Check: You must be within 30 feet of the speaker and be able to see her speak. You must be able to understand the speaker's language. The base DC is 15; it's higher for complex speech or a heavily bearded or inarticulate speaker. You have to concentrate on reading lips for a full minute before making the skill check, and you can't perform another action during this time. You can move at one-half your speed but no faster, and you must maintain a line of sight to the lips being read. If the check succeeds, you can understand the general content of a minute's worth of speaking, but you usually still miss certain details.

If the check fails, you can't read the speaker's lips. If the check fails by 5 or more, you draw some incorrect conclusion about the speech. Typically, the Gamemaster rolls your check for you so you don't know whether you succeeded or missed by 5.

Retry: The skill can be used once per minute.

Special: Use of this skill can be extended beyond the normal 30 feet by use of binoculars, hidden cameras, or other devices that extend vision with precision.

REPAIR (INT, TRAINED ONLY)

You can repair damaged machinery or electronic devices.

Check: Most Repair checks are made to fix complex electronic or mechanical devices, such as radios, cars, or computers. The DC is set by the Gamemaster. In general, simple repairs have a DC of 10–15 and require no more than a few minutes to accomplish. More complex repair work has a DC of 20 or higher and can require an hour or more to complete.

If you don't have the proper tools for a Repair check, you suffer a –5 penalty. Also, working with alien or unfamiliar technology increases the DC by +5.

You can choose to attempt temporary or jury-rigged repairs. This reduces the DC by 5 and cuts the required time in half, but each time the equipment is used, there is a cumulative 10% chance it will break again.

Retry: No restrictions against repeated Repair checks exist. In some specific cases, the Gamemaster may decide that a failed Repair check has negative ramifications that prevent repeated checks (for example, if it shorted out some irreplaceable part of the machine).

Special: At the Gamemaster's discretion, Repair can be substituted for Disable Device, but with a +5 to the DC of the check.

RESEARCH (INT)

Use this skill for learning information from books, the Internet, or other standard sources. Research allows you to navigate a library, an office filing system, a newspaper morgue, or the World Wide Web. It does not include talking to people and asking questions—that's Gather Information.

Check: Given enough time (usually 1d4 hours) and a successful skill check, you get a general idea on just about any topic, such as the latest news in an area, the public history of a particular old building, or a few facts about a well-known individual. This assumes no obvious reasons exist why the information is unavailable (such as if it's been kept out of the papers by influential parties). The higher the check result, the better the information.

If you want to discover a specific fact ("Where has Stephen Alzis been investing his money?"), date ("When did the silver mine outside the city collapse?"), obtain a map of a specific locale, or something else along those lines, the DC is 15–25 or higher.

Retry: Yes, but it usually takes at least 1d4 hours for each check.

Special: An investigator accessing information on the Internet can use either Computer Use or Research for some checks; however, specific information may either be absent or misleading. Computer Use can't be substituted for a Research check against DC 15 or higher.

RIDE (DEX)

You can ride a particular type of mount, usually a horse. When you select this skill, choose the type of mount with which you are familiar. If you use the skill with a different mount, such as a camel, your modifier is reduced by 2 (but not below 0). If you use this skill with a very different mount, such as trying to ride a shantak when you're used to riding horses, your modifier is reduced by 5 (but not below 0). For purposes of the skill, if you choose horses, that includes mules and donkeys.

Check: Typical riding actions don't require checks. You can saddle, mount, ride, and dismount without a problem. Mounting or dismounting is a move action. Some tasks require checks, as given on the table below.

Task	DC
Guide with knees	5
Stay in saddle	5
Cover	15
Leap	15
Soft fall	15
Control mount in battle	20
Fast mount or dismount	20*

*Armor check penalty applies.

Guide with Knees: You can react instantly to guide your mount with your knees so that you can use both hands in combat. Make the check at the start of your round. If you fail, you can only use one hand this round because you need to use the other to control your mount.

Stay in Saddle: You can react instantly to avoid falling when your mount rears or bolts unexpectedly or when you take damage.

Cover: You can react instantly to drop down and hang alongside your mount, using it as one-half cover (see Cover, page 72). You can't attack or cast spells while using your mount as cover. If you fail, you don't get the cover benefit.

Leap: You can get your mount to leap obstacles as part of its movement. Use your Ride skill modifier or the mount's Jump skill modifier, whichever is lower, to see how far your mount can jump. A successful Ride check (DC 15) indicates that you stay on the mount when it leaps.

Soft Fall: You react instantly to try to take no damage when you fall off a mount, such as when it throws you or is killed itself. If you fail the Ride check, you take 1d6 points of falling damage.

Control Mount in Battle: As a move action, you can attempt to control a horse (or similar mount) while in combat. If you fail, you can do nothing else that round.

Fast Mount or Dismount: You can mount or dismount as a free action. If you fail the check, mounting or dismounting is a move action. You can't attempt a fast mount or dismount unless you can perform the mount or dismount as a move action this round.

SEARCH (INT)

You can find simple traps, hidden compartments, secret passageways, and other details not readily apparent. The Spot skill lets you passively notice something nearby, such as a lurking thug. The Search skill lets you discern a small detail or irregularity through active effort.

Check: You generally must be within 10 feet of the object or surface to be searched. It takes 1 round to search a 5-foot-by-5-foot area or a similar volume of goods; doing so is a full-round action.

Special: A character who does not have the Track feat can use the Search skill to find tracks, but can only follow tracks if the DC is 10 or less (see Track, page 42).

Task	DC
Ransack a drawer full of junk to find a certain item	10
Notice a typical secret door or a trap	20
Notice a well-hidden secret door	30

SENSE MOTIVE (WIS)

Use this skill to tell when someone is trying to mislead you. This skill represents sensitivity to body language, speech habits, and mannerisms of others.

Check: A successful opposed check allows you to counteract the Bluff skill (page 24), letting you sense that the story you're hearing may not be true. You can also use the skill to tell when something is up (something odd is going on that you were unaware of) or assess someone's trustworthiness. Trying to gain information with this skill takes at least 1 minute. You could spend a whole evening trying to get a sense of the people around you.

Task	DC
Hunch	20
Sense enchantment	25

Hunch: This use of the skill essentially means making a gut assessment of a social situation. You can get the feeling from another's behavior that something is wrong, such as when you're talking to an impostor. Alternatively, you can ascertain that someone is trustworthy. (Of course, a hunch is not usable as legal evidence.)

Sense Enchantment: You can tell that someone's behavior is being influenced by a mind-influencing effect, such as *dominate person*, even if that person isn't aware of it herself.

Retry: No, though you may make a Sense Motive check for each Bluff attempt made on you.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Sense Motive receives a +2 synergy bonus on Diplomacy checks.

SLEIGHT OF HAND (DEX; TRAINED ONLY)

You can lift a purse or wallet and hide it on your person, palm an unattended object, conceal a weapon in your jacket, or perform a feat of legerdemain with an object no larger than a hat or loaf of bread.

Check: A check against DC 10 lets you palm a coin-size, unattended object. Minor sleight-of-hand feats, such as making a coin disappear, are also DC 10 unless an observer is determined to note where the item went.

DC	Task
10	Palm a coin-size object, make a coin disappear
20	Lift a small object from a person
30	Plant an object on another person

When performing this skill under close observation, your skill check is opposed by the observer's Spot check. The observer's check doesn't necessarily prevent you from performing the action, just from doing it unnoticed.

If you try to take something unnoticed from another character, you must make a skill check against DC 20. The observer makes a Spot check to detect the attempt. The observer detects the attempt if her check result beats your check result, regardless of whether you got the item.

Retry: A second Sleight of Hand attempt against the same target, or when being watched by the same observer, has a DC +10 higher than the first skill check if the first check failed or if the attempt was noticed.

SPEAK OTHER LANGUAGE (INT; TRAINED ONLY)

Like Craft, the Speak Other Language skill is a group of related skills. You buy ranks in each language separately. Having even a single rank in a language gives the character the ability to both speak and write that language; additional ranks improve her mastery of it (greater vocabulary, lessened accent, better grasp of idiom, and so on). Common spoken languages in published scenarios have included French, German, Arabic, Spanish, and Chinese.

In general, a literate character can read and write any language she speaks and vice versa. Exceptions include certain ancient languages for which the pronunciations have been lost and modern languages that are spoken, but not written. Knowledge of the language includes knowledge of the writing system as well, whether that's Chinese kanji or Egyptian hieroglyphics.

Check: In general, Speak Other Language comes into play in three ways: reading Mythos tomes, attempting to communicate with characters who do not speak your native language, and understanding overheard conversations in another language. Unless another DC is provided, deciphering a Mythos tome requires a Speak Other Language check against DC 15.

Retry: Generally, yes. This represents asking someone to repeat a phrase more slowly and clearly, rephrasing a question, or making an educated guess at a word's meaning from context. In some cases, the task is simply beyond your grasp until you improve your knowledge of the language (for example, trying to read a DC 25 tome when you only have a single rank in that language and no Intelligence bonus).

Special: If a character attempting a Speak Other Language check is assisted by a native speaker or has access to dictionaries, phrase books, and the like, she gains a +2 circumstance bonus on her roll.

SPELLCRAFT (INT; TRAINED ONLY)

Use this skill to identify spells as they are cast or spells already in place.

Check: You can identify spells and magic effects, as long as you know how to cast them already or have deciphered them in a tome (see the table below). Because Mythos magic is unpredictable, variant versions of spells may exist; this skill helps you identify these variations. Speculating about spells you have never seen before and haven't deciphered requires the Cthulhu Mythos skill.

Retry: See the table below.

Special: Starting characters may take this skill, but until they begin learning spells and deciphering tomes, their knowledge of magic is purely academic.

DC	Task
15	Identify a spell being cast. You must be able to see or hear the spell's verbal or somatic components, and you must know the spell. No retry.
20	Identify a spell that's already in place and in effect. You must be able to see or detect its effects, and you must know the spell. No retry.
25	Decipher a written spell from a book without learning it first (figuring what it might do, and what its cost might be). Each attempt takes one day of study, and you may only make one attempt each day.
30+	Understand a strange or unique magical effect. No retry.

DC	Task
15	Treat a fall as if it were 10 feet shorter when determining damage.
15	Tumble up to 20 feet (as part of normal movement), even through areas adjacent to enemies.
25	Tumble up to 20 feet (as part of normal movement), even through areas occupied by enemies (over, under, or around them).

SPOT (WIS)

Use this skill to notice a mugger lurking in the alley, a clue amid a morass of papers on a desk, or a Formless Spawn at the bottom of a dark pit.

Check: The Spot skill is primarily used to notice objects that are somehow out of place. It can also be used to detect characters or creatures that are hiding, or noticing someone in disguise. Spot can be opposed by the Hide check of a character or creature trying not to be seen or the Disguise skill of someone who doesn't want to be identified.

A Spot check is usually a reaction (see the Action Types sidebar). The Gamemaster may roll it secretly so you don't know whether you succeed at it.

Retry: You can make a Spot check every time you have the opportunity to notice something in a reactive manner. The Gamemaster may call for Spot checks to determine the distance at which an encounter begins. As a full-round action, you may attempt to spot something that you failed to spot previously.

Condition	Penalty
Per 10 feet of distance	–1
Spotter distracted	–5

SWIM (STR; ARMOR CHECK PENALTY)

Using this skill, a land-based creature can swim, dive, navigate underwater obstacles, and so on.

Water	DC
Calm water	10
Rough water/moderate current	15
Stormy water/strong current	20

Each hour that you swim, make a Swim check against DC 20 or take 1d6 points of subdual damage from fatigue.

Check: A successful Swim check allows you to swim one-quarter of your speed as a move action or one-half your speed as a full-round action. Roll once per round. If you fail, you make no progress through the water. If you fail by 5 or more, you go underwater and start to drown (see The Drowning Rule, page 85).

If you are underwater (whether drowning or swimming underwater intentionally), you suffer a cumulative –1 penalty to your Swim check for each consecutive round you have been underwater.

The DC for the Swim check depends on the water.

Special: You suffer a penalty of –1 for every 5 pounds of gear you are carrying or wearing.

TUMBLE (DEX; TRAINED ONLY; ARMOR CHECK PENALTY)

You can dive, roll, somersault, flip, and so on.

Check: You can land softly when you fall or tumble past opponents. You can also tumble to entertain an audience (as with the Performance skill).

Retry: You can try to reduce damage from a fall as an instant reaction only once per fall. You can attempt to tumble as part of movement once per round.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Tumble receives a +2 synergy bonus on Balance and Jump checks.

Special: A character with 5 or more ranks in Tumble gains a +3 dodge bonus to Armor Class when fighting defensively (instead of a +2 dodge bonus to Armor Class; see Fight Defensively, page 66).

A character with 5 or more ranks in Tumble gains a +6 dodge bonus to Armor Class when using total defense (instead of a +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class; see Total Defense, page 68).

USE ROPE (DEX)

With this skill, you can make firm knots, undo tricky knots, and bind prisoners with ropes.

Check: Most tasks with a rope are relatively simple.

When you bind another character with a rope, any Escape Artist check that the bound character makes is opposed by your Use Rope check. You get a special +10 circumstance bonus on the check because it is easier to bind someone than to escape from being tied up. The Gamemaster determines whether your Use Rope check succeeds when you tie someone up or when someone tries to escape your knots.

DC	Task
10	Tie a firm knot (for example, to secure a climbing rope)
15	Tie a special knot, such as one that slips, slides slowly, or loosens with a tug
15	Tie a rope around yourself one-handed
15	Splice two ropes together to make a single longer rope (takes 5 minutes)

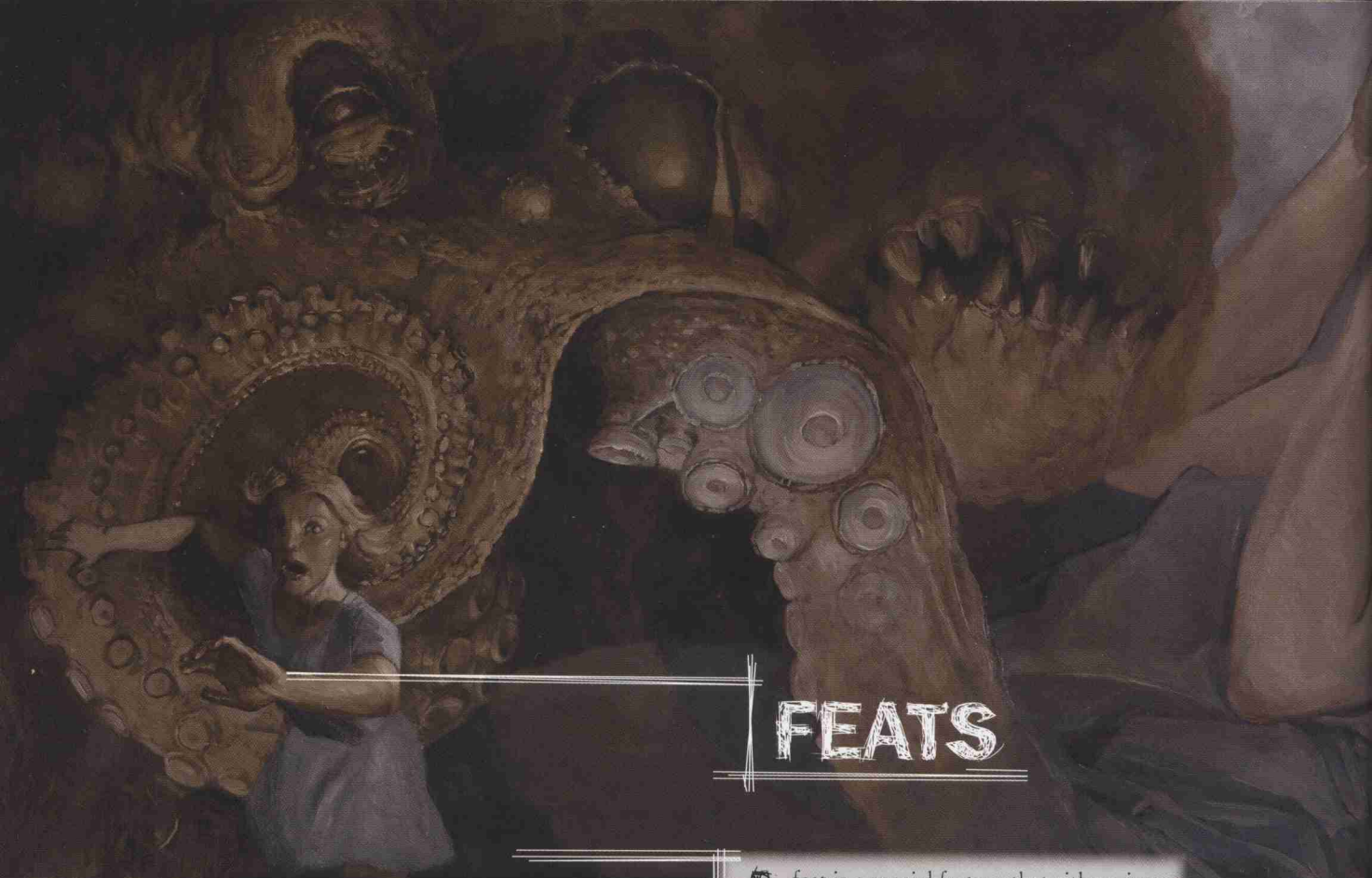
WILDERNESS LORE (WIS)

Use this skill when hunting wild game, guiding a party safely through frozen wastelands, identifying signs that bears live nearby, avoiding natural hazards, or demonstrating other survival skills.

Check: You can keep yourself and others safe and fed in the wild.

Retry: For getting along in the wild or gaining the Fortitude save bonus, you make a check once every 24 hours. The result of that check applies until the next check is made. To avoid getting lost or to avoid natural hazards, you make a check whenever the situation calls for one. Retries to avoid getting lost in a specific situation or avoid a specific natural hazard are not allowed.

DC	Task
10	Get along in the wild. Move up to one-half your overland speed while hunting and foraging (no food or water supplies needed). You can provide food and water for one other person for every 2 points by which your check result exceeds 10.
15	Gain a +2 circumstance bonus on all Fortitude saves against severe weather while moving up to one-half your overland speed, or gain a +4 circumstance bonus if stationary. You may grant the same bonus to one other character for every 1 point by which the check result exceeds 15.
15	Avoiding getting lost or avoiding natural hazards, such as quicksand.



FEATS

To me there was nothing grotesque in the bones and skeletons that strowed some of the stone crypts deep down among the foundations. I fantastically associated these things with everyday events, and thought them more natural than the coloured pictures of living beings which I found in many of the mouldy books. From such books I learned all that I know. No teacher urged or guided me, and I do not recall hearing any human voice in all those years. . . .

—H.P. Lovecraft, "The Outsider"

A feat is a special feature that either gives your character a new capability or improves one he already has. For example, Sam chooses to start his investigative career with the Improved Initiative and Toughness feats. These feats add a +4 bonus on his initiative checks and +3 hit points, respectively. At 3rd level, he gains a new feat and chooses Dodge. This allows Sam a better chance to avoid the attacks of a single opponent in combat, improving his Armor Class against that opponent. Unlike a skill, a feat doesn't have ranks. A character either has the feat or he doesn't.

ACQUIRING FEATS

Unlike skills, feats are not bought with points. You simply choose them for your character. Each character gets two feats when the character is created. At 3rd level and every three levels thereafter (6th, 9th, 12th, 15th, and 18th), he gains another feat.

PREREQUISITES

Some feats have prerequisites. A character must have the listed ability score, feat, skill, or base attack bonus in order to select or use that feat. For example, you cannot take Mobility unless you already have Dodge, so Dodge is listed under Mobility as a prerequisite. A character can gain a feat at the same level at which he gains the prerequisite.

TYPES OF FEATS

Most feats are general, meaning that no special rules govern them. If your Gamemaster allows psychic feats, they'll give characters access to powers beyond those normally understood by science. Psychic feats are described after general feats.

You can't use a feat if you have lost a prerequisite. For example, if your Strength drops below 13 because you have taken temporary ability damage, you can't use the Power Attack feat until your Strength returns to 13 or higher.

TABLE 3–1: General Feats

Feat	Prerequisite
Acrobatic	—
Alertness	—
Ambidexterity	Dex 15+
Animal Affinity	—
Athletic	—
Blind-Fight	—
Cautious	—
Combat Casting	—
Dodge	Dex 13+
Mobility	Dex 13+, Dodge
Spring Attack	Dex 13+, Dodge, Mobility, base attack bonus +4 or higher
Drive-By Attack	—
Endurance	—
Expertise	Int 13+
Gearhead	—
Great Fortitude	—
Improved Critical*	Proficient with weapon, base attack bonus +8 or higher
Improved Initiative	—
Iron Will	—
Lightning Reflexes	—
Martial Artist	—
Nimble	—
Persuasive	—
Point Blank Shot	—
Far Shot	Point Blank Shot
Precise Shot	Point Blank Shot
Rapid Shot	Dex 13+, Point Blank Shot
Multishot	Dex 13+, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot
Shot on the Run	Dex 13+, Point Blank Shot, Dodge, Mobility
Rolling Shot	Dex 13+, Point Blank Shot, Shot on the Run, Dodge, Mobility
Power Attack	Str 13+
Cleave	Str 13+, Power Attack
Quick Draw	Base attack bonus +1 or higher
Run	—
Sharp-Eyed	—
Skill Emphasis*	—
Stealthy	—
Toughness†	—
Track	—
Trustworthy	—
Two-Weapon Fighting	—
Wealth†	—
Weapon Finesse*	Weapon Proficiency (for that weapon), base attack bonus +1 or higher
Weapon Focus*	Weapon Proficiency (for that weapon), base attack bonus +1 or higher
Weapon Proficiency*	—

*You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new skill or weapon.
†You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects stack.

GENERAL FEAT DESCRIPTIONS

Here is the format for feat descriptions:

FEAT NAME

Description of what the feat does or represents in plain language, with no game mechanics.

Prerequisite: A minimum ability score, another feat or feats, a minimum base attack bonus, a skill, or a level that a character must have in order to acquire this feat. This entry is absent if a feat has no prerequisite. A feat may have more than one prerequisite.

Benefit: What the feat enables you (the character) to do.

Normal: What a character who does not have this feat is limited to or restricted from doing. If not having the feat causes no particular drawback, this entry is absent.

Special: Additional facts about the feat that may be helpful when you are deciding whether to choose the feat.

ACROBATIC

You are very agile.

Benefit: You get a +2 aptitude bonus on all Jump checks and Tumble checks.

ALERTNESS

You are keenly aware of your surroundings.

Benefit: You get a +2 aptitude bonus on all Listen checks and Spot checks.

AMBIDEXTERITY

You are equally adept at using either hand.

Prerequisite: Dex 15+.

Benefit: You ignore all penalties for using an off hand. You are neither left-handed nor right-handed.

Normal: Without this feat, a character who uses her off hand suffers a –4 penalty to attack rolls, ability checks, and skill checks. For example, if a right-handed character wields a weapon with her left hand, she suffers a –4 penalty to attack rolls with that weapon.

Special: This feat helps offset the penalty for fighting with two weapons. (See the Two-Weapon Fighting feat, below, and Table 5–1: Two-Weapon Fighting Penalties, page 67.)

ANIMAL AFFINITY

You are good with animals.

Benefit: You get a +2 aptitude bonus on all Handle Animal checks and Ride checks.

ATHLETIC

You have a knack for athletic endeavors.

Benefit: You get a +2 aptitude bonus on all Climb checks and Swim checks.

BLIND-FIGHT

You know how to fight in melee without being able to see your foes.

Benefit: In melee combat, every time you miss because of concealment (see Table 5–6, page 73), you can reroll your miss chance percentile roll once to see if you actually hit.

You take only half the usual penalty to speed for being unable to see. Darkness and poor visibility in general reduce your speed to three-quarters normal, instead of one-half (see Cover, page 72).

CAUTIOUS

You are especially careful with tasks that may yield catastrophic results.

Benefit: You get a +2 aptitude bonus on all Demolitions checks and Disable Device checks.

CLEAVE

You can follow through with a powerful melee attack.

Prerequisite: Str 13+, Power Attack.

Benefit: If you deal an opponent enough damage to reduce its hit points to 0, you get an immediate extra melee attack against another opponent within your reach. You cannot take a 5-foot step before making this extra attack. The extra attack is with the same weapon and at the same bonus as the attack that dropped the previous opponent. You can use this ability once per round.

COMBAT CASTING

You are adept at casting spells in combat.

Benefit: You get a +4 bonus on Concentration checks made to cast a spell defensively (see Casting on the Defensive, page 74).

DODGE

You are adept at dodging attacks.

Prerequisite: Dex 13+.

Benefit: During your action, you designate an opponent and receive a +1 dodge bonus to your Armor Class against attacks from that opponent. You can designate a new opponent on your next initiative count (see The Combat Round, page 65).

Special: A condition that makes you lose your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (if any) also makes you lose dodge bonuses. Also, dodge bonuses stack with each other, unlike most other types of bonuses (see the Bonus Types sidebar, page 22).

DRIVE-BY ATTACK

You are especially skilled at attacking from a moving vehicle.

Benefit: You suffer no penalty when firing a gun from a moving car.

Normal: When in a moving vehicle, characters suffer a –2 circumstance penalty when attacking a target not in the car.

Special: A vehicle moves on the driver's initiative count; if you ready an attack action, you can attack at any time during that move.

ENDURANCE

You are capable of amazing feats of stamina.

Benefit: Whenever you make a check for performing a physical action that extends over a period of time (such as running, swimming, holding your breath, and so on), you get a +4 competence bonus on the check.

EXPERTISE

You are trained at using your combat skill for defense as well as offense.

Prerequisite: Int 13+.

Benefit: When you use an attack or a full attack action as a full-round action (see Full Attack, page 66) in melee, you can take a penalty of up to –5 on your attack and add the same number (up to +5) to your Armor Class. This number cannot exceed your base attack bonus. The changes to attack rolls and Armor Class last until your next initiative count. The bonus to your Armor Class is a dodge bonus. You can use this feat with either a melee attack or a ranged attack.

Normal: A character without the Expertise feat can fight defensively while making a melee attack to take a –4 penalty on attacks and gain a +2 dodge bonus to Armor Class (see Fight Defensively, page 66).

FAR SHOT

You can get greater distance out of a ranged weapon.

Prerequisite: Point Blank Shot.

Benefit: When you use a projectile weapon, its range increment increases by one-half (multiply by 1.5). When you use a thrown weapon (such as a throwing knife or grenade), its range increment is doubled.

GEARHEAD

You have a way with machines.

Benefit: You get a +2 aptitude bonus on all Computer Use checks and Repair checks.

GREAT FORTITUDE

You are tougher than normal.

Benefit: You get a +2 inherent bonus on all Fortitude saving throws.

IMPROVED CRITICAL

Choose one specific weapon, such as a baseball bat or an M-16. With a melee weapon, you know how to hit where it hurts; with a ranged weapon, you have deadly accuracy.

Prerequisite: Proficient with weapon category, base attack bonus +8 or higher

Benefit: When using the weapon you selected, your threat range is doubled. For example, a commando knife usually threatens a critical on a 19 or 20 (two numbers). If the character using the commando knife has Improved Critical, the threat range becomes 17 through 20 (four numbers).

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. The effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new weapon.

IMPROVED INITIATIVE

You can react more quickly than normal in a fight.

Benefit: You get a +4 inherent bonus on initiative checks.

IRON WILL

You have a stronger will than normal.

Benefit: You get a +2 inherent bonus on all Will saving throws.

to all melee damage rolls. This number may not exceed your base attack bonus. The penalty on attacks and bonus on damage applies until your next action.

LIGHTNING REFLEXES

You have faster than normal reflexes.

Benefit: You get a +2 inherent bonus on all Reflex saving throws.

MARTIAL ARTIST

You are skilled at fighting while unarmed and deal more damage with unarmed strikes. You are also capable of dealing normal damage with unarmed attacks at no penalty (as opposed to subdual damage).

Benefit: Your unarmed attack deals 1d4 points of normal damage (as opposed to subdual damage).

Normal: Without this feat, a character normally deals 1d3 points of subdual damage. If he wants to deal normal damage, he must attack with a –4 penalty (see Subdual Damage, page 75).

MOBILITY

You are skilled at dodging past opponents and avoiding attacks they make against you.

Prerequisite: Dex 13+, Dodge.

Benefit: You don't have to stop moving when you move adjacent to an opponent. Also, when adjacent to an opponent, you can move normally.

Normal: Without this feat, you must stop moving when you move adjacent to an opponent, and may not move more than a 5-foot step when adjacent to an opponent.

MULTISHOT

You can use the autofire or multifire option on guns with exceptional accuracy.

Prerequisite: Dex 13+, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot.

Benefit: When using the autofire or multifire option on a firearm, reduce the penalty for each attack to –4 (for autofire) or –2 (for multifire).

Normal: The normal autofire penalty is –6 for each attack. The normal multifire penalty is –4 for each attack. (See Firearm Attacks, page 80.)

NIMBLE

You have exceptional flexibility and manual dexterity.

Benefit: You get a +2 aptitude bonus on all Escape Artist checks and Sleight of Hand checks.

PERSUASIVE

You have a way with words and body language.

Benefit: You get a +2 aptitude bonus on all Bluff checks and Intimidate checks.

POINT BLANK SHOT

You are skilled at making well-placed shots with ranged weapons at close range.

Benefit: You get a +1 competence bonus on attack and damage rolls with ranged weapons against opponents up to 30 feet from your position.

POWER ATTACK

You can make exceptionally powerful melee attacks.

Prerequisite: Str 13+.

Benefit: On your action, before making attack rolls for the round, you may choose to subtract a number from all melee attack rolls and add the same number

PRECISE SHOT

You are skilled at timing and aiming ranged attacks.

Prerequisite: Point Blank Shot.

Benefit: You can shoot or throw weapons at an opponent engaged in melee without suffering the standard –4 penalty.

Normal: Without this feat, you suffer a –4 penalty when shooting at an opponent engaged in melee with an ally. This represents the difficulty of trying to shoot your foe without hitting your friend. (See Shooting or Throwing into a Melee under Attack Actions, page 66.)

QUICK DRAW

You can draw weapons with startling speed.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1 or higher.

Benefit: You can draw or holster a weapon as a free action instead of as a move action.

RAPID SHOT

You can use ranged weapons with exceptional speed.

Prerequisite: Dex 13+, Point Blank Shot.

Benefit: You can get one extra attack per round with a ranged weapon. The attack is at your highest base attack bonus, but each attack (the extra one and the normal ones) suffers a –2 penalty. You must use a full-round action to use this feat.

ROLLING SHOT

You are highly trained in acrobatic, defensive ranged weapon tactics.

Prerequisite: Dex 13+, Point Blank Shot, Shot on the Run, Dodge, Mobility.

Benefit: When using the attack action with a ranged weapon in the same round in which you use a move action to move at least 20 feet, you gain a +2 dodge bonus to your Armor Class against ranged attacks.

RUN

You are fleet of foot.

Benefit: When running, your top speed is five times your normal speed (150 feet per round for most characters). You must still move more or less in a straight line. If you make a running jump, increase the distance or height you clear by one-fourth, but not past the maximum (see Jump, page 32).

Normal: Without this feat, your top speed is four times your normal speed (120 feet per round for most characters).

SHARP-EYED

You have an eye for detail.

Benefit: You get a +2 aptitude bonus on all Search checks and Sense Motive checks.

SHOT ON THE RUN

You are highly trained in ranged weapon tactics.

Prerequisite: Dex 13+, Point Blank Shot, Dodge, Mobility.

Benefit: When using the attack action with a ranged weapon, you can move both before and after the

attack, provided that your total distance is not greater than your speed. In essence, this feat splits your move action into two parts.

Normal: Without this feat, you can move either before your attack or after.

SKILL EMPHASIS

Choose a skill, such as Spot. You have a special knack with that skill.

Benefit: You get a +3 competence bonus on all skill checks with that skill.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a different skill.

SPRING ATTACK

You are trained in fast melee attacks and fancy footwork.

Prerequisite: Dex 13+, Dodge, Mobility, base attack bonus +4 or higher.

Benefit: When using the attack action with a melee weapon, you can move both before and after the attack, provided that your total distance is not greater than your speed. In essence, this feat splits your move action into two parts.

Normal: Without this feat, you can move either before your attack or after.

STEALTHY

You are particularly good at avoiding notice.

Benefit: You get a +2 aptitude bonus on all Hide checks and Move Silently checks.

TOUGHNESS

You are tougher than normal.

Benefit: You gain +3 hit points. This is a permanent addition to your hit point total.

Special: A character may gain this feat multiple times. Its effects stack.

TRACK

You can follow the trails of creatures and characters across most types of terrain.

Surface	DC
Very soft	5
Soft	10
Firm	15
Hard	25

Benefit: To find tracks or to follow them for one mile requires a Wilderness Lore check. You must make another Wilderness Lore check every time the tracks become difficult to follow, such as when other tracks cross them or when the tracks backtrack and diverge.

You move at half your normal speed (or at your normal speed with a –5 penalty on the check) when tracking. The DC for the Wilderness Lore check depends on the surface and the prevailing conditions (see the tables).

Very Soft Ground: Any surface (fresh snow, thick dust, wet mud) that holds deep, clear impressions of footprints.

Soft Ground: Any surface soft enough to yield to pressure in which the quarry leaves frequent but shallow footprints.

Firm Ground: Most normal outdoor surfaces (such as lawns, fields, woods, and the like) or exceptionally soft or dirty indoor surfaces (thick rugs, very dusty floors). The quarry might leave some traces (broken branches, tufts of hair) but only occasional or partial footprints.

Hard Ground: Any surface that doesn't hold footprints at all, such as bare rock or indoor floors. Most streambeds fall into this category, since any footprints left behind are obscured or washed away quickly. The quarry leaves only traces (scuff marks, displaced pebbles).

Condition	DC Modifier
Every 3 targets in the group being tracked	–1
Size of targets being tracked:*	*
Fine	+8
Diminutive	+4
Tiny	+2
Small	+1
Medium-size	+0
Large	–1
Huge	–2
Gargantuan	–4
Colossal	–8
Every 24 hours since the trail was made	+1
Every hour of rain since the trail was made	+1
Fresh snow cover since the trail was made	+10
Poor visibility	†
Overcast or moonless night	+6
Moonlight	+3
Fog or precipitation	+3
Tracked target hides trail (moves at half speed)	+5

*For a group of mixed sizes, apply only the modifier for the largest size category represented.
†Apply only the largest modifier from this category.

If you fail a Wilderness Lore check, you can retry after 1 hour (outdoors) or 10 minutes (indoors) of searching.

Normal: A character without this feat can use the Search skill to find tracks, but can only follow tracks if the DC is 10 or less (see Search, page 35).

TRUSTWORTHY

You have a friendly demeanor.

Benefit: You get a +2 aptitude bonus on all Diplomacy checks and Gather Information checks.

TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING

You can fight with a weapon in each hand, making one extra attack each round with the second weapon.

Benefit: Your penalties for fighting with two weapons are reduced by 2.

Normal: Without this feat, all attacks with your primary hand suffer a –6 penalty and attacks with your off hand suffer a –10 penalty. (See Attacking with Two Weapons, page 67, and Table 5–1: Two-Weapon Fighting Penalties.)

Special: The Ambidexterity feat lessens the attack penalty for the second weapon by 4.

WEALTH

You have more money than others, either due to inheritance, a trust fund, stock options, smart investments, salary bonuses, or other means.

Benefit: You gain an additional amount of money equal to your starting savings (see Starting Money and Income, page 15) as a windfall. You also increase your income modifier by +2 (see Table 1–13: Profession Modifiers to Income).

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects stack. Each time you take the feat, you gain the same additional amount of money.

WEAPON FINESSE

You are especially skilled at using a certain melee weapon, one that can benefit as much from Dexterity as from Strength. Investigators can choose one weapon

from this list: knife (any), rapier/foil, hatchet, brass knuckles, or unarmed strike.

Prerequisite: Proficient with weapon, base attack bonus +1 or higher. (Unarmed strike doesn't require Weapon Proficiency.)

Benefit: With the selected weapon, you may use your Dexterity modifier instead of your Strength modifier on attack rolls.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new weapon.

WEAPON FOCUS

Choose a specific weapon (a single entry in the Equipment list), such as a straight razor or a Colt New Service Revolver. You are especially good at using this weapon. You can choose unarmed strike or grapple for your specific weapon for purposes of this feat.

Prerequisite: Proficient with appropriate weapon category, base attack bonus +1 or higher. (Unarmed strike and grapple don't require Weapon Proficiency.)

Benefit: You add +1 to all attack rolls you make using the selected weapon.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a different weapon.

WEAPON PROFICIENCY

You understand how to use a particular type of weapon in combat. Each time you take this feat, you may choose one of the following weapon categories: melee weapon, thrown weapon, pistol, rifle (includes automatic rifles), shotgun, or submachine gun.

Melee weapons include weapons such as clubs, nightsticks, baseball bats, and even shovels. Thrown weapons include throwing knives and grenades.

Benefit: You can make attack rolls with a weapon without suffering a nonproficiency penalty.

Normal: A character who uses a weapon without proficiency with it suffers a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new weapon.

If your campaign includes bows and slings, they have their own category: Weapon Proficiency (primitive ranged). Unarmed strikes and grapples don't require Weapon Proficiency.

PSYCHIC FEAT DESCRIPTIONS

Psychic feats use the same format as general feats, with two additions.

Action: This is the type of action (move action, full-round action, and so on) required to use the psychic feat.

Cost: This gives the number of Sanity points (if any) and any other costs (such as temporary Wisdom damage) to the character for using the psychic feat.

BIOFEEDBACK TRANCE

You can access your inner psychic strength, using it to better use the powers of your own body.

Prerequisite: Cha 15+, Sensitive.

Benefit: You may enter a trance that slows your metabolism, allowing you to survive for extended periods of time with very little air, water, or food. You may enter a trance at will as a full-round action. Awakening from the trance takes a full-round action.

While in a trance, your heartbeat slows, your breathing all but ceases, and you appear to be dead. A character in a trance uses only 10% as much air as a sleeping person and needs no food or water for an extended period of time. For purposes of natural healing, a trance is the equivalent of assisted healing, doubling the normal rate of healing (see Heal, page 31).

When entering the trance, the character must declare the circumstances under which the trance will end. Examples include a time limit (10 minutes, 24 hours, a week) or certain stimuli (such as hearing a loud noise, feeling a sudden drop in temperature, hearing your name spoken, or being touched). A character in a trance is not conscious of his surroundings and may not use any skills or abilities other than the Remote Viewing psychic feat.

A character can remain in a trance for up to one week in a dry climate or up to one month in a wet climate before succumbing to thirst. If water were somehow supplied (via an intravenous drip, for example), a character could remain in a trance for up to three months.

While in the trance, you may use your Psychic Focus skill to resist the effects of diseases or poisons; the DC is the same as for using a Heal check to help someone else resist these effects (see Treat Poison and Treat Disease, page 31).

Action: Full-round action to enter the trance, a full-round action to leave it.

Cost: None.

DOWSING

You can sense energy patterns invisible to others.

Prerequisite: Cha 15+, Sensitive.

Benefit: You can follow a psychic or magical energy pattern, such as a ley line or the invisible trail left by a supernatural creature. If the Gamemaster tells you that you feel something unknown with your Sensitive feat, you can attempt a Psychic Focus check (DC 15) to follow a pattern or trail involved. You can track incorporeal, invisible, or insub-

PSYCHIC FEATS

Refer to these descriptions when selecting psychic feats. The Sensitive feat is a prerequisite for all other Psychic Feats. The Psychic Focus skill enhances these feats. Unlike other feats, most psychic feats have a Sanity point cost to use.

Not all *Call of Cthulhu* campaigns involve psychic feats. Check with your Gamemaster before choosing them during character creation.

TABLE 3–2:
Psychic Feats

Feat	Prerequisite
Sensitive	Cha 15+
Biofeedback Trance	Cha 15+, Sensitive
Remote Viewing	Cha 15+, Sensitive, Biofeedback Trance
Dowsing	Cha 15+, Sensitive
Mind Reading	Cha 15+, Sensitive
Mind Probe	Cha 15+, Sensitive, Mind Reading
Psychokinesis	Cha 15+, Sensitive
Psychometry	Cha 15+, Sensitive
Second Sight	Cha 15+, Sensitive
Telepathy	Cha 15+, Sensitive

stantial creatures, but not coexistent creatures. If the creature leaves your plane of existence, you lose the trail.

Action: This power can be activated as a free action.

Cost: 1 Sanity point and 1 point of temporary Wisdom damage for each successful use; 1 Sanity point for each failed attempt.

MIND PROBE

You can delve into someone's mind to learn information stored there.

Prerequisite: Cha 15+, Sensitive, Mind Reading.

Benefit: You can learn the answer to some question if the answer is within the mind of your target. You must be within sight and within 30 feet of your target. The probe requires a Psychic Focus check, with the DC determined by the circumstances. All modifiers to the DC are cumulative.

Action: This power requires a full-round action to use.

Cost: 1d4 Sanity points and 1 point of temporary Wisdom damage for each successful use; 1 Sanity point for each failed attempt.

Circumstances	DC
Target touching you	20
Target within 30 feet	25
Target well-known to you	–2
Target acquainted with you	+0
Target unknown to you	+2

Circumstances	DC
Target is unwilling	+5
Target has the Mind Reading feat	+5
Target has the Mind Probe feat	+5
Answer is a guarded, personal secret	+10

MIND READING

You can read someone else's current thoughts. Characters with this ability are sometimes called "receivers."

Prerequisite: Cha 15+, Sensitive.

Benefit: You can learn what someone else is thinking at that moment. Only surface thoughts are received ("I need a drink"), not deep, dark secrets ("Only three more days until I betray them all to my master, Nyarlathotep!"). Successfully using the feat requires the Psychic Focus skill, with a DC determined by the circumstances.

All modifiers to the DC are cumulative. Thus, the DC to read the mind of an stranger in an elevator is 22 (17 if you manage to bump into him). The DC for reading the thoughts of a cultist leader you have never met who happens to be halfway around the world at the time might be as high as 50.

Action: This power requires a full-round action to use.

Cost: 1d3 Sanity points and 1 point of temporary Wisdom damage for each successful use; 1 Sanity point for each failed attempt.

Circumstances	DC
Target touching you	15
Target within 30 feet	20
Target between 30 feet and 1 mile away	25
Target between 1 and 25 miles away	30
Target between 25 and 1,000 miles away	35
Target more than 1,000 miles away	40

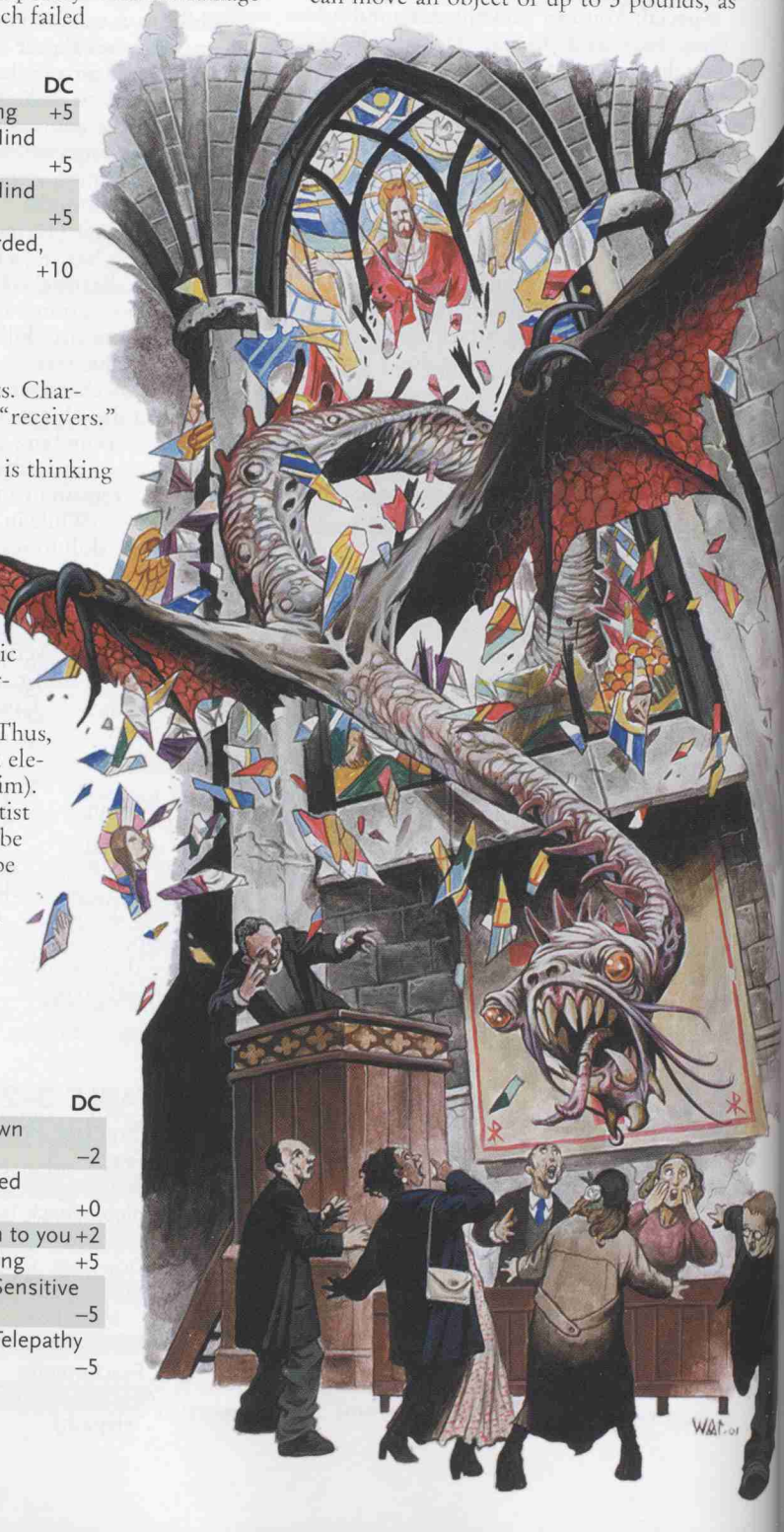
Circumstances	DC
Target well-known to you	–2
Target acquainted with you	+0
Target unknown to you	+2
Target is unwilling	+5
Target has the Sensitive feat	–5
Target has the Telepathy feat	–5

PSYCHOKINESIS

With a talent of mind over matter, you can manipulate physical objects by thought alone. This ability does not work on living creatures.

Prerequisite: Cha 15+, Sensitive.

Benefit: You can exert up to 5 pounds of pressure with the force of your mind at a range of 30 feet. This means that you can move an object of up to 5 pounds, as



though lifting it, moving it at a rate of 5 feet per round. It also means that you can push buttons, pull levers, and prod things from afar. For actions requiring fine manipulation, a Psychic Focus check is required. The DC set by the Gamemaster for such activities will be 20 or more, depending on the action.

Action: This power requires a full-round action to activate.

Cost: 1d4 Sanity points and 1 point of temporary Wisdom damage for each successful use; 1 Sanity point for each failed attempt. Every minute of continuous use after the first minute costs an additional 1 Sanity point and 1 point of temporary Wisdom damage.

Task	DC
Opening a door	20
Turning a dial to a specific setting	25
Tying or untying a knot	30
Signing your name on a check with a pen	35

PSYCHOMETRY

You can handle an object and gain a vision, either of the person who created it or someone who has touched it in the past.

Prerequisite: Cha 15+, Sensitive.

Benefit: When you touch an inanimate object and concentrate for 1 minute, you may attempt a Psychic Focus check (DC 15). If you succeed, you gain a brief vision of someone associated with the object in the past.

For example, if you pick up a hunting knife, you might glimpse someone who carried it for years, the last person to use the knife, or a scene of a woman being murdered with the knife. Long association and strong emotion tend to leave behind the strongest impressions. The specific details of what the character sees are up to the Gamemaster.

Action: This power requires a full-round action to use.

Cost: 1d4 Sanity points and 1 point of temporary Wisdom damage for each successful use; 1 Sanity point for each failed attempt. In addition, the vision may itself cause Sanity loss if horrific enough (see the Sanity Loss Examples table, page 48).

REMOTE VIEWING

You can see events occurring far away from you.

Location	DC
Less than 100 feet away	15
Between 100 feet and 1 mile away	20
Between 1 and 25 miles away	25
Between 25 and 1,000 miles away	30
More than 1,000 miles away	35

Location well known to you	+0
Location one you have seen once	+2
Location never seen but described	+4
Location never seen or described	+6
Location practically unimaginable (such as an alien world)	+8

Prerequisite: Cha 15+, Sensitive, Biofeedback Trance.

Benefit: While in a trance, you can observe a place far away. This requires a Psychic Focus check, and the DC depends on the location.

Action: This power requires a full-round action to activate.

Cost: 1d4 Sanity points and 1 point of temporary Wisdom damage for each successful use; 1 Sanity point for each failed attempt.

SECOND SIGHT

You can see things that others cannot. Sometimes ghosts or horrible alien monsters can render themselves invisible, but not to you.

Prerequisite: Cha 15+, Sensitive.

Benefit: You can see invisible creatures, objects, or energies, as long as they are of a supernatural nature. You cannot see natural objects that are invisible (such as X-rays) but you can see supernaturally invisible creatures, such as star vampires. You do not need to activate this power; the Gamemaster tells you when you witness something others cannot see (probably by asking for a Sanity check right away).

If a supernatual creature is using Hide or Move Silently, your character can oppose that roll with a Psychic Focus check instead of Spot or Listen; the GM may make this roll secretly so that you don't know whether you succeeded.

Action: None. The GM announces when you see something.

Cost: None, other than the standard Sanity point cost for seeing the disturbing images and revelations you'll inevitably discover.

SENSITIVE

You are aware that there is more than meets the eye—an almost imperceptible world of psychic phenomena.

Prerequisite: Cha 15+.

Benefit: You can learn other psychic feats. Furthermore, the Gamemaster may provide you with special information, such as a strange feeling in a certain spot in the house, disturbing dreams, or other inexplicable occurrences. You have no control over these sensations and revelations; thus, this power doesn't require an action to activate. If a Psychic Focus check is required (say, for very faint extrasensory sensations), the GM may roll it secretly so that you won't know whether you succeeded.

Action: None. The GM announces when you see something.

Cost: None.

TELEPATHY

You can communicate with someone by sending mental messages. Characters with this ability are sometimes called "senders."

Prerequisite: Cha 15+, Sensitive.

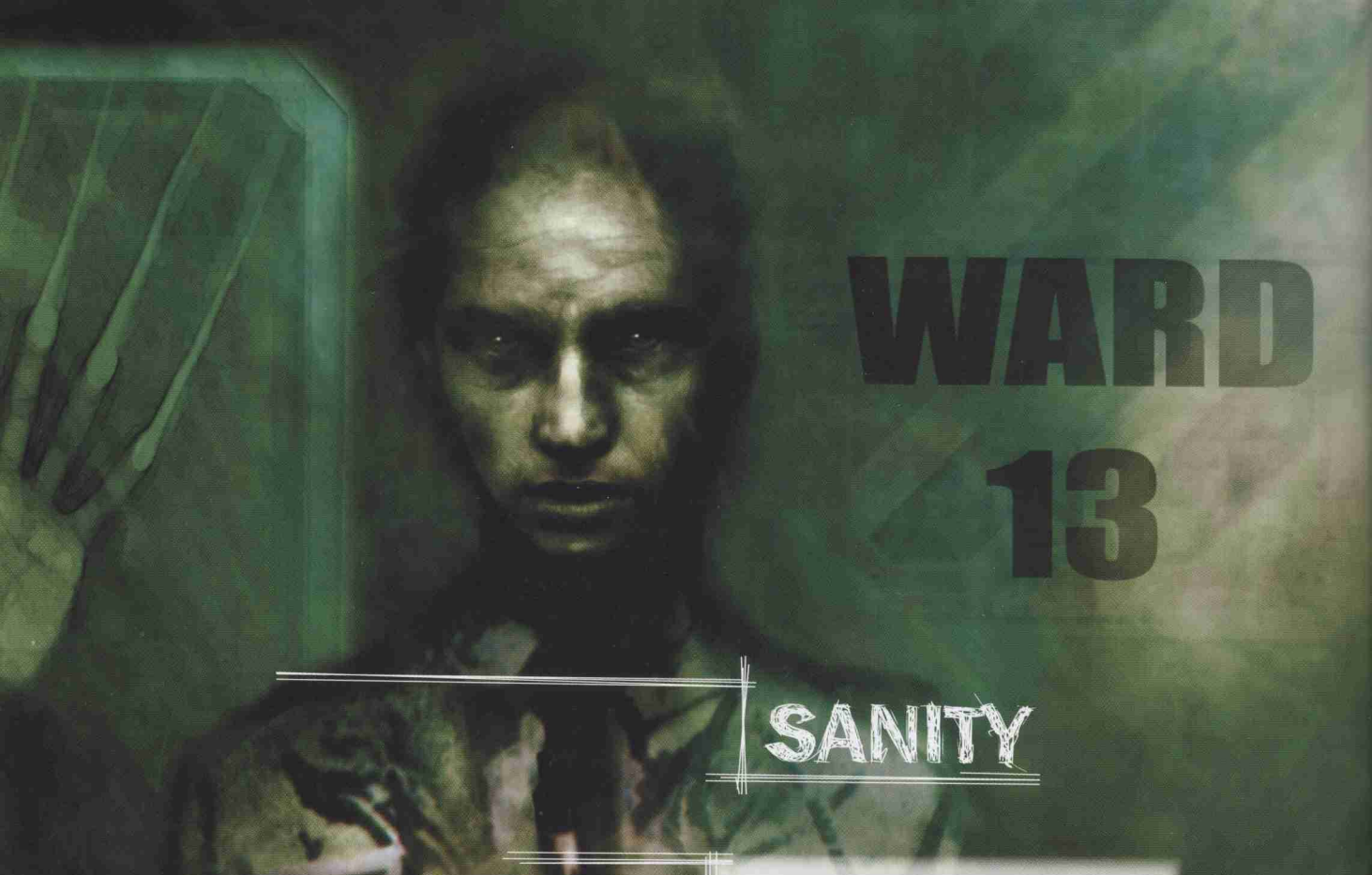
Benefit: You can send a mental message to one person. This message can be of up to ten words or of a single visual image (without sound). Successfully sending the message requires a Psychic Focus check, the DC determined by the circumstances. All modifiers to the DC are cumulative.

Action: This power requires a full-round action to use.

Cost: 1d4 Sanity points and 1 point of temporary Wisdom damage for each successful use; 1 Sanity point for each failed attempt.

Circumstances	DC
Target touching you	15
Target within 30 feet	20
Target between 30 feet and 1 mile away	25
Target between 1 and 25 miles away	30
Target between 25 and 1,000 miles away	35
Target more than 1,000 miles away	40

Target well-known to you	–2
Target acquainted with you	+0
Target unknown to you	+2
Target is sleeping	–5
Target has the Sensitive feat	–5
Target has the Mind Reading feat	–5



WARD 13

SANITY

A few steps more, and our breaths were literally snatched from us by what we saw; so literally that Thornton, the psychic investigator, actually fainted in the arms of the dazed man who stood behind him. Norrys, his plump face utterly white and flabby, simply cried out inarticulately; whilst I think that what I did was to gasp or hiss, and cover my eyes. The man behind me—the only one of the party older than I—croaked the hackneyed "My God!" in the most cracked voice I ever heard. Of seven cultivated men, only Sir William Brinton retained his composure; a thing the more to his credit because he led the party and must have seen the sight first.

—H.P. Lovecraft, "Rats in the Walls"

Sanity is the natural mental state of ordinary life. Normal mental balance is endangered when characters confront the horrors of the Cthulhu Mythos—their entities and activities are shocking, unnatural, and bewildering. Such encounters cause characters to lose Sanity points, which in turn risks temporary, indefinite, or permanent insanity. Mental stability and lost Sanity points may be restored, up to a point, but mental scars may remain.

Insanity occurs if too many Sanity points are lost in too short a time. Insanity does not necessarily occur if Sanity points are low, but a lower Sanity point total makes some forms of insanity more likely to occur after an emotional shock occurs. The character's Sanity may be regained after a few minutes, recovered after a few months, or lost forever.

A character may regain Sanity points, and even increase her Sanity-point maximum. However, an increase in a character's Cthulhu Mythos skill always lowers her potential maximum Sanity points by an equal amount.

LOSS OF SANITY

Conflict, abuse, or any other strong personal experience inflicts emotional scars. To emphasize certain ideas he had concerning fear, the unknown, and humanity's lowly place in the scheme of things, Lovecraft

posited brand new terrors for us. He suggested that the laws of space and time that we believe to be universal and immutable are only locally valid, and only partly true.

Beyond our ken lie infinities where greater realities hold sway. Outside our perception, alien powers and races wait with hostility, or at best, cosmic indifference. Some encroach on our world. The true universe is one with no joy or comfort. It is driven by mind-bending forces to which our existence holds no significance, and titanic struggles in which our desires and needs matter not at all. Human insanity confirms these terrible realizations, and is often caused by them. Through madness, we glimpse the dark and bloody truths at the heart of the universe.

Sanity is ordinarily lost in a few specific ways.

Learning the Truth. Knowledge is dangerous, and none more dangerous than knowledge of the Mythos—the true face of reality in the universe. No amount of psychotherapy or rest can remove the danger of self-transformation from such knowledge.

Using Spells. Mythos magic relies on the physics of the true universe. By learning and casting spells, investigators visualize the unimaginable, warping their minds to follow alien ways of thought. These wound the mind. Such traumas are ones for which the casters volunteer, it is true, but they are shocks all the same.

Reading Forbidden Tomes. Mythos tomes add ranks to an investigator's Cthulhu Mythos skill and teach Mythos spells. Studying and comprehending Mythos books causes all that we know to become like shadows. The burning power of a greater reality seizes the soul. Whether we try to retreat from the experience or hunger greedily for more, it destroys our confidence in what we once believed, opening us up to the all-encompassing truths of the Cthulhu Mythos.

Encountering the Unimaginable. When people perceive the creatures and entities of the Mythos, it costs them some portion of their minds, as such creatures are intrinsically discomforting and repellent. We never lose awareness of their slimy, fetid alien nature, which Lovecraft often characterizes as "obscene" or "blasphemous." This instinctive reaction is part and parcel of every human being. In this category, we can include supernatural events or agents not always recognized as specifically attached to the Mythos, such as hauntings, zombies, vampires, curses, and so on.

Severe Shocks. Non-Mythos shocks can also cost Sanity points. This includes witnessing untimely or violent death, experiencing personal mutilation, loss of social position, treachery, the failure of love, or whatever else the Gamemaster decides is sufficiently extreme.

SANITY POINTS

Sanity points measure the stability of a character's mind. This trait provides a way to display the sanity inherent in a character, the most stability a character can ever have, and the current level of sane rationality that a character still preserves, even after numerous shocks and horrid revelations.

Sanity is measured in three ways: starting Sanity (5 times the character's Wisdom score), maximum Sanity (99 minus Cthulhu Mythos modifier), and current Sanity points.

STARTING SANITY

Starting Sanity equals a character's Wisdom score multiplied by 5. This score represents a starting character's current Sanity points, as well as the upper limit of Sanity that can be restored by the Psychoanalysis skill (page 34). After creation, a character's current Sanity score often fluctuates considerably and might never again match starting Sanity. A change in a character's Wisdom score changes the starting Sanity score in regard to what Psychoanalysis can restore. Current Sanity, however, does not change if Wisdom rises or falls.

MAXIMUM SANITY

The Cthulhu Mythos skill simulates character comprehension of aspects of the Mythos. Once gained, this horrible knowledge is never forgotten, and the character consequently surrenders mental equilibrium. An investigator's Sanity weakens as his comprehension of the Mythos increases. Such is the way of the universe.

An investigator's current Sanity points can never be higher than 99 minus the modifier the character has in the Cthulhu Mythos skill. This number (99 minus Cthulhu Mythos ranks and any bonuses) is the character's maximum Sanity.

CURRENT SANITY

A character's current Sanity points fluctuate almost as often (and sometimes much more often) than hit points.

Making a Sanity Check: When an investigator encounters a gruesome, unnatural, or supernatural situation, the GM may require a player to make a Sanity check with percentile dice (d%). The check succeeds if the result is equal to or less than the character's current Sanity.

On a successful check, the character either loses no Sanity points or only loses a minimal amount. Potential Sanity loss is usually shown as two numbers or dice rolls separated by a slash, such as 0/1d4. The number before the slash indicates the number of Sanity points lost if the Sanity check succeeds (in this case, none); the number after the slash indicates the number of Sanity points lost if the Sanity check fails (in this case, between 1 and 4 points). See the nearby Sanity Loss Examples sidebar, the monster descriptions in the Creatures chapter, and the descriptions of various Great Old Ones and others in the appendix for typical Sanity losses.

An investigator's current Sanity is also at risk when the character reads certain books, learns the spells contained within, and attempts to cast them. These losses are usually automatic (no Sanity check is involved)—the character who chooses to undertake that activity forfeits the required Sanity points. See the Magic chapter for details.

For the most part, a new Sanity-shaking confrontation requires a new Sanity check. However, the GM always gets to decide when characters make Sanity checks. Confronting several horribly mangled corpses at one time or in rapid succession may call for just one Sanity check, while the same encounters at intervals of several game hours may require separate checks.

Going Insane: Losing more than a few Sanity points may also cause the character to go insane, as described below. If a character's Sanity points drop to 0, she begins the quick slide into permanent insanity. Each round, the character loses another point of Sanity. Once a character reaches –10 Sanity points, she is hopelessly, incurably insane. See the Psychoanalysis skill (page 34) for information on stabilizing a character on the threshold of permanent insanity.

A GM's description of a Sanity-shaking situation should always justify the threat to an investigator's well-being. Thus, a horde of frothing rats is horrifying, while a single ordinary rat usually is not (unless the character has an appropriate phobia, of course).

Sanity Loss Examples

Sanity Lost*	Unnerving or Horrifying Situation
0/1d2	Surprised to find mangled animal carcass
0/1d3	Surprised to find human corpse
0/1d3	Surprised to find human body part
0/1d4	Finding a stream flowing with blood
1/1d4+1	Finding a mangled human corpse
0/1d6	Awakening trapped in a coffin
0/1d6	Witnessing a friend's violent death
0/1d6	Seeing a ghoul
1/1d6+1	Meeting someone you know to be dead
0/1d10	Undergoing severe torture
1/d10	Seeing a corpse rise from its grave
2/2d10+1	Seeing a gigantic severed head fall from the sky
1d10/d%	Seeing Great Cthulhu

* Successful check cost/failed check cost

GETTING USED TO AWFULNESS

Never underestimate the ability of the human mind to adapt, even to the most horrific experiences. Reading and rereading the same bit of disturbing text or seeing the same horrible image over and over eventually provokes no further loss. Within a reasonable interval of play, usually a single session of the game, characters should not lose more Sanity points for seeing monsters of a particular sort than the maximum possible points a character could lose for seeing one such monster. For instance, the Sanity loss for seeing a single deep one is 0/1d6. Thus, in the same game day or in the same play session, no character should lose more than 6 Sanity points total for seeing any number of deep ones. Keep in mind that the interpretation of "reasonable interval" must vary by GM and situation. When it feels right, the GM should rule that the horror is renewed and points must be lost again.

Learning or casting spells never becomes a normal thing to do. No matter how many times a character casts a spell, no matter what the time interval between castings may be, the Sanity loss is always the same. This is true of anything that a character does willingly. For example, if brutally murdering a friend costs 2/1d10 Sanity, this loss is incurred each time, even if the character loses the maximum possible points after the first or even the second murder.

INSANITY

Character insanity is induced by a swift succession of shocking experiences or ghastly revelations, events usually connected with the Cthulhu Mythos. The type of insanity incurred depends on the proportion of Sanity points lost. The duration of insanity varies as well.

Horrifying encounters can result in three states of mental unbalance. Two of them, temporary insanity and indefinite insanity, can be cured. The third, permanent insanity, results when a character's Sanity points are reduced to –10 or below and cannot be cured (see Permanent Insanity, page 50).

TEMPORARY INSANITY

Whenever a character loses Sanity points equal to one-half her Wisdom score from a single roll, she has suffered enough shock that the GM must ask for a Sanity check. If the check fails, then the character realizes the full significance of what she saw or experienced and goes temporarily insane. If the check succeeds, the character does not go mad, but in consequence, she may not clearly remember what she experienced—a trick the mind plays to protect itself.

Temporary insanity might last for a few minutes or a few days. Perhaps the character acquires a phobia or fetish befitting the situation, faints, becomes hysterical, or suffers nervous twitches, but she can still respond well enough to run away or hide.

TABLE 4–1: Duration of Temporary Insanity

d10 roll	Insanity Type	Duration
1–7	Short temporary insanity	1d10+4 rounds
8–10	Longer temporary insanity	1d10×10 hours

The character remains in this state for the length of time rolled on Table 4–1: Duration of Temporary Insanity. The GM must describe the insanity so that the player can roleplay it accordingly. Ideas for phobias and episodes of insanity are described later in this chapter. Anyone can create new ones as appropriate—though for the shortest extents, simple characterizing will do, such as "lies on the ground and twitches," "runs shrieking into the night," or "drools and squeaks like a baby." The character is overwhelmed by fear or horror, incapacitated, and then recovers quickly.

Successful application of the Psychoanalysis skill (page 34) or Heal skill (page 31) may alleviate or erase temporary insanity.

Temporary insanity concludes when the duration of game time rolled has elapsed, or when the GM feels the end to be appropriate.

The intent of temporary insanity is forcing a character's behavior to noticeably change for a limited time. Whether this means that the character is babbling in some corner, running away in a panic, or attacking Great Cthulhu with a can-opener is up to the creativity and inspiration of the player and the GM.

After the temporary insanity ends, traces or even profound evidence of the experience should remain. No reason exists that a phobia, for instance, should depart from someone's mind as quickly as a train pulls out of a station. What

remains behind after the brief episode of insanity should exert a pervasive influence on the character. The character may still be a bit batty, but her conscious mind once again runs the show.

If the GM prefers, the exact nature of the breakdown can be determined randomly. To choose a temporary insanity, roll 1d10 on Table 4–1 (for duration) and d% on Table 4–2 or 4–3 (for effect). To speed up play, make the d10 and d% rolls at the same time.

As a variant rule, if the amount of Sanity lost exceeds the investigator's Wisdom score, go directly to Table 4–3: Long-Term Temporary Insanity Effects.

TABLE 4–2:
Short-Term Temporary Insanity Effects (lasts 1d10+4 rounds)

d%	Effect on Character
01–20	Character faints (can be awakened by vigorous action taking one round)
21–30	Character has a screaming fit
31–40	Character flees in panic
41–50	Character shows physical hysterics or emotional outburst (laughing, crying, and so on)
51–55	Character babbles in incoherent rapid speech or in logorrhea (a torrent of coherent speech)
56–60	Character gripped by intense phobia, perhaps rooting her to the spot
61–65	Character becomes homicidal, dealing harm on nearest person as efficiently as possible
66–70	Character has hallucinations or delusions (details at the discretion of the GM)
71–75	Character gripped with echopraxia or echolalia (saying or doing whatever those around him say or do)
76–80	Character gripped with strange or deviant eating desire (dirt, slime, cannibalism, and so on)
81–90	Character falls into a stupor (assumes fetal position, oblivious to events around her)
91–99	Character becomes catatonic (can stand but has no will or interest; may be led or forced to simple actions but takes no independent action)
00	Roll on Table 4–3: Long-Term Temporary Insanity Effects

TABLE 4–3:
Long-Term Temporary Insanity Effects (lasts 1d10×10 hours)

d%	Effect on Character
01–10	Character performs compulsive rituals (washing hands constantly, praying, walking in a particular rhythm, never stepping on cracks, constantly checking to see if gun is loaded, and so on)
11–20	Character has hallucinations or delusions (details at the discretion of the GM)
21–30	Character becomes paranoid
31–40	Character gripped with severe phobia (refuses to approach object of phobia except on successful Will save, DC 20)
41–45	Character has strange sexual desires (exhibitionism, nymphomania or satyriasis, teratophilia, necrophilia, and so on)
46–55	Character develops an attachment to a "lucky charm" (embraces object, type of object, or person as a safety blanket) and cannot function without it
56–65	Character develops psychosomatic blindness, deafness, or the loss of the use of a limb or limbs
66–75	Character has uncontrollable tics or tremors (–4 penalty to all attack rolls, checks, and saves except those purely mental in nature)
76–85	Character has amnesia (memories of intimates usually lost first; Knowledge skills useless)
86–90	Character has bouts of reactive psychosis (incoherence, delusions, aberrant behavior, and/or hallucinations)
91–95	Character loses ability to communicate via speech or writing
96–00	Character becomes catatonic (can stand but has no will or interest; may be led or forced into simple actions but takes no independent action)

INDEFINITE INSANITY

If a character loses 20% (one-fifth) or more of her current Sanity points in 1 hour, she goes indefinitely insane. The GM judges when the impact of events calls for such a measure. Some GMs never apply the concept to more than the result of a single roll, since this state can remove characters from play for extended periods. Beginning immediately, indefinite insanity lasts 1d6 game months (or as the GM indicates). Symptoms of indefinite insanity may not be immediately apparent. This may give the GM additional time to decide what the effects of the bout of insanity might be.

Table 4–4: Random Indefinite Insanity has been provided as an aid to selecting what form the character's indefinite insanity takes. Many *Call of Cthulhu* Gamemasters prefer to choose an appropriate way for the insanity to manifest, based on the circumstances that provoked it. It's also a good idea to consult with the player of the afflicted character to see what sort of mental malady the player wishes to roleplay.

The state of indefinite insanity is encompassing and incapacitating. For instance, a schizophrenic may be able to walk the streets babbling and gesticulating, find rudimentary shelter, and be able to beg for enough food to survive, but most of the business of the mind has departed into itself: She cannot fully interact with friends,

VARIANT: INSANE INSIGHT

At the GM's option, a character who has just gone insane may have an insight into the situation or entity that provoked the insanity. The player needs to make a Wisdom check (DC 15) to gain the insight. Information provided by this sudden burst of awareness is up to the GM, but may include something about a creature's origin or a fact about its nature (feeding habits, natural habitat, weakness), a clue to the identity of a murderer at a murder scene, some hint at the location of great importance, and so forth.

family, and acquaintances. Conversation, cooperation, and personal regard have vanished.

It is possible for characters with indefinite insanity to continue to be played as active investigators, depending on the form their madness takes. The character may still attempt to stumble madly through the rest of the adventure. However, with her weakened grasp on reality, she is a danger to herself and others.

For the most part, indefinitely insane characters should be removed from active play until they recover. At the GM's discretion, that player might be allowed to use a temporary character until the end of the story. Whether this "stand-in" character is an incidental NPC in the adventure, the same level as the rest of the group, one or two levels below the rest of the investigators, or even a 1st level character is up to the GM. Different Gamemasters have different policies for handling this transition.

TABLE 4–4:
Random Indefinite Insanity

d%	Mental Disorder Type
01–15	Anxiety Disorders (includes severe phobias)
16–25	Dissociative Disorders (amnesia, multiple personalities)
26–30	Eating Disorders (anorexia, bulimia)
31–35	Impulse Control Disorders (compulsions)
36–45	Mood Disorders (manic/depressive)
46–50	Personality Disorders (various neuroses)
51–55	Psychosexual Disorders (sadism, nymphomania)
56–70	Schizophrenia/Psychotic Disorders (delusions, hallucinations, paranoia, catatonia)
71–80	Sleep Disorders (night terrors, sleepwalking)
81–85	Somatoform Disorders (psychosomatic conditions)
86–95	Substance Abuse Disorder (alcoholic, drug addict)
96–00	Other Disorders (megalomania, quixotism, panzaism)

If an investigator goes mad near the end of an adventure, the GM may decide to set the beginning of the next adventure after the insane investigator has recovered.

The indefinitely insane are in limbo, unable to help themselves or others. The Psychoanalysis skill can be used to restore Sanity points during this period, but the underlying insanity remains.

After recovery, the victim retains definite traces of madness. For example, he might hesitate to step out onto a bridge for fear that "gravity will get him," even though he knows rationally that the bridge will not collapse. The character is in control, but the experience has changed him, perhaps forever.

GAINING THE CTHULHU MYTHOS SKILL

An investigator's first instance of Mythos-related insanity bestows 2 ranks of the Cthulhu Mythos skill, thereby lowering maximum Sanity by 2 points. Each time a character fails a Sanity check and endures another Mythos-related episode of insanity (that is, temporary or indefinite insanity), he gains an additional rank in Cthulhu Mythos. No maximum rank exists for a character's Cthulhu Mythos skill.

For example, Claire has 1 rank of Cthulhu Mythos after reading a strange manuscript. She then steps outside, sees a byakhee fly overhead, and goes indefinitely insane, her raving mind failing to understand the unearthly manifestation. Since she has never gone mad before, her player adds two ranks of Cthulhu Mythos to Claire's character sheet. Now Claire's maximum Sanity is 96 (99 minus 3 ranks of Cthulhu Mythos).

PERMANENT INSANITY

Characters who reach –10 Sanity points go permanently insane. The character becomes an NPC under the control of the Gamemaster.

A character with –10 Sanity points may be reduced to a raving lunatic or may be outwardly indistinguishable from a normal person, but inwardly corrupted by the pursuit of knowledge and power. Some of the most dangerous cultists in the world are investigators who have gone completely insane, been corrupted by the Mythos, and "gone over to the other side."

Characters might be driven permanently mad by forces other than the Cthulhu Mythos. In those cases, moral corruption need not necessarily occur. The GM might decide to look at different sorts of permanent insanity, rolling randomly or choosing from among the types on Table 4–4: Random Indefinite Insanity.

A character who has gone permanently insane can never be normal again. She is forever lost in her own world. This need not mean a lifetime in a padded cell, merely that the character has retreated so far from reality that sanity can never be restored. She might be able to lead, within restricted bounds, a more or less normal life if kept away from the things that trigger strong responses in her individual case. Yet a relapse may come quickly. Her calm façade can be destroyed in seconds if her fragile equilibrim is disturbed by even the smallest reminder of whatever it was that drove her mad.

Such eventual fates are matters for individual Gamemasters and players to decide. In keeping with the spirit of the game, permanent insanity should have about it a dark air of defeat and agony. Future developments concerning it should be cloudy, unpredictable, and dangerous.

RECOVERING SANITY

An investigator's Sanity score can increase during the events of a campaign. Although a character's Sanity points can never exceed 99 minus her Cthulhu Mythos skill modifier, her current Sanity and maximum Sanity can exceed starting Sanity.

Raising a character's current Sanity points above starting Sanity is generally a result of gained levels. Some GMs may feel such self-improvement to be antithetical to Lovecraft's dark vision, and thus may not allow it. Others may allow it if the player can roll over her character's current Sanity points after the character gains a level. Most Gamemasters should find the question to be of no consequence, since characters continue to go insane regardless of how many Sanity points they gain. This is a point for players to be aware of, but not to worry about.

MENTAL THERAPY

To give useful therapy, the therapist must have the Psychoanalysis skill. Intensive psychoanalysis can return Sanity points to a troubled character. However, Sanity points restored in this manner can never exceed the patient's starting Sanity. Psychoanalysis can restore but never improve the character. A character can have only one psychoanalyst at a time. See the description of the Psychoanalysis skill (page 34) for an exact description of how the skill works.

Psychoanalysis can also be used to help a character snap out of temporary insanity (for example, from an acute panic attack). It does not speed recovery from indefinite insanity, but it can strengthen the character by adding Sanity points. (The Heal skill can be used in the same way; see Heal, page 31.)

Recovery from indefinite insanity only comes with time (typically 1d6 months). It is not dependent upon the investigator's total Sanity points and is not connected with them. A character can be sane with 24 Sanity points and insane while possessing 77 Sanity points.

PSYCHIATRIC MEDICATIONS

Although psychiatric drugs were administered to patients in the early part of the century, only in the 1940s and beyond were they broadly and consistently effective in treating the symptoms of emotional trauma. As long as a character can afford a psychiatric medication and is able to take it, the symptoms of indefinite insanity can be ignored. Taking such drugs does not make a character immune or even particularly resistant to further Sanity losses. A Knowledge (medicine) check against DC 15 is needed to accurately prescribe the correct medications and dosage.

A 50% chance (01–50 on a d%) exists that a given drug will have either physical or mental side effects. If the side effects are physical, the patient suffers a –1 penalty to attack rolls, Fortitude and Reflex saves, and Strength-, Constitution-, and Dexterity-based skill checks. If the side effects are mental, the patient suffers a –1 penalty to Will saves and to Intelligence-, Wisdom-, and Charisma-based skill checks. If more than one type of medication is taken due to multiple symptoms, the character will automatically have side effects and has a 50% chance for both mental and physical side effects. Side effects last for as long as the medication is taken. The die roll is made one time, upon the first instance of a particular character's taking a particular drug.

Long-term drug therapy can restore lost Sanity points, just as use of the Psychoanalysis skill can. For each month the character takes an accurately prescribed psychiatric medication, she regains 1d3 Sanity points. As with Psychoanalysis, long-term drug therapy can never raise an investigator's current Sanity above starting Sanity.

A character cannot regain Sanity from both Psychoanalysis and drug therapy in the same month.

LEVEL GAINS

When a character gains a level, she gains current Sanity points. This gain comes from the satisfaction of improving yourself and gaining experience. Since levels are gained as a result of experience points, and experience points are earned by overcoming threats and challenges, a character who gains levels realizes that while fantastic horrors assail our world, they can be bested—or at least driven off for a time.

Each time a character rises to a new level, roll 1d6 and add the result to the character's current Sanity. Points gained from advancing in level are not subject to the restriction of starting Sanity. They can raise current Sanity to any total equal to or less than maximum Sanity.

TREATMENT OF INSANITY

Temporary insanity ends quickly enough that schedules of treatment are essentially pointless. It concludes soon enough that one merely need protect the deranged investigator from further upset or harm. On the other hand, treatment of permanent insanity has no real meaning. By definition, the character will never recover, no matter how good the facility. Only indefinite insanity offers any hope for intervention and treatment.

After 1d6 months, if undisturbed by further trauma and with the agreement of the Gamemaster, an indefinitely insane character finds enough mental balance to reenter the world. Three sorts of care may help the investigator regain Sanity points during this time. When choosing among them, the GM and player should consider the character's resources, her friends and relatives, and how wisely she has behaved in the past.

PRIVATE CARE

The best care available is at home or in some friendly place (perhaps a small private sanitarium) where nursing can be tender, considerate, and undistracted by the needs of competing patients.

If Psychoanalysis or psychiatric medications are available, roll d% for each game month that one or the other is used. A result of 01–95 is a success: add 1d3 Sanity points for Psychoanalysis or psychiatric medications, whichever is used (a character cannot benefit from both in the same game month). On a result of 96–00, the analyst fumbles the diagnosis or the character rebels against taking the drugs. She loses 1d6 Sanity points, and no progress is made that month.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION

The next best alternative to private care is commitment to a good insane asylum. Asylums may be said to have an advantage over home care in that they are relatively cheap or even a free service provided by the state. These institutions are of uneven quality, however, and some may be potentially harmful. Some are creative places of experiment and advanced therapy, while others offer mere confinement. Presently, in the United States, most institutions are full or accessible only to the criminally insane. In any era, concentrated and nourishing treatment by strangers is rare.

Supervised activity, manual therapy, psychiatric medications, and hydrotherapy are frequent, as is electroconvulsive treatment. Psychoanaly-

sis is generally unavailable, and sometimes an institution can convey an uncaring sense that undermines the useful effects of psychiatric medications, leaving the character with a sense of anger and loss. He is likely to be distrustful of outpatient support once he has left the institution.

Roll d% for each game month the character is institutionalized. A result of 01–95 is a success; add 1d3 Sanity points for psychiatric medications. On a result of 96–00, the character rebels against taking drugs. He loses 1d6 Sanity points, and no progress can be made that month.

WANDERING AND HOMELESS

If no care is available, the character may become a wandering derelict struggling for survival. The wanderer gains no Sanity points unless he is able to join a group of the homeless and find at least one friend among them. To find a friend, make a Charisma check (DC 15) each month. If a friend appears, add 1 Sanity point per game month.

Each game month the character lives on the street, roll d% for survival. On a result of 01–95, the character survives. On a result of 96–00, the character dies of disease, exposure, or violence (perhaps murder, or worse).

MENTAL DISORDERS

Terminology changes rapidly. A psychiatrist of the 1920s would recognize some of these terms, but others would be baffling to her. Most strikingly, phrases of a hundred years ago such as "demented" or "lunatic" are avoided by modern psychiatrists because of their modern, negative connotations. Below, you will find descriptions of many mental disorders, from schizophrenia to various personality disorders. Where appropriate, suggested modifiers to characters' attacks, saves, checks, and abilities are also given. Keep in mind that as psychological science progresses, some of these conditions may undergo redefinition or be found to have other causes, such as chemical imbalances or genetic disorders.

ANXIETY DISORDERS

Generalized Anxiety Disorder: The character suffers from a variety of physical and emotional symptoms that can be grouped into certain categories.

Motor Tension: Jitteriness, aches, twitches, restlessness, easily startled, easily fatigued, and so on. All attack rolls, Fortitude and Reflex saves, and all checks involving Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution suffer a –2 competence penalty.

Autonomic Hyperactivity: Sweating, racing heart, dizziness, clammy hands, flushed or pallid face, rapid pulse and respiration even when at rest, and so on. All attack rolls, saves, and checks suffer a –2 competence penalty.

Expectations of Doom: Anxieties, worries, fears, and especially anticipations of misfortune. All attack rolls, saves, and checks suffer a –2 morale penalty.

Vigilance: Distractible, inability to focus, insomnia, irritability, impatience. All Will saves and checks dealing with Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma suffer a –4 morale penalty.

Panic Disorder (Panic Attack): This illness is marked by a discrete period of fear in which symptoms develop rapidly. Within minutes palpitation, sweating, trembling, difficulty in breathing, and so on appear, strong enough that the person fears immediate death or insanity. Burdened with the recurrence of these episodes, she fears their return. This often leads to a developing agoraphobia (see below).

Agoraphobia (Fear of Open Places): The character becomes very nervous outside familiar surroundings and needs a successful Will save (DC 15) in order to leave home or engage socially. May be linked to panic disorder (see above) or to a related phobia (see below), such as uranophobia (fear of the sky), barophobia (fear of loss of gravity), or xenophobia (fear of strangers).

DANGEROUSNESS CRITERIA

When a person seems at risk to harm himself or others, and apparently cannot care for himself, a medical doctor can certify that the individual should undergo psychiatric assessment or become an involuntary patient. With this affirmation, often of a comprehensive nature, the state can hold an individual for observation and potentially for treatment.

The duration of institutionalization varies by state, but the term is rarely less than 60 game days if for a legal assessment, and frequently up to 180 days. This fate is most likely for a character who attempts bodily assault or murder without apparent motive, or who intelligently shams mental disturbance to avoid serious criminal charges. The doctor also can revoke the capacity to manage personal finances, the right to drive an automobile, the right to make treatment decisions, and so on.

DOCTOR SHINY IS IN: AN EXAMPLE

Arrested after breaking into a construction site and attempting to steal dynamite, Harvey Walters keeps babbling about saving the world from a "cult of Cthulhu" and the forces of the Mythos, especially the "evil wizard" Carl Stanford. The court decides to have Harvey assessed by Dr. Shiny, a local psychiatrist.

Dr. Shiny listens carefully during an interview, then decides to make Harvey an involuntary patient for three reasons:

- Harvey poses a risk to others, in the person of Carl Stanford;
- Harvey poses a danger to himself, in stealing the dynamite and blasting caps; and
- Harvey has a psychiatric disorder, manifesting in delusions concerning a "cult of Cthulhu."

During his research, Dr. Shiny learns that Harvey has been in five car accidents involving chases recently, as well as one hit-and-run. Of the last, Harvey explains that he had to run over an evil cultist. Tsk-tsk! Dr. Shiny therefore also declares Harvey unfit to drive. He finds that Harvey is financially competent, able to explain all his assets and how he earns money, so Harvey retains the right to continue to manage his own financial affairs. Nonetheless, Harvey Walters is committed to the institute for further assessment and eventual treatment.

A few nights later, Harvey escapes from the institute and heads toward Arkham. Naturally, Dr. Shiny wants to protect all involved, so he notifies the police. He also calls Carl Stanford regarding the escape.

"Yes, Mr. Stanford, Harvey may be dangerous. . . ."

backs. Correspondingly, the character loses interest in daily activities. She may return to normal once the memories have been thoroughly explored and understood, but that process may take years. Today, quicker clinical treatments exist, such as eye movement desensitization and refocusing, or EMDR. Known as "shell shock" during and in the years following World War I.

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder: This illness manifests in one of two main forms, obsessive thoughts or compulsive actions; some characters exhibit both.

Obsessions: The character cannot help thinking about an idea, image, or impulse incessantly, often involving violence and self-doubt. These ideas are frequently repugnant to the character, but they are so strong that during times of stress she may be unable to concentrate on anything else, even if doing so is necessary for her survival. Obsessive impulses can be very dangerous when combined with auditory hallucinations, as the "voices" may urge the character to take some dangerous or hostile course of action.

Compulsions: Ritual actions performed by the character, such as touching a doorway at left, right, and top before passing through it. Though he may agree that the actions are senseless, the need to perform them is overpowering and may last for 1d10 rounds. Even in times of great stress, the character may ignore his survival in order to perform the ritual(s).

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: After a traumatic event, perhaps even years later, the character begins to relive the trauma through persistent thoughts, dreams, and flash-

Phobia or Mania: The individual persistently fears a particular object or situation. He realizes that the fear is excessive and irrational, but the fear is disturbing enough that he avoids the stimulus. A Will check (DC 15) is required for a character to be able to force himself into (or remain within) the presence of the object of his phobia, and even then all his rolls and checks will be at a –2 morale penalty for as long as the object of fear remains. In severe cases, the object of the phobia is imagined to be omnipresent, perhaps hidden—thus, someone with severe acrophobia (fear of heights) might be frightened when in an enclosed room on the upper story of a building, even if there were no window or way to see how high up the room was. As many phobias exist as one cares to notice or name—the listing in the nearby sidebar are merely some of the more common for *Call of Cthulhu* characters.



Manias are rarer. In a mania, the character is inordinately fond of a particular stimulus and takes great pains to be with it or near it. When the character's sexuality is involved, the mania may be termed a fetish. Thus teratophobia would be an inordinate fear of monsters, while teratophilia would be an unhealthy (possibly sexual) attraction to them. See the nearby phobia listing for ideas.

PHOBIAS

Acrophobia: fear of heights (formerly known as vertigo)
Aerophobia: fear of wind
Agoraphobia: fear of open places (see above)
Ailurophobia: fear of cats
Androphobia: fear of men (males)
Astrophobia: fear of stars
Autophobia: fear of being alone
Bacteriophobia: fear of bacteria ("germs")
Ballistophobia: fear of bullets
Barophobia: fear of loss of gravity
Bathophobia: fear of deep places
Bibliophobia: fear of books
Blennophobia: fear of slime
Brontophobia: fear of thunder
Cenophobia: fear of empty rooms
Chionophobia: fear of snow
Claustrophobia: fear of enclosed spaces.
Demophobia: fear of crowds
Dendrophobia: fear of trees
Entomophobia: fear of insects
Gephyrdrophobia: fear of crossing bridges
Gynephobia: fear of women (females)
Hamartophobia: fear of sin or of making an error
Haphephobia: fear of being touched
Heliophobia: fear of sunlight or the sun
Hematophobia: fear of blood or of bleeding
Hydrophobia: fear of water
Hypnophobia: fear of sleep
Iatrophobia: fear of doctors
Ichthyophobia: fear of fish
Maniaphobia: fear of going insane
Monophobia: fear of being alone
Musophobia: fear of mice (and rats)
Necrophobia: fear of dead things
Nyctophobia: fear of night or nightfall
Odontophobia: fear of teeth
Onomatophobia: fear of a certain name, word, or phrase
Ophidiophobia: fear of snakes
Ornithophobia: fear of birds
Pediphobia: fear of children
Phagophobia: fear of eating
Phonophobia: fear of noise, including your own voice
Pyrophobia: fear of fire
Scotophobia: fear of darkness
Spectrophobia: fear of mirrors
Taphephobia: fear of being buried alive
Teratophobia: fear of monsters
Thalassophobia: fear of the sea
Tomophobia: fear of surgery
Uranophobia: fear of the heavens ("the horrible gaping sky!")
Vermiphobia: fear of worms
Xenophobia: fear of foreigners or strangers
Zoophobia: fear of animals

DISSOCIATIVE DISORDERS

Dissociative Amnesia (Psychogenic Amnesia): This is the inability to recall important personal information, brought on by a desire to avoid unpleasant memories. The character must make a Will save (DC 20) to recall such details or the cause of the amnesia. Since the horror of the Mythos is the probable cause of this amnesia, as an optional rule the GM may choose to reset the character's Cthulhu Mythos modifier to zero and her maximum Sanity to 99 while this disorder holds sway: the horror returns when the character's memories do.

Dissociative Fugue: The character flees from home or work and cannot recall her past. Once the flight halts, the character may assume an entirely new identity.

Dissociative Identity Disorder (Multiple Personality Disorder, or MPD): The character appears to harbor more than one personality, each of which is dominant at times and has its own distinct behavior, name, and even gender. The player needs to keep track of the character's different personalities. (Each one has the same ability scores and game stats, but different goals, outlooks, and attitudes.)

EATING DISORDERS

Since nearly all such cases are diagnosed in the United States and Canada, anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa might be classified as cultural syndromes. They are conditions that may continue for many years, sometimes to the considerable danger of the patient.

Anorexia Nervosa: The character has an overpowering fear of becoming fat and consequently loses weight, as well as Constitution (at a rate of 1d3 points per week). Even when skin and bones, the character continues to see herself as "too fat." Without intervention, she may literally starve herself to death.

Bulimia Nervosa: The character frequently eats high caloric food during secret binges. An eating episode may continue until abdominal cramping or self-induced vomiting occurs. Feelings of depression and guilt frequently follow such episodes.

IMPULSE CONTROL DISORDERS

These include compulsive gambling, pathological lying, kleptomania (compulsive thieving), and pyromania (the compulsion to set fires).

Intermittent Explosive Disorder: The character is recognizably impulsive and aggressive, and at times gives way to uncontrollable rages that result in assault or destruction of property.

MOOD DISORDERS

Depression: Symptoms of this illness include changes in appetite, weight gain or loss, too much or too little sleep, persistent feeling of tiredness or sluggishness, and feelings of worthlessness or guilt, leading in severe cases to hallucinations, delusions, stupor, or thoughts of suicide. All attack rolls, saves, and checks suffer a –4 morale penalty. A predisposition to use alcohol or other substances in an attempt at self-medication exists. A character suffering from severe chronic depression may give up virtually all effort from feelings of hopelessness—for example, deciding not to get out of bed for two years. Characters suffering from deep, acute depression may need to be put on suicide watch.

Mania: The character has a fairly constant euphoric or possibly irritable mood. Symptoms include a general increase in activity, garrulousness, increased self-esteem to the point of delusion, decreased need for sleep, being easily distracted, willingness for dangerous or imprudent activities such as reckless driving, delusions, hallucinations, and bizarre behavior. All attack rolls, saves, and checks suffer a –4 morale penalty. A predisposition exists to use alcohol or other substances in an attempt at self-medication.

Bipolar Mood Disorder: The character oscillates between mood states for up to weeks at a time, sometimes rapidly switching from one to another. Formerly known as manic-depressive.

PERSONALITY DISORDERS

These long-term disorders have almost constant effects on a character's behavior, making it difficult for him to interact with others and often making him unpleasant to be around as well. This is an important point to keep in mind when roleplaying—few players want to spend time with another player character suffering from a personality disorder.

In game terms, the character has a –4 penalty to all Charisma-based skill checks. In addition, NPC attitudes are shifted on Table 10–1: Attitude Adjustment (page 226). When the table is used, the player must make a Charisma check for the character. With a successful check, NPCs become more hostile by one category; on a failed check, NPCs become more hostile by two categories.

Personality disorders may fall into any of the following categories.

Antisocial: Short-sighted and reckless behavior, habitual liar, confrontational, fails to meet obligations (job, bills, relationships), disregards rights and feelings of others.

Avoidant: Oversensitive to rejection, low self-esteem, socially withdrawn.

Borderline: Rapid mood shifts, impulsive, unable to control temper, chronic boredom.

Compulsive: Perfectionist, authoritarian, indecisive through fear of making mistakes, difficulty expressing emotions.

Dependent: Lacks self-confidence; seeks another to look up to, follow, and subordinate herself to ("codependent").

Histrionic: Overly dramatic, craves attention and excitement, overreacts, displays temper tantrums, may threaten suicide if thwarted.

Narcissistic: Exaggerated sense of self-importance, craves attention and admiration, considers others' rights and feelings as of less importance than his own.

Passive-aggressive: Procrastinator, stubborn, intentionally forgetful, deliberately inefficient. Sabotages own performance on a regular basis.

Paranoid: Jealous, easily offended, suspicious, humorless, secretive, vigilant; exaggerates magnitude of offenses, refuses to accept blame.

Schizoid: Emotionally cold, aloof, has few friends; indifferent to praise or criticism.

Gamemasters should know, while these traits may make for an interesting NPC from whom the players must extract information or a favor, their antiso-

cial nature makes them ill-suited for party members.

PSYCHOSEXUAL DISORDERS

This is an exceedingly diverse group, constantly undergoing redefinition. (Up until the 1960s, homosexuality was believed to be a mental disease.) Recognizable disorders include transsexualism (a belief that one is actually a member of the opposite sex), impaired sexual desire or function, nymphomania and satyriasis (inordinate and uncontrollable sexual appetite in women and men, respectively), and paraphilia (requirement of an abnormal sexual stimulus, such as sadism, masochism, necrophilia, pedophilia, exhibitionism, voyeurism, fetishism, or bestiality).

Most of these disorders could make players of the afflicted characters uncomfortable and thus are not appropriate for most roleplaying groups, although they can make for striking (if unpleasant) NPCs.

SCHIZOPHRENIA AND OTHER PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS

A psychotic character experiences a break with reality. Symptoms can include delusions, hallucinations, and cognitive impairment. In general, psychiatric medications may be of high value in treating such disorders. Note, however, that many psychotic characters suffer from the delusion that nothing is wrong with them and hence feel no need to take their medication. Beyond exhibiting the symptomatic behaviors, those who lack appropriate medications should also suffer skill reductions while the effect is strong.

Schizophrenia (schizophreniform disorder, dementia praecox): Mental concentration greatly diminishes; halve all modifiers for skills requiring concentration. Symptoms include bizarre delusions, paranoia, auditory hallucinations ("hearing voices"), incoherent speech, emotional detachment, social withdrawal, bizarre behavior, and a lack of the sense of self.

A schizophrenic character may belong to one of the following categories.

Undifferentiated: Impaired cognitive function, emotional detachment.

Disorganized: Inappropriate behavior, shallow emotional responses, delusions, hallucinations.

Catatonic: Mutism (loss of ability to talk), extreme compliance, absence of all voluntary movements, complete immobility ("statuism").

Paranoid: Delusions of persecution, illogical thinking, hallucinations.

Symptoms from more than one type can occur in the same individual, along with mood disorders (see above). For example, catatonic schizophreniacs sometimes have manic episodes of extreme activity alternating with periods of complete withdrawal. Schizophrenia brought on by sudden stress is called acute schizophrenia; player characters who go insane and babble of vast global conspiracies will usually be diagnosed as suffering from "acute paranoid schizophrenia."

SLEEP DISORDERS

These include insomnia (character has difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep) and narcolepsy (character frequently falls asleep, almost anywhere and at inappropriate times). Characters performing demanding tasks such as driving a car or flying a plane may, when stressed, need Concentration checks (DC 15) to stay awake and not put themselves in a dangerous situation.

Night Terrors: A sleeping character wakes after several hours of sleep, usually screaming in terror. Pulse and breathing are rapid, pupils are dilated, and his hair stands on end. The character is confused and hard to calm down. Night terrors are similar to normal nightmares, but much more intense and disruptive.

Somnambulism: Sleepwalking. As with night terrors, this behavior occurs in the first few hours of sleep. An episode may last up to 30 minutes. During the episode, the character's face is blank and staring, and she can be roused only with difficulty. Once awake, she recalls nothing of the activity.

SOMATOFORM DISORDERS

Somatization Disorder: The character suffers a psychosomatic condition, with possible symptoms ranging from dizziness and impotence to blindness or intense pain. Medicine cannot identify any physical cause for the symptoms, but the character does not believe they represent a specific disease. All attack rolls, saves, and checks suffer a –2 competence penalty.

Conversion Disorder: The character reports physical dysfunctions suggesting a physical disorder but, though involuntary, the symptoms provide a way to avoid something undesirable or to garner attention and caring (Munchausenism). Symptoms range from painful headaches to paralysis or blindness. In Reverse Munchausenism, the character projects ill health onto others and may even arrange injuries or illnesses for them so that she may take care of them. All attack rolls, saves, and checks suffer a –2 competence penalty.

Hypochondriasis: Character believes she suffers from a serious disease. No physical cause for reported symptoms can be found, but the character continues to believe the disease or condition exists, often with serious consequences to her normal life.

Body Dysmorphic Disorder: Character suffers from perceived flaws in appearance, usually of the face, or of the hips or legs. Behavior may alter in unexpected ways to cover up the flaws or to calm anxieties.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE DISORDERS

The character finds solace in using a drug, becomes physically addicted, and spends much time maintaining, concealing, and indulging the habit. Drugs include alcohol, amphetamines, cocaine, hallucinogens, marijuana, nicotine, opium (especially morphine and heroin), sedatives, the Plutonian drug, space mead, thag weed, and so on.

A character under the sway of such a substance should feel the personal struggle daily. Will saving throws might be used to resist or succumb symbolically to cravings, especially just before periods of stress (for

example, just before a confrontation or likely battle with evil cultists). All attack rolls, saves, and checks suffer a –2 morale penalty because of withdrawal symptoms. Sanity losses could occur from binges or bad trips. Some characters might find that drugs promote communication with alien entities and gods, and that dreams about them become ever more vivid and horrifying, Conversely, such substances might function as medications, deadening a character's fears and offering temporary defenses against Sanity loss.

See the nearby sidebar for abused substances that often lead to substance-related disorders.

OTHER DISORDERS

Other disorders exist in common parlance, but most of these are actually symptoms or specific instances of disorders already mentioned above. These include quixotism (seeing the supernatural everywhere, even in the most mundane surroundings), panzaism (seeing the most extraordinary events as ordinary and rational), and megalomania (delusions of power, wealth, fame, and ability). Use or ignore these as suits your own campaign, or invent new categories of madness to reflect the chaos that lies just below the brittle surface of Lovecraft's world.

A PSYCHIATRIC GLOSSARY

Affect—the external expression of a patient's mood (sadness, anger, joy, fear). May be inconsistent with patient's mood, depending on the disorder.

Anorexia—loss or decrease of appetite.

Catatonia—various strong motor anomalies, for instance catatonic stupor (slowed activity to the point of immobilization); ceraflexibilitas (the person can be molded into strange postures that are maintained), and catatonic excitement (agitated, purposeless movements).

Compulsion—the need to perform an act repetitively, including various personal rituals, dipsomania, kleptomania, nymphomania, satyriasis, trichotillomania (pulling out hair), and so on.

Delirium—a reversible syndrome of bewilderment, restlessness, confusion, and disorientation, associated with fear and hallucinations, all caused by some underlying medical condition.

Delusion—a firmly fixed false belief, one not based in reality. It can be bizarre, as in schizophrenia, or systematized as in delusional disorders.

Dementia—a loss of cognitive function, often first manifesting in memory loss.

Depersonalization—subjective feeling of being unreal, or unfamiliar to self.

Derealization—a subjective feeling that the environment is strange or unreal; for instance, feeling the world to be a stage or a two-dimensional painting.

Dissociation—confusion in the sense of self and identity.

Formication—the feeling that insects are crawling all over one's body, a tactile hallucination caused by

ADDICTIONS (SUBSTANCE-RELATED DISORDERS)

Substance abuse occurs in all segments of all societies. By definition, abuse indicates decreased work or school performance, accidents, intoxication while working or driving, absenteeism, violent crime, or theft. Urine and blood tests can confirm suspected abuse. Substance use may worsen or mimic other psychiatric disorders relating to depression, anxiety, mania, or psychosis.

Many people successfully use substances recreationally, without substantial or even observable changes to their lives. A sizable fraction of users are not so fortunate. Their lives change, as they increasingly come to depend on one or more such substances.

Alcohol, amphetamines, cocaine, and the opiates are addictive substances most frequently resorted to in earlier game eras. They and more are abused in the present day.

Abuse often leads to dependence, which is characterized by developing tolerance (thus requiring a larger dose), withdrawal symptoms, and a pattern of increasing procurement of the substance. Dependence may be emotional and social in context.

Therapy includes making sure someone hasn't overdosed, ruling out other substances possibly present in the blood, and medical support. Long-term treatment ("drying out") lasts six months to a year, with the goal of creating longer and longer periods of abstinence.

Alcohol: Symptoms include poor judgment, talkativeness, mood changes, aggression, impaired attention, and blackouts (amnesialike states). Use can also cause a flushed face, impaired coordination, and slurred speech. Withdrawal can cause mild shakiness, hangovers, and other symptoms. Delirium tremens can include seizures and delirium requiring active medical intervention.

LSD, Mushrooms, Peyote: Duration 8–12 hours of high with flashbacks after abstinence, visual hallucinations, paranoid thoughts, false sense of achievement and strength, suicidal or homicidal tendencies, depersonalization, derealization. Treatment requires talking down; for severe agitation, sedatives or antipsychotics plus restraints may be needed. Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) was first synthesized in 1943 and thus is not present in earlier eras.

Amphetamines and Cocaine: User may be alert, talkative, euphoric, hyperactive, irritable, aggressive, agitated, sometimes paranoid. There may be visual and tactile hallucinations such as formication (the feeling that insects are crawling across your skin). Cocaine use may be quickly followed by a crash phase. Craving for these drugs can last for years.

Opiates (Opium, Morphine, Heroin): Symptoms include euphoria, drowsiness, anorexia, lessened sex drive, hyperactivity, and passivity; physically, nausea and slow heart rate. In the 1890s, most addicts smoked opium in pipes, or drank it in solutions (laudanum, cola-wine), or injected it subcutaneously (under the skin, not into a vein); in the modern day, most addicts inject it into a vein for a quicker, more drastic high. In themselves, needle tracks in arms and legs can develop into a medical problem. Treatment is a weaning-off process using methadone, itself highly addictive.

Phencycladine (PCP, Ketamine, "Special K"): Duration 8–12 hours of high, hallucinations, paranoid thoughts, catatonic state, violent behavior, convulsions, anesthesia (can punch a hand through a windshield and shatter every bone in the arm, but not feel it until the drug wears off). If attempting to talk down such a user, the talker may get his face punched, or more. Isolate until the behavior calms; use antipsychotics if the person is on a rampage. These and similar drugs are new, and exist only in the present era.

cocaine and delirium tremens.

Hallucination—a perception of a sensory stimulus in the absence of sensory stimulus; for instance, seeing or hearing someone who isn't there.

Illusion—the misperception of a sensory stimulus; for instance, seeing the rustling branches of a tree as tentacles.

Logorrhea—copious, coherent, logical speech.

Mania—a mood characterized by elation and increased activity.

Mood—a pervasive feeling that is experienced internally.

Neurosis—symptoms of depression, anxiety, or the like arising from stress. A neurosis is less severe than a psychosis. A neurotic character may still be able to function; a psychotic one generally cannot.

Obsession—an idea or thought that constantly intrudes into consciousness.

Paranoia—persistent, consistent, plausible, and ingenious delusions of persecution or jealousy. New information always seems to support the increasing threat of some great conspiracy. Paranoia is more a symptom than a disorder, as it can appear in schizophrenia, mania, and so on

Psychosis—severe mental illness in which the character suffers thoughts and perceptions that are out of touch with reality. A psychosis is more severe than a neurosis.

Somnambulism—sleepwalking.

Somnolence—abnormal drowsiness.

Synthesia—sensation caused by another sensation; for instance, seeing sound.

Tic—involuntary spasmodic motor movement.

Trailing Phenomenon—perceptual abnormality associated with hallucinogens in which moving objects are seen in a series of discrete discontinuous images.

Trance—focused attention and altered consciousness, usually seen in hypnosis, dissociative disorders, and ecstatic religious experiences.

MEDICATIONS AND TREATMENTS

Medications

Antipsychotics: A variety of drugs used for the treatment of schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders. Drugs include chlorpromazine, thioridazine, haloperidal, and newer or specialized ones such as risperidone and clozapine. These drugs are also called neuroleptics, and they can have motor abnormality side effects such as restlessness and erratic body movements. They take a few weeks to begin to reverse the psychosis, but any sedation effects are dose-dependent from the beginning. Stopping the drug in a chronic psychotic condition results in the patient reentering the psychotic state.

Antidepressants: Used to treat depressive symptoms, usually in major depressive episodes. These include Elavil and other tricyclic drugs, Pamate and other monoamine oxidase inhibitors, and Prozac and other selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors. It often takes a month or six weeks to begin to treat a major depressive episode. If the drug is stopped before the episode is over (six months to a year), the patient reexperiences the symptoms.

Mood Stabilizers: Used in bipolar disorders, especially in manic phases, these drugs act as an umbrella to prevent the moods of a person with this illness from swinging too high or low. The classic drug is lithium, followed by various anticonvulsants such as carbamazapine, valproic acid, and gaba-pentin. Lithium can be very toxic, and if taken as an overdose (or if a person becomes dehydrated, and so on), the patient can enter into seizures and coma.

Anxiolytics: Sedatives used to treat anxiety symptoms. The first ones used were barbiturates such as secobarbital, but they were highly addictive. They were abandoned for benzodiazipes (Valium, and so on), which are addictive as well, but to a lesser degree, and without so many side effects. These drugs are often sold as street drugs, under many names ("Red Devils" is a street term for secobarbital).

Many Others: For movement disorders, beta-blockers, anticholinergics; for dementia, Aracept; for eating disorders, mood stabilizers and antidepressants; for opiate addiction, methadone weaning; and so forth.

Treatments

Electroconvulsive Therapy: Seizure inducements have been used to treat psychosis since the 16th century. Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) was introduced in 1934, first with injections of camphor to produce seizures and then with electrically induced seizures in 1938. Alternating currents of electricity are passed through the patient's head between two electrodes placed over the temples. This causes unconsciousness and seizures. Though ECT produced good results, it also produced such violent seizures as to routinely fracture patients' bones! With the advent of anesthesia and paralysis drugs in the modern era, patients avoid this problem. In the United States, ECT treats depressive disorders, manic episodes, and other serious disorders in 50,000 to 100,000 patients annually. The main side effect is that patients suffer from short-term memory loss, and often they entirely lose the memories of the hours or days connected with ECT.

Light Therapy (Phototherapy): Used to treat mood symptoms coinciding with seasonal changes. A bright artificial light bathes the patient every day as long as the symptoms last. Response occurs in a few days, the only side effects being occasional headaches, eye strain, or nervousness.

Psychosurgery: Surgical modification of the brain, including lobotomies and cingulotomies. This extreme procedure was widespread in the 1940s and 1950s, then nearly abandoned when antipsychotic drugs were introduced. It is resorted to now only when all else fails.

Biological Therapies, 1936 to Present

1936: Frontal lobotomies (Moniz).

1938: Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) begun (Cerletti and Bini).

1940: Phenytoin introduced as an anticonvulsant (Putnam).

1943: Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) synthesized (Hofmann).

1949: Lithium introduced as mood stabilizer.

1952: Chlorpromazine introduced as antipsychotic.

1955–1958: Tricyclics and monoamine oxidase inhibitors introduced as antidepressants.

1960: Chlordiazepoxide introduced (minor tranquilizers, benzodiazipines).

1960–present: Introduction of newer and target anxiolytics, antipsychotics, antidepressants, light therapy, and a plethora of other therapies.

Today: New drugs are constantly being moved through the R&D, testing, and approval process. These new therapies are big business.



COMBAT

Suddenly, without a warning sound in the dark, Carter felt his curved scimitar drawn stealthily out of his belt by some unseen hand. Then he heard it clatter down over the rocks below. And between him and the Milky Way he thought he saw a very terrible outline of something noxiously thin and horned and tailed and bat-winged. Other things, too, had begun to blot out patches of stars west of him, as if a flock of vague entities were flapping thickly and silently out of that inaccessible cave in the face of the precipice. Then a sort of cold rubbery arm seized his neck and something else seized his feet, and he was lifted inconsiderably up and swung about in space. Another minute and the stars were gone, and Carter knew that the night-gaunts had got him.

—*H.P. Lovecraft*, The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath

A scale-covered claw rips at your flesh as you fire another round from your Glock into its bloated, corpulent flesh. Dear God, why won't it die? Why did you think it would be vulnerable to a weapon crafted by the hand of man?

Combat comes in many forms. From a gunfight with insane cultists to a struggle to escape coiled tentacles, danger lies in wait for those who look for adventure—and many who do not. Fortunate investigators avoid such confrontations altogether. The rest master survival tactics and hope for the best.

This chapter details the rules for combat. It starts with an example, covers the basics, and then elaborates on some of the more unusual strategies characters can employ in combat. Hazardous conditions that might affect combat are featured at the end of this chapter. Some special abilities and forms of damage that affect combat are explained in more detail in the Creatures chapter.

HOW COMBAT WORKS

This extended example of combat demonstrates the most commonly used combat rules.

SET-UP

Marie, Sam, Claire, and Kristof are exploring an ancient tomb buried under Arabian

sands. They have unearthed a series of passageways and now stand within a narrow corridor. Fifty feet behind them, there's an intersection of passageways. In front of them, a stone slab at their feet blocks the entrance to an ancient crypt. Sam has been making Strength checks to pry it up with his shovel, and the stone is finally starting to give. The scraping sounds, however, are audible all the way down the passageway.

The GM asks the players to tell him where their characters are, explaining that the corridor is wide enough for them to stand two abreast, if need be. Sam is in front of the entrance to the crypt, Marie and Kristof are to either side of it, and Claire is behind Kristof.

The GM looks at his notes, rolls some dice, and determines that three ghouls have heard Sam opening the crypt. The ghouls shamble around a corner of the intersection. They're 50 feet away from the stone slab on the ground, so they're 40 feet away from Claire, 45 feet away from Kristof, 50 feet away from Sam, and 55 feet away from Marie. The GM starts sketching a rough map of where everyone is standing.

The ghouls know that the investigators are there. The GM needs to know which player characters are aware of the ghouls. Those who are caught unaware will be surprised. The GM asks each player to make a Listen check (DC 9). Kristof and Marie succeed and hear footsteps scraping along the rocks. Sam and Claire fail.

SURPRISE ROUND

During the surprise round, only characters or creatures aware of their enemies can act. Each one can take a move action or an attack action. The ghouls, Kristof, and Marie can all act during the surprise round.

As soon as the characters are aware of the ghouls, they must make Sanity checks. Both Kristof and Marie make their checks before attempting anything else. Kristof rolls a 21 and succeeds. Marie rolls a 92 and fails. Ghouls have a 0/1d6 Sanity point loss, so Kristof loses 0 Sanity points, and the GM rolls a 2 for Marie. Marie is disturbed by the sight of the inhuman creatures, but she also has a few bullets left.

Even though the other investigators cannot act during the surprise round, the GM asks Sam's player and Claire's player to each make a Sanity check. Claire fails. She loses a full 6 points of Sanity at once, enough to render her temporarily insane. Rolling on Table 4–1 in the Sanity chapter, the GM determines that she has fainted.

Then the GM asks Kristof's and Marie's players to make initiative checks. Kristof's initiative modifier is –1 (the same as his Dexterity penalty). Marie's is +6 (she has a +2 Dexterity modifier and the Improved Initiative feat). They get 7 and 19 as their initiative results, respectively. The GM rolls once for all four ghouls (adding their +1 initiative modifier) and gets a result of 12. The order of battle during the surprise round is Marie first, followed by the ghouls, followed by Kristof. Each of the acting investigators can take one attack action or move action during this round.

The GM calls on Marie's player. Marie recognizes the ghouls by their horrid appearance and fetid stench. She's holding Sam's 9mm Glock, but unfortunately, it's only got two bullets left. Marie steps to one side to get a clear line of sight past her friends. Her attack bonus with a pistol is +2 (+0 base attack bonus plus a +2 Dexterity bonus; she has the Weapon Proficiency feat for pistols, so there isn't a nonproficiency penalty). The ghoul is 55 feet away, or two range increments for the Glock. Marie therefore suffers a range penalty of –4. Because the ghoul has not acted yet, it's flat-footed, and doesn't get to add its Dexterity bonus to its Armor Class.

Marie's player rolls a 17, for an attack result of 15 (17+2–4), well over the ghoul's flat-footed Armor Class of 13. She rolls 1d10 for damage and gets a 9. The ghouls have 13 hit points each, so the wounded ghoul has 4 hit points left. "It staggers and hisses," says the GM, "but it doesn't fall."

Then it's the ghouls' turn. They use this time to close with their victims, moving 30 feet each.

Kristof isn't much good in combat, and his shotgun is out of shells. He steps up to Claire's unconscious body, grabs it as a move action, and then uses a second move action to drag her 15 feet away.

With that, the surprise round ends.

FIRST REGULAR ROUND

Sam must make an initiative check. He gets a 14, so he goes after Marie and before the ghouls. The order of battle is: Marie, Sam, ghouls, Kristof. Claire is unconscious and can't take an action. The GM secretly rolls to see how long Claire will be passed out.

Marie fires again, but misses. She's out of ammo, so she drops the gun and switches to her hunting knife.

Sam moves 10 feet forward to cover Kristof's retreat and guard Claire's unconcious body. Bravely, he hopes that they will attack him rather than her. He hefts his shovel as a weapon and readies an attack against any ghoul that comes close.

On their action, the ghouls are 10 feet away from Sam. Two ghouls charge and attack him. In the 10-foot-wide corridor, only two can fight side by side. The one in the back waits for a chance to join them. The ghouls have a +6 attack bonus on their claw attack rolls (+1 base attack bonus, +3 bonus for Strength, +2 charge bonus for charging). Since they're charging, they can only make one attack each.

Before they can attack, Sam uses his readied action, swinging the edge of his shovel at one of the ghouls directly in front of him. His attack modifier is +3 (+1 base attack bonus, +2 bonus for Strength, and he has the Weapon Proficiency feat for melee weapons). He rolls a 1 and misses.

The ghouls continue with their attacks. Sam's Armor Class is only 11 (+1 Dexterity bonus), but neither charging ghoul hits him. "Their stained claws tear at your clothes," says the GM, "and you can feel the strength behind their blows, but somehow you avoid being hurt."

Kristof attempts to shake Claire to awaken her. He rolls a Heal check (DC 15), but fails. His attempt is a full-round action, so he can't act again until next round.

SECOND REGULAR ROUND

Marie steps in next to Sam and thrusts with her hunting knife at the ghoul she wounded with her pistol. Her attack modifier is –5 (–1 Strength, but since she doesn't have the Weapon Proficiency feat for melee weapons, she gets a –4 for using a knife). The ghoul's Armor Class is penalized by –2 because he charged in the previous round, but Marie still misses. She steps back 5 feet after her attack.

Sam makes another attack with his shovel. He hits the ghoul (whose Armor Class is still penalized from charging) and deals 1d6+2 points of damage. His total is 7, which is enough to seriously wound the ghoul, but not take it out.

The ghoul claws at Sam. Since it did not move, it makes a full attack as a full-round action, allowing it to use both of its claws and its bite attack. It hits with one claw with a roll of a natural 20 on its attack roll. That's a "threat" (a possible critical hit). The GM makes a critical roll (1d20 + its total attack bonus), and the result is 17. Since that would hit Sam, the ghoul's hit is a critical hit.

A ghoul claw normally deals 1d6+3 points of damage and does double damage on critical hits, so the GM rolls 2d6 and adds +6. He gets a result of 10 points of damage, and Sam's hit points drop to 1. That's enough to be considered massive damage. Sam must make a Fort save with a DC of 15 to survive the blow. He makes the save, but with 1 hit point left, he is hurt badly enough that one more hit will easily drop him.

The ghoul that Marie tried to stab curses her, steps forward 5 feet, claws at her, then attempts to bite her. It gnaws on her for 3 points of damage. Marie has 3 hit points left, and the ghoul's special attack requires that they make opposed grapple rolls to see if it hangs on with its bite. The ghoul rolls a 12, but Marie rolls a 15. She avoids its grip and is only grazed.

The rear ghoul is able to step forward now, and does so, lashing out at Sam with all its attacks. Miraculously, they all miss.

Kristof, worried that his companion's bodies might become a warm feast for these creatures, thinks back to his copy of the *R'lyeh Text*. He chants the intonations of an ancient healing ritual while tracing a mystical sigil with his left hand. This normally beneficial spell harms undead. Kristof loses 1 point of Sanity immediately and takes 2 points of temporary Wisdom damage. Since Marie stepped back, there's room for him to get into the thick of things by moving next to her, right behind Sam. He moves 5 feet to reach out with his left hand and make a touch attack against the ghoul fighting Marie. He hits, placing his palm against undead flesh. The spell forces the ghoul to make a Fortitude saving throw. The GM rolls a 15, and it's a failure—Kristof's spell has a DC of 17. The undead ghoul takes 1d8+1 points of damage. Kristof rolls a 8, deals 9 points of damage, and seriously wounds it. The ghoul has 4 hit points left.

THIRD REGULAR ROUND

The GM announces that Claire is now conscious and able to act. Claire rolls for initiative. She'll go right after Marie.

Marie uses a full-round action to withdraw from melee, backing 10 feet away from the ghoul Kristof wounded. Her knuckles are white around the hilt of her knife.

Claire then rushes forward to take Marie's place. She uses her Martial Arts feat to strike for 5 points of damage. The ghoul's rubbery body collapses to the ground.

Sam hits the ghoul he injured previously. He gets a result of 7 points of damage again, which is more than enough to put the second ghoul down. With a sickening crunch, Sam's shovel bashes in the ghoul's head, and it drops.

The last ghoul attacks Sam. It makes all its attacks, but misses.

Kristof steps in next to Sam with a crowbar, swings and misses.

FOURTH REGULAR ROUND

Marie gathers her courage and decides to throw her knife from 10 feet away. There's no range penalty, and despite her lack of any proficiency, the blade penetrates the graverobber's cold flesh for 4 points of damage. Marie gets ready to step on its neck and pull her knife out of its rubbery flesh.

Kristof is still disturbed by his loss of Sanity from the spell. Claire is still quite shaken up. Both Sam and Marie are badly hurt. "If there are any more ghouls in this place," Kristof says shakily, "let's run."

COMBAT SEQUENCE

As seen in the example, combat is cyclical. Each character acts in turn in a regular cycle. Generally, combat runs in the following way:

1) Each combatant starts the battle flat-footed. Once a combatant acts, he is no longer flat-footed. A flat-footed combatant loses his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class.

2) The GM determines which characters are aware of their opponents at the start of the battle. If some, but not all, of the combatants are aware of their opponents, a surprise round occurs before regular rounds begin. Combatants who are aware of their opponents can act in the surprise round, so they roll for initiative. In initiative order (highest to lowest), combatants who started the battle aware of their opponents each take one move action or attack action during the surprise round. Combatants who were unaware do not get to act in the surprise round. If no one or everyone starts the battle aware, there is no surprise round.

3) Combatants who have not yet rolled initiative do so. All combatants are now ready to begin their first regular round.

4) Combatants act in initiative order.

5) When everyone has had a turn, the combatant with the highest initiative acts again. Repeat this process until combat ends.

COMBAT STATISTICS

Several fundamental statistics determine how well you do in combat. This section summarizes these statistics, and the following sections detail how to use them.

ATTACK ROLL

When you make an attack roll, you roll 1d20 and add your attack bonus. If your result equals the target's Armor Class or better, you hit and deal damage. Different modifiers can affect the attack roll, such as a +1 bonus if you have Weapon Focus with that weapon, a +1 bonus if you're standing above your opponent, a +2 bonus if your opponent is stunned, and so forth. (See Table 5–4: Attack Roll Modifiers, page 72.)

COMBAT BASICS

This one page summarizes the basics of combat. If you're unfamiliar with the d20 rules, this is enough detail to get you started in a fight scene. For now, don't worry about the details.

ROUNDS

Combat is broken up into rounds. Every round, each combatant gets to do something. A round represents 6 seconds in the game world.

INITIATIVE

Before the first round of combat, each player makes an initiative check for her character. The GM makes initiative checks for the monsters or foes. An initiative check is a Dexterity check (1d20+Dexterity modifier). Characters act in order from highest initiative result to lowest, with the check applying to all rounds of the combat (unless a combatant takes an action that changes her initiative).

ATTACKS

You can move and make a single attack in one round. A melee attack is one using a weapon you physically strike an opponent with, such as lunging with a knife or swinging a baseball bat. (A monster's claw attack is also a melee attack.) A ranged attack is one that you use at a distance, such as throwing a rock or firing a pistol.

ATTACK ROLL

To score a hit that deals damage on your attack roll, you must roll the target's Armor Class (AC) or better.

Melee Attack Roll: 1d20 + base attack bonus + Strength modifier + size modifier

Ranged Attack Roll: 1d20 + base attack bonus + Dexterity modifier + size modifier + range penalty

DAMAGE

If you score a hit, roll damage and deduct it from the target's current hit points. Add your Strength modifier to damage from melee and thrown weapons.

If you're using a melee weapon in your off hand, you add half your Strength bonus instead. If you're wielding a melee weapon with both hands, add one and one-half times your Strength bonus to the damage.

ARMOR CLASS

A character's Armor Class is the result you need to get on your attack roll to hit that character in combat.

Armor Class = 10 + Dexterity modifier + size modifier (+ armor bonus, if any)

HIT POINTS

Hit points represent how much damage a character can take before falling unconscious or dying.

ATTACK OPTIONS

When attacking, you have several basic options:

Attack: You can move up to your speed and make a single attack, or attack and then move.

Charge: When making a charge, you move in a straight line for up to double your speed and then make one attack with a +2 charge bonus on the attack roll. You suffer a –2 penalty to your Armor Class until your next action.

Full Attack: Some characters can strike more than once each melee round, but only when making a full attack. Other than taking a 5-foot step, you can't move or do anything else when you make a full attack. (See Full Attack, page 66.)

MOVEMENT

Each character has a speed measured in feet. In one round, you can move that distance and attack. You can move before or after attacking.

In one round, you can make a double move instead—this lets you move double your speed.

If you move adjacent to an opponent—that is, if you move within 5 feet of where he's standing—you must stop moving. While you are adjacent to an opponent, you cannot move more than 5 feet unless you're moving directly away from him.

If all Hell breaks loose, run. Running lets you move quadruple your speed as a full-round action. When running, you must more or less travel in a straight line.

OTHER ACTIONS

During a round of combat, you can take:

—a move action and an attack action;

—an attack action and a move action;

—two move actions (a "double move");

—or, a full-round action.

These terms are defined in the Action Types sidebar, page 21.

SPELLS

In one round, you can move and cast a single 1-action spell. You cannot cast a spell while adjacent to an opponent without a Concentration check (DC 20).

DEATH, DYING, AND HEALING

Your hit points represent how much damage you can take before being disabled, knocked unconscious, or killed.

0 Hit Points: If your hit points drop to 0, you are disabled. You can only take one attack action or move action on your next turn. If you attempt any strenuous activity, you take 1 point of damage after completing that action.

–1 to –9 Hit Points: If your hit points drop to from –1 to –9 hit points, you're unconscious and dying. You lose 1 hit point per round. Each round, before losing that hit point, you have a 10% chance to stabilize. While stabilized, you're still unconscious. Each hour, you have a 10% chance to regain consciousness; if you don't, you lose 1 hit point instead.

–10 Hit Points: If your hit points fall to –10 or below, you're dead.

Healing: You can stop a dying character's loss of hit points with a successful Heal check (DC 15).

MINIATURES

If you use miniatures to keep track of where the characters and monsters are, use a scale of 1 inch = 5 feet.

WEAPON PROFICIENCY

If a character is not proficient with the type of weapon he's attempting to use, he suffers a –4 penalty on attack rolls with that weapon. All melee weapons (including knives, clubs, baseball bats, and even shovels) require the Weapon Proficiency (melee weapon) feat. The different categories of firearms (such as pistols, rifles, shotguns, and submachine guns) have separate Weapon Proficiency feats. Unarmed strikes don't require a Weapon Proficiency feat, although some feats, such as Martial Artist, can make them more effective. Thrown weapons, such as throwing knives and grenades, require Weapon Proficiency (thrown weapons). For more details, see the Weapon Proficiency feat, page 43.

ATTACK BONUS

Your attack bonus with a melee weapon is:

Base attack bonus + Strength modifier + size modifier

With a ranged weapon, your attack bonus is:

Base attack bonus + Dexterity modifier + size modifier + range penalty

Strength Modifier: Strength helps you swing a weapon harder and faster, so your Strength modifier applies to melee attack rolls.

Dexterity Modifier: Since Dexterity measures coordination and steadiness, your Dexterity modifier applies to attacks with ranged weapons.

Size Modifier: The smaller you are, the bigger other creatures are relative to you. A human is a big target to a dog, just as an elder thing is a big target to a human. Since this same size modifier applies to Armor Class, two creatures of the same size strike each other normally, regardless of what size they actually are. Size modifiers are as follows: Colossal –8, Gargantuan –4, Huge –2, Large –1, Medium-size +0, Small +1, Tiny +2, Diminutive +4, Fine +8.

Range Penalty: The range penalty with a ranged weapon depends on what weapon you're using and how far away the target is. All ranged weapons have a range increment, such as 10 feet for a thrown dagger or 20 feet for a simple handgun (see the Equipment chapter). Any attack from a distance of less than one range increment is not penalized for range, so a bullet from a .30-06 rifle (range increment 200 feet) can strike at enemies up to 199 feet away with no penalty. However, each full range increment adds a cumulative –2 penalty to the attack roll. A character firing that rifle at a target 620 feet away suffers a –6 attack penalty (because 620 feet is at least three range increments, but not four increments).

Thrown weapons, such as throwing axes, have a maximum range of five range increments. Projectile weapons, such as rifles, can shoot up to ten increments.

DAMAGE

When you hit with a weapon, you deal damage according to the type of weapon (see the Equipment chapter). Unarmed strikes and the natural physical attack forms of creatures are considered to deal weapon damage for the purposes of effects that give you a bonus to weapon damage.

Minimum Weapon Damage: If penalties to damage bring the damage result below 1, a hit still deals 1 point of damage.

Strength Bonus: When you hit with a weapon, you add your Strength modifier to damage with melee and thrown weapons. Apply neither a Strength bonus nor a Strength penalty to damage from a firearm. (If your campaign includes primitive ranged weapons, such as bows and slings, you can't apply a Strength bonus, but you can apply a Strength penalty.)

If you have a Strength bonus (not a penalty), you sometimes add more than or less than the bonus:

Off-Hand Weapon: When you deal damage with a melee weapon in your off hand, you add only one-half of your Strength bonus.

Wielding a Weapon Two-Handed: When you deal damage with a melee weapon that you are wielding two-handed, you add one and one-half times your Strength bonus.

Multiplying Damage: Sometimes you multiply damage by some factor, such as when you score a critical hit. Roll the damage (with all modifiers) multiple times and total the results. When you multiply damage more than once, each multiplier works off the original, unmultiplied damage.

Ability Score Damage: Certain creatures and magical effects, as well as the use of magical spells, can cause temporary ability damage (a reduction to an ability score) or permanent ability drain. Points lost to temporary damage return at the rate of 1 point per day (or double that if the character gets "complete rest," doing nothing for the entire day) for each damaged ability.

While any loss is debilitating, losing all points in an ability score can be devastating.

- Strength 0 means that the character cannot move at all. He lies helpless on the ground.
- Dexterity 0 means that the character cannot move at all. He stands motionless, rigid, and helpless.
- Constitution 0 means that the character is dead.
- Intelligence 0 means that the character cannot think. He is helpless and unconscious in a comalike stupor.
- Wisdom 0 means that the character is helpless and withdrawn into a deep sleep filled with nightmares.
- Charisma 0 means that the character is helpless and withdrawn into a catatonic, comalike stupor.

Keeping track of negative ability score points is never necessary. A character's ability score can't drop below 0.

Having a 0 score in an ability is different from having no ability score whatsoever. For instance, a ghost has no Strength score, not a Strength score of 0. The ghost can move, but it can't act physically against other objects.

Constitution Loss and Hit Points: If a character's Constitution score drops, either from temporary damage or permanent drain, he loses 1 hit point per Hit Die for every point by which his Constitution modifier drops.

For example, when Sam is a 7th level character, he is hit by poison, and his Constitution temporarily drops from 16 to 13. His bonus drops from +3 to +1, so he loses 14 hit points. A minute later, the poison deals another 8 points of temporary Constitution damage, dropping his score to 5 and his modifier from +1 to –3. He loses another 28 hit points (a total of 42 hit points lost for an overall 6 point drop in his Con modifier).

A full hit point score can't drop below 1 per Hit Die. As a 7th-level character, Claire has 22 hit points. Even if her Constitution falls to 1, she'll still have at least 7 hit points (less any damage she has taken).

Intelligence Loss and Skill Points: If a character's Intelligence score drops enough to lower his Intelligence modifier (such as when he's casting certain spells), his ability modifier to Int-based skills drops as well. However, temporary Intelligence loss does not reduce his total skill points. Permanent Intelligence drain does.

Wisdom Loss and Sanity: Wisdom loss, whether permanent or temporary, does not decrease a character's Sanity score. However, if Wisdom drops enough to lower a character's Wisdom modifier, her ability modifier to Wisdom-based skills drops as well.

not include any armor bonus, shield bonus, or natural armor bonus. Your size modifier and Dexterity modifier apply normally.

ARMOR CLASS

Your Armor Class trait represents how hard it is for opponents to land a solid, damaging blow on you. It's the attack roll result that an opponent needs to achieve to hit you. The average, unarmored person has a Armor Class of 10. Your Armor Class is equal to the following:

10 + Dexterity modifier + size modifier

Armor Bonuses: Some kinds of armor provide an armor bonus to your Armor Class. This bonus represents their ability to protect you from blows. If you're using a shield (whether it was requisitioned for crowd control or salvaged from a medieval armory), the shield gives a separate shield bonus.

Dexterity Modifier: If your Dexterity is high, you are particularly adept at dodging blows. If your Dexterity is low, you are particularly inept at it. That's why you apply your Dexterity modifier to your Armor Class.

Sometimes you can't use your Dexterity bonus (if you have one). The bonus you get for a high Dexterity represents your ability to dodge incoming attacks. If you can't react to a blow, you can't use your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class. For example, you can lose your Dexterity bonus when an invisible fire vampire attacks you, you're hanging on for dear life to the face of a crumbling cliff, or you're caught flat-footed at the beginning of a combat.

Size Modifier: The bigger a creature is, the easier it is to hit in combat. The smaller it is, the harder it is to hit. Since this same modifier applies to attack rolls, a dog, for example, doesn't have a hard time hitting another dog. Size modifiers are as follows: Colossal –8, Gargantuan –4, Huge –2, Large –1, Medium-size +0, Small +1, Tiny +2, Diminutive +4, Fine +8.

Dodge Feat: The Dodge feat (page 40) improves your Armor Class by +1 against a single opponent.

Natural Armor: Natural armor improves your Armor Class. People don't have natural armor, which usually consists of scales, fur, or layers of huge muscles. However, an investigator might get natural armor from a spell that transforms his flesh such as *skin of sedefkar*, or an alien artifact such as a mi-go's living armor.

Touch Attacks: Some attacks disregard armor, including shields and natural armor. In these cases, the attacker makes a touch attack roll (either a ranged touch attack roll or a melee touch attack roll). The attacker makes her attack roll as normal, but your Armor Class does

HIT POINTS

Your hit points tell you how much punishment you can take before dropping. Your hit points are based on your level and are modified by your Constitution modifier.

When your hit point total reaches 0, you're disabled. When it reaches –1, you're dying. When it gets to –10, your problems are over—you're dead (see Injury and Death, page 68).

SPEED

Your speed tells you how far you can move in a round and still do something, such as attacking or casting a spell.

Human characters move 30 feet in a round. If you take a double move action in a round, you can move up to double your normal speed. If you run, you can move up to quadruple your normal speed as a full-round action.

SAVING THROWS

As an investigator of the unknown, you have more to worry about than taking damage. You may also have to face the magical power of a *shriveling* spell, the freezing winds of the gnophkeh, or the poison of a Leng spider.

Generally, when you are subjected to an unusual or magical attack, you get a saving throw to avoid or reduce the effect. Like an attack roll, a saving throw is 1d20 roll plus a bonus based on your level and an ability score. Your saving throw bonus is:

Saving Throw = base save bonus + ability modifier

Three types of saving throws exist: Fortitude saves, Reflex saves, and Will saves.

Fortitude: These saves measure your ability to stand up to massive physical punishment or attacks against your vitality and health, such as poison, paralysis, and magic that causes instant death. You can apply your Constitution modifier to your Fortitude saving throws. Fortitude saves can be made against attacks or effects such as poison, disease, and paralysis.

Fortitude Saving Throw: 1d20 + base save bonus + Constitution modifier

Reflex: These saves test your ability to dodge massive attacks, such as the goo spewed forth by a dhole. You can apply your Dexterity modifier to your Reflex saving throws. Reflex saves can be made against attacks or effects such as pit traps, catching on fire, and explosions.

GM ADVICE: SAVE OR CHECK?

A character slips and falls from the roof of Waite Mansion. He tries to catch himself on the edge, while another investigator reaches forward, attempting to catch him. Are these Reflex saves or Dexterity checks?

The answer is "both." The character attempting to save himself makes a Reflex save. The character trying to grab him makes a Dexterity check.

Concept #1: Ability checks are used to accomplish something, while saves are used to avoid something.

Concept #2: Ability checks don't always reflect level. Saves always do. This is a subtle but important point. If something seems like the task should be the same for everyone, just based on ability, use a check. For example, forcing open a door is merely a reflection of the Strength score.

Concept #3: The middle ground between a save and an ability check is a skill check, such as a Climb check to get back up from the edge of a roof. A Climb check reflects level only if the character has ranks in the skill.

Reflex Saving Throw: 1d20 + base save bonus + Dexterity modifier

Will: These saves reflect your resistance to mental influence and domination, as well as many magical effects. Apply your Wisdom modifier to your Will saving throws. Will saves can be made against attacks or effects such as the *dominate person* spell or the mind attacks of an Insect from Shaggai.

Will Saving Throw: 1d20 + base save bonus + Wisdom modifier

Saving Throw Difficulty Class: The DC for a save is determined by the attack itself. For example, a Leng spider's poison allows a Fortitude save against DC 22, while Cthugha's flame burst allows a Reflex save against DC 31.

INITIATIVE

Each round, each combatant gets to do something. The combatants' initiative checks determine the order in which they act, from highest to lowest.

Initiative Checks: At the start of a battle, each combatant makes a single initiative check. An initiative check is a Dexterity check. The GM finds out what order characters are acting in, counting down from highest result to lowest. Each character acts in turn, with the check applying to all rounds of the combat (unless a character takes an action that results in her initiative changing; see Special Initiative Actions, page 75). Usually, the GM writes the names of the characters down in initiative order so that on subsequent rounds, he can move quickly from one character to the next. If two or more combatants have the same initiative check result, the combatants who are tied go in order of Dexterity (highest first). If there is still a tie, flip a coin.

Creature Initiative: Typically, the GM makes a single initiative check for groups of creatures or NPCs. At the GM's option, however, he can make separate initiative checks for individual creatures. For instance, the GM may make one initiative check for an evil cultist and another check for the three nightguants she has summoned.

Flat-Footed: At the start of a battle, before you have had a chance to act (specifically, before your first regular turn in the initiative order), you are flat-footed. You can't use your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (if any) while flat-footed.

SURPRISE

When a combat starts, if you were not aware of your enemies and they were aware of you, you're surprised.

HOW SURPRISE WORKS

Sam is scouting 40 feet ahead of his companions as they make their way through some thick woods on the trail of a murderer. Sam hears something coming toward him from a thick copse of trees ahead; his companions don't. Before he can raise a hand to signal his companions, an axe-wielding lunatic runs out of the woods. Fortunately, Sam has his shotgun ready.

The lunatic and Sam's friends are surprised, but Sam is not. He can take a move action or an attack action before anyone else can do anything. Because the murderer is known to be hopelessly insane, Sam fires his shotgun. Since the man is surprised, he does not get his +2 Dexterity bonus to Armor Class. Sam's blast hits, but does not drop the madman. With that, the surprise round ends and the first regular round begins. If Sam's initiative result is better than the murderer's, Sam can act again before the lunatic does (and the axe-toting fiend will still be flat-footed).

AWARENESS AND SURPRISE

Sometimes all the combatants on a side are aware of the enemies, sometimes none are, and sometimes only some of them are.

Determining Awareness: The GM determines who is aware of whom at the start of a battle. She may call for Listen checks, Spot checks, or other checks to see how aware the PCs are of the enemy. Some example situations:

- The group comes to a door in an old, abandoned factory. The GM knows that the shoggoth on the other side of the door can sense the party. Claire listens at the door, hears gurgling and whistling, and then tries to describe it to the rest of the group. Kristof grips his elder sign tightly while Sam breaks the door open. Both sides are aware; neither is surprised. The characters and shoggoth make initiative checks, and the battle begins.
- The group is exploring a mine that's recently been evacuated because of some mysterious accidents. Servants of Glaaki are lurking in hiding places, waiting for the right time to strike. After Marie spots one of the servants, the shambling undead creatures let out a shriek and charge. The Servants and Marie each get a move action or an attack action during the surprise round. The Servants that are close enough can attack the characters. Others can move to try to put themselves in advantageous positions or throw rocks at the flat-footed characters. Marie can run, attack, or take some other action. After the surprise round, the first regular round begins.
- Kristof is advancing down a dark alley, using a flashlight to light the way. At the end of the alley, a pair of thugs look for an easy victim, and decide to pick on the pale scholar. They leap out with knives drawn and demand that he give them his money. That's the surprise round. After their appearance, the first regular round begins. Kristof will be in a tough spot until he starts chanting spells.

The Surprise Round: If some but not all the combatants are aware of their opponents, a surprise round happens before regular rounds begin. The combatants who are aware of the opponents can act in the surprise round, so they roll for initiative. In initiative order (highest to lowest), combatants who started the battle aware of their opponents each take a move action or an attack action during the surprise round. If no one or everyone is surprised, a surprise round does not occur.

Unaware Combatants: Combatants who are unaware at the start of battle do not get to act in the surprise round. Unaware combatants are still flat-footed because they have not acted yet. Because of this, they lose any Dexterity bonus to Armor Class.

ACTIONS IN COMBAT

The fundamental actions of moving, attacking, and casting spells cover most of what you want to do in a battle. They're all described here. Other, more specialized options are touched on in Table 5–2: Other Actions (page 68), explained later in Special Initiative Actions (page 75), and clarified in Special Attacks and Damage (page 75).

THE COMBAT ROUND

Each round represents about 6 seconds in the game world. In the real world, a round is an opportunity for each character involved in a combat to act. Anything a person could reasonably do in 6 seconds, your character can do in 1 round. The most common combat actions that can be performed in 1 round—attacking, casting a spell, moving, charging, and others—are described in detail on the following pages.

Each round begins with the character with the highest initiative result and then proceeds, in initiative order, from there. Each round uses the same initiative order. When a character's turn comes up in the initiative sequence, that character performs his action for that round. (For exceptions, see Special Initiative Actions, page 75.)

For almost all purposes, there is no relevance to the end of a round or the beginning of a round. The term "round" works like the word "month." A month can mean either a calendar month or a span of time from a day in one month to the same day the next month. In the same way, a round can be a segment of game time starting with the first character to act and ending with the last, but it usually means a span of time from 1 round to the same initiative number (or "initiative count") in the next round. Effects that last a certain number of rounds end just before the same initiative count that they began on.

ACTION TYPES

An action's type essentially tells you how long it takes to perform within the framework of a 6-second round. *Call of Cthulhu* has four types of actions: free actions, move actions, attack actions, and full-round actions.

During a round, you can attempt:
—a move action and an attack action;
—an attack action and a move action;
—two move actions;
—or, a full-round action.
You can also perform free actions as the GM allows.

Free Action: Free actions consume a very small amount of time and effort. Over the span of the round, their impact is so minor that they are considered free. You can perform one or more free actions while taking another action normally. However, the GM puts reasonable limits on what you can do for free. For instance, calling out to your friends for help is a free action. Shouting out several pages of text from the *Necronomicon* takes longer.

Move Action: Move actions either involve moving or take the place of movement. As a move action, you can move up to your speed. Other move actions include (but aren't limited to) drawing a weapon, standing up from a prone position, and picking up an item (see Table 5–2: Other Actions for more details).

As an example, Sam can normally move 30 feet and attack once in a round. If he's knocked down, he could: stand up from being prone and attack once; stand up from prone and move 15 feet; or stand up from prone and pick up an item.

If you move no actual distance in a round (that is, you use your actions to do something other than moving actual distance), you can take one 5-foot step before, during, or after the action.

For example, if Sam has been knocked down, he can stand up from prone (a move action), move up to 5 feet (as a 5-foot step), and attack (as an attack action).

Attack Action: During a combat round, you can take an attack action and a move action in the same round. Making a single attack is an attack action; so is anything you might do instead of attacking that doesn't involve movement. Examples include dismissing a spell, drawing a weapon, and using the Heal skill to stabilize a dying character.

For instance, during a round Kristof could: move and attack, move and dismiss a spell, or move and use the Heal skill to help a dying friend. You can also perform as many free actions (see above) as the GM allows.

Full-Round Action: A full-round action consumes all your effort during a round. Examples include casting a 1-round spell, reloading a gun, and running up to quadruple your speed (likely fleeing for your life). If you can attack more than once in a round, doing so is a full-round action.

The only movement you can take with a full-round action is a 5-foot step before, during, or after the action. Some full-round actions do not allow you to take a 5-foot step, including those that involve moving (such as running).

ATTACKING

This section details the most common, straightforward attacks a character or creature might attempt in combat. More specialized attack actions are mentioned in Other Actions, page 68, and explained in Special Attacks and Damage, page 75.

MAKING THE ATTACK

Each round, you can take one attack action. You can move and then make a single attack, or attack and then move. Attacking more than once in a round is a full-round action.

Melee Attacks: With a normal melee weapon, you can strike any enemy within 5 feet. Enemies within 5 feet are considered adjacent to you.

Some archaic weapons have "reach," allowing you to make an attack from farther away. (For instance, a typical polearm has a reach of 10 feet; so do the poisonous snakes wielded by the *hands of Colubra.*) You can use a reach weapon to strike opponents up to the limit of your reach, but you cannot strike foes that are adjacent to you. Many creatures have natural reach, such as monsters with long, writhing tentacles.

Ranged Attacks: With a ranged weapon, you can shoot or throw at any target that is within the ranged weapon's maximum range and in line of sight. A target is in line of sight if no obstructions are between you and the target. The maximum range for a

thrown weapon is five range increments. For projectile weapons, it is ten range increments. Some ranged weapons have shorter maximum ranges, as specified in their descriptions.

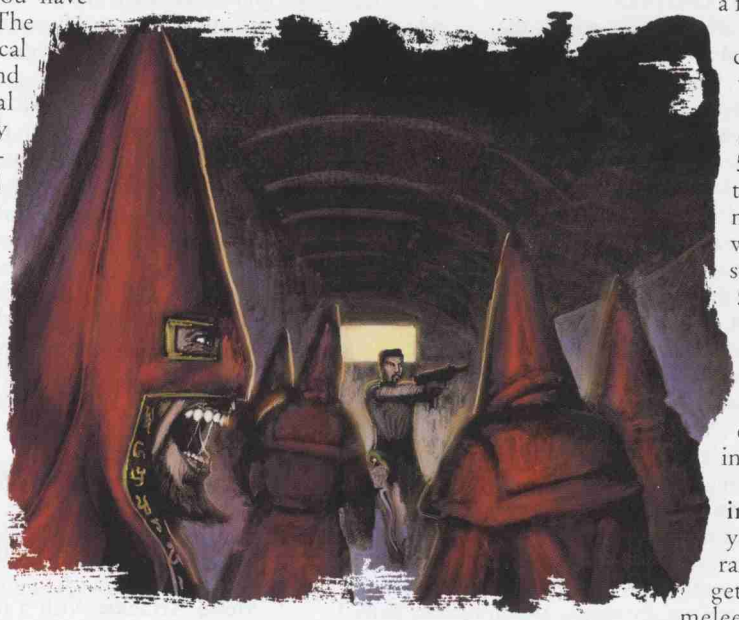
Unarmed Attacks: Unarmed attacks are covered in Unarmed Attacks, page 82, and Subdual Damage, page 75.

Attack Rolls: An attack roll represents your attempts to strike your opponent. Your attack roll is 1d20 + your attack bonus with the weapon you're using. If the result is at least as high as the target's Armor Class, you hit and deal damage.

Automatic Misses and Hits: A natural 1 (the 1d20 shows 1) on the attack roll is always a miss. A natural 20 (the 1d20 shows 20) is always a hit. A natural 20 is also a "threat": a possible critical hit (see Critical Hits, below).

Damage Rolls: If the attack result equals or exceeds the target's Armor Class, the attack is successful, and you deal damage. Roll the appropriate damage for your weapon (see Chapter 6). Damage is deducted from the target's current hit points. If the opponent's hit points drop to 0 or below, he is in bad shape (see Injury and Death, page 68).

Critical Hits: When you make an attack roll and get a natural 20 (that is, the 1d20 shows 20), you hit regardless of your target's Armor Class, and you have scored a "threat." The hit might be a critical hit (or "crit"). To find out if it's a critical hit, you immediately make a critical roll—another attack roll with all the same modifiers as the attack roll you just made. If the critical roll also results in a hit against the target's Armor Class, your original hit is a critical hit. (The critical roll just needs to hit to give you a crit. It doesn't need to show 20 again.) If the critical roll is a miss, then your hit is just a regular hit.



A critical hit means that you roll your damage more than once, with all your usual bonuses, and add the rolls together to get total damage. Unless otherwise specified, the threat range for a critical hit on an attack roll is 20, and the multiplier is ×2. (See Increased Threat Range and Increased Critical Multiplier, below.)

Increased Threat Range: Sometimes your threat range is greater than 20; you can score a threat on a lower number. Most knives, for instance, give you a threat on a natural attack roll of 19 or 20. In such cases, a roll below 20 is not an automatic hit. Any attack roll that doesn't result in a hit is not a threat.

Increased Critical Multiplier: Some weapons, such as the hatchet, deal better than double damage with a critical hit. See the Equipment chapter for more details.

Spells and Critical Hits: A spell that requires an attack roll, such as *spectral razor*, can score a critical hit. A spell attack that requires no attack roll, such as *grasp of Cthulhu*, cannot score a critical hit.

Multiple Attacks: A character with more than one attack per round must attempt a full attack to get more than one attack. (See the Full Attack section below.) A full attack is a full-round action.

Threatened: Any character or opponent who is not flat-footed "threatens" an area around himself up to 5 feet in each direction. If you're using miniatures on a map with a square grid, each square should represent 5 feet—a character in a given square threatens each adjacent square. A character who enters a threatened area has engaged in melee combat.

Shooting or Throwing into a Melee: If you shoot or throw a ranged weapon at a target that is engaged in melee with an ally, you suffer a –4 penalty on your attack roll because you have to aim carefully to avoid hitting your ally. Two characters are engaged in melee if they are enemies of each other and either one threatens the other. An unconscious or otherwise immobilized character is not considered engaged unless he is actually being attacked.

If your target (or the part of your target you're aiming at, if it's a big target) is more than 5 feet away from the nearest ally, you can avoid this –4 penalty, even if the creature you're aiming at is engaged in melee with an ally.

Fight Defensively: You can choose to fight defensively when attacking. If you do so, you take a –4 penalty on all attacks in a round to gain a +2 dodge bonus to Armor Class for the same round. This bonus lasts until your next initiative count.

FULL ATTACK

If you get more than one attack per action because your base attack bonus is high enough, because you fight with two weapons, or for some special reason (such as a feat), you must attempt a full attack to get your additional attacks. You do not need to specify the targets of your attacks ahead of time. You can see how the earlier attacks turn out before assigning the later ones.

A full attack is a full-round action. Because of this, the only movement you can take during a full attack is a 5-foot step. You may take the step before, after, or between your attacks.

TABLE 5–1:
Two-Weapon Fighting Penalties

Circumstances	Primary Hand	Off Hand
Normal penalties	–6	–10
Off-hand weapon is light	–4	–8
Ambidexterity feat	–6	–6
Two-Weapon Fighting feat	–4	–8
Off-hand weapon is light and Ambidexterity feat	–4	–4
Off-hand weapon is light and Two-Weapon Fighting feat	–2	–6
Ambidexterity feat and Two-Weapon Fighting feat	–4	–4
Off-hand weapon is light and Ambidexterity feat and Two-Weapon Fighting feat	–2	–2

If you get multiple attacks based on your base attack bonus, you must make the attacks in order from highest bonus to lowest. If you are using two weapons, you can strike with either weapon first.

Deciding between an Attack or a Full Attack: After your first attack, if you have not yet taken a 5-foot step, you can decide to move instead of making your remaining attacks. Essentially, you can decide whether to make a full attack depending on how the first attack turns out.

Attacking with Two Weapons: If you wield a second weapon in your off hand, you can get one extra attack per round with that weapon. Fighting in this way is very hard, however. You suffer a –6 penalty with your regular attack (or attacks with your primary hand) and a –10 penalty to the attack with your off hand. You can reduce these stiff penalties in three ways:

- If your off-hand weapon is light, the penalties are reduced by 2 each. A light weapon is one that has a size category smaller than yours. (An unarmed strike is always considered light.)
- The Ambidexterity feat reduces the off-hand penalty by 4.
- The Two-Weapon Fighting feat reduces both penalties by 2.

Table 5–1: Two-Weapon Fighting Penalties summarizes the interaction of all these factors.

CHARGE

Charging allows you to move up to twice your speed and attack during the action. However, it carries tight restrictions on how you can move. When you make a charge, you move at least 10 feet and make a melee attack. Charging is a full-round action.

Movement during a Charge: You must move before your attack, not after. You must move at least 10 feet and may move up to double your speed. All movement must be in a straight line, with no backing up allowed. You must stop as soon as you are within striking range of your target. You can't run past him and attack from another direction. If you have ranks in the Tumble skill, you can tumble while charging.

Attacking during a Charge: After moving, you may make a single melee attack. Since you can use the momentum of the charge in your favor, you get a +2 charge bonus on the attack roll. Since a charge is impossible without a bit of recklessness, you also suffer a –2 penalty to your Armor Class for 1 round.

Even if you have extra attacks, such as from having a high enough base attack bonus or from using multiple weapons, you only get to make one attack during a charge.

MOVEMENT

Sometimes you just want to cover ground as quickly as possible or put as much distance as you can between yourself and an opponent. The move actions covered here are ones in which you devote your efforts only to moving during a round. Other move actions are covered in Other Actions (see the next page) and Table 5–2: Other Actions.

MOVE

You can move your speed in a round as a move action. You can then either take another move action or an attack action.

DOUBLE MOVE

You can move up to double your speed in a round as two move actions. It's a "move and a move," thus a double move. For an investigator, this represents moving about six miles per hour.

If you enter an area adjacent to your foe while moving, you must halt your movement there.

RUN

You can run as a full-round action. (You do not get a 5-foot step.) When you run, you can move up to four times your normal speed in a straight line.

Unlike heroes in the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game, a *Call of Cthulhu* investigator does not lose his Dexterity bonus while running. Fleeing is a valuable tactic in this game.

You can run for a number of rounds equal to your Constitution score, but after that,

SPEEDING UP COMBAT

A couple of tricks make combat run faster.

Attack and Damage: Roll your attack die and damage die (or dice) at the same time. If you miss, you can ignore the damage, but if you hit, your friends don't have to wait for you to make a second roll for damage.

Multiple Attacks: Use dice of different colors so you can make your attack rolls all at once instead of one at a time. Designate which attack is which color before you roll.

Roll Ahead of Time: Once you know who you are attacking and how, make your attack rolls before it is your turn so you have the results ready when your turn comes around. Get your GM's permission before you roll ahead of time. Some GMs like to watch their players' attack rolls.

Dice as Counters: Use dice to keep track of how many rounds a short-duration magical effect has been active. Each round, turn the die to the next number until the effect ends.

Concealment Rolls: If you know what your chance to miss is because of your target's concealment, you can roll it along with your attack roll. If the concealment roll indicates a miss, just ignore the attack roll.

Prep Initiative: Have your GM roll the characters' and creatures' initiative checks ahead of time and prepare the order of battle. That way when a battle starts, you can skip the initiative checks and get right to the action.

Miniatures: Use miniatures, coins, or other markers to show the relative positions of the combatants. It's a lot faster to place a miniature where you want your character to be than explaining (and remembering) where your character is relative to everyone else.

TABLE 5–2: Other Actions

No Action
Delay

Free Actions
Speak
Cease concentration on a spell
Drop an item
Drop to the floor
Draw a weapon (if you're moving that round)

Move Actions
Move your speed
Climb (one-quarter your speed)
Sheathe or holster a weapon
Open a door
Pick up an item
Retrieve a stored item
Move a heavy object
Stand up from prone
Click on a flashlight
Draw a weapon (if you're not moving that round)

Attack Actions
Make a single attack
Ready (triggers a move action or an attack action)
Concentrate to maintain or redirect a spell
Dismiss a spell
Bum's rush (as an attack)
Change form (for a shapeshifter)
Use touch spell on self
Escape a grapple
Feint (see Bluff, page 24)
Heal a dying friend
Light a candle with a match
Use a skill that takes 1 action
Strike a weapon (attack)
Strike an object (attack)
Total defense

Full-Round Actions
Climb (one-half your speed)
Use a skill that takes 1 round
Coup de grace
Bum's rush (as a charge)
Extinguish flames
Load a firearm
Use touch spell on up to six friends
Refocus (no move)
Escape from a net or similar trap
Withdraw from melee

Action Type Varies (Unarmed Attacks)
Disarm‡
Grapple‡
Trip an opponent‡

† If you have the Two-Weapon Fighting feat, you can draw two light or one-handed weapons in the time it would normally take you to draw one.

‡ These attack forms substitute for a melee attack, not an action. As melee attacks, they can be used once as an attack action, once during a charge, or one or more times in a full attack.

you must succeed at a Constitution check (DC 10) to continue running. You must check again each round in which you continue to run, and the DC of this check increases by 1 for each check you have made. When you fail this check, you must stop running. A character who has run to his limit must rest for 1 minute (10 rounds) before running again. During a rest period, the character can move no faster than a normal move.

A run represents moving about twelve miles per hour for an unencumbered human.

OTHER ACTIONS

For actions not covered below, the GM lets you know how long such an action takes to perform. The variant and special attacks mentioned here are covered in Special Attacks and Damage, page 75.

TOTAL DEFENSE

By choosing "total defense," you can simply defend yourself in a round. Choosing total defense is an attack action. That round, you don't attack or perform any other activity other than moving your speed, but you get a +4 dodge bonus to your Armor Class for 1 round. Your Armor Class improves at the start of this action.

USE FEAT

Certain feats, such as Rolling Shot, let you take special actions in combat. Others are not actions themselves, but they give you a bonus when attempting something you can already do, such as Power Attack. The individual feat descriptions tell you what you need to know about them.

INJURY AND DEATH

Your hit points measure how hard you are to kill. While horrible alien creatures might have a number of special ways to hurt, maim, or kill you, usually you just take damage and lose hit points. The damage from each successful attack and each fight accumulates, eventually dropping your hit point total to 0 or below. Then you're in trouble. Luckily, you also have a number of ways to regain hit points. If you have a few days to rest, you can recover lost hit points on your own. A few rare spells exist that even restore lost hit points.

LOSS OF HIT POINTS

The most common way your character can get hurt is by taking damage and losing hit points, whether from the crushing tentacles of a chthonian or a gunshot wound. You record your character's hit point total on your character sheet. As your character takes damage, you subtract that damage from your hit points, leaving you with your current hit points. Current hit points go down when you take

THREATENED AREAS SUMMARY

Any character or creature that isn't flat-footed threatens an area around himself 5 feet in each direction. To engage that character or creature in melee, you must enter the area he threatens. If you enter an opponent's threatened area, you must stop moving—you are engaged in melee combat.

Each round, you cannot move more than 5 feet through an opponent's threatened area. If you can take a 5-foot step (see Move Action, page 65), you can use it to step out of that area. Otherwise, if you want to withdraw from a threatened area, you can use a full-round action to move directly away from your opponent up to twice your speed. The Mobility feat allows you to ignore these restrictions on movement.

If you wish to cast a spell from a threatened area, you must first succeed at a Concentration check (DC 20). The Combat Casting feat gives you a +4 bonus to this roll.

damage and go back up when you recover.

What Hit Points Represent: Hit points represent two factors in the game world: the ability to take physical punishment and keep going, and the ability to turn a serious blow into a less serious one (such as turning a fatal blow into a grazing blow or near-miss). A 10th-level character who has taken 5 points of damage is not as badly hurt as a 1st-level character who has taken that much damage. This is partly because the more experienced character is better at rolling with punches, protecting vital areas, and dodging just enough that a blow that would be fatal only wounds him. It's partly because he's just plain tougher.

A 10th-level character who has taken 5 points of damage may be about as physically hurt as a 1st-level character who has taken 1 point of damage. Details at this level, however, don't affect how the dice roll. When picturing a scene, just remember that 5 points of damage means different things to different people.

Damaging Helpless Defenders: Even if you have lots of hit points, a bullet in the brain is a bullet in the brain. When a character can't avoid damage or deflect blows somehow—that is, when he's helpless—he's in trouble (see Helpless Defenders, page 73).

Effects of Hit Point Damage: Damage gives you scars and gets blood on your clothes, but it doesn't slow you down until your current hit points reach 0 or lower.

At 0 hit points, you're disabled.

At from –1 to –9 hit points, you're dying.

At –10 or lower, you're dead.

For more details, keep reading.

DISABLED (0 HIT POINTS)

When your current hit points drop to exactly 0, you're disabled. You're not unconscious, but you're close to it. You can only take one move action or attack action each round. If you perform any strenuous activity, you take 1 point of damage after completing the act. Strenuous activities include running, attacking, casting a spell, or using any ability that requires physical exertion or mental concentration. Unless your activity increased your hit points, you are then at –1 hit points, and you're dying.

Healing that raises you above 0 makes you fully functional again, just as if you had never been reduced to 0 or below.

You can also become disabled when recovering from dying. In this case, you can have fewer than 0 hit points and still be disabled—it's a step up along the road to recovery (see Stable Characters and Recovery, below).

DYING (–1 TO –9 HIT POINTS)

When your character's current hit points drop to below 0 (but more than –10), he's dying. He immediately falls unconscious and can take no actions. At the end of each round (starting with the round in which the character dropped below 0), roll a d10 to see whether he stabilizes—this is known as a "10% roll." On a roll of a 1, he becomes stable. If he doesn't, he loses 1 hit point. If the character's hit points drop to –10 (or below), he's dead.

You can keep a dying character from losing any more hit points and make him stable with a successful Heal check (DC 15).

If any sort of healing cures the dying character of even 1 point of damage, he stops losing hit points and becomes stable.

Healing that raises the dying character's hit points to 0 makes him conscious and disabled. Healing that raises his hit points to 1 or more makes him fully functional again, just as if he had never been reduced to 0 or below.

DEAD (–10 HIT POINTS OR LOWER)

When your character's current hit points drop to –10 (or below), he's dead. A character can also die from failing a massive damage saving throw (see below), taking ability damage, or suffering an ability drain that reduces his Constitution to 0.

STABLE CHARACTERS AND RECOVERY

A stable character who has been tended by someone with appropriate training eventually regains consciousness and recovers hit points naturally. If the character has no one to tend him, however, his life is still in danger, and he may slip away.

Recovering with Help: An hour after a tended, dying character becomes stable, roll a d10. On a roll of a 1, he becomes conscious, at which point he is disabled. (This is the same effect as if he had 0 hit points, but the character still has a negative number of hit points.) If this 10% roll fails, he remains unconscious and has the same chance to revive and become disabled every hour. Even if unconscious, he recovers hit points naturally. He returns to normal when his hit points rise to 1 or higher.

Recovering without Help: A severely wounded character left alone usually dies. He has a small chance, however, of recovering on his own. Even if he seems as though he's pulling through, he can still succumb to his wounds hours or days after taking damage.

A character who stabilizes on his own (by making a 10% roll while dying) but has no one to tend for him still loses hit points, just at a slower rate. He has a 10% chance each hour of becoming conscious. Each time he misses his hourly roll to become conscious, he loses 1 hit point. He does not recover hit points through natural healing.

Even once he becomes conscious and is disabled, an unaided character does not recover hit points naturally. Instead, each day he has a 10% chance to start recovering hit points naturally (starting with that day); otherwise, he loses 1 hit point.

Once an unaided character starts recovering hit points naturally, he is no longer in danger of losing hit points (even if his current hit point total is negative).

HEALING

After taking damage, you can recover hit points through natural healing over the course of several days. In any case, you can't regain hit points beyond your hit point total.

You recover 1 hit point per character level per day of rest. For example, a 5th-level character recovers 5 hit points per day of rest. You may

engage in light, nonstrenuous travel or activity, but any combat or spellcasting prevents you from healing that day.

If you undergo "complete rest" (doing nothing for an entire day), you recover one and one-half times your character level in hit points (round down). A 5th-level character recovers 7 hit points per day of complete rest.

Higher-level characters recover lost hit points faster than lower-level characters because they're tougher, and also because a given number of lost hit points represents a lighter wound for a higher-level character.

Healing Ability Damage: Temporary ability damage returns at the rate of 1 point per day of rest (light activity, no combat or spellcasting) for each damaged ability. "Complete rest" (as defined above) restores 2 points per day for each damaged ability. You can recover ability points and hit points in the same day.

MASSIVE DAMAGE

A threshold exists, called massive damage, at which a wound threatens death no matter how many hit points a character has. If a character sustains 10 points of damage in a single attack, that character must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 15). Failure means that the character dies immediately.

Creatures have a massive damage threshold of 50 points. If that damage is subdual damage, the saving throw determines whether it is immediately knocked unconscious for 2d6 minutes.

MOVEMENT AND POSITION

Few characters in a fight are likely to stand still for long. Smart characters choose to run instead of facing overwhelming odds.

"I could not, I decided, risk an emergence into the corridor; where my footsteps would surely be heard, and where the difficulties of entering the desired room would be insuperable. My progress, if it was to be made at all, would have to be through the less solidly built connecting doors of the rooms; the locks and bolts of which I would have to force violently, using my shoulder as a battering-ram whenever they were set against me."

—H.P. Lovecraft, "The Shadow Over Innsmouth"

TACTICAL MOVEMENT

Where you can move and how long it takes you to get there are key questions in combat.

HOW FAR CAN YOUR CHARACTER MOVE?

Generally, you can move your speed in a round and still do something, such as firing a gun or opening a door. If you do nothing but move, you can move double your speed. If you flat-out run, you can move quadruple your speed (as long as you move more or less in a straight line). If you do something that requires a full round, such as attacking more than once, you can only take a 5-foot step. Some specific actions don't allow you to move at all. See Action Types (page 65) and Table 5–2: Other Actions to see how far you can move with each action.

Threatened Areas: Any character or opponent who is not flat-footed threatens the area around himself, 5 feet in each direction. (If you're using miniatures on a map with a square grid, each square should represent 5 feet—a character in a given square "threatens" each adjacent square.)

If you enter the threatened area of a foe, you must stop immediately. You cannot move more than 5 feet through a threatened area in a round. To leave a threatened area, you can withdraw as a full-round action, moving up to double your speed directly away from your opponent. Alternatively, if you can take a 5-foot step, you can use it to leave a threatened area.

PASSING THROUGH

Sometimes you can pass through an area occupied by another character or creature.

Friendly Creature: You can move through an area occupied by a friendly character.

Unfriendly Creature Not an Obstacle: You can also move through an area occupied by an unfriendly character who doesn't present an obstacle, such as one who is dead, unconscious, bound, stunned, or just cowering.

Tumbling: A trained character can attempt to tumble through a threatened area or an area occupied by an enemy. (See Tumble, page 37.)

Very Small Creature: A Fine, Diminutive, or Tiny creature can move into or through an occupied area.

Area Occupied by Creature Three Sizes Larger or Smaller: Any creature can move through an area occupied by a creature three size categories larger than it is. A dog (Small), for example, can run between the legs of an elephant (Huge).

A big creature can move through an area occupied by a creature three size categories smaller than it is. An elephant, for example, can step over a dog.

FLANKING

If you are making a melee attack against a creature, and an ally directly opposite you is threatening the creature, you and your ally flank the creature. You both gain a +2 flanking bonus on your attack rolls. The ally must be on the other side of the defender, so that the defender is directly between you.

GANGING UP

Typically, up to eight opponents can gang up on a single target the same size, provided they have room to maneuver freely. (If you're using miniatures on a square grid, a character in a given square can be threatened by opponents in the eight adjacent squares.) If the defender can fight side by side with allies, back into a corner, fight through a doorway, or otherwise protect himself, attackers can't gang up to this extent.

Picture the eight attackers as evenly spaced out surrounding the defender. The defender can reduce the opportunity for attackers to gang up based on how much of the area around himself he can block off. Backed against a wall, a creature only allows five attackers to get at him. If he's backed into a corner, only three attackers can get at him at a time. If the defender is standing in a doorway, the creature in front of him can attack normally, and one attacker on either side can attack as well, but the defender benefits from one-half cover (see Cover, page 72). If the defender is fighting in a 5-foot-wide hallway, only one attacker can get at him (unless attackers are coming at him from both ends of the hallway).

The above rules are for Medium-size and Small creatures fighting with weapons or attacks that don't have reach. Larger creatures present room for more attackers to get at them (see below). Creatures with reach attacks can get at defenders more easily, though they cannot use reach attacks against adjacent defenders (that is, defenders within 5 feet of them).

BIG AND LITTLE CREATURES IN COMBAT

Creatures smaller than Small or bigger than Medium-size have special rules relating to position. These rules concern the creatures' "faces," or sides, and their reach.

Face: Face is how wide a target a creature presents in combat. This width determines how many creatures can fight side by side in a 10-foot-wide corridor, and how many opponents can attack a creature at the same time. (When using miniatures on a square grid, face is essentially the border between the square or rectangular space that a creature occupies and the space next to it.)

In *Call of Cthulhu*, the specific direction a character or creatures faces does not matter. Even on a grid, a creature's facing is abstract, not "front, back, left, and right," because combatants are constantly moving and turning in battle. Unless a creature is immobile, it practically doesn't have a front side or a left side—at least not one you can locate on the tabletop.

Natural Reach: Natural reach is how far the creature can reach when it fights. Unlike a reach weapon, a creature with greater than normal natural reach (more than 5 feet) can still strike at creatures adjacent to it. However, the creature still only threatens an area within 5 feet of where it's standing. The creature can reach targets out to the length of its reach, it merely does not threaten all those areas.

The "Tentacle Rule": Once each round, a creature with natural reach can make a free attack on any opponent moving more than 5 feet through an area extending up to the limit of its natural reach. An opponent can avoid all these free attacks with Mobility, or avoid 1 round of these free attacks by making a Tumble check (DC 25).

As a variant rule, a creature with natural reach can also "lie in wait" as a full-round action. It can then use its natural reach as described above, but it can peform this tactic a number of times equal to its Dexterity modifier that round.

Big Creatures: Big creatures (long, Large creatures plus Huge, Gargantuan, and Colossal creatures) take up more space on the battlefield than a Medium-size human does; their face is therefore larger. More combatants can attack them because more combatants can crowd around them. As a rule of thumb, assume that one Small or Medium-size combatant can get to each 5-foot length of the creature, and four more combatants can fit into the "corners" where one side meets another. (This rule is why you can get eight people around a Medium-size creature at once. One fits on each 5-foot face, and one fits on each corner.)

Very Small Creatures: Very small creatures (Fine, Diminutive, and Tiny) have no effective natural reach. They have to enter or be in your area to attack you. You can attack into your own area if you need to, so you can attack them normally. Since they have no natural reach, they do not threaten the area around them. You can move past them without a problem.

Bigger Creatures Attacking Smaller Creatures: Creatures of different size categories can attack a defender in different numbers. For instance, a lloigor occupies a space 10 feet wide; its face is 10 feet. Only four lloigor could surround a Medium-size creature because each lloigor would take up a side or face as well as a corner.

TABLE 5–3:
Creature Size and Scale

Creature Size	Example Creature	Natural Reach	Face*
Fine	Insect from Shaggai	0	1/2 ft.×1/2 ft.
Diminutive	Toad	0	1 ft.×1 ft.
Tiny	Cat	0	2 1/2 ft.×2 1/2 ft.
Small	Dog	5 ft.	5 ft.×5 ft.
Medium-size	Human	5 ft.	5 ft.×5 ft.
Large (tall)**	Elder Thing	10 ft.	5 ft.×5 ft.
Large (long)**	Horse	5 ft.	5 ft.×10 ft.
Huge (tall)**	Lloigor	15 ft.	10 ft.×10 ft.
Huge (long)**	Hunting Horror	10 ft.	10 ft.×20 ft.
	Leng Spider	10 ft.	15 ft.×15 ft.
Gargantuan (tall)**	Cthugha	20 ft.	20 ft.×20 ft.
Gargantuan (long)**	Shudde M'ell	10 ft.†	20 ft.×40 ft.
	Shoggoth	15 ft.	30 ft.×30 ft.
Colossal (tall)**	Cthulhu	25 ft.	40 ft.×40 ft.
Colossal (long)**	Mordiggian	15 ft.	40 ft.×80 ft.

*Listed width by length.
**Tall creatures are upright. Long creatures are primarily horizontal. Big, long creatures may be in any of several shapes. See the Creatures chapter for details.
†Bite attack.

COMBAT MODIFIERS

Sometimes you just have to go toe-to-toe in a fight, but you can usually gain some advantage by seeking a better position, either offensively or defensively. This section covers the rules for when you can line up a particularly good attack or are forced to make a disadvantageous one.

TABLE 5–4:
Attack Roll Modifiers

Circumstance	Melee	Ranged
Attacker flanking defender*	+2	—
Attacker on higher ground	+1	+0
Attacker prone	–4	—**
Attacker invisible	+2†	+2†
Defender sitting or kneeling	+2	See Cover
Defender prone	+4	See Cover
Defender cowering or stunned	+2†	+2†
Defender climbing	+2†	+2†
Defender surprised or flat-footed	+0†	+0†
Defender running	+0†	–2†
Defender grappling (attacker not)	+0†	+0††
Defender pinned	+4†	–4†
Defender has cover	— See Cover —	
Defender concealed or invisible	— See Concealment —	
Defender helpless (such as when paralyzed, sleeping, or bound)	See Helpless Defenders	

*You flank a defender when you have an ally on the opposite side of the defender threatening him.
**Some primitive weapons, such as bows, can't be used while the attacker is prone, but you can use a firearm while prone.
†The defender loses any Dexterity bonus to Armor Class.
††Roll randomly to see which grappling combatant you strike. That defender loses any Dexterity bonus to Armor Class.

FAVORABLE AND UNFAVORABLE CONDITIONS

Depending on the situation, you may gain bonuses or suffer penalties on your attack roll. Your GM judges what bonuses and penalties apply, using Table 5–4: Attack Roll Modifiers as a guide.

COVER

One of the best defenses available is cover. By taking cover behind a tree, a wall, the side of a car, or the edge of a sarcophogus, you can protect yourself from attacks, especially ranged attacks.

Cover provides a bonus to your Armor Class. The more cover you have, the bigger the bonus.

Cover and Reach Attacks: If you're using a reach weapon (or, more likely, if a creature with natural reach is attacking you), a character standing between you and your target provides cover to your target. Generally, if both of the other creatures are the same size, the one in the back has one-half cover (+4 Armor Class). If you hit the creature providing cover, it takes no damage because you strike it ineffectually. (See Striking the Cover Instead of a Missed Target for more details.)

Degree of Cover: Cover is assessed in subjective measurements of how much protection it offers you. Your GM determines the value of cover. This measure is not a strict mathematical calculation because you gain more value from covering the parts of your body that are more likely to be struck. If the bottom half of your body is covered (such as behind a 3-foot wall), that only gives you one-quarter cover. If one side or the other of your body is covered, as when you're partly behind a corner, you get one-half cover.

Table 5–5: Cover gives examples of various situations that usually produce certain degrees of cover. These examples might not hold true in exceptional circumstances. For example, a 6-foot wall might provide a 12-foot gug one-half cover in a melee against humans, who have a hard time striking a gug's upper body in melee, but the same wall might grant a gug no cover in melee against a subterranean chthonian.

Cover Armor Class Bonus: Table 5–5: Cover gives the Armor Class bonuses for different degrees of cover. Add the relevant number to your Armor Class. Different cover bonuses to AC do not stack; if more than one condition from Table 5–5 applies, use the largest cover bonus. For example, kneeling gives you a +2 cover bonus to your Armor Class against ranged weapons. Kneeling behind a low wall could change your cover from one-quarter (+2) to three-quarters (+7). You would not get the +2 bonus for kneeling on top of the +7 cover bonus.

Cover Reflex Save Bonus: Table 5–5: Cover lists the bonuses to Reflex save for different degrees of cover. Add this bonus on Reflex saves against attacks that affect an area, such as the goo spewed by a dhole. If you have nine-tenths cover, and a Reflex save would normally reduce damage by half, the damage is negated instead. These bonuses, however, only apply to attacks that originate or spread out from a point on the other side of the cover.

Striking the Cover Instead of a Missed Target: If it ever becomes important to know whether the cover was actually struck by an incoming attack that misses the intended target, the GM should determine if the attack roll would have hit the protected target without cover. If the attack roll falls within a range low enough to miss the target with cover, but high enough to strike the target if there had been no cover, the object used for cover was struck. This can be particularly important to know in cases where a character uses another creature as cover. In such a case, if the cover is struck and the attack roll exceeds the Armor Class of the covering creature, the covering creature takes the damage intended for the target.

TABLE 5–5:
Cover

Degree of Cover	Example	Bonus to AC	Bonus to Reflex Saves
One-quarter	A human standing behind a 3-ft. high wall; a character who is targeted by a ranged attack while sitting or kneeling	+2	+1
One-half	Fighting from around a corner or a tree; behind a creature of same size; a character who is targeted by a ranged attack while prone	+4	+2
Three-quarters	Peering around a corner or a tree	+7	+3
Nine-tenths	Standing behind a door that's slightly ajar	+10	+4*
Total	On the other side of a solid wall	—	—

*Half damage if save is failed; no damage if successful.

make two rolls, or you can just make both rolls at the same time.

When multiple concealment conditions apply to a defender—behind dense foliage in near total darkness, for example—use the one that would produce the highest miss chance. Do not add the miss chances together.

If the covering creature has a Dexterity bonus to Armor Class or a dodge bonus, and this bonus keeps the covering creature from being hit, then the original target is hit instead. The covering creature has dodged out of the way and didn't provide cover after all. A covering creature can choose not to apply his Dexterity bonus or his dodge bonus to Armor Class, if his intent is to try to take the damage in order to keep the covered character from being hit.

CONCEALMENT

Besides cover, another way to avoid attacks is by making it hard for opponents to know where you are. Concealment includes all circumstances where nothing physically blocks a blow or shot, but where something interferes with an attacker's accuracy.

Concealment: Concealment is subjectively measured as to how well concealed the defender is. Examples of what might qualify as concealment of various degrees are given on Table 5–6: Concealment. Concealment always depends on the point of view of the attacker. Total darkness, for example, is meaningless to a creature with darkvision. Moderate darkness doesn't hamper a creature with low-light vision, and near total darkness is only one-half concealment for such a creature (see the Creatures chapter for more detail).

Concealment Miss Chance: Concealment gives the subject of a successful attack a chance that the attacker missed because of the concealment. If the attacker hits, the defender must make a miss chance roll to avoid being struck.

Practically, it doesn't matter who makes the roll or whether it's rolled before or after the attack roll. To save time, you can first make the roll that's most likely to result in a miss, so that you're less likely to have to

TABLE 5–6:
Concealment

Concealment	Example	Miss Chance
One-quarter	Light fog; moderate darkness; light foliage	10%
One-half	Dense fog at 5 ft.	20%
Three-quarters	Dense foliage	30%
Nine-tenths	Near total darkness	40%
Total	Defender invisible; attacker blind; total darkness; dense fog at 10 ft.	50% and must guess target's location

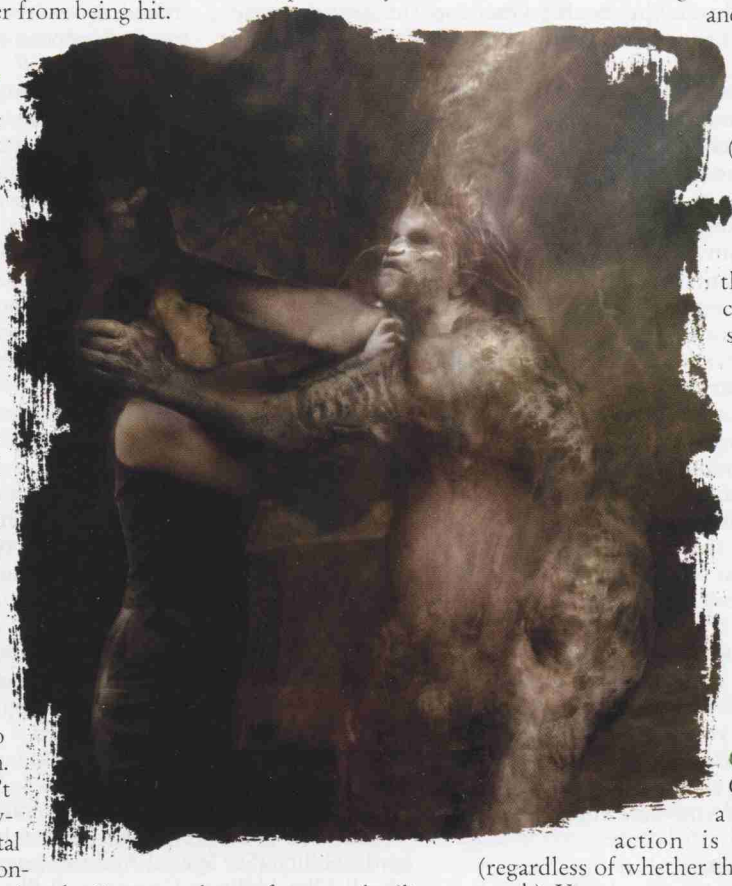
HELPLESS DEFENDERS

A helpless foe—one who is bound, sleeping, paralyzed, unconscious, comatose, or otherwise at your mercy—is an easy target.

Normal Attack: A melee attack against a helpless character gets a +4 circumstance bonus on the attack roll. A ranged attack does not get this bonus. A helpless defender can't use his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class. In fact, his Dexterity score is treated as if it were 0, and his Dexterity modifier to Armor Class as if it were –5.

Coup de Grace: As a full-round action, you can use a melee weapon to deliver a coup de grace to a helpless foe. You can use a firearm instead, provided you're within 5 feet of the target. You automatically hit and score a critical hit. If the defender survives the damage, he must still make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + damage dealt) or die.

You can't deliver a coup de grace against a creature that is immune to critical hits, such as a shoggoth.



MAGIC

The ways of spells and magic are for the very brave or the very foolish, particularly in combat situations. These are the most common actions involving the use of magic.

CASTING A SPELL

Casting a spell with a casting time of 1 action is an attack action (regardless of whether the spell is actually an attack). You can move and then cast the spell, or cast the spell and then move.

Casting a spell with a casting time of 1 full round is a full-round action. You can take a 5-foot step before, during, or after casting such a spell, but cannot otherwise move.

You cannot cast a spell from a threatened area—within 5 feet of a foe—unless you "cast on the defensive" (see below). The Magic chapter has more details on casting spells, their effects, saving throws, and so on.

You retain your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class while casting.

Spell Components: To cast a spell with a verbal (V) component, you must speak in a firm voice. If you're gagged, you can't cast such a spell. A spellcaster who has been deafened has a 20% chance to spoil any spell he tries to cast if that spell has a verbal component.

To cast a spell with a somatic (S) component, you must gesture freely with at least one hand. You can't cast a spell of this type while bound, grappled, or with both your hands full or occupied (such as while swimming or clinging to the side of a cliff).

To cast a spell with a material (M) or focus (F) component, you have to have the proper materials, as described by the spell. Unless these materials are elaborate, preparing these materials is a free action.

Concentration: You must concentrate to cast a spell. If you can't concentrate, such as when hundreds of malignant insects are biting off little pieces of your skin, you can't cast a spell. If you start casting a spell, but something interferes with your concentration, such as a Hound of Tindalos leaping out of a wall and seizing you in its teeth, you must make a Concentration check or lose the spell. The check's DC depends on what is threatening your concentration (see the Concentration skill, page 26). If you fail, the spell fizzles with no effect.

Concentrating to Maintain a Spell: Some spells require continued concentration to keep them going. Concentrating to maintain a spell is an attack action; you cannot attack while concentrating on a spell (unless the spell requires a touch attack to discharge; see below). Anything that could break your concentration when casting a spell can keep you from concentrating to maintain a spell. If your concentration breaks, the spell ends.

Casting Time: Many spells have a casting time of 1 action. You can cast one of these spells as an attack action; you cannot attack while casting one of them (unless the spell requires a touch attack; see below). A spell cast in this manner takes effect immediately.

A few spells have a casting time of 1 full round or even longer. A spell that takes 1 full round to cast is a full-round action. It comes into effect just before the beginning of your turn in the round after you began casting the spell. You can then act normally after the spell has been completed. A spell that takes 1 minute to cast comes into effect just before your turn 1 minute later (and for each of those 10 rounds, you are casting a spell as a full-round action).

When you begin a spell that takes a full round or longer to cast, you must continue to concentrate from 1 round to just before your turn in the next round (at least). If you lose concentration after starting the spell and before it is complete, you lose the spell. If you are attacked, you lose your concentration unless you were "casting on the defensive."

Casting on the Defensive: You may attempt to cast a spell while "on the defensive." This means that you're casting the spell while paying attention to threats and avoiding blows in an area threatened by enemies. This requires a Concentration check (DC 20) to pull off. If you succeed, you can cast a spell from a threatened area or complete casting a spell despite taking damage. Failure means that you lose the spell. While casting on the defensive, you must make this check each time you take damage.

Touch Spells in Combat: A few spells have a range of Touch. To use these spells, you cast the spell and then touch the subject, either in the same round or any time later. With the same action you use to cast the spell, you may also touch (or attempt to touch) the target. You may take your move before casting the spell, after touching the target, or between casting the spell and touching the target. You can automatically touch one friend or use the spell on yourself, but to touch an opponent, you must succeed at an attack.

Holding the Charge: If you don't discharge the spell on the round you cast the spell, you can hold the charge indefinitely. You can continue to make touch attacks round after round. You can touch one friend as an attack action or up to six friends as a full-round action. If you touch anything or anyone while holding a charge, even unintentionally, the spell discharges. If you cast another spell, the touch spell dissipates. Alternatively, you may make a normal unarmed attack while holding a charge. If the attack hits, the spell discharges.

Touch Attacks: If the first attempt to touch your target fails, you can try again later (as long as you're holding the charge). Since you need only touch your enemy, you can make a touch attack instead of a regular attack; either way, this takes an attack action.

Touch attacks come in two types: melee touch attacks (for touches made with, say, your hand) and ranged touch attacks. You can score critical hits with either type of attack. Your opponent's Armor Class against a touch attack does not include any armor bonus, shield bonus (if any), or natural armor bonus. His size modifier, Dexterity modifier, and deflection bonus (if any) all apply normally.

USE SPECIAL ABILITY

Using a special ability is usually an action, but whether it is an attack action, a full-round action, or not an action at all is defined by the ability. (See Special Abilities, page 129.)

Spell-Like Abilities: Using a spell-like ability works like casting a spell in that spell-like abilities can be disrupted. If your concentration is broken, the attempt to use the ability fails, but the attempt counts as if you had used the ability. (For example, it counts against your daily limit, if you have one.) The casting time of a spell-like ability is 1 action, making its use an attack action unless the ability description notes otherwise.

Using a Spell-Like Ability on the Defensive: You may attempt to use a spell-like ability on the defensive, just as with a spell. If the Concentration check (DC 20) fails, you can't use the ability, but the attempt counts as if you had used the ability. (For example, it counts against your daily limit, if you have one.)

Supernatural Abilities: Using a supernatural ability is usually an attack action (unless defined otherwise by the ability description). Its use cannot be disrupted and does not require concentration.

Extraordinary Abilities: Using an extraordinary ability is usually not an action because most extraordinary abilities automatically happen in a reactive fashion. Those extraordinary abilities that are actions are usually attack actions that cannot be disrupted and do not require concentration.

How Readying Works: Claire and her friends are menaced by deep ones. On initiative count 14, Claire specifies that she is going to shoot the first deep one that comes within 25 feet. On 10, Sam moves next to Claire and readies an attack with a sledgehammer so that he can strike any foe that comes into the area he threatens. On 7, the deep ones charge. As soon as the lead deep one is within 25 feet of Claire, she shoots at it, but she misses. Sam swings at the first deep one to reach him, and drops it with a critical hit. Other deep ones, however, can reach him and attack him. From this point on, Claire and Sam act on initiative count 7 (and before the deep ones).

Readying an Action: You can only ready one move action or attack action in a round. To do so, specify the action you will take and the conditions under which you will take it. Then, any time before your next action, you may take the readied action in response to those conditions. The readied action occurs before the action that triggers it. For the rest of the fight, your initiative number is the count on which you took the readied action, and you act immediately ahead of the character whose action triggered your readied action.

Initiative Consequences of Readying: Your initiative result becomes the count on which you took the readied action. If you come to your next action and have not yet performed your readied action, you don't get to take that action (though you can ready the same action again). If you take your readied action in the next round, before your regular turn comes up, your initiative rises to that new point in the order of battle, and you do not get your regular action that round.

SPECIAL INITIATIVE ACTIONS

Usually you act as soon as you can in combat, but sometimes you want to act later, at a better time, or in response to the actions of someone else.

DELAY

By choosing to delay, you take no action and then act normally at whatever initiative count you decide to act. When you delay, you voluntarily reduce your own initiative result for the rest of the combat. When your new, lower initiative count comes up later in the same round, you can act normally. You can specify this new initiative result or just wait until some time later in the round and act then, thus fixing your new initiative count at that point.

Delaying is useful if you need to see what your friends or enemies are doing before you decide what to do. You cannot, however, interrupt anyone's action with a delayed action (as you can with a readied action). The price you pay is lost initiative. You never get back the time you spent waiting to see what's going to happen.

Delaying Limits: A character can only voluntarily lower her initiative to –10 minus her initiative bonus. (For instance, a character with a +4 initiative bonus cannot delay later than –14.) When the initiative count reaches –10 minus a delaying character's initiative bonus, that character must act or forfeit any action that round.

Multiple Characters Delaying: If multiple characters are delaying, the one with the highest initiative bonus (or highest Dexterity, in case of a tie) has the advantage. If two or more delaying characters both want to act on the same initiative count, the one with the highest bonus gets to go first. If two or more characters are trying to delay, the one with the highest initiative bonus gets to go last.

For instance, Marie and a mysterious stranger run across each other in a back alley. Marie's initiative count is 17, higher than the stranger's. She doesn't want to commit to attacking, fleeing, or talking, so she delays, intending to act after the stranger acts. The stranger's initiative count is 12. He stares at her, motionless, and delays as well. The initiative count drops down, and neither character acts. (If there were other characters in the encounter, they would act on their initiative counts.)

Finally, the count reaches –14, Marie's limit (thanks to her +4 initiative bonus), and the stranger still hasn't acted. Marie has to choose, and the stranger (who apparently has a higher initiative bonus) will get to respond. Marie decides to forfeit her action.

"What do you want?" asks Marie, hoping for the best. The patient stranger whispers, "Your skin," draws a straight razor, and slashes at Marie. Combat ensues, but Marie cannot act until her new initiative count next round.

READY

Readying lets you prepare to take an action later, after your turn is over, but before your next one has begun. Readying is an attack action, so you can move as well.

REFOCUS

Refocusing is a full-round action during which you cannot move. A character can choose to do nothing for an entire round and refocus his thoughts as he gets his bearings and appraises the situation. The effect is that on the following rounds of the combat, the character moves up in the initiative count and is positioned as though he had rolled a 20 on his initiative check. Other modifiers (such as for Dexterity and for the Improved Initiative feat) also apply to this total when determining the initiative check result.

SPECIAL ATTACKS AND DAMAGE

This section covers subdual damage, unarmed attacks, grappling, explosives, thrown weapons that splash (such as acid), attacking objects (such as trying to destroy a mi-go's alien device or hacking apart a wooden chest), and an assortment of other special attacks.

SUBDUAL DAMAGE

Sometimes you get roughed up or weakened, such as when you're pummeled repeatedly in a fistfight or exhausted after fleeing from Tcho-Tchos through a Cambodian jungle. This sort of stress won't kill you, but it can knock you out or make you faint.

Nonlethal damage is subdual damage. If you take enough subdual damage, you fall unconscious, but you don't die. Subdual damage goes away much faster than standard damage does.

How Subdual Damage Works: While walking through a parking lot, Sam is jumped by two thugs breaking into his car. They exchange blows, and Sam takes 4 points of subdual damage. He has 11 hit points, so 4 points of subdual damage doesn't bother him. He lands a lucky blow for 6 points of subdual damage, enough to stagger one of the thugs, since he only has 6 hit points. His next blow knocks the man unconscious (since the thug's subdual damage exceeds his current hit points). Then Sam takes another 5 points of subdual damage, putting his total at 9.

When Sam turns on the second brawler, the car thief pulls out a switchblade and stabs Sam for 5 points of normal (not subdual) damage. That drops Sam's hit points to 6. Now that Sam's subdual damage (9) is higher than his current hit points (6), he's knocked out. He still has 6 hit points. He's not dying, but he's unconscious. The thug with the switchblade takes off before the cops arrive.

Dealing Subdual Damage: Certain attacks deal subdual damage, such as a normal human's unarmed strikes (including punches and kicks). Other stresses, such as heat or exhaustion, also deal subdual damage. When you take subdual damage, keep a running total of how much you have accumulated. Do not deduct the subdual damage number from your current hit points. It is not real damage. Instead, when your subdual damage equals your current hit points, you're staggered. When it exceeds your current hit points, you fall unconscious. It doesn't matter whether the subdual damage exceeds your current hit points because the subdual damage has gone up or because your current hit points have gone down.

Subdual Damage with a Weapon that Deals Normal Damage: You can use a melee weapon that deals normal damage to deal subdual damage instead, but you suffer a –4 penalty on your attack roll because you have to use the flat of the blade, strike in nonvital areas, or check your swing. You cannot use a ranged weapon to deal subdual damage.

Normal Damage with a Weapon that Deals Subdual Damage: You can use a weapon that deals subdual damage, including an unarmed strike, to deal normal damage instead. However, you suffer a –4 penalty on your attack roll because you have to strike in the most vulnerable areas to cause normal damage.

Staggered and Unconscious: When your subdual damage exactly equals your current hit points, you're staggered. You're so badly weakened that you can only take one move action or attack action each round. You cease being staggered when your hit points exceed your subdual damage again.

When your subdual damage exceeds your current hit points, you fall unconscious. While unconscious, you are helpless (see Helpless Defenders, page 73).

Each full minute that you're unconscious, you have a 10% chance to wake up and be staggered until your hit points exceed your subdual damage again. Nothing bad happens to you if you miss this roll.

Healing Subdual Damage: You heal subdual damage at the rate of 1 hit point per hour per character level. For example, a 7th-level character heals 7 points of subdual damage each hour until all the subdual damage is gone.

If a spell or a magical power cures hit point damage, it also removes an equal amount of subdual damage, if any.

ATTACK AN OBJECT

Sometimes you need to attack or break an object, such as when you want to smash a loathsome statue, strike a foe's weapon, or break open a door.

STRIKING AN OBJECT

Objects are easier to hit than creatures because they usually don't move, but many are tough enough to shrug off some damage from each blow.

How Striking an Object Works: While skulking through the attic of a Viennese auction house, Marie finds an old sea chest. She can't pick the lock, so Sam volunteers to open it "his way." Before Marie can stop him, he chops at it with a wood axe he just found, dealing 10 points of damage. The chest, made of wood, has a hardness of 5, so the chest only takes 5 points of damage. The wood is 1 inch thick, so it originally had 10 hit points. Now it has 5.

The GM makes Listen checks for the security guards downstairs—time is of the essence. Sam has gouged the wood, but not yet broken the chest open. With his second blow, he deals 4 points of damage. That's lower than the chest's hardness, so the chest takes no damage—a glancing blow. His third blow, however, deals 12 points of damage (which means the chest takes 7). The chest breaks open, revealing a stolen statuette! Unbeknownst to the investigators, however, the guards have been running up the stairs for 2 rounds.

Armor Class: Objects are harder or easier to hit depending on several factors.

Inanimate, Immobile Objects: An inanimate, immobile object has a Armor Class of 10 + its Dexterity modifier (–5 for no Dexterity) + its size modifier. Immobile objects, such as a chandelier hanging from a ceiling, are easy to hit. With a melee weapon, you get a +4 bonus on your attack roll. If you take a full-round action to line up a shot, you get an automatic hit with a melee weapon or a +5 attack bonus with a ranged weapon. Objects, however, are immune to critical hits.

Held, Carried, or Worn Objects: Objects that are held, carried, or worn by a creature are harder to hit. The object uses the creature's Dexterity modifier (not its own –5) and any deflection bonus to Armor Class the creature or character may have. You don't get any special bonus for attacking the object. If it's in the creature's hand (or tentacle, or whatever), it gets a +5 bonus to Armor Class because the creature can move it quickly out of harm's way. If you want to destroy a creature's weapon, see Striking a Weapon on page 77. If you want to knock it out of his hand, use the Disarm rules on page 78.

Damage to Objects: The amount of damage an object can withstand depends on what it's made out of and how big it is. Weapon damage is

TABLE 5–7:
Size and Armor Class of Objects

Size (Example)	Armor Class Modifier	Size (Example)	Armor Class Modifier
Colossal (broad side of a barn)	–8	Medium-size (barrel)	+0
		Small (chair)	+1
Gargantuan (narrow side of a barn)	–4	Tiny (tome)	+2
		Diminutive (bottle)	+4
Huge (wagon)	–2	Fine (gem)	+8
Large (big door)	–1		

Vulnerability to Certain Attacks: The GM may rule that certain attacks are especially successful against particular objects. For example, it's easy to light a curtain on fire or rip up a letter.

Hardness: Each object has hardness—a number that represents how well it resists damage. Whenever an object takes damage, subtract its hardness from the damage. Only damage in excess of its hardness is deducted from the object's hit points (see Table 5–8: Substance Hardness and Hit Points; Table 5–11: Object Hardness and Hit Points; and Table 5–9: Weapon Hardness and Hit Points).

Hit Points: An object's hit point total depends on what it is made of and how big it is (see one of the three tables in the last section). When an object's hit points reach 0, it's ruined.

Very large objects have separate hit point totals for different sections. For example, you can smash through a car door without destroying the entire vehicle.

Saving Throws: Nonmagical, unattended items never make saving throws. They are considered to have failed their saving throws. An item attended by a character (being grasped, touched, or worn) receives a saving throw just as if the character herself were making the saving throw.

Artifacts (and other magic items) always get saving throws. An artifact's Fortitude, Reflex, and Will save bonuses are equal to (2 + one-half the level of the creature or character who made it). An attended artifact makes a saving throw, using either the owner's or its own saving throw bonus, whichever is better.

TABLE 5–8:
Substance Hardness and Hit Points

Substance	Hardness	Hit Points
Paper	0	2/inch of thickness
Rope	0	2/inch of thickness
Glass	1	1/inch of thickness
Hard Rubber	2	1/inch of thickness
Plastic	1	2/inch of thickness
Ice	0	3/inch of thickness
Wood	5	10/inch of thickness
Fiberglass	6	10/inch of thickness
Stone	8	15/inch of thickness
Iron	10	30/inch of thickness

TABLE 5–9:
Weapon Hardness and Hit Points

Weapon	Example	Hardness	HP
Tiny blade	Dagger	10	1
Medium-size blade	Saber	10	5
Small hafted weapon	Handaxe	5	2
Medium-size hafted weapon	Shovel	5	5
Handgun	.38	10	5
Rifle/shotgun	.30-06	10	8

TABLE 5–10:
DCs to Break or Burst Items

Strength Check to:	DC	Strength Check to:	DC
Break down simple door	13	Bend iron bars	24
Break down good door	18	Break barred door	25
Break down strong door	23	Burst chain bonds	26
Burst rope bonds	23	Break down iron door	28

TABLE 5–11:
Object Hardness and Hit Points

Object	Hardness	Hit Points	Break DC
Rope (1 inch diam.)	0	2	23
Bottle	1	1	12
Simple wooden door	5	10	13
Wooden pole	5	2	14
Small chest	5	1	17
Good wooden door	5	15	18
Strong wooden door	5	20	23
Car door	6	10	28
Masonry wall (1 ft. thick)	8	90	35
Hewn stone (3 ft. thick)	8	540	50
Chain	10	5	26
Handcuffs	10	10	26
Iron door (2 in. thick)	10	60	28

rolled normally against objects.

Immunities: Inanimate objects are immune to critical hits. Objects are immune to subdual damage.

Ranged Weapon Damage: Objects take half damage from ranged weapons (except for artillery weapons and the like). Divide the damage by 2 before applying the object's hardness.

Energy Attacks: Objects take half damage from acid, fire, and electricity attacks. Divide the damage by 2 before applying the hardness. Cold attacks deal one-quarter damage to objects. Sonic attacks deal full damage to objects.

Ineffective Weapons: The GM may determine that certain weapons just can't deal damage effectively to certain objects. For example, you'll have a hard time chopping down a door by firing a pistol at it or cutting a rope with a club.

STRIKING A WEAPON

You can use a melee attack with a slashing or bludgeoning weapon to strike a weapon your opponent is holding. The attacking weapon must be no more than one size category smaller than the weapon attacked. You and the defender make opposed attack rolls. If you win, you have landed a solid blow against the defender's weapon. Roll damage and deal it to the weapon (see Striking an Object, above).

Enchanted Weapons: Items like enchanted knives have their own particular strengths. An attacker cannot damage a weapon that has an enhancement bonus (from a spell like *enchant item* or *magic weapon*) unless the attacker's weapon has at least as high an enhancement bonus as the weapon struck. Each +1 of enhancement bonus also adds 1 to the item's hardness and hit points.

BREAKING ITEMS

When you try to break something with sudden force rather than by dealing regular damage, use a Strength check to see if you succeed. The DC depends more on the construction of the item than on the material. For instance, an iron door with a weak lock can be forced open much more easily than it can be hacked down.

If an item has lost half or more of its hit points, the DC to break it drops by 2.

BUM'S RUSH

You can attempt a bum's rush as an attack action or a charge. If you succeed, you push an opponent straight back instead of attacking him. You can only bum's rush an opponent who is no more than one size category larger than you, the same size, or smaller.

Initiating a Bum's Rush: First, you move into the defender's space. At this point, the defender immediately gets to make a single attack against you as a free action. This free attack uses the defender's best attack bonus. Next, you and the defender make opposed Strength checks. You each add a +4 bonus for each size category you are above Medium-size or a –4 penalty for each size category you are below Medium-size. You get a +2 charge bonus if you were charging (plus a –2 penalty to your Armor Class). The defender gets a +4 stability bonus if he has more than two legs or is otherwise exceptionally stable.

Bum's Rush Results: If you beat the defender, you push him back 5 feet. If you wish to move with the defender, you can push him back up to a distance of an additional 1 foot for each point by which you exceed the defender's check result. You can't, however, exceed your normal movement limit.

If you fail to beat the defender's Strength check, you move 5 feet straight back to where you were before you moved into his space. If that space is occupied, you fall prone in that space (see Table 5–4: Attack Roll Modifiers).

DISARM

As a melee attack, you may make a disarm attempt. You and the defender make opposed attack rolls with your respective weapons. If the weapons are different sizes, the combatant with the larger weapon gets a bonus on the attack roll of +4 per difference in size category. Human hands are treated as Small weapons; a creature's hands/pincers/claws are usually one size category smaller than the creature. If the defender is using a weapon in two hands, he gets an additional +4 bonus. If you beat the defender, the defender is disarmed. If you attempted the disarm action unarmed, you now have the weapon. Otherwise, it's on the ground at the defender's feet. If you fail, then the defender may immediately react and make an attempt to disarm you with the same sort of opposed melee attack roll.

"The call of the clan had been given, and before the foul procession had time even to be frightened a cloud of smothering fur and a phalanx of murderous claws were tidally and tempestuously upon it. The flutes stopped, and there were shrieks in the night. Dying, almost humans screamed, and cats spit and yowled and roared, but the toad-things made never a sound as their stinking green ichor oozed fatally upon that porous earth with the obscene fungi."

—*H.P. Lovecraft,*
The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath

GRAPPLE

Grappling means wrestling and struggling hand-to-hand. It's tricky to perform, but sometimes you want to pin foes instead of killing them, and sometimes you have little choice in the matter. For monsters, grappling can mean trapping you in a toothy maw or holding you down so it can chew you up.

GRAPPLE CHECKS

Repeatedly in a grapple, you need to make opposed grapple checks against an opponent. A grapple check is simliar to a melee attack roll. Your attack bonus on a grapple check is:

Base attack bonus + Strength modifier + special size modifier

Special Size Modifier: The special size modifiers for a grapple check are as follows: Colossal +16, Gargantuan +12, Huge +8, Large +4, Medium-size +0, Small –4, Tiny –8, Diminutive –12, Fine –16. Use this number in place of the normal size modifier you use when making an attack roll.

STARTING A GRAPPLE

To start a grapple, you first need to grab and hold your target. Before you determine whether you succeed, the target immediately gets to make a single attack against you as a free action. This free attack uses the target's best attack bonus.

Attempting to start a grapple is the equivalent of making a melee attack. If you get multiple attacks in a round, you can attempt to start a grapple multiple times (at your successively lower base attack bonuses). When you grapple, you must grab your opponent, hold him, and move into his space.

Grab: Make a melee touch attack to grab the target. If you fail to hit the target, you fail to start the grapple.

Hold: Immediately after succeeding at the grab, make an opposed grapple check. If you succeed, you have started the grapple, and you deal damage to the target as if with an unarmed strike. If you get multiple attacks in a round, you may continue to attempt the hold multiple times after one successful grab.

If you lose, you fail to start the grapple. You automatically lose an attempt to hold if the target is two or more size categories larger than you are (but you can still make an attempt to grab such a target without holding it).

Move In: To maintain the grapple, you must immediately move into your opponent's space. This doesn't require a 5-foot step or a move action, but if you can't physically enter his space, you can't grapple.

Grappling: If you have fulfilled these three conditions, you and your target are grappling.

JOINING A GRAPPLE

If your target is already grappling someone else, then you can use an attack to start a grapple, as above, except that your grab automatically succeeds. You still have to make a successful opposed grapple check to hold your opponent and move in to be part of the grapple.

IF YOU'RE GRAPPLING

When you are grappling (regardless of who started the grapple), you can make an opposed grapple check as a melee attack. (This is a separate melee attack from the one that started the grapple.) If you win, you can use one of the following tactics.

Damage Your Opponent: You deal subdual damage as with an unarmed strike (1d3 points for Medium-size attackers or 1d2 points for Small attackers, plus Strength modifiers). If you want to deal normal damage, you suffer a –4 penalty on your grapple check to deal damage.

Pin: You hold your opponent immobile for 1 round. If you get multiple attacks, you can use subsequent attacks to damage your opponent. You can't use a weapon on a pinned character or attempt to damage or pin a second opponent while holding a pin on the first.

While you're pinned, opponents other than the one pinning you get a +4 bonus on attack rolls against you (although you're not helpless).

Break Another's Pin: You can break the hold that an opponent has over an ally.

Escape: You can escape the grapple. You can take whatever movement you get. If more than one opponent is grappling you, your grapple check result has to beat all their check results to escape. Opponents don't have to try to hold you if they don't want to do so.

IF YOU'RE PINNED

When an opponent has pinned you, you are held immobile (but not helpless) for 1 round. You can make an opposed grapple check as a melee attack. If you win, you escape the pin, but you're still grappling.

OTHER GRAPPLING OPTIONS

In addition to making opposed grapple checks, you have a few other options while grappling.

Weapons: You can attack with a light weapon while grappling (but not while pinned or pinning), even with a pistol (although at a –4 penalty). You can't attack with two weapons while grappling. You can still attempt unarmed strikes (such as punches or a head butt) if you are not pinned.

Spells: You can attempt to cast a spell while grappling or even while pinned, provided its casting time is no more than 1 action, it has no somatic (S) components, and you have in hand any material components or foci you might need. Any spell that requires precise and careful action, such as drawing a burnable sigil around yourself for the *banishment of Yde Etad,* is impossible to cast while grappling or being pinned. If the spell is one that you can cast while grappling, you have to make a Concentration check (DC 25) or lose the spell.

Wriggle Free: You can make an Escape Artist check (opposed by your opponent's grapple check) to escape a grapple or a pin (so that you're just being grappled). Doing so counts as an attack action; if you escape a grapple, you can also move in the same round.

MULTIPLE GRAPPLERS

Several combatants can take part in a single grapple. Up to four combatants can grapple a single opponent in a given round. Creatures that are one size category smaller than you count for half, creatures that are one size category larger than you count double, and creatures two or more size categories larger count quadruple.

GRAPPLING CONSEQUENCES

While you're grappling, your ability to attack others and defend yourself is limited.

No Threatened Area: You don't threaten the area around you while grappling.

No Dexterity Bonus: You lose your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (if you have one) against opponents you aren't grappling. You can still use it against opponents you are grappling, however.



GRENADELIKE WEAPON ATTACKS

A grenadelike weapon is one that splashes or explodes, dealing damage in an area rather than upon a single target. It has a broad enough effect that it can hurt characters just by landing close to them. Grenadelike weapons include grenades, dynamite, and beakers of acid in a madman's laboratory. Attacks with grenadelike weapons are ranged touch attack rolls. Direct hits deal direct hit damage. (Grenadelike weapon damage is covered on Table 6–12: Explosives, page 113.)

If you miss your target, roll 1d6 to see how many feet away from the target the weapon lands. Add +1 foot for every 10 feet of distance that you threw the weapon. Then roll 1d8 to determine the direction in which the object deviated: 1 means long, 2 means long and to the right, 3 right, 4 short and right, 5 short, 6, short and left, 7 left, 8 long and left.

Once you know where the weapon landed, it deals damage to all creatures within a certain area (see Table 6–12: Explosives, page 113).

FIREARM ATTACKS

All modern firearms have the capability to offer you extra attacks because they can fire more rapidly in a round than archaic weapons (such as bows). Some firearms fire more rapidly than others. As described in the Equipment chapter, all firearms belong to one of three classifications: standard, multifire, or autofire.

AUTOFIRE

You may attempt two extra attacks per round with a weapon that has autofire. The extra attacks are at your highest base attack bonus, but each attack (the extra ones and the normal ones) suffers a –6 penalty. You must use a full attack to use autofire. (A full attack is a full-round action.) The Multishot feat lessens this penalty by 2.

Each autofire attack uses three bullets. Be sure to track your ammo accordingly and reload when necessary.

MULTIFIRE

You may attempt one extra attack per round with a weapon that has the multifire capability. The extra attack is at your highest base attack

TABLE 5–12:
Multiple Ranged Attacks

Base Attack Bonus	Standard Weapon	Standard Weapon w/Rapid Shot	Standard Weapon w/Multishot	Standard Weapon w/Both Feats
+0	–6/–6	–8/–8/–8	–4/–4	–6/–6/–6
+1	–5/–5	–7/–7/–7	–3/–3	–5/–5/–5
+2	–4/–4	–6/–6/–6	–2/–2	–4/–4/–4
+3	–3/–3	–5/–5/–5	–1/–1	–3/–3/–3
+4	–2/–2	–4/–4/–4	+0/+0	–2/–2/–2
+5	–1/–1	–3/–3/–3	+1/+1	–1/–1/–1
+6/+1	+0/+0/–5	–2/–2/–2/–7	+2/+2/–3	+0/+0/+0/–5
+7/+2	+1/+1/–4	–1/–1/–1/–6	+3/+3/–2	+1/+1/+1/–4
+8/+3	+2/+2/–3	+0/+0/+0/–5	+4/+4/–1	+2/+2/+2/–3
+9/+4	+3/+3/–2	+1/+1/+1/–4	+5/+5/+0	+3/+3/+3/–2
+10/+5	+4/+4/–1	+2/+2/+2/–3	+6/+6/+1	+4/+4/+4/–1

Base Attack Bonus	Multifire Weapon	Multifire Weapon w/Rapid Shot	Multifire Weapon w/Multishot	Multifire Weapon w/Both Feats
+0	–4/–4	–6/–6/–6	–2/–2	–4/–4/–4
+1	–3/–3	–5/–5/–5	–1/–1	–3/–3/–3
+2	–2/–2	–4/–4/–4	+0/+0	–2/–2/–2
+3	–1/–1	–3–3/–3	+1/+1	–1/–1/–1
+4	+0/+0	–2/–2/–2	+2/+2	+0/+0/+0
+5	+1/+1	–1/–1/–1	+3/+3	+1/+1/+1
+6/+1	+2/+2/–3	+0/+0/+0/–5	+4/+4/–1	+2/+2/+2/–3
+7/+2	+3/+3/–2	+1/+1/+1/–4	+5/+5/+0	+3/+3/+3/–2
+8/+3	+4/+4/–1	+2/+2/+2/–3	+6/+6/+1	+4/+4/+4/–1
+9/+4	+5/+5/+0	+3/+3/+3/–2	+7/+7/+2	+5/+5/+5/+0
+10/+5	+6/+6/+1	+4/+4/+4/–1	+8/+8/+3	+6/+6/+6/+1

Base Attack Bonus	Autofire Weapon	Autofire Weapon w/Rapid Shot	Autofire Weapon w/Multishot	Autofire Weapon w/Both Feats
+0	–6/–6/–6	–8/–8/–8/–8	–4/–4/–4	–6/–6/–6/–6
+1	–5/–5/–5	–7/–7/–7/–7	–3/–3/–3	–5/–5/–5/–5
+2	–4/–4/–4	–6/–6/–6/–6	–2/–2/–2	–4/–4/–4/–4
+3	–3–3/–3	–5/–5/–5/–5	–1/–1/–1	–3/–3/–3/–3
+4	–2/–2/–2	–4/–4/–4/–4	+0/+0/+0	–2/–2/–2/–2
+5	–1/–1/–1	–3/–3/–3/–3	+1/+1/+1	–1/–1/–1/–1
+6/+1	+0/+0/+0/–5	–2/–2/–2/–2/–7	+2/+2/+2/–3	+0/+0/+0/+0/–5
+7/+2	+1/+1/+1/–4	–1/–1/–1/–1/–6	+3/+3/+3/–2	+1/+1/+1/+1/–4
+8/+3	+2/+2/+2/–3	+0/+0/+0/+0/–5	+4/+4/+4/–1	+2/+2/+2/+2/–3
+9/+4	+3/+3/+3/–2	+1/+1/+1/+1/–4	+5/+5/+5/+0	+3/+3/+3/+3/–2
+10/+5	+4/+4/+4/–1	+2/+2/+2/+2/–3	+6/+6/+6/+1	+4/+4/+4/+4/–1

extra one and the normal ones) suffers a –6 penalty. You must use a full attack to get the extra attack. (A full attack is a full–round action.) The Multishot feat lessens this penalty by 2.

bonus, but each attack (the extra one and the normal ones) suffers a –4 penalty. You must use a full attack to use multifire. (A full attack is a full–round action.) The Multishot feat lessens this penalty by 2.

STANDARD

You may attempt one extra attack per round with a weapon that has the standard capability. The extra attack is at your highest base attack bonus, but each attack (the

MULTIPLE RANGED ATTACKS

Table 5–12: Multiple Ranged Attacks calculates each attack bonus, with each type of weapon fire, with Rapid Shot, with Multishot, and with both together. Use the character's base attack bonuses, then add other modifiers (such as for Dexterity) to the result.

TRIP

You can try to trip an opponent as a melee attack. You can only trip an opponent who is no more than one size category larger than you, the same size, or smaller.

Making a Trip Attack: Make a melee touch attack. If the attack succeeds, make a Strength check opposed by the defender's Dexterity or Strength check (whichever ability score has the higher modifier).

VARIANT: RELOADING FIREARMS

By default, reloading any firearm to full capacity requires a single full-round action. Players desiring a more realistic way of modeling reload times can use the table below.

Loading Method	Time to Reload
Belt	2 rounds to load a belt and chamber a round
Drum	2 rounds to load a drum and chamber a round
Break-Open	1 round to load up to two cartridges, or 1 round to load all chambers if a speed loader is used
Clip	1 round to load a clip and chamber a round
Magazine	1 round to load a magazine and chamber a round
Side	1 round to load two cartridges
Swing-Out	1 round to load up to two cartridges, or 1 round to load all chambers if a speed loader is used

VARIANT: AUTOFIRE SPRAY

Autofire weapons are capable of truly rapid fire. Standard autofire use is in the form of short, controlled bursts that you can reliably target and control. If you want to just fire away like Chow Yun Fat in *Hard Boiled*, you can use this variant. Firing in this manner is very inaccurate, but if it's your last stand, you might as well go out with guns blazing.

When using autofire spray, you make your normal maximum of autofire attacks as described in the text. You may then continue firing. Each additional attack you take uses three bullets. Unlike a regular autofire attack, you only hit on a natural 20. Such a hit does not qualify as a critical hit, however—just roll normal damage. You may continue making attacks until you run out of ammunition or have fired up to 39 bullets—that's 13 attacks.

VARIANT: FIREARM MALFUNCTIONS

An unmodified attack roll of 1 is an automatic failure, perhaps indicating a wild shot. However, it can also indicate that the weapon or its ammunition has malfunctioned. In this event, a 1d20 roll should be made. If the result is a 1, the ammunition has misfired (it's a dud). If the result is a 2, the weapon has jammed. It takes 1 round to clear a jam or misfire. A followup die roll is required to clear a jam. If you roll a 1, the weapon suffers a serious malfunction or breaks and cannot be readily repaired in a short amount of time.

Weapons that are in poor condition or are very dirty have a higher chance of jamming. In general, such weapons will jam on a 2 or a 3. Some are more or less reliable. A sample listing is below. This applies only if the weapon is dirty, worn, or otherwise prone to problems.

Weapon Name or Type	Malfunctions on a roll of
Revolving-action arms	*
"Actionless" arms such as double-barrel shotguns	*
Bolt-action arms	2
Colt M1911 and M1911A1 pistol and variants	2
Lahti L/35, Browning High-Power, M35 Radom, Steyr M1911, and Walther P38 pistols	2
Beretta M1951 and Model 92 pistols and Glock 17 pistol (and variants)	2
M1950 pistol (CZ 50) and P08 Luger pistol and variants	2, 3, or 4
AK-47, FN FAL, G3, M1 Garand, M-14, and Galil rifles	2
AR-15 and M-16 rifles (and variants)	2, 3, or 4
Thompson M1928 and M1 submachine guns	2
PPSh-41 submachine gun	2
MP38 and MP40 submachine guns	2, 3, or 4
Lewis machine gun and MG34 machine gun	2, 3, or 4
Bren, MG42, MG3, Browning M1917, M2 Heavy Barrel, and Vickers machine guns	2

* For game purposes, revolvers and "actionless" weapons (such as double-barrel shotguns) cannot jam. Only if they are in absolutely appalling condition might they suffer from a malfunction.

VARIANT: DROPPED FIREARMS

At the Gamemaster's discretion, a dropped firearm with a live round in the chamber may discharge in a random direction. Use a 1d8 roll to determine direction (as in Grenadelike Weapon Attacks, page 80). If there's a target (or targets) within 30 feet in that direction, roll 1d20 and subtract 4; if this number equals or exceeds the Armor Class of the nearest target, he's been hit. After the first time this happens, cautious investigators may learn to holster their sidearms instead of dropping them.

This occurrence should only happen accidentally. Dropping a box of loaded pistols into a shoggoth pit should accomplish nothing except losing the pistols and angering the shoggoth.

A combatant gets a +4 bonus for every size category he is larger than Medium-size or a –4 penalty for every size category he is smaller. The defender gets a +4 stability bonus on his check if he has more than two legs or is otherwise more stable than a normal humanoid. If you win, you trip the defender. If you lose, the defender may immediately react and make a Strength check opposed by your Dexterity or Strength check to try to trip you.

Being Tripped (Prone): A tripped character is prone (see Table 5–4: Attack Roll Modifiers). Standing up from prone is a move action.

Tripping a Mounted Opponent: You may make a trip attack against a mounted opponent. The defender may use his Ride skill in place of his Dexterity or Strength check. If you succeed, you pull the rider from his mount.

UNARMED ATTACKS

Striking for damage with punches, kicks, and head butts is like attacking with a weapon, except for the following:

Unarmed Strike Damage: An unarmed strike from a Medium-size character deals 1d3 points of damage (plus your Strength modifier). All damage is subdual damage. Unarmed strikes count as light weapons (for purposes of two-weapon attack penalties and so on).

Dealing Normal Damage: You can specify that your unarmed strike will deal normal damage before you make your attack roll, but you suffer a –4 penalty on your attack roll because you have to strike a particularly vulnerable spot to deal normal damage.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The GM should consider the following aspects of the game, from strange powers such as invisibility to more mundane—but equally dangerous—dangers such as weather, fire, and drowning.

DAMAGE REDUCTION

While running from a bloodbath in the city sewers, Claire is confronted by a bestial vampire. She lunges at it with a hunting knife, plunging steel into its cold heart. The undead monster grabs the knife, tosses it away, and laughs as the wound instantly heals. Then it hisses its rage and readies its claws.

Some Mythos creatures have the supernatural ability to instantly heal damage from weapons or completely ignore blows altogether as though they were invulnerable.

- A creature with damage reduction has a DR rating. This is the number of hit points the creature ignores from normal attacks. Thus, a creature with a damage reduction of DR 5 struck for 8 points of damage ignores 5 points and takes only 3 points of damage.
- Usually a certain type of weapon—often a magic weapon—can overcome this reduction. For example, a loup-garou's damage reduction is 15/silver, meaning the werewolf ignores the first 15 points of damage from every normal attack unless the weapon is made of silver.
- Any weapon more powerful than the type given in the note also negates the ability. A weapon with an enhancement bonus is considered more powerful than a weapon made of a special material. Thus, an enchanted knife with a +1 enhancement bonus damages a loup-garou normally, just as a silver blade would.
- Magical attacks and energy attacks (even mundane fire) ignore damage reduction.
- For purposes of harming other creatures with damage reduction, a creature's natural weapons count as weapons of the type that can ignore its own innate damage reduction. The amount of damage reduction is irrelevant. For example, a hunting horror (damage reduction 5/+1) deals full damage to a loup-garou, as if the hunting horror's attack were with a +1 weapon. However, damage reduction from spells, such as *create self ward,* does not confer this ability.
- Sometimes damage reduction is instant healing. A hunting knife slashed across a flying polyp's greasy hide slices it open, but the wound seals as fast as it's made. Sometimes damage reduction represents the creature's tough hide or body, such as the scales of a shantak. In either case, characters can see that conventional attacks don't work.

DISEASE

While hunting the bestial vampire that attacked Claire in the city sewers, Sam is attacked by sewer rats infested with diseased fleas. He survives the encounter, but two days later a fever strikes, and he becomes shaky and tired. The fever lasts a few more days before he can throw it off. Then, gradually, his body recovers. Sam counts himself lucky—some diseases weaken their victims permanently.

When a character is injured by a contaminated attack, touches an item smeared with diseased matter, or consumes disease-tainted food or drink, he must make an immediate Fortitude saving throw. If he succeeds, the disease has no effect—his immune system fought off the infection. If he fails, he takes damage after an incubation period. Once per day afterward he must make a successful Fortitude saving throw to avoid repeated damage. Two successful saving throws in a row indicate that he has fought off the disease and recovers, taking no more damage. (The GM can roll these Fortitude saving throws for a player character so that the player doesn't know whether the disease has taken hold.)

Diseases cause various symptoms and are spread through a number of vectors. Rather than give game stats to every ailment and virus, when the GM determines a character encounters disease, she can choose a result on Table 5–13 below to determine the disease's effects (or roll randomly, if she prefers).

Healing: Use of the Heal skill can help a diseased character. Every time the diseased character makes a saving throw against disease effects, the healer makes a check. The diseased character can use the healer's result in place of his saving throw if the Heal result is higher. The diseased character must be within the healer's care and must spend most of each day resting.

TABLE 5–13:
Random Diseases

Roll	DC	Incubation	Damage
01–20	16	1d3 days	1d4 Str†
21–30	16	1 day	1d6 Wis
31–35	18	1 day	1d6 Con*
36–40	14	1d4 days	1d4 Str
41–60	12	1d3 days	1d3 Dex, 1d3 Con
61–70	12	1 day	1d4 Int
71–75	20	1 day	1d6 Con
76–85	15	1d3 days	1d6 Str
86–90	13	1 day	1d8 Dex
91–00	14	1 day	1d4 Con*

* When damaged, the character must succeed at another saving throw or 1 point of temporary damage is a permanent drain instead.
† Each time the character takes 2 or more points of damage from the disease, he must make another Fortitude save or be permanently blinded.

Characters recover points lost to ability score damage at a rate of 1 per day; this rule applies even while a disease is in progress. That means that a lucky character with a minor disease might be able to withstand it without accumulating any damage.

DC: This gives the DC for the saving throws to prevent infection (if the character has been infected), prevent each instance of repeated damage, and recover from the disease.

Incubation: The time before damage begins.

Damage: The damage the character takes after incubation and each day afterward. Ability score damage is temporary unless otherwise noted.

Infection: The disease's method of delivery—ingested, inhaled, via injury, or contact—should be noted. For example, if an infected character can communicate the disease through breathing, it's an inhaled disease. Keep in mind that some injury diseases may be transmitted by as small an injury as a fleabite and that most inhaled diseases can also be ingested (and vice versa).

INCORPOREALITY

Marie watches in horror as a translucent face passes through the door in front of her. By the time she alerts her companions, it's gone. The investigators keep exploring the haunted mansion when suddenly several ghostly figures fly out of the walls toward them. Sam grabs a chair to fend off the spirit's attack, but an incorporeal hand passes through it and reaches through his kevlar armor. It touches his heart, which grows suddenly cold. For a few deadly seconds, Sam stops breathing. In a panic, Claire drops her useless knife and runs.

Spectres, wraiths, and a few other creatures lack physical bodies. Such creatures are insubstantial and can't be touched by nonmagical matter or energy. Likewise, they cannot manipulate objects or exert physical force on objects. However, incorporeal beings have a tangible presence that sometimes seems like a physical attack against a corporeal creature (such as an ability drain from a Colour Out of Space).

- Incorporeal creatures can only be harmed by other incorporeal creatures, by weapons with an enhancement bonus of +1 or greater (such as a knife with *magic weapon*), or by spells, spell-like effects, or supernatural effects. They are immune to all nonmagical attack forms. They are not burned by normal fires, affected by natural cold, or harmed by mundane acids.
- Even when struck by enchanted weapons or magic, an incorporeal creature has a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. However, Force-effect spells (as defined in the Magic chapter) affect it normally.
- Incorporeal creatures move in any direction (including up or down) at will. They do not need to walk on the ground.
- Incorporeal creatures can pass through solid objects at will, although they cannot see if their eyes are "inside" solid matter.
- The physical attacks of incorporeal creatures ignore material armor.
- Incorporeal creatures pass through and operate in water as easily as air.
- Incorporeal creatures cannot fall down and take damage.
- Corporeal creatures cannot trip or grapple incorporeal creatures.
- Incorporeal creatures have no weight.
- Incorporeal creatures do not leave footprints, have no scent, and make no noise unless they want to do so intentionally.

INVISIBILITY

An invisible star vampire spies on the investigators from a nearby rooftop. As it descends to the ground, Marie suddenly gets a strange feeling. "There's something here," she whispers, and signals for silence as she tries to locate it by ear. Kristof holds his breath for a few seconds, readying his shotgun and waiting for Marie's signal to attack. Before he can react, the invisible creature grabs him from behind. Within seconds, it begins feasting on his blood.

The ability to move about unseen is wonderful, but it's not foolproof. While invisible creatures can't be seen, they can be heard, smelled, or even felt.

- A creature can generally notice the presence of an active invisible creature within 30 feet with a Spot check (DC 20). Characters with the Sensitive feat gain a +2 bonus on this check. The observer gains a hunch that "something's there," but can't see it or target it accurately with an attack. A invisible creature that's holding still is practically impossible to notice (DC 30). An invisible inanimate object—or invisible, unliving creature holding still, or a completely immobile invisible creature—is even harder to notice (DC 40). It's practically impossible (+20 DC) to pinpoint an invisible creature's location with a Spot check. Even if a character succeeds at such a check, the invisible creature still benefits from full concealment (50% miss chance).

TABLE 5–14:
Detecting Invisible Creatures

Condition	Listen DC
In combat or speaking	0
Moving at half speed	Move Silently check
Moving at full speed	Move Silently check at –4
Running or charging	Move Silently check at –20
Distance	+1 to DC per 10 feet
Obstacle: door	+5 to DC
Obstacle: stone wall	+15 to DC

- A creature can use hearing to find an invisible creature. A character can make such a Listen check as a free action each round. A Listen check at least equal to the invisible creature's Move Silently check reveals its presence. (A creature with no ranks in Move Silently can use it untrained, making a Dexterity check instead.) A successful Listen check lets a character hear an invisible creature "over there somewhere." Pinpointing the exact location of an invisible creature is practically impossible with a Listen check (+20 to DC).
- A creature can grope about to find an invisible creature. A character can make a touch attack with his hands or a weapon into two adjacent 5-foot areas using a single attack action. If there is an invisible target in the designated area, there's a 50% miss chance on the touch attack. If successful, the groping character deals no damage, but has successfully pinpointed the invisible creature's current location. (If the invisible creature moves, the location is once again unknown.)
- If an invisible creature strikes a character, the character struck knows the location of the creature that struck him (until, of course, the invisible creature moves). The only exception is if the invisible creature has a reach greater than 5 feet. In this case, the struck character knows the general location of the creature, but has not pinpointed its exact location.
- If a character tries to attack an invisible creature whose location he has pinpointed, he attacks normally, but the invisible creature still benefits from full concealment (and thus a 50% miss chance). At the GM's option, a particularly large and slow creature might have a lessened miss chance.
- If a character tries to attack an invisible creature whose location he has not pinpointed, the player should choose the area where he will direct an attack. If the invisible creature is there, conduct the attack normally. If the enemy's not there, the GM should roll the miss chance anyway without letting the player see it, and tell him that he's missed. That way the player doesn't know whether he missed because the enemy's not there or because the GM successfully rolled the miss chance.
- If an invisible character picks up a visible object, the object remains visible. An invisible creature can pick up a small visible item and hide it on its person to render it effectively invisible.
- Invisible creatures still leave tracks, and they can be tracked normally. Footprints in sand, mud, or other soft surfaces can give enemies clues as to the invisible creature's location.
- An invisible creature in the water displaces water, revealing its location. The invisible creature, however, is still hard to see and benefits from one-half concealment (30% miss chance).
- A creature with the scent ability can detect invisible creatures as it would a visible one.
- A character or creature with the Blind-Fight feat has a better chance to hit an invisible target. Roll the miss chance twice; the concealment roll fails only if both rolls indicate a miss. (Alternatively, make one 25% miss roll rather than two 50% miss rolls.)

TABLE 5–15: Poisons

Poison Type	Initial Damage	Secondary Damage
Injury DC 12	0	1d4 Dex
Injury DC 13	1 Con	1d2 Con
Injury DC 13	1d4 Str	1d6 Str
Injury DC 12	0	1d4 Con + 1d3 Wis
Injury DC 24	1d6 Str	1d6 Str
Injury DC 14	1d6 Str	1d6 Str
Injury DC 17	3d6 Con	3d6 Con
Injury DC 14	1 Con	Unconsciousness
Injury DC 15	1d6 Dex	1d6 Dex
Injury DC 17	1 Str*	2d6 Str
Injury DC 12	0	1d6 Str
Injury DC 20	1d6 Con	2d6 Con
Contact DC 16	1 Dex	2d4 Dex
Contact DC 13	0	3d6 Con
Contact DC 26	3d6 Str	0
Contact DC 16	2d12 hp	1d6 Con
Contact DC 16	1d6 Dex	2d6 Dex
Contact DC 13	Paralysis	0
Contact DC 20	3d6 Con	3d6 Con
Ingested DC 15	0	Unconsciousness
Ingested DC 14	1d4 Int	2d6 Int
Ingested DC 11	1 Wis	2d6 Wis + 1d4 Int
Ingested DC 13	1 Con	1d8 Con
Ingested DC 17	2d6 Str	1d6 Str
Ingested DC 18	2d6 Con	1d6 Con + 1d6 Str
Inhaled DC 15	1 Cha	1d6 Cha + 1 Cha*
Inhaled DC 18	1 Con*	3d6 Con
Inhaled DC 15	1d4 Wis	2d6 Wis

POISON

Atlach-Nacha grabs Kristof in its pincers and stings him. The wound burns like fire. Pain spreads through his body, bringing a strange weakness with it. Kristof struggles to free himself from the pincers, but his arms have become weak, and the avatar of the Great Old One stings him again. Soon, it overcomes him. Kristof falls helpless in the obscene being's grasp.

A character must make a Fortitude saving throw when he takes damage from an attack with a poisoned weapon, touches an item smeared with contact poison, consumes poisoned food or drink, or is otherwise poisoned. If he fails, he suffers the poison's initial damage (usually ability damage). Even if he succeeds, he typically faces more damage 1 minute later, which he can also avoid with a Fortitude saving throw.

Poisons are described on Table 5–15: Poisons.

Type: The poison's method of delivery—ingested, inhaled, via an injury, or contact—and the DC needed to save.

Initial Damage: The damage the character takes immediately upon failing his Fortitude saving throw against this type of poison. Ability score damage is temporary unless marked with an asterisk (*), in which case the loss is a permanent drain. Paralysis lasts 2d6 minutes.

Secondary Damage: The amount of damage the character takes 1 minute after exposure as a result of the poisoning, if he fails a second saving throw. Unconsciousness lasts for 1d3 hours. Loss marked with an asterisk is a permanent drain instead of temporary damage.

Perils of Using Poison: A character has a 5% chance to expose himself to a poison whenever he applies it to a weapon or otherwise readies it for use. Additionally, a character that rolls a 1 on an attack roll with a poisoned weapon must make a Reflex saving throw (DC 15) or accidentally poison himself with the weapon.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Characters crossing the burning desert face heatstroke and dehydration. Plunging into the murky depths of the ocean raises the risk of drowning and even decompression. Investigators spend a lot of time in the most dismal, dangerous, and generally unpleasant places imaginable. If the monsters and the cultists don't slaughter them, the environment itself might do them in. This section details hazards the player characters face from the physical world around them.

LANDSLIDES AND AVALANCHES

A landslide or avalanche consists of two distinct areas: the bury zone and the slide zone. Characters directly in the path of a rockfall or avalanche are in the bury zone; characters on the edge of the area are in the slide zone and have a chance of being able to get out of the way.

Characters in the bury zone sustain 8d6 points of damage, or half that amount if they make a successful Reflex saving throw (DC 15). They are subsequently pinned (see below).

Characters in the slide zone sustain 3d6 points of damage, or no damage if they make a successful Reflex saving throw (DC 15). Those who fail their saves are also pinned.

Pinned characters take 1d6 points of subdual damage per minute while pinned. If the character falls unconscious, he must make a Constitution check (DC 15) or take 1d6 points of normal damage each minute thereafter until he's freed or he dies.

WATER DANGERS

Water presents characters with several problems. First, it can block their movement. Second, characters in the water face the danger of drowning or losing gear. Third, a character caught in fast-moving water can be swept away and battered or killed by rapids and waterfalls. Fourth, really deep water deals damage from the great pressure it exerts. Finally, even a short exposure to cold water can be dangerous, killing even the hardiest characters by hypothermia.

Obviously, the skill most commonly used in dealing with water as an obstacle is Swim. Unfortunately, not every character who gets into the water has ranks in this skill; most simply use the skill untrained, making a Strength check instead.

Any character can wade through relatively calm water that isn't over his head, no check required (hence the importance of fords). Similarly, swimming in calm waters only requires skill checks with a DC of 10. Trained swimmers can just take 10.

By contrast, fast-moving water is much more dangerous. On a successful Swim or Strength check (DC 15), it deals 1d3 points of subdual damage per round (1d6 points of normal damage if flowing over rocks). On a failed check, the character must make another check that round to avoid going under.

Very deep water is not only generally pitch-black, posing a navigational hazard, but also deals water pressure damage: 1d6 points of damage per minute for every 100 feet the character is below the surface. A successful Fortitude saving throw (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) means the diver takes no damage in that minute.

Very cold water deals 1d6 points of subdual damage from hypothermia per minute of exposure.

STARVATION AND THIRST DANGERS

In normal climates, investigators need at least a gallon of fluids and about a pound of decent food per day to avoid starvation. In very hot climates, characters need two or three times as much water to avoid dehydration.

A character can go without water for one day plus a number of hours equal to his Constitution score. After this, the character must make a Constitution check each hour (DC 10, + 1 per each previous check) or sustain 1d6 points of subdual damage.

A character can go without food for 3 days, in growing discomfort. After this, the character must make a Constitution check each day (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or sustain 1d6 points of subdual damage.

Characters who have taken subdual damage from lack of food or water are fatigued (see the Character Conditions Summary sidebar, page 91). Subdual damage from thirst or starvation cannot be recovered until the character gets food or water, as needed.

HEAT DANGERS

Prolonged exposure to hot temperatures can quickly wear down a character, and heatstroke can be deadly.

Heat deals subdual damage that cannot be recovered until the character cools off (reaches shade, survives until nightfall, gets dowsed in water, and so on). Once rendered unconscious through the accumulation of subdual damage, the character begins to take normal damage at the same rate.

Characters in very hot conditions (above 90° F) must make Fortitude saving throws (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) or sustain 1d4 points of subdual damage each hour. Characters wearing heavy clothing or armor (such as bullet-proof vests) have a –4 penalty to their saves. A character with the Wilderness Lore skill may receive a bonus on this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well (see Wilderness Lore, page 37). Characters reduced to unconsciousness begin taking normal damage (1d4 points per hour).

In conditions of extreme heat (above 110° F), characters must make Forti-

THE DROWNING RULE

Any character can hold her breath for a number of rounds equal to twice her Constitution score. After this, the character must make a Constitution check (DC 10) every round in order to continue holding her breath. Each round, the DC increases by 1.

When the character finally fails her Constitution check, she begins to drown. In the first round, she falls unconscious (0 hp). The following round, she drops to –1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, she drowns.

It is possible to drown in other substances besides water, such as sand, quicksand, fine dust, silos of grain, oceans of blood, and so on.



tude saves once every 10 minutes or sustain 1d4 points of subdual damage. Characters wearing heavy clothing or armor have a –4 penalty on their saving throws. A character with the Wilderness Lore skill may receive a +2 competence bonus on this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well. Characters reduced to unconsciousness begin taking normal damage (1d4 points per each 10 minute period).

A character who sustains any subdual damage from heat exposure suffers from heatstroke and is fatigued (suffering a –2 penalty to all Strength- and Dexterity-based rolls; see the Character Condition Summary sidebar, page 91). These penalties end when the character recovers the subdual damage she took from the heat.

Abysmal heat (air temperature over 140° F, fire, boiling water, lava) deals normal damage. Breathing air in these temperatures deals 1d6 points of damage per minute (no save). In addition, characters must make Fortitude saves (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) or sustain 1d4 points of subdual damage every 5 minutes. Those wearing heavy clothing or armor have a –4 penalty to their saves.

Boiling water deals 1d6 points of scalding damage, unless the character is fully immersed, in which case it deals 10d6 points of damage per round of exposure.

COLD DANGERS

Prolonged exposure to cold temperatures and harsh weather can wear down a character who isn't protected against the climate. Hypothermia, frostbite, and exhaustion can quickly kill in bad weather. The best defense against cold and exposure is getting under cover and keeping warm.

Cold and exposure deal subdual damage to the victim. This subdual damage cannot be recovered until the character gets out of the cold and warms up again. Once she is rendered unconscious through the accumulation of subdual damage, the cold and exposure begin to deal normal damage at the same rate.

FIRE!

Characters exposed to burning oil, bonfires, or the attacks of a fire vampire might find their clothes, hair, or equipment on fire.

Characters at risk of catching fire are allowed a Reflex saving throw (DC 15) to avoid this fate. If a character's clothes or hair catch fire, he takes 1d6 points of damage immediately. In each subsequent round, the burning character must make another Reflex saving throw. Failure means he takes another 1d6 points of damage that round. Success means that the fire has gone out. (That is, once he succeeds at his saving throw, he's no longer on fire.)

A character on fire may automatically extinguish the flames by jumping into enough water to douse himself. If no body of water is at hand, rolling on the ground or smothering the fire permits the character another save with a +4 bonus.

Those unlucky enough to have their clothes or equipment catch fire must make Reflex saving throws for each item (DC 15). Inflammable items that fail sustain the same amount of damage as the character.

Unprotected characters in cold weather (below 40° F) must make Fortitude saving throws (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) or sustain 1d6 points of subdual damage each hour. A character who has the Wilderness Lore skill may receive a +2 circumstance bonus on this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well.

In conditions of extreme cold or exposure (below 0° F), unprotected characters must make Fortitude saves once per 10 minutes, taking 1d6 points of subdual damage on each failed save. A character who has the Wilderness Lore skill may receive a +2 competence bonus on this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well. Characters wearing winter clothing only need to check once per hour for cold and exposure damage.

A character who sustains any subdual damage from cold or exposure suffers from frostbite or hypothermia. (Treat the character as fatigued; see the Character Condition Summary sidebar, page 91.) These penalties end when the character recovers the subdual damage she took from the cold and exposure.

WEATHER HAZARDS

Aside from heat and cold, the weather itself can present dangers and obstacles to characters.

Winds: Winds can create a stinging spray of sand or dust, fan a large fire, keel over a small boat, and blow gases or vapors away. If powerful enough, they can even knock characters down (see Table 5–16: Wind Effects), interfere with ranged attacks, or impose penalties on some skill checks.

Light Wind: A gentle breeze, having little or no game effect.

Moderate Wind: A steady wind with a 50% chance of extinguishing small unprotected flames.

Strong Wind: These gusts automatically extinguish unprotected flames, impose a –2 penalty to ranged attacks, and apply a –2 penalty to Listen checks.

Severe Wind: In addition to automatically extinguishing any unprotected flames, winds of this magnitude cause protected flames (such as those in lanterns) to dance wildly, conferring a 50% chance of extinguishing these lights. Ranged weapon attacks and Listen checks are at a –4 penalty.

Windstorm: Powerful enough to bring down branches, if not whole trees, windstorms automatically extinguish unprotected flames and have a 75% chance of blowing out protected flames (such as those in lanterns). Ranged weapon attacks are impossible. Listen checks are at a –8 penalty due to the howling of the wind.

Hurricane: All flames are extinguished, and ranged attacks are impossible. Listen checks are impossible—all characters can hear is the roaring of the wind. Hurricanes often fell trees.

Tornado: All flames are extinguished, and all Listen checks and ranged attacks are impossible. Instead of being blown away (see Table 5–16: Wind Effects), characters in close proximity to a tornado who fail their Fortitude saves are sucked toward it. Those who come in contact with the actual funnel cloud are picked up and whirled around for 1d10 rounds, taking 6d6 points of damage per round before being violently expelled (falling damage may then apply). While a tornado's rotational speed can be as great as 300 mph, the funnel itself moves forward at an average of 30 mph. Tornadoes uproot trees, destroy buildings, and generally raise hell.

Blown Away: Creatures on the ground are knocked down and rolled 1d4×10 feet, sustaining 1d4 points of subdual damage per 10 feet. Flying creatures are blown back 2d6×10 feet and sustain 2d6 points of subdual damage due to battering and buffering.

Knocked Down: Creatures are knocked to the ground by the force of the wind. Flying creatures are blown back 1d6×10 feet.

Checked: Creatures are unable to move forward against the force of the wind. Flying creatures are blown back 1d6×5 feet.

Precipitation: Most precipitation comes in the form of rain, but in cold conditions, it can manifest as snow, sleet, or hail. Precipitation of any kind fol-

TABLE 5–16: Wind Effects

Wind Force	Wind Speed	Ranged Attacks	Creature Size*	Wind Effect on Creatures	Fort Save DC
Light	0–10 mph	–	Any	None	–
Moderate	11–20 mph	–	Any	None	–
Strong	21–30 mph	–2	Tiny or smaller	Knocked down	10
			Small or larger	None	
Severe	31–50 mph	–4	Tiny	Blown away	15
			Small	Knocked down	
			Medium-size	Checked	
			Large or larger	None	
Windstorm	51–74 mph	Impossible	Small or smaller	Blown away	18
			Medium-size	Knocked down	
			Large or Huge	Checked	
			Gargantuan or Colossal	None	
Hurricane	75–174 mph	Impossible	Medium-size or smaller	Blown away	20
			Large	Knocked down	
			Huge	Checked	
			Gargantuan or Colossal	None	
Tornado	175–300 mph	Impossible	Large or smaller	Blown away	30
			Huge	Knocked down	
			Gargantuan or Colossal	Checked	

*Flying or airborne creatures are treated as one size class smaller than their actual size, so an airborne Huge shantak is treated as Large for purposes of wind effects.

lowed by a cold snap—in which the temperature dips from above freezing to at least 30° F or below—may produce ice. (See Ice, page 89.)

Rain: Rain reduces visibility ranges by half, resulting in a –4 penalty to Spot and Search checks. It has the same effect on flames, ranged weapon attacks, and Listen checks as severe wind (see above).

Snow: While falling, snow reduces visibility as rain (–4 penalty to ranged weapon attacks, Spot checks, and Search checks). Once on the ground, it reduces movement by half. Snow has the same effect on flames as moderate wind (see above).

Sleet: Essentially frozen rain, sleet has the same effect as rain while falling (except that its chance to extinguish protected flames is 75%) and the same effect as snow once on the ground.

Hail: Hail does not reduce visibility, but the sound of falling hail makes Listen checks more difficult (–4 penalty). Sometimes (5% chance) hail can become large enough to deal 1 point of damage (per storm) to anything in the open. Once on the ground, hail has the same effect on movement as snow.

Storms: The combined effects of wind and precipitation (or dust) that accompany all storms reduce visibility ranges by half, imposing a –8 penalty to all Spot, Search, and Listen checks. Storms make ranged weapon attacks impossible.

Storms automatically extinguish unprotected flames. They cause protected flames, such as those in lanterns, to dance wildly, with a 50% chance to extinguish those lights.

See Table 5–16: Wind Effects for possible consequences to creatures caught outside without shelter during such a storm. Storms are divided into the following three types:

Duststorm: These desert storms differ from other storms in that they have no precipitation. Instead, a duststorm blows fine grains of sand that obscure vision, smother unprotected flames, and can even choke protected flames (50% chance). Most duststorms are accompanied by severe winds (see above) and leave behind a deposit of 1d6 inches of sand. However, there is a 10% chance of a greater duststorm accompanied by windstorm-magnitude winds (see above and Table 5–16: Wind Effects). These greater duststorms deal 1d3 points of subdual damage each round on anyone caught out in the open without shelter. They also pose a choking hazard. (See The Drowning Rule sidebar, page 85. A character with a scarf or similar protection across his mouth and nose does not begin to choke until after a number of rounds equal to ten times his Constitution score.) Greater duststorms leave behind 2d3–1 feet of fine sand in their wake.

Snowstorm: In addition to the wind and precipitation common to other storms, snowstorms leave behind 1d6 inches of snow on the ground.

Thunderstorm: In addition to wind and precipitation (usually rain, but sometimes also hail), thunderstorms are accompanied by lightning that can pose a hazard to characters without proper shelter. As a rule of thumb, assume one bolt per minute for a 1-hour period at the center of the storm. Each bolt causes electricity damage equal to 1d10 eight-sided dice. One-in-ten thunderstorms are accompanied by a tornado (see below).

Powerful Storms: Very high winds and torrential precipitation reduce visibility to zero, making Spot, Search, and Listen checks impossible. Unprotected flames are automatically extinguished, and even protected flames have a 75% chance of being doused. Creatures caught in the area can make a Fortitude saving throw

VARIANT: OPPORTUNITY ATTACKS

The standard rules for *Call of Cthulhu* assume that combatants are actively avoiding attacks. A player doesn't have to declare anything special for his character to defend himself. Sometimes, however, a combatant in a melee lets his guard down, and he's not on the defensive as usual. In these cases, combatants near him can take advantage of his lapse in defense to attack him for free. These free attacks are called attacks of opportunity (also known as "opportunity attacks" or "op attacks").

Threatened Areas: Each combatant threatens a 5-foot area around himself (the area into which he can make melee attacks). If you're within 5 feet of an opponent, you're in his threatened area, and some of your actions might provoke opportunity attacks. Likewise, any opponent within 5 feet of you is in your threatened area. A flat-footed character doesn't threaten the area around him.

Provoking an Opportunity Attack: Three types of actions can provoke opportunity attacks while you're in a threatened area: moving more than 5 feet, taking an action that distracts you from defending yourself, and certain unarmed attacks.

Moving within a Threatened Area: When you enter a threatened area, you must immediately stop moving; if you don't, you provoke an opportunity attack. However, if you start your movement within a threatened area, you can move up to 5 feet without provoking one.

Taking an Action that Distracts You: Some actions themselves provoke opportunity attacks because they require you to divert attention from the fight at hand. Common examples include casting a spell and holstering (or sheathing) a weapon. Firing a gun does not incur an opportunity attack. For more detail, see Table 8–4 in the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS *Player's Handbook*.

Unarmed Attacks: Certain unarmed attacks draw opportunity attacks. If you attempt to disarm, grapple, trip, or bum's rush your opponent, he can respond with an opportunity attack. Touch attacks and regular unarmed strikes don't provoke op attacks.

Casting on the Defensive: You can cast a spell from a threatened area without drawing an opportunity attack by making a Concentration check (DC 15). If the check fails, the spell and the action are lost, and the subject threatening you can make an opportunity attack.

Withdrawing from Combat: You can withdraw from combat with an opponent by leaving his threatened area. You can doing this either by moving 5 feet (perhaps with your 5-foot step) or by withdrawing as a full-round action. If you take this second option, you can move up to double your speed.

Making an Opportunity Attack: An opportunity attack is a single melee attack, and you can only make one per round. You do not have to make an opportunity attack if you don't want to do so. If you make an opportunity attack, you do so at your normal attack bonus—even if you have already attacked that round.

Feats: At the Gamemaster's discretion, you may also want to add the following feats from the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS *Player's Handbook* for use with this variant: Combat Reflexes, Improved Trip, Improved Bull Rush (which becomes "Improved Bum's Rush"), and Improved Unarmed Strike. Additionally, you may want to use the D&D version of Mobility.

(DC 20) or face the effects described below. Powerful storms are divided into the following four types:

Windstorm: While accompanied by little or no precipitation, windstorms can cause considerable damage simply through the force of their wind. See Table 5–16: Wind Effects and the description on page 87.

Blizzard: The combination of high winds, heavy snow (typically 1d3 feet), and bitter cold (see Cold Dangers, page 86) make blizzards deadly to all who are unprepared for them.

Hurricane: In addition to very high winds and heavy rain, hurricanes are accompanied by flash floods (see below). Most investigative activity is impossible under such conditions.

Tornado: One in ten thunderstorms are accompanied by a tornado.

Fog: Whether it consists of low-lying clouds or mist rising from the ground, fog obscures all sight beyond 5 feet. Creatures within 5 feet have one-half concealment (attacks by or against them have a 20% miss chance).

Flash Floods: Runoff from heavy rains forces creatures in the path of a flash flood to make Fortitude saves (DC 15). Large or smaller creatures that fail the save are swept away by the rushing water, taking 1d6 points of subdual damage per round (1d3 points on a successful Swim check). Huge creatures that fail are knocked down and face potential drowning (see The Drowning Rule sidebar, page 85). Gargantuan and Colossal creatures also make this Fortitude save, but they only drown if the waters rise above their heads.

OTHER DANGERS

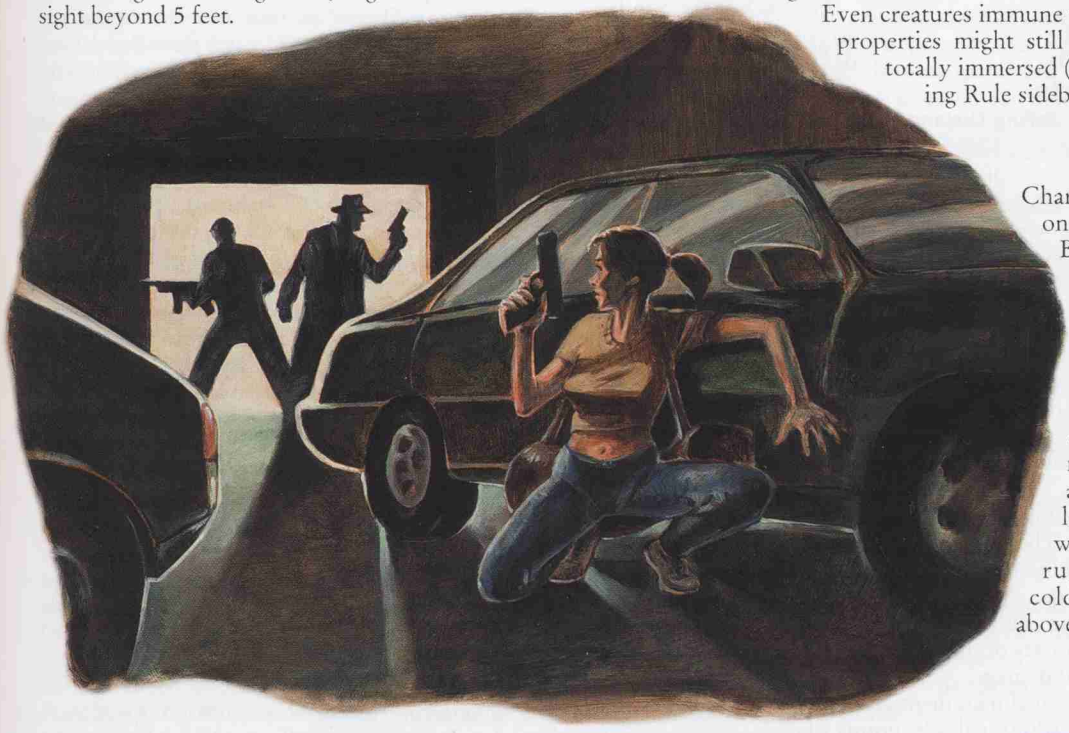
Use the following guidelines for other dangers a character can face.

ACID

Corrosive acids deals 1d6 points of damage per round of exposure except in the case of total immersion (such as submersion in a vat of acid). Total immersion deals 10d6 points of damage per round. An attack with acid, whether from a hurled vial or a creature's spittle (such as the goo spewed from a dhole), counts as a round of exposure.

The fumes from most acids are also inhalant poisons. Characters close enough to inhale them must make a Fortitude save (DC 13) or take 1 point of temporary Constitution damage. All such characters must also attempt a second save 1 minute later or take another 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage.

Even creatures immune to acid's caustic properties might still drown in it if totally immersed (see the Drowning Rule sidebar, page 85).



ICE

Characters walking on ice must make Balance checks (DC 15) to avoid slipping and falling. Over long distances, a character must make a check each minute. Characters in prolonged contact with ice may run the risk of cold damage (see above).

VARIANT: DESPERATE SITUATIONS

From time to time, characters may be in immediate peril because they all lack a specific trained-only skill. For example, if the only pilot on a plummeting zeppelin has just fallen overboard, and none of the investigators in the cockpit have the Pilot skill, everyone may die.

With this variant rule, if the characters are in a desperate situation, the Gamemaster may allow an untrained attempt at what would normally be a trained-only skill; in this case, someone could make a simple Dexterity check to attempt a crash landing. The DC for such desperate tasks should be set at whatever the Gamemaster thinks appropriate, remembering that what's Very Easy (DC 0) for a trained pilot should be at least Tough (DC 15) or Challenging (DC 20) to an untrained amateur (see Table 2–2: Difficulty Class Examples, page 19).

Even with this variant, the Gamemaster may rule that some trained-only skills really are impossible for amateurs, however well motivated. For example, the Gamemaster in the previous example could decide that none of the investigators can figure out the controls. Sometimes this is essential to the plot; for instance, the GM might be encouraging the desperate players to look for some other way out of their dilemma, such as trying that *summon byakhee* spell they have just learned.

LACK OF AIR/HIGH ALTITUDE

Characters in conditions of low oxygen, such as on top of a mountain, must roll a Fortitude saving throw each hour (DC 15, +1 for each previous check), taking 1d6 points of subdual damage each time they fail.

A character who sustains any subdual damage from lack of oxygen is automatically fatigued (see the Character Condition Summary sidebar, page 91). These penalties end when the character recovers the subdual damage he took from low oxygen.

Altitude Sickness: Long-term oxygen deprivation due to high altitude affects mental and physical ability scores. Each 6-hour period a character spends over 20,000 feet, he must make a Fortitude save or take 1 point of temporary damage to all ability scores.

SMOKE

Characters breathing heavy smoke must make Fortitude saving throws (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) each round or spend that round choking and coughing. Characters who choke for 2 consecutive rounds take 1d6 points of subdual damage.

Smoke obscures vision, giving one-half concealment (20% miss chance) to characters within it.

FALLING OBJECTS

Just as characters take damage when they fall more than 10 feet, they take damage when hit by falling objects. Objects that fall onto characters deal damage based on their weight and the distance they have fallen.

TABLE 5–17: Damage from Falling Objects

Object Weight	Falling Distance
200–101 lb.	20 ft.
100–51 lb.	30 ft.
50–31 lb.	40 ft.
30–11 lb.	50 ft.
10–6 lb.	60 ft.
5–1 lb.	70 ft.

For each 200 pounds an object weighs, it deals 1d6 points of damage, provided it falls at least 10 feet. Distance also comes into play, adding an additional 1d6 points of damage for every 10-foot increment it falls beyond the first (to a maximum of 20d6 points of damage).

Objects smaller than 200 pounds also deal damage when dropped, but they must fall farther to deal the same damage. Use Table 5–17: Damage from Falling Objects to see how far an object of a given weight must drop to deal 1d6 points of damage.

Example: A dirigible drops a 400-pound crate overboard. The crate deals 2d6 points of damage to anything it strikes by virtue of its weight alone. If the ship were 100 feet in the air at the time, the falling crate would deal an additional 9d6 points of damage, for a total of 11d6 points of damage.

For each additional increment an object falls, it deals an additional 1d6 points of damage. For example, since a 30-pound metal sphere must fall 50 feet to deal damage (1d6 points of damage), such a sphere that fell 150 feet would deal 3d6 points of damage. Objects weighing less than 1 pound do not deal damage to those they land upon, no matter how far they have fallen.

WEATHER

Player characters have a tendency to ignore the weather, but sometimes it can play an important role in an adventure. Rain can wash away tracks, while a thunderstorm can force the characters to seek shelter. If you need this level of detail, roll once per day on Table 5–18: Random Weather to determine the weather for that day.

Calm: Wind speeds are light (0 to 10 mph).

Cold: Between 0° and 40° Fahrenheit during the day, 10–20 degrees colder at night.

Cold Snap: Lowers temperature by –10° F.

Downpour: Treat as rain (see Precipitation, below) but conceals as fog. Creates flash floods (see Weather Hazards, page 87). A downpour lasts 2d4 hours.

Heat Wave: Raises temperature by +10° F.

Hot: Between 85°–110° Fahrenheit during the day, 10–20 degrees colder at night.

Moderate: Between 40°–60° Fahrenheit during the day, 10–20 degrees colder at night.

Powerful Storm: *(Windstorm/Blizzard/Hurricane/Tornado):* Wind speeds are over 50 mph (see Table 5–16: Wind Effects). In addition, blizzards are accompanied by heavy snow (1–3 feet), and hurricanes are accompanied by downpours (see above). Windstorms last 1d6 hours. Blizzards last 1d3 days. Hurricanes can last up to a week, but their major impact on characters will come in a 24- to 48-hour period when the center of the storm moves through their area. Tornadoes are very short-lived (1d6×10 minutes), typically forming as part of a thunderstorm system (see Storm, below, and Weather Hazards, page 87).

Precipitation: Roll d% to determine whether the precipitation is fog (01–30), rain/snow (31–90), or sleet/hail (91–00). Snow and sleet occur only when the temperature is 30 Fahrenheit or below. Most precipitation lasts 2d4 hours. By contrast, hail lasts only 1d20 minutes but usually accompanies 1d4 hours of rain. See Weather Hazards, page 87.

Storm: *(Duststorm/Snowstorm/Thunderstorm):* Wind speeds are severe (30 to 50 mph) and visibility cut by half—see Weather Hazards, page 87. Storms last 2d4–1 hours.

SUFFOCATION

Characters in conditions where there is no air at all can hold their breath for 2 rounds per point of Constitution. After this, each character must make a Constitution check (DC 10) to continue holding her breath. The save must be repeated each round (with a +1 to the DC for each previous success).

When the character finally fails her Constitution check, she begins to suffocate. In the first round, she falls unconscious (0 hp). The following round, she drops to –1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, she suffocates.

Slow Suffocation: A character can breathe easily for 6 hours in a 10-foot-by-10-foot-10-foot sealed area. After that time, the character takes 1d6 points of subdual damage every 15 minutes. Each additional character, or every significant fire source, reduces this time by half. Thus, two people can last for 3 hours, after which they each take 1d6 points per 15 minutes. If there's a fire nearby, the good air runs out in only 2 hours.

TABLE 5–18:
Random Weather

d%	Weather	Cold Climate	Temperate Climate*	Desert
01–70	Normal weather	Cold, calm	Normal for season**	Hot, calm
71–80	Abnormal weather cold snap (31–100)	Heat wave (01–30) or cold snap (51–100)	Heat wave (01–50) or	Hot, windy
81–90	Inclement weather (snow)	Precipitation (normal for season)	Precipitation	Hot, windy
91–99	Storm	Snowstorm	Thunderstorm, snowstorm†	Duststorm
100	Powerful storm *hurricane, tornado*	Blizzard *Downpour*	Windstorm, blizzard††,	

*Temperate includes forest, hills, marsh, mountains, plains, and warm aquatic.
**Winter is cold, summer is warm, spring and autumn are moderate. Warm or marshy regions are always slightly warmer in winter.
†Only in wintertime; otherwise, treat as thunderstorm (01–75) or windstorm (76–00).
††Only in wintertime; otherwise, treat as hurricane (01–50) or tornado (51–00)

Warm: Between 60°–85° Fahrenheit during the day, 10–20 degrees colder at night.

Windy: Wind speeds are moderate to strong (10–30 mph) (See Weather Hazards, page 87.)

CHARACTER CONDITION SUMMARY

If more than one of these conditions affects a character, apply them all. If certain effects can't combine, apply the most severe effect.

Blinded: The character cannot see at all, and thus everything has full concealment to him. He has a 50% chance to miss in combat, loses his positive Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (if any), and grants a +2 bonus on attack rolls to enemies that attack him, just as if all his enemies were invisible. He moves at half speed and suffers a –4 penalty on most Strength- and Dexterity-based skills. He cannot make Spot checks or perform any other activity (such as reading) that requires vision.

Cowering: The character is frozen in fear, loses his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (if any), and can take no actions. Foes gain a +2 bonus to hit cowering characters.

Deafened: A deafened character cannot hear, suffers a –4 penalty to initiative checks, and has a 20% chance of spell failure when casting spells with verbal components. He cannot make Listen checks.

Disabled: You can only take one move action or attack action each round. If you perform any strenuous activity (see Disabled, page 69), you take 1 point of damage.

Entangled: An entangled character suffers a –2 penalty to attack rolls and a –4 penalty to effective Dexterity. If the bonds are anchored to an immobile object, the entangled character cannot move. Otherwise, he can move at half speed, but can't run or charge. An entangled character who attempts to cast a spell must make a Concentration check (DC 15) or lose the spell.

Exhausted: Characters who are exhausted move at half normal speed and suffer an effective penalty of –6 to Strength and Dexterity. A fatigued character becomes exhausted by doing something else that would normally cause fatigue. After 1 hour of "complete rest" (see Healing, page 69), exhausted characters become fatigued.

Fatigued: Characters who are fatigued cannot run or charge and suffer an effective penalty of –2 to Strength and Dexterity. A fatigued character becomes exhausted by doing something else that would normally cause fatigue. After 8 hours of "complete rest," fatigued characters are no longer fatigued.

Flat-Footed: A character who has not yet acted during a combat is flat-footed, not yet reacting normally to the situation. A flat-footed character loses his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (if any).

Grappled: The character is engaged in wrestling or some other form of hand-to-hand struggle with one or more attackers. A grappled character cannot move, cast a spell, fire a ranged weapon, or undertake any action more complicated than making a barehanded attack, attacking with a Tiny or Small weapon (such as a knife), or attempting to break free from the opponent. In addition, grappled characters do not threaten any area and lose any Dexterity bonuses to Armor Class against opponents they aren't grappling.

Helpless: Bound, sleeping, paralyzed, or unconscious characters are helpless. Enemies can make advantageous attacks against helpless characters, or even deliver a usually lethal coup de grace. A melee attack against a helpless character is at a +4 bonus on the attack roll (equivalent to attacking a prone target). A ranged attack gets no special bonus. A helpless defender can't use any Dexterity bonus to Armor Class. In fact, his Dexterity score is treated as if it were 0 and his Dexterity modifier to Armor Class were –5.

Incapacitated: Characters who are incapacitated are treated as helpless.

Nauseated: Nauseated characters are unable to attack, cast spells, concentrate on spells, or do anything else requiring attention. The only action such a character can take is a single move action per turn.

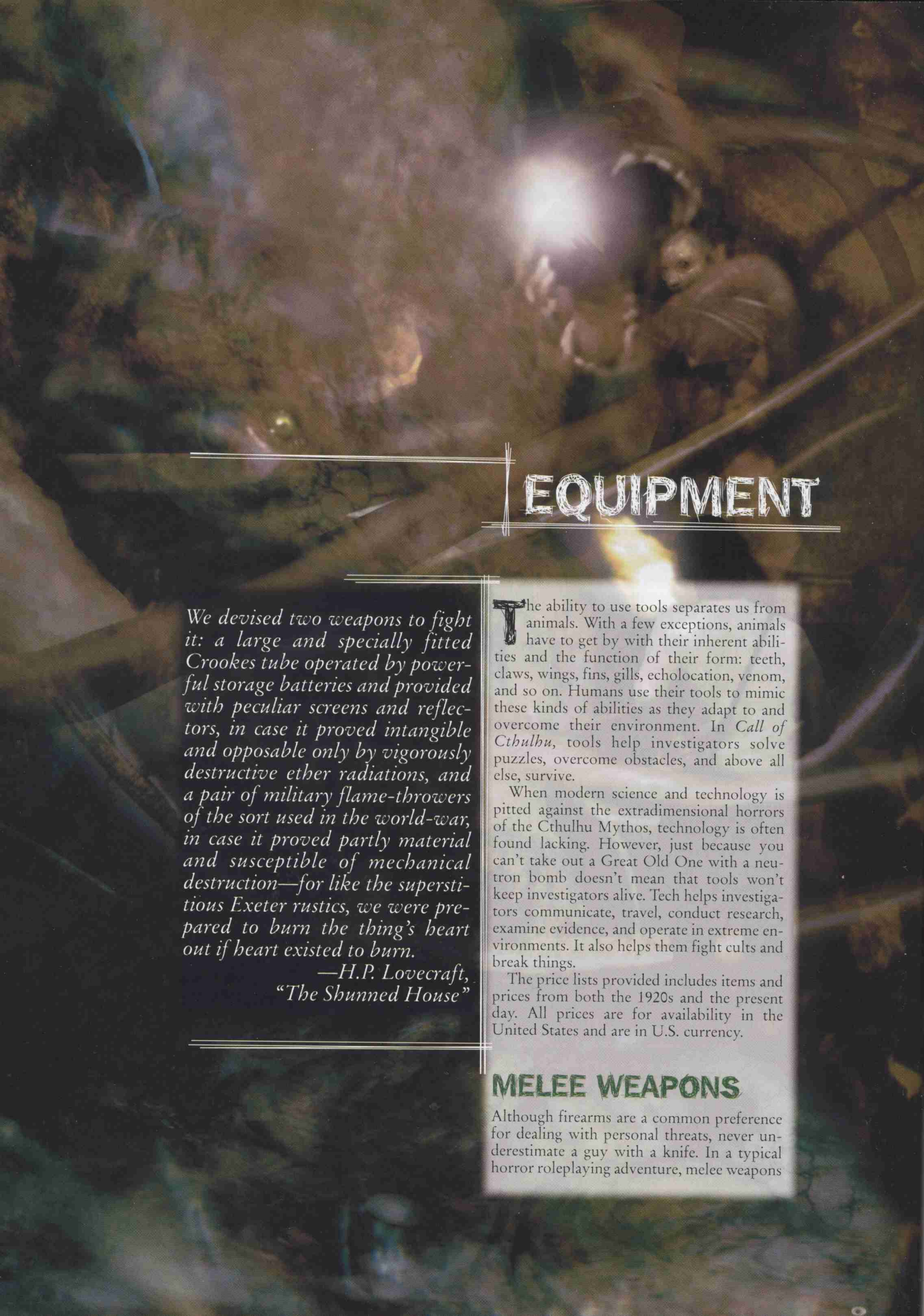
Paralyzed: A paralyzed character stands rigid and helpless, unable to move or act physically. He has effective Strength and Dexterity scores of 0 but may take purely mental actions.

Prone: The character is on the ground. He suffers a –4 penalty on melee attack rolls, but can use firearms without penalty. Opponents receive +4 bonuses on melee attack against him but –4 penalties on ranged attacks. Standing up from prone is a move action.

Staggered: The character has subdual damage equal to current hit points. Staggered characters can only take one move action or attack action each round. You cease being staggered when your hit points exceed your subdual damage.

Stunned: A stunned creature can take no actions and loses any Dexterity bonus to his AC. Each attacker gains a +2 bonus on attack rolls against the stunned creature. In addition, stunned characters immediately drop anything they are holding.

Unconscious: Knocked out and helpless (see above). Unconsciousness can result from having current hit points between –1 and –9, or from subdual damage in excess of current hit points.



EQUIPMENT

We devised two weapons to fight it: a large and specially fitted Crookes tube operated by powerful storage batteries and provided with peculiar screens and reflectors, in case it proved intangible and opposable only by vigorously destructive ether radiations, and a pair of military flame-throwers of the sort used in the world-war, in case it proved partly material and susceptible of mechanical destruction—for like the superstitious Exeter rustics, we were prepared to burn the thing's heart out if heart existed to burn.

—H.P. Lovecraft, "The Shunned House"

The ability to use tools separates us from animals. With a few exceptions, animals have to get by with their inherent abilities and the function of their form: teeth, claws, wings, fins, gills, echolocation, venom, and so on. Humans use their tools to mimic these kinds of abilities as they adapt to and overcome their environment. In *Call of Cthulhu*, tools help investigators solve puzzles, overcome obstacles, and above all else, survive.

When modern science and technology is pitted against the extradimensional horrors of the Cthulhu Mythos, technology is often found lacking. However, just because you can't take out a Great Old One with a neutron bomb doesn't mean that tools won't keep investigators alive. Tech helps investigators communicate, travel, conduct research, examine evidence, and operate in extreme environments. It also helps them fight cults and break things.

The price lists provided includes items and prices from both the 1920s and the present day. All prices are for availability in the United States and are in U.S. currency.

MELEE WEAPONS

Although firearms are a common preference for dealing with personal threats, never underestimate a guy with a knife. In a typical horror roleplaying adventure, melee weapons

are often improvised on the spot, whether they're shovels, chairs, kitchen knives, or baseball bats. Table 6–1: Melee Weapons provides game mechanics for some common examples.

WEAPON QUALITIES

The following important factors are listed for melee weapons:

Tiny, Small, Medium-size, and Large Weapons: The size of a weapon compared to your size determines whether the weapon is light, one-handed, two-handed, or too large to use. Investigators are Medium-size, but Mythos monsters wielding weapons come in all shapes and sizes.

Light: If the weapon's size category is smaller than you are (such as a human using a cleaver), then the weapon is light. You can use a light weapon in one hand; you get no special bonus when using it two-handed. Light weapons are easier to use in your off hand, and you can use them while grappling. For human investigators, unarmed strikes are always considered light.

One-Handed: If the weapon's size category is the same as yours (such as a human using a machete), then the weapon is one-handed. You can use a one-handed melee weapon two-handed so that you can apply one and one-half times your Strength bonus to damage. (This rule doesn't apply to Strength penalties, just Strength bonuses). This type of weapon can be thrown one-handed; you add your Strength bonus to damage if you do so.

Two-Handed: If the weapon's size category is one step larger than your own (such as a human using a fire axe), then the weapon is two-handed. To use a two-handed melee weapon effectively you must use both hands. When you deal damage with it, you add one and one-half times your Strength bonus to damage (as long as it's a bonus, not a penalty).

Too Large to Use: If the weapon's size category is two or more steps larger than your own (such as a particularly clever rat-thing trying to pick up a crowbar), it's too large to use. Some objects are just too big or unwieldy to be used as improvised weapons.

Weapon Proficiency: A character without the Weapon Proficiency (melee weapons) feat suffers a –4 penalty to all attacks with melee weapons.

Damage: The Damage column indicates the damage you deal with a weapon when you score a hit.

Critical: The entry in this column notes the chance for a critical hit, the extra damage the weapon does on a critical hit, or both. When you score a critical hit, roll the damage with all modifiers either two times or three times (as indicated by its critical multiplier) and add all the rolls together.

×2: Roll damage twice on a critical hit.

×3: Roll damage three times on a critical hit.

19–20/×2: The weapon scores a threat (a possible critical hit) on a natural 19 or 20 (instead of just on a 20). You roll damage twice on a critical hit.

18–20/×2: The weapon scores a threat on a natural 18, 19, or 20 (instead of just on a 20). You roll damage twice on a critical hit.

Unless noted otherwise, a weapon's threat range is 20 (it only scores a possible critical hit when a natural 20 is rolled on 1d20).

Range Increment: Any weapon with a range increment can be used as a ranged weapon. A ranged attack at less than this increment is not penalized for range. However, each full range increment adds a cumulative –2 penalty to the attack roll. For instance, a commando knife (range increment 10 feet) can be thrown at a target less than 10 feet away at no penalty, but would suffer a –2 penalty against a target 12 feet away, and a –6 penalty against a target 30 feet away. Thrown weapons, including throwing knives and grenades, have a maximum range of five range increments.

Improvised Thrown Weapons: Sometimes more unusual objects get thrown during the course of an adventure, such as a book, a vase, a stone idol, the dead investigator hanging limp in a gug's claws, or whatever else comes readily to hand. Because these objects are not designed for throwing, they are unwieldy. Characters who use improvised thrown weapons suffer a –4 penalty on their attack rolls (just as they would for any other weapon they were not proficient with). The range increment of an improvised weapon is 10 feet. Its size and damage it deals must be adjudicated by the GM.

Weight: This gives the weapon's weight in pounds.

Type: Melee weapons are classified according to the three types of damage they deal: bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing. Some monsters may be partially or wholly immune to attacks with certain types of weapons. If a weapon is of two types, a creature would have to be immune to both types of damage to ignore damage dealt by that weapon.

FIREARMS

Most investigators don't get killed because their weapons fail them. Instead, they die horribly because they try to use their weapons for nearly impossible tasks—such as killing Mythos creatures. Theoretically, the game rules allow mundane weapons to kill deadly Mythos monsters such as chthonians, but that's only likely if the critter stands up in broad daylight under optimum conditions and lets the investigators open up with a fusillade of heavy weapons fire. Most Mythos critters, even relatively fragile ones such as human cultists or deep ones, won't be so obliging as to give the investigators a clear shot.

Weapons, no matter how destructive, are unlikely to solve all the investigators' Mythos problems. Considering the legal ramifications of using firearms, weapons can get the surviving investigators locked up by the local authorities. If they're not careful, the investigators become indistinguishable from bloodthirsty cultists. At that point, the law fails to distinguish between the two groups.

When guns are drawn, characters die. Nonetheless, their presence does occasionally save the lives of characters in horror roleplaying games. Fantasy games have spells and magic items, while science-fiction games have laser guns and cyber-enhanced body parts. Investigators in *Call of Cthulhu* have guns. While intelligence and cleverness are an investigator's best friends, sometimes a troubled hero is comforted by the security of a trusty shotgun.

If firearms don't play a large role in your campaign, or if a given player just doesn't care that much about picking one out, you'll only need the game mechanics from Table 6–3: Generic Firearms (page 95). Those wanting more information should proceed to the Expanded Firearms Rules, page 95.

TABLE 6–1:
Melee Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Tiny Weapons					
Brass knuckles	1d3	×2	—	0.5 lb.	Bludgeoning
Knife, steak	1d3	×2	—	0.5 lb.	Piercing
Razor, straight	1d3	×2	—	0.5 lb.	Slashing
Stiletto/Switchblade	1d3	19–20/×2	—	0.75 lb.	Piercing
Knife, commando	1d4	19–20/×2	10	1 lb.	Piercing
Knife, hunting	1d4	19–20/×2	10	2.5 lb.	Piercing
Knife, combat	1d4	19–20/×2	10	2.5 lb.	Slashing
Small Weapons					
Sap	1d6 subdual	×2	—	3 lb.	Bludgeoning
Pocketknife or scalpel	1d3	×2	—	0.5 lb.	Piercing
Cleaver	1d4	19–20/×2	5	1 lb.	Piercing
Butcher knife	1d4	19–20/×2	5	1 lb.	Piercing
Folding shovel or entrenching tool	1d4	×2	—	2.5 lb.	Bludgeoning and slashing
Gun butt, pistol	1d4	×2	5	2 lb.	Bludgeoning
Knife, kukri	1d4	18–20/×2	10	3 lb.	Slashing
Hatchet or tomahawk	1d6	×3	10	3.5 lb.	Slashing
Nunchaku*	1d6	×2	—	2 lb.	Bludgeoning
Medium-Size Weapons					
Croquet mallet	1d4	×2	—	2.5 lb.	Bludgeoning
Nightstick or billy club	1d4	×2	—	1.5 lb.	Bludgeoning
Fencing foil	1d4	18–20/×2	—	2.5 lb.	Piercing
Bayonet, hand-held	1d4	19–20/×2	—	2.5 lb.	Piercing
Crowbar, tire iron, or fireplace poker	1d6	×2	—	3 lb.	Bludgeoning
Pick or pickaxe	1d6	×4	—	6 lb.	Piercing
Machete	1d6	19–20/×2	—	2.5 lb.	Slashing
Rapier	1d6	18–20/×2	—	3 lb.	Piercing
Saber, cavalry	1d6	18–20/×2	—	3 lb.	Slashing
Large Weapons					
Bat, baseball or cricket	1d6	×2	—	3 lb.	Bludgeoning
Bayonet, fixed to rifle	1d6	19–20/×2	—	11.5 lb.	Piercing and slashing
Gun butt, rifle or shotgun	1d6	×2	—	9 lb.	Bludgeoning
Shovel or spade	1d6	×2	—	4 lb.	Bludgeoning
Axe, wood or fire	1d8	×3	—	6 lb.	Slashing

* Requires Martial Arts feat to use.

TABLE 6–2:
Melee Weapon Prices

Weapon	1920s	2000s
Pocket knife	$0.79	$16.95
Swiss army knife	$1.98	$39.95
Rapier	$12.50	$79.00
Fencing foil	$6.00	$149.99
Saber	$30.00	$200.00
Bayonet	$3.75	$99.99
Combat knife	$3.48	$36.88
Commando knife	$4.25	$19.99
Kukri knife	$6.00	$24.95
Stiletto	$2.00	$24.99
Machete w/scabbard	$1.00	$13.95
Brass knuckles	$1.00	$6.95
Billy club/police club	$0.85	$19.95
Nunchaku*	—	$19.95

* Requires Martial Arts feat to use.

MODERN ARMOR

Armor is not commonly available to Mythos investigators until fairly modern eras (after the 1960s). To be honest, manufacturers didn't design modern armor to protect against deep one claws or chthonian tentacles. For purposes of simplicity and game balance, Table 6–4: Generic Armor describes four levels of protection for paranoid investigators.

ARMOR CHECK PENALTY

An investigator wearing armor suffers an armor check penalty to the follow skills: Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Move Silently, Jump, and Tumble.

In addition, the investigator suffers the same armor check penalty to attack rolls.

BULLET RESISTANT VESTS

Bullet resistant vests that can be concealed under clothing come in a variety of grades. Some are made of simple ballistic cloth and are designed to stop handgun rounds of .38 Special and 9×19mm caliber and less. This vest covers the front and back of the torso and some may cover the sides. The armor bonus is +4.

High velocity rifle rounds (including the .22 long rifle round), larger caliber handguns (such as the .357 Magnum), arrows, and knives tend to punch through this type of vest by working through the cloth's weave. Against these kinds of attacks, this vest is of only limited protection; reduce the armor bonus to +1.

Reinforced vests are also available. These are much like the standard type above but include bullet resistant Kevlar plates in the front and back. These plates are designed to withstand hits from rifles of 7.62×51mm or less. The armor bonus is +5; against larger caliber weapons, this limited protection is only +1.

Bullet resistant vests provide only a +1 armor bonus against a creature's claw attacks.

FLAK ARMOR

Modern military flak vests are designed to protect the entire torso from grenade and shell fragments and bullets of up to 7.62×51mm caliber. Vests in good condition should be able to withstand direct bullet hits and protect the wearer from significant harm. Due to their thick-

TABLE 6–3:
Generic Firearms

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Capacity	Range Increment	Rate of Fire
Handgun (9mm)	1d10	×3	9	20 ft.	Multifire
Rifle (.30-06 bolt-action)	2d10	×3	4	200 ft.	Standard
Shotgun (12-gauge pump-action)	3d6/2d6/1d6*	×3	5	50 ft.	Standard
Submachine Gun (9×19mm selective fire)	1d10	×3	30	25 ft.	Autofire

All firearms on this table do piercing damage.
*Damage is by range increment. Shotguns do no damage beyond the third increment

TABLE 6–4:
Generic Armor

Armor	2000s Cost	Armor Bonus	Armor Check Penalty
Bullet resistant vest	$299.95	+4	–1
Reinforced vest	$439.95	+5	–2
Flak vest	$2,000.00	+6	–3
Flak armor (body armor)	$4,000.00	+7	–4

ness and weight, they are not easily concealed and are worn over clothing. The armor bonus to Armor Class is +6. Even heavier and offering more coverage, flak armor, also known as body armor, provides a +7 armor bonus to Armor Class.

EXPANDED FIREARMS RULES

Table 6–3: Generic Firearms presents a few weapons characters in *Call of Cthulhu* can use right away. Some players, however, prefer additional detail about their gear. If you want more elaborate statistics for your character's firearm, a history for every gun, or just a wider array of options, then this section is for you. Make sure you check with your Gamemaster before choosing anything exotic—she'll decide whether your investigator needs to "check his guns at the door."

While the role of firearms in this game is a question each group answers in different ways, this information should be useful to anyone running a d20-based campaign in modern-day Earth—even without the Cthulhu Mythos.

SPECIFIC FIREARMS

The arms described in the tables that follow are divided into four categories: pistols, rifles (including automatic rifles, shotguns, and submachine guns. Within each table, weapons are listed in chronological order by year. The tables provide a sampling of weapons commonly available in the 20th century.

MODEL/DESIGNATION

This is the name or designation of the weapon. It often includes the name of the manufacturer. The letter "M" appears in many weapon names/designations and almost always stands for "model." For example, the Winchester M1897 shotgun is also known as the Winchester Model 1897 shotgun.

CALIBER(S)

This is the caliber of ammunition the weapon uses. Many weapons of the same model are available in different calibers. However, with a very few exceptions, a specimen chambered for one caliber cannot use ammunition of a different caliber.

In almost every case, caliber refers to the diameter of the bullet that is fired down the barrel. This is typically measured in either fractions of inches or in millimeters. For example, a very common and popular handgun cartridge is the .45 ACP round; the ".45" means that the bullet is .45 inches (almost half an inch) in diameter at its widest point. Another example is the 7.62×54mm rifle cartridge, the standard Russian and Soviet rifle round of both world wars; "7.62" means that the bullet is 7.62 millimeters across at its widest point. A caliber that is measured in millimeters also often includes a follow-up number that refers to the overall cartridge length. In the previous example involving the 7.62×54mm round, the "54" refers to the total length of the cartridge in millimeters.

Shotgun caliber is measured differently. Using the archaic measurement of gauge, this is a description of the weapon's bore size: the lower the gauge, the larger the caliber. In other words, a 12-gauge shotgun fires a greater mass of pellets than one that's 20-gauge. Shotgun barrels lack rifling and are designed to fire various numbers and sizes of pellets. They may also fire individual slugs that are capable of doing considerable damage.

The .357 Magnum and .44 Magnum caliber revolvers are special in one important respect. Most .357 Magnum revolvers can safely load and shoot both .357 Magnum rounds and .38 Special rounds. Similarly, most .44 Magnum revolvers can safely load and fire both .44 Magnum rounds and .44 Special rounds.

A weapon's caliber affects many important elements in its performance. This includes but is not limited to range, accuracy, reliability, and damage. A poorly designed cartridge might, for instance, make an otherwise decent weapon prone to jams.

ACTION

This describes the mechanism that the weapon uses to chamber and fire a cartridge. The type of action greatly affects the weapon's rate of fire, reliability, and ease of maintenance.

Automatic: When the trigger is pulled, the weapon fires a stream of bullets until the shooter releases the trigger, the weapon malfunctions, or the weapon runs out of ammunition. Machine guns are, by definition, fully automatic, though many are also selective fire (see below).

Bolt: Bolt-action arms first appeared in the latter half of the 19th century. Reliable and easy to maintain, they were the standard military long arm

design for most countries in both world wars and remain popular as sniper and sporting arms. A bolt-action rifle requires the shooter to manipulate the bolt in order to eject any spent casing that is in the chamber. The same maneuver also either moves a fresh cartridge from the magazine into the chamber or opens the breach so the shooter can manually reload. In most designs, this means the shooter (1) lifts the bolt handle up, (2) pulls the bolt to the rear to eject the casing, (3) pushes the bolt forward to chamber a new round, and (4) pushes the bolt handle back down to lock the bolt in place.

Lever: Lever-action arms require the shooter to manipulate a lever or handle that is typically mounted on the underside of the weapon. By working the lever, any spent cartridge casing in the chamber is ejected and a fresh round is maneuvered from the magazine into the chamber. Lever-action weapons made their debut in the 1860s and are often associated with the taming of the American West. They remained popular sporting arms throughout the 20th century.

Pump: Also known as slide-action, pump-action weapons are most commonly associated with sporting and riot shotguns. A wide range of pump-action rifles, particularly light .22 caliber target and "varmint rifles," have also been manufactured. The design first appeared in the late 19th century. By pulling back and pushing forward the slide in one smooth motion, the action ejects any spent cartridge casing and loads a new round from the magazine.

Revolving: First appearing in the mid-19th century, revolving-action weapons are typically associated with handguns ("revolvers") that first appeared in the 1840s. Though both revolving rifles and shotguns have been manufactured, the design proved far more successful with handguns. Repeating weapons (arms that can fire multiple times without reloading) appeared in various forms prior to the 1840s, but it was Samuel Colt's revolver design that proved to be the first noteworthy, reliable, mass-produced repeating weapon. Revolvers were common in military use until around World War I. They remained a popular law enforcement and civilian weapon throughout the 20th century and continued to see at least limited military use in some areas for the entire 20th century.

Revolving arms come in two basic sub-types. Single-action revolvers require the shooter to cock the hammer in order to turn the cylinder and expose a fresh cartridge for firing. Double-action revolvers can be fired like single-action revolvers. However, by simply pulling the trigger, the mechanism automatically turns the cylinder and fires a shot. The trigger pull is heavy when the weapon has not first been cocked and this tends to diminish its accuracy. A less common variant is the hammerless double-action revolver. This version cannot be manually cocked so the trigger pull is always heavy. Though this might be viewed as a disadvantage from the standpoint of accuracy, it also means that the revolver is less susceptible to an accidental discharge.

In the Action column of firearms tables, "rev/S" refers to a single-action revolving weapon. The term "rev/D" refers to a double-action revolving weapon.

Selective: Selective fire weapons, such as most submachine guns, are those that have a selector switch. The switch typically has three settings. One functions as a safety. A second permits it to fire as a semiautomatic weapon. The third permits it to fire on fully automatic.

Military assault rifles are, by definition, selective fire. Many machine guns and submachine guns are selective fire as well. Selective fire small arms began to enter widespread use in the closing years of World War II and are now the standard infantry arm for virtually every army in the world.

Semi: Semiautomatic firearms are designs that use either recoil forces or gas pressure to automatically move the bolt within the weapon in order to load and fire. They discharge one round for each pull of the trigger. The mechanism is fairly complex when compared to earlier designs. It wasn't until shortly before World War II that truly reliable semiautomatic designs appeared. They have proved popular in both military and sporting use. Semiautomatic arms are neither machine guns nor assault rifles.

For semiautomatic pistols, there are two basic sub-types. Single-action designs are those that require the weapon to first have a round chambered and the hammer to be cocked before it will fire. Once it discharges its first round, the weapon cocks itself for the follow-up shots. Double-action designs are those that do not have to be cocked to fire. Once a round is chambered, the weapon will cock itself as the trigger is pulled. The trigger pull for this first shot will be heavy (as with a single-action revolver). The weapon self-cocks with each subsequent shot. Of course, the shooter can manually cock a double-action pistol so that its first shot is smooth and accurate.

In the Action column of the handgun table, "semi/S" refers to a single-action semiautomatic pistol while "semi/D" refers to a double-action semiautomatic pistol. Semiautomatic rifles and shotguns are almost always single-action.

CAP (CAPACITY)

This is the number of cartridges the weapon normally holds. Some models are available with different magazine sizes.

LOADING

This is the way in which the weapon is loaded. Several common options follow.

Belt: Designed for use with machine guns, an ammunition belt is made of metal or fabric links that hold cartridges. As the belt is fed through the weapon, the rounds are fired. The spent casings are ejected and the belt exits the opposite side of the weapon. Some metal link belts are designed to remain intact as they exit the weapon. Others are "disintegrating link belts" that eject the individual links from the weapon. Unlike fabric belts, metal link belts of any type are reusable. Because belts contain large quantities of ammunition, they are ideal for use with fully automatic weapons.

Break: Break-open designs have the barrel mounted on a hinge. By pressing a small catch or lever, the weapon can be "broken open" to expose the barrel(s) or cylinder. In most modern designs, cartridge casings are automatically ejected when this occurs. The weapon may then be quickly reloaded. Most single- and double-barrel shotguns use this loading method. It is also common in revolvers, particularly older (19th century) Smith & Wesson and Webley models. Some break-open revolver designs have speed-loaders available for them that permit the entire cylinder to be reloaded at once.

RANGE

This is the weapon's range increment. Any attack at less than this distance is not penalized for range, so a handgun (range increment 20 feet) can be fired at enemies up to 19 feet away with no penalty. However, each full range increment causes a cumulative –2 penalty to the attack roll; the same handgun, fired at someone 40 feet away, would suffer a –4 penalty.

RATE

This is the weapon's rate of fire. In this version of *Call of Cthulhu,* every firearm is classified as either standard, multifire, or autofire. Rate of fire governs how many attacks you can make each round with a firearm and what penalties or bonuses apply (see Firearm Attacks, page 80).

COUNTRY

This is the country where the weapon was first manufactured. Many firearms are manufactured in numerous countries, sometimes illegally or without proper licensing.

YEAR

This is the year in which the weapon was first manufactured. Military arms are typically unavailable to civilians in any meaningful number in the first years of their manufacture. This is particularly the case for weapons that are introduced during times of war. In later years, most military weapons become available on the legitimate civilian market in quantity when they are declared obsolete. The exceptions to this are selective fire and automatic weapons, which are illegal in most countries. Of course, the black market in almost any country might have most any type of weapon available, sometimes at astonishingly low prices. In the 1990s in some parts of Africa, for example, fully automatic AK-47 assault rifles could be acquired for a mere seventy dollars or so. The reason lies in the flood of arms sent into Africa by the Soviet bloc during the Cold War. This does not mean that such arms are reasonably available to investigators, nor that the weapon purchased will be in good condition. It can be very dangerous dealing with the black market, especially in a foreign country whose culture, language, and laws are unfamiliar to those seeking weapons.

NOTES

Some weapons include lettered footnotes (a, b, c, and so on) that refer to additional information located at the bottom of that table.

Clip: Also known as "charger" and "stripper clip," a clip is a small piece of metal used to hold cartridges. Typically, a small spring in the clip provides sufficient pressure to prevent rounds from simply falling out. Clips are commonly used in bolt-action military rifles and carbines but have also been used in some semiautomatic pistols, and even lever-action and semiautomatic rifles.

In most cases, using a clip involves simply inserting it into the breach and pushing the rounds with the thumb from the clip into the weapon's internal magazine. The clip is then tossed aside or is knocked away when the breach is closed. In a few cases, the clip must be physically inserted into the weapon and is required to remain in it for it to work. The best known example is the M1 Garand rifle of World War II.

The term "clip" is often erroneously used to describe a detachable box magazine (see "Mag" below). Clip-loaded weapons that do not require the clip to be in the weapon can usually be loaded manually like side-loaded weapons (see below). In the firearms tables, the only weapons that require clips to be used with them are the M1 Garand, the Colt M1917 revolver, and the Smith & Wesson M1917 revolver. All three are described in detail separate from this section.

Drum: A drum is simply an enlarged magazine that holds as little as a few dozen or as much as one hundred or more cartridges (fifty to seventy-five are typical sizes). Drums are usually heavy and cumbersome and most tend to rattle when they are moved around. Drums are usually used with submachine guns and light machine guns. One of the best known weapons that uses a drum is the Thompson submachine gun (or "tommy gun").

Mag: This refers to the detachable box magazine. Made of metal or plastic, a magazine contains a spring that pushes its cartridges into the weapon as the action works. First introduced in the late 19th century, magazines are commonly used in military, law enforcement, and sporting firearms of virtually every type. Magazines can be of small capacity (five rounds or so), but are more typically found in sizes ranging from ten to thirty rounds or more. Military issue magazines are rarely seen in capacities much exceeding forty rounds. In the 1980s and 1990s, some larger capacity magazines became available for civilian use. Their sizes sometimes rivals drums. More of a technical curiosity, these outsize magazines gained a reputation for being unreliable and prone to jam.

Side: Side-loading weapons are those designed to have rounds loaded through a receiver or side-gate or into the breach. Cartridges are loaded by hand, one by one. This is a slow process. Though many military arms used this method in the 19th century, it was obsolete by the 20th century. Many civilian arms continue to use this method. Notably, pump-action shotguns are commonly side-loading, being loaded through a receiver on the underside of the weapon.

Swing: Swing-out designs involve revolvers only. By pressing a catch or button on the revolver, the cylinder can be made to swing on a hinge away from the weapon's frame. The rounds in the cylinder can then be manually ejected by pushing an ejector rod, permitting the cylinder to be reloaded. Many swing-out revolvers, particularly those postdating World War II, are designed to allow the use of a speed-loader that can reload the entire cylinder in one efficient maneuver.

HIGHLIGHTED FIREARMS

The arms described here are expanded descriptions of some of those found on Table 6–5: Specific Firearms. In particular, these are weapons of historical or criminal importance or the kinds of firearms commonly seen in movies and history documentaries. They are divided into four categories: pistols, rifles, shotguns, and submachine guns. Within these categories, they are given in chronological order.

TABLE 6-5:
Specific Firearms

Pistols	Caliber	Damage	Crit	Action	Capacity	Loading	Range	Rate	Country (Year)
Remington Double Derringer [a]	.41 RF Short	1d8	×3	n/a	2	break	5	Multifire	USA (1866)
Colt Single Action Army Revolver [a]	.45 Colt Long, .40 or .41 Colt	2d8 1d10	×3 ×3	rev/S	6	side	20	Standard	USA (1873)
Colt M1877 "Lightning" Revolver [a]	.38 Colt	1d10	×3	rev/D	6	side	20	Multifire	USA (1877)
Colt M1877 "Thunderer" Revolver [a]	.41 Colt	1d10	×3	rev/D	6	side	20	Multifire	USA (1877)
Webley Mark I Revolver [a]	.455 Webley	2d8	×3	rev/S, or rev/D	6	break	20	Standard Multifire	UK (1887)
Mauser M1896 "Broomhandle" [a c]	7.62×25mm, 9×19mm 9mm Mauser	1d10 1d10	×3 ×3	semi/S	10	mag or clip	20	Multifire	Germany (1896)
P08 Luger Pistol [b c]	9×19mm	1d10	×3	semi/S	8	mag	20	Multifire	Germany (1908)
Colt M1911 Pistol [a]	.45 ACP	2d8	×3	semi/S	7	mag	20	Multifire	USA (1911)
Colt M1917 Revolver [a]	.45 ACP	2d8	×3	rev/D	6	clip or side	20	Multifire	USA (1917)
Smith & Wesson M1917 Revolver [a]	.45 ACP	2d8	×3	rev/D	6	clip or side	20	Multifire	USA (1917)
Astra M1921 [b]	9×23mm, 9mm Steyr, 9×19mm (and others)	1d10 1d10	×3 ×3	semi/S	8	mag	20	Multifire	Spain (1921)
Walther PPK [a]	.32 ACP .380 ACP	1d8 1d10	×3 ×3	semi/D	7	mag	20	Multifire	Germany (1931)
Browning GP35 High-Power Pistol [a c]	9×19mm	1d10	×3	semi/S	13	mag	20	Multifire	Belgium (1935)
Walther P38 Pistol [a]	9×19mm	1d10	×3	semi/D	8	mag	20	Multifire	Germany (1938)
Colt Python Revolver [b]	.357 Magnum	2d6	×3	rev/D	6	swing	20	Multifire	USA (1955)
Ruger Blackhawk Revolver [b]	.357 Magnum, .44 Magnum, or .45 Colt Long	2d6 2d8 2d8	×3	rev/S	6	side	20	Standard	USA (1955)
Heckler & Kock P9 Pistol [b]	9×19mm	1d10	×3	semi/S	9	mag	20	Multifire	Germany (1970)
SIG-Sauer P225 [a]	9×19mm	1d10	×3	semi/D	8	mag	20	Multifire	Switzerland (1985)
Beretta M92 [a]	9×19mm	1d10	×3	semi/D	15	mag	20	Multifire	Italy (1976)
Ruger Redhawk Revolver	.44 Magnum	2d8	×3	rev/D	6	side	20	Multifire	USA (1979)
IMI Desert Eagle Pistol [a]	.357 Magnum .41 Mag, .44 Mag, or .50 AE	2d6 2d6 2d8 2d10	×3 ×3 ×3 ×3	semi/S	9 (.357) 8 (.41) 7 (.44) 7 (.50)	mag	20	Multifire	Israel (1982)
Glock Model 17 [b]	9×19mm	1d10	×3	semi/D	17	mag	20	Multifire	USA (1983)
Colt Delta Elite [a]	10mm Auto	1d10	×3	semi/S	8	mag	20	Multifire	USA (1987)

[a] This design has an exposed hammer.
[b] This is a hammerless design.
[c] Some variants of this weapon could accommodate a detachable shoulder stock.

Rifles	Caliber	Damage	Crit	Action	Capacity	Loading	Range	Rate	Country (Year)
Mosin-Nagant M1891 Rifle	7.62×54mm	2d10	×3	bolt	5	clip	200	Standard	Russia (1891)
Mannlicher-Carcano M1891 Carbine [a]	6.5×52.5mm	2d8	×3	bolt	6	clip	175	Standard	Italy (1891)
Winchester M1894 Sporting Rifle	.32-40, .25-35 .30-30, .38-55	2d6 2d10	×3 ×3	lever	4 or 8	side	200	Standard	USA (1894)
Lee-Enfield Mark I Rifle [a]	.303 British	2d10	×3	bolt	6	mag	175	Standard	UK (1896)
Mauser M1898 Rifle [a]	7.92×57mm	2d10	×3	bolt	5	clip	200	Standard	Germany (1898)
Springfield M1903 [a]	7.92×57mm	2d10	×3	bolt	5	clip	175	Standard	USA (1903)
Lee-Enfield Mark III [a]	.303 British	2d10	×3	bolt	10	mag	200	Standard	UK (1907)
M1 Garand Rifle [a]	.30-06	2d10	×3	semi	8	clip	200	Multifire	USA (1936)
Springfield M1903A4 Sniper Rifle	.30-06	2d10	×3	bolt	5	clip	200	Standard	USA (1942)
Lee-Enfield No. 5 Mark I Jungle Carbine [a b]	.303 British	2d10	×3	bolt	10	mag	175	Standard	UK (1944)
Ruger Mini-14 Rifle	5.56×45 mm	2d6	×3	semi	5, 10, 20 or 30	mag	200	Multifire	USA (1973)
M21 Sniper Rifle [b]	7.62×51mm	2d10	×3	semi	20	mag	200	Multifire	USA (1975)
Barett Light Fifty M82A1 [b c]	12.7×99mm	2d12	×4	semi	11	mag	200	Multifire	USA (1983)
FR-F2 Sniper Rifle [b c]	7.62×51mm	2d10	×3	bolt	10	mag	200	Standard	France (1984)
Ruger M77 Mark II Police Rifle [c]	7.62×51mm or 5.56×45mm	2d10 2d6	×3 ×3	bolt	4	side	200	Standard	USA (1989)

[a] Most or all specimens of this weapon could accommodate a detachable bayonet.
[b] A flash suppressor is a standard accessory on most or all examples of this weapon.
[c] Some or all specimens are equipped with a bipod.

continued on page 99

Automatic Rifles	Caliber	Damage	Crit	Action	Cap	Loading	Range	Rate	Country (Year)
M1918 Browning Automatic Rifle [b]	.30-06	2d10	×3	select	20	mag	200	Autofire	USA (1918)
Kalashnikov AK-47 [a b]	7.62×39mm	2d6	×3	select	30	mag	150	Autofire	USSR (1947)
FN FAL [a b e]	7.62×51mm	2d10	×3	select	20	mag	200	Autofire	Belgium (1953)
M-14 Rifle [a,b]	7.62×51mm	2d10	×3	select	20	mag	200	Autifire	USA (1957)
Heckler & Koch G3 [a b]	7.62×51mm	2d6	×3	select	20	mag	200	Autofire	W.Germany (1959)
Colt M-16A1 [a b]	5.56×45mm	2d6	×3	select	20 or 30	mag	200	Autofire	USA (1966)
Galil Assault Rifle [a b d e]	5.56×45mm	2d6	×3	select	35 or 50	mag	200	Autofire	Israel (1973)
Steyr Sturmgewehr 77 AUG [b c f]	5.56×45mm	2d6	×3	select	30 or 42	mag	200	Autofire	Austria (1977)
Enfield L85A1 IndividualWeapon [a b c f]	5.56×45mm	2d6	×3	select	30	mag	200	Autofire	UK (1985)

[a] This weapon can accommodate a detachable bayonet.
[b] A flash suppressor is a standard accessory on most or all examples of this weapon.
[d] Most or all specimens of this weapon have folding stocks.
[e] Most or all specimens of this weapon are equipped with bipods.
[f] The standard AUG has a 1.4 power telescopic sight. The standard L85A1 has a 4.0 power telescopic sight.

Submachine Guns	Caliber	Damage	Crit	Action	Cap	Loading	Range	Rate	Country (Year)
Thompson M1921	.45 ACP	2d8	×3	select	20, 30, or 50	mag or drum	30	Autofire	USA (1921)
Sten Mark I [b c]	9×19mm	1d10	×3	select	32	mag	25	Autofire	UK (1941)
M3 "Grease Gun" [b]	.45 ACP	2d8	×3	auto	30	mag	30	Autofire	USA (1942)
Uzi [b]	9×19mm	1d10	×3	select	25, 32, or 40	mag	25	Autofire	Israel (1952)
Sterling L2A1 [a b]	9×19mm	1d10	×3	select	34	mag	30	Autofire	UK (1953)
vz61 Skorpion [b]	.32 ACP	1d8	×3	select	10 or 20	mag	20	Autofire	Czech (1961)
Heckler & Koch MP5 [b]	9×19mm	1d10	×3	select	15 or 30	mag	25	Autofire	W.Germany

[a] This weapon can accommodate a detachable bayonet.
[b] Some or all versions of this weapon have folding stocks.
[c] This weapon has a flash suppressor.

Shotguns	Caliber	Damage*	Action	Cap	Loading	Range	Rate	Country (Year)
Winchester M1897 [a]	12g or 16g		pump	5	side	50	Standard	USA (1897)
Winchester M1897 Trench [a c]	12g		pump	5	side	50	Standard	USA (1917)
Winchester M1897 Riot Shotgun [a]	10g or 12g		lever	4	side	50	Standard	USA (1897)
Browning Auto-5 Shotgun [b]	12g or 16g		semi	4	side	50	Multifire	Belgium (1900)
Winchester M1912 [b]	12g, 16g, 20g, 28g		pump	5	side	50	Standard	USA (1912)
Ithaca Model 37 [b]	12g, 16g, 20g		pump	4	side	50	Standard	USA (1937)
Winchester Model 24 Shotgun [b d]	12g, 16g, or 20g		n/a	2	break	50	Multifire	USA (1939)
Browning Auto-5 Light [b]	12g, 16g, or 20g		semi	5	side	50	Multifire	Belgium (1948)
Remington Model 11A Shotgun [b]	12g, 16g, or 20g		semi	5	side	50	Multifire	USA (1905)
Remington Model 11R [b]	12g		semi	5	side	50	Multifire	USA (1921)
Winchester Model 1400 [b]	12g, 16g, or 20g		semi	2	side	50	Multifire	USA (1964)
Franchi SPAS-12	12g		semi/pump	7	mag	50	Multifire	Italy (1979)
Mossberg M590 [c]	12g		pump	6	side	50	Standard	USA (1987)
Beretta Model 686 Onyx [b e]	12g, 20g, or 28g		n/a	2	break	50	Multifire	Italy (1989)
Baretta M3P	12g		semi	5	box	50	Multifire	Italy

[a] This design has an exposed hammer.
[b] This is a hammerless design.
[c] This weapon can accommodate a detachable knife-type bayonet.
[d] A double-barreled shotgun in a side-by-side configuration.
[e] A double-barreled shotgun in an over-and-under configuration.
*See Table 6–8 on page 107 for shotgun damage.

PISTOLS

REMINGTON DOUBLE DERRINGER (M95)

The Model 95 Derringer is the classic double-barrel derringer design. Introduced by Remington in 1866, over 150,000 were made before production concluded in 1935. The standard model is in .41 rimfire short caliber and has a pair of three-inch-long over-and-under barrels. Loading requires the shooter to unlock the barrels and tip them up on a hinge in order to extract spent casings and reload the weapon. The barrels cannot be fired simultaneously. When the first shot is fired, the firing pin automatically switches to the next barrel, permitting both barrels to be fired in quick succession. Its diminutive size permits easy concealment, but also makes it highly inaccurate beyond a very short range (a few yards).

Derringers are a common type of small firearm that are generally intended for self-defense. Often they are viewed as a weapon of last resort. Though the Model 95 is available in one caliber only, derringers have been produced by numerous manufacturers in an astonishing array of calibers and designs. They can have anywhere from one to four barrels (or more) and at the end of the 20th century are commonly seen in calibers ranging from .22 long rifle up to .38 Special (or greater).

COLT SINGLE ACTION ARMY REVOLVER (M1873)

Best known as the "Peacemaker" and "Frontier Six-Shooter," this venerable Colt design is perhaps the handgun most associated with the Old West. A supremely successful weapon, it was adopted by the U.S. Army and enjoyed substantial sales on the civilian

market. During its production run from 1872 to 1940, well over 350,000 were manufactured in a sizable number of variants. Those produced after 1898 were designed for smokeless ammunition. Production resumed in 1955 and continues to this day.

Though most commonly thought of as a powerful six-shot revolver chambering the .45 Colt, it has been available in a host of calibers from .22 rimfire to .476 Eley. The standard calibers have been .45 Colt, .44-40, .38-40, .32-20, and .41 Colt. Standard barrel lengths were 4 3/4-inch, 5 1/2-inch, and 7 1/2-inch, but some were made with barrels as short as 2 1/2 inches or as long as 16 inches. Some of the long barrel designs could accommodate a detachable shoulder stock. The majority were blued, but nickel-plated specimens are fairly common.

As a military weapon and in particular as a cavalry arm, the Peacemaker had distinct disadvantages that led to it being supplanted by other designs. Reloading requires the shooter to open a hinged sidegate and extract the spent cartridge casings individually. This is assisted by an integral ejector rod, but is still a cumbersome exercise when one is also occupied with maneuvering a horse. Being single-action, it must be manually cocked before it will fire. Though obsolete for military and law enforcement use, it remains one of the most famous and popular handguns in history.

Perhaps Colt's most respected post-World War II revolver design is the Python. Introduced in 1955, it is a six-shot, double-action, .357 Magnum revolver available with bluing, nickel plating, and matte stainless steel finish. Barrel lengths are 2.5 inches, 3 inches, 4 inches, 6 inches, and 8 inches. A rare version is chambered for .38 Special only. While sales for the venerable Peacemaker have declined drastically in recent years, the more modern Python still sells very well.

COLT MODEL 1877 "LIGHTNING" AND "THUNDERER" REVOLVERS

The Colt Model 1877 revolver was made in two basic models that are identical except for caliber. The "Lightning" was made in .38 Colt, while the "Thunderer" fired the slightly more powerful .41 Colt round.

Introduced in 1877, over 165,000 were manufactured before production ended in 1909. Like the more famous Peacemaker, it is commonly associated with the American West. Each was produced in a number of submodels with barrel lengths ranging from as little as 1 1/2 inches to as much as 10 inches. Standard lengths were 2 1/2-inch, 3 1/2-inch, 4 1/2-inch, and 6-inch. The majority were blued, but many had nickel plating.

The Model 1877 is Colt's first double-action design. Unfortunately, the new double-action mechanism was rather delicate. The mechanisms in many specimens, particularly those that have suffered heavy use or abuse, become defective over time. These will still fire, but only as single-action weapons (such as the Peacemaker). It has a six-round capacity and is loaded via a side gate.

Despite its technical flaw, the Model 1877 was a popular item and enjoyed brisk sales. One famous owner was outlaw John Wesley Hardin, who owned a Lightning with a 2 1/2-inch barrel. Other than its double-action mechanism, the M1877 is a well-made, quality design.

WEBLEY REVOLVER

For decades, the Webley revolver was the standard British sidearm. It first entered service in 1887. Initially manufactured as the Mark 1 for the very powerful .455 Webley round, it went through many design modifications over the years, which included alternate calibers.

The basic Webley is a six-shot break-open revolver and was available in both single-action and (more commonly) double-action versions. It saw service in both world wars as well as the Anglo-Boer War of 1899–1902. Webleys were commonly equipped with a lanyard tied to a ring on the bottom of the grip that helped prevent the shooter from losing or accidentally dropping it.

The Webley's initial caliber was .455 Webley round. Along with .45 Colt and .45 ACP, this was one of the most powerful calibers of its day, providing great stopping power. However, such a heavy caliber requires a large and robust weapon and this was a factor that contributed to its ultimate retirement from military service. Though a .38 caliber variant later appeared, this change was not enough to keep it in the British Army inventory.

Most Webleys for game purposes are identical except in caliber. Barrel lengths are typically either 4 or 6 inches though shorter barrel specimens were produced. The Webley is remarkable in that it remained in service long after most other major powers had long since discarded revolvers from front line military use. In the British service, the Webley was supplanted by the superb Browning High Power.

MAUSER M1896 PISTOL

Best known as the "Broomhandle Mauser," the M1896 is one of the most distinctive handguns ever produced and remains a popular item with shooters and collectors over a century after it was introduced. The nickname is, of course, due to its unusual narrow grip, which does not house a magazine. Whereas most semiautomatic handguns incorporate the magazine into the handle of the weapon, the M1896 has its magazine located forward of the trigger guard.

Designed and manufactured in Germany, mass production began in October of 1896 with the weapon being chambered for the powerful 7.63mm Mauser (7.63×25mm) round. Early models were loaded via a stripper clip, but later specimens used a detachable box magazine. Military sales were disappointing, but it was placed into quantity production during World War I in a 9×19mm variant. This version is sometimes termed the M1916 and is distinguished by a large "9" engraved on the handle. Many Broomhandle Mausers were slotted for detachable shoulder stocks. Such stocks were often hollow designs that doubled as holsters. Perhaps the most unusual variant is the selective fire version that was produced in both Germany and Spain. Used in conjunction with a shoulder stock, it was a machine pistol that was essentially a poor man's submachine gun. One example of this is the Model 712, which could accommodate both ten-round and twenty-round detachable box magazines.

The Broomhandle Mauser was manufactured in several countries (including Norway, Spain, and China) and is occasionally encountered in the hands of insurgents and guerrillas to this day. Most specimens were made in 7.63mm Mauser, 9mm Mauser, and 9×19mm (a.k.a. 9mm Parabellum), but one Chinese variant was in .45 ACP.

Though it is a distinctive and attractive weapon, the Broomhandle Mauser suffers from a few drawbacks that limited its sales. One is that it is expensive to manufacture. The other is that it is clumsy to handle and lacks the natural pointing qualities of weapons such as the P08 Luger. Despite this, it found early use in

TABLE 6–6:
Handgun/Submachine Gun Damage

Caliber	Also Known As	Damage	Critical
.22 Short		1d4	×2
.22 Long		1d4	×2
.22 LR	.22 Long Rifle	1d6	×3
.25 ACP	6.35×15mm SR	1d6	×2
.30 Carbine	7.62×33mm	2d6	×3
.32 ACP	7.65×17mm SR, 7.65 Browning	1d8	×3
.32 S&W		1d8	×3
.357 Magnum		2d6	×3
.380 ACP	9×17mm, 9mm Short, 9mm Browning, 9mm Kurz	1d10	×3
.38 Colt		1d10	×3
.38 S&W	9×20mmR	1d10	×3
.38 Special	9×29mm R	1d10	×3
.38 Super Auto		1d10	×3
.38 Webley		1d10	×3
.40 S&W		1d10	×3
.41 Colt		1d10	×3
.41 Magnum		2d6	×3
.41 RF Short	.41 Rimfire Short	1d8	×3
.44 Magnum		2d8	×3
.44 S&W		2d6	×3
.44 Special		2d6	×3
.45 Colt Long		2d8	×3
.45 S&W		2d6	×3
.455 Webley		2d8	×3
.455 Webley Auto		2d6	×3
.45 ACP	11.43×23mm	2d8	×3
.50 AE	.50 Magnum, .50 Action Express	2d10	×3
7.62×25mm	7.62mm Type P, 7.62mm Tokarev, 7.63×25mm, 7.63mm Mauser	1d10	×3
7.65×20mm	7.65mm French Long	1d8	×3
7.65×22mm	7.65mm Parabellum, 7.65mm Luger	1d8	×3
8mm Nambu	8mm M1904, 8mm Nambu Auto Pistol, 8mm Japanese	1d8	×3
9×18mm	9mm Makarov, 9mm Ultra	1d10	×3
9×19mm	9mm Parabellum, 9mm Luger	1d10	×3
9×23mm	9mm Largo, 9mm Bergmann Bayard, 9mm Bayard	1d10	×3
9mm Browning Long	9mm Swedish M1907	1d10	×3
9mm Glisenti		1d10	×3
9mm Mauser	9mm Neuhausen, 9mm Mauser Auto Pistol	1d10	×3
9mm Steyr		1d10	×3
10mm Auto		1d10	×3

the hands of British officers in Africa who purchased M1896s in England to use as personal (and unofficial) sidearms. The most notable user was a young Winston Churchill who employed his M1896 in a vicious close quarters engagement against Dervishes near Omdurman in the Sudan. His use of this pistol instead of his sabre very likely saved his life.

P08 LUGER PISTOL

Perhaps the best-known and most distinctive German pistol apart from the Broomhandle Mauser, the Luger has long been associated with the German military in both world wars. Less known is the fact that the earliest Lugers were not German but Swiss and were first produced in that country in 1900. World War I gave the Luger fame when it was one of several standard pistols employed by the Kaiser's forces. It also saw service in World War II, when it was one of several weapons that supplemented the standard Walther P38.

The Luger is a pleasant design with natural pointing qualities that make it easy to aim and shoot. The original Swiss versions were manufactured in 7.65×22mm (a.k.a. 7.65mm Parabellum) and had a grip safety. German models were first manufactured in 1908. They were chambered for 9×19mm and lacked a grip safety (though they have a standard manual safety). They remained Germany's standard sidearm until the adoption of the Walther P38 in 1938 and continued in production when it became evident that the German Army's appetite for sidearms could not be satisfied by the P38. Another 400,000 Lugers were manufactured between 1938 and 1943.

Two major flaws prevented the Luger's widespread adoption and continued use in the post-World War II years. The first is that it is comparatively expensive to manufacture. Its successor could be manufactured more quickly and cheaply. The second is that under harsh battlefield conditions, the Luger is susceptible to jams if mud, sand, or grit gets into the action.

Lugers remain a common and popular pistol in civilian hands. Good specimens are highly sought after by collectors and many made it into the United States after both World Wars, being brought in by veterans. Ultimately, over two and a half million P08 Lugers were produced.

The standard P08 Luger was a 9×19mm semiautomatic pistol with a 4-inch barrel that was loaded via an eight-shot detachable box magazine. A distinctive long-barrel variant known as the "Artillery Luger" (a.k.a. Model 1914 and M1917) was first produced in 1914. It had a 7.5-inch barrel and was slotted for a detachable shoulder

EXPANDED FIREARMS DAMAGE

As a rough guideline for firearms not detailed in this chapter, firearm damage can be estimated by the caliber of the weapon. Any reliable reference book on firearms can provide information on most of the weapon's other stats, including caliber, capacity, action, and loading. Adjudicating range is a little more difficult, but when in doubt, the GM can use the standard ranges on the Generic Firearms table or the range increment for a similar weapon—not an entirely realistic method, but a direct one.

Firearm damage is given below, grouped by caliber and according to gun type (handgun, rifle, and so on). Within a given table, metric calibers (usually expressed in millimeters, as in 9mm) appear last. All firearm calibers do piercing damage. In each case, the damage given assumes the ammunition is conventional sporting or military issue; damage would be modified for special ammunition types (see page 109).

stock. In addition to the standard eight-round magazine, it could use a 32-round snail drum (the drum, first introduced in 1917, was intended to be used with the shoulder stock attached). Another long-barrel version was the "Navy Luger," which had a 6-inch barrel. Like the Artillery model, it could use a detachable shoulder stock.

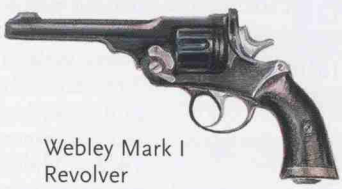
COLT M1911 AND M1911A1 PISTOLS

Designed by John Moses Browning, the Colt M1911 was an extremely long-lived and highly popular pistol design that faithfully served the United States military from its adoption in 1911 to its replacement by the Beretta M9 (Beretta Model 92F) in the 1980s. It had all the qualities of a successful military handgun. It was easy to manufacture, simple to maintain, robust, and supremely reliable. Its .45 ACP round had stopping power superior to any other caliber employed as a military standard round with the possible exception of Britain's .455 Webley. Loading is via a seven-shot detachable box magazine.

The Model 1911 was available in time for World War I, but demand outstripped production and other weapons were called on to supplement it (see the Colt M1917 for an example). It went through a number of minor refinements and a new model, the M1911A1, was adopted in 1926. The primary improvement was the addition of a grip safety to supplement the manual safety.

During World War I, the Colt M1911 was one of the weapons employed by Medal of Honor recipient Sergeant Alvin York. When he was rushed by several German soldiers, he was able to drop them all with his pistol without suffering any injury to himself, single-handedly killing 25 and taking over 80 prisoners. In the 1941 Gary Cooper film *Sergeant York*, his character was depicted using a captured P08 Luger in this famous incident, but he actually used a Colt M1911.

Millions of M1911s have been manufactured around the world and remain in military service in many countries to this day. It has also seen service as a law enforcement weapon and is very popular among civilian shooters.



Webley Mark I Revolver



Smith & Wesson M1917 Revolver



Baretta M92



Mauser M1896



Luger P08



Glock Model 17

COLT M1917 REVOLVER AND SMITH & WESSON M1917 REVOLVER

During World War I, the United States found itself in need of vast quantities of war materiel. Though the superb Colt M1911 pistol was the standard sidearm, manufacturing could not keep pace with demand. With over one million troops to train and equip, the military was forced to accept alternatives.

The Colt M1917 and Smith & Wesson M1917 revolvers were an answer to this problem. They were substantially the same in most respects and for game purposes are identical. Each is a double-action, six-shot revolver chambered for the .45 ACP round. The Colt version was also produced in .455 Webley for the British in 1915 and 1916. Smith & Wesson produced extra cylinders for its model that permitted the weapon to load standard .45 Colt rounds; this was intended to enhance civilian sales.

One design feature that is unusual for these weapons exists. In order to shorten the time required to load them, each was designed to be loaded with a three-round "half-moon" clip. The clip was loaded into the cylinder and remained there. The cylinder was then rotated to permit a second clip to be inserted so all six chambers were loaded. Once the weapon was fired, the clips were manually extracted which also removed the spent casings from the weapon (the Smith & Wesson cylinders for a .45 Colt version do not require these clips).

On the surface, this seems to be an agreeable arrangement. Unfortunately, the design requires the clips to be used. If the chambers are loaded with individual cartridges without the clips in place, the weapon will fire as normal. However, extracting the spent casings from the chambers is virtually impossible except by prying them loose with a penknife or similar tool. Such a time-consuming process is not ideal in a combat situation, so the gun's owner must be careful not to idly discard the clips after loading.

Of course, a well-supplied military force would be expected to have ample supplies of clips available for these revolvers. However, one purchased in used condition at a gun store might lack clips. Since the merchant might not know the clips were required, the shooter might be in for an unpleasant surprise if she needed to quickly reload the weapon after its first load of six shots had been expended.

ASTRA M1921 PISTOL

This Spanish-manufactured semiautomatic pistol is perhaps the most noteworthy handgun to come out of Iberia in the first half of the 20th century. Based on the Campo-Giro M1913-16 pistol, the M1921 is a strong improvement. It is unique for one very important reason: It is capable of chambering and firing most major forms of 9mm pistol ammunition (9mm Largo, 9×19mm [9mm Parabellum], 9mm Steyr, and 9mm Browning Long) as well as .38 Super Auto. However,

just because it is capable of doing this does not mean it is ideal. Most sources suggest that it is only prudent to chamber the 9mm Largo round; well-worn or defective M1921s might have malfunctions with other calibers.

Adopted by the Spanish Army in 1921, it remained their standard sidearm into the late 1940s. The M1921 was also sold commercially under the designation Astra Model 400.

FN BROWNING HIGH-POWER PISTOL (A.K.A. HP35 AND GP35)

It has been commonly stated that the Browning High-Power is the finest semiautomatic pistol ever made. It was the last of John Browning's designs and was modified and improved after his death in 1926 before being placed into production in Belgium in 1935. Its lineage with another John Browning design, the venerable Colt M1911, is clear, and like its predecessor it is a reliable and easy-to-maintain single-action weapon.

Chambered for the popular 9×19mm round, some specimens were able to accommodate detachable shoulder stocks. Perhaps the most noteworthy feature is that it has a thirteen-round magazine capacity. This was at a time when most pistols in the same classification could contain only eight to ten rounds. More recently, twenty-round magazines were made for it. When loaded, the magazine actually protrudes a centimeter or so below the pistol's grip since it is too long to fit completely within the weapon.

The Browning High-Power saw extensive service in World War II on both sides. When German forces overran Belgium, production of the High-Power continued. At around the same time, it entered British service and supplemented the aging Webley revolver. Since the war, it had become one of the most common military handguns in the world and is the standard sidearm in the British Army. Production has taken place in many countries, including Canada and Argentina. Most recently, a variant was introduced in .40 S&W caliber with the intent to attract law enforcement sales. The High-Power remains one of history's most successful handguns and is very popular in civilian circles.

WALTHER P38 PISTOL

The P38 was supposed to be Germany's standard sidearm in World War II. It was an effective design that was easy and inexpensive to manufacture. Military requirements far outstripped Walther's production capacity and soon many other pistols, including the P08 Luger, the Browning High-Power, and the M35 Radom, were pressed into service as supplemental arms.

The P38 was manufactured in huge numbers and ontinues in production to this day. It is a reliable 9×19mm pistol that is easy to shoot and maintain. Since its introduction in 1938 and its service in World War II, the P38 has been made available in .22 long rifle and 7.65×22mm calibers and, most recently, a short-barrel 9mm variant has been manufactured. The latter is designated P38K.

BERETTA MODEL 92 PISTOL

The Beretta Model 92 is essentially an improved version of the highly respected Beretta M1951. It is a modern 9×19mm semiautomatic pistol that uses a fifteen-round detachable box-magazine (the M1951 uses an eight-round magazine). Like any good military design, it is reliable and easy to maintain.

First appearing in 1976, it has since been updated and several variants have appeared. The most notable is the Model 92F that won the U.S. Army competition for a replacement for the superb Colt M1911A1. The Model 92F differs from the original model in comparatively minor details that have little or no effect on gameplay. In the U.S. military, the M92F is called the M9. It has largely replaced the M1911A1, though stocks of this older pistol are still in the inventory. With the adoption of the M9, the United States became the last NATO member to adopt a 9×19mm weapon as its standard service pistol.

The Model 92 comes in one other noteworthy variant. This is the Model 93R, a selective-fire version of the Model 92. It is not fully automatic but can fire both as a semiautomatic and in a three-round burst. A small, hinged foregrip and a detachable folding stock are standard and a twenty-round magazine is available. This machine-pistol version is most popular in Italian service and with special forces in some countries.

GLOCK MODEL 17 PISTOL

Adopted by the Austrian Army in 1983, the Glock Model 17 has since earned fairly substantial military and law-enforcement sales around the world. Some sources have stated that by the year 2000, nearly half of the law enforcement agencies in the U.S. employed this pistol. It is a simple and reliable double-action 9×19mm weapon that lacks a manual safety. Design features prevent it from being accidentally discharged unless the trigger is properly operated. Its magazine capacity is 17, hence the term "Model 17." Many of its components are made of tough plastics, but the bulk of its internal structure (the barrel, the action, and so on) is made of steel. The standard version has a 4.49-inch-long barrel.

Its extensive use of plastic caused a storm of media coverage when many woefully misinformed individuals made wild speculations that it would get by airport metal detectors. This was completely inaccurate; all versions of the Model 17 contain more than enough steel to be detected.

The Model 17 has spawned several variants. The Model 18 is a selective-fire version that employs 17-, 19-, and 33-round magazines. In order to prevent criminal conversions of Model 17s into machine pistols, the primary components of the two weapons are not interchangeable.

RIFLES

WINCHESTER MODEL 1894 RIFLE AND CARBINE

Well over four million M1894 rifles and carbines have been produced since November of 1894, making it one of the most successful and popular sporting rifles ever made. Production of such vast numbers are usually restricted to military arms, but the M1894 is one of a handful of exceptions.

Not surprisingly, the designer of the M1894 was none other than John M. Browning, one of the world's most successful firearms designers. Some of his other accomplishments are the Colt M1911, the Browning High-Power, the Browning machine guns, and the Browning Auto-5 shotgun.

The M1894 was designed for use with smokeless cartridges, which were a brand new development at the time. Unfortunately, the smokeless cartridges it was intended for were not

TABLE 6–7:
Rifle/Automatic Rifle Damage

Caliber	Also Known As	Damage	Critical
.222	.222 Remington	2d6	×3
.243	.243 Winchester	2d6	×3
.25–20		2d6	×3
.25–36	.26–36 Marlin	2d6	×3
.270	.270 Winchester	2d10	×3
.300 H&H Mag.	.300 H&H Magnum	2d12	×3
.30–06	.762×63mm, .30 M2, .30 US, .30 M1906, .30–06 Springfield	2d10	×3
.30–30	.30–30 Winchester	2d10	×3
.30–40	.30–40 Krag	2d10	×3
.303 British	.303 Enfield,7.62×56mm R	2d10	×3
.32–20		2d6	×3
.358	.358 Winchester	2d12	×3
.38–40		2d8	×3
.38–55	.38–55 Ballard, .38–55 Winchester	2d10	×3
.38–72		2d12	×3
.40–60		2d10	×3
.405	.405 Winchester	2d12	×3
.44 Rem. Mag.	.44 Remington Magnum	2d12	×3
.444	.444 Marlin	2d12	×3
.44–40	.44–40 WCF, .44–40 Winchester	2d10	×3
.45–60		2d12	×3
.45–70		2d12	×3
.45–75		2d12	×3
.50–70	.50–70 Government	2d12	×3
.50–90		2d12	×3
.50–95		2d12	×3
5.56×45mm	5.56mm NATO, .223 Remington	2d6	×3
6.5×50.5mm SR	6.5mm Japanese Arisaka	2d8	×3
6.5×52.5mm	6.5mm Italian	2d8	×3
6.5×53mm	6.5mm Greek	2d8	×3
6.5×54mm R	6.5mm Dutch, 6.5mm Romanian	2d8	×3
6.5×55mm	6.5mm Mauser, 6.5mm Swedish, 6.5mm Krag	2d8	×3
6.5×58mm	6.5mm Portuguese	2d8	×3
7×57mm	7mm Mauser	2d10	×3
7.35×52mm	7.35mm Italian Carcano	2d10	×3
7.5×54mm	7.5mm French	2d10	×3
7.5×55.5mm	7.5mm Swiss	2d10	×3
7.62×39mm	7.62mm M1943, 7.62mm Soviet M43	2d6	×3
7.62×45mm	7.62mm Czech M52	2d6	×3
7.62×51mm	7.62mm NATO, .308 Winchester	2d10	×3
7.62×54mm	7.62×54mm R, 7.62mm Russian	2d10	×3
7.65×53.5mm	7.65mm Mauser	2d10	×3
7.7×58mm RL	7.7mm Japanese Arisaka	2d10	×3
7.7×58mm SR	7.7mm Japanese Type 92	2d10	×3
7.92×33mm	7.92mm Kurz, 7.92mm Short	2d6	×3
7.92×57mm	7.92mm Mauser, 8mm Mauser, 8×57mm	2d10	×3
7.92×57mm M88	7.92mm M88 Mauser	2d10	×3
7.92×57mm R	7.92mm Dutch	2d10	×3
8mm Lebel	8×50.5mm R (L)	2d10	×3
8mm Steyr	8×50.5mm R (S)	2d10	×3
8×56mm	8mm Hungarian Mannlicher	2d10	×3
8×58mm R	8mm Danish Krag	2d10	×3
12.7×99mm	.50 M2, .50 BMG, .50 Browning Machine Gun	2d12	×4
12.7×108mm	.50 Soviet Machine Gun	2d12	×4
14.5mm Soviet		2d12	×4

yet available when manufacture began, so the first specimens were chambered for the older but still popular .32-40 and .38-55 blackpowder cartridges. The first Model 1894s chambered for smokeless cartridges appeared in 1895 in .25-35 and .30-30.

Physically, the M1894 is a classic exposed-hammer, lever-action design. It is rugged, dependable, and accurate, well suited for hunting and target shooting. The sporting rifle is available with full-length, eight-shot tubular magazines (where the tube runs the entire length of the barrel) and half-length, four-shot tubular magazines. A light-weight version has an even shorter, three-round magazine. The carbine version has a capacity of either six rounds (full-length magazine) or four rounds (half-length). It is available in the aforementioned calibers plus .32 Winchester Special in 1902, .44 Magnum in 1967, and .375 Winchester in 1979. The design is best known in caliber .30-30. Barrel lengths for the rifle are 26 inches, except for the light-weight version that has a 22-inch barrel. All carbines have 20-inch barrels. Except for a single-shot design in .30-40 Krag, the M1894 was the first Winchester rifle to use smokeless ammunition.

One of the remarkable things about the M1894 is that production of the rifle version actually ceased in 1936. The vast majority produced are the carbine version, and the .25-35 version of the carbine was discontinued in 1936. The M1894 also has the distinction of being the first Winchester sporting arm to have more than one million produced. Following the Winchester tradition, presentation models have been provided to important historical figures. The 1,000,000th specimen was presented to President Calvin Coolidge in 1927, the 1,500,000th went to President Harry S. Truman in 1948, and the 2,000,000th specimen was presented to President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1953. Without a doubt, the M1894 is the most successful lever-action sporting arm ever produced by Winchester.

The 1927 edition of the *Sears, Roebuck Catalogue* listed the M1894 .30-30 carbine at a mere $27.95. The M1894 rifle in the same caliber was listed at $31.98. Prices in the 1900 edition of the same catalogue were even better: $14.75 in calibers .25-35 and .30-30 and $12.52 in calibers .38-55 and .32-40.

WINCHESTER MODEL 1895 RIFLE

The Model 1895 was yet another Winchester triumph. During its production run from 1896 through 1931, over 425,000 were made. It saw substantial civilian sales and was also manufactured for the military market.

Physically, it is a robust lever-action rifle with a blued barrel. It is a departure from previous Winchester designs

in that ammunition is loaded into a nondetachable box magazine rather than into a tubular magazine under the barrel. Since tubular magazines are more susceptible to damage in harsh conditions, the M1895 was able to attract military contracts it might not otherwise have seen.

Standard calibers are .30-03, .30-06, .30-40, .303 British, .35 Winchester, .38-72, .40-72, .405 Winchester, and 7.62×54mm. It was designed for the then-new smokeless ammunition. Military versions in .30-40 and .303 British could accommodate a knife bayonet with an 8-inch long blade. These versions had a six-round magazine capacity. Some of those in .30-40 caliber saw service in U.S. hands in the Spanish-American War. Another military version was produced in 1915 and 1916 for Imperial Russia. Chambered for 7.62×54mm, it could accept the standard Mosin-Nagant stripper clip, allowing the magazine to be completely loaded very quickly. The initial batch of Russian M1895s could accept a bayonet with an 8-inch blade, but most took a 16-inch sword bayonet. Nearly 300,000 were made, and some were still in Soviet service during World War II.

Barrel lengths for this design varied greatly, with some being custom made. They were as long as 36 inches, and a carbine with a 22-inch barrel was also produced. The magazine capacity varied depending on the caliber. The .30-40 and .303 versions could take six rounds. The Russian version took five rounds.

Perhaps the most famous individual specimen of the Winchester M1895 was one owned by President Theodore Roosevelt in .405 caliber. He took this weapon on his famous hunting trip to Africa in 1909. It is the focus of one scene in the 1975 film *The Wind and the Lion*. The 1900 edition of the *Sears, Roebuck Catalogue* lists the M1895 in caliber .30-40 at $17.84.

MOSIN-NAGANT M1891 RIFLE

The Mosin-Nagant M1891 rifle was adopted in 1891 and is chambered for the long-lived 7.62×54mm round. In its very long production run under both the Czar's government and that of the Soviet Union, tens of millions were produced and hundreds of thousands were produced on license in the United States. The latter specimens were intended for export to Imperial Russia during World War I.

The basic M1891 is a five-shot bolt-action rifle that can accommodate a bayonet. It is a very rugged and highly reliable design that is particularly well-suited to cold climates. Its sights are not quite as refined as the German Mauser and the U.S. Springfield M1903, but it is nevertheless a reasonably accurate weapon. A variety of shortened versions and carbines appeared prior to World War II, but one of the most common variants is the M1944. This version includes a permanently attached folding bayonet and has an overall weight of 8.9 pounds. By comparison, the original M1891 weighed 10.63 pounds with bayonet. The M1944 remained in production after World War II and was even manufactured alongside the semiautomatic SKS carbine and the AK-47 assault rifle. It was widely exported and was manufactured in some Soviet client states. Many M1891s, M1944s, and their variants are on the civilian market. Finnish-made Mosin-Nagants are noted for their superior quality.

MANNLICHER-CARCANO RIFLE

Italy's standard service rifle of both world wars was the Mannlicher-Carcano. A fairly standard bolt-action design, its first model, the M1891, was introduced in March of 1892. Its caliber is 6.5×52mm, a somewhat smaller round than ones employed by most other major powers aside from Sweden and Japan. The M1891 carbine was adopted in 1893 and sports a permanently attached folding bayonet (the original could take a detachable knife-bayonet).

Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia in 1935 revealed that the 6.5×52mm round lacked suitable stopping power so a new round, the 7.35×51mm, was developed. It was employed in the Mannlicher-Carcano M1938 rifle and was supposed to completely replace the earlier version in Italian service. Both the M1891 and the M1938 were employed in World War II. Due to the stress of war, the 6.5×52mm version remained the standard and the Italians went so far as to cease use of the newer cartridge and to rebarrel the newer weapon for the older round. A small number of Mannlicher-Carcanos were produced in 7.92×57mm for the Germans, but there are indications that the design cannot handle this more powerful cartridge. Like most of the major bolt-action rifles of both world wars, substantial quantities of surplus M1891s are on the civilian market.

Physically, the Mannlicher-Carcano is very much like the German Mauser, a rifle with which it shares some design features. Its internal six-round magazine can be loaded with either a stripper clip or by hand, one cartridge at a time. The original M1891 has an overall length of 50.8 inches while its intended successor, the M1938, is only 40.2 inches.

Sadly, the Mannlicher-Carcano has one distinction it could do without. It was the weapon Lee Harvey Oswald used to assassinate President John F. Kennedy in Dallas, Texas, on November 22, 1963.

LEE-ENFIELD RIFLE

Whereas the Mauser bolt-action military rifle is commonly called the most accurate weapon in its class, its British contemporary, the Lee-Enfield, is often called the best overall battle rifle. The Lee-Enfield is a direct descendant of the Lee-Metford rifle that was chambered for a blackpowder .303 cartridge. The primary difference between the older weapon and the first model Lee-Enfield was the adoption of the smokeless .303 British cartridge and more efficient rifling to take advantage of this round.

The Lee-Enfield Mark I rifle was introduced in November of 1895. It went on to be produced in numerous variants and underwent constant improvement throughout its production run. As the primary long arm employed by the British in both world wars, it saw service wherever British or Commonwealth forces operated and was manufactured in the millions.

Physically, the Lee-Enfield is a robust and attractive design that differs from most other military bolt-action rifles by using a ten-shot detachable box-magazine. Five-round stripper clips were also available that could be used to load the weapon as long as a magazine was inserted. Without a magazine, it can load and fire only individual cartridges. For game purposes, most Lee-Enfields are identical except in comparatively minor details such as overall length. Carbine versions were produced for cavalry use. The Mark I carbine, for example, was introduced

in August of 1900 and, like the rifle, could employ a bayonet (military carbines often lack bayonet mounts).

Several notable variants on the basic Lee-Enfield design exist. One is the No. 4 Sniper's Rifle that was introduced during World War II and included a telescopic sight. A descendant of this is the L42A1 Rifle, a Lee-Enfield sniper rifle chambered for 7.62×51mm caliber. This weapon was the standard British sniper rifle during much of the Cold War. A third important variant is the very distinctive Lee-Enfield No. 5 Mark 1 jungle carbine. It was introduced in September of 1944 and was intended to be a lighter weapon for use in the Pacific Theatre. It weighed 7.14 pounds and was 39.37 inches long. By comparison, the No. 4 Mark I rifle was 9.06 pounds and 44.43 inches long. The jungle carbine possesses a flash suppressor, making it very easy to recognize. Some argued that this weapon should supplant all previous Lee-Enfields in the British inventory, but it suffered from one flaw. A technical problem with the sights caused them to lose their accuracy after only a day or two of use. This problem was not overcome and with the advent of the assault rifle, the fate of the jungle carbine was sealed.

Military surplus Lee-Enfields are very common on the civilian market and are popular sporting weapons. They are obsolete for military use though are probably still used in a secondary capacity in some developing countries and former British possessions.



MAUSER RIFLE

Mauser has produced numerous designs over the years, but there is one that had tremendous impact on how armies were equipped and fought wars. In Germany, it achieved its zenith as the Model 1898, but the design actually predates this model by several years.

The Model 1898 replaced the less-successful Model 1888, which suffered from technical flaws. Physically, the M1898 and its innumerable variants are five-shot, bolt-action weapons. Loading is via a stripper clip, but individual rounds can be loaded without the clip.

The Mauser rifle design is almost without question the most significant bolt-action military rifle in history. The M1898 equipped the Kaiser's forces in World War I and a variant, the shorter Model 98K, was the standard German rifle of World War II. It has appeared in a vast number of variants and was widely exported and manufactured. Millions were ultimately produced and have appeared in the inventories of armies on virtually every continent. In addition to variations in caliber, Mausers have appeared in long rifle, short rifle, and carbine versions. A not commonly known fact is that the Springfield M1903 rifle that was used by the United States in both world wars is a Mauser chambered for the .30-06 cartridge. The Mauser is reliable and has deadly accuracy. In combination with a telescopic sight, it is an excellent hunting and sniping weapon. Military-surplus specimens became available in vast quantities and remain very popular with hunters, recreational shooters, and collectors.

M1 GARAND RIFLE

First issued in 1936, the M1 Garand rifle is the first successful military semiautomatic rifle. It is a .30-06 weapon that is fed via an eight-shot stripper clip. In contrast with most clip-fed arms, the M1 requires the clip in order to function. The clip must be fully inserted in the weapon, where it remains until the last shot is discharged. At this time, the clip is automatically ejected, emitting an audible "ping" sound. During World War II, some Axis soldiers learned to listen for this ping. When they heard it, they knew their opponent was holding an empty rifle and was therefore vulnerable.

The Garand is a very reliable and accurate rifle that served the United States in World War II, the Korean War, and the first years of the Vietnam War. It is fairly heavy (9.5 pounds) but very durable. Garands were widely exported to U.S. allies and some are undoubtedly in service with some developing countries.

When seeking a replacement for the Garand, the Army didn't have to go far. Its successor, the M-14, is little more than a modernized Garand. The main differences are that it uses a twenty-round detachable box-magazine and is a selective-fire weapon. A bipod was issued with some in order to permit their use as squad automatic weapons (to replace the venerable BAR). Semiautomatic M-14s have been manufactured for the civilian market, with the M1A being one popular civilian variant.

Both the Garand and the M-14 were developed into sniper rifles. Two of the sniper versions of the Garand are the M1C and M1D, both of which featured telescopic sights and flash suppressors. The M-14 sniper version is a semiautomatic weapon known as the M-21.

AK-47 RIFLE

The Kalashnikov AK-47 is one of the most common and successful military long arms ever produced. Introduced in 1947, it was inspired by German assault rifle designs that appeared in the last few years of World War II. It is

chambered for the fairly low powered 7.62×39mm cartridge. The light recoil of this round when compared to traditional high-powered cartridges such as the 7.62×54mm and .30-06 makes the AK-47 easy to control when on full automatic. The drawback is that the accuracy and range suffers and the cartridge has less stopping power.

The AK-47 is a rugged and supremely reliable weapon. It is easy to manufacture and maintain and a modernized version, the AKM, appeared in 1957. It also spawned a light machine gun version known as the RPK. As a light machine gun, it is hampered by the inability to quickly change its barrel. The RPK can use the standard thirty-shot AK-47 magazine as well as a forty-round magazine and a seventy-five-round drum (similarly, the drum and larger magazine will work in a standard AK-47). The basic AK-47 action has also been employed in the SVD sniper rifle, which is chambered for the powerful 7.62×54mm cartridge.

As a short- to medium-range weapon, the AK-47 is extremely effective. It was produced in such massive numbers during the Cold War that potential successors developed in the Soviet Union/Russia cannot find significant buyers. In the 1970s, the AK-74 was introduced into Soviet service. It uses many of its predecessor's components and is chambered for the new 5.45×39mm cartridge.

FN FAL RIFLE

The FAL is one of the world's most successful military rifles to emerge since the end of World War II. Developed from the FN M1949, the FAL first appeared in 1950 and earned its first large sales in 1953.

Simple to manufacture and maintain, the FAL is a reliable weapon that fires the powerful 7.62×51mm cartridge. It is available in selective fire and semiautomatic versions and is loaded with a twenty-round detachable box-magazine. A flash suppressor is standard, and some have been equipped with bipods to permit them to be employed as automatic rifles.

The FAL continues to enjoy widespread use throughout the world and was Britain's standard service rifle (as the semiautomatic L1A1 Rifle) in the Falkland Islands conflict. It has since been replaced by the Enfield IW in British service. Semiautomatic FALs have been sold on the civilian market in the United States and are popular with sporting shooters.

M-16 RIFLE

At the time it was developed, the *United* States military was happy with its current service rifle, the excellent M-14. Experience in Vietnam and (it is said) political wheeling and dealing managed to gain government contracts for the M-16. It went on to serve the United States in the final years of the Vietnam War and will continue in service for the foreseeable future.

The M-16 introduced the 5.56×45mm cartridge, a much lighter round than the 7.62×51mm round it supplanted. The 5.56×45mm round is essentially a very high-powered .22 caliber cartridge. It lacks the stopping power of its predecessor but is quite accurate out to 300 meters or so. Because it is light and compact, more cartridges can be carried by the soldier in the field. The disadvantage is that the bullet is easily deflected off its intended flight path by very light obstructions, such as leaves and grass, that would otherwise not pose much of a problem for a heavier round.

The M-16 itself has been the source of much controversy. Among its advantages are that it is very light and pleasant to carry and is accurate. Its disadvantages include poor reliability under harsh battlefield conditions, complexity, and inferior stopping power. Many of its supporters insist the M-16 works perfectly when kept clean. Its detractors point out that when a soldier hurls himself into a sand dune or muddy hole, the enemy is unlikely to give him the opportunity to field-strip his rifle so that it will properly function.

Two main versions of the M-16 exist. The M-16A1 superseded the M-14 in the Vietnam War. It is a selective-fire rifle that uses twenty- and thirty-round magazines. The lower-size magazine was commonly used in Vietnam; the larger one is the standard today. The M-16A2 is an improved rifle that uses the same magazines and is also selective fire. However, instead of being fully automatic, it employs a three-round-burst option. This is supposed to impose fire discipline on troops in the field but has, not surprisingly, been the source of some controversy.

When set on full automatic, the M-16A1 is reasonably easy to control. Its unusually high cyclic rate (rate of fire) means that it will very quickly consume an entire magazine's load of ammunition.

Semiautomatic versions of the M-16, commonly called the AR-15, are popular on the civilian market. Semiautomatic and selective-fire versions of the M-16 are widely used in law enforcement.

SHOTGUNS

WINCHESTER M1897 SHOTGUN

One of the most successful shotgun designs of the first half of the 20th century is the rugged Winchester Model 1897. Physically, it is a pump-action shotgun with an exposed hammer and a five-round tubular magazine. It was manufactured in a multitude of subtypes but is available in 12-gauge and 16-gauge only. Sales commenced in November of 1897 and production concluded in 1957 after just over one million had been manufactured.

The basic model is a classic sporting weapon with a barrel length of 26, 28, 30, or 32 inches (16-gauge specimens were not made with a 32-inch barrel). It is Winchester's first shotgun available in 16-gauge and was a modern design using the still-new smokeless powder. Sales surpassed all competitors in the same

TABLE 6–8:
Shotgun Damage

Caliber	Buckshot Damage*	Birdshot Damage*	Slug Damage	Critical
10-gauge	3d8/2d8/1d8	3d4/2d4/1d4	2d10	×3
12-gauge	3d6/2d6/1d6	3d3/2d3/1d3	2d10	×4
16-gauge	3d6/2d6/1d6	2d3/2d3/1d3	2d10	×3
20-gauge	2d6/1d6/1d4	2d3/1d3/1d2	2d8	×3
28-gauge	2d4/1d4/1d3	2d2/1d2/1	2d6	×3
.410 (.410-gauge)	1d8/1d3/1d2	1d4/1/1	1d10	×3

*Buckshot and birdshot deal the greatest damage at close range. The first value given is for the first range increment. The second is for the second range increment, and the third is for ranges beyond that out to the maximum range.

class and large numbers remain in use some five decades after production ceased. The 1927 edition of the *Sears, Roebuck Catalogue* listed the standard M1897 in 12-gauge at $36.95.

Two subtypes (both in 12-gauge) are especially noteworthy. A riot gun was introduced in March of 1898 and was manufactured until 1935. It has a 20-inch barrel and was a very popular law enforcement weapon. More notable is the trench gun. Designed for military use, it is much the same as the riot version except that it has a ventilated barrel jacket and a bayonet mount that could accommodate the standard Springfield M1903 bayonet. It entered military use during World War I and became available for sale to the public in 1920.

It is interesting to note that use of the M1897 trench gun during the Great War was enough of an annoyance to the Germans that they officially protested its use to the Swiss who were monitoring the actions of all belligerents on the Western Front. Despite this, the trench gun remained in U.S. service. The United States is virtually alone in making extensive use of shotguns in their armed services. At the end of the 20th century, the Mossberg M590 was in both U.S. Army and Marine Corps service and, like the M1897, has a ventilated barrel jacket and bayonet mount.

BROWNING AUTO-5 SHOTGUN

The Auto-5 is a recoil-operated semiautomatic shotgun that is one of the most common weapons of its type. In addition to the Belgian-made version, it was also manufactured under license in Japan and the United States. The basic Auto-5 is a 12- or 16-gauge four-shot weapon. The Auto-5 Light shotgun, which first appeared in 1948, is available in 12-, 16-, and 20-gauge and has a five-round capacity. Though primarily a sporting weapon, the Auto-5 has seen some military use, most notably in British hands in Malaya against Communist guerrillas. Some of these were short-barrel versions modified (sawed-off) by their operators in the field. A 12-gauge Magnum version was introduced in 1958 for the sporting market.

The Remington version of the Auto-5 is the Model 11A. Manufactured from 1905 to 1949, it was like the Auto-5 Light in that it has a five-shot capacity and is available in 12-, 16-, and 20- gauge versions. The Model 11R is Remington's riot gun version. This version has a 20-inch barrel and is available in 12-gauge only. It was produced from 1921 to 1948.

The 1927 *Sears, Roebuck Catalogue* listed the Browning Auto-5 in 12-gauge at $56.95 and the 16-gauge model at $68.95. The same edition listed the 12-gauge Remington Model 11A as low as $52.50. The Auto-5 Light shotgun is still being manufactured.

WINCHESTER M1912 SHOTGUN

As popular as the Winchester M1897 was, the Model 1912 enjoyed far greater success. Between January of 1912 and 1980, over two million were manufactured. It is a pump-action, hammerless shotgun with a five-round tubular magazine and was manufactured in a host of variants. Bore sizes were 12-, 16-, 20-, and 28-gauge. Available barrel lengths were 26-, 28-, 30-, and 32-inch for 12-gauge, and a similar range in lengths was available for the other bore sizes. More specialized skeet guns, tournament guns, and the like were produced, but the most noteworthy from the game standpoint are the riot and trench versions. Both of these were available in 12-gauge only and sported 20-inch-long barrels. The trench version also had a ventilated barrel jacket and bayonet mount for a standard Springfield M1903 rifle bayonet. The riot gun enjoyed a very long production run (1918–1963), but the trench version is comparatively rare. It was first manufactured in 1918 but was made on special order only after that (the successful Winchester M1897 trench gun received the bulk of military sales). The 1927 *Sears, Roebuck Catalogue* priced a standard M1912 in either 12- or 16-gauge at $42.95.

Winchester has a long tradition of presenting weapons to important figures in history. The 1,000,000th M1912 was presented on August 30, 1943 to Lieutenant General Henry "Hap" Arnold, commander of the United States Army Air Force during World War II. In 1973, the 2,000,000th specimen was presented to former Texas governor and Treasury Secretary John B. Connally.

SUBMACHINE GUNS

THOMPSON SUBMACHINE GUN (TOMMY GUN)

Not the first submachine gun, but certainly the most famous, Col. Thompson's gun was conceived as a personal lightweight machine gun for use in World War I but went into production too late to see use in the conflict. Although preceded by earlier designs such as the Italian 9mm Villar-Perosa (1915) and the German Bergmann MP18 (1918), the "tommy gun" was the first to see significant civilian use, beginning with public demonstration of a (1,500-rounds-per-minute) prototype before an amazed crowd in August 1920 at a match factory. With a 10-inch barrel and weighing under eleven pounds, it was easily portable, accepting both a twenty-round magazine and a fifty-round drum.

Initially sales were slow, with only a few police departments adopting the weapon; then the Coast Guard decided to use them on patrol boats in the fight against rum-runners. Marines assigned to "ride shotgun" to protect mail trucks were so impressed with the Thompson SMG that they took them along for the 1927 "police action" in Nicaragua. This in turn gave rise to a request by the U.S. Navy for the development of a sturdier, heavier unit with a slower rate of fire (about 600 rounds per minute), the M1928, for use on Navy gunboats.

The weapon's true claim to fame, or infamy, came with its adoption by gangsters and bank robbers throughout the Prohibition Era and Great Depression. Although prior to the National Firearms Act of 1934 tommy guns could be purchased via mail order or at hardware and sporting good stores for only $225, on the black market they went for $1,000 to $2,000. With its ability to sweep a room, riddle a car with bullets, and generally release a hail of bullets at a target, the "chopper" or "Chicago typewriter" was ideal for any number of criminal activities. Obsolete by World War II, it nevertheless was mass-produced in a simplified variant known as the M1 and saw much use in the early part of the war before being replaced by the M3 "Grease Gun" in 1943–44. By the postwar era, the Thompson was relegated to collectors, a relic of bygone days compared with newer smaller, lighter submachine guns such as the Uzi.

TABLE 6–9:
Firearm Prices

Pistols	1920s	2000s
Single-action .45 revolver	$30.00	$300.00
.45 ACP semiautomatic	$40.00	$575.00
9mm Parabellum semiauto	$30.00	$600.00
.32 ACP semiautomatic	$15.00	$240.00
.38 Special revolver	$25.00	$300.00
.357 Magnum revolver	—	$425.00
.44 Magnum revolver	—	$475.00
.44 Magnum semiautomatic	—	$850.00
Rifles		
Bolt-action, military	$50.00	$200.00
Bolt-action, civilian	$39.95	$150.00
Lever-action, civilian	$27.95	$250.00
Semiauto, military	—	$980.00
Semiauto, civilian	$51.20	$400.00
Shotguns		
Semiautomatic, civilian	$55.00	$300.00
Semiautomatic, paramilitary	—	$895.00
Double-barrel, civilian	$40.00	$220.00
Pump-action, civilian	$45.00	$400.00
Pump-action, military	$60.00	$400.00
Lever-action, civilian	$50.00	$300.00
Submachine Guns		
Thompson M1921 .45 ACP	$225.00	$3,000.00+*
9mm Parabellum	—	$2,500.00+*
Assault and Automatic Rifles		
Browning Automatic Rifle M1918	$180.00	$800.00*+
7.62×39mm Soviet (AK-47)	—	$1,000.00*+
7.62×51mm NATO (FN FAL.)	—	$1,200.00*+
5.56×45mm NATO (M-16)	—	$2,000.00

TABLE 6–10:
Ammunition Prices

	1920s	2000s
12 gauge shells, 00 buckshot (25)	$0.92	$27.00
12 gauge shells, slug (25)	$0.92	$27.00
.22 long rifle (100)	$0.48	$3.70
.22 LR hollow point (100)	$0.96	$5.80
.30-06 gov't (100)	$7.63	$36.50
.32 ACP (100)	$5.26	$8.95
.357 Magnum (50)	—	$18.25
.357 Magnum hollow point (50)	—	$21.50
.38 Special (100)	$5.95	$48.95
.38 Special hollow point (100)	—	$53.95
5.56mm (50)	—	$23.90
7.62mm NATO (100)	—	$78.80
9mm Parabellum (50)	$6.95	$11.95
9mm Parabellum hollow point (50)	—	$13.95
.44 Magnum (100)	—	$67.95
.45 ACP (100)	$8.60	$36.50
.45 ACP hollow point (100)	—	$41.50
.30-30 (100)	$9.00	$54.50

FIREARM AND AMMUNITION PRICES

These price lists cover broad types of weapons rather than specific examples, since many fall into similar price ranges. Some firearms are listed directly, usually because they are the only likely option for a given time period or because their pricing is unusual. In all cases, the GM determines the actual price of any weapon an investigator wishes to purchase. Weapons or accessories marked with an asterisk (*) on the price lists are not legally available in that time period without a class III federal weapons collector license. Furthermore, limited numbers make them highly subject to availability.

AMMUNITION OPTIONS

In addition to standard (solid slug) ammunition, a fairly wide variety of specialized ammunition types have been developed over the years. Two of the most common are hollow point and armor piercing.

HOLLOW-POINT AMMUNITION

Also known as dum-dum rounds, hollow-point ammunition does more damage to unarmored targets, but has less penetration against armor. It is commonly available in .22 long rifle, .38 Special, and 9×19mm. Though it is widely employed by U.S. law enforcement, due to its increased stopping power, it has been banned by the Geneva Convention for military use. The .22 long rifle hollow-point round is popular for varmint hunting. Hollow points are more expensive than standard rounds (see Table 6–10), but still affordable.

Against unarmored targets (creatures whose Armor Class does not include an armor or natural armor bonus), hollow-point ammunition increases the critical by one step (for example, from ×3 to ×4). Against armored targets (such creatures whose Armor Class does includes an armor or natural armor bonus), damage is halved and the critical is reduced by one step (for example, from ×3 to ×2).

ARMOR-PIERCING AMMUNITION

Armor-piercing ammunition has a greater chance of penetrating armor and solid objects (vehicle doors, walls, body armor, and so on) but tends to do less damage to flesh. It often simply bores a neat hole completely through the body rather than tumbling around and breaking up. Armor-piercing ammunition is widely employed by military forces and is sometimes seen in law enforcement hands. It is now illegal in the United States for civilian use. Before it was made illegal in the 1990s, it was rather expensive compared to standard ammunition.

Against armored targets, an armor-piercing round reduces the armor bonus by three points (for example, from +4 to +1). However, damage is reduced whether or not the target is armored: apply a –2 penalty to the damage rolled and a one-step reduction in the critical multiplier (for example, from ×3 to ×2).

FIREARM ACCESSORIES

A number of items of interest to firearms users exist.

BAYONETS

Most military rifles and some carbines, shotguns, and even submachine guns have a bayonet mount that permits attachment of a bayonet. Though considered obsolete on the modern battle-

field, most major powers retain this feature in their rifles as it is of use in certain specific (and comparatively rare) tactical situations.

Bayonets are available in a wide range of types. In World War I, many bayonets were long and some of these were termed "sword bayonets." Though they were not really swords, their great length made them a distinctive feature on any soldier's rifle. More common are knife bayonets. They are about the size of a modern survival or hunting knife and are practical tools in addition to being weapons. The least practical bayonet is the so-called pike bayonet. It is a sharp metal rod (sometimes with flanges) that is intended to stab rather than slash a target. (See Table 6–1: Melee Weapons, page 94, for bayonet damage.)

BIPODS

Bipods are hinged metal attachments for rifles and machine guns that are usually fixed to the barrel or forward part of the weapon. When deployed, they permit the weapon to be braced for steady, aimed fire. They can be folded and unfolded in a single round.

Weapons that lack bipods can benefit from clip-on bipods made of metal or sturdy plastic, widely available at affordable prices ($15 to $20). These are "universal," meaning they can be attached to most any rifle. The majority are designed to not cause wear and tear to the exterior of the weapon. Clip-on bipods cannot be folded beneath the weapon but are easily attached and detached (a full-round action).

Use of a bipod (or bracing a rifle or machine gun on a steady object such as a log) provides the shooter with a +2 circumstance bonus on the attack roll. Bracing requires the shooter to take 1 full round of preparation before gaining the circumstance bonus.

FLASH SUPPRESSORS

Flash suppressors are standard attachments for most assault rifles. They're metal prongs or conelike attachments that reduce the muzzle flash of a weapon when it's fired. They are usually not permanently affixed and can be unscrewed from the barrel. Flash suppressors are legal in the United States. However, they are usually not found on handguns, sporting rifles, or shotguns. The normal Spot DC to see a muzzle flash is 10 (0 at night). The Spot DC to see a flash-suppressed weapon is 20 (10 at night).

FOLDING AND TELESCOPING STOCKS

Folding stocks are hinged attachments to firearms that replace the customary solid wood, plastic, or metal stock. They are designed to enhance the portability of a rifle or shotgun. When extended, a folding stock permits the weapon to be fired as normal. When folded (usually either underneath or to the side of the weapon), shooting is usually less accurate: Apply a –2 circumstance penalty to the attack roll. Telescoping stocks are those that collapse like a telescope to reduce the overall length of the firearm. Such accoutrements are not illegal in the United States. They are, however, affected by the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994.

LASER GUNSIGHT

Available after 1975, this attachment projects a thin beam that shows the shooter if the weapon is accurately pointed at the target. This device adds a +4 equipment bonus on the shot. A Spot check (DC 15) allows the target or someone near him to notice the red dot; if successful this negates the attack bonus and instead imposes a –2 circumstance penalty to the shot if the target is not flat-footed. These devices do not work in rain, fog, smoke, snow, or similar conditions.

SILENCERS (SOUND SUPPRESSORS)

Currently illegal for civilian use in the United States, silencers are attachments for firearms that reduce the noise emitted when a weapon is fired. They are ineffective for revolvers due to the lack of a proper seal between the cylinder and the barrel. They work comparatively well with semiautomatic and bolt-action weapons but are not suitable for shotguns. If used with an automatic weapon, they are quickly worn out when fired on full auto. For a weapon to employ a silencer, a gunsmith must create threads in the muzzle of the barrel so the silencer can be screwed on. (This requires a Craft [gunsmith] check, DC 10.)

Silencers do not eliminate the sound of a shot, but they do suppress it fairly well. The sound of a "silenced" weapon fired in a room has been described by many as like dropping a hardbound book onto a wooden or concrete floor.

The normal Listen DC to hear gunfire is –10. In other words, the noise is so loud that anyone within range will hear it unless they suffer at least a –10 penalty to their Listen checks (for example, if it was behind a closed door in a room 50 feet away). By contrast, the Listen DC to hear a silenced weapon is 5. It makes a distinct thump, but may be masked by background noise or distance.

TELESCOPIC SIGHTS

Commonly used by hunters, telescopic sights are available in a wide array of powers ranging from less than ×2 to greater than ×9. A ×9 power scope will make a target that is 900 yards away appear as though it is only 100 yards away.

To work, a telescopic sight must be properly mounted and aligned. For most, this requires the assistance of a qualified professional (who makes a Craft [gunsmith] check against DC 10). Treating a scope-equipped rifle roughly could result in its

TABLE 6–11: Weapon Accessory Prices

	1920s	2000s
40 round cartridge bandoleer	$1.79	$19.95
40 round cartridge belt & holster	$1.79	$64.95
Magazine pouch	$2.25	$9.95
Handgun magazine, 8 round	$.50	$15.00
Handgun magazine, 15 round	—	$50.00
Rifle stripper clip	$0.20	$1.00
Rifle magazine, 20 round	$1.00	$30.00
Rifle magazine, 30 round	—	$60.00
Speed-loader (revolver)	—	$9.95
Sound suppresser (pistol)	—	$800.00*
Detachable bipod	—	$11.95
Laser gunsight	—	$124.95
×6 telescopic sight (optical)	$8.50	$69.88
×6 telescopic/night vision sight	—	$3,229.95
Pistol holster w/flap	$1.00	$5.00
Shoulder holster	$1.25	$29.95
Rifle sling	$1.50	$6.95
Rifle case, hard	$5.79	$34.95
Rifle case, soft	$1.48	$14.95
Multigun cleaning kit, w/oil	$5.34	$49.88

misalignment, negating any benefit it might provide. Telescopic sights are, in general, not robust and are susceptible to damage if mistreated.

A properly aligned telescopic sight reduces range penalties to –1 per range increment, rather than –2.

Military scopes often have other features. Some are night sights, intensifying ambient light and allowing the shooter to see targets otherwise shrouded in darkness. Infrared scopes work by detecting heat emitted by bodies, engines, and the like and are intended for use at night (although some Mythos beings, such as mi-go, may not emit such heat). Such specialized scopes are legal in the U.S. for civilian use but are very expensive. They allow for visual targeting in the dark almost as if it were day, suffering only a –2 circumstance penalty.

FIREARMS AND THE LAW

Federal regulation of firearms manufacture, sale, and ownership has been slow in developing in the United States. The first significant nationwide legislation did not appear until after World War I. The reluctance of lawmakers to place limitations on ownership of arms has been affected by numerous elements, not the least of which is the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, guaranteeing the citizens' rights "to keep and bear arms."

Opposed to this has been the desire to protect the public against ever-improving weapons in the hands of criminals, lunatics, and terrorists (or, in the 1890s and 1920s, "anarchists"). Within the game, these laws have the effect of making it harder for both the player characters and evil cultists to get their hands on guns at short notice (say, to replace ones lost in a precipitous flight from an encounter gone bad, or to prepare for a raid on the PCs' headquarters).

MAILING FIREARMS

In May of 1927, federal legislation went into effect that made it illegal to mail handguns and other concealable firearms. Military officers (in connection with their duties), federal law enforcement agents, postal employees, personnel guarding federal property, and legitimate firearms manufacturers and dealers were exempted from this but still had to comply with regulations established by the Postmaster General. Violators were subject to a fine of up to one thousand dollars and/or up to two years imprisonment. Other types of firearms were not subject to this legislation.

NATIONAL FIREARMS ACT OF 1934

This landmark piece of legislation went into effect in July of 1934 and was perhaps the first major federal law to significantly regulate access to firearms to the civilian population of the United States. The intent was to curb so-called "gangster" weapons that had become notorious at the time. The act effectively banned automatic weapons, although special licenses could (and still can) be acquired to own them. The controls over these licenses are so great that the effort is not worthwhile for the average citizen. After this legislation took effect, automatic weapons were mostly restricted to government agencies, law enforcement, the military, some private security agencies and companies, a comparative handful of dedicated collectors and hobbyists, and, of course, the criminal element.

Another important element in this act made it illegal to remove or obliterate serial numbers and other identifying marks from firearms. Weapons so modified became illegal to possess and are considered contraband by law enforcement. Even if the owner is not prosecuted, the weapon is confiscated without any recompense.

A third element in this legislation made it illegal to possess a rifle or shotgun with a barrel length of less than 18 inches. Prior to 1934, there was a rather brisk business in such weapons, primarily for use as varmint guns and home and personal defense arms. They also became associated with the criminal element, which led to their inclusion in this legislation. It is not illegal to alter the barrel length of a weapon; it is simply illegal to reduce the barrel length to less than 18 inches.

Silencers were also covered by this act. They were made illegal though they can be employed by the clandestine services in the government in the performance of their duties. As with contraband weapons, law enforcement is obligated to confiscate silencers (a.k.a. sound suppressors) they learn of even if the owners are not prosecuted.

SHOTGUN PLUGS

On August 3, 1937, a Presidential Proclamation was issued that set restrictions on the hunting of fowl. The fear was that modern repeating firearms in the hands of hunters would eventually result in the depletion of waterfowl and other birds commonly hunted in North America.

The Proclamation set a few specific restrictions. First, only shotguns were permitted for hunting, and these could not have a bore size greater than 10-gauge. Second, repeating shotguns (those that were pump-action, lever-action, bolt-action, or semiautomatic) could not have a magazine capacity exceeding three, including the round that is in the chamber. The use of metal or wood plugs was authorized. Such plugs could be inserted into the magazine of a repeating shotgun to limit its capacity to two shots. After 1937, plugs are commonly included with the purchase of a new repeating shotgun. They are easily installed and removed, requiring no specialized expertise for the task.

GUN CONTROL ACT OF 1968

The purpose of this act, the first serious gun control legislation since before World War II, was to assist law enforcement in combating crime and violence while not placing undue restrictions on the rights of the law-abiding citizen to own or carry a firearm. The legislation was nevertheless very controversial at the time. The act had several elements that affected the average citizen either directly or indirectly.

The first is that it became illegal for licensed firearms dealers, manufacturers, importers, and collectors to sell or provide any rifle or shotgun to anyone less than eighteen years of age. It also became illegal to sell or provide handguns to anyone under the age of twenty-one (prior to World War II,

there was a thriving business in marketing small caliber rifles to teenage boys; such rifles were inexpensive and very common). The law specifically applied to licensed dealers and the like—it was not illegal under this act for a parent or friend to provide a firearm to a minor.

In addition to reaffirming the restrictions on ownership of short-barrel (less than 18 inches) rifles and shotguns, the act made it illegal to provide arms to several classes of people: fugitives from justice, those who are under indictment by a court, people who have received a prison sentence of one year or more, users of controlled substances, and anyone who has been adjudicated as being mentally defective. In short, anyone who is a felon or has been declared mentally incompetent cannot legally own or carry a firearm in the United States.

Finally, the act required licensed dealers to have buyers of firearms fill out a standard registration form when making the purchase. Private citizens who are selling personal weapons are not required to do this. On the surface, the registration form seemed to be a good idea, but in practice there were few checks on it. Its effectiveness was largely negated by the fact that it assumed that the buyer would not lie on the form. Since there was no background check or waiting period in conjunction with it, a criminal could simply lie about her background and still make the purchase.

THE BRADY HANDGUN CONTROL ACT

Popularly known as "the Brady Bill," this legislation was approved on November 30, 1993 and went into effect on February 28, 1994. Also known as the Brady Handgun Violence Protection Act, it was named for James Brady, who was shot in the head by John Hinckley during Hinckley's attempted assassination of President Ronald Reagan in 1981. This controversial law established a federal five-day waiting period for the purchase of handguns. It did not override waiting periods already in place at the state or county level in many areas unless those waiting periods were less than five days (as of the date the act took effect, the majority of U.S. states had no waiting periods).

The act also provided for the establishment of a national instant background check system. This was to allow licensed dealers to telephone a hotline with the particulars of a buyer in order to determine whether she was legally allowed to make the purchase. If the sale is declined, the buyer is usually told why and can probably walk out without fear of arrest. The Brady Act was intended as a stopgap measure until the national instant criminal background check system could be put in place. It included measures to remedy erroneous denials of firearms purchases; such denials are uncommon, but can occur for any of several reasons. One example is if the system misidentifies the buyer as a felon or fugitive with a similar name, date of birth, and physical description.

Two main reasons why supporters argued in favor of a waiting period exist. First, it might discourage impulse purchases of firearms, allowing a "cooling-off period" for those who might otherwise buy a gun and commit a crime in a fit of anger. Second, and more important, it would prevent criminals and the mentally incompetent from acquiring firearms through legitimate dealers.

VIOLENT CRIME CONTROL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 1994

Prior to its enactment, this very controversial law was commonly referred to as "the Crime Bill." It is a lengthy piece of legislation covering numerous crime, public safety, and law enforcement issues. Most of the controversy was confined to Title XI—Firearms. Sections 110101 through 110103 covered "assault weapons" and large capacity ammunition feeding devices.

Section 110102 effectively banned "semiautomatic assault weapons." These were defined as follows:

- Any version of the AK-47, AR-15 (M-16), UZI, Galil, Beretta AR-70, FN FAL, and Steyr AUG, as well as revolving shotguns such as the Striker 12 and Street Sweeper.
- Any semiautomatic rifle that accepts a detachable magazine and has any two or more of the following features: a folding or telescoping stock, a protruding pistol grip, a bayonet mount, a flash suppressor (or a barrel threaded to accept one), or a grenade launcher.
- Any semiautomatic pistol capable of accepting a detachable magazine and with two or more of the following features: a magazine that attaches to the exterior of the pistol grip; a threaded barrel allowing the attachment of a barrel extender, flash suppressor, forward hand grip, or silencer; a barrel shroud or jacket that permits the shooter to grip the barrel without being burned; an unloaded weight of fifty or more ounces; or a semiautomatic version of an automatic weapon.
- Any semiautomatic shotgun with two or more of the following features: a folding or telescoping stock, a protruding pistol grip, a fixed magazine capacity exceeding five, or the ability to accept a detachable magazine.

Weapons meeting the above definition that were manufactured before this legislation was enacted are not affected by it.

Section 110103 effectively banned large-capacity ammunition-feeding devices. These were defined as any magazine, belt, drum, feed strip (stripper clip), or similar device manufactured after the date of enactment that holds more than ten rounds of ammunition.

EXPLOSIVES

When guns aren't enough, explosives are the last resort of desperate investigators. Not surprisingly, most heroes fail to employ them correctly, sacrificing many of their comrades and associates as a result. See the Demolitions Skill (page 27) for information on using explosives.

DYNAMITE

This is perhaps one of the most common and straightforward of explosives, invented by Alfred Nobel in 1867 by combining nitroglycerin with a stabilizer and a fuse or detonator. One stick does 4d6 points of damage. Extra sticks detonated together increase the damage by +1d6 and the radius by a foot. If thrown, dynamite has a range increment of 10 feet. If the ranged touch attack roll is not

successful, roll 1d20 to determine how many feet off the mark the stick lands in a random direction from the target.

FRAGMENTATION GRENADES

The most common sort of military grenade, this is a small explosive meant to be thrown. It explodes, spraying metal shrapnel in all directions. When thrown, it has a range increment of 10 feet. If the ranged touch attack roll is not successful, roll 1d20 to determine how many feet off the mark the grenade lands in a random direction from the target. Throwing a grenade requires the Weapon Proficiency (thrown weapons) feat; otherwise, the character has a –4 penalty to the attack roll.

C-4

Plastic explosive is not meant to be thrown or used in combat, but instead used to destroy stationary objects. It is detonated with a fused timer or something more complex.

PIPE BOMBS

This homemade device is crude and counts as a scratch-built device for purposes of the Demolitions skill (see page 27). A Demolitions check (DC 25) is required to make one; if the roll is failed, the pipe bomb goes off. If thrown, a pipe bomb has a range increment of 10 feet. If the ranged touch attack roll is not successful, roll 1d20 to determine how many feet off the mark the bomb lands in a random direction from the target. Throwing a pipe bomb requires the Weapon Proficiency (thrown weapons) feat; otherwise, the character has a –4 penalty to the attack roll.

TABLE 6–12: Explosives

Explosives	Price 1920s	Price 2000s	Blast Radius	Damage
Dynamite (one stick)	$1.00	$5.00	10 ft.	4d6
Fragmentation grenade	$8.00	$75.00	20 ft.	3d6
C-4 (plastic explosive)	—	$250.00	15 ft.	6d6
Pipe bomb	n/a	n/a	15 ft.	3d6

INVESTIGATIVE GEAR

Some investigators travel light, with no more than a camera or notebook, while others fill the trunks of their cars with firearms (then flee the scene, thereby arming the cultists). A happy balance between preparation and moderation is essential.

Maintaining this balance isn't easy. The dedicated investigator might have to break into a dark warehouse one night and chase cultists through a swamp the next. One solution is to prepare a few bags or backpacks with gear, each sorted by use—even though this may mean redundant possessions. This runs the risk of overkill, but more than one investigator has lived to see the dawn because he had a lighter, a pair of binoculars, or a crowbar at just the right moment.

Some suggested equipment packs follow. These are mostly general so as to apply to any time period or setting. Look them over and customize them as needed. The prices here are provided as guidelines; if the outcome of your campaign really depends on the price of a pair of sunglasses or cell phone, you'll need to do further research on your own.

BREAKING AND ENTERING GEAR

Sometimes you just have to go where you're not wanted. Whether it's to rescue a hostage, spy on a cult, or just see what's in the restricted room of the museum, you need a bag of gear that'll do the job. Investigators who want to do a little breaking and entering might need any of the following: dark clothing, gloves, watch, flashlight (doubles as a club), crowbar (ditto), lockpick set (if you know how to use it), tape (for keeping doors unlocked), bolt cutters, wire cutters, glass cutters, notepad and pen (for silent communication), multipurpose tool, folded duffel bag (for stuff you steal), camera, tape recorder, first-aid kit, splint kit (for those sprained ankles), cell phone (set to vibrate, not ring!), and business cards for a lawyer and a bail bondsman if the attempt fails.

SHADOWING AND SURVEILLANCE GEAR

On a stakeout? Following somebody who's up to no good? A few items thrown in a casual backpack or satchel can help. An investigator's gear for this type of adventure might include small binoculars or opera glasses, extra shirts and hats (for a quick change of appearance), chalk (to mark a target for your allies), watch, book or newspaper (to look innocent), pocket flashlight and/or lighter, handcuffs, duct tape (to keep someone's mouth shut), camera (to record who the suspect meets), notepad and pen, and small change for bus/taxi.

OUTDOORS GEAR

Cultists often prefer remote, outdoor locations for their foul ceremonies. If you're heading into the woods for a reasonably short trip, pack well and prepare for emergencies. You may need sturdy clothing, first-aid kit, splint kit, gloves, hat, boots, compass, map, watch, flashlight, extra batteries, canteen, whistle, folding camp shovel, lighter, matches, trail food, twine, sleeping bag, tent, notepad and pen, hatchet, and binoculars.

DANGER PACK

There's no doubt, is there? Someone's going to hurt you, unless you hurt them first. Well, if you're not going to call the police like a normal human being then you might at least be ready for the pain. Consider this equipment: a fighting knife (hunting, commando, stiletto, preferably a couple stashed here and there), pocket knife (for when you get disarmed and tied up), brass knuckles, leather gloves (protect those hands!), flashlight, handgun and spare ammunition, handcuffs, handcuff key (several hidden all over your body), duct tape, and whistle.

CLOTHING

Clothes make the investigator. When it comes to interacting with strangers, the clothes the investigators wear affect their interactions. It is slightly more difficult to gain access to the Miskatonic University restricted book collection if the investigators are wearing beer-stained sweats. Similarly, it isn't easy trying to get information from a bartender in a biker bar if you're wearing a suit and tie. Investigations sometimes require a quick change of clothes.

Men's Clothing	1920's	2000's
Man's topcoat	$14.00	—
Union suit	$1.50	—
Man's shirt	$1.00	—
Tailored silk dress suit	$75.00+	$800.00+
Worsted wool dress suit	$29.50	—
Cashmere dress suit	$18.50	—
Corduroy Norfolk suit	$9.95	—
Dog fur overcoat	$37.50	—
Chesterfield overcoat	$19.95	—
Leather work shoes	$4.95	—
Lace bottom breeches	$4.95	—
Broadcloth dress shirt	$1.95	—
Shaker sweater	$7.69	—
Felt fedora	$8.95	—
Wool golf cap	$1.95	—
Seal skin fur cap	$16.95	—
Silk four-in-hand tie	$3.69	—
Bat wing bow tie	$0.55	—
Cuff links	$0.40	—
Wool pinstripe suit	—	$279.95+
Rayon blend 2-piece suit	—	$149.95
Baggy jogging suit	—	$59.95
Leather bomber jacket	—	$249.95
Good trench coat	—	$299.95
Oversized twill shirt	—	$24.95
Souble pleated pants	—	$39.95
Jeans	—	$49.95
Leather docksider shoes	—	$49.95
Cross-trainer shoes	—	$109.95
Silk tie	—	$33.95
Thermal underwear	—	$12.95
Nylon swim trunks	—	$14.95
Women's Clothing		
Quality women's dress	$15.00	—
Woman's wool coat	$14.00	—
Woman's frock	$5.00	—
Chic designer dress	$90.00	—
Silk crepe frock	$16.50	—
Satin charmeuse	$10.95	—
French Repp dress	$10.95	—
Worsted wool sweater	$9.48	—
Cotton crepe negligee	$6.98	—
Spike heel Parisian shoes	$4.45	—
Leather one-strap slippers	$3.69	—
Snug velour hat	$4.44	—
Satin turban-style hat	$3.69	—
Rayon elastic corset	$4.95	—
Embroidered costume slip	$1.98	—
Silk hose (3 pair)	$2.25	—
Velour coat w/ fur trim	$39.75	—
Brown fox fur coat	$198.00	—
Silk handbag	$4.98	—
Dress hair comb	$0.77	—
Designer's dress, worn once	—	$399.00
Fine silk side-drape dress	—	$389.95
Acrylic 2-piece dress	—	$169.95
Woven rayon coat dress	—	$89.95
Dacron pleat-front pants	—	$39.95
Stone-washed jeans	—	$49.95
Leather motorcycle jacket	—	$289.95
Wool-blend swing coat	—	$149.95
Button Polo sweater	—	$39.95
Fashion print challis shirt	—	$44.95
Fashion pumps	—	$89.95
Fashion boots	—	$159.95
Good hiking boots	—	$249.95
Silk chemise nightgown	—	$109.95
Matte black hoop earrings	—	$15.95
Gucci shoulder bag	—	$249.95
Spandex bicycle shorts	—	$29.95

COMMUNICATIONS

Need to call the cops? Need to have some documents shipped to you? Need to warn the target of an impending assassination? Well, that's what communications are all about. Communications technology has changed more dramatically than perhaps any other area of tech over the last century. With the advent of computers, not only can individuals communicate cheaply, quickly, and globally, they can also perform research, transfer money, and conduct daily business with people they'll never meet in person.

Dialing a phone or calling someone on a walkie-talkie is a move action. After that, it's a free action to talk.

Telegraph	1920s	2000s
12 words	$0.25	$34.90
Per additional word	$0.02	$0.89
International, per word	$1.25	$0.89
Postage		
To 1 ounce	$0.03	$0.34
To 2 ounces	$0.05	$0.55
Per additional ounce	$0.01	$0.22
International (1 oz.)	—	$0.60–0.80
Per additional ounce	—	$0.25
Telephone		
Desk phone (bridging style)	$15.75	—
Telegraph outfit	$4.25	—
Local telephone service (monthly)	—	$18.00
Cordless phone	—	$89.95
Car phone	—	$299.95
Long-distance call	—	$0.17
International call	—	$0.40
Printer/photocopier/scanner	—	$449.95
Digital answering machine	—	$99.95
Caller ID system	—	$59.95
Fax machine	—	$199.95
Beeper/pager	—	$89.95
Beeper pager service (monthly)	—	$6.00
Computers		
Cray super computer	—	$1,000,000.00+
Minicomputer	—	$200,000.00
Server computer	—	$5,000.00
Cheap PC system	—	$999.95
Cheap laptop	—	$1,199.95
Good PC system	—	$2,499.95
Good laptop	—	$2,399.95
Palmtop PC	—	$499.95
Internet service (monthly)	—	$20.00
T-1 line (monthly)	—	$999.95
56K modem	—	$139.95
8-inch×12-inch flat bed scanner	—	$249.95
Portable storage disk drive	—	$149.95
Portable storage disk (100M)	—	$9.95
CD writer	—	$599.95
Quick Cam (color)	—	$219.95

Radio and Electronics		
Console radio receiver	$49.95	—
CB radio w/ police scanner	—	$299.95
Three-band walkie-talkie	—	$139.95
Tactical radio headset	—	$19.95
Multiband radio scanner	—	$179.95
Radar scanner	—	$169.95
Print Media		
Newspaper	$0.05	$0.50
News magazine	$0.50	$3.95
News clipping service	$2.75/ month	$175.00/ month
Writing		
Good fountain pen	$3.00	$29.95
Fine rolling ball-point pen	—	$14.99
Self-filling fountain pen	—	$1.25
Rolling ball-point pen	—	$1.45
Manual typewriter	$40.00	—
Electric typewriter	—	$119.99
Pencil	$0.01	$0.06
Writing tablet	$0.20	$0.86

ENTERTAINMENT

Entertainment does not merely encompass items that the investigators would want to have for an evening of off-duty relaxation. Various types of photographic, video, and audio recording equipment are also included, as is the ever-popular Ouija board.

Entertainment	1920s	2000s
Mah Jong board	$1.80	$12.99
Deck of playing cards	$0.75	$4.00
Ouija board	$0.95	$16.99
Baseball bat	$1.50	$14.95
Movie tickets	$0.15	$8.50
Nickelodeon	$0.05	—
Video arcade game	—	$0.50
Virtual reality arcade (5 min.)	—	$5.00
Professional sports ticket	$1.00	$55.00
Popular novel (hardback)	$1.50	$20.00
Concert hall/ballet, Public seating	$4.00	$75.00
Popular novel (hardback)	$1.50	$20.00
Music		
5-string banjo, used	$9.95	$500.00
Violin	$35.00	$200.00
Ukulele, used	$8.00	$50.00
Brass saxophone, used	$63.45	$800.00
Plated cavalry trumpet	$7.00	$250.00
Electric guitar	—	$699.95
Professional 5-piece drum kit	—	$2,999.95
Cabinet phonograph	$45.00	—
Phonograph records	$0.39	—
200-watt music system	—	$459.95
Stereo CD player	—	$109.95
CD	—	$11.95
Cassette/CD boom box	—	$89.95
Aiwa personal CD	—	$79.95
CD writer	—	$169.99
Movies and Television		
Movie camera	$89.00	—
Movie projector	$54.00	—
Digital video camcorder	—	$899.95
Digital video projector	—	$3,599.95
35-inch stereo PiP television	—	$1,299.95
27-inch stereo PiP television	—	$499.95
20-inch color television	—	$199.95
Mini satellite disk, 2 receivers	—	$459.95
Monthly DB service	—	$50.00
DVD playback	—	$595.95
4-head VCR	—	$139.95
Photography		
Box camera	$2.29	—
Film, 24 exposures	$0.38	—
Folding pocket camera	$16.15	—
Film, 6 exposures	$0.50	—
Developer kit	$4.95	—
144 8×10 photo paper	$5.00	—
Photo lab equipment	$15.00	—
VHS-C stabilized camcorder	—	$549.95
35mm SLR camera	—	$499.95
Basic 35mm zoom lens	—	$259.95
35mm film, 36 exposures	—	$8.95
Digital camera w/ software	—	$359.95
Basic Polaroid instamatic	—	$49.95
Polaroid film, 12 exposures	—	$12.95
Pocket one-use camera	—	$14.95
Photo enlarger	—	$399.95
90mm scope, 1 eyepiece, case	—	$599.95
Tripod, 3 eyepieces, adapter	—	$289.95

LODGING AND DINING

Gamemasters are encouraged to ensure that investigators realize there are other costs to adventures besides that case of dynamite they need, or the ticket on the tramp steamer to Dar-es-Salaam. In civilized areas, they'll need to keep up with their expenses. Do they have enough money to buy some bathtub gin to lubricate a witness? Or enough money for a hotel to hide out in?

Lodging	1920's	2000's
Squalid flophouse per night	$0.20	—
Fleabag hotel per night	$0.75	—
Econo-motel per night	—	$29.95
Comfortable hotel per night	$4.50	$89.95
Per week (w/room service)	$24.00	$400.00
Good hotel per night	$7.00	$159.00+
Deluxe hotel per night	$9.00	$490.00+
Rent		
House (per year)	$1000.00	$16,000.00
Flat (per week)	$12.50	$200.00
Apartment (per week)	$10.00	$240.00
Food		
Deluxe meal on train	$1.50	$18.00
Good meal in restaurant		
Breakfast	$0.45	$8.95
Lunch	$0.65	$10.95
Dinner	$1.00	$24.95
Speakeasy Prices		
Rotgut gin (shot)	$0.10	—
Cocktail (glass)	$0.25	—
Wine (glass)	$0.75	—
Beer (glass)	$0.20	—
Whiskey (glass)	$0.25	—
Excellent cigar	$0.20	$9.00
Cigarettes (per pack)	$0.10	$3.00
Soft drink (12 oz.)	$0.05	$0.55

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

No matter how careful investigators are, no matter how well they plan, or how accurately they can shoot, if they keep taking on the Cthulhu Mythos, they're going to get hurt. Mental and psychic injuries are dealt with by psy-

choanalysis and psychiatric medications, but most everything else is the province of the medical doctor. With the advent of sulfa drugs and penicillin, infections are more easily treatable, thus making traumatic injuries more survivable. Certainly, wounds and maladies considered fatal in 1920 are now easily treatable. While the recovery rate is a function of the Heal check, some attempts are impossible without proper tools. After all, surgery to remove a bullet is rather difficult without some kind of sharp instrument. In most cases, having the appropriate equipment grants a +2 circumstance bonus on Heal checks (see page 31).

Medical Equipment	1920s	2000s
Complete first-aid kit	$2.57	$24.95
Basic doctor's diagnostic kit	$10.45	$69.95
Surgical gloves (per 100)	$0.75	$13.99
Wheelchair	$40.00	$697.00
Metal crutches	$1.69	$44.95
Folding pole stretcher	$3.25	$149.95
Forceps	$3.59	$3.99
Scalpel set	$1.39	—
Surgery kit	—	$64.95
Alcohol (half gallon)	$0.20	$3.17
Hypodermic syringes	$12.50	—
Disposable 3cc syringe	—	$10.96
Atomizer	$1.39	—
Gauze bandages (10 yards)	$0.39	$0.36
Adhesive badges (per 100)	—	$4.95
Clinical thermometer	$1.39	—
Digital thermometer	—	$9.99
Electronic thermometer	—	$34.95
Instant cold packs (per 12)	—	$12.95
Disposable respirator	—	$24.95
EMT kit	—	$299.95
Foam pad splint	—	$19.95
Stretch gauze bandage	—	$3.95
Emergency burn kit	—	$124.95
Aluminized blanket	—	$8.95
Portable oxygen unit	—	$289.95
Bandage kit w/tape and scissors	—	$100.00
Spinal injury transport gear	—	$300.00
Splint kit	—	$300.00
Anti-shock trousers	—	$300.00
Cardiac monitor/defibrillator	—	$3,995.95
Rescue gear/vehicular	—	$2,000.00
250× microscope	$11.98	$269.95
Centrifuge	—	$429.95
Bunsen burner	—	$15.95

OUTDOOR AND TRAVEL GEAR

Whether they're mounting expeditions into uncharted territory or chasing down leads to a world-girding conspiracy, investigators are always traveling. Sometimes they're packing suitcases and passports; other times they're lugging eighty-pound backpacks. In either case, the last thing they want to do is go camping in their street clothes, or throw their gear in a plastic trash bag before hopping a flight to London.

Clothing	1920s	2000s
Rain slicker and hood	$5.00	$34.95
Hiking/riding suit	$12.00	$109.95
Hunter's coat	$5.00	$129.95
Pocket/safari vest	—	$89.95
Poncho	$2.89	40.95
Parka	$40.00	$149.95
Field jacket, outdoors	$4.50	$99.88
Good hiking boots	$3.85	$249.95
Combat boots	$2.79	$100.99
Jungle boots	—	$119.99
Leather gloves	$1.75	$22.88
Windbreaker	—	$29.95
Equipment		
2-quart canteen	$1.69	$14.95
Thermal canteen	—	$10.95
Water bag (1 gallon)	$0.89	$24.95
Water bag (5 gallon)	$2.00	$10.95
Insulated tank (5 gallon)	$3.98	$11.95
1-quart vacuum thermos	$5.00	$24.00
Thermoelectric cooler	—	$139.95
Portable chemical toilet	—	$79.95
Folding bathtub	$6.45	—
SPF-64 sunscreen	—	$8.95
Insect repellent	—	$10.95
Haversack	$1.98	$29.95
Rucksack/backpack	$5.45	$69.95
Camo makeup	—	$4.95
Camouflage netting (10×10)	—	$49.95
Folding camp shovel	$1.09	$14.95
Camp stove	$5.85	$69.95
Cooking kit	$8.48	$19.95
Mess kit	$1.29	$14.95
C-rations	$0.55	—
Meal Ready to Eat (MRE)	—	$5.00
Shelter		
2-person tent	$11.25	$249.95
4-person tent	$24.85	$379.95
8-person tent	$55.45	$500.00
25-person tent	$95.00	$1,450.00
16-ft.×20-ft. tarpaulin	$15.00	$20.00
24-ft.×36-ft. tarpaulin	$39.95	$69.95
Poly/cotton sleeping bag	—	$39.95
Polar sleeping bag	—	$749.95
Nylon air mattress	—	$29.95
Folding camp cot	$5.95	$69.95
Thermal blanket	$1.79	$45.00
Ground cloth	$1.79	$5.95
Cotton blanket	$0.89	$7.95
Survival blanket	$3.25	$19.95
Bedroll	$2.79	$6.95
Illumination		
Kerosene lantern	$2.00	$45.95
Kerosene (1 gallon)	$0.40	$2.49
Gasoline table lamp (lasts 12–15 hours)	$6.59	$53.95
Flashlight battery	$0.30	$1.46
Flashlight, 3 cell	$3.10	$18.12
Mag light, 4 cell	—	$18.60
Mag light, mini	—	$10.38
Cap light w/battery	$4.59	$21.95
Hand-held emergency flare	$0.27	$2.00
Wax candles (per 12)	$0.35	$1.99
6-watt florescent lamp	—	$34.95
Carbide spelunker lamp	$2.59	—
Carbide battery (2 lb., 10 hours)	$0.27	—
Search light	$5.95	$89.00
Navigation		
Jeweled compass	$2.45	$75.00
GPS receiver	—	$395.95
Map (waterproof)	$1.90	$19.95
Map case	$1.29	$19.95
Atlas	$1.55	$24.95+
Climbing		
One-half-inch-thick hemp rope, per 50 ft.	$1.80	$8.60

10.5mm-thick dry rope (50 m)	—	$128.95
Assisted-climbing gear	—	$1,500.00
Crampons	—	$127.50
Grappling hook	$2.35	$22.95
Travel		
Cheap trunk (40 lb.)	$4.00	—
Expensive trunk (55 lb.)	$13.95	—
Handle bag (8 lb.)	$7.45	—
Suitcase (15 lb.)	$9.95	—
Wardrobe (95 lb.)	$41.95	—
Nylon book bag (15 oz.)	—	$59.95
Carry-on upright (5 lb.)	—	$74.95
Canvas duffel bag (5 lb.)	—	$39.95
Attaché case (3 lb.)	—	$149.95
Large EZ cart (6 lb.)	—	$129.95
Hanging bag (6 lb.)	—	$69.95
26-inch Samsonite hardside (7 lb.)	—$94.95	
Men's toilet set (10 pieces)	$9.98	$25.00
Straight razor	$0.35	$8.95
Women's toilet set (15 pieces)	$22.95	$48.00
Dictionary English/Foreign	$0.89	$9.95
Phrasebook	$0.89	$9.95

SPY TECH

Gathering information is the heart of any *Call of Cthulhu* adventure. One of the great advantages modern investigators have over their 1920s' counterparts is access to the fruits of the Cold War: half a century of technological advancement centered on eavesdropping on what the other guy is talking about and seeing what he's doing. These are invaluable tools for any investigator who wants to keep her surveillance of the target a secret.

Spy Tech	1920s	2000s
6× binoculars	$28.00	$89.00
Stabilizer 7×50 binoculars	—	$269.95
Passive night vision scope	—	$249.95+
Passive night vision goggles	—	$799.95+
×100 telephoto lens	—	$399.95
Minox miniature camera	—	$149.95
50 exposure cassette	—	$20.00
Parabolic microphone	—	$159.95+
Laser microphone	—	$25,000.00
Concealable microphone	—	$90.00–$1,000.00
Radio signal transmitter	—	$100.00
IR signal transmitter	—	$600.00
Camouflaged tape recorder	—	$299.95
Telephone tap detector	—	$299.95
Radio transmission detector	—	$499.95
Lockpicking tools	$30.00	$79.95
Lockpick "gun"	—	$129.00
Handheld metal scanner	—	$249.95
Metal detector	—	$229.95
Geiger counter	—	$269.95
Motion detector for 1 room	—	$39.95
Wireless perimeter alarm	—	$229.95
Fireproof safe	—	$389.95
Heavy-duty document shredder	—	$199.95
Telephonic voice modulator	—	$69.95
Disguise kit	$4.98	$59.95

TOOLS

Car broken down? Boat need repairs? Radio kaput? Often, the requisite skills mean nothing without the proper tool for the job. Most of these tools add a +2 circumstance bonus on applicable skills.

Tool	1920s	2000s
48-piece watchmaker's kit	$14.38	—
Mechanical tools (20 tools)	$12.90	$39.99
Mechanic's tool chest (812 pieces)	—	$2,199.95
Folding multipurpose tool	—	$69.95
25-ft. ladder	$3.20	$169.95
Shovel	$1.00	$17.99
Crowbar	$2.25	$16.88
Handaxe	$1.59	$27.99
Handsaw	$2.80	$11.99
Hacksaw	$0.85	$17.09
Glasscutter	$0.80	$7.95
Wire cutters, insulated	$1.35	$8.95
Bolt cutters, insulated	$3.60	$35.69
Hand drill (plus bits)	$5.98	$21.99
6-volt cordless drill	—	$33.95
Dremel tool w/bits	—	$29.95
Gasoline chainsaw	—	$274.95
Electric chainsaw	—	$169.95
2 1/2 HP circular saw	—	$67.95
18v cordless reciprocating saw kit	—	$296.95
7/8-inch rotary hammer	—	$229.95
Digital AC/DC multimeter	—	$19.95
Gasoline blowtorch	$4.45	—
Oxy-acetylene blowtorch	—	$149.78
Welder's goggles	$2.00	$16.57
Welder's kit	—	$3,100.00
Carpenter tool set	$50.00	—
Blacksmith tool set	$80.00	—
Triple beam balance	—	$99.95
12-speed drill press	—	$279.95
1,500-watt electric generator	—	$459.95
1/2-inch steel link chair per foot	$0.65	$1.99
Fire extinguisher	$10.95	$32.95
Scientific calculator	—	$19.95

MISCELLANEOUS GEAR

More than a few of the most useful items in the investigator's arsenal are not easily pigeonholed. Some, such as artificial light sources, are obvious in their utility. Others, such as chronometers or umbrellas, are the kinds of things you realize you need right about the time you realize you don't have them.

Miscellaneous Gear	1920s	2000s
Cheap wrist watch	$5.95	$29.95
Expensive wrist watch	$25.00	$199.95+
Pocket watch	$15.00	$39.00
Gold pocket watch	$32.50	$149.95+
Wind-up alarm clock	$3.00	$17.00
Battery alarm clock	—	$16.99
Plated cross, 10 inches high	$2.00	$40.00
Holy bible	$4.00	$27.98
Unabridged dictionary	$6.75	$19.95
10-volume encyclopedia	$49.00	$380.00
Cheap signet ring	$4.00	$39.95
Straitjacket	$9.50	$350.00
Handcuffs	$2.00	$29.95
Padlock w/2 keys	$0.95	$7.49
College tuition (semester)	$480.00+	$6,000.00+
Cigarette lighter, non disposable	$0.35	$19.95
Umbrella	$1.79	$34.95
Gas mask w/case	$13.00	$109.95
Sunglasses w/case	$1.25	$39.95



MAGIC

They walk unseen and foul in lonely places where the Words have been spoken and the Rites howled through their Seasons. The wind gibbers with Their voices, and the earth mutters with their consciousness. They bend the forest and crush the city, yet may not forest or city behold the hand that smites.

— from the Necronomicon *in "The Dunwich Horror"*

Kristof finds an ancient tome called the *R'lyeh Text.* Unfortunately, it is written in Chinese, having been transcribed directly from ancient scrolls, and he cannot read it. It is important to him to know what it says, but he does not want to simply find a translator, as he feels the need to keep his possession of it a secret. The cult of Cthulhu seems to be watching his every move lately.

So instead, he finds some books and attempts to learn the language himself. This takes a fair amount of time (represented by Kristof going up a level and spending skill points toward the language), but finally, he can attempt to decipher the book. It's still tough going, however, for the dialect is old and the concepts are strange and extremely complex. He has some strange incidents as he attempts to pore through the text: horrific nightmares, strange voices, and even a time when the book itself goes missing. Kristof later finds it in a locked cabinet he is sure he had not opened since before the time he found the book.

Although his sanity has been shaken by these experiences and the occult knowledge gleaned from the text disturbs him, he sets upon his ultimate goal: learning the spells contained within its pages. This requires more research. Kristof's friends begin to worry about the amount of time he spends alone in his apartment. When he is finished, he knows the proper incantations, cryptic gestures, and mindset for his new rituals. He

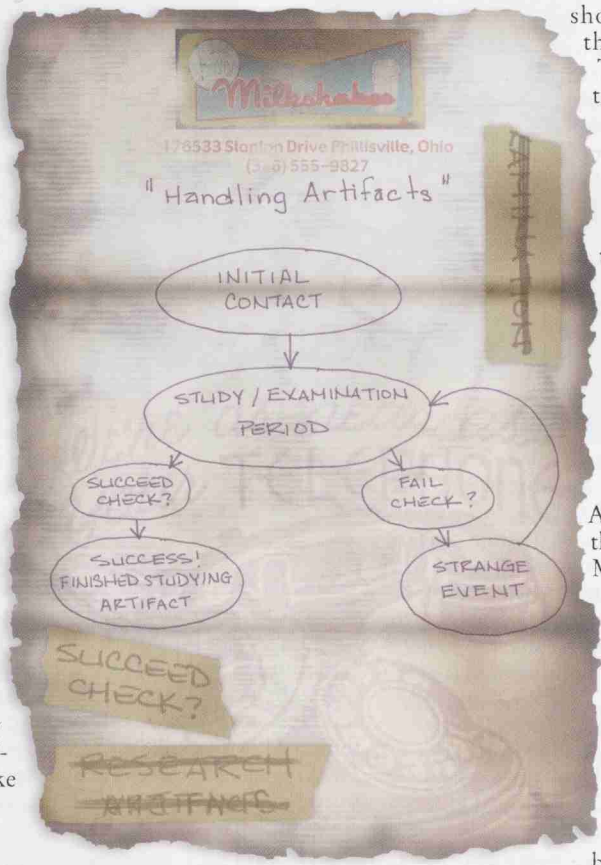
can cast spells that can call forth and bind a winged supernatural creature he has never seen before, and he's learned an incantation that allows him to see into the future. He can now use these powers whenever he dares try, but the experience is certain to be dangerous to his psyche—if not his actual well-being.

ARTIFACTS AND TOMES

Artifacts left over from the time of the Great Old Ones are still buried within the earth. Madmen have scribed ancient tomes filled with arcane lore and forbidden knowledge. Alien migo carry strange and uncanny devices as they explore our world. Characters can come across all sorts of artifacts in their investigations. An artifact is any physical object of power or importance relevant to the Cthulhu Mythos. Artifacts often present characters with potential power or knowledge, but always carry great risks to one's sanity.

The most frequently encountered artifacts are tomes, occult books that contain written secret knowledge, spells, and mind-shattering revelations. They often hold the only keys to staving off the horrors of the Cthulhu Mythos. However, they also have a reputation for being dangerous to read, and with good reason. Many characters have lost their grip on sanity by pouring through mysterious tomes to glean more information on the Mythos.

Artifacts include weapons usable against supernatural creatures and seemingly impossible devices that allow characters to accomplish strange and dangerous tasks—such as traveling through time, communicating with the dead, or viewing faraway places. Like tomes, artifacts carry risks to use, and it is invariably difficult to figure out how to make them function.



HANDLING ARTIFACTS

Handling a character's encounter with an artifact requires several steps. The process includes an Initial Contact, a variable number of Examination Periods, and a variable number of Strange Events. The Initial Contact and Examination Periods are always initiated by a character. Strange Events are not.

INITIAL CONTACT

The process begins with a moment of Initial Contact. This occurs when a character first examines an artifact in any amount of detail. (Usually just seeing it or picking it up doesn't count, but the GM can rule that for some artifacts, this is sufficient.) Initial Contact always results in potential Sanity loss. This could be from the horrible presence of the alien thing, or it could occur from flipping through the pages of the book and seeing ghastly illustrations or a few disturbing phrases.

EXAMINATION PERIOD

Make a study check. (This is 1d20 + the character's level + Intelligence modifier + number of previous study checks made with item). For example, a 4th-level character has an Intelligence modifier of +1. On her first study check, she rolls 1d20 and adds +5. If she fails, she gets to make another check after the next Examination Period (and after a Strange Event occurs), adding +6.

The DC for the check is set by the artifact. Success means that the character finishes studying after that Examination Period, and has successfully figured out the artifact or read the tome in question. Failure means that a Strange Event happens and another Examination Period is required.

If more than a week passes in the course of this Examination Period, and the character makes no progress during that time (because she's doing things other than studying or examining), she must make a DC 15 Intelligence check to continue where she left off. Failure means the Examination Period must start all over again.

STRANGE EVENTS

When a Strange Event is called for, use Table 7–1 to determine the details. Strange Events occur at dramatic moments during the Examination Period. The character should never know when they're going to happen. These events may be real, or they may be the result of the artifact's disturbing nature affecting the user's sanity. Of course, the effects don't have to be completely random. The GM may wish to choose or adapt a particular Strange Event when introducing a chosen artifact into her campaign.

BOOKS OF THE CTHULHU MYTHOS

As stated above, tomes are the most common artifacts. Mythos tomes might look like old leather-bound volumes, typeset books with metal clasps, handwritten notebooks with loose scrap paper inserted, ancient stone tablets carved with runes, or anything in between. Each one contains a wealth of Mythos knowledge and secrets of magic, but also a fair bit of nonsensical raving and seemingly meaningless sketches, diagrams, and equations. They are filled with marginalia, censored sections blacked out by out-

TABLE 7–1:
Strange Events

01–10	You realize that the artifact includes some gruesome materials (skin, bones, and so on). Sanity loss 0/1.
11–15	You begin to notice suspicious strangers that lurk around you or where the artifact is kept. They disappear mysteriously before you can confront or follow them. Sanity loss 0/1.
16–22	You black out for 1d6 hours, and cannot be revived by any means during that time.
23–28	A dream provides the clue you need to continue using the artifact. Sanity loss 0/1.
29–34	The artifact is found somewhere you did not leave it. Sanity loss 0/1d4.
35–40	Exposure to the artifact makes you ill for 24 hours (–2 to all attack rolls, checks, and saves).
41–43	You hear strange, unnerving sounds around the artifact. Sanity loss 0/1d4.
44–50	You have disturbing dreams about the artifact. Sanity loss 0/1d4.
51–54	Images in or on the artifact begin to resemble you (or your name) in some way. Sanity loss 0/1d4.
55–58	You are compelled to treat the artifact as a living thing (Will save, DC 15, to resist) by speaking to it, caring for it, and so forth.
59–65	Henceforth, you are compelled to become angry if anyone other than you touches the artifact (Will save, DC 15, to resist).
66–70	The artifact makes you feel weak while you handle it. (Each day, make a Fort save against DC 15 to resist, or take 2 points of temporary Strength damage.)
71–73	You see ghastly visions when touching the artifact. Sanity loss 1/1d6.
74–77	The artifact visibly responds to your touch by becoming warm, firm, or otherwise "pleased." Sanity loss 1/1d6.
78–80	The artifact visibly responds to your touch by becoming cold or otherwise "displeased." Sanity loss 1/1d6.
81–83	You catch a glimpse of the artifact moving under its own power and volition. Sanity loss 1/1d6.
84–90	You see words on a page, tiny cracks in the surface, or some other portion of the artifact writhe or move. Sanity loss 1/1d6.
91–94	You are compelled to drip your own blood onto the artifact (Will save, DC 15, to resist); take 1d4+1 points of temporary Con damage. Sanity loss 1/1d6.
95–00	You realize the contents or parts of the artifact conceal something entirely new (a second artifact, a palimpsest, and so on).

raged scholars, and cryptic cyphers and codes. The authors were almost assuredly mad. Reading what they have written offers a glimpse into their fevered brains and may detail the same knowledge that drove them insane in the first place.

Each copy of each book is unique, filled with notes written by previous owners, extra or missing sections, or altered text. Thus, each copy of each book might have different spells and slightly different information—this is up to the GM to decide.

The Examination Period for a book involves, not surprisingly, reading it. Reading a Mythos tome isn't like picking up a novel, or even a complicated textbook. Tomes aren't organized, they're rarely straightforward, and they're often filled with ideas and concepts quite alien to most readers. The authors were not necessarily skilled communicators; if they were, truths may be hidden behind allegories and allusions. The writing is often disjointed, frenetic, redundant, and at times, nonsensical. Books may have errors, omissions, and strange editorial changes introduced by translators or transcribers.

If a tome is not written in a character's native language, the investigator must make Speak Other Language checks for the language the tome has been written in. The investigator makes a skill check at the end of each week of the Examination Period. For each failed check, the investigator must spend an additional week translating before retrying the skill.

Unless otherwise noted, the Speak Other Language check to study a tome is DC 15.

USING BOOKS TO LEARN SPELLS

Once you have read a book, learning to cast a spell within it requires an additional 1d3 weeks of study. Once this time is spent, you know the spell and can cast it whenever you wish, suffering whatever harmful effects it may have on you each time. The GM assigns spells to each tome to suit her particular campaign.

As a variant rule, a character who has finished the Examination Period for a tome may be able to cast one of the spells in it once, but without knowing precisely what it does—or the sacrifice the spell exacts.

USING BOOKS AS REFERENCE

Once a character has read one of these eldritch tomes, it is still useful to keep around. If a character spends at least 1d4 hours poring over a book she has already read, she may make a single Cthulhu Mythos check to learn a specific bit of information relating to the book's subject matter. Add a bonus on this roll equal to the number of ranks the book originally added to the reader's Cthulhu Mythos skill. No Sanity loss is incurred for this referencing.

The GM has final say in which spells and what information can be found in a tome. Even an infinite amount of research cannot find information that's not there.

BOOK LISTING

Much of this information is commonly known among bibliophiles, historians, and the book trade. Although other versions and translations of these writings almost certainly exist, these lists only include those that have been substantially documented. Many other lesser volumes are certainly still unknown, as are incidental notebooks, diaries, and letters, all of which could be presented in a similar fashion (containing spells, adding Cthulhu Mythos ranks, and so on). The number of copies listed reflects only those specimens known to be held in public or private collections. Additional copies certainly may be discovered.

Dimensions given are traditional, since exact sizes often vary from copy to copy. Folios vary between 12.5×20 inches and 10×15 inches; quartos range between 10×12.5 inches and 7.5×10 inches; octavos vary between 6.25×10 inches and 5×7.5 inches.

Three books (the *Necronomicon*, *Nameless Cults*, and the *Book of Eibon*) are shown in multiple versions. These three sets come first, followed by the rest of the Mythos books alphabetized in single-entry form.

Each entry consists of the title, followed by the actual language of the edition, author or translator, and date of completion or publication. Many of these dates are conjectural. Descriptive notes then follow, ending with game information. Each book is listed with the time and language required to read it (during the Examination Period), the number of spells found within it, the amount of Sanity lost upon initial contact, the amount of Sanity lost upon reading it, and the number of Cthulhu Mythos ranks gained by reading it. Sanity losses cannot be avoided. They are mandatory.



Spells should be chosen based on appropriateness, with occasional, seemingly random inclusion as well. Again, the exact spells in each tome are the purview of the GM.

THE NECRONOMICON (Five Versions)

Al Azif. In Arabic, by Abd al-Azrad, c. A.D. 730. Original form is unknown, but numerous manuscript versions were long circulated among medieval scholars. As early as the 12th century, this version was referred to as lost. *Examination Period:* 2d10 weeks (DC 25). Contains 4d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d10 initial and 2d10 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +3 ranks.

Necronomicon. In Greek, trans. by Theodoras Philetas, A.D. 950. Early handwritten copies are unknown. In 1501, mass printing in Italy in a folio-size edition led to religious suppression. Last known copy was burned in Salem, 1692. *Examination Period:* 2d10 weeks (DC 25). Contains 3d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d10 initial and 2d10 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +2 ranks.

Necronomicon. In Latin, trans. by Olaus Wormius, A.D. 1228. First circulated in manuscript form, then printed in Germany (late 15th century) as a black-letter folio. A second, nearly identical edition was published in Spain in the early 17th century. One copy of the former edition and four copies of the latter are known to exist. *Examination Period:* 2d10 weeks (DC 24). Contains 3d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d10 initial and 2d10 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +2 ranks.

Necronomicon. In English, trans. by Dr. John Dee, 1586. An accurate but expurgated version of the Greek translation. Never printed, this version appears in bound manuscript form only. Three nearly complete copies are known to exist. *Examination Period:* 1d12+1 weeks (DC 22). Contains 2d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d10 initial and 2d10 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +2 ranks.

The Sussex Manuscript. In English, trans. by Baron Frederic, 1597. A muddled, incomplete translation of the Latin Necronomicon, printed in Sussex, England, in an octavo edition. Properly known as the *Cultus Maleficarum. Examination Period:* 1d8 weeks (DC 20). Contains 1d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d3 initial and 1d6 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +1 rank.

NAMELESS CULTS (Three Versions)

Unausprechlichen Kulten. In German, by Friedrich Wilhelm von Junzt, 1839. A German-printed quarto, this volume has long been referred to as "the Black Book." Six copies are held by major libraries in Europe and America. *Examination Period:* 2d10 weeks (DC 24). Contains 4d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d8 initial and 2d8 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +3 ranks.

Nameless Cults. In English, trans. unknown, published 1845. An unauthorized translation published by Bridewell of England in a fine octavo edition. Complete but flawed. At least twenty copies are known to be in public and private collections. *Examination Period:* 1d12+1 weeks (DC 22). Contains 3d6 spells, but 75% do not work. *Sanity Loss:* 1d8 initial and 2d8 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +2 ranks.

Nameless Cults. In English, trans. unknown, published 1909. A heavily expurgated and error-laden edition published by Golden Goblin Press of New York. Numerous copies of this cheap octavo are believed extant. *Examination Period:* 1d10 weeks (DC 20). Contains no spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d8 initial and 2d8 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +1 rank.

THE BOOK OF EIBON (Three Versions)

Liber Ivonis. In Latin, trans. Caius Phillipus Faber, 9th century AD. Although the original is said to have been written by Eibon, wizard of Hyperborea, no earlier versions than the Latin have been verified. Never printed, six bound manuscript versions are presently held in library collections. *Examination Period:* 1d12+1 weeks (DC 22). Contains 3d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d4 initial and 2d4 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +2 ranks.

Livre D'Ivon. In French, trans. Gaspard du Nord, c. 13th century. Bound, handwritten manuscript of which thirteen specimens, both partial and

complete, are known to exist. *Examination Period:* 2d10 weeks (DC 24). Contains 3d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d4 initial and 2d4 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +2 ranks.

Book of Eibon. In English, trans. unknown, c. 15th century. A flawed translation. Eighteen copies, all handwritten, are known to exist. *Examination Period:* 1d12 weeks (DC 22). Contains 2d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d4 initial and 2d4 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +2 ranks.

Azathoth and Others. In English, written by Edward Derby, 1919. A collection of the Arkham-born poet's early works. Published in Boston in a slim volume, 3.5×5.5 inches, bound in black. Some 1,400 copies were printed and sold. *Examination Period:* 1 day (DC 20). Contains no spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1 initial and 1d4 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +1 rank.

Celaeno Fragments. In English, by Dr. Laban Shrewsbury, 1915. A handwritten manuscript of which only a single copy is known to exist, deposited at Miskatonic Library shortly before the author's mysterious disappearance. *Examination Period:* 1 week (DC 23). Contains 2d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d4 initial and 1d8 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +2 ranks.

Cthaat Aquadingen. In English, author and translator unknown, c. 14th century. First versions were in early Latin, but have been lost. The single bound manuscript is held by the British Museum, although other copies, some bound in human skin, are rumored to exist. *Examination Period:* 1d10+1 weeks (DC 23). Contains 3d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d8 initial and 2d8 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +2 ranks.

Cthulhu in the Necronomicon. In English, written by Dr. Laban Shrewsbury, 1915. Handwritten notes apparently toward an intended book. Deposited at the Miskatonic University Library in 1915 shortly before the doctor's disappearance. *Examination Period:* 1d8 weeks (DC 22). Contains 1d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d3 initial and 1d6 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +1 rank.

Cultes des Ghoules. In French, by Francois-Honore Balfour, Comte d'Erlette, c. 1702. Published in France in early 1703 in a quarto edition, it was immediately denounced by the Church. At least fourteen copies are known to exist, the last surfacing in 1906. *Examination Period:* 1d8+1 weeks (DC 22). Contains 1d8 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d4 initial and 1d10 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +2 ranks.

De Vermiis Mysteriis. In Latin, by Ludwig Prinn, 1542. Published in folio size in Cologne, Germany, the same year it was written. Suppressed by the Church, only fifteen copies are known to have survived until today. *Examination Period:* 1d10+1 weeks (DC 24). Contains 2d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d6 initial and 2d6 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +2 ranks.

Eltdown Shards. In English, by Rev. Arthur Brooke Winters-Hall, 1912. Questionable translation of mysterious hieroglyphs found on clay fragments discovered in England. Approximately 350 copies of this thick brochure were printed at the author's expense. *Examination Period:* 1d8 weeks (DC 22). Contains 1d4 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d4 initial and 1d8 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +1 rank.

G'harne Fragments. In English, by Sir Amery Wendy-Smith, 1919 (1931). A scholarly study and translation of carvings found on shards carried out of North Africa by the explorer Windrop. The original printing consisted of slightly less than 1,000 copies privately financed and distributed as a humble sixteenmo (4.5×5.75 inches). *Examination Period:* 1d6 weeks (DC 23). Contains 1d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d6 initial and 1d10 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +2 ranks.

The King in Yellow. In English, trans. unknown, c. 1895. The original is in French, but that edition was seized and destroyed by the French government just after publication. The edition in English is a thin black octavo volume with a large Yellow Sign embossed on the front cover. The Sign costs an investigator 0/1d6 Sanity points to see the first time. (This does not count as Initial Contact.) Within is an ambiguous, dreamlike play that opens readers to madness. *Examination Period:* 1 week (DC 22). Contains no spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d3 initial and 1d6+1 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +1 rank.

Massa Di Requiem Per Shuggay. In Italian, by Benvento Chieti Bordighera, 1768. An opera score and libretto never published and believed to have been performed only once. Knowledgeable musicians have pronounced portions of it to be unplayable. Copies are held by the British Museum, the Bibliothèque Nationale in France, and presumably the Vatican's Z-collection. *Examination Period:* 1 week (DC 23). Contains one spell (*call Azathoth*). *Sanity Loss:* 1d3 initial and 1d6 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +1 rank.

Monsters and their Kynde. In English, author unknown, c. 16th century. Only a single copy of this handwritten book is believed to exist. Bound in leather, it was stolen from the British Museum in 1898. Other copies have long been rumored to be in private hands. *Examination Period:* 1d10+1 weeks (DC 22). Contains 1d10 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d4 initial and 1d8 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +1 rank.

People of the Monolith. In English, written by Justin Geoffrey, 1926. A volume of poetry, 4×6.75 inches, bound in dark red. An edition of 1,200 copies was printed shortly before the author was confined to a madhouse. *Examination Period:* 1 week (DC 20). Contains no spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1 initial and 1d3 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +1 rank.

Ponape Scripture. In English, by Captain Abner Ezekiel Hoag, 1734. Published posthumously in the late 18th century as a primitive American sexto-decimo, 4×6.75 inches. The printed version is believed inferior to the original manuscript, copies of which purportedly still exist. *Examination Period:* 1d6 weeks (DC 21). Contains 1d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d3 initial and 1d6 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +1 rank.

Pnakotic Manuscripts. In English, author and trans. unknown, c. 15th century. Known only in five bound manuscripts held by major libraries in Europe and America. The author claims the writings to be of prehistoric or possibly prehuman origin. *Examination Period:* 2d8 weeks (DC 23). Contains 1d4 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d4 initial and 1d8 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +2 ranks.

Revelations of Glaaki. In English, by various authors, early 19th century. Although handwritten versions of eleven and twelve volumes are rumored to exist, the only verified edition is the nine-volume edition published in England in 1865 as a folio. Copies of this edition are held by many major libraries,

and more are believed to exist in private collections. *Examination Period:* 3d6 weeks (DC 24). Contains 2d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d6 initial and 2d6 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +3 ranks.

R'lyeh Text. In Chinese, author unknown, c. 300 BC. Existence of original clay tablets is disputed, though accurate copies are rumored to be found on ancient scrolls. Known by reputation only. English and German translations are rumored to have been smuggled out of Asia. *Examination Period:* 3d8 weeks (DC 23). Contains 2d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d8 initial and 2d8 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +3 ranks.

Seven Cryptical Books of Hsan. In Chinese, written by Hsan the Greater, c. 2nd century AD. Long a rumor in the Occidental world, this tome is said to be contained on seven separate scrolls, each covering a different topic. A translation titled *Seven Cryptical Books of Earth* is said to have been smuggled out of the country, but never verified. *Examination Period:* 2d10+1 weeks (DC 22). Contains 2d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d4 initial and 1d8 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +1 rank.

True Magick. In English, written by Theophilus Wenn, c. 17th century. Long known only by rumor, the book is said to be a bound manuscript. *Examination Period:* 2d6 weeks (DC 22). Contains 1d8+1 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d4 initial and 1d8 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +1 rank.

Thaumaturgical Prodigies in the New-England Canaan. In English, by Rev. Ward Phillips, c. 1788. Published in two editions, the second in Boston in 1801. Both editions identical, although the latter is far more common. Primitive American octavo in imitation black letter. Commonly found in major libraries and historical societies throughout New England. Typically used for occult reference. *Examination Period:* 1d4 weeks (DC 21). Contains no spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d3 initial and 1d6 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +2 ranks.

Zanthu Tablets. In English, by Prof. Harold Hadley Copeland, 1916. A brochure subtitled "A Conjectural Translation," of which 400 copies were printed. Translates carvings found on stone tablets drawn up from the Pacific Ocean in a fishermen's net. The author imputes the carvings to trace to the lost continent of Mu. *Examination Period:* 1d4 weeks (DC 22). Contains 1d6 spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d3 initial and 1d6 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +1 rank.

ARTIFACTS

Characters may encounter all sorts of strange devices during their investigations. Once an artifact's function has been determined, it can be used as described, although many carry great dangers. A time interval is provided at the end of each description, indicating how long an item must be studied and experimented with before its powers are known to the user, although its effects may be inadvertently felt or triggered before that time.

Carafe of Space Mead. Even a tiny draught of this fine, golden liquid allows the drinker to survive in the vacuum of space in a physical and mental stupor. (The stupor does not take effect until you are actually in space.) Those hoping to ride byakhee to other planets, for example, will want a heady dose of space mead.

Weight: 1 lb.; *Study Time:* 1d4 days.

Deep One Breather. Organic in nature, this device is really a set of actual gills that grafts on to a human or other air-breather, allowing the subject to breathe underwater for up to 24 hours (at which time the artifact is exhausted, and will not function again for 48 hours). Because it insinuates itself into the actual lungs of the possessor, it deals 1d4 points of damage when it is removed. The study time reflects the lengthy process of grafting it to human flesh.

Weight: 3 lb.; *Study Time:* 1d6 days.

Elder Thing Crystal. These shining white crystals contain power. The crystal's energy can be drawn upon to power spells, so that the caster does not suffer any ability score damage from the spell (Sanity loss still occurs). Each crystal can account for up to 5d10 points of ability score damage before its power is exhausted (keep a running total).

Weight: Negligible; *Study Time:* 3d8 days.

Glass from Leng. This magical round lens allows the possessor to see in it random visions of other places. Focused concentration is all that is required, although no mortal can ever control the exact location viewed. Creatures viewed can also see the viewer through the windowlike glass. Smart owners learn to inscribe a pentagram around themselves to keep creatures that are looking back through the glass from acting against them.

Sanity loss for looking through the glass depends on the scene viewed. Sorcerers who have used this artifact gaze through it for as long as they dare, hoping to learn some (random) secret or truth.

Weight: 10 lb.; *Study Time:* 1d8 days.

Jar of Powder of Ibn-Gazi. This fine white powder renders invisible things visible. It is used by blowing it through a pipe or throwing a handful of it at a target. The invisible objects, creatures, or magical energies remain visible for 2 rounds.

Weight: 2 lb.; *Study Time:* 1d4 days.

Jar of the Baneful Dust of Hermes Trismegistus. A handful (one application) of this gold-colored dust, thrown at a creature of nonterrestrial origin, deals 2d6 points of damage. Using the powder requires a ranged touch attack, with a range of no more than 15 feet. The term "nonterrestrial origin" excludes humans, deep ones, ghouls, servants of Glaaki, sand dwellers, serpent people, and chthonians, but not flying polyps, elder things, mi-go, star-spawn of Cthulhu, or shoggoths. The damage ignores damage reduction.

The pain dealt to the creature is horrible and hideous. Those viewing the victim must risk 0/1d3 Sanity loss. A spell exists to create more of the dust (listed under *enchant item*); it costs 5 points of temporary Constitution damage to cast.

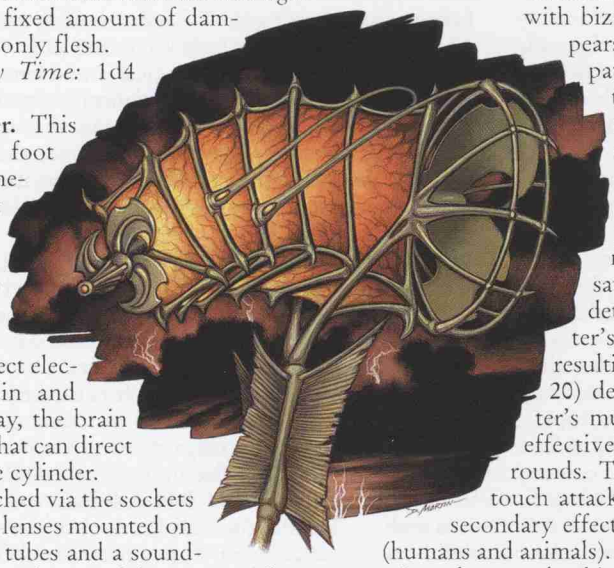
Weight: 2 lb.; *Study Time:* 1d4 days.

Lamp of Al-Hazred. A curiously engraved oil lamp made of gold, this artifact is said to have been used by al-Hazred himself. When burned, it gives off fumes so that those who inhale them gain strange visions of creatures or locations important to the Outer Gods or the Great Old Ones. Anyone within 30 feet of the burning lamp must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 16) or fall into a vision-filled stupor for 3d10 minutes. Sanity loss from these visions is at least 1d4, although far greater losses are incurred depending on what was seen in the vision. (Seeing Great Cthulhu himself, for example, costs much more than 1d4 Sanity.)

Weight: 3 lb.; *Study Time:* 1d4 days.

Lightning Gun. To a human, this device looks a little something like a 30s-era camera with a great number of protrusions, buttons, and knobs. It fires great bolts of lightning, dealing 1d6 points of electricity damage per charge expended. The weapon fires this electricity in a line 5 feet wide and 300 feet long. Any targets along this line can attempt a Reflex saving throw (DC 20) for half damage. The gun has a pack of 32 charges. (A Yithian or mi-go using this weapon may carry additional packs.) A skilled user can choose to use one charge, multiple charges, or all remaining charges at once. It is a full-round action to load a new charge pack, if one is available. A 5% chance per charge above four used at once exists that the weapon burns out and will not function. It is rumored that there are also lightning weapons that deal a fixed amount of damage, and others that harm only flesh.

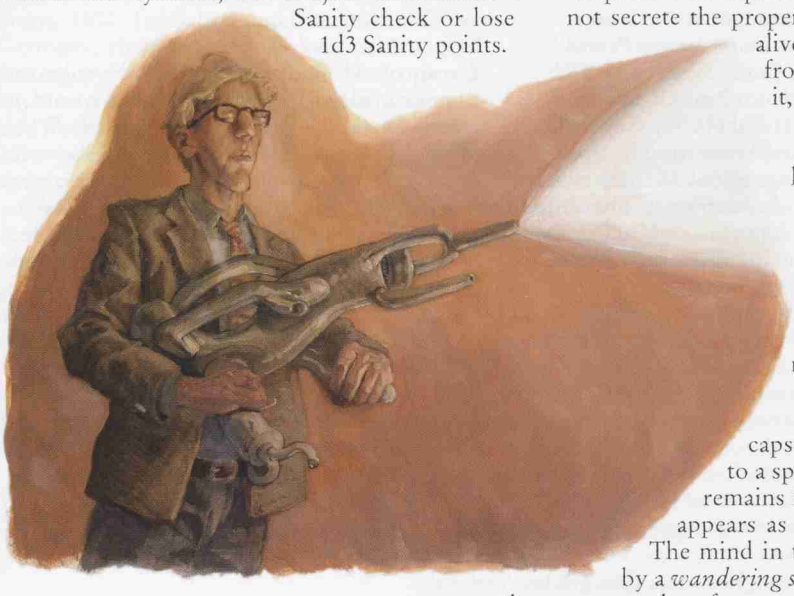
Weight: 10 lb.; *Study Time:* 1d4 weeks.



Mi-Go Brain Cylinder. This shiny cylinder is about 1 foot high and 8 inches in diameter. It has three sockets set in a triangle on its curved surface. The cylinder contains fluids that can sustain a brain placed within it, as well as complicated alien circuitry that can detect electrical pulses in the brain and interpret them. In this way, the brain can send neural impulses that can direct machines connected to the cylinder.

Devices that can be attached via the sockets include a tall rig with twin lenses mounted on front, a box with vacuum tubes and a sounding board, and a small box with a metal disc on top. These allow the brain within to see, hear, and speak. The mi-go have done their best to approximate human senses, but in fact, the visual images are grainy and low resolution, the sound flat, and the speech utterly monotone.

Mi-go have the ability and know-how to remove a brain from a human in such a way that it continues to live on within a cylinder. Humans do not. Even after a proper procedure, bodies without a brain die in 1d10 rounds. Each week a brain spends within the cylinder, the subject must make a Sanity check or lose 1d3 Sanity points.



Weight: 10 lb., 50 lb. with sensory apparatus; *Study Time:* 1d4 weeks.

Mi-Go Electric Weapon. This warty ovoid device is made of some unidentifiable black metal covered with bizarre circuitry that almost appears to be laid out in an arcane pattern. When clutched in just the right way, the electrical resistance of the weapon changes. The device then emits a bluish bolt of sparks up to 20 feet long that deals 1d10 points of damage. The target must also make two Fortitude saving throws. The first (DC 12) determines whether the character's nervous system is overloaded, resulting in death. The second (DC 20) determines whether the character's muscles are thrown into spasm, effectively paralyzing him for 1d4 rounds. The user must make a ranged touch attack in order to hit a target. The secondary effects only affect natural creatures (humans and animals).

In order to make this weapon usable by humans, the circuitry must be jury-rigged into a new pattern. This requires a Repair check (DC 25). Even then, the device has a 40% chance of failure (so that nothing happens that round) when used by a human.

Weight: 1 lb.; *Study Time:* 3d8 days.

Mi-Go Living Armor. Constructed by alien biotechnology, this slimy green web of chitinous, fungal segments fits on a host and confers a +6 natural armor bonus to Armor Class. Each week it is worn by a human, the amount of protection it provides degrades by 1 point. (Humans do not secrete the proper nutrient solutions to keep the armor alive.) Furthermore, each time it is removed from a human, it tears hair and skin with it, dealing 1 point of damage.

Weight: 8 lb.; *Study Time:* 3d8 days.

Mi-Go Mist Projector. This device looks like a cluster of twisted metal tubes. When used correctly, it projects a cone of icy mist in a thick, white cloud 10 feet long and 10 feet wide at the end. The mist is so cold that anyone within it takes 2d6 points of cold damage (Reflex save, DC 19, for half damage). The mist dissipates immediately.

Weight: 6 lb.; *Study Time:* 1d8 days.

Plutonian Drug Pellets. These small capsules send the user's mind back in time to a spot designated by the creator. The mind remains in the past for 1d20 hours, although it appears as if only moments pass in the present. The mind in the past can move about as if affected by a *wandering soul* spell. Once the mind returns to the present, the user must sleep for a period equal to the amount of time spent in the past (a rather inconvenient restriction if the Hounds of Tindalos are after you).

Weight: Negligible; *Study Time:* 1d4 days.



Shaggai Nerve Whip. This alien device taps into the mental power of the user. It projects a chattering line of pallid light up to 20 feet long, striking foes as a ranged touch attack. Those struck must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + user's Charisma bonus) or collapse in agony, unable to take any actions and considered helpless for 1d6 rounds. A single use of this device deals 1 point of temporary Charisma damage to the user.

Weight: 1 lb.; *Study Time:* 2d8 days.

Shining Trapezohedron. A nearly black, red-striated polyhedron with many irregular flat surfaces, this artifact is found within a metal box. Looking within the crystalline form grants one visions of other worlds or times (purely at the GM's discretion). If the box is closed at night, a hideous avatar of Nyarlathotep appears in 2d6 rounds and consumes those around it, then leaves within 1d10 days. The avatar can only exist in complete darkness.

Weight: 1 lb. (including box); *Examination Period:* 1d2 days.

Ultraviolet Projector. This device reveals the presence of coexistent creatures, such as the Terrors from Beyond (see page 187). Activating the device requires a Craft (electronics) or Knowledge (electronics) check against DC 25.

The first time the projector is used, it affects an area about the size of a room. The second time, its field affects an area the size of a house or small building. By the third time, the projector has attuned to its environment and the people within it. Anyone who leaves this area of effect can be attacked by Terrors from Beyond as long as the machine is operational. Once attuned, the ultraviolet projector cannot be shut off—only destroyed. It has a hardness of 5 and 5 hit points, although theoretically, it could be encased in something larger and more defensible.

Weight: 6 lb.; *Study Time:* 1d3 days.

Yithian Stasis Cube. This cube-shaped device can come in many sizes, even in other shapes. Once it is activated, time within the cube slows to a crawl (a ratio of about 1 second for every thousand years outside). Stasis cubes are usually used to store valuable objects, but can also be used as a sort of one-way time travel trip. The Yithians in the far future have improved their technology to the point where their cubes slow time down to 1 second per million years.

Weight: Varies (often around 30 lb.); *Study Time:* 1d4 days.

Yithian Tabula Rasa Device. This small, slim, rectangular copper box is covered with tiny indentations. From one side of the box, five flexible metal tubes extend, ending in inch-long metal needles. These needles are made to be inserted into the head of a living creature; this process takes 5 rounds. The needles paralyze the creature (Fortitude save, DC 20). Each round thereafter, the machine erases up to a year's worth of memories or permanently drains one point of Intelligence at the user's option. These memories and thoughts are stored within the machine. This process can also be reversed, feeding the stored memories into the original creature or into another creature entirely. The device does not transfer skill ranks or the ability to cast spells.

Weight: 1 lb.; *Study Time:* 10d10 weeks.

Yithian Temporal Communicator. This bizarre-looking, intricately etched brass device is topped with a red jewel. The jewel is attuned to a particular Yithian. When the 1-foot-high device is activated, the gem glows, and after 1d4 minutes, contact is established. A hologram is projected, so it seems as if the Yithian appears next to the device. The Yithian can see into the time and space occupied by the machine and can communicate with anyone nearby. This device has no maximum range, in terms of either space or time. It is fairly simple to use, as it was designed to be given to non-Yithians.

Weight: 10 lb.; *Study Time:* 1d4 days.

CASTING SPELLS

Although magic is a dangerous pursuit to attempt, characters can learn to tap into the powers of the Cthulhu Mythos by casting spells. Whether you look at it as the scholarly application of ancient lore or deciphering and harnessing "true science," spellcasting works the same way.

WHAT IS A SPELL?

A spell is a one-time magical effect. Spellcasting characters learn to cast spells by reading special books. No special preparation is needed once a spell is known, but harnessing the energies required usually costs both Sanity and damage to one or more ability scores. To use a spell, the character casts it using a few special words, specific gestures, a specific item, or any combination of the three.

CASTING A SPELL

Casting a spell can be a straightforward process, as when Kristof casts *find gate* to locate an invisible portal that leads back home, or it can be complicated, as when Claire is attempting to aim an *insect plague* by ear at a group of mi-go who have hidden themselves in a *darkness* spell, all while avoiding the attacks of the mi-go's dominated human servants.

CHOOSING A SPELL

First choose which spell to cast, assuming your character knows more than one.

To cast a spell, you must be able to speak (if the spell has a verbal component), gesture (if it has a somatic component), and manipulate the material components or focus (if any). Additionally, you must concentrate to cast a spell—and it's hard to concentrate in the heat of battle. (See below for details.) No limit exists on how many times you can cast a spell you know, except for its cost in Sanity and ability score damage.

CASTING TIME

You can cast a spell with a casting time of 1 action as an attack action.

A spell that takes 1 full round to cast requires a full-round action. It comes into effect at the beginning of your initiative count 1 round after you started casting the spell. You then act normally after the spell is complete. A spell that takes 1 minute to cast comes into effect on your initiative count 1 minute later (and for each of those 10 rounds, you are casting the spell as a full-round action).

RANGE

A spell's range indicates how far from you it can reach, as defined on the Range line of the spell description. A spell's range is the maximum distance from you that the spell's effect can occur, as well as the maximum distance at which you can designate the spell's point of origin. If any portion of the spell's area would extend beyond the range, that area is wasted. Standard ranges include:

Personal: The spell affects only you.

Touch: You must touch a creature or object to affect it.

Close: The spell reaches up to 25 feet away from you. The maximum range increases by 5 feet for every two full caster levels.

Medium: The spell reaches up to 100 feet + 10 feet per caster level.

Long: The spell reaches up to 400 feet + 40 feet per caster level.

Unlimited: The spell reaches anywhere on the same plane of existence. (Outsider creatures come from other planes of existence, and can usually return to them.)

Range Expressed in a Distance: Some spells have no standard range category, just a range expressed in feet, miles, and so on.

AIMING A SPELL

You must make some choice about who the spell affects or where the effect originates, depending on the type of spell.

Target: Some spells, such as *wither limb*, have a target or targets. You cast these spells directly on creatures or objects, as defined by the spell itself. Unless otherwise stated in the spell description, you must be able to see or touch the target, and you must specifically choose that target. However, you do not have to select your target until you finish casting the spell.

If you cast a targeted spell on the wrong sort of target, such as casting *cast out shan* when there is no shan present, the spell has no effect.

If the target of a spell is yourself ("Target: You"), you do not receive a saving throw.

Some spells require a willing target. A subject compelled by a mind-affecting spell such as *dominate person* is not considered willing.

Effect: Some spells, such as summoning spells, create or summon things rather than affecting things that are already present. You must designate the location where these things are to appear, either by seeing it or defining it (such as "The *insect plague* will appear 20 feet into the area of *darkness* that the mi-go are hiding in."). Range determines how far away an effect can appear, but if the effect is mobile (a summoned entity, for instance), it can move regardless of the spell's range.

Spread: Some effects, notably clouds and fogs, spread out from a point of origin to a distance described in the spell. The effect can extend around corners and into areas you can't see. Figure distance by actual distance traveled, taking into account the number of turns the spell effect takes. You must designate the point of origin for such an effect, but need not have line of effect to all portions of the effect (see below). Example: *obscuring mist*.

Area: Some spells affect an area. You select where the spell starts, but otherwise you don't control which creatures or objects the spell affects. Sometimes a spell describes a specially defined area, but usually an area falls into one of the categories below.

Burst: As with an effect, you select the spell's point of origin. The spell bursts out from this point, affecting whatever it catches in its area. A burst spell has a radius that indicates how far from the point of origin the spell's effect extends.

Creatures: Some spells affect creatures directly (like a targeted spell), but they affect creatures in an area of some kind rather than individual creatures you select. Some spells summon creatures. You can only summon a nonflying creature on a level surface (not in the air).

Many spells affect "living creatures," which means all creatures other than undead. For instance, if you cast *pipes of madness* in the midst of people and zombies, the spell ignores the zombies and affects the people. If there is a maximum number of creatures that can be affected by the spell, creatures that can never be affected (such as undead in the case of a spell that affects living creatures) do not count toward the maximum.

Objects: Some spells affect objects within an area you select (as above, but affecting objects instead of creatures).

Other: A spell can have a unique area, as defined in its description.

Line of Effect: A line of effect is a straight, unblocked path that indicates what a spell can affect. A line of effect is canceled by a solid barrier. It's like line of sight for ranged weapons, except it's not blocked by fog, darkness, and other factors that limit normal sight.

Unless otherwise noted, you must have a clear line of effect to any target on which you cast a spell or any space in which you wish to create an effect. You must have a clear line of effect to the point of origin of any spell you cast, unless the range states that no line of sight is needed.

An otherwise solid barrier with a hole of at least 1 square foot through it does not block a spell's line of effect. For purposes of line of effect, a 5-foot length of wall with an opening this size is no longer considered a barrier (though the rest of the wall farther from the hole can still block the spell).

SAVING THROW

Most harmful spells allow an affected creature to make a saving throw to avoid some or all of the effect. The Saving Throw line in a spell description defines which type of saving throw the spell allows (Fort for Fortitude, Ref for Reflex, and Will) and describes how saving throws against the spell work.

Negates: This term means that the spell has no effect on a creature that makes a successful saving throw.

Half: The spell deals damage, and a successful saving throw halves the damage taken (round down).

None: No saving throw is allowed.

(Harmless): The spell is usually beneficial, not harmful, but a targeted creature can attempt a saving throw if it wishes.

Saving Throw Difficulty Class: A saving throw against your spell has a DC of 15 + your Intelligence bonus.

Succeeding at a Saving Throw: A creature that successfully saves against a spell without obvious physical effects feels a hostile force or a tingle, but cannot deduce the exact nature of the attack. For example, if you secretly cast *dominate person* on a character and his saving throw succeeds, he knows that someone used magic against him, but he can't tell what the caster was trying to do. Likewise, if a creature's saving throw succeeds against a targeted spell, such as *dominate person,* you sense that the spell has failed. You do not sense when creatures succeed at saving throws against effect and area spells.

Voluntarily Giving Up a Saving Throw: A creature can voluntarily forego a saving throw and willingly accept a spell's result.

THE SPELL'S RESULT

Once you know which creatures (or objects or areas) are affected, and whether those creatures have made successful saving throws (if any), you can apply whatever results a spell entails.

DURATION

Once you have determined who's affected and how, you need to know for how long. A spell's Duration line tells you how long the magical energy of the spell lasts.

Timed Durations: Most spell durations are measured in rounds, minutes, hours, or some other increment. When the time is up, the magic goes away and the spell ends. If a spell's duration is variable, such as for *control weather*, the GM rolls it secretly.

Instantaneous: The spell energy comes and goes the instant the spell is cast, though the consequences of the spell might be long-lasting. For example, a *mindblast* spell lasts only an instant, but the Sanity points it destroys are gone for good.

Permanent: The energy remains as long as the effect does. Theoretically, the spell can be dispelled (for example, with *dispel magic* in D&D). The spell lasts forever if left alone.

Concentration: The spell lasts as long as you concentrate on it. Concentrating to maintain a spell is an attack action. Anything that could break your concentration when casting a spell can also break your concentration while you're maintaining one, causing the spell to end (see Concentration, below). You can't cast a spell while concentrating on another one.

Subjects, Effects, and Areas: If the spell affects creatures directly (for example, *blind, deafen,* or *evil eye*), the result travels with the subjects for the spell's duration. If the spell creates an effect, the effect lasts for the duration. The effect might move or remain still. Such effects can be destroyed prior to when the spell's duration ends (such as *raise night fog* being dispersed by wind). If the spell affects an area, then the spell stays with that area for the spell's duration. Creatures are subjected to the spell when they enter the area and are no longer subject to it when they leave.

Touch Spells and Holding the Charge: If you don't discharge a touch spell on the round you cast the spell, you can hold the discharge of the spell (or "hold the charge") indefinitely. This doesn't require concentration to maintain. You can make touch attacks round after round. You can touch one friend (or yourself) as an attack action or up to six friends as a full-round action. If you touch anything with your hand while holding a charge, the spell discharges. If you cast another spell, the touch spell dissipates.

Discharge: A few spells last for a set duration or until triggered or discharged. For instance, *flesh ward* waits until triggered; the spell ends once damage has been prevented.

(D): If the Duration line ends with "(D)," you can dismiss the spell at will. You must be within range of the spell's effect and must speak words of dismissal, which are usually a modified form of the spell's verbal component. If the spell has no verbal component, you dismiss the spell with a gesture. Dismissing a spell is an attack action. By its very nature, a spell that depends on concentration can be dismissed, and dismissing it does not require an action (since all you have to do to end the spell is stop concentrating).

COMPONENTS

As mentioned above, a spell's components include what you must do or possess to cast it. A spell's Components line includes abbreviations that tell you what type of components it has. Specifics for material and focus components are given at the end of the descriptive text if not mentioned earlier in the description.

Usually you don't worry about components, but when you can't use a component for some reason, or when a material or focus component is expensive, then they're critical.

V (Verbal): A verbal component is a spoken incantation. To provide a verbal component, you must be able to speak in a strong voice. Preventing the caster from speaking spoils the incantation (and thus the spell). A spellcaster who has been *deafened* has a 20% chance to spoil any spell he tries to cast if that spell has a verbal component.

S (Somatic): A somatic component is a measured and precise movement of the hand or some other part of the body. You must have at least one hand free to provide a somatic component.

M (Material): A material component is a physical substance or object that is annihilated by the spell energies in the casting process.

F (Focus): A focus component is a prop of some sort. Unlike a material component, a focus is not consumed when the spell is cast and can be reused.

COST

The rigors of spellcasting do not come naturally to humans; thus, the physical body and the mind are usually harmed when a spell is cast. Furthermore, bringing such impossible (and often horrific) effects into existence exacts a toll on the caster's psyche. Most spells deal ability score and Sanity damage, although a few just do one or the other. This damage takes place upon the completion of the spell's casting. Like other types of temporary ability score damage, lost points come back over time.

Occasionally, rather than damaging ability scores, spellcasting demands a permanent investment of power. This comes in the form of a permanent ability score "drain." (By definition, ability damage is temporary; an ability drain is permanent.) Such points do not return after time. Costs are temporary unless they include the "permanent" descriptor.

CONCENTRATION

To cast a spell, you must concentrate. If something interrupts your concentration while you're casting, you must make a Concentration check or lose the spell. The more distracting the interruption, the higher the DC is. If you fail the check, you lose the spell just as if you had cast it to no effect.

Injury: Getting hurt or being affected by hostile magic while trying to cast a spell can break your concentration and ruin a spell. While trying to cast a spell, if you take damage, fail a saving throw, or are otherwise successfully assaulted, you must make a Concentration check. The DC is 15 + damage taken. If you fail the check, you lose the spell without effect. The interrupting event strikes during spellcasting if it comes between when you start and complete a spell (for a spell with a casting time of 1 full round or more) or if it comes in response to your casting the spell (such as a readied action).

If you are taking continuous damage, such as from being on fire, half the damage is considered to take place while you are casting a spell. You must make a Concentration check (DC 15 + one-half the damage that the continuous source last dealt). If the last damage dealt was the last damage that the effect could deal (such as the last round of the fire), then the damage is over, and it does not distract you.

Grappling or Pinned: The only spells you can cast while grappling or pinned are those without somatic components and whose material components (if any) you have in hand. Even so, you must make a Concentration check (DC 25) or lose the spell.

Vigorous Motion: If you are riding on a moving mount, enduring a rough ride in a vehicle, on a small boat in rough water, below decks in a storm-tossed ship, or simply being jostled in a similar fashion, you must make a Concentration check (DC 15) or lose the spell.

Violent Motion: If you are on a galloping horse, enduring a very rough ride in a vehicle, on a small boat in rapids or in a storm, on deck in a storm-tossed ship, or being tossed roughly about in a similar fashion, you must make a Concentration check (DC 20) or lose the spell.

Violent Weather: If you are in a high wind carrying blinding rain or sleet, the DC is 10. If you are in wind-driven hail, dust, or debris, the DC is 15. You lose the spell if you fail the Concentration check.

Casting on the Defensive: If you want to cast a spell within an area a foe threatens (that is, if he's not flat-footed and you're within 5 feet of him), you need to dodge and weave. You must make a Concentration check (DC 20) to succeed. You lose the spell if you fail.

CASTER LEVEL

A spell's power often depends on its "caster level," which is typically equal to your investigator's level. For example, a *fist of Yog-Sothoth* deals 1d6 points of damage per caster level (to a maximum of 10d6), so a 10th-level caster can cast a more powerful version of that spell than a 5th-level character can.

You can cast a spell at a lower caster level than normal, but all level-dependent features must be based on the same caster level. For example, at 10th level, Kristof can cast a *fist of Yog-Sothoth* spell to a range of 200 feet for 10d6 points of damage. If he wishes, he can cast the spell so that it deals less damage by casting the spell at a lower caster level, but he must reduce the range according to the selected caster level. Sanity loss and ability score cost remain the same.

MULTIPLE CASTERS

Other people who know the spell can help an investigator cast a spell that requires more than one action to cast. If multiple casters cast a spell, they divide the ability score damage among themselves (round fractions up), but each caster suffers the full Sanity cost.

If multiple casters are casting a spell, disrupting one caster does not disrupt the entire spell, but it does mean the ability score damage for the remaining casters increases. (The damage is divided among the remaining casters.)

In cases where a caster level is needed, use the highest level of all the casters, then add one-fifth of the total levels of all the other casters involved. Ultimately, additional casters cannot increase the overall caster level by more than twice the level of the highest-level caster.

One caster must be chosen to be the leader; ranges and other necessary data are measured from her.

SPELL FAILURE

If you ever try to cast a spell in conditions where the characteristics of the spell (range, area, and so on) cannot be made to conform, the casting fails and the spell is wasted. For example, if you cast *dominate person* on a dog (even a dog that has been magically changed into a human), the spell fails because a dog is the wrong sort of target for the spell. Spells also fail if your concentration is broken (see Concentration, above).

COMBINING MAGICAL EFFECTS

Spells or magical effects usually work as described, no matter how many other spells or magical effects happen to be operating in the same area or on the same recipient. Except in special cases, a spell does not affect the way another spell operates. Whenever a spell has a specific effect on other spells, the spell descrip-

tion explains the effect. Several other general rules apply when spells or magical effects operate in the same place:

Stacking Effects: Spells that give bonuses or penalties to attack rolls, damage rolls, saving throws, and other attributes usually do not stack with themselves. For example, if one *flesh ward* spell gives a subject damage resistance of 10/+1, two *flesh ward* spells won't give the subject a damage resistance of 20/+2. Both spells, however, continue to act simultaneously, and if one ends first, the other one continues to operate for the remainder of its duration.

Two bonuses of the same type don't stack even if they come from different spells (or from effects other than spells). You use whichever bonus is more beneficial. For instance, if one spell gives a +1 resistance bonus, and another spell cast at the same time gives a +2 resistance bonus, the end result is a +2 resistance bonus. (As an exception, dodge bonuses stack with each other, and circumstance bonuses stack with each other.)

Different Bonus Names: The bonuses or penalties from two different spells do stack, however, if the effects are of different types. A bonus that isn't named (just a "+2 bonus" rather than a "+2 resistance bonus") stacks with any named bonus or any other unnamed one.

Same Effect with Differing Results: The same spell can sometimes produce varying effects if applied to the same recipient more than once. For example, a series of *animal form* spells might turn a creature into a mouse, a lion, and then a snail. In this case, the last spell in the series trumps the others. None of the previous spells are actually removed or dispelled, but their effects become irrelevant while the final spell in the series lasts.

Multiple Mental Control Effects: Sometimes magical effects that establish mental control render each other irrelevant. For example, a *grasp of Cthulhu* effect renders any other form of mental control irrelevant because it robs the held character of the ability to move. Mental controls that don't remove the recipient's ability to act usually do not interfere with each other. For example, consider a creature forced back by *Eibon's wheel of mist* and then subjected to a *cause fear* spell. The creature remains afraid, but it won't run into the *Eibon's wheel of mist* under any circumstances. In this case, the *Eibon's wheel of mist* spell does not negate the *cause fear,* but limits the options of the subject.

If a creature is under the mental control of two or more creatures, it tends to obey each to the best of its ability (to the extent of the control each effect allows). If the controlled creature receives conflicting orders simultaneously, the competing controllers must make opposed Charisma checks to determine which one the creature obeys.

Spells with Opposite Effects: Spells that have opposite effects apply normally, with all bonuses, penalties, or changes accruing in the order that they apply. A creature with magically improved ability scores suffering ability score damage (such as from a *dread curse of Azathoth*) applies the bonus and then the damage, deriving a total when all the math is done.

Instantaneous Effects: Two or more magical effects with instantaneous durations work cumulatively when they affect the same object, place, or creature. For example, when two *fists of Yog-Sothoth* strike the same creature, the creature must attempt a saving throw against each spell and takes damage from each according to the saving throws' results.

LEARNING SPELLS

By far the most common means of learning a spell is from a book, but simply reading the instructions for the spell is not enough. Once you have read a book completely, you must spend 1d3 weeks to learn to cast one spell within the tome; each additional spell requires an additional 1d3 weeks. After this time is spent, you know the spell and can cast it whenever you wish, suffering whatever harmful effects it may have on you each time.

Spells can also be taught by gods, learned creatures, or other characters who know the spell. While a god can simply impart the knowledge on you, infusing your brain with information, other creatures must teach it to you as best they can (using words, drawn diagrams, and by example). Teaching a spell takes 1d6 weeks and involves at least one casting of the spell by the teacher, which deals ability score damage as normal and Sanity damage on both teacher and student.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Some monsters, such as ghosts or nightgaunts, can create magical effects without being spellcasters. Characters using artifacts and other enchanted items can also create magical effects. These effects come in two types: spell-like and supernatural. Additionally, certain creatures can use special abilities that aren't magical. These abilities are called extraordinary or natural.

Spell-Like Abilities: Usually, a spell-like ability works just like the spell of that name. A few spell-like abilities are unique; these are explained in the text where they are described.

Spell-like abilities have no verbal, somatic, or material components. The user activates them mentally. A spell-like ability has a casting time of 1 action unless noted otherwise in the ability or spell description. In all other ways, a spell-like ability functions just like a spell. As part of this, a spell-like ability can't be used in a threatened area without a Concentration check (DC 20).

Spell-like abilities do not function in areas where magic has been suppressed or negated (such as an *antimagic field* in D&D; no equivalent spell exists in *CofC*).

Supernatural Abilities: These abilities cannot be disrupted in combat, as spells and spell-like abilities can (except as noted in their descriptions). For instance, a creature can use its supernatural abilities in a threatened area without a Concentration check. However, supernatural abilities do not function in areas where magic is suppressed or negated.

Extraordinary Abilities: These abilities cannot be disrupted in combat as spells can. Indeed, they do not qualify as magical, though they may break the laws of physics. Extraordinary abilities are usually reactions, and supernatural abilities are usually attack actions, except where otherwise noted. Effects or areas that negate or disrupt magic have no effect on extraordinary abilities.

Natural Abilities: Things a creature can do that aren't extraordinary, supernatural, or spell-like are natural abilities, such as a bird's ability to fly.

SPELLS

Never use the same name for a spell twice. If a spell is called *find gate* in one book, it should be referred to as *seeking the door* in another. In fact, some GMs will want to discard the less flavorful (but easy to remember and reference in this book) names given in this chapter. They may prefer to use names such as *the drawing of the square* for *flesh ward* and *puppet on a string* for *dominate person.* Additionally, if a book is written in Latin, the GM may wish to find a Latin dictionary and translate the names found in that book into that language.

It is common for spells to be found with slightly different parameters than those mentioned below. GMs can modify these spells slightly (or dramatically) for effect. For example, perhaps a particularly vile form of *divination* found in a specific tome requires the use of human entrails, or a version of *mindblast* is developed that deals physical damage as well as Sanity-point loss. Some dramatic elements, such as material components, may also vary from tome to tome to reflect different themes.

Spells should always have an aura of mystery and strangeness over them. Unlike in a high fantasy roleplaying game, spells should never seem easy, mechanical, mundane—or safe.

ANIMAL FORM

Components: V
Cost: 4 Int damage and 1d8 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 hour/level (D)

This spell changes you into a natural animal (that is, a creature with the "animal" subtype). This spell is usually found in tomes with a specific creature in mind (*bat form* or *wolf form*, for example). The new form can range in size from Diminutive to one size larger than your normal form and cannot have more HD than you have levels. Upon changing, you regain lost hit points as if having rested for a day (though this healing does not restore temporary ability damage or provide the other benefits of resting for a day; changing back does not heal you further). If slain, you revert to your original form, though you remain dead.

You acquire the physical and natural abilities of the animal while retaining your own mind. Physical abilities include Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores and natural size. Natural abilities include armor, natural weapons (such as claws, bite attacks, swoop and rake attacks, and constriction), and similar gross physical qualities (presence or absence of wings, number of extremities, and so on). A body with extra limbs does not allow you to make more attacks (or more advantageous two-weapon attacks) than normal. Natural abilities also include mundane movement capabilities, such as walking, swimming, and flying with wings. Other nonmagical abilities (such as an owl's low-light vision) are considered natural abilities and are retained.

Any part of the body or piece of equipment that is separated from the whole reverts to its original form.

Your new scores and faculties are average ones for the species into which you have been transformed.

You retain your Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores, level, hit points (despite any change in Constitution score), alignment, base attack bonus, and base saves. (New Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores may affect final attack and save bonuses.) You can cast spells for which you have components. You need a humanlike voice for verbal components and humanlike hands for somatic components.

Your new form may be disorienting. Any time you are in a stressful or demanding situation (such as combat), you must succeed at a Will save (DC 19) or suffer a –2 penalty on all attack rolls, saves, skill checks, and ability checks until the situation passes. Creatures who are changed for a long time (years and years) grow accustomed to their new form and can overcome some of these drawbacks (at the GM's discretion).

When the change occurs, your equipment and clothing, if any, transforms to match the new form. If the new form is a creature that does not use equipment, the equipment melds into the new form and becomes nonfunctional. Material components and foci melded in this way cannot be used to cast spells. If the new form uses equipment (an albino ape, for instance), the subject's essential equipment changes to match the new form and retains its properties.

You can freely designate the new form's minor physical qualities (such as hair color, hair texture, and skin color) within the normal ranges for a creature of that type. The new form's significant physical qualities (such as height, weight, and gender) are also under your control, but must fall within the norms for the new form's species.

AUGURY

Components: V, S, F or M
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1d2 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Instantaneous

An *augury* can tell you whether a particular action will bring good or bad results for you in the immediate future. For example, if a party is considering destroying a weird seal that closes a portal, this spell might determine whether it's a good idea.

The base chance for receiving a meaningful reply is 70% + 1% per caster level; the GM makes the roll secretly. The GM may determine that the question is so straightforward that a successful result is automatic, or so vague as to have no chance of success. If the *augury* succeeds, you get one of four results:

- "Weal" (if the action will probably bring good results).
- "Woe" (for bad results).
- "Weal and woe" (for both).
- "Nothing" (for actions that don't have especially good or bad results).

If the spell fails, you get the "nothing" result. A caster who gets the "nothing" result has no way to tell whether it was the consequence of a failed *augury.*

SPELLCASTING AND ABILITY LOSS

- If a character takes temporary Intelligence damage, he does not lose skill points. However, if the ability score drops enough to lower his ability modifier, the loss affects Intelligence-based skills.
- If a character takes temporary Wisdom damage, it does not decrease his current Sanity. However, if this ability score drops enough to lower his Wisdom modifier, the loss affects Will saves and Wisdom-based skills.
- If a character takes enough temporary Strength damage to lower his Strength modifier, the loss affects melee attacks and Strength-based skills.
- If a character takes permanent Constitution drain, the loss affects Fortitude saves and hit points permanently.

An *augury* can see into the future only about half an hour, so anything that might happen after that time does not affect it. Thus, it might miss the long-term consequences of the contemplated action. All auguries cast by the same person about the same topic use the same dice result as the first one.

Focus or Material Components: Divination tools, such as a set of marked sticks, bones, or similar tokens, or expendable material components, such as animal entrails or tea leaves.

BANISHMENT OF YDE ETAD

Components: V, S, M
Cost: 8 Int damage and 1d4 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: 1 mile (no line of sight needed)
Targets: One outsider humanoid, or an outsider entity possessing a humanoid
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates

This spell enables you to force a humanoid with the outsider subtype away from Earth. To target a creature, you must burn a sigil representing the target. The spell must be performed in the open air in the middle of the night within range of the target (the target must have spent time in the exact area at some point).

Material Components: A burnable sigil and a circle drawn around all casters involved. The most common substances for this circle are silicon dioxide, lime, or magnesium silicate, combined with dried and ground henbane or garlic.

BECOME SPECTRAL HUNTER

Components: V, S, M
Cost: 2 Con drain (permanent) and 3d6 Sanity points (see text)
Casting Time: 1 minute
Range: Touch
Targets: You or one willing creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None

You transform one willing subject (which might be you) into a horrible, invisible monster. The subject loses all remaining Sanity points. (Thus, if the subject is you, the 3d6 Sanity loss for the spell is meaningless.) Ignore all the subject's old statistics, and use only the statistics of the spectral hunter (see Spectral Hunter, page 183).

Before casting the spell, you must have a small figurine that represents the subject. It must be bathed in the blood of at least three Small (or bigger) animals. Someone holding the figurine can attempt to mentally communicate with and control the hunter, but the hunter can make a Will saving throw to resist (DC 10 + the level of the figurine's possessor). If the spectral hunter fails, it must obey, but gains a new saving throw every day to break the control. If the figurine is destroyed, the spectral hunter is killed.

BIND ENEMY

Components: V, S, M
Cost: 2 Int damage
Casting Time: 1 full round
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./ level)
Targets: One human
Duration: 7 days
Saving Throw: Will negates

This spell makes it impossible for a specific human target to deal harm upon the caster, either by physical or magical attacks. If the caster attacks the target, the spell ends.

Material Components: An effigy containing materials of a personal nature belonging to the target, such as a few hairs or nail clippings. If this effigy is destroyed, the spell ends.

BIND LOUP-GAROU (CAGE OF KIND)

Components: V, S, M
Cost: 4 Int damage/target and 2d4 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 full round
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./ level)
Targets: One or more lycanthropes, all of which must be within 25 feet of each other
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: Will negates

You force a lycanthrope (or lycanthropes) to remain in his animal form. After the spell is cast, all targets spend at least half of the next 1d4 days in their animal forms, whether they want to or not. Even while in their normal form, the lycanthropes take on the traits of their animal form (secretive, violent, and so on). After that, they spend all the time in their animal forms, attempting to live in the wild forever, if possible.

Material Components: A bowl of solid silver inscribed with incantations, six drops of human blood, and six candles.

BIND SOUL

Components: V, S, F
Cost: 6 Int damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action (and see text)
Range: Medium (100 ft.+10 ft./ level)
Target: One creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates (see text)

By casting *bind soul,* you place a target's soul in a receptacle, leaving his body lifeless. The most common focus for this spell is a bottle or jar, but any intact inanimate object that closes will do. While trapped, the victim takes 1d4 points of Con damage per day until dead (or freed). The rituals to prepare the vessel require three days. Destroying or opening the receptacle ends the spell, releasing the soul.

To cast the spell, the receptacle must be within spell range and you must know where it is, though you do not need line of sight or line of effect to it.

BLACK BINDING

Components: V, S, M
Cost: 3 Int damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Targets: One corpse touched
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None

This spell turns the body of a dead animal or humanoid into an undead animated corpse that follows your spoken commands. The zombie must be created from a mostly intact corpse. The zombie can follow you, or can remain in an area and attack any creature (or just a specific type of creature) entering the place. The undead remains animated until it is destroyed.

The undead creatures you create remain under your control indefinitely. No matter how many times you use this spell, however, you can control only 2 HD worth of undead creatures per caster level. If you exceed this number, all the newly created creatures fall under your control, and any excess undead from previous castings become uncontrolled. (You choose which creatures are released.)

For more details on animated corpses and their abilities, see page 158.

Material Components: You must place a black gem into the corpse's mouth or eye socket. The magic of the spell turns this gem into a worthless, burned-out shell.

BLIND/DEAFEN

Components: V
Cost: 3 Int damage and 2d6 Sanity points

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./ level)
Target: One living creature
Duration: Permanent (D)
Saving Throw: Fort negates

The subject becomes blinded or deafened, as you choose. In addition to the obvious effects, a blinded creature suffers a 50% miss chance in combat (all opponents have full concealment), loses any Dexterity bonus to Armor Class, grants a +2 bonus on attackers' attack rolls (they are effectively invisible), moves at half speed, and suffers a –4 penalty on Search checks and most Strength- and Dexterity-based skill checks. A deafened character, in addition to the obvious effects, automatically fails Listen checks, suffers a –4 penalty on initiative, and has a 20% chance to miscast and lose any spell with a verbal (V) component he tries to cast.

BODY WARPING OF GORGOROTH

Components: V
Cost: 6 Int damage and 2d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Permanent (see text)

By invoking Nyarlathotep, you change your physical form into any one creature or object you wish. The new form can range in size from Diminutive to one size category larger than your normal form. You remain in the new form until you cast this spell again, or until a preexisting condition is met (a certain date, an action performed, and so on). If slain, you revert to your original form, though you remain dead.

You acquire the physical and natural abilities of the animal while retaining your own mind. Physical abilities include Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores and natural size. Natural abilities include mundane movement capabilities (such as walking, swimming, and flight with wings), but not magical flight and other magical forms of travel. Extremely high speeds for certain creatures are the result of magical ability, so they are not granted by this spell. Other nonmagical abilities (such as an owl's low-light vision) are considered natural abilities and are retained.

Any part of the body or piece of equipment that is separated from the whole reverts to its original form.

Your new scores and faculties are average ones for the species into which you have been transformed, although you can take the specific appearance of an individual known to you if you wish.

You retain your Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores, level, hit points (despite any change in Constitution score), base attack bonus, and base saves. (New Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores may affect final attack and save bonuses.) You can cast spells for which you have components. You need a humanlike voice for verbal components and humanlike hands for somatic components.

If you turn into an inanimate object, it will have a fleshy consistency (no hardness), but it can appear to be anything (such as stone, plastic, or wood). Objects cannot take actions. As an object, you age as that object (very slowly). If the object is destroyed, however, you are slain.

When the change occurs, your equipment and clothing, if any, does not transform to match the new form.

You can freely designate the new form's minor physical qualities (such as hair color, hair texture, and skin color) within the normal ranges for a creature of that type. The new form's significant physical qualities (such as height, weight, and gender) are also under your control, but must fall within the norms for the new form's species.

BREATH OF THE DEEP

Components: V
Cost: 4 Str damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./ level)
Target: One living creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fort negates

The subject's lungs fill with water. If the subject fails his saving throw to negate the spell, refer to the rules for drowning (see The Drowning Rule sidebar, page 85). If the saving throw is successful, the subject still takes 2d6 points of damage.

BRING PESTILENCE

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: Living creature touched
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fort negates

The subject contracts a particularly terrible disease, which strikes immediately (no incubation period). You infect the subject with a sickness that permanently drains 1d4 Con, 1d4 Str, or 1d4 Dex each day (your choice) until the subject is dead. The subject can attempt a new saving throw each day, but must succeed at two saves in a row to rid himself of the disease (as with any disease; see Disease, page 82).

CALL DEITY

Components: V, S, F
Cost: 20 Wis damage and 1d10 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1d% minutes
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: One summoned deity
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None

This spell summons an avatar, Outer God, or Great Old One. A 50% chance, +1% per level of the caster(s), exists that the deity will heed the call (if more than one caster is involved, caster level is the total of all casters). The deity appears where you designate and acts on your initiative count. A called deity is free to act as it wishes, remain for as long as it wants, or leave immediately, if it chooses. Those foolish or desperate enough to cast such a spell often have some sort of offering to appease the deity, perhaps in hopes that it will do something in return.

Each deity requires the use of a specific *call deity* spell. (For example, *call Ithaqua* and *call Hastur* are two different spells). The specifics for each spell vary. Some are listed below.

Azathoth: This spell can only be cast outdoors at night.

Cthugha: The caster must be holding some sort of flame on a clear night outside, when Fomalhaut clears the horizon. (September to November are the best nights for Fomalhaut in North America.) Cthugha sometimes grants spells or temporary ability score points with which to cast spells.

Hastur: The caster(s) must arrange nine large blocks of stone in a V-pattern, each with a volume of at least 9 cubic yards. The spell can be cast only on clear nights when Aldebaran is above the horizon. (In North America, that's roughly between October and March.) Each byakhee present adds 10% to the chance that Hastur appears. Hastur sometimes grants spells or temporary ability score points with which to cast spells.

Ithaqua: The spell must be cast on an enormous mound of snow in the northern hemisphere, where the temperature is below freezing (or potentially on a snowy mountaintop



anywhere). If appeased by the summoner, Ithaqua sometimes offers to destroy enemies, grants spells, or grants temporary ability score points with which to cast spells.

Nyogtha: The spell must be cast at the entrance to a cave that eventually connects to the cavern wherein Nyogtha dwells.

Nyarlathotep: Each of this deity's avatars has its own spell and conditions for summoning.

Shub-Niggurath: This spell must be cast before a consecrated stone altar in the dank wilderness during the dark of the moon. The altar is consecrated by bathing it in blood (20 HD of creatures worth). Each Dark Young of Shub-Niggurath present adds 10% to the chance that it will appear.

Yog-Sothoth: This spell must be cast in a stone tower at least 30 feet high in an open area under a cloudless sky. Yog-Sothoth always takes a human victim when it appears. It will take a specific victim if presented with one.

CANDLE COMMUNICATION

Components: V, M
Cost: 1 Sanity point
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: None

Two casters who know this spell must use it at the same time. The time is usually agreed upon long before the casting (such as every night at midnight). Once each casts the spell separately, they can both communicate verbally through a burning candle each has. If either candle flame is extinguished, the spell ends. The candles can be up to five miles per level of the casters apart (so two 5th-level casters can be fifty miles apart). This spell does not use the rules for multiple casters.

Material Components: A candle for each caster.

CAST OUT DEVIL

Components: V, S, F
Cost: 10 Int damage
Casting Time: 1 day
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One creature possessing another creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates

This spell forces a possessing creature, such as Y'golonac or a Yithian, out of its host. Add the creature's HD to its saving throw and subtract your level. If the spell is successful, the creature is instantly whisked away. Lesser versions of this spell only affect one specific supernatural creature (thus, *cast out devil, cast out Yithian,* and *cast out Y'golonac* may be written as three different spells.) This spell counters *imprison mind.*

Focus: Any item that is distasteful to the subject.

CAST OUT SHAN

Components: V, S, M
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1d3 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./ level)
Target: One shan
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates

This spell forces a shan (an Insect from Shaggai) to leave any victim or victims standing within a 5-foot-wide pentagram (usually drawn with the herb amica). The victim(s) and the caster have one Con point drained permanently. After the ceremony, the pentagram is proof against a new shan intrusion for 12 hours. If performed in direct sunlight, any shan expelled are instantly slain.

CAUSE FEAR
[Mind-Affecting]
Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1d4 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One living creature
Duration: 1d4 rounds
Saving Throw: Will negates

The affected creature becomes frightened. It suffers a –2 morale penalty on attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws. It flees from you as well as it can. If unable to flee, the creature may fight. Creatures with 6 or more Hit Dice are immune.

Mind-affecting spells do not affect nonintelligent or undead creatures.

CHANT OF THOTH
Components: V
Cost: 1d4 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 round/level

You gain a +1/level enhancement bonus on any one Int-based check made during the duration of this spell. The spell must be cast before its bonus can be applied to Int-based skill checks.

CIRCLE OF NAUSEA
Components: V, S, M
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 0
Area: An emanation extending in a 20-ft.-radius around a 4-foot circle on the ground, with you in the center
Duration: 1 minute/level.
Saving Throw: Fort negates

Magical energy bursts in all directions from the point of origin, subjecting everyone within the radius to excruciating pain (–2 on all attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks). Those successful in their saving throw must make a new saving throw each round in the area. The circle must be prepared ahead of time with an inscribed circle on the ground and four stones, one set at each cardinal direction. Creating this circle takes 1 hour. Anyone actually attempting to cross the circle must make a second saving throw; failure indicates the subject cannot take actions other than a single move action each round. Entering the 4-foot circle around the caster and succeeding at the saving throw to do so ends the spell.

CLOAK OF FIRE
[Fire]
Components: V, S
Cost: 3 Str damage and 1d10 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 round/level (D)

You are surrounded by weaving, glittering points of light. Each point leaves a luminous trail and flickers white hot. (Sanity cost to view this is 1/1d3). The sparks are so hot that you take 1 point of heat damage per round enveloped in the cloak.



Sealed within the cloak, you rise a foot off the floor. You gain 1d4+1 points of Dexterity while in the cloak and +10 feet to your speed each round. Anyone touching you (such as while making an unarmed or natural attack against you) takes 1d8 points of heat damage. If you touch a creature, you deal 1d8 points of heat damage, but take half that damage yourself as well (round down).

CLOUD MEMORY
[Mind-Affecting]
Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1d2 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: One intelligent creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates

By command, you block a specific memory from the mind of a thinking creature. The memory must be known to you and specific. For instance, you cannot say, "Forget what you did yesterday." You must be specific: "Forget that you were assaulted by a monster yesterday."

This spell cannot be used to make a subject forget a spell, a skill, or Cthulhu Mythos ranks, and it cannot be used to regain Sanity points. Subjects forced to forget potent memories may still have recurring dreams about them.

CLUTCH OF NYOGTHA
[Force]
Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Str (+1 Str/round) damage and 1d20 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: One living creature
Duration: Concentration (see text)
Saving Throw: Will negates (see text)

You create a magic force that grips the subject's heart (or similar vital internal organ) and begins crushing it. The victim appears to be having a heart attack; he is paralyzed (see the Character Condition Summary sidebar, page 91) and takes 1d3 points of damage per round. Each round, you must concentrate and take another point of Strength damage to maintain the spell. In addition, a conscious victim gains a new saving throw each round to stop the spell. If the victim dies as a result of this spell, his chest ruptures and bursts, and his smoking heart appears in your hand.

CONSUME LIKENESS
Components: V, S
Cost: 10 Int damage and 1d20 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Permanent

You can take on the appearance and form—including clothing and equipment—of another creature that is freshly dead. You must see the corpse (in the flesh, in a photo, and so on) to appear taller or shorter, thinner, fatter, or in between. The assumed form must be corporeal. Some Mythos creatures cast this spell while actually consuming their victims, but this is not necessary.

After the likeness has been assumed (which takes 1d3 days), you can assume the new likeness at will. By changing to this new form, your body can undergo a limited physical transmutation, including adding or subtracting one or two limbs, and your weight can be changed up to one-half. If the form selected has wings, you can fly at a speed of 30 feet with poor maneuverability. If the form has gills, you can breathe underwater. You cannot assume the likeness of something that is of a different size category than you.

Your attack rolls, natural armor bonus, and saves do not change. The spell does not confer special abilities, attack forms, defenses, ability scores, or mannerisms of the chosen form. If you take damage or are slain, you automatically return to your normal form, which is a move action.

If you use this spell to create a disguise, you get a +10 bonus on your Disguise check.

This spell cannot be cast by multiple casters.

CONTACT CREATURE

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1d3 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1d4+5 full rounds
Range: 50 miles/level (no line of sight needed)
Target: 1 Hit Die worth of creatures/level
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None

Many tomes have various *contact creature* spells. Each of these spells contacts a specific type of creature within range (if any) and entices it to come to the caster. (Thus, *contact deep one* and *contact Formless Spawn* are two different spells.) Multiple creatures are called if the caster's level is high enough to accommodate the creatures' Hit Dice. For example, a 6th-level caster using *contact deep one* can contact up to six deep ones. The creatures come under their own power, so ghouls have to walk, while flying polyps fly. The caster then never knows exactly when the creature will arrive. Outsider creatures appear magically 1d4 rounds after they are contacted.

No sort of control of the creature, nor any guarantee it will not just leave once it arrives, is implied. Many creatures arrive angry, annoyed at the disturbance. You should have some means to appease the creature and some way to bargain with it to get it to do what you want.

The specifics of these spells depend on the creature involved (more such spells are sure to exist for other creatures).

Chthonian: This spell must be cast in an area frequented by earthquakes.

Deep One: Contacting a deep one involves throwing specially inscribed tablets into the sea.

Elder Thing: This spell should be cast in the southern part of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge or near the geological trenches in Antarctica for any chance of success.

Flying Polyp: Since these creatures live in underground cities, the caster should ensure there is a means (such as a shaft or tunnel) for these creatures to reach the surface.

Formless Spawn: This spell should be cast either in a temple to Tsathoggua or near a cave connecting to the black abyss of N'Kai.

Ghoul: This spell must be cast on a moonlit night near a graveyard or crypt.

Gnoph-Keh: This spell must be cast in Greenland or near the North Pole to succeed. It also must be accompanied by a Performance (singing) check against DC 15 and an effigy made of ice and snow.

Hound of Tindalos: This spell always succeeds, but there is no known way to bargain with these creatures.

Mi-Go: This spell must be cast at the top of a high mountain in an area known to be frequented by the creatures (or, at least in theory, on Yuggoth itself).

Rat-Thing: If a caster hopes to succeed, he should discover where these things exist, such as specific estates in Yorkshire, England or Arkham, Massachusetts.

Sand-Dweller: This spell must be cast in a desert.

Star-Spawn of Cthulhu: This spell must be cast along a coastline or under the water for it to succeed.

CONTACT DEITY

Components: V, S
Cost: 1 Wis drain (permanent) and 1d10 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1d4+5 full rounds
Range: Unlimited
Target: One deity
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None

These spells are primarily cast by the truly mad, although attempting a *contact deity* spell is generally safer than actually calling the deity to come forth. A spell of this sort can be used to get the deity to do something for the caster or find out what the deity wishes of the caster. Each of these spells contacts a specific Elder God, Great Old One, or Outer God and entices it to come to the caster (in some form other than its physical form, if any). A 50% chance, +1% per level of the caster(s), exists that the deity will heed the call. (If more than one caster is involved, add up the total levels of all casters and add it to 50%.) The manifestation of the deity appears magically 1d4 hours after it is contacted.

The deity is never actually controlled by the caster, but initially, the deity is at least neutral to the caster. The deity is unlikely to give nonworshipers anything of value. If the caster bores the deity—perhaps simply by doing or offering nothing the deity can notice—the deity kills the caster or drives him insane. If you choose to cast this spell, you should have some means to appease the deity and some way to bargain with it to get it to do what you want. The specifics of these spells depend on the creature involved (more such spells are sure to exist for other deities).

Chaugnar Faugn: If the spell is successful, the deity sends dreams and nightmares to communicate with the caster.

Cthulhu: If the spell is successful, the deity sends dreams and nightmares to communicate with the caster.

Eihort: If the spell is successful, the deity sends dreams and nightmares to communicate with the caster. It is willing to impart spells directly into the caster at the cost of an additional Wisdom point (permanently drained).

Nyarlathotep: Although the spell can be cast anywhere, Nyarlathotep only communicates with those in a temple that has been properly dedicated to one of his forms. He appears as one of his many avatars (or "masks") according to his whim.

Tsathoggua: If the spell is successful, this deity appears in a translucent version of its physical form (Sanity costs apply) and speaks verbally, but only when the caster is alone.

Y'golonac: If the spell is successful, this deity possesses a friend or acquaintance of the caster and com-

municates through him. Y'golonac only speaks with worshipers. If the caster refuses to become the deity's priest, he is destroyed.

CONTACT HUMAN

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Wis damage
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 10 miles/level (no line of sight needed)
Target: One human
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Will negates

Only nonhuman creatures cast this spell (mi-go employ it, for example). Unlike other *contact* spells, this spell does not summon anything, but it does establish a telepathic link. The caster, or another caster well known to him, must have used a *hypnotism* spell on the subject previously for it to work. The human must make a Will saving throw each round or mentally answer the caster's questions. One question can be asked each round. The human loses 1 Sanity point each round the contact lasts.

CONTROL WEATHER

Components: V, S
Cost: 3 Str damage
Casting Time: 10 minutes (see text)
Range: 2 miles
Area: 2-mile-radius circle, centered on you (see text)
Duration: 4d12 hours (see text)
Saving Throw: None

You change the weather in the local area. It takes 10 minutes to cast the spell and an additional 10 minutes for the effects to manifest. The current, natural weather conditions are determined by the Gamemaster (see Weather, page 90). You can call forth weather appropriate to the climate and season of the area you are in.

You control the general tendencies of the weather, such as the direction and intensity of the wind. You cannot control specific applications of the weather—where lightning strikes, for example, or the exact path of a tornado. When you select a certain weather condition to occur, the weather assumes that condition 10 minutes later (changing gradually, not abruptly). The weather continues as you left it for the duration, or until you use an attack action to designate a new kind of weather (which fully manifests itself 10 minutes later). Contradictory conditions are not possible simultaneously—fog and strong wind, for example.

Season	Possible Weather
Spring	Tornado, thunderstorm, sleet storm, or hot weather
Summer	Torrential rain, heat wave, or hailstorm
Autumn	Hot or cold weather, fog, or sleet
Winter	Frigid cold, blizzard, or thaw
Late winter	Hurricane-force winds or early spring (coastal area)

Control weather can do away with atmospheric phenomena (naturally occurring or otherwise) as well as it creates them.

CREATE BAD-CORPSE DUST

Components: V, S, M
Cost: 3 Int damage
Casting Time: 3 hours
Range: 0 ft.
Area: A flat plane up to 100 ft. long.
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: None

This spell creates a barrier across which corporeal undead cannot cross. The barrier is created from the intestines of an animated corpse, an ounce of flesh from the caster (bitten off himself, dealing at least one-tenth of his hit points in damage), and rare dried flowers, all mashed into a powder. Most tomes specify a jungle liana as the rare flower required, but other variants exist in various books.

CREATE BARRIER OF NAACH-TITH

[Force]
Components: V, S
Cost: 6 Int damage and 1d10 Sanity points
Casting Time: 10 minutes (see text)
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Area: Sphere 10 ft. in diameter/level
Duration: 1d4+4 hours
Saving Throw: None

This spell creates a powerful barrier that provides physical and magical defense. Spells cannot be cast through the barrier (either in or out). A creature attempting to move through it must make a Strength check (DC 40) or must deal a total of 200 points of damage upon it (the barrier has a hardness of 10). If successful, the barrier is destroyed. Creatures bisected by the barrier when it is cast are pushed outside the sphere.

A written copy of this spell is known to be in a great haunted library on a planet orbiting the star Celaeno in the Pleiades.

CREATE GATE

Components: V, M
Cost: See text; Str drain (permanent)
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: 0 ft.
Effect: Circle up to 5 ft. in radius that transports those who activate it
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: None

You create a doorway that transports anyone activating it to another place. Most commonly, this takes the form of a circle or pattern on a floor or another horizontal surface. The gate teleports any willing creature who stands on it to a designated spot. Once you designate the destination for the gate, you can't change it. The spell fails if you attempt to set the circle to teleport creatures into a solid object, or if you choose a place you are not familiar with or have no clear description of.

Some tomes may include a specific version of this spell keyed to one particular place, such as a *create gate to Celaeno*; each one of these is a separate spell. This type of *create gate* spell can be cast if you have read a detailed description of the destination in the tome that includes it.

Str Drain or Damage	Distance
1	100 miles
2	1,000 miles
3	10,000 miles
4	100,000 miles
5	1,000,000 miles
6	10,000,000 miles
7	100,000,000 miles
8	1,000,000,000 miles
9	10,000,000,000 miles
10	100,000,000,000 miles
11	1,000,000,000,000 miles
12	0.5 light-years
13	5 light-years
14	50 light-years
15	500 light-years
16	5,000 light-years
17	50,000 light-years
18	500,000 light-years
19	5,000,000 light-years
20	50,000,000 light-years

Creating a gate requires permanent Strength point drain based on the distance it crosses (see table). Activating the gate costs 1 point of Sanity and temporary Strength damage in the amount equal to half (round up) of the permanent Strength drain it cost to create the gate. The gate alters those passing through it physically so that they might survive in whatever environment they encounter on the other side.

Material Components: Different versions of this spell specify different material components for the circle or diagram. One book might mention a simple chalk sketch; another may require a diagram painted in the blood of a particular animal. A gate to a particular place may require expensive materials or even a Craft check to create.

CREATE SCRYING WINDOW

Components: V, S, M
Cost: 6 Wis damage and 1d3 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 day
Range: 0 ft.
Effect: Piece of glass
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: None

You can see into the past by enchanting a piece of glass. You must specify the exact time to be viewed when creating the glass, relative to the present ("800 years ago," not "1125 B.C."). You must then affix 98 more pieces of colored glass around that piece in a mosaic. Creating the window requires a day of work, and completing this process requires an Intelligence check against DC 15. If you fail the check, the spell fails and you lose 1 Sanity point instead of the listed cost.

Once finished, the glass shows the past date, although it continues to move forward in time. (For instance, if a *scrying window* made in March of 1925 shows 50 years previous, it shows March of 1875 when created, but April of 1875 a month later, and so on). The caster can, at any time, take 6 more points of temporary Wis damage to move the viewed site by up to 100 miles/level. This requires 5 minutes per 100 miles. Looking through the glass costs the viewer 1d3 Sanity points for each session of viewing.

Any creature with Intelligence 12 or higher can notice that it is being watched though the *scrying window* by making an Intelligence check against DC 20.

You may cast the following spells through a *scrying window* (either way), although they have only a 5% chance per caster level of operating correctly: *detect magic* and *message*.

CREATE SELF-WARD

Components: V, S, M
Cost: 4 Con drain (permanent) and 3d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 3 days
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: None

After gathering a few of your personal effects in a bag and casting this ritual over them for three days, you gain resistance to blows, cuts, stabs, and slashes. You gain damage reduction 10/+1. (The spell ignores the first 10 points of damage each time it takes damage, although a weapon with a +1 enhancement bonus, or any magical attack, bypasses the reduction.)

While protected by this spell, you age much more slowly—at a rate of 1 year for every 3 years that pass. The spell ends if the bag is ever destroyed, and you instantly revert to your proper age (which might result in death if it is past your normal life span).

CREATE TIME GATE

Components: V, M
Cost: See text; Str drain (permanent)
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: 0 ft.
Effect: Circle up to 5 ft. in radius that transports those who activate it
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: None

You create a doorway that transports anyone activating it to another time, past or future. Most commonly this time gate takes the form of a circle or pattern on a floor (or other horizontal surface) that teleports any willing creature standing on it to a designated time. You must specify the exact time to be connected when creating the gate, relative to the present ("800 years from now," not "A.D. 2802"). Designations can be no more precise than a year (so the gate cannot travel back or forward in time less than one year). Once you designate the destination date for the gate, you can't change it, and it continues to move forward in time normally. (If a gate made in March of 1925 is connected to a time 100 years previous, it transports characters to March of 1825 when created, but a month later, it will transport them to April of 1825.) The spell fails if you attempt to set the circle to teleport creatures into a solid object, or if you designate a place you are not familiar with or have no clear description of.

The gate requires permanent Strength drain based on the period of time it circumvents (see table). Activating the gate costs 1 Sanity point and temporary Strength damage equal to half (round up) of the permanent Strength drain it cost to create the gate. The gate alters those passing through it physically so that they can survive in whatever environment they encounter on the other side.

Str Drain	Distance
1	100 years
2	1,000 years
3	10,000 years
4	100,000 years
5	1,000,000 years
6	10,000,000 years
7	100,000,000 years
8	1,000,000,000 years
9	10,000,000,000 years
10	100,000,000,000 years
11	1,000,000,000,000 years
12	10,000,000,000,000 years
13	100,000,000,000,000 years
14	1,000,000,000,000,000 years
15	10,000,000,000,000,000 years

Certain Mythos creatures may notice investigators traveling in time, and respond accordingly. Dimensional shamblers and the Hounds of Tindalos are two notable examples.

CURSE OF CHAUGNAR FAUGN

Components: V, S, M
Cost: See text
Casting Time: See text
Range: Touch
Target: Living creature touched
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fort negates

You must have a portion of flesh from the subject and touch the subject upon initial casting. From that point on, you must then chant for 12 hours each week to maintain the spell. Each week, the caster takes 3 temporary Int damage and loses 1d3 Sanity points. The subject begins to feel the effects of this spell the next time he sleeps, as he is plagued with nightmares from Chaugnar Faugn. These nightmares continue each night. Each night the subject takes 1d4 temporary Charisma damage and gains no natural healing for that day. When the subject reaches 0 Charisma, she enters a trance in which she offers herself to the deity to be devoured. The subject gets a new saving throw each day to resist the spell. If successful, the spell consumes the bit of flesh, alerting the caster that the victim is dead.

CURSE OF THE PUTRID HUSK

[Mind-Affecting]
Components: V, S, M
Cost: 3 Wis damage and 1d10 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One intelligent creature
Duration: 1 round
Saving Throw: Will negates

This illusion forces the subject to believe that his own flesh is rotting and falling off his body, and that his internal organs are spilling out. The subject loses 1d10 Sanity points for the experience. Those failing the Will saving throw faint after 1 round and remain unconscious for 1d10 minutes.

CURSE OF THE RAT-THING

Components: V, S, M
Cost: 3 Int damage and 1d10 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 minute
Range: Touch
Target: Corpse touched
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fort negates

This horrible spell transforms a corpse dead no longer than 24 hours, and the soul that once inhabited it, into a rat-thing. The rat-thing has the facial features of the subject. Being reborn as a rat-thing costs all remaining Sanity points. This is not a kind thing to do to a fallen friend.

CURSE OF THE STONE

[Mind-Affecting]
Components: V, S, M
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1d10 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One intelligent creature
Duration: Concentration
Saving Throw: Will negates

This spell causes the subject to be overwhelmed with hallucinations that blind him to reality. He can take no actions. The subject loses 1d4 Sanity points for the experience. A new saving throw is allowed each round to end the spell. Even afterward, when the spell's duration is over, the subject is plagued with nightmares that force the loss of 1 Sanity point each night. Furthermore, he is not allowed the benefit of natural healing during this time. These nightmares continue until the caster is dead or yet another saving throw is successful. The subject may attempt one Will saving throw to negate the spell each night.

Material Components: A specially inscribed stone that either the caster or the subject must be touching when the spell is cast.

DARK RESURRECTION

Components: V, S, M
Cost: 3 Int damage and 1d10 Sanity points
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One dead creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates

Performing an unholy rite, you call back a spirit of a dead creature, uniting it with the essential salts of the corpse and reforming the body as it appeared before death. Resurrection costs the subject 1d20 Sanity points. Resurrected characters are never quite what they were in life. Subtract one level (including all benefits gained from that level) from the subject, and decrease each ability score by a 1d4 permanent drain. In most tomes, this spell is found with *return to rest*.

Material Components: The entire corpse is needed to perform the ritual, reduced to its essential salts (a bluish-gray powder). At the end of this process, the caster must make a Knowledge (chemistry) check against DC 20. If this check is failed, the process is ruined and the spell cannot be cast; you still take 3 Int damage and lose 1d10 Sanity points.

DARKNESS

Components: V, M
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1d4 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: Object touched
Duration: 10 minutes/level (D)
Saving Throw: None

This spell causes an object to radiate darkness out to a 20-foot radius. Not even creatures that can normally see in the dark (such as creatures with darkvision) can see in an area shrouded by magical *darkness*. Normal lights (candles, lanterns, and so forth) do not work. If the spell is cast on a small object that is then placed inside or under a lightproof covering, the spell's effects are blocked until the covering is removed.

Material Components: A bit of bat fur, a drop of pitch, or a piece of coal.

DEATH BY FLAMES

[Fire]
Components: V, S, M
Cost: 4 Str damage and 3d10 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One creature
Duration: Concentration
Saving Throw: Fort negates

This spell causes the subject to explode into flames. After the caster concentrates for 1d3 rounds, the subject's skin begins to blister, and she takes 1d3 points of damage. The next round, she takes 1d6 points of damage. On the third and subsequent rounds, she bursts into flames and takes 1d10 points of damage per round. The stench of burning hair and flesh is overwhelming. No conventional means of extinguishing the flames is helpful, since she is burning from the inside out. The only way to stop the spell is to ruin the concentration of the caster (say, with a physical attack) before the subject dies.

DEFLECT HARM

[Force]
Components: V, S
Cost: 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Concentration
Saving Throw: None

By calling on the names of the Outer Gods and holding forth your hand, you deflect a number of successful incoming physical attacks equal to your level, although each attack you deflect causes you to take 2 points of temporary Intelligence damage. You can choose to take normal damage from an attack rather than the Int damage (thus, it doesn't count toward your maximum number of one attack per level), but you must make this decision before the damage is rolled. All attacks deflected must occur before your next action.

DETECT LIFE

Components: V, S
Cost: 1 Sanity point
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 60 ft.
Area: Quarter circle emanating from you to the extreme of the range
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute/level (D)
Saving Throw: None

You detect living creatures. The amount of information revealed depends on how long you study a particular area or subject:

1st Round: Presence or absence of living creatures.

2nd Round: Number of living creatures.

3rd Round: Description of one living creature in the area.

At the GM's discretion, understanding what a creature is and what it can do may require a Cthulhu Mythos, Knowledge (occult), or Knowledge (biology) check.

Each round, you can turn to detect life in a new area. The spell can penetrate barriers, but 3 feet of wood

or dirt, 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal, or a thin sheet of lead blocks it.

DETECT MAGIC

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Wis damage
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 60 ft.
Area: Quarter circle emanating from you to the extreme of the range
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute/level (D)
Saving Throw: None

You detect magical auras. The amount of information revealed depends on how long you study a particular area or subject:

1st Round: Presence or absence of magical auras.

2nd Round: Number of different magical auras and the strength of the strongest aura.

3rd Round: The strength and location of each aura.

Magical areas, multiple types of magic, or strong local magical emanations may confuse or conceal weaker auras. Each round, you can turn to detect things in a new area. The spell can penetrate barriers, but 3 feet of wood or dirt, 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal, or a thin sheet of lead blocks it. *Detect magic* does not detect the use or effects of psychic powers.

Caster Level	Aura Strength	Duration
1st–5th	Faint	1d6 minutes
6th–11th	Moderate	1d6×10 minutes
12th–20th	Strong	1d6 hours
21+ (Deity)	Overwhelming	1d6 days

Aura Strength and Duration: An aura's magical power, strength, and duration depend on the caster level of the character or creature that originally cast the spell. If an aura falls into more than one category, *detect magic* indicates the stronger of the two.

DISMISS DEITY

Components: V, S, F
Cost: 20 Int damage and 1d10 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1d% minutes
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: One summoned deity
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None

This spell banishes an avatar, Outer God, or Great Old One. A 50% chance, +1% per level of the caster(s), exists that the deity will heed the banishment. (If more than one caster is involved, add the total of all caster levels to 50%.)

Each deity requires the use of a specific *dismiss deity* spell. (For example, *dismiss Ithaqua* and *dismiss Hastur* are two different spells.) The specifics for each spell vary. Some are listed below.

Azathoth: This spell can only be cast outdoors at night.

Cthugha: The caster must be holding some sort of flame on a clear night outside, when Fomalhaut clears the horizon. (September to November are the best nights for Fomalhaut in North America.)

Hastur: The caster(s) must arrange nine large blocks of stone in a V-pattern, each with a volume of at least 9 cubic yards. The spell can be cast only on clear nights when Aldebaran is above the horizon (in North America, that is roughly October to March).

Ithaqua: The spell must be cast on an enormous mound of snow in the northern hemisphere (or on a snowy mountaintop anywhere) where the temperature is below freezing.

Nyogtha: The spell must be cast at the entrance to a cave that eventually connects to the cavern wherein Nyogtha actually dwells.

Nyarlathotep: Each of this deity's avatars has its own spell and conditions for dismissal.

Shug-Niggurath: The spell must be cast before a consecrated stone altar in the wilderness during the dark of the moon. The altar is consecrated by bathing it in blood (20 HD of creatures worth).

Yog-Sothoth: The spell must be cast in a stone tower at least 30 feet high in an open area under a cloudless sky.

DISMISSAL

Components: V, S, F
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One outsider creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates

This spell forces an outsider creature back to its plane of origin. Add the creature's HD to its saving throw and subtract your level as well. If the spell is successful, the creature is instantly whisked away, but there is a 20% chance of actually sending the subject to a plane other than its own.

Focus: Any item that is distasteful to the subject. One of the most common foci for this spell is a crux ansata (an type of ankh) made of an unalloyed metal.

DIVINATION

Components: V, S, M
Cost: 3 Wis damage and 1d8 Sanity points
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Instantaneous

Similar to *augury,* but more powerful, a *divination* spell can provide you with a useful piece of advice in reply to a question concerning a specific goal, event, or activity that is to occur within one week. The advice can be as simple as a short phrase, or it might take the form of a cryptic rhyme or omen.

For example, suppose the question is "Will we do well if we enter the ancient Mayan temple?" The GM knows that in the temple, a terrible magical spell guards some fabulous treasures and a map to a deep one city. Therefore the divination response might be: "An ancient curse guards golden wealth and briny knowledge." In all cases, the GM controls what information you receive. If you don't act on the information, the conditions may change so that the information is no longer useful.

The base chance for a correct divination is 70% + 1% per caster level. The GM adjusts the chance if unusual circumstances require it (if, for example, unusual precautions against divination spells have been taken). If the dice roll fails, you know the spell failed, unless specific magic yielding false information is at work.

As with *augury,* multiple *divinations* about the same topic by the same caster use the same dice result as the first *divination,* yielding the same answer each time.

Material Components: Incense and a sacrificial offering appropriate to the question offered (usually a blood sacrifice).

DOMINATE ANIMAL

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1 Sanity point
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./ level)
Target: One animal
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Will negates

You can enchant an animal and direct it with simple commands, such

as "attack," "run," and "fetch." Suicidal or self-destructive commands (including an order to attack a creature two or more size categories larger than the dominated animal) are simply ignored.

Dominate animal establishes a mental link between you and the subject animal. The animal can be directed by silent mental command as long as it remains in range. You need not see the animal to control it. You do not receive direct sensory input from the animal, but you know what it is experiencing. Because you are directing the animal with your own intelligence, it may be able to undertake actions normally beyond its own comprehension, such as manipulating objects with its paws and mouth. You do not need to concentrate exclusively on controlling the animal unless you are trying to direct it to do something it normally couldn't do.

DOMINATE PERSON

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: One humanoid of Medium-size or smaller
Duration: 1 day/level
Saving Throw: Will negates

You can control the actions of any humanoid that is Medium-size or smaller. You establish a telepathic link with the subject's mind. If a common language is shared, you can generally force the subject to perform as you desire, within the limits of his abilities. If no common language is shared, you can communicate only basic commands, such as "come here," "go there," "fight," and "stand still." You know what the subject is experiencing, but you do not receive direct sensory input from it.

Subjects resist this control. A subject forced to take additional actions against his nature receives an additional Will save for each one. Each of these Will saves has a bonus of +1 to +4, depending on the type of action required. Obviously, self-destructive orders are not carried out. Once control is established, the range at which it can be exercised is unlimited, as long as you and the subject are on the same plane. (Outsider creatures come from other planes of existence, and are usually capable of returning to them.) You do not need to see the subject to control it.

DREAD CURSE OF AZATHOTH

Components: V
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fort negates

Uttering the secret name of Azathoth, including the dreaded Last Syllable, can gain the respect (and fear) of anyone conversant in the Mythos. Directed against a target, the utterance of the Last Syllable permanently drains 1d3 points of Charisma from the subject.

EIBON'S WHEEL OF MIST

Components: V, S, F
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1 Sanity point
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Area: 10-foot-high, 5-foot-diameter cylinder centered around you
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: None

By laying down a specially inscribed, small bronze disk at your feet, you create a cylinder of swirling mist around you. Everyone and everything within the mist is completely invisible and undetectable (by any means) to creatures summoned by or in the name of Nyarlathotep (but not the deity himself). Such creatures are unaware of the mist. If it is directly in their path, they will move around it or turn back without knowing why.

Other creatures cannot see through the mist, but they can see it and move through it normally. Creatures within the area of effect at the time of the casting can see through the mist. If someone leaves the mist or attacks out of the mist, or if any portion of a character or creature sticks out of the mist in the presence of a creature that the spell works against, the spell ends.

ELDER SIGN

Components: V, S, F
Cost: 1 Con drain (permanent)
Casting Time: 1 full round
Range: Touch
Area: Any opening, doorway, or magical gate
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: None

You create a special drawn symbol that forbids any Great Old One or Outer God, or their servants, to pass through a specific opening or use a magical gate. The symbol can be drawn as a part of the spell—using chalk, scratches on wood or metal, or lines in dust—but since such attempts are very easy to destroy (even accidentally), the sign is usually made ahead of time as a leaden seal, etched in rock or forged in steel, and then affixed to some permanent edifice. This spell can activate any *elder sign* whether it was created by the caster or not. An *elder sign*, while a potent symbol, cannot be used for personal protection or as a means to ward off a creature when carried around, such as a cross in a vampire movie.

ENCHANT ITEM

Components: V, S, M
Cost: See text
Casting Time: See text
Range: Touch
Effect: Any single item
Duration: Permanent

You invest magical power into an inanimate object and create a magic item that performs some special function or becomes a critical part of some other spell. Different types of enchanted items require different spells; for example, *enchant sacrificial knife* and *brew space mead* are two different spells. A few enchant item spells are listed below.

Bless Blade. This spell enchants a knife so that it has a +1 enhancement bonus on attack and damage rolls. It takes an hour to intone the chants this spell requires. At the end of this process, the caster loses 1d4 Sanity points and loses 3 temporary Strength. The effects of *bless blade* last for one day.

Enchant Pipes. An hour-long ritual of incantation must be performed over a musical instrument. This costs 1d6 Sanity points and a permanent drain of 1 Charisma point. Some deities and creatures can only be summoned with an item enchanted by with this spell, and some require a particular musical instrument. For instance, one of the most dangerous uses for this spell is as a prelude to casting *call Azathoth,* a deity who can only be summoned with pipes or flutes.

Dedicate Sacrificial Knife. If a flame-shaped dagger has this hour-long ritual cast over it, and then is used to kill a living being of at least 8th level, the knife becomes an enchanted artifact. When the caster then uses the knife to sacrifice a creature in the name of Nyarlathotep, 1/4 of the victim's ability score points, as a total, are stored within the knife, usable by the caster (and only the caster) to draw upon when casting

spells; he uses the ability score points in the knife rather than his own. The spell requires 1d6 Sanity points and a permanent drain of 6 Wisdom.

Create Powder of Ibn-Gazi. This spell requires one day's work with various chemical compounds and makes one dose of this magical dust. The completion of the process requires a Knowledge (chemistry) check against DC 15; if the check fails, the spell fails. Casting the spell successfully costs 2 temporary Constitution.

Create Glass From Leng. Assuming that the caster can obtain the materials (a piece of glass from time-lost Leng), over the course of a month, she can create a viewing glass while sacrificing 4 points of Strength (permanently drained) and losing 2d8 Sanity points. The completion of the process requires an Intelligence check against DC 15; if the check fails, the spell fails.

Create Baneful Dust of Hermes Trismegistus. One day's work with various chemical compounds allows the caster to make 16 doses of this magical dust. The spell deals 5 points of temporary damage to the creator's Constitution. The completion of the process requires a Knowledge (chemistry) check against DC 15; if the check fails, the spell fails.

Enchant Bullet. This spell enchants ammunition so that it has a +1 enhancement bonus on attack and damage rolls. It takes one day to intone the chants this spell requires. Casting the spell deals 3 points of temporary damage to the creator's Strength. The caster can enchant a number of bullets each day equal to his level. This spell can be used on other projectiles, although it does not work on buckshot or birdshot. When an enchanted projectile is used, its enhancement is lost.

Brew Space Mead. Brewing this liquid requires mixing many secret ingredients over the course of a week. During that week, the creator takes 20 points of temporary damage to Constitution, but can choose when the damage takes place during that week (and can spread it out over that time). This spell makes one dose. Multiple doses can be brewed at once, but the Con damage must be paid for each dose.

Create Plutonian Drug Pellets. These pellets are made over the course of one week. During that week, the creator takes 14 points of temporary damage to Constitution, but can choose when the damage takes place during that week (and can spread it out over that time). This makes one pellet. Multiple pellets can be made at once, but the Con damage must be paid for each pellet.

Enchant Fetch Stick. The fetch stick is a bamboo staff with a sharpened iron point on one end (1d6 bludgeoning damage, ×2 on a crit, 4 lb.). Over the course of a year, the owner devotes 2 Constitution (permanent drain) and two human sacrifices to enchant it as a magic weapon. The skull of the second sacrifice is attached to the stick, and the creator loses 1d20 Sanity points. The resulting weapon has a +3 enhancement bonus on attack and damage rolls; only the caster who enchanted it receives this bonus. Animated corpses struck by the weapon are instantly destroyed (no save).

EVIL EYE

Components: S
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1d4 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One creature
Duration: Permanent (D)
Saving Throw: Will negates

You focus magical energy through your gaze and curse someone with bad luck. You must have line of sight to your target when casting this spell. The subject suffers a –4 luck penalty to all attack rolls, checks, and saves. The spell ends at the next sunrise, until dismissed, or until the caster takes at least 1 point of damage from the subject.

EYE OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS

Components: V, S, M, F
Cost: 20 Con drain (permanent)
Casting Time: 4 hours
Range: Touch
Area: 1-mile radius per level (see below)
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: None

You create a powerful symbol that weakens many Mythos creatures. A great sigil in the shape of an eye must be worked into a very hard substance, such as granite or iron, and then placed at least 10 feet off the ground. The spell itself must be cast in the afternoon, 4 hours before moonrise. The blood of an innocent (someone with no ranks of Cthulhu Mythos) is then used to fill the pupil of the eye. During the casting, the caster(s) chant until the moon rises, when the symbol begins to glow. Assuming there are multiple casters, start with the leader and roll 1d4 to determine the amount of Con drained for each participant (in random order) until 20 points have been drained or all the casters are dead. At moonrise, the symbol disappears. It cannot be physically or magically harmed or dispelled except by the action of a deity. It is always dimly visible to the caster(s).

The agents, monsters, and minions of the Outer Gods or Great Old Ones within the area are permanently drained 1 point of Wisdom per hour. Those drained to 0 Wisdom by this spell are dismissed. Contact, call, and summon/bind spells cannot be cast in the area.

The energy of this spell fills the area, but does not penetrate more than 20 feet of rock or other dense material as spread from the engraved eye itself. Thus, deep underground caverns are not subject to its power if it is placed on the surface.

EYES OF THE ZOMBIE

Components: V, S, M
Cost: 2 Int damage and 3d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 30 minutes
Range: Personal
Effect: You and one animated corpse
Duration: 1 day/level (D)
Saving Throw: None

You replace your eyes with the eyes of an animated corpse, allowing you to see through that zombie's eye sockets and control its actions. You must either create the zombie yourself (such as with *black binding*) or put it under your control by some other means. You then brew a special chemical bath as part of the spell; the process takes 30 minutes and requires a Knowledge (chemistry) check against DC 15. If you fail the check, the spell fails and you lose 1 Sanity point instead of the listed cost. If you succeed, the spell enables you to harmlessly remove your eyes and switch them with a zombie's eyes you have removed and soaked in the chemical bath. Your eyes are preserved by the spell while you control and perceive the world through the zombie. Your own body remains motionless.

FIND GATE

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1d3 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: None

You gain the ability to find magical gates (as with the *create gate* spell) by sight, no matter how magically obscured. However, normal obscurement works fine; for example, this spell does not allow you to see a gate on the other side of a wall.

FIST OF YOG-SOTHOTH

[Force]
Components: S
Cost: 2 Str damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./ level)
Target: One creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Ref half

You can pummel a foe with a magical blow. The force strikes like a big fist, dealing 1d6 points of damage per caster level or 1d8 points of subdual damage per caster level. (Your choice upon casting the spell, maximum 10d6 or 10d8 points of damage.) The target is also subjected to a bum's rush attack as if the fist had a Strength equal to the Intelligence of the caster and was Large.

FLESH WARD

Components: V, S, M
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1d4 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 10 minutes/level or until discharged (whichever comes first)
Saving Throw: None

Your flesh gains resistance to blows, cuts, stabs, and slashes. You gain the equivalent of damage reduction 10/+1; that is, the spell prevents the first 10 points of damage each time it takes damage, though a weapon with a +1 enhancement bonus or any magical attack bypasses the reduction. Once the spell has prevented a total of 5 points of damage per caster level (minimum 10 points; maximum 50 points), it is discharged.

Material Components: A bit of flesh torn from your body during the casting (dealing 1 point of damage).

FROZEN TRACKS

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1d3 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./ level)
Target: One Medium-size or smaller humanoid
Duration: 1 round/level (D)
Saving Throw: Will negates

The subject freezes in place, standing still as if his feet are rooted to the ground. He is able to otherwise move his arms and upper body normally, crouch, and so on, but he cannot go prone. The victim cannot move from his spot, and he can't be moved by others (thus, a bum's rush won't work against him). Activities such as casting a spell or firing a gun are not hindered in any way.

A flying creature in the air or a swimming creature in water can't be affected by this spell—only those currently touching the ground.

GRASP OF CTHULHU

[Force]
Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Str damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./ level)
Target: One Small, Medium-size or Large creature
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Ref negates

Calling upon the name of Great Cthulhu, you summon forth magical energies that wrap around a subject, holding him motionless. Each round that the subject is grasped, he takes 2d6 points of subdual damage. The *grasp of Cthulhu* can do no more than render targets unconscious. It cannot kill.

HANDS OF COLUBRA

Components: V, S
Cost: 4 Int damage and 1d10 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: None (see text)

Your arms turn into poisonous snakes with 10 feet of reach. They each bite using your attack bonus and deal 1d6 points of damage. Each victim bitten must make a Fort save (DC 15 + your Intelligence modifier) or take 1d6 points of temporary Strength damage; each one must make another save 1 minute later or take 1d6 more points of Strength damage. Sanity loss for viewing someone using this spell is 0/1d6.

HEALING TOUCH

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1 Sanity point
Casting Time: 1 full round
Range: Touch
Target: One creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (harmless)

The target of this touch spell regains 1d8 hit points +1 point for every level you have. This spell also heals 1 point of ability score damage. However, you cannot use this effect to regain 1 of the 2 points of Wisdom you expended casting the spell. Corporeal undead, such as animated corpses, take 1d8 points of damage +1 point for every level you have if you use this spell against them.

HIDE FROM THE EYE

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 minute/level (D)
Saving Throw: None

You and whatever you are wearing or carrying vanishes from sight. You become invisible.

Items dropped or put down by an invisible creature become visible; items picked up disappear if tucked into the clothing or pouches worn by the creature. Light never becomes invisible, although a source of light can disappear (thus, the effect is that of a light with no visible source). Any part of an item that the subject carries that extends more than 10 feet from it becomes visible, such as a trailing rope.

You are not automatically silent while invisible. In some cases, an investigator using *hide from the eye* may need to make a Move Silently check to remain undetected. Certain other conditions can render the recipient detectable, such as stepping in a puddle. The spell ends if the subject speaks, causes a loud sound (such as firing a gun or knocking over a garbage can), directly touches another living creature, or is touched by a living creature. Throwing a small rock at a creature does not end the spell, but touching a creature with a baseball bat would.

See Table 5–4: Attack Roll Modifiers (page 72) for the effects of invisibility on combat.

HYPNOTISM

[Mind-Affecting]
Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1d4 Sanity points

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Area: Several living creatures, no two of which may be more than 30 ft. apart
Duration: 2d4 rounds (D)
Saving Throw: Will negates

Your gestures and droning incantation cause creatures nearby to stop and stare blankly at you, as though hypnotized. You can use their rapt attention to make your suggestions and requests seem more plausible. Roll 2d4 to see how many total HD you affect. Creatures with fewer HD are affected before creatures with more HD. Only creatures that can see or hear you are affected, but they do not need to understand you to be hypnotized.

If you use this spell in combat, your targets gain a +2 bonus on their Will saving throws to negate it. If the spell affects only a single creature not in combat at the time, the saving throw has a –2 penalty. While hypnotized, a creature's Spot and Listen checks suffer a –4 penalty. Any potential threat (such as an armed person moving behind the hypnotized creature) allows the creature a second saving throw. Any obvious threat, such as casting a spell, readying a knife, or aiming a gun, automatically breaks the *hypnotism*, as does shaking or slapping the creature. A hypnotized creature's ally may shake it free of the spell as an attack action.

While the subject is hypnotized, you can make a suggestion or request (provided you can communicate with the subject). The suggestion must be brief and reasonable. The creature reacts as though it were "less hostile" by two categories on the Attitude Adjustment table (see page 226). Even once the spell ends, it retains this new attitude toward you, but only with respect to that particular suggestion.

A creature that fails its saving throw does not remember that you hypnotized it.

IDENTIFY SPIRIT

Components: V, S, M
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1d3 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 day
Range: Touch
Effect: One handful of dust
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: None

During one full day spent meditating in a dark cave, you can attempt to enchant a handful of dust made from ground glass. At the end of this time, you must attempt an Intelligence check against DC 15; if you fail the check, the spell fails. When the glass is sprinkled over a living being (requiring a ranged touch attack if the being is mobile and unwilling), any possessing spirit or entity is made visible as a translucent figure superimposed over the being it possesses.

IMPRISON MIND

Components: V, S
Cost: 3 Int damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Area: One possessing creature (and one possessed creature)
Duration: Permanent or 1 minute/level (D)
Saving Throw: Will negates

You trap one creature that can possess or inhabit other creatures, or one that can move its mind out of its body, within the subject it currently inhabits. It cannot leave the body it is currently in by any means other than another spell (such as *cast out devil* or *cast out shan*).

If you use this spell against a creature such as a ghost or a shan, the possessing creature is trapped permanently. If successfully used against a divine creature, such as a Great Old One, an Outer God, or similar divine being, the duration is 1 minute/level.

INSECT PLAGUE

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Str damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 full round
Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)
Effect: Cloud of insects 180 ft. in diameter
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: See text

A horde of creeping, hopping, flying insects swarm in a thick cloud when you cast this spell. The insects limit vision to 10 feet, and casting spells within the cloud becomes impossible. Creatures inside the plague's area of effect, regardless of Armor Class, take 1 point of damage at the end of each round they remain within the area of effect, due to the bites and stings of the insects. Invisibility (such as from *hide from the eye*) offers no protection. All creatures with 2 or fewer HD are driven from the cloud at their fastest possible speed in a random direction and flee until they are at least 100 feet away from the insects. Creatures with 3 to 5 HD flee as well, though a Will save negates this effect. (When a character attempts this Will save, the urge to flee is considered an extraordinary fear effect.)

Heavy smoke drives off insects within its bounds. A large fire also drives insects away, although a single torch is ineffective against this vast horde of insects. A strong wind (21+ mph) that covers the entire plague area disperses the insects and ends the spell.

INVISIBILITY PURGE

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Wis damage
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 minute/level (D)
Saving Throw: None

You surround yourself with a sphere of power that has a radius of 5 feet per caster level. The spell negates all forms of invisibility within the sphere. Anything invisible becomes visible while in the area.

LEVITATE

Components: V, S, F
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1d3 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal or close (25 ft.+ 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: You or one willing creature or one object (total weight up to 100 lb./level)
Duration: 10 minutes/level (D)
Saving Throw: None

Levitate allows you to move yourself, another creature, or an object up and down as you wish. A levitated creature must be willing to be levitated. A levitated object must either be unattended or possessed by a willing creature. You can mentally direct the recipient to move up or down as much as 20 feet each round; doing so is a move action. You cannot move the recipient horizontally, but the recipient could clamber along the face of a cliff, for example, or push against a ceiling to move laterally (generally at half its speed).

A levitating creature who attacks with a melee or ranged weapon finds itself increasingly unstable; the first attack has a penalty of –1, the second –2, and so on, up to a maximum penalty of –5. A full round spent stabilizing allows the creature to begin again at –1.

Focus: Either a small leather loop or a piece of golden wire bent into a cup shape with a long shank on one end.

LOCATE CREATURE

Components: V, S, M
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 2d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)
Area: Circle, centered on you, with a radius of 400 ft. + 40 ft./level
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: None

As *locate object,* except this spell locates a known or familiar creature.

You slowly turn and sense when you are facing in the direction of the creature to be located, provided the creature is within range. If the creature is moving, you know which direction it is moving.

The spell can locate a creature of a specific type (such as a human or migo) or a specific creature known to you. It cannot find a creature of a general type (such as humanoid or animal). You must have seen such a creature up close (within 30 feet) at least once.

Running water blocks the spell. *Locate creature* cannot detect objects.

LOCATE OBJECT

Components: V, S, F
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)
Area: Circle, centered on you, with a radius of 400 ft. + 40 ft./level
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: None

You sense the direction of a well-known or clearly visualized object. The spell locates such objects as apparel, jewelry, furniture, tools, or weapons. You can search for general items, such as a stairway, a pistol, or a jewel, in which case you locate the nearest one of its type if more than one is within range. Attempting to find a specific item, such as a particular piece of jewelry, requires a specific and accurate mental image. If the image is not close enough to the actual object, the spell fails. You cannot specify a unique object (such as the Xenig of Aphorat) unless you have observed that particular item first-hand (not through magic).

The spell is blocked by lead. *Locate object* cannot detect creatures.

Focus: A forked twig.

LOOK TO THE FUTURE

Components: V, S, F
Cost: 1 Str drain/year traveled (permanent) and 2d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: Close (25 ft.+ 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One willing creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None

After an hour of chanting, you hurl one willing participant into the future. The destination is determined by the caster, but the margin of error is +/– 1d10 years. If this results in a trip to the past, the subject winks out of existence until he catches up with the present (but appears to have gone nowhere to non-time-traveling viewers and is not aware of what happened). The trip is a one-way affair.

If this spell results in a time paradox, the subject must make a Will saving throw (DC 25—higher if the paradox is great, up to the discretion of the GM) or be driven completely mad (Sanity down to –10) or utterly destroyed (GM's discretion).

Nyarlathotep has been known to occasionally impart this spell to his worshipers.

MAGIC JAR

Components: V, S, F
Cost: 4 Int damage and 2d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft.+10 ft./level)
Target: One creature
Duration: 1 hour/level or until you return to your body
Saving Throw: Will negates (see text)

By casting *magic jar,* you place your own soul in a gem or large crystal (also known as a *magic jar*), leaving your body lifeless. You can then attempt to take control of a nearby body, forcing its soul into the *magic jar.* You may move back to the jar (returning the trapped soul to its body) and attempt to possess another body. The spell ends when you send your soul back to your own body (leaving the receptacle empty).

To cast the spell, the *magic jar* must be within spell range, and you must know where it is, though you do not need line of sight or line of effect to it. When you transfer your soul upon casting, your body, as near as anyone can tell, is dead.

While in the *magic jar*, you can sense and attack any life force within 10 feet per caster level. You do need line of effect from the jar to the creatures. However, you cannot determine the exact creature types or positions of these creatures. In a group of life forces, you can sense a difference of 4 or more HD and can determine whether a life force is positive or negative energy. (Undead creatures are powered by negative energy. Only sentient undead creatures have souls.)

For example, if two 10th-level characters are fighting a dog (2 HD) and four 1st-level guards, you could determine that there are two stronger and five weaker life forces within range, all with positive life energy. You could choose to take over either a stronger or a weaker creature, but which stronger or weaker creature you attempt to possess is determined randomly.

Attempting to possess a body is a full-round action. You possess the body and force the creature's soul into the *magic jar* unless the subject succeeds at a Will save. Failure to take over the host leaves your life force in the *magic jar*, and the target automatically succeeds at any further saving throws to negate the spell if you attempt to possess its body again.

If successful, your life force occupies the host body, and the host's life force is imprisoned in the *magic jar.* You keep your Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, level, base attack bonus, base save bonuses, and mental abilities. The body retains its Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, hit points, automatic abilities, and natural abilities (for instance, a fish's body breathes water). A body with extra limbs does not allow you to make more attacks (or more advantageous two-weapon attacks) than normal. You can't choose to activate the body's extraordinary or supernatural abilities. The creature's spells and spell-like abilities do not stay with the body.

As an attack action, you can shift freely from a host to the *magic jar* if within range, sending the trapped soul back to its body. The spell ends when you shift from the jar to your own body.

If the host body is slain, you return to the *magic jar*, if within range, and the life force of the host departs (that is, it is dead). If the host body is slain beyond the range of the spell, both you and the host die. Any life force with nowhere to go is treated as slain.

If the spell ends while you are in the *magic jar*, you return to your body (or die if your body is out of range or destroyed). If the spell ends while you are in a host, you return to your body (or die, if it is out of range of your current position), and the soul in the *magic jar* returns to its body (or dies if it is out of range). Destroying the receptacle ends the spell, and the spell can be dispelled at either the *magic jar* or the host.

Incorporeal creatures with the *magic jar* ability can use a handy, nearby object (not just a gem or crystal) as the magic jar.

Focus: A gem or crystal.

MAGIC WEAPON

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Str damage and 1d4 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: Weapon touched
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless, object)

Magic weapon gives a weapon a +1 enhancement bonus on attack and damage rolls. You can't cast this spell on a natural weapon (such as a dog's teeth) or an unarmed strike. If *magic weapon* is cast on a gun (or other ranged weapon), the +1 enhancement bonus applies to all attacks made with it for the duration of the spell.

Unlike most enhancement bonuses, the enhancement bonuses of ranged weapons and ammunition stack for attack and damage purposes. For instance, a gun with *magic weapon* (+1 enhancement bonus) firing an *enchanted bullet* (+1 enhancement bonus) contributes a +2 attack bonus on the ranged attack roll and a +2 bonus on damage dealt by the attack.

MESSAGE

Components: V, S, F
Cost: 1 Sanity point
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: One creature/level
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: None

You can whisper messages and receive whispered replies without being overheard. You point your finger at each creature to be included in the spell effect. The *message* becomes audible to all the targeted beings that are within range, but creatures that are not targeted cannot hear it. One foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal (or a thin sheet of lead), or 3 feet of wood or dirt blocks the spell. The message, however, does not have to travel in a straight line. It can circumvent a barrier if there is an open path between you and the subject, and the path's entire length lies within the spell's range. The creatures that receive the message can whisper a reply that only you hear. The spell transmits sound, not meaning. It doesn't transcend language barriers.

Focus: A short length of copper wire.

MINDBLAST

[Mind-Affecting]
Components: S
Cost: 4 Str damage and 1d3 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Area: One living creature
Duration: 1 hour
Saving Throw: Will negates

You focus your own mental energies to overwhelm the mind of someone else. The subject loses 1d10 Sanity points and automatically becomes temporarily insane (see page 48) for 1 hour.

MIND TRANSFER

[Mind-Affecting]
Components: V, S
Cost: 4 Str damage and 1d10 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Area: One living creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates

You switch your mind with someone else's, inhabiting the target's body and forcing its mind into yours. Each mind keeps its Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, level, base attack bonus, base save bonuses, and mental abilities. Each body retains its Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, hit points, natural abilities, and extraordinary abilities.

If the exchange fails (because the subject makes a successful save), you immediately take 4 points of temporary Strength damage and lose 1d10 Sanity points again.

MIRROR OF TARKHUN ATEP

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1 Sanity point
Casting Time: See text
Range: Unlimited (no line of sight needed)
Target: One living creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None

You can send your image into the next mirror or mirrored surface your chosen target will see. After casting the spell, you must then stare into a mirror until the target sees his own reflection (or until you tire and give up). You can see the subject and his surroundings in your mirror when he looks at his reflection. You then either appear to be staring out at the target, replacing his own reflection, or you appear to be standing right behind him in the image (your choice). You can have your image say up to one word per caster level before it disappears, if you choose. Otherwise, the contact remains for only 1 round. The subject loses 1d3 Sanity points.

NIGHTMARE

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1 Sanity point
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Unlimited (no line of sight needed)
Target: One living creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates

You send a hideous and unsettling phantasmal vision to a specific creature you name or otherwise designate. The nightmare prevents restful sleep, leaving the subject tired and unable to regain hit points or lost ability score points. The subject also loses 1d3 Sanity points for experiencing the vision.

If the recipient is awake when the spell begins, you can choose to cease casting (ending the spell) or enter a trance until the recipient goes to sleep, whereupon you become alert again and complete the casting. If you are disturbed during the trance, the spell ends.

If you choose to enter a trance, you are not aware of your surroundings or the activities around you while in the trance. You are defenseless, both physically and mentally. (For example, you always fail any saving throw.)

Creatures that don't sleep or dream are immune to this spell.

OBSCURING MIST

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1d4 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 30 ft.
Effect: Cloud centered on you spreads 30 ft. and is 20 ft. high
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: None

A misty vapor arises around you. It is stationary once created. The vapor obscures all sight, including a creature's darkvision, beyond 5 feet. A creature 5 feet away has one-half concealment (attacks have a 20% miss chance). Creatures farther away have total concealment (50% miss chance, and the attacker cannot use sight to locate the target).

A moderate wind (11+ mph) disperses the fog in 4 rounds. A strong wind (21+ mph) disperses the fog in 1 round.

This spell does not function underwater.

PIPES OF MADNESS

[Mind-Affecting]
Components: V, S, F
Cost: 4 Wis damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Area: 100-ft. radius centered on you
Duration: 1 round (see text)
Saving Throw: Will negates

Using *enchanted pipes* (created with a version of *enchant item*), you create a weird melody that forces all living creatures that can hear within the area to make Sanity checks. Failure means that the subject loses 5 Sanity points and immediately goes temporarily insane. A successful check means that the subject loses 1d3 Sanity points and does not go insane.

Once you begin playing, you can continue to play on subsequent rounds at a cost of 1 point of temporary Strength damage per round. Each new round, all listeners must make saving throws again. If you stop playing, even for 1 round, the spell ends and a full recasting of the spell is needed to start again.

POSE MUNDANE

[Mind-Affecting]
Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1 Sanity point
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Touch
Target: One creature or object
Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: Will negates (see text)

You create an illusion over the subject, rendering it completely ordinary and mundane in the eyes of all viewers. A deep one could appear to be a nondescript-looking human, or a mi-go mist projector could be made to look like a vacuum cleaner. (The caster does not choose the disguise; each viewer sees the subject as whatever they would regard as normal.) Only those people who actually interact with the subject, pass by it frequently, or make a Search check in the area near the subject are allowed a saving throw. Those who make the saving throw see the true subject.

POWER DRAIN

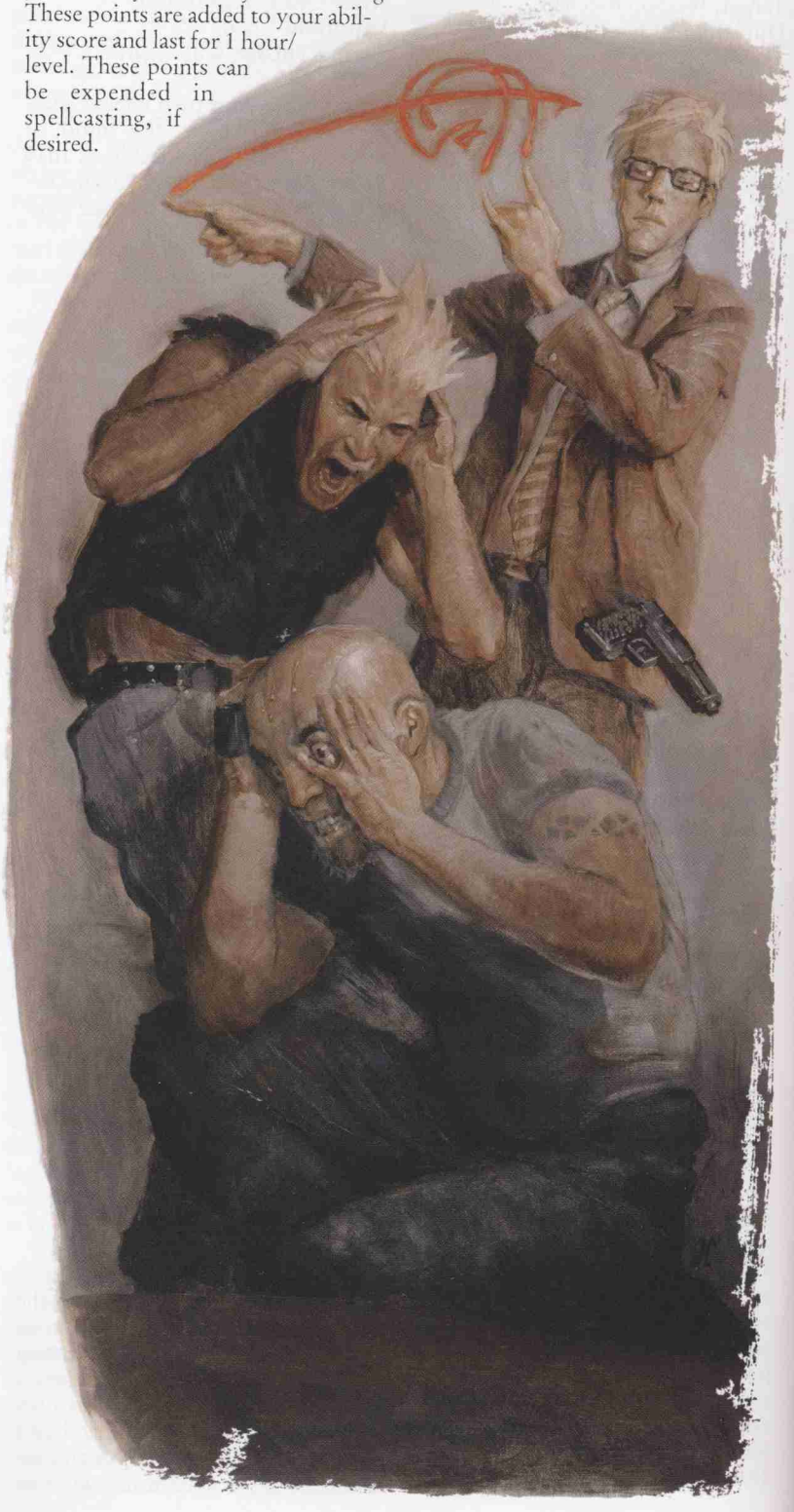
Components: V, S
Cost: 4 Str damage and 2d8 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Area: 1 living creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates

Your touch permanently drains 1d6 ability score points from the subject's ability score of your choosing. These points are added to your ability score and last for 1 hour/level. These points can be expended in spellcasting, if desired.

POWER OF NYAMBE

Components: V, S, M
Cost: 1 Con drain (permanent)
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None

You create a special reserve of power within you, represented by 2d6 temporary ability score points



only usable for spellcasting. These points can be sacrificed in lieu of the normal ability score points damaged when casting a spell. For example, if you have a reserve of 7 points, and you cast *wave of oblivion,* rather than taking 3 points of temporary Strength damage, you can subtract them from your reserve instead. The *power of Nyambe* does not help against Sanity loss, nor does it help for spells that drain ability score points permanently. The reserve can only be applied to spellcasting. These points cannot be applied to your ability scores, nor can they help against other things that damage scores, such as poisons.

Material Components: Rare jungle herbs.

RAISE NIGHT FOG

Components: V, S
Cost 3 Int damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft. level)
Effect: Fog that spreads in a 60-ft. radius, 20 ft. high
Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: None

This spell can only be cast at night. A bank of fog billows out from the point you designate. The fog obscures all sight, including a creature's darkvision, beyond 5 feet. A creature within 5 feet has one-half concealment (attacks suffer a 20% miss chance). Creatures farther away have total concealment (50% miss chance, and the attacker can't use sight to locate the target).

A moderate wind (11+ mph) disperses the fog in 4 rounds; a strong wind (21+ mph) disperses the fog in 1 round.

RED SIGN OF SHUDDE M'ELL

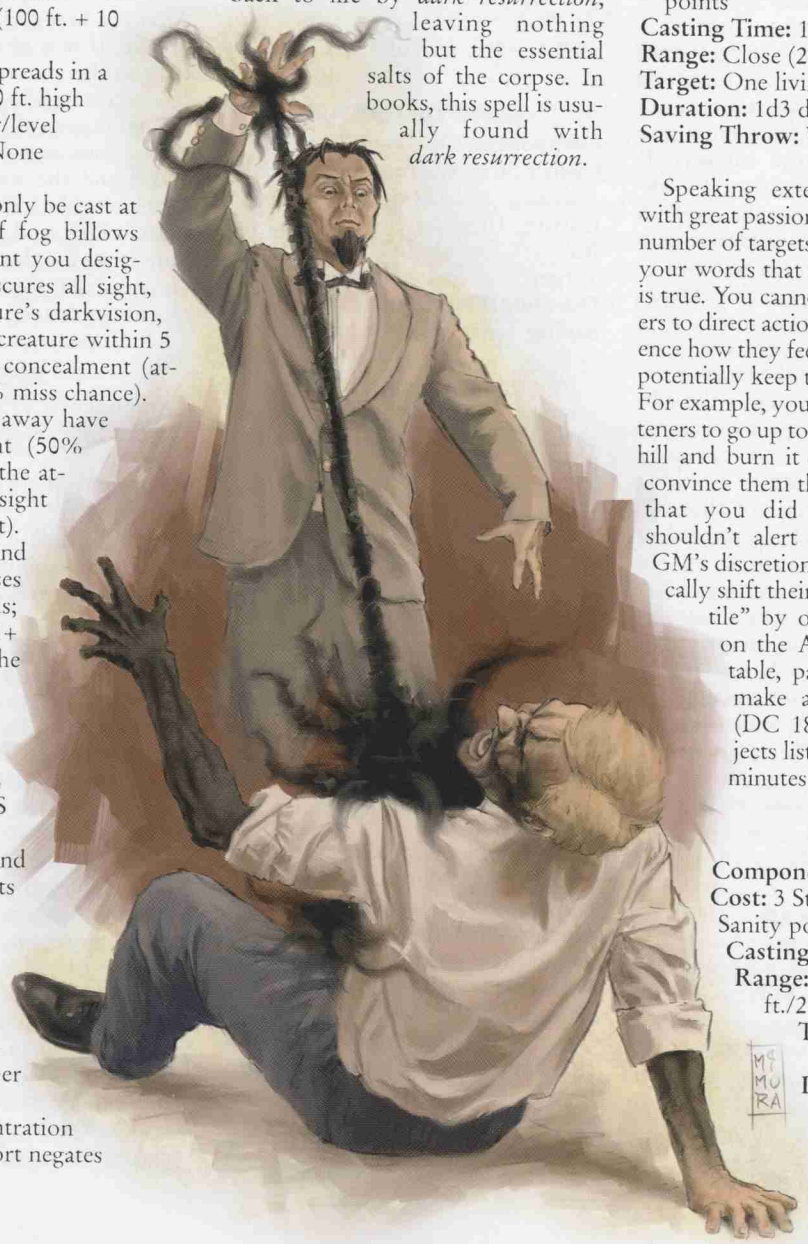
Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Str damage/target and 1d8 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: Up to one living creature per level
Duration: Concentration
Saving Throw: Fort negates

You draw a glowing red symbol in the air. Each target you designate takes 1d6 points of damage each round, +1 point of damage for each caster level you have. You must have a line of effect to each target. You also take 1 point of damage each round due to the sign's power. The spell ends when you stop concentrating or when you move from the spot where you drew the sign.

RETURN TO REST

Components: V, S
Cost: 3 Int damage and 1d10 Sanity points
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One creature resurrected by *dark resurrection*
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fort negates

Undoing an unholy rite, you send back a spirit of a creature brought back to life by *dark resurrection*, leaving nothing but the essential salts of the corpse. In books, this spell is usually found with *dark resurrection.*



SEAL OF ISIS

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1 Sanity point
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Area: 25-foot radius
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None

You create a special protection for all inanimate objects within the area against magical attacks. To affect an object in the area with a spell, a caster must make a level check (1d20 + character level) with a DC of 25. Failure means the object is untouched. Success means the spell is resolved normally. Each object requires a separate check.

SEKHMENKENHEP'S WORDS

[Mind-Affecting]
Components: S
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One living creature/level
Duration: 1d3 days
Saving Throw: Will negates

Speaking extemporaneously and with great passion, you can convince a number of targets that can understand your words that what you are saying is true. You cannot compel the listeners to direct action, but you can influence how they feel about an action, or potentially keep them from an action. For example, you cannot force the listeners to go up to the old house on the hill and burn it down, but you can convince them that it was acceptable that you did it and that they shouldn't alert the police. (At the GM's discretion, this may automatically shift their reactions "less hostile" by one or two columns on the Attitude Adjustment table, page 226.) You must make a Diplomacy check (DC 18) to keep the subjects listening for the full 10 minutes of casting time.

SHRIVELING

Components: V, S
Cost: 3 Str damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One living creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Ref half

You channel dark energy into a target that blasts and blackens its flesh. The subject takes 1d4 points of damage per caster level (maximum 10d4).

SIREN'S SONG

[Mind-Affecting]
Components: V
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1d8 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One or more creatures, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart
Duration: 1 day/level
Saving Throw: Will negates

This magical song makes a number of creatures whose combined HD do not exceed twice your level (or at least one creature regardless of HD) regard you as his trusted friend and ally. If the creatures are currently being threatened or attacked by you or your allies, they receive a +5 bonus on their saving throws. If there are more potential targets than you can affect, you choose them one at a time until you choose a creature with too many HD. You must sing to initially charm the subjects. If they cannot hear you, they are immune to the spell. After the spell has been cast, you do not need to sing to communicate further suggestions.

The spell does not enable you to control these subjects as if they were automatons, but they perceive your words and actions in the most favorable way. You can try to give the subjects orders, but you must win an opposed Charisma check to convince a subject to do anything he wouldn't ordinarily do. (Retries not allowed.) The subject never obeys suicidal or obviously harmful orders, but he might believe you if you assured him that the only chance to save your life is for him to hold back an onrushing shoggoth for "just a few seconds." Any act by you or your apparent allies that threatens the subject of this spell breaks the spell. Note also that you must speak the person's language to communicate your commands; otherwise, you can only communicate in gestures.

SKIN OF SEDEFKAR

Components: V, S, M
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1d3 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

The subject's skin grows tough and scaly. The subject gains a +1 natural armor bonus for every five levels of the caster (maximum +4).

Material Components: A piece of a creature's skin that is tougher than human flesh.

SNARE DREAMER

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1 Sanity point
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 1 mile (no line of sight needed)
Area: One dreaming soul
Duration: 1 round per level
Saving Throw: Will negates

This spell allows you to attract and capture a dreaming soul, such as someone using the *wandering soul* spell. If such a character is within range at the time of casting, it is caught, brought instantly before you, held motionless, and made visible for the duration (for use in a *bind soul* spell or other such use).

SONG OF HASTUR

Components: V
Cost: 2 Str (+1 Str every 2 rounds) damage and 1d4 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One living creature
Duration: Concentration
Saving Throw: Fort negates

You sing a wailing ululation. This requires a Performance (singing) check against DC 15; if the check fails, the spell fails. The flesh of the target bubbles and festers into pestilent blobs, dealing 2d6 points of damage each round. When the victim dies, he bursts with a sickening pop as steamy gore spills onto the ground.

This spell works only at night, and only if Aldebaran is visible. Casting it within range of someone else singing the song cancels both spells.

SOUL SINGING

Components: S, F
Cost: 2 Str + 2 Wis damage, and 2d4 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One living creature
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: Will negates

Using *enchanted pipes* (created by a version of *enchant item*), you create a song that completely enchants a victim, placing you in complete control of his senses. You can make him see and hear whatever you wish. Others nearby notice the subject acting strangely and hear faint, vague piping of strange melodies.

SOUL TRAP

Components: V, S, F
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1d4 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One living creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None (see text)

You draw out the soul of a dead victim and imprison it within a specially made talisman. The victim must have had the talisman in his possession when he died or the spell cannot function.

Henceforth, if the talisman is in your possession, you can call forth the soul and question it about what it knew in life for up to 1 round/level each day (one question per round). Answers are clear, complete, and precise. If it is hostile, or if the answer to the question was an important secret to it in life, it gains a Will saving throw. A successful saving throw indicates that the spell has ended and the soul can leave. The soul looks like it did in life, including the clothing and equipment it had with it on the day it died (treat as a ghost for purposes of Sanity loss to all but the caster).

SPEAK WITH DEAD

Components: V, S, F
Cost: 2 Int damage and 2d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: 10 ft.
Target: One dead creature
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: Will negates (see text)

You grant the semblance of life and intellect to a corpse, allowing it to answer several questions that you put to it. You may ask up to one question per two caster levels. Unasked questions are wasted if the duration expires. The corpse's knowledge is limited to what the creature knew during life, including the languages it spoke (if any). Answers are usually brief, cryptic, or repetitive.

If the corpse has been subject to *speak with dead* within the past week, the new spell fails. You can cast this spell on a corpse that has been deceased for any amount of time, but the body must be mostly intact to be able to respond. A damaged corpse may be able to give par-

tial answers or partially correct answers, but it must at least have a mouth in order to speak at all (or failing that, an orifice or device it normally uses for speaking).

This spell does not let you actually speak to the person (whose soul has departed). It instead draws on the imprinted knowledge stored in the corpse. The partially animated body retains the imprint of the soul that once inhabited it, and thus it can speak with all the knowledge the creature had while alive. The corpse, however, cannot learn new information. Indeed, it can't even remember being questioned.

Any corpse that has been turned into an undead creature can't be spoken to with *speak with dead.*

SPECTRAL RAZOR

[Force]
Components: S, V
Cost: 2 Str damage and 1d3 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: One energy blade
Duration: Concentration
Saving Throw: None

You create a bladelike beam of force that can be directed by you to attack anyone within range. The *spectral razor* has an attack bonus equal to your own base attack bonus. The blade deals 2d6 points of damage and is treated as a +5 magic weapon (for damage reduction purposes only, not attack or damage rolls). The blade cannot attack invisible targets.

STEAL LIFE

Components: S, V
Cost: 4 Str damage and 1d20 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Area: One living humanoid
Duration: Concentration
Saving Throw: Fort negates

You tap into the life essence of a subject and drain it away, adding it to your own. Each round you concentrate, you permanently drain 1 ability score point from the subject. Although you can choose which ability score to drain, you must choose a different ability score to drain each next round. You cannot choose a score already drained until you have drained all the others, at which point the process starts over. Thus, if you drain 1 point of Strength, you must choose another score the next round to drain, and cannot choose Strength again until you have drained one point of Con, Dex, Int, Wis, and Cha. Then you can drain another point of Strength, but not a third until you have drained a second point from all the others.

If cast on the night of a full moon, for each point you drain, you become effectively one week younger. If cast at other times, the subject suffers the drains, but you gain nothing.

The victim withers and shrivels. When it is completely drained of points, it becomes a horrid dry husk that costs 0/1d6 Sanity points just to see. If the caster dies while concentrating on this spell, all drained points are returned to the subject.

There are vocal qualities peculiar to men, and vocal qualities peculiar to beasts; and it is terrible to hear the one when the source should yield the other. Animal fury and orgiastic licence here whipped themselves to daemoniac heights by howls and squawking ecstasies that tore and reverberated through those nighted woods like pestilential tempests from the gulfs of hell. Now and then the less organised ululation would cease, and from what seemed a well-drilled chorus of hoarse voices would rise in sing-song chant that hideous phrase or ritual: "Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn" ["In his house at R'lyeh dead Cthulhu waits dreaming"]

—H.P. Lovecraft, "Call of Cthulhu"

SUGGESTION

[Mind-Affecting]
Components: V
Cost: 3 Wis damage and 1d4 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One living creature
Duration: 1 hour/level or until completed
Saving Throw: Will negates

You influence the actions of the enchanted subject by suggesting a course of activity (limited to a sentence or two). The *suggestion* must be worded in such a manner as to make the activity sound reasonable. Asking the subject to stab himself, immolate himself, or do some other obviously harmful act automatically negates the effect of the spell. However, a suggestion that a pool of acid is actually pure water and that a quick dip would be refreshing is another matter. Urging a cultist to stop attacking you so that the two of you could jointly rob the house of another cultist is likewise a reasonable use of the spell's power.

The suggested course of activity can continue for the entire duration, such as in the case of the cultist mentioned above. If the suggested activity can be completed in a shorter time, the spell ends when the subject finishes what he was asked to do. You can instead specify conditions that will trigger a special activity during the duration. For example, you might suggest that a wealthy woman give her money-filled purse to the first homeless person she meets. If the condition is not met before the spell expires, the activity is not performed.

A very reasonable suggestion causes the save to be made with a penalty (such as –1, –2, and so on) at the discretion of the GM.

SUMMON/BIND CREATURE

Components: V, S, F
Cost: 4 Wis damage and 1d3 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 full round
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: One summoned creature
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: Will negates (see text)

This spell summons a greater or lesser servitor, or even an independent race (if it was once a servitor race). It appears where you designate and acts immediately. If you wish, you can attempt to bind it and give it a specific command of limited duration (something that can be accomplished within the duration). "Protect me forever" would not work, but "slay the man in the corner" would.

At the conclusion of a *summon* spell, the creature can attempt a Will save. If the check succeeds, the spell is negated. If the summoning succeeds, but the caster does not attempt a binding, the creature remains for the duration doing whatever is appropriate for the creature. (Attacking those around it might be appropriate, but it has no special need to choose to attack the caster over other potential targets.)

At the conclusion of a *bind* spell, the caster and the creature make opposed Wisdom checks. If the caster

gets a higher result on his Wisdom check, the creature has been bound. If the creature gets a higher result on its Wisdom check, it attacks the caster and leaves at the end of the duration of the spell.

The caster can attempt to bind a creature that he did not summon himself if he knows the proper *bind* spell. In this case, the bound creature obeys the caster's command (as described above), but after the duration is over, it can go back to whatever it was doing before.

Each spell to summon a specific creature is a different spell, and each spell to bind a creature is a different spell. (For instance, *summon byakhee, bind byakhee,* and *summon Dark Young* are three different spells.) Authors of occult tomes don't always know how to bind the creatures they summon.

Byakhee: A whistle must be blown during the summoning. The spell is only useful on nights when Aldebaran is above the horizon (October through March in North America). The summoned byakhee floats down out of the icy, star-filled night sky.

Dark Young: A Small or larger creature must be sacrificed with a knife as a part of the spell. The spell must be cast outdoors during a new moon in the woods. The Dark Young appears out of the shadows of the trees.

Dimensional Shambler: This spell requires a dagger made of any pure metal, such as copper or iron. The shambler appears out of empty space.

Fire Vampire: A bonfire or other source of flame is required to cast this spell. The spell may be cast only at night when the star Fomalhaut is above the horizon (September through November in North America). The fire vampire appears from out of the sky, as if a star has suddenly fallen from the heavens.

Hunting Horror: This spell must be cast at night in the open air. A sacrifice of a sentient creature must be offered to the hunting horror, who devours it when it arrives (in 1 round). The horror appears head-first, as though pushing its way through a hole in the air.

Nightgaunt: To cast this spell, you need to use a stone emblazoned with an *elder sign* at night when there is no moon. The nightgaunt appears out of the darkness on silent wings.

Servitor of the Outer Gods: A flute must be played atonally during the casting of this spell. Amid echoes of more piping from afar, the servitor appears.

Star Vampire: This spell must be cast at night under a cloudless sky. The star vampire descends from the stars, but it is invisible (even to the caster) until it feeds.

TRUE STRIKE

Components: V
Cost: 2 Int damage
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: See text

You gain temporary, intuitive insight into the immediate future during your next attack. Your next single attack roll (if it is made before the end of the next round) gains a +20 insight bonus. Additionally, you are not affected by the miss chance that applies to attacks against a concealed target.

UNMASK DEMON

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Wis damage
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One creature affected by a magical disguise
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None

This spell immediately dispels the magical disguise or change of form on one creature, including the following spells: *body warping of Gorgoroth, consume likeness, pose mundane,* and *animal form.* It also works on spell-like abilities or supernatural abilities based on these spells. Although the spell costs no Sanity points to cast, Sanity points may be lost when the subject's true identity is revealed.

UNSPEAKABLE OATH

Components: S
Cost: 2d8 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None

You make a promise to He Who Is Not to Be Named. In exchange for your devotion, He grants you some tangible gift, such as a fragment or copy of the *R'lyeh Text,* or a special grant of +1 Int every year (or every time you go up a level). The details of the boon are up to the player's and GM's discretion. However, each time you go up a level, or each time a year passes (whichever comes first), you suffer a permanent drain of 1d2 points of Charisma, slowly transforming into a hideous creature over time. When the character has no Charisma score, he is a beast under the control of Hastur forever. (See Chosen of Hastur, page 190.)

VIEW GATE

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Wis damage and 1 Sanity point
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One magical gate
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None

This spell allows you to look at a magical gate and see the spot (or time) that it leads to as if you had passed through it.

VOICE OF RA

Components: V
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1 Sanity point
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 24 hours
Saving Throw: None

You can make yourself better looking and more charming. You gain a +1d6+1 enhancement bonus to Charisma.

VOORISH SIGN

Components: S
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1 Sanity point
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 round
Saving Throw: None

You use an intricate arcane gesture that makes the next spell you cast more potent. If you use *Voorish Sign* on the round before you cast another spell, the second spell is treated as if you were three levels higher for all level-based aspects, such as range and duration. The saving throw DC is also raised by 3. The *Voorish Sign* is typically employed by those who know it before summonings, bindings, and attempts to call deities.

WANDERING SOUL

Components: V, S
Cost: 4 Int damage and 1 Sanity point
Casting Time: 1 minute
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 minute/level (D)

You immediately fall into a deep sleep; your spirit then becomes ethe-

real. Your physical body remains helpless, but your spirit can wander through the physical world.

An ethereal spirit is invisible, incorporeal, and capable of moving in any direction, even up or down (albeit at half normal speed). Since you are incorporeal, you can move through solid objects, including living creatures. However, an ethereal spirit can't attack material creatures.

Your spirit can see and hear physical and material objects, but everything looks gray and insubstantial. Sight and hearing in the material world are limited to 60 feet and limited by existing conditions (if it's dark, you can't see). Spells you cast while ethereal affect only other ethereal things. By contrast, treat other ethereal creatures and ethereal objects as if they had become material.

When the spell ends, you return to your body, although you do not awaken for 12 hours—a sleep that does not allow you to regain lost hit points or ability score damage.

WARD AGAINST PSYCHICS

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Int damage and 1 Sanity point
Casting Time: 1 full round
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Area: 25-foot radius
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: None

This spell creates an area of psychic distortion and mental static that prohibits the use of any psychic feat within it. As part of this, the area is shielded against attempts to examine it with the Psychometry feat, but only for events that occurred during the duration of this spell.

WARDING THE EYE

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Int damage
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Permanent (D)
Saving Throw: None

This ward protects you completely from the *evil eye* spell. Like that spell, it lasts until dismissed or until the next sunrise.

WAVE OF OBLIVION

Components: V, S
Cost 3 Str damage and 1d8 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft. level)
Effect: Wave that is 10 ft. long, 5 ft. high/level
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Ref half

This spell creates a huge wave in a large body of water, such as a lake or the ocean. The caster must be in or on the water himself. The wave rises up and then crashes down anywhere within reach (its reach is its height). The wave deals 1d4 points of damage per caster level to anyone within the area (maximum 15d4). Anyone failing a Reflex save is considered drowning (see The Drowning Rule sidebar, page 85). Boats entirely within the area have a 50% chance of capsizing.

WITHER LIMB

Components: V, S
Cost: 2 Str damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Area: The limbs of one living creature
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Fort negates

You choose to wither either the arms or the legs of a living opponent (that possesses limbs). Withered legs force a character to fall prone; it is impossible for the character to move from that spot faster than 1 feet/round as a full-round action. Withered arms make it impossible for the character to use objects or cast spells with somatic components.

WORD OF RECALL

Components: V
Cost: 4 Int + 4 Wis damage, and 2d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Unlimited
Target: You and objects and willing creatures totaling up to 50 lb./level
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None

A *word of recall* teleports you instantly back to a chosen sanctuary when it is uttered. You must designate the sanctuary when you prepare the spell, and it must be a very familiar place. The actual point of arrival is a designated area no larger than 10 feet by 10 feet. You can be transported any distance, but cannot travel between dimensions. You can transport, in addition to yourself, objects and creatures weighing up to 50 pounds per caster level. Thus, a 15th-level caster could transport his person and objects or creatures weighing an additional 750 pounds. Exceeding this limit causes the spell to fail.

An unwilling creature can't be teleported by *word of recall.*

WRACK

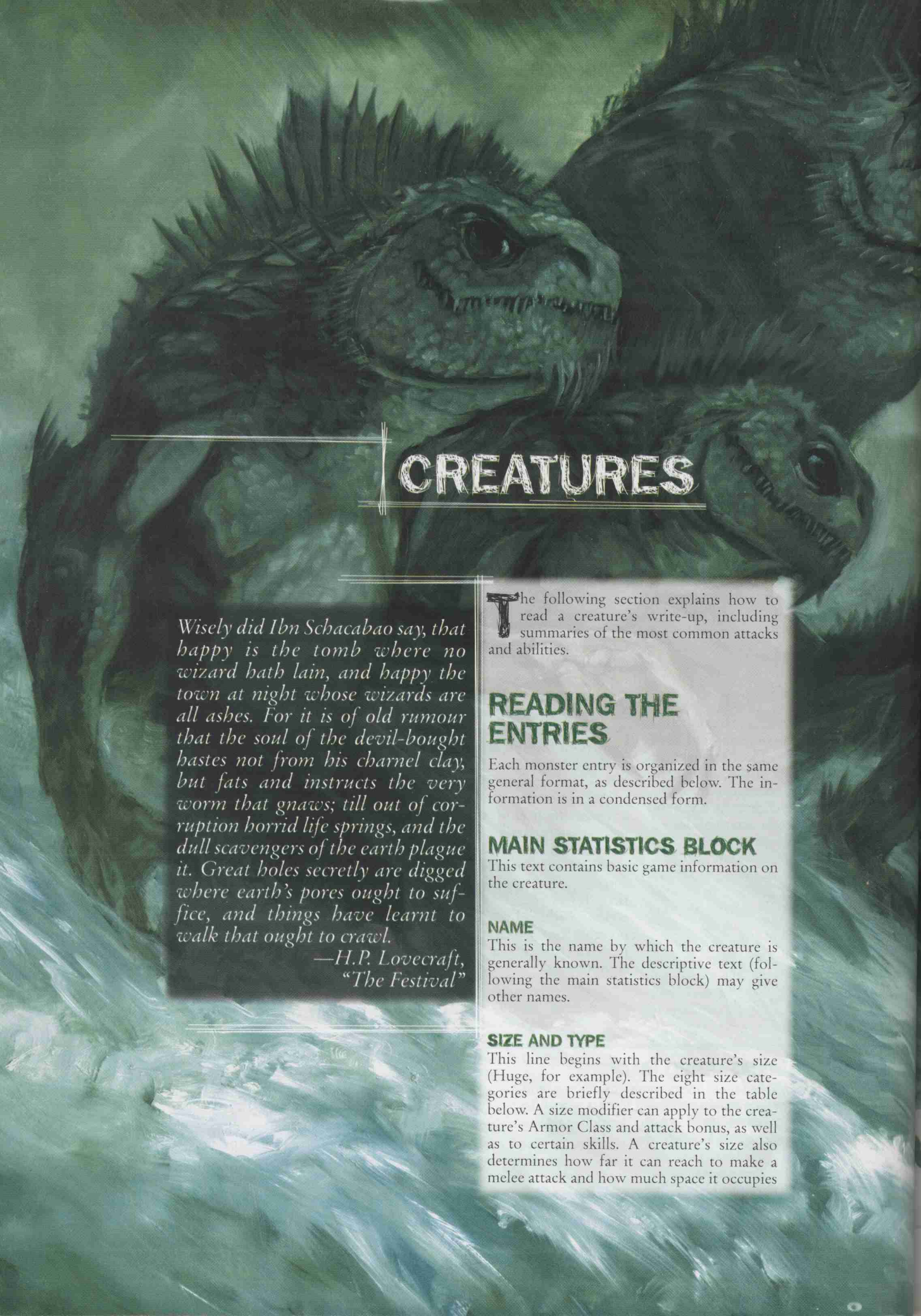
Components: V, S
Cost: 4 Str damage and 1d6 Sanity points
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Area: One living creature
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Fort negates

A subject of your choosing is wracked with such pain that he doubles over and collapses. His face and hands blister and drip fluid, and his eyes cloud with blood, rendering him blind. For the duration of the spell, the target is considered helpless and cannot take actions. Even after the duration is over, the subject (although he can see) is still visibly shaken and suffers a –2 penalty on attack rolls, saves, and checks for 3d10 minutes. The experience has a Sanity loss of 1/1d6+1 for the subject.

VARIANT: UNMASTERED MAGIC

If you wish magic to seem even more mysterious and uncontrolable, force anyone attempting to cast a spell to make a Intelligence check (DC 15) to successfully cast the spell. Failure is resolved on the following table:

01–60 The spell is cast normally.
61–70 No spell effect occurs, but the caster faces the cost of the spell nonetheless. The energy of the spell is conjured, just not properly handled.
71–95 The spell's target, area, or effect are determined randomly (if applicable, otherwise, the spell is cast normally) as the caster miscasts the spell.
96–00 As 71–95, plus one random character within 100 feet (if any) pays the cost of the spell as if he were the caster (and the caster also pays as normal). The hungry forces in the heartless universe, tapped by the spell, wish to consume as much life and energy as they can.



CREATURES

Wisely did Ibn Schacabao say, that happy is the tomb where no wizard hath lain, and happy the town at night whose wizards are all ashes. For it is of old rumour that the soul of the devil-bought hastes not from his charnel clay, but fats and instructs the very worm that gnaws; till out of corruption horrid life springs, and the dull scavengers of the earth plague it. Great holes secretly are digged where earth's pores ought to suffice, and things have learnt to walk that ought to crawl.

—H.P. Lovecraft, "The Festival"

The following section explains how to read a creature's write-up, including summaries of the most common attacks and abilities.

READING THE ENTRIES

Each monster entry is organized in the same general format, as described below. The information is in a condensed form.

MAIN STATISTICS BLOCK

This text contains basic game information on the creature.

NAME

This is the name by which the creature is generally known. The descriptive text (following the main statistics block) may give other names.

SIZE AND TYPE

This line begins with the creature's size (Huge, for example). The eight size categories are briefly described in the table below. A size modifier can apply to the creature's Armor Class and attack bonus, as well as to certain skills. A creature's size also determines how far it can reach to make a melee attack and how much space it occupies

in a fight (see Face/Reach, below).

The size and type line continues with the creature's type (ooze, for example). Type determines how magic affects a creature; for example, the *dominate animal* spell affects only creatures of the animal type. Type also determines many of the creature's characteristics and abilities, as described below.

Aberration: An aberration has a bizarre anatomy, strange abilities, an alien mindset, or any combination of the three. Unless noted otherwise, aberrations have darkvision with a range of 60 feet. Example: star vampire.

Animal: An animal is a nonhumanoid creature, usually a vertebrate. An animal may currently exist on Earth, or it may be a historical creature. All animals have Intelligence scores of 1 or 2. Unless noted otherwise, animals have low-light vision (allowing them to see twice as far as a human in twilight conditions). Example: wolf.

Beast: A beast is a nonhistorical, vertebrate creature with a reasonably normal anatomy and no magical or unusual abilities. Unless noted otherwise, beasts have low-light vision and darkvision with a range of 60 feet. Example: dhole.

Dragon: A dragon is a reptilian creature, usually winged, with magical or unusual abilities. Dragons are immune to sleep and paralysis effects. Unless noted otherwise, dragons have darkvision with a range of 60 feet and low-light vision. Example: hunting horror.

Giant: A giant is a humanoid creature of great strength, usually of at least Large size. Giants are proficient with all weapons given in their entries. Unless noted otherwise, giants have darkvision with a range of 60 feet. Example: gug.

Humanoid: A humanoid usually has two arms, two legs, and one head, or a humanlike torso, arms, and head. Humanoids have few or no supernatural or extraordinary abilities, and usually are Small or Medium-size. Every humanoid creature also has a type modifier (see below). Humanoids are proficient with all weapons mentioned in their entries. Example: serpent person.

Magical Beast: Magical beasts are similar to beasts but have supernatural or extraordinary abilities. Unless noted otherwise, magical beasts have darkvision with a range of 60 feet and low-light vision. Example: chthonian.

Monstrous Humanoid: These are humanoid creatures with monstrous or animalistic features, often having supernatural abilities. Unless noted otherwise, monstrous humanoids have darkvision with a range of 60 feet. Monstrous humanoids are proficient with all weapons mentioned in their entries. Example: byakhee.

Ooze: An ooze is an amorphous or mutable creature. Oozes are immune to poison, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing. They have no clear front or back and are therefore not subject to critical hits or flanking. Oozes are blind, but have the blindsight special quality. They have no Intelligence scores and are therefore immune to all mind-affecting spells. (In D&D, oozes are also immune to sleep spells and effects.)

Oozes have no natural armor ratings, but they are nevertheless difficult to kill because their bodies are mostly simple protoplasm. This is reflected by bonus hit points (in addition to those from Hit Dice and Constitution scores) according to size. Ooze Size/Bonus Hit Points: Small/5, Medium-size/10, Large/15, Huge/20, Gigantic/30, Colossal/40. Example: shoggoth.

Outsider: An outsider is a nonelemental creature that comes from another dimension, reality, or plane. Unless noted otherwise, outsiders have darkvision with a range of 60 feet. Example: dimensional shambler.

Shapechanger: This type of creature has a stable body but can assume other forms. Unless noted otherwise, shapechangers have darkvision with a range of 60 feet. Example: loup garou.

Undead: Undead are once-living creatures animated by spiritual or supernatural forces. Undead are immune to poison, stunning, and disease. They also ignore mind-affecting spells and effects (such as *cloud memory, hypnotism,* or *suggestion).* (In D&D, undead are also immune to sleep spells and effects, patterns, and phantasms.)

Undead are not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, or ability drain. They have no Constitution scores and are therefore immune to any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects). An undead spellcaster uses its Charisma modifier when making Concentration checks.

Undead without Intelligence scores cannot heal damage on their own. (In D&D, undead can be healed by spells that use negative energy, such as *inflict light wounds.*) The regeneration and fast healing special qualities work regardless of the creature's Intelligence score.

An undead creature is not at risk of death from massive damage, but when reduced to 0 hit points or below, it is immediately destroyed. Most undead have darkvision with a range of 60 feet. Example: animated corpse.

Vermin: This type includes insects, arachnids, arthropods, worms, and similar invertebrates. Vermin have no Intelligence scores and are immune to all mind-affecting spells. (In D&D, vermin are also immune to sleep spells and effects, patterns, and phantasms.) Unless noted otherwise, vermin have darkvision with a range of 60 feet. Example: spider.

Type Modifiers

A parenthetical note following the creature type indicates a type modifier (fire, for example), indicating that the creature is associated with an element, a form of energy, a state of being, or the like. A type modifier links creatures that share characteristics, connects members of different types, or creates a subtype within a larger type, such as undead (incorporeal).

Some common type modifiers that affect a creature's abilities are described below.

Creature Sizes

Size	Armor Class/ Attack Modifier	Dimension*	Weight**
Fine	+8	6 in. or less	Less than 1/8 lb.
Diminutive	+4	6 in.–1 ft.	1/8 lb.–1 lb.
Tiny	+2	1 ft.–2 ft.	2 lb.–8 lb.
Small	+1	2 ft.–4 ft.	9 lb.–60 lb.
Medium-size	0	4 ft.–8 ft.	61 lb.–500 lb.
Large	–1	8 ft.–16 ft.	501 lb.–4,000 lb.
Huge	–2	16 ft.–32 ft.	4,001 lb.–32,000 lb.
Gargantuan	–4	32 ft.–64 ft.	32,001 lb.–250,000 lb.
Colossal	–8	64 ft. or more	250,001 lb. or more

* Biped's height, quadruped's body length (nose to base of tail).

** Assumes that the creature is roughly as dense as a regular animal. A creature made of stone will weigh considerably more. A gaseous creature will weigh much less.

Cold: A cold creature is immune to cold damage. It takes double damage from fire unless a saving throw for half damage is allowed, in which case it takes half damage on a success and double damage on a failure.

Fire: A fire creature is immune to fire damage. It takes double damage from cold unless a saving throw for half damage is allowed, in which case it takes half damage on a success and double damage on a failure.

Incorporeal: An incorporeal creature has no physical body. It can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, spells, spell-like abilities, or supernatural abilities. It is immune to all nonmagical attack forms. When hit by spells or magic weapons, it has a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. Force effect spells affect it normally. An incorporeal creature has no natural armor, but has a deflection bonus equal to its Charisma modifier (always at least +1, even if the creature's Charisma score does not normally provide a bonus).

An incorporeal creature can pass through solid objects at will (but not force effects). Its attack passes through (ignores) natural armor, armor, and shields, although deflection bonuses (and force effects) work normally against it. An incorporeal creature moves silently and cannot be heard with Listen checks if it doesn't wish to be heard. It has no Strength score, so its Dexterity modifier applies to both its melee and its ranged attacks.

Independent Race, Lesser and Greater: Independent races vary in power. Some may actually be ancestors of races long dead that spawned some of the still extant Great Old Ones. The antediluvian prehistory of Earth is rife with the comings and goings of many disparate independent races, though presently most are extinct or dormant.

Servitor Race, Lesser and Greater: Particular species are often assocated with particular Great Old Ones or gods. Such races are called servitor species, and frequently accompany any god or Great Old One who manifests or otherwise influences matters on Earth. Servitor races may act as assassins, messengers, and spies. Usually, servitor races are met in the stead of the Great Old One or god they serve.

Burrow: The creature can tunnel through dirt, but not through rock unless the descriptive text says otherwise. Creatures cannot run as a full-round action while burrowing.

Climb: A creature with a climb speed has the Climb skill at no cost and gains a +8 racial bonus on all Climb checks. The creature must make a Climb check to climb any wall or slope with a DC of more than 0, but it always can choose to take 10, even if rushed or threatened while climbing. The creature climbs at the listed speed while climbing. If it chooses an accelerated climb (see Climb, page 25), it moves at double the listed climb speed (or its normal land speed, whichever is less) and makes a single Climb check at a –5 penalty. Creatures cannot run as a full-round action while climbing.

Fly: All fly speeds include a parenthetical note indicating maneuverability, as follows.

Perfect: The creature can perform almost any aerial maneuver it wishes. It moves through the air as well as a human does over smooth ground.

Good: The creature is very agile in the air (such as a housefly or hummingbird), but cannot change direction as readily as those with perfect maneuverability.

Average: The creature can fly as adroitly as a small bird.

Poor: The creature flies as well as a very large bird.

Clumsy: The creature can barely fly at all.

Creatures that fly can make dive attacks. A dive attack works just like a charge, but the diving creature must move a minimum of 30 feet. It can make only claw attacks, but these deal double damage. A creature can run as a full-round action (moving four times its base speed) while flying, provided it flies more or less in a straight line.

Swim: A creature with a swim speed can move through water at the listed speed without making Swim checks. It gains a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. The creature always can choose to take 10, even if rushed or threatened when swimming. A creature can run as a full-round action (moving four times its base speed) while swimming, provided it swims more or less in a straight line.

HIT DICE

This line gives the number and type of Hit Dice the creature has and any bonus hit points. A parenthetical note gives the creature's average hit points.

A creature's Hit Dice total is also its level for determining how spells affect the creature, its rate of natural healing, and its maximum ranks in a skill.

INITIATIVE

This line shows the creature's modifier to initiative rolls. A parenthetical note tells where the modifier comes from (most commonly the creature's Dexterity modifier and the Improved Initiative feat, if the creature has it).

SPEED

This line gives the creature's tactical speed on land (the amount of distance it can cover with one move action). If the creature has other modes of movement, these are provided after the main entry. Unless noted otherwise, modes of movement are natural (not magical).

ARMOR CLASS

This entry gives the creature's Armor Class for normal combat and includes a parenthetical mention of the modifiers contributing to it (usually size, Dexterity, and natural armor).

ATTACKS

This line gives all the creature's physical attacks, whether with natural or manufactured weapons.

Natural Weapons: These include teeth, claws, stingers, and the like. The entry gives the number of attacks along with the weapon (2 claws, for example), attack bonus, and form of attack (melee or ranged). The first entry is for the creature's primary weapon, showing an attack bonus that includes modifications for size and Strength (for melee attacks) or Dexterity (for ranged attacks). A creature with the Weapon Finesse feat can use its Dexterity modifier on melee attacks.

The remaining weapons are secondary and have –5 to the attack bonus, no matter how many there are.

All of the foregoing assumes that the creature makes a full attack and employs all its natural weapons. If a creature instead chooses the attack option (and thus makes only a single attack), it uses its primary attack bonus.

Unless noted otherwise, natural weapons threaten critical hits on a natural attack roll of 20.

Manufactured Weapons: Creatures that use melee or ranged weapons follow the same rules as characters, including those for multiple attacks and two-weapon fighting penalties. All the steps in a multiple attack sequence are given and include all modifications.

DAMAGE

This line shows the damage each of the creature's attacks deals. Damage from an attack is always at least 1 point, even if a subtraction from a die roll brings the result to 0 or lower.

Natural Weapons: A creature's primary attack damage includes its full Strength modifier (one and a half times its Strength bonus if it's the creature's sole attack). Secondary attacks add only one-half the creature's Strength bonus.

If any attacks also cause some special effect other than damage (poison, disease), that information is given here.

Unless noted otherwise, creatures deal double damage on critical hits.

Natural weapons have types just as other weapons do. The most common are summarized below.

Bite: The creature attacks with its mouth, dealing piercing, slashing, and bludgeoning damage.

Claw or Rake: The creature rips with a sharp appendage, dealing piercing and slashing damage.

Gore: The creature spears the opponent with an antler, horn, or similar appendage, dealing piercing damage.

Slap or Slam: The creature batters opponents with an appendage, dealing bludgeoning damage.

Sting: The creature stabs with a stinger, dealing piercing damage. Stingers are usually envenomed.

Manufactured Weapons: Creatures that use melee or ranged weapons follow the same rules as characters do. The bonus for attacks with two-handed melee weapons is one and a half times the creature's Strength bonus, while secondary weapons add only one-half the Strength bonus.

FACE/REACH

This line describes how much space the creature needs to fight effectively and how close it has to be to an opponent to threaten that square. This is written in the format [feet] by [feet]/[feet]: The numbers before the slash show the creature's fighting space (width first, length second). The number after the slash is the creature's natural reach. If the creature has exceptional reach due to a weapon, tentacle, or the like, the extended reach and its source are noted in parentheses.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Many creatures have unusual abilities, which can include special attack forms, resistance or vulnerability to certain types of damage, and enhanced senses (among others). A creature entry breaks these abilities into Special Attacks and Special Qualities. The latter category includes defenses, immunities, vulnerabilities, and other special abilities that are not modes of attack.

A special ability is either extraordinary (Ex), spell-like (Sp), or supernatural (Su). (This distinction is incidental in *Call of Cthulhu*, but can be critical in D&D.) Refer to the definitions of extraordinary, spell-like, and supernatural abilites in the Magic chapter (see Special Abilities, page 129).

SPELLCASTING

Though many creatures "cast spells" using a spell-like ability, qualified creatures may also learn to cast new spells. When a creature learns to cast a spell, it uses the same rules for spellcasting that a character does (as described in the Magic chapter). It still uses its previous spell-like abilities as before, but is suceptible to ability damage for using its learned spells.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

This line gives all the creature's special attacks in the order they are most likely to be used. If the creature has no special attacks, this line does not appear. Details appear in the creature's descriptive text. In general, "creature" means the creature using the special attack, while "opponent" is the target of the attack.

SPECIAL QUALITIES

This line gives all the creature's special qualities. If the creature has no special qualities, this line does not appear. Details of the most common special qualities are provided here (others are definied in the Combat chapter).

Blindsight (Ex): Using nonvisual senses, such as sensitivity to vibrations, scent, acute hearing, or echolocation, the creature maneuvers and fights as well as a sighted creature. Invisibility and darkness are irrelevant, though the creature can't discern ethereal beings (as defined in the *wandering soul* spell). The ability's range is specified in the creature's descriptive text. The creature usually does not need to make Spot or Listen checks to notice creatures within range of its blindsight ability.

Intuit Direction (Ex): The creature has an innate sense of direction. Most creatures with Intuit Direction use this speical quality to navigate in unusual environments, such as when burrowing underground or navigating networks of tunnels. Flying creatures and dimensional travelers can also use it to navigate while traveling.

By concentrating for 1 minute, the creature can determine where true north lies in relation to itself with a successful Wilderness Lore check (DC 15). The creature rolls for this special quality once each day. That result represents how sensitive it is to direction that day; it is used for all other Wilderness Lore checks to determine direction on the same day. If this initial check fails, the creature cannot determine direction that day.

A flying creature or dimensional traveler with this ability can use it once each day to navigate while traveling. With a successful Wilderness Lore check (DC 15), it can determine where its point of origin or destination is relative to its current position. The creature must have traveled to the destination at

least once. For dimensional travelers, either location can be in a different dimension. For instance, a nightgaunt could use this ability to find its way back to a temple in the Dreamlands after abducting a cultist from a remote mountaintop in the Appalachians.

Fast Healing (Ex): The creature regains hit points at an exceptionally fast rate, usually 1 or more hit points per round, as given in the entry (for example, a vampire has fast healing 5). Except where noted here, fast healing is just like natural healing. Fast healing does not restore hit points lost from starvation, thirst, or suffocation, and it does not allow a creature to regrow or reattach lost body parts.

Regeneration (Ex): Creatures with this ability are difficult to kill. Damage dealt to the creature is treated as subdual damage. The creature automatically heals subdual damage at a fixed rate per round, as given in the entry. Certain attack forms, typically fire and acid, deal normal damage to the creature, which doesn't go away. The creature's descriptive text describes the details.

A regenerating creature that has been rendered unconscious through subdual damage can be killed with a coup de grace. The attack cannot be of a type that automatically converts to subdual damage.

Attack forms that don't deal hit point damage (for example, most poisons) ignore regeneration. Regeneration also does not restore hit points lost from starvation, thirst, or suffocation.

Regenerating creatures can regrow lost portions of their bodies and can reattach severed limbs or body parts; details are in the creature's entry. Severed parts that are not reattached wither and die normally.

Resistance to Energy (Ex): The creature ignores some damage of the listed type each round (commonly acid, cold, fire, or electricity). This entry indicates the amount and type of damage ignored.

Scent (Ex): This ability allows the creature to detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell. Creatures with the scent ability can identify familiar odors just as humans do familiar sights.

The creature can detect opponents within 30 feet by sense of smell. If the opponent is upwind, the range increases to 60 feet; if downwind, it drops to 15 feet. Strong scents, such as smoke or rotting garbage, can be detected at twice the ranges noted above. Overpowering scents, such as skunk musk, can be detected at triple normal range.

When a creature detects a scent, the exact location is not revealed—only its presence somewhere within range. The creature can take an attack action to note the direction of the scent. If it moves within 5 feet of the source, the creature can pinpoint that source.

A creature with the scent ability can follow tracks by smell, making a Wisdom check to find or follow a track. The typical DC for a fresh trail is 10 (no matter what kind of surface holds the scent). This DC increases or decreases depending on how strong the quarry's odor is, the number of creatures, and the age of the trail. For each hour that the trail is cold, the DC increases by 2. The ability otherwise follows the rules for the Track feat (see page 42). Creatures tracking by scent ignore the effects of surface conditions and poor visibility.

SAVES

This line gives the creature's Fortitude, Reflex, and Will save modifiers, which take into account its type, ability score modifiers, and any special qualities.

ABILITIES

This line gives all six of the creature's ability scores, in order: Str, Dex, Con, Int, Wis, Cha. Abilities work exactly as described in the Character Creation chapter. Some creatures lack certain ability scores. (For instance, undead have no Constitution score.) These creatures do not have an ability score of 0—they lack the ability altogether. The modifier for a "nonability" is +0.

SANITY

Unless specifically noted to the contrary, creatures do not have Sanity scores, nor do they ever make Sanity checks.

SKILLS

This line details all the creature's skills by name along with each skill's modifier, which includes adjustments for ability scores and any bonuses from feats or racial abilities unless otherwise noted in the descriptive text. All listed skills were purchased as class skills unless the creature is a template added to a profession (see Profession Templates, page 12).

FEATS

The line gives all the creature's feats by name. The creature's descriptive text may contain additional information if a feat works differently than described in this section or in the section of this

CREATURE FEATS

FLYBY ATTACK

The creature can attack on the wing.

Prerequisite: Fly speed.

Benefit: While taking a move action to fly its speed, the creature may take an attack action or another move action or at any point during the move.

Normal: Without this feat, the creature takes a move action or an attack action either before or after moving.

GREAT CLEAVE

The creature can wield a natural weapon or melee weapon with such power that it can strike multiple times when it drops opponents.

Prerequisites: Str 13+, Power Attack, Cleave, base attack +4 or higher.

Benefit: As Cleave (see page 40), except the creature has no limit to the number of times it can use it per round.

WHIRLWIND ATTACK

The creature can strike nearby opponents in an amazing, spinning melee attack.

Prerequisite: Dex 13+, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, base attack bonus +4 or higher, Int 13+, Expertise.

Benefit: As a full-round action, the creature can give up its regular attacks and instead make one melee attack at its full base attack bonus against each opponent within 5 feet of its position.

skills, depending on its type. Table 8–1: Creature Advancement by Type shows how creature types advance.

Saving throw bonuses are listed on Tables 1–8 and 1–9 (page 10). A "good" saving throw uses the higher of the listed values (starting at +2); a "bad" saving throw uses the lower one (starting at +0).

book dealing with feats. Most creatures use the same feats that are available to characters, but some have access to unique feats (see the sidebar).

Size Increases

Creatures may become larger as they gain Hit Dice (the new size is noted parenthetically).

An increase in size affects a creature's ability scores, Armor Class, attack bonuses, and damage ratings as indicated on the following tables.

CHALLENGE RATING

In *Call of Cthulhu,* a creature's Challenge Rating (or CR) gives a rough measure of its toughness on a scale of 1 to 20. CR stats are listed here as a guideline to help the GM measure the relative difficulty of various encounters in a campaign.

In DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, CR has a slightly different meaning. A creature's Challenge Rating is the average level of a party of adventurers for which one creature would make an encounter of moderate difficulty. However, for several reasons, the average *CofC* investigator isn't as tough as the average D&D character. Keep in mind that a "moderate" encounter in a high-fantasy game may become "extreme" in a modern horror setting.

Investigators can fight creatures with any CR, regardless of the average level of their group.

Old Size*	New Size	Natural Armor	Str	Dex	Con	Attack
Fine	Diminutive	Same	–2	Same	Same	–4
Diminutive	Tiny	+2	–2	Same	Same	–2
Tiny	Small	+4	–2	Same	Same	–1
Small	Medium-size	+4	–2	+2	Same	–1
Medium-size	Large	+8	–2	+4	+2	–1
Large	Huge	+8	–2	+4	+3	–1
Huge	Gargantuan	+8	Same	+4	+4	–2
Gargantuan	Colossal	+8	Same	+4	+5	–4

* Repeat the adjustment if the creature moves up more than one size category. For example, if a creature advances from Medium-size to Huge size, it gains +16 Strength, –2 Dexterity, +8 Constitution, +5 to AC, and –2 to attack bonus.

Old Damage (Each)*	New Damage
1d2	1d3
1d3	1d4
1d4	1d6
1d6	1d8
1d8 or 1d10	2d6
1d12	2d8

* Repeat the adjustment if the creature moves up more than one size category. For example, if a Medium-size creature with two claw attacks dealing 1d4 points of damage each advances from Medium-size to Huge, the damage dealt by each of its claw attacks increases to 1d8.

CLIMATE/TERRAIN

This line gives the environment in which the creature is most likely to be encountered.

ADVANCEMENT

This book details only the weakest and most common version of each creature. The Advancement line shows how tough the creature can get, in terms of extra Hit Dice. (This is not an absolute limit, but exceptions are extremely rare.)

Improvement

As its Hit Dice increase, the creature's attack bonuses and saving throw modifiers might improve, and it could gain more feats and

SANITY LOSS

This line gives the number of Sanity points lost by an investigator when the creature is encountered.

DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

The descriptive text opens with a short description of the monster: what it does, what it looks like, and what is most noteworthy about it. Special sections describe how the creature fights and give details on special attacks, special qualities, skills, and feats.

TABLE 8–1: Creature Advancement by Type

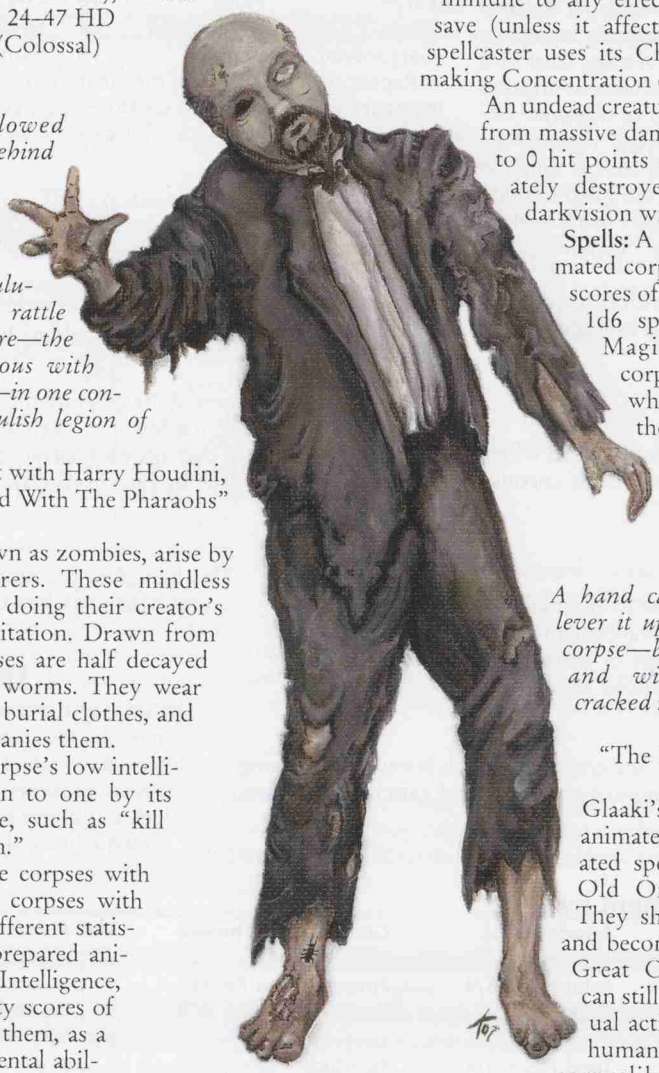
	Hit Die	Attack Bonus	Good Saving Throws	Skill Points	Feats
Aberration	d8	Total HD × 3/4	Will	+2 per extra HD	+1 per 4 extra HD
Beast	d10	Total HD × 3/4	Fortitude and Reflex	+1 per extra HD	—
Dragon	d12	Total HD	Fortitude, Reflex, Will	+6 (+ Int bonus) per extra HD	+1 per 4 extra HD
Giant	d8	Total HD × 3/4	Fortitude	+1 per extra HD	+1 per 4 extra HD
Humanoid	d8	Total HD × 3/4	Variable	+1 per extra HD	+1 per 4 extra HD
Magical beast	d10	Total HD	Fortitude and Reflex	+1 per extra HD	+1 per 4 extra HD
Monstrous humanoid	d8	Total HD	Reflex and Will	+2 per extra HD	+1 per 4 extra HD
Ooze	d10	Total HD × 3/4	—	—	—
Outsider	d8	Total HD	Fortitude, Reflex, Will	+8 (+ Int bonus) per extra HD	+1 per 4 total HD
Shapechanger	d8	Total HD × 3/4	Fortitude, Reflex, Will	+1 per extra HD	+1 per 4 extra HD
Undead	d12	Total HD × 1/2	Will	+2 per extra HD	+1 per 4 extra HD
Vermin	d8	Total HD × 3/4	Fortitude	10–12	—

ANIMATED CORPSE

Medium-Size Undead
Hit Dice: 2d12+3 (16 hp)
Initiative: –1 (Dex)
Speed: 30 ft.
Armor Class: 11 (–1 Dex, +2 natural)
Attacks: Slam +2 melee
Damage: Slam 1d6+1
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Spells
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/+1, darkvision 60 ft., undead qualities
Saves: Fort +0, Ref –1, Will +3
Abilities: Str 13, Dex 8, Con —, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 1
Skills: Listen +5, Spot +4
Feats: Toughness
CR: 1
Climate/Terrain: Any
Advancement: 3–4 HD (Medium-size); 5–7 HD (Large); 8–23 HD (Huge); 24–47 HD (Gargantuan); 48–96 HD (Colossal)
Sanity Loss: 1/1d6

The training of unhallowed thousands of years must lie behind the march of earth's inmost monstrosities . . . padding, clicking, walking, stalking, lumbering, rumbling, crawling . . . A fiendish and ululant corpse-gurgle or death rattle now split the very atmosphere—the charnel atmosphere poisonous with naphtha and bitumen blasts—in one concerted chorus from the ghoulish legion of hybrid blasphemies.

—H. P. Lovecraft with Harry Houdini, "Imprisoned With The Pharaohs"



Animated corpses, also known as zombies, arise by the will of obscene sorcerers. These mindless automatons shamble about, doing their creator's bidding without fear or hesitation. Drawn from their graves, animated corpses are half decayed and partially consumed by worms. They wear the tattered remains of their burial clothes, and a rank odor of death accompanies them.

Because of an animated corpse's low intelligence, the instructions given to one by its master must be very simple, such as "kill anyone who enters this room."

The statistics here describe corpses with humanlike forms. Animated corpses with different forms may have different statistics. Additionally, specially prepared animated corpses may retain the Intelligence, Charisma, and Wisdom ability scores of the living body—or close to them, as a 0–3 point degradation per mental ability score is *de riguer*.

COMBAT

Animated corpses are usually not particularly adept in combat, and are usually content to slam their decaying fists into a foe over and over.

Undead Qualities (Ex): Undead are immune to poison, stunning, and disease. They also ignore all mind-affecting spells (such as *cloud memory, hypnotism,* and *suggestion*). Undead are not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, or ability drain. They have no Constitution scores and are therefore immune to any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects). An undead spellcaster uses its Charisma modifier when making Concentration checks.

An undead creature is not at risk of death from massive damage, but when reduced to 0 hit points or below, it is immediately destroyed. Most undead have darkvision with a range of 60 feet.

Spells: A very few individual animated corpses with mental ability scores of 11 or higher may know 1d6 spells, chosen from the Magic chapter. Animated corpses never lose Sanity when casting spells (since they don't have a Sanity score).

SERVITORS OF GLAAKI

A hand came scrabbling out to lever it up! . . . . the hand of a corpse—bloodless and skeletal, and with impossibly long, cracked nails.

—Ramsey Campbell, "The Inhabitant of the Lake"

Glaaki's slaves are a type of animated corpse. They are created specifically by the Great Old One known as Glaaki. They share Glaaki's memories and become almost a part of the Great Old One, though they can still perform many individual actions. At first they look human enough, if stiff and corpselike, but in time they wither and look like the undead monsters they are. After six decades of half-death, the Servitors of Glaaki begin to rot if subjected to intense light, such as daylight. This rapid rotting is called the Green Decay, and destroys one so exposed in a few hours.

Servitors of Glaaki always know at least 2d6 spells, chosen from the Magic chapter.

BYAKHEE

Medium-Size Monstrous Humanoid (Lesser Servitor Race)
Hit Dice: 4d8 (18 hp)
Initiative: +2 (Dex)
Speed: 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)
Armor Class: 15 (+2 Dex, +3 natural)
Attacks: 2 claws +7 melee, bite +2 melee
Damage: Claw 1d4+3, bite 1d4+1
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Rend
Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., immunities
Saves: Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +4
Abilities: Str 17, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 12
Skills: Balance +3, Hide +6, Listen +5, Move Silently +6, Spot +5, Tumble +3
CR: 3
Climate/Terrain: Any temperate
Advancement: 5–8 HD (Medium-size); 9–13 HD (Large)
Sanity Loss: 1/1d6

There flapped rhythmically a horde of tame, trained, hybrid winged things . . . . not altogether crows, nor moles, nor buzzards, nor ants, nor decomposed human beings, but something I cannot and must not recall.

—H. P. Lovecraft, "The Festival"

A byakhee appears as a disturbing mixture of creatures composing a humanoid form. Insect traits vie with predatory birds, digging mammals, and possibly the necrotic flesh of human victims. Great wings allow the byakhee to lift into the sky, and beyond.

At home in the lonely voids of interstellar space, byakhee are a created race, though their origin is buried in the distant past. Hastur the Unnameable often commands byakhee as messengers and agents of doom. Mortal and immortal wizards alike summon byakhee to serve in various ways, including as mounts. Byakhee can bear riders of equal or lesser size than their own, and are even able to carry them through the vacuum of interstellar space. Unless specifically summoned, byakhee are most often encountered as the agents of some malign agenda.

Byakhee speak their own language, and some also speak one or more earthly languages.

COMBAT

Byakhee can dive on unsuspecting victims from great heights.

Rend (Ex): If a byakhee hits with both claw attacks, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears its flesh. This attack automatically deals an additional 2d4+4 points of damage.

Immunities (Ex): Byakhee are immune to all the natural perils of vacuum (extreme heat and cold, zero pressure, and lack of breathable air). They are susceptible to damage from other sources of heat and cold, though they can suspend their breathing at will (if they ever breathe at all).

COLOUR OUT OF SPACE

Medium-Size Outsider (Greater Independent Race)
Hit Dice: 10d8 (45 hp)
Initiative: +4 (Dex)
Speed: Fly 75 ft. (perfect)
Armor Class: 14 (+4 Dex)
Attacks: +14/+9 melee touch attack
Damage: Envelop 1d6+ability drain
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Ability drain, disintegrate, spell-like abilities
Special Qualities: Incorporeal, , vulnerable to ability-draining spells (as long as the ability is not Con, Wis, or Cha), imprisoned by magnetism
Saves: Fort—, Ref +11, Will—
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 18, Con—, Int 12, Wis—, Cha—
Skills: Cthulhu Mythos +5, Hide +17, Knowledge (any four) +14, Listen +17, Move Silently +17, Spot +17
Feats: Dodge, Stealthy, Alertness
CR: 10
Climate/Terrain: The Colours come from regions of deep space where other dimensions coexist with our own. When brought to our world by a space traveler, a meteor, or piece of falling space debris, they seek out cool, damp areas (such as old wells or abandoned culverts) in which to lair.
Advancement: None, but see Larva below
Sanity Loss: 0/1d4 to see a Colour, 0/1d8 to see one of its victims (1d3/1d10 if she is a friend or loved one)

[A] thousand tiny points of faint and unhallowed radiance, tipping each bough like the fire of St. Elmo . . . It was a monstrous constellation of unnatural light, like a glutted swarm of corpse-fed fireflies dancing . . . over an accursed marsh; and its Colour was that same nameless intrusion which [he] had come to recognize and dread. All the while the shaft of phosphorescence from the well was getting brighter and brighter . . . . It was no longer shining out; it was pouring out; and as the shapeless stream of unplaceable Colour left the well it seemed to flow directly into the sky.

—H. P. Lovecraft, "The Colour Out of Space"

A Colour Out of Space appears to be an amorphous, glistening patch of color, rolling and shining in pale shades that match nothing in the known spectrum. It pours over the ground or passes through the air like an uncanny aurora borealis. The taint

of its indefinable color spreads to creatures and items it touches, as well as the area in which it lairs. They are radioactive, so Geiger counters are good passive indicators of their presence.

Colours Out of Space are very rarely encountered by earthly beings, although they are occasionally met with by those crossing interstellar space (traveling to Celaeno on the back of a byakhee, for example). With increased space activity in recent decades, they have become slightly more common, following satellites, shuttles, and deep-space probes back to their source.

A Colour seeks out an area rich in bio-organic mass (such as arable soil or shallow water), hides its seeds, and departs. While seeding an area, it also preys upon all nearby life forms to replace the energy used in creating the seeds. Its presence has a malign effect on terrestrial life. Once tainted by the Colour's unearthly hue, plants and animals surge with unhealthy growth, becoming unnaturally large but strangely deformed mockeries of living things.

Once the Colour begins to feed in earnest, the area surrounding its lair is drained of all life, even on a microbiotic level, leaving it barren for decades thereafter. Human and animal life within a few miles of its lair become curiously reluctant to leave the area (largely due to the Colour's studious application of its spell-like abilities). While it does not look it, a Colour is a highly efficient parasite and predator, one that takes great care that potential food cannot escape.

Colours do not speak, although they can plant thoughts in the minds of lesser beings in order to lure victims to them. Some have reported an eerie chime to accompany Colour sightings, and it is possible that these represent some as-yet-unrecorded mode of speech. More likely, these beings communicate with each other via shifts in color-tone, much as mi-go do, or send messages directly from mind to mind.

COMBAT

A Colour Out of Space is difficult to fight because of its elusive nature. Few attack forms can harm it, and it promptly retreats from those that can. Most appearances of a Colour falling to Earth have ended either with it withdrawing back into space or, more often, departing of its own accord once it has fully fed. Colours' eldritch energies are disrupted by strong magnetic currents, so they avoid crossing ley lines or coming within 300 feet of electromagnetic generators.

Ability Drain (Su): A Colour Out of Space attacks by simply flowing over its target (as a touch attack). The victim is allowed a Fort save (DC 20) to mitigate the effects of being enveloped by the Colour. Each round the Colour remains in contact with its victim, it permanently drains 1d3 points from each of its target's ability scores on a failed save, or permanently drains a single point from each ability on a successful save. It releases the target once one of the victim's ability scores reach zero. Beings drained by the Colour become dried, brittle gray husks. Death occurs only if their Constitution reaches 0; otherwise, the character lingers on horribly for 1d6 days; pieces of the victim flake off each time it moves. Once a Colour has drained a number of creatures or characters equal to the total of its ability scores (18+18+12, or 48 for an average Colour), it departs, fully recharged with bio-energy.

Disintegrate (Su): By concentrating its energies, a Colour may disintegrate any substance. The Colour concentrates itself into a ball no more than a foot or so in diameter. It can burn its way through solid matter, although no heat is released, as the Colour absorbs it all. In this manner, it can move through 1 yard of material per minute, minus 1 inch per point of the substance's hardness (minimum of 1 inch of material disintegrated per minute). It rarely uses this as an attack, since it is (a) slow and (b) wasteful of potential nourishment.

Spell-Like Abilities: As a full-round action, a Colour may use any one of the following spell-like abilities at will—*bind enemy, cloud memory, contact human, detect life, dominate animal, dominate person, hypnotism, siren's song, soul singing.*

Imprisoned by Magnetism: A Colour Out of Space can be trapped within a particularly powerful magnetic field.

LARVA

A Colour's egg-seeds are crystal, iridescent spheres about 3 inches across. These crystalline bubbles are highly brittle and shatter or pop if roughly handled (hardness 1, 10 hp), leaving nothing behind. If placed in a secure spot, they begin to absorb life energy from surrounding microscopic organisms, hatching in 1d3 weeks (possibly much longer if stranded in barren desert soil, arctic ice, or even indefinitely if stored in a sterile containment facility). These crystal-bubbles are comparatively harmless, having no attack form, but each one that ruptures triggers an unnatural growth spurt in the surrounding area. Egg seeds prosper, while living things become mutated, fey, and strange, stimulating a more bountiful harvest for its more fortunate siblings. An investigator exposed to several broken crystal-bubbles at once might, on a failed Fort check (DC 10, +1 per seed-egg broken), experience a bizarre growth spurt or physical distortion.

The emerging larva bear little resemblance to their parent, being material in substance and jellylike in substance. They possess the spell-like abilities of a full-grown Colour and use them to draw small prey. They are also capable of locomotion (speed 15 feet, climb 15 feet) and can venture forth from their crèche in search of sustenance. A larval Colour has a lessened form of ability drain and can, when threatened, use an acid attack either as a ranged or touch attack.

Ability Drain (Ex): A larval Colour that comes into contact with a living creature attempts to drain 1d3 points from a random ability per round (Fort save, DC 12, to reduce this to a single point per round). This loss is permanent. A larva that drains enough points to equal a full-grown Colour's ability scores (48 in all) transforms into an adult Colour and departs skyward, abandoning its earthly cradle.

Acid Attack (Ex): A larval Colour may dissolve human flesh at the rate of 1d6 points per round. It can also spit out a sizable portion of itself (range 15 feet) at a target who comes to the aid of its first victim, or one who warily (but not warily enough!) keeps his distance.

Spell-Like Abilities: As a full-round action, a larval Colour may use any one of the following spell-like abilities at will—*bind enemy, cloud memory, contact human, detect life, dominate animal, dominate person, hypnotism, siren's song, soul singing.*

CHTHONIAN

Huge Magical Beast (Greater Independent Race) (Earth)
Hit Dice: 8d10+40 (84 hp)
Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 20 ft., burrow 10 ft.
Armor Class: 21 (+1 Dex, +12 natural, –2 size)
Attacks: 4 tentacles +13 melee
Damage: Tentacle 2d4+7
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 30 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks: Improved grab, drain Constitution, crush, *trigger earthquake, dominate person*
Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., intuit direction, fast healing 5, heat immunity, water vulnerability
Saves: Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +7
Abilities: Str 25, Dex 13, Con 20, Int 17, Wis 17, Cha 13
Skills: Concentration +13, Cthulhu Mythos +10, Hide –7, Knowledge (geography) +15, Listen +15, Spot +5
Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Critical (tentacle), Improved Initiative, Iron Will
CR: 8
Climate/Terrain: Any underground (especially under North Africa)
Advancement: 9–15 HD (Huge); 16–32 HD (Gargantuan)
Sanity Loss: 2/1d20

Flowing tentacles and pulpy gray-black, elongated sack of a body . . . . no distinguishing features at all other than the reaching, groping tentacles. Or was there—yes!—a lump in the upper body of the thing . . . a container of sorts for the brain, ganglia, or whichever diseased organ governed this horror's loathsome life!

—Brian Lumley, *The Burrowers Beneath*

A chthonian resembles nothing so much as an immense earthbound squid measuring some 30 feet in length. Its wormlike body glistens with noisome secretions. Huge tentacles writhe at the creature's head, while its tail leaves a trail of fetid mucus in its wake. As it burrows through loose earth or solid rock, terrible chantlike vibrations spread away in all directions.

Chthonians dwell in sub-surface tunnels throughout the world. Their burrows pass deep below the ocean beds, passing through basaltic rock, and ever deeper into the mantle. It's rumored that the majority of chthonians live toward the core of this planet, and that only outcasts, wanderers, and those accidentally caught up in magma swells are found in the cold outer crust where humans thrive. Under the continent of Africa, chthonians are particularly numerous. They frequent a prehuman city called G'harne, which may have served as the arrival point of the chthonians on Earth. Chthonians also purposefully trigger earthquakes for their own purposes. They are aware of the often catastrophic effects earthquakes have on surface populations of humans, and delight in that knowledge.

Chthonians speak their own language, though they can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet, or any chthonian they know of no matter how distant.

Masters of the underworld, chthonians are a horror to any spelunkers unfortunate enough to encounter them. Chthonians can easily batter the life out of most creatures with violent tentacle rakes, though they sometimes prefer to grab opponents and slowly draw their life forth with sucking tentacles. When particularly enraged, or when facing a large group of enemies, a chthonian can rear up to its full length, then drop down to crush many enemies at once. Subtle chthonians rely on their spell-like abilities and spells they have learned to deal with tenacious opponents.

Crush (Ex): A chthonians' crush attack affects a 10-foot-by-20-foot area immediately adjacent to the chthonian. As a full-round action, the chthonian rears up, then falls with its full weight into the area. All creatures in the area must make a Reflex saving throw (DC 17) or take 2d4+10 points of damage. A successful save indicates that only half damage is taken.

Improved Grab (Ex): If the chthonian hits with a tentacle, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without allowing its opponent to make a free attack. The chthonian uses its tentacle to hold the opponent. Each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds (assuming the victim doesn't break free on its action) automatically deals the damage listed for the tentacle attack, in addition to draining Constitution (see below).

Drain Constitution (Ex): Any time the chthonian makes a successful grapple check against a foe it has previously grappled, it deals damage normally and permanently drains 1 Con.

***Trigger Earthquake* (Sp):** A chthonian can use this ability once per week. Using this ability creates an intense tremor that rips the ground for the duration of 1 round. The effect propagates through earth to an effective radius of 1 mile, though minor shaking may be felt for many tens or hundreds of miles beyond that radius. A chthonian within less than 1 mile of the surface also affects all creatures and structures on the surface. (Of course, the deeper the chthonian, the smaller the effective area of the earthquake that propagates to the surface—chthonians deeper than 1 mile cannot affect the surface.) A group of two or more adjacent chthonians may simultaneously trigger an earthquake. Each additional chthonian increases the effective radius by 1 mile.

During this earthquake, chthonian-dug burrows are immune to collapse, but natural tunnels, artificial tunnels, and artificial structures may partly collapse; this deals 8d6 points of damage to any creature caught in the cave-in or structure collapse (Reflex DC 15 for half damage). All creatures (except chthonians) in the area must make a Reflex save (DC 15) or fall down.

***Dominate Person* (Sp):** Usable 3/day, chthonians can take control of the minds of humans as if casting *dominate person* with a caster level of 10th. Chthonians do not suffer Sanity loss or ability damage for using their spell-like abilities.

Fast Healing (Ex): Chthonians heal 5 hit points per round, but they still die if they reach –10 or fewer hit points.

Heat Immunity (Ex): Chthonians are immune to fire and heat damage.

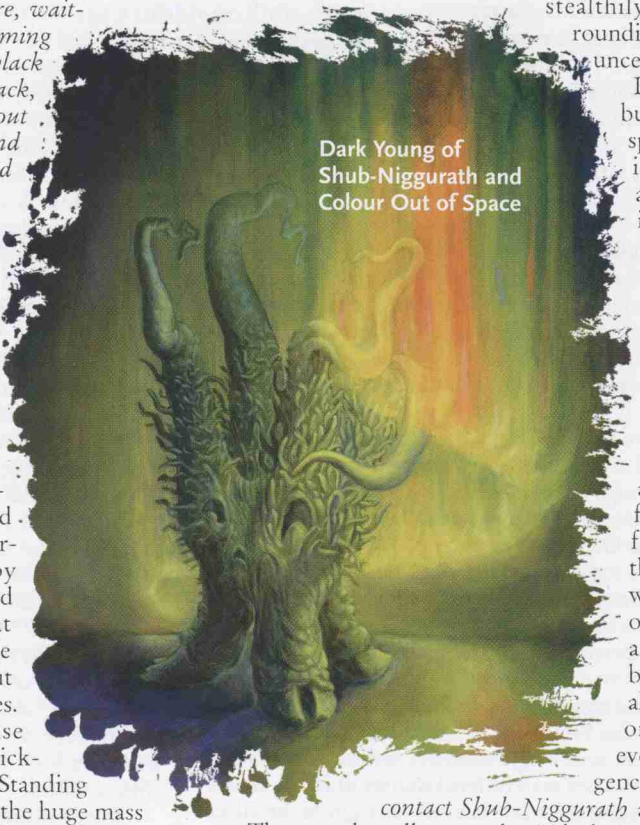
Water Vulnerability (Ex): Chthonians take double normal damage from any attack using water. They are killed outright if fully immersed in it.

DARK YOUNG OF SHUB-NIGGURATH

Huge Aberration (Greater Servitor Race)
Hit Dice: 8d8+24 (60 hp)
Initiative: +3 (Dex)
Speed: 30 ft.
Armor Class: 12 (+1 natural, –2 size, +3 Dex)
Attacks: 4 tentacles +14 melee; or 1 trample +14 melee
Damage: Tentacle 1d6+10; or trample 2d6+10
Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks: Improved grab, constrict, Strength drain
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 20/+2, blindsight, immunities
Saves: Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +10
Abilities: Str 30, Dex 16, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 18, Cha 15
Skills: Disguise +7, Hide +10, Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Spot +11
Feats: Power Attack, Stealthy
Psychic Feats: Sensitive, Biofeedback Trance
CR: 9
Climate/Terrain: Temperate and subtropical forests and swamps
Advancement: 9–16 HD (Huge)
Sanity Loss: 1d3/1d10

Something black . . . that wasn't a tree. Something big and black and ropy, just squatting there, waiting, with ropy arms, squirming and reaching . . . it was the black thing of my dreams—that black, ropy, slimy jelly tree-thing out of the woods. It crawled up and it flowed up on its hoofs and mouths and snaky arms.

—Robert Bloch, "Notebook Found in a Deserted House"



Dark Young of Shub-Niggurath and Colour Out of Space

At first glance or in dim light, a Dark Young might look like no more than one in a row of low trees with twisty branches, their thick trunks covered with leafless vines. Closer examination reveals that the vines and branches are actually an enormous writhing mass of ropy black tentacles punctuated here and there with great suckerlike mouths, the whole form resting atop three stout legs that end in great hooves. Four massive tentacles rise above the main body, each thicker than an elephant's trunk. Standing between 12 and 20 feet high, the huge mass moves with surprising nimbleness for its great bulk, as unwary investigators have found to their regret. Dark Young give off a foul, earthy stench reminiscent of an opened grave.

Dark Young are never encountered indoors, preferring natural surroundings. They typically lurk in dark groves or guard the last remnants of ancient forests against interlopers.

Dark Young share their progenitor's extraordinary fecundity, and thus are often summoned to take part in fertility rituals. Such rites are traditionally held under the dark of the moon around an altar made of unhewn stone surrounded by woods. Wise cultists provide a sacrifice to propitiate the Dark Young, discouraging it from immediately seizing upon and devouring the celebrants. Dark Young are often placed as guardians near open-air Mythos sites (as opposed to Formless Spawn, who sometimes play a similar role in temples and underground environs). Shub-Niggurath's "thousand young" fill this role with great effect, given their ability to hide in and move stealthily through natural surroundings, coupled with their unceasing vigilance.

Dark Young never speak, but they recognize and respect the names of the various Outer Gods. When angry or trampling a foe in combat, they howl and bellow unsettling sounds —few who hear them can ever forget them thereafter.

COMBAT

Their great strength and multiple simultaneous attacks make Dark Young fearful opponents in a fray, particularly since they attack fearlessly any who trespass their chosen or assigned territory. Nor are they merely mindless brutes: Dark Young always know a half-dozen or more spells (one for every 2 points of Intelligence), two of which will be *contact Shub-Niggurath* and *call Shub-Niggurath*. They rarely call upon the "Black Goat of the Woods with a Thousand Young" in the heat of battle, but if a Dark Young is destroyed, the Great Old One will know and take steps to replace it within the next few decades. If angered (for example, by trespassers who have just blown up an altar stone it was guarding), a Dark Young often chooses to trample its foes rather than attacking with its tentacles.

Trample (Ex): As an attack action, a Dark Young can trample Medium-size or smaller creatures for 2d6+10 points of damage. It does not need to stop when entering a victim's threatened area.

A trampled opponent can attempt a free attack in response, but this incur a –4 penalty. If the opponent does not attempt this free attack, she can attempt a Reflex save (DC 20) for half damage.

Immunities (Ex): Dark Young are immune to the effects of heat, explosions, acid, electricity, and poison. They can remain submerged indefinitely, lapsing into stasis (a biofeedback trance of indefinite duration) until uncovered or otherwise awakened. They are not fond of cold and are never found in barren, arctic

regions or above the tree line; being forced into such conditions causes them to lapse into stasis again.

Improved Grab/Constrict (Ex): A Dark Young's tentacle can attempt to grapple a foe it has just struck without allowing the foe to make a free attack. If it succeeds in an opposed grapple check, its foe is pinned (losing its Dex bonus to Armor Class). On the next and every subsequent round the foe remains pinned, she takes 1d6+10 points of damage.

Strength Drain (Su): Rather than constricting an opponent, a Dark Young typically chooses to carry its imprisoned foe to one of its sucker-like maws. On the next and every subsequent round she remains pinned, the victim takes 1d3 points of permanent Strength drain. The effects are so agonizing that all the victim can do is ineffectually writhe and scream as she visibly shrivels before the horrified eyes of her more fortunate friends.



DEEP ONE

Medium-Size Aberration (Lesser Servitor Race) (Aquatic)
Hit Dice: 2d8+4 (13 hp)
Initiative: +2 (Dex)
Speed: 20 ft., swim 40 ft.
Armor Class: 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural)
Attacks: 2 claws +5 melee, bite +0 melee (on land); or 2 claws +5 melee, 2 rakes +5 melee, bite +0 melee (in water); or longspear +5 melee (land or water)
Damage: Claw 1d4+4, bite 2d4+2, rake 2d4+4; longspear 1d8+6
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft. (10 ft. reach with longspear)
Special Qualities: Low-light vision
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +3
Abilities: Str 19, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 6
Skills: Climb +10, Hide +7*, Listen +7*, Move Silently +5, Spot +7*
Feats: Alertness
CR: 2
Climate/Terrain: Temperate and warm aquatic (especially off the coast of Massachusetts)
Advancement: 3–6 HD (Medium-size); 7–13 HD (Large); 14–26 HD (Huge)
Sanity Loss: 0/1d6

I think their predominant color was a grayish-green, though they had white bellies. They were mostly shiny and slippery, but the ridges of their backs were scaly. Their forms vaguely suggested the anthropoid, while their heads were the heads of fish, with prodigious bulging eyes that never closed. At the sides of their necks were palpitating gills and their long paws were webbed. They hopped irregularly, sometimes on hind legs and sometimes on four . . . . their croaking, baying voices . . . held all the dark shades of expression which their staring faces lacked.

—H.P. Lovecraft, "The Shadow Over Innsmouth"

Deep ones are misbegotten creatures of the deep. A deep one appears as an abominable crossbreed of a human and amphibian. Its fins are merged with twisted arms and legs; its bent back is crowned with a long, spiny frill; at its neck, gills gasp for air. A deep one's slender, muscular tail makes it a powerful swimmer, while bulbous eyes give it good vision both in and out of the water.

In the timeless depths of the sea, the deep ones' alien, arrogant lives are coldly beautiful, unbelievably cruel, and effectively immortal. The longer they live, the larger they grow, although a deep one's rate of growth decelerates with each passing year. They come together to mate or worship Great Cthulhu, as well as Father Dagon and Mother Hydra, the oldest and wisest of their race.

Ambitious deep ones interact with humans. They appear to have a monstrous lust to produce hybrid spawn. The reason may lie in the breeding cycle of these beings, of which little is known. Deep ones may be worshiped by humans with whom they regularly interbreed, for deep ones are immortal, unless slain, and so are any hybrid offspring. Typically, hybrids inhabit remote coastal villages. Globally, they inhabit many cities submerged beneath the waves. One is off the coast of Massachusetts near Innsmouth.

Such a hybrid begins life as a human-looking child, though hybrids are sometimes said to have the "Innsmouth look." A hybrid can live into her twenties or longer before the change begins. Over a period of a few months, the human's appearance undergoes a monstrous transformation, until she has become a deep one, both in body and mind.

Deep ones can breathe both air and water. They speak the human languages they previously knew, as well as their own languages of the deep.

COMBAT

In the water, deep ones are dangerous enemies that attack by biting, clawing, and raking with their rear legs. On land, they are less dangerous, for they cannot rake. Deep ones sometimes fight with weapons, typically preferring two-handed melee weapons with reach (such as longspears and tridents). Particularly intelligent deep ones who have learned spells hang back to cast them while their fellows swarm enemies.

Skills: *While underwater, deep ones receive a +4 racial bonus on Hide, Listen, and Spot checks.

DHOLE

Colossal Beast (Greater Independent Race) (Earth)
Hit Dice: 32d10+288 (464 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: 20 ft., burrow 20 ft.
Armor Class: 17 (+15 natural, –8 size)
Attacks: Bite +32 melee
Damage: Bite 4d6+24
Face/Reach: 40 ft. by 200+ ft./25 ft.
Special Attacks: Caustic spittle, improved grab, swallow whole
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 50/+1, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent
Saves: Fort +27, Ref +18, Will +15
Abilities: Str 42, Dex 11, Con 28, Int 7, Wis 21, Cha 17
Skills: Climb +23, Listen +12
CR: 17
Climate/Terrain: Any underground
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 1d4/1d20

Below him the ground was festering with gigantic Dholes, and even as he looked, one reared up several hundred feet and leveled a bleached, viscous end at him.

—H. P. Lovecraft and E. Hoffman Price, "Through the Gate of the Silver Key"



Dholes are gigantic, wormlike burrowing beasts that can reach hundreds of feet in length. Like worms, they possess no visible anatomy, except for colossal mouths ringed with row after row of gnashing teeth.

Dholes are not native to the Earth, and none seem to have been brought here for more than brief periods. This is indeed most fortunate, for they have riddled and left waste several other worlds. They dislike light, though it does not visibly harm them. They are only rarely seen in daylight, and then only on planets that they have thoroughly conquered. Some unknown relation between dholes and chthonians may exist.

Dholes possess some intelligence, but they possess no language or obvious ability to speak with any other creature.

COMBAT

It is difficult to imagine fighting a dhole—one could as well fight a natural disaster. Their gnashing bites, ability to swallow almost anything, and caustic spittle they can lob for miles makes these creatures nigh unstoppable.

Caustic Spittle (Ex): A dhole can spit a glob of caustic goo from its mouth to a range of three miles if it has unrestricted line of sight. The goo covers a 20-foot-radius spread. Creatures or objects in the area must make a successful Reflex save (DC 17) or be engulfed and stuck.

A stuck creature can't move, fight, or cast spells. A stuck creature can break loose as a move action by succeeding at a Strength check (DC 20) or an Escape Artist check (DC 25).

The goo provides one-quarter cover for every 5 feet of the substance between you and an opponent—one-half cover for 10 feet of goo (+2 Armor Class), three-quarters for 15 feet (+7 Armor Class), and total cover for 20 feet or more.

The goo is caustic. All creatures stuck in the goo take 2d4 points of acid damage each round they are stuck. (A victim takes this acid damage on its initiative count.)

Improved Grab (Ex): If the dhole hits with a bite, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without allowing its opponent to make a free attack. The dhole uses its mouth to hold the opponent. Each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds (assuming the victim doesn't break free on its action) automatically deals the damage listed for the bite, or the dhole can choose to swallow its victim whole.

Swallow Whole (Ex): A dhole can try to swallow a grabbed opponent by making another successful grapple check on a later round. The victim can be up to one size category smaller than the swallowing creature. Swallowed creatures are killed instantly.

DIMENSIONAL SHAMBLER

Large Outsider
(Lesser Independent Race)
Hit Dice: 3d8+9 (22 hp)
Initiative: +4 (Improved Initiative)
Speed: 40 ft.
Armor Class: 12 (–1 size, +3 natural)
Attacks: Claw +7 melee
Damage: Claw 1d6+6
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Improved grab, planar jaunt
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/+1, darkvision 60 ft., intuit direction
Saves: Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +3
Abilities: Str 19, Dex 11, Con 17, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8
Skills: Escape Artist +6, Hide +2, Listen +5, Move Silently +4, Wilderness Lore +4
Feats: Improved Initiative
CR: 3
Climate/Terrain: Any
Advancement: 4–6 HD (Large); 7–13 HD (Huge)
Sanity Loss: 0/1d10

Shuffling towards him in the darkness was the gigantic, blasphemous form of a thing not wholly ape and not wholly insect. Its hide hung loosely upon its frame, and its rugose, dead-eyed rudiment of a head swayed drunkenly from side to side. Its forepaws were extended, with talons spread wide, and its whole body was taut with murderous malignity despite its utter lack of facial description.

—H. P. Lovecraft and Hazel Heald, "The Horror in the Museum"



Dimensional shamblers are cancerous entities that infest the cracks between dimensions. Taloned and loose-skinned, these 8-foot-tall creatures have a simian posture, though their heads and legs seem to blend most unsettlingly into insect versions of the same.

Dimensional shamblers come and go as they please, walking between worlds in search of prey. Because of this ability, the popular spell *call dimensional shambler* is used by aspiring sorcerers to gain the attention of these passing creatures.

COMBAT

Shamblers travel the planes at will, signaling their transition by a shimmer and fade. Often, a dimensional shambler attempts to grab some likely victim, then flees to a nearby dimension beyond the reach of the normal world (usually another plane of existence) where it may feast in privacy. Objects and victims phased away in this manner are never found again. Some dimensional shamblers are bright enough to learn one or two spells, which they use to enhance their abilities in or before combat, if applicable.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a dimensional shambler hits with a claw, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without allowing its opponent a free attack. The shambler uses its claw to hold the opponent. Assuming the victim doesn't break free on its action, each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals the damage listed for the claw, or the shambler can choose to take the victim with it on a planar jaunt.

Planar Jaunt (Su): A dimensional shambler can shift between the physical world and another plane of existence as a free action, then shift back to the physical world as a move action. If a dimensional shambler has a Medium-size or smaller foe grappled, the foe also shifts planes with the shambler.

ELDER THING

Large Outsider (Lesser Independent Race)
Hit Dice: 5d8+15 (37 hp)
Initiative: +1 (Dex)
Speed: 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (poor), swim 20 ft.
Armor Class: 15 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural)
Attacks: 5 tentacles +8 melee
Damage: Tentacle 1d4+4
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Improved grab, constrict, spells
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 15/+1, blindsight, amphibious
Saves: Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +5
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 13
Skills: Concentration +8, Cthulhu Mythos +8, Hide +8, Innuendo +10, Knowledge (occult) +11, Knowledge (history) +11, Listen +10, Spot +5
Feats: Dodge
CR: 4
Climate/Terrain: Any cold and/or aquatic
Advancement: 6–11 HD (Large)
Sanity Loss: 0/1d6

They represented some ridged barrel-shaped object with thin horizontal arms radiating spokelike from a central ring and with vertical knobs or bulbs projecting from the head and base of the barrel. Each of these knobs was the hub of a system of five long, flat, triangularly tapering arms arranged around it like the arms of a starfish.

—H. P. Lovecraft, "Dreams in the Witch House"

An elder thing stands about 8 feet tall, with a 6-foot torso. It has wings that neatly fold up into slots along the side of its body.

Elder things came to Earth two billion years ago, and are attributed (in arcane tomes) with seeding Earth with multicellular life. Their race began to degenerate before man evolved, and they at least partially lost their former ability to fly through space on membranous wings. They bred one of their more terrible creations, the shoggoths, to serve as slaves. Their civilization was eventually wiped out because of wars with other races and revolts instigated by their former slaves, the shoggoths. Currently, the only known remnant of elder thing civilization is a city frozen under a glacier in Antarctica; however, the elder things may still have colonies in the deepest waters in other areas.

Elder things communicate by piping whistles in their own language, though they know and can approximate several other languages as well, including most human languages.

COMBAT

Elder things prefer to wield spells, but they will enter melee if a given contest seems easily won. In melee combat, an elder thing may use all five tentacles at once, but no more than three against a single target.

Improved Grab (Ex): If an elder thing hits with a tentacle, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without allowing its opponent a free attack. The elder thing can use its tentacle to hold the opponent. Assuming the victim doesn't break free on its action, each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals the damage listed for the tentacle, plus constriction damage.

Constrict (Ex): If its opponent has been grappled on a previous round, and is still held, the elder thing can constrict it, dealing 2d4+6 extra points of bludgeoning damage with each subsequent successful grapple check.

Spells: Most elder things know 1d4 spells chosen from the Magic chapter. Elder things never lose Sanity when casting spells (since they don't have a Sanity score).

Amphibious (Ex): Elder things can survive on land and in water equally well.

FIRE VAMPIRE

Diminutive Aberration (Lesser Servitor Race) (Fire)
Hit Dice: 2d8 (9 hp)
Initiative: +3 (Dex)
Speed: Fly 10 ft. (perfect)
Armor Class: 17 (+4 size, +3 Dex)
Attacks: Touch +0 melee
Damage: Touch 1d6 fire + 1d4 Con absorption
Face/Reach: 1 ft. by 1 ft./0 ft.
Special Attacks: Fire touch, spells, steal essence
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 20/+1, darkvision 60 ft., fire subtype, conflagration, immunities
Saves: Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +6
Abilities: Str 1, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 17
Skills: Hide +20, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Search +2, Spot +8
CR: 3
Climate/Terrain: Any
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 0/1d4

There appeared thousands of tiny points of light . . . . The myriad points of light were living entities of flame! For wherever they touched, fire sprang up.

—August Derleth,
"The Dweller in Darkness"

A fire vampire is a mote of living flame, no more than a foot in diameter when fully expanded. The core of a fire vampire appears as a blot of superheated plasma. When this core enters a suitable atmosphere, it flames and drips with fire.

Fire vampires are servitors of a Great Old One known as Cthugha. It is possible that Cthugha himself is some ancient offshoot or variety of fire vampire, though the relationship is unclear. Like Cthugha, fire vampires dwell on or near the star Fomalhaut. They come to Earth when summoned, or when accompanying Cthugha.

Fire vampires do not normally communicate, though they may have the capacity if provided some magical means to do so.

COMBAT

Fire Touch/Steal Essence (Ex): A fire vampire's touch attack sets fire to flammable objects and deals fire damage. The same touch also steals a living creature's essence, which the fire vampire gains.

Fire Touch (Su): If a fire vampire makes a successful touch attack, the object or creature touched takes 1d6 points of fire damage.

Spells: Some fire vampires know 1d4 spells, chosen from the Magic chapter. Fire vampires never lose Sanity points when casting spells (since they don't have a Sanity score). Fire vampires can cast spells by force of will, even spells that have verbal and somatic components.

Steal Essence (Su): In addition to causing fire damage, a fire vampire's successful touch attack damages a living creature's Constitution score by 1d4 points. The fire vampire can immediately add those points to its own Constitution score, gaining all associated benefits of a high Constitution. A fire vampire can never gain more than double its original Constitution score in this manner. The stolen Con points return at their standard rate to the victim, but the fire vampire loses stolen Con at a rate of 5 per hour.

Conflagration (Ex): A fire vampire is misty and translucent, and its fiery mass makes its movement unusual. It can't "run" (that is, move four times its speed as a full-round action), but it does fly with speed 10 feet (perfect maneuverability). While flying, it can pass through small holes or narrow openings, even mere cracks. However, fire vampires are affected by strong winds, and may not enter water or other liquids.

Immunities (Ex): Immune to poison and critical hits.

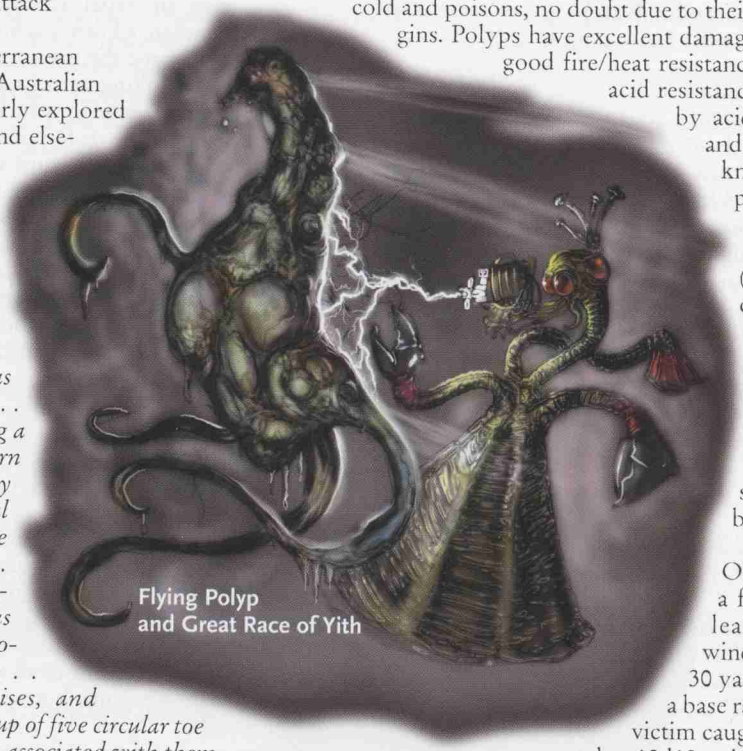
FLYING POLYP

Huge Aberration (Greater Independent Race)
Hit Dice: 12d8+84 (138 hp)
Initiative: +1 (Dex)
Speed: 30 ft., fly 45 ft. (good)
Armor Class: 17 (+8 natural, –2 size, +1 Dex)

Attacks: 2d6 tentacles +17 melee touch attack
Damage: Tentacle 1d6+15
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Wind blast, wind storm, wind capture
Special Qualities: Incorporeal, blindsight, immunities, damage reduction 20/+2, resist heat/fire (10), resist acid (20).
Saves: Fort +11, Ref +5, Will +11
Abilities: Str 30, Dex 12, Con 25, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 10
Skills: Listen +28, Spot +28
Feats: Alertness, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Whirlwind Attack
CR: 13
Climate/Terrain: Subterranean chasms (beneath the Australian Outback, certain poorly explored caverns in Virginia, and elsewhere), interstellar spaces
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 1d3/1d20

[A] horrible elder race of half-polypous, utterly alien entities . . . only partly material—as we understand matter . . . their mental world being a strange, nonvisual pattern of impressions. . . . They had the power of aerial motion, despite the absence of wings . . . . There were veiled suggestions of a monstrous plasticity, and of temporary lapses in visibility. . . Singular whistling noises, and colossal footprints made up of five circular toe marks, seemed also to be associated with them.

—H. P. Lovecraft, "The Shadow Out of Time"



Flying Polyp and Great Race of Yith

Flickering in and out of sight, these semicorporeal monstrosities seem, when visible, to be composed of a writhing cancerous mass that constantly changes shape—extruding and reabsorbing organs, sloughing off dead matter that disintegrates into nothingness, darting out loathsome feelers like the tongues of oddly warped snakes, all to the accompaniment of a continual piping or whistling.

Originally from immeasurably distant universes, flying polyps came to our solar system hundreds of millions of years ago and reared great cyclopean cities filled with windowless towers of black basalt over bottomless abysses in the earth. Defeated and imprisoned beneath their own cities by the Great Race, they long ago broke the seals and utterly destroyed their foes. Diminished in numbers, but not in strength or malice, they still lurk in their long-tenanted abysses deep within the earth. Whenever they detect other life near the openings of one of the chasms, wells, or pits that lead to the upper world, they emerge to prey horribly upon all beings they encounter before returning once more to the eternal darkness below.

While flying polyps undoubtedly have their own language, none who have encountered them have ever had leisure to study it, as such encounters inevitably result in the destruction or panic flight of one or the other of the entities involved. Nor have the polyps, while intelligent, ever been known to express an interest in mastering the languages of other beings. Given that the polyps' mental composition was considered bizarrely alien even by the Yithians, any such language would bear no resemblance to human speech.

COMBAT

Flying polyps attack with utter ferocity, and without concern for their own safety, whenever they detect anything lurking around the entrance to one of their chasms. At close quarters, they can extrude tentacles that briefly brush prey and deal damage resembling desiccation or extreme windburn; such victims usually fall into slimy rottenness within mere seconds. Apparently, a flying polyp can generate an infinite supply of these tentacles without diminishing its own mass. Due to their incorporeality, a polyp's tentacles ignore any armor worn by the target, although Dexterity and dodge bonuses still apply. They always attack as many foes as possible, rather than centering their attentions on a single target among many.

Flying polyps can become invisible at will, but their endless maddening piping continues nonetheless. They enjoy immunity to cold and poisons, no doubt due to their extraterrestrial origins. Polyps have excellent damage reduction (20/+2), good fire/heat resistance (10), and superior acid resistance. (Surfaces affected by acid simply slough off and dissolve). Their one known weakness, exploited by the Great Race, is a vulnerability to electricity (half damage on successful save, double damage on a failed save). Electrical impulses somehow disrupt their control over their tissues, causing them to scatter and splatter beyond reclamation.

Wind Blast (Su): Once every 5 rounds, a flying polyp can release a devastating wind blast in a cylinder 30 yards in diameter with a base range of 60 feet. Each victim caught in the wind blast takes 10d10 points of damage: Their flesh on the side facing the polyp is flayed and literally stripped from their bones by the force of the wind, while on the opposite side, it is dehydrated and severely burned by wind. In addition, each victim is blown back 3 feet for every point of damage he receives.

Wind Storm (Su): Given time, a polyp can create very powerful localized storms. The wind picks up speed at the rate of +30 mph per round. Thus, the first round a gentle zephyr stirs, which by the next round has grown to a strong wind (30 mph),

then a windstorm (60 mph), then a hurricane (90, 120, and 150 mph), and finally a tornado (180, 210, 240, and 270, maxing out at 300 mph). See Table 5–16: Wind Effects (page 87) for the damage such high winds can cause.

No rainfall accompanies this phenomena, which has a radius of no more than 1 mile at its height. The polyp can maintain the storm for 1 round per HD.

Wind Capture (Su): This unusual attack enables a flying polyp to somehow retard the progress of a target that has drawn its attention. Normally the polyp uses this power to slow down escaping prey as it pursues them, drawing them ever nearer. A wind emanating from the polyp begins to draw the target *against* the direction of the wind, moving it toward the polyp (or "upwind"). If the victim actively struggles against the effect, she may attempt a Will save; if she succeeds, she may move away from the polyp (or "downwind") at half her normal land speed for 1 round. The polyp may affect as many targets as it has Hit Dice. It's quite possible that several characters in a large group will find themselves totally unaffected by the strange underground breeze while it works upon those around them.

FORMLESS SPAWN

Large Ooze (Lesser Servitor Race)
Hit Dice: 5d10+10+15 (53 hp)
Initiative: +5 (Dex)
Speed: slither 45 ft., climb 30 ft.
Armor Class: 15 (+5 Dex)
Attacks: 4 pseudopods +7 melee; or 1 bite +7 melee
Damage: Pseudopod 1d8+5, bite (swallow whole)
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./20 ft.
Special Attacks: Improved grab, ingestion, swallow whole
Special Qualities: Immunities, darkvision, ooze qualities
Saves: Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +4
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 20, Con 14, Int —, Wis 10, Cha –
Skills: Climb +12, Hide +5, Tumble +6, Wilderness Lore +10
Feats: Track
CR: 8
Climate/Terrain: Temples, subterranean caverns
Advancement: 6–10 HD (Huge); 11–20 HD (Gargantuan); 21+ HD (Colossal)
Sanity Loss: 1/1d10
*Formless Spawn receive a +10 racial bonus to all Wilderness Lore checks.

[I]t poured over the rim of the basin like a torrent of black quicksilver, taking as it reached the floor an undulant ophidian form . . . . The monstrosity was too awful to permit of even a brief contemplation; also, its intentions were too plainly hostile, and it gave evidence of anthropophagic inclinations, for it slithered toward us with an unbelievable speed and celerity of motion, opening as it came a toothless mouth of amazing capacity . . . . We saw that our departure from the fane of Tsathoggua had become most imperative . . . .

—Clark Ashton Smith,
"The Tale of Satampra Zeiros"

When at rest, a Formless Spawn seems a mere pool of utterly opaque black liquid that gives off a fetid odor reminiscent of some primal swamp. When roused, it extrudes a menacing head with gaping maw and great luminous eyes. It can extend or retract arms or pseudopods at will, grow dozens of legs, or indeed assume any form it pleases. Whatever its form, it retains its shiny blackness, like liquid obsidian.

Formless Spawn are typically found resting in great three-legged bowls or braziers of incised bronze within shrines or temples dedicated to Tsathoggua, that most ancient of all the Great Old Ones. When such a temple is profaned by the entrance of unauthorized beings (such as investigators), the Formless Spawn rises up to slay or repel the intruders. As a perfect guardian, a Formless Spawn rarely pursues foes who escape the precincts it guards. However, it may be willing to make an exception for persistent trespassers, in which case it will tirelessly pursue its chosen foe until he or it is destroyed, then return to its original vigilance.

Formless Spawn never speak—presumably by preference, as the evidence suggest they could form speech organs if they chose. Similarly, while they may choose to obey the compulsion of a stronger will if it furthers their dark master's incomprehensible aims, there is no evidence that they understand language as such, other than the name of Tsathoggua himself.

COMBAT

When roused, a Formless Spawn makes a fearful opponent. Its protean nature enables it to change form at a whim, creating or reabsorbing limbs as free actions, slipping through the smallest cracks, or reassembling severed parts (say, if blown apart by a powerful explosion). A Formless Spawn can lash out with long thin pseudopods, attacking opponents up to 20 feet away as easily as those adjacent to its main mass. Its yielding surface makes it immune to all weapon damage, whether by mundane or magic weapons, but spells, fire, chemicals, and acids affect it normally.

Formless Spawn rarely know spells other than *contact Tsathoggua* and *call Tsathoggua*, but a few have an impressive array of incantations and rituals to draw from, should they choose to use them. In any case, Tsathoggua is instantly aware whenever one of his spawn is destroyed, although he rarely intervenes.

Improved Grab (Ex): If the Formless Spawn succeeds with its pseudopod attack, it deals normal damage and can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without allowing its opponent a free attack. If it succeeds, its foe is automatically pinned (a pinned victim loses its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class). On the same or following round, it may attempt to swallow its victim whole (see below); this requires another successful grapple check.

Ingestion (Ex): Instead of attacking with its pseudopods, a Formless Spawn may choose to bite an opponent. If the bite attack succeeds, it does no damage; instead, the Formless Spawn automatically swallows its victim whole (see below). The victim is held immobile inside the spawn's protoplasmic mass, unable to take any action, but horribly aware of his surroundings.

Swallow Whole (Ex): The spawn can choose to hold a swallowed character immobilized (but unharmed) or automatically deal 2 points of damage each round. When the victim reaches –10 hp, its body is completely absorbed by the Formless Spawn.

A Formless Spawn can swallow a single Large creature or up to four Medium-size creatures (such as investigators). Once it has swallowed an opponent, it cannot move until it either disgorges its foe or fully digests him (by reducing him to –10 hit points).

Ooze Qualities: Oozes are immune to poison, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing. They have no clear front or back and are therefore not subject to critical hits or flanking. Oozes are blind, but have the blindsight special quality. They have no Intelligence scores, and are therefore immune to all mind-affecting spells.

Oozes do not have a natural armor bonus to Armor Class, but they are nevertheless difficult to kill because their bodies are mostly simple protoplasm. This is reflected by bonus hit points (in addition to those from Hit Dice and Constitution scores) according to size.

GHOUL

Medium-Size Undead (Lesser Independent Race)
Hit Dice: 2d12 (13 hp)
Initiative: +1 (Dex)
Speed: 30 ft.
Armor Class: 14 (+3 natural, +1 Dex)
Attacks: 2 claws +4 melee, bite –1 melee
Damage: Claw 1d6+3, bite 1d6+1
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Improved grab, worry
Special Qualities: Spells, undead traits
Saves: Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +3
Abilities: Str 17, Dex 13, Con —, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 13
Skills: Climb +5, Concentration +3, Hide +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +6, Search +5, Spot +7
Feats: Alertness
CR: 2
Climate/Terrain: Any underground (usually city sewers)
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 0/1d6

These figures were seldom completely human, but often approached humanity in varying degrees. Most of the bodies, while roughly bipedal, had a forward slumping, and a vaguely canine cast. The texture of the majority was a kind of unpleasant rubberiness.

—H. P. Lovecraft, "Pickman's Model"



Hound of Tindalos and Ghoul

Ghouls are rubbery, loathsome humanoids with hooflike feet, canine features, and claws. They are often encrusted with grave mold collected as they feed.

Ghouls dwell in horrible squalor in sewer systems beneath many cities. Sometimes, humans lured by dark knowledge go to live among them. A human who does so transforms into a ghoul over a prolonged period of time. Ghouls speak human languages (though often with a terrible lisp) in a debased form described as "gibbering" or "meeping."

COMBAT

Ghouls are always hungry for the flesh of the living, but usually sate themselves by consuming the corpses of the dead. When a ghoul's bite strikes home, it worries the victim with its fangs each round it can maintain a hold.

Improved Grab (Ex): If ghoul hits with a bite, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without allowing its opponent a free attack. The ghoul uses its mouth to hold the opponent. Assuming the victim doesn't break free on its action, each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals the damage listed for the bite attack, plus worry damage.

Worry (Ex): If grappled on the previous round, the ghoul continues to bite its prey, dealing 1d6+5 extra points of piercing damage with each subsequent successful grapple check.

Spells: A few ghouls know 1d4 spells chosen from the Magic chapter. Ghouls never lose Sanity points when casting spells (since they don't have a Sanity score).

Undead Traits (Ex): Undead creatures are immune to poison, paralysis, stunning, disease, and mind-affecting spells. In addition, they are immune to any effect requiring a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. They are not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, or ability drain. Undead are not at risk of death from massive damage, but they are destroyed at 0 hit points or below. They also have 60-ft. darkvision.

CREATING A GHOUL

"Ghoul" is a template that can be added to any humanoid creature (referred to hereafter as the "character"). The creature's type changes to "undead." It uses all the character's statistics and special abilities except as noted here. (For more rules for this type of creature, see Templates, page 190.)

Hit Dice: Increase to d12.

Speed: Same as the character.

Armor Class: The ghoul has +3 natural armor, or the character's natural armor, whichever is better.

Damage: Creatures without natural weapons gain two primary claw attacks and a secondary bite attack (second-

ary attacks are made with a –5 penalty to the creature's primary attack). Ghoul claws deal a base 1d6 points of damage. A ghoul's bite deals a base 1d6 points of damage and only half the creature's Strength modifier (an attribute of secondary attacks). Creatures that already possess natural claw and bite attacks use their original values for those attacks.

Special Attacks: A ghoul retains all the character's special attacks and also gains those listed below.

Improved Grab (Ex): If the ghoul hits with its bite, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as described above.

Worry (Ex): If the ghoul maintains a hold after a bite attack, it deals extra damage as described above.

Spells: The ghoul can cast any spells it could cast while alive.

Special Qualities: A ghoul retains all the character's special qualities and those listed below, and also gains the undead type.

Saves: Same as the character.

Abilities: A ghoul gains +6 to Strength, and +2 to Dexterity and Charisma, but being undead, has no Constitution score.

Skills: Same as the character.

Feats: Ghouls gain the Alertness feat.

Advancement: Same as the character.

GNOPH-KEH

Large Magical Beast (Cold) (Greater Independent Race)
Hit Dice: 8d10+48 (92 hp)
Initiative: +3 (Dex)
Speed: 35 ft.
Armor Class: 21 (+9 natural, –1 size, +3 Dex)
Attacks: 1 horn +14 melee, 2 claws +9 melee (slash×2); or 1 horn +14 melee, 4 claws +9 melee (slash×4)
Damage: Horn 1d8+6, claw (slash×2) 1d6+6 each or claw (slash×4) 1d6+3 each
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Goring charge, summon blizzard, spells
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/+2, cold aura, darkvision, low-light vision, immunities, vulnerable to fire and heat attacks
Saves: Fort +12, Ref +9, Will +8
Abilities: Str 22, Dex 17, Con 23, Int 17, Wis 19, Cha 18
Skills: Climb +9, Hide +14, Jump +9, Listen +10, Search +4, Spot +10, Swim +5, Wilderness Lore +5
Feats: Endurance, Improved Critical (horn), Iron Will, Power Attack, Track
CR: 10
Climate/Terrain: Arctic tundra
Advancement: 9–16 HD (Huge)
Sanity Loss: 0/1d10

. . . the sharp horn of the Gnoph-keh, the hairy myth-thing of the Greenland ice, that walked sometimes on two legs, sometimes on four, and sometimes on six.

—H. P. Lovecraft and Hazel Heald, "The Horror in the Museum"

With its dirty white fur and great scarlet claws, a gnoph-keh looks at first glance somewhat like a great polar bear as it erupts from cover beneath a snowbank and lopes to attack. Only those who survive its fierce onslaught have the leisure to notice its abnormalities: it has too many legs (six, not four); its claws are not blood-stained, but naturally black and red; its great yellow teeth are stronger and larger than any bear's could possibly be; and it has a wicked 2-foot-long horn in the center of its muzzle. Worse of all, the wicked intelligence in its piercing red eyes could never be found in any simple animal, no matter how fierce.

Gnoph-keh haunt Arctic regions, favoring ice caps, glaciers, and frozen tundras for their hunting-grounds. They typically make their lairs in icy caves on peninsulas or rocky snow-covered isles in the Arctic Sea, where hunting is best. Looking like relics from the days of saber-toothed tigers and mastodons, as indeed they are, they often hibernate for long periods. Even when active, they often sleep a decade at a time. More than once a hibernating gnoph-keh has been found by explorers and scientists, then carried off in triumph as an unusually well-preserved previously unrecorded Pleistocene species. In every case, the creature wreaks horrible vengeance when it eventually awakens, destroying most of the evidence of its "discovery" as it smashes the museum or camp to bloody flinders. While gnoph-keh prefer cold climates, they can survive quite well in temperate climes for months at a time, should they find themselves carried off to such regions—or otherwise have reasons to call them hither.

Gnoph-keh speak their own language—a collocation of wailing howls that travels for great distances on the wind, sounding to human ears like the lamentations of ghostly wolves. It is rare that two or more members of this almost-extinct species happen to meet; hence it is more likely that a character will hear a gnoph-keh when it is howling prayers to Ithaqua. Gnoph-keh also have a facility for human speech. Often in the course of their centuries of hunting and lurking, they learn the languages of those they live near and prey upon. Their linguistic acquisitions include Inuit, Lapp, Abasani, and various Siberian tongues, including many now long extinct that any linguist would give his right arm to hear (a sacrifice some investigators have unintentionally made). Gnoph-keh lack proper vocal equipment (such as a tongue or palate) for human speech, but many a listener has sometime fancied he could make out an occasional word in the distant howling that came to him on the wind (0/1d3 Sanity).

COMBAT

More dangerous than any maddened polar bear or tropical rhino, gnoph-keh combine the brute strength and ferocity of a great beast with the malign cunning of an evil cultist. They love to play with their prey, typically slaying one member of an exploring party with each assault, then returning the next day or week to pick off another, and then another, until none are left.

A gnoph-keh's favorite attack is its goring charge (see below), but for close quarters, it can lash out with its horn and claws. Against multiple foes, it can rear up on its hindmost legs and attack with four claws rather than just two. While using this tactic, it halves its damage bonus, since it cannot strike as forcefully and still maintain its balance. (This tactic is listed as "slash×4" in the creature's stat block.)

Damage: Nipper 2d4+7; or lightning gun (see page 124)
Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Lightning weapon
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/+1, darkvision 60 ft., mind transference
Saves: Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +16
Abilities: Str 25, Dex 7, Con 20, Int 36, Wis 29, Cha 15. When possessing another, a Yithian takes on the physical stats of that form (Str, Dex, Con) but retains its own mental stats (Int, Wis, Cha); however, due to unfamiliarity with the new form, its new Dex is 4 points below that of the host body.
Skills: Appraise +14, Bluff –3, Computer Use +17, Craft (Great Race tech) +21, Demolitions +15, Disable Device +17, Forgery +17, Gather Information +12, Knowledge (astronomy, biology, chemistry, electronics, mathematics, and any five other reflecting the focus of that particular Yithian's researches) +15 each, Operate Heavy Machinery +5, Psychic Focus +12, Repair +20, Research +26, Search +19, Speak Other Language (any four) +15
Feats: Expertise, Lightning Reflexes, Gearhead, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Sharp Eye, Trustworthy, Weapon Proficiency
Psychic Feats: Sensitive, Biofeedback Trance, Mind Probe, Mind Reading, Telepathy
CR: 10

All gnoph-keh venerate Ithaqua, and all know the spell *call Ithaqua*, which they will use if seriously threatened (or just thoroughly annoyed). Any given gnoph-keh has a 75% chance of knowing one spell per point of Intelligence.

Goring Charge (Ex): When a gnoph-keh charges (as a full-round action), its horn impales its target and deals double damage (2d8+12). When it succeeds in goring an opponent, the gnoph-keh typically howls in triumph and carries the unfortunate away. The victim screams in agony if still alive and conscious. Witnessing this grisly spectacle costs 0/1d6 Sanity. The impaled character loses 1d4 points per round from massive internal injuries.

After the gnoph-keh carries its prey to a handy nearby precipice, it then likes to toss the victim over with a sudden shake of its great head. If no cliff is available, it will throw the victim into the sea (hypothermia damage applies if the character is still alive after the impact) or across the wide frozen plain (for [1d6+4]×10 falling damage).



Summon Blizzard (Su): A gnoph-keh has the innate ability, granted by Ithaqua himself, to summon a small blizzard centered on itself (100-yard radius). This is a full-round action. On those rare occasions when multiple gnoph-keh gather, they can combine their powers to create gigantic blizzards. Anyone caught in such a blizzard takes cold damage as described in the Combat chapter (see Weather Hazards, page 87).

Cold Aura (Su): As a full-round action, a gnoph-keh can choose to create a zone of intense cold around itself, lowering the temperature up to 20°F per HD it has. Characters exposed to intense cold take environmental damage as described in the Combat chapter (see Cold Dangers, page 86). The gnoph-keh can combine its cold aura and summon blizzard abilities to devastating effect.

GREAT RACE OF YITH (YITHIAN)

Huge Aberration (Greater Independent Race)
Hit Dice: 10d8+40 (85 hp)
Initiative: –2 (Dex)
Speed: 15 ft.
Armor Class: 18 (+12 natural, –2 size, –2 Dex)
Attacks: 2 nippers +12 melee; or lightning gun +5 ranged; or by artifact
Climate/Terrain: Permian cyclopean cities, research outposts (including one on the Moon), or wherever their research takes them.
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 0/1d6 (cone-being form only)

[E]normous iridescent cones, about ten feet high and ten feet wide at the base, and made up of some ridgy, scaly, semielastic matter. From their apexes projected four flexible, cylindrical members, each a foot thick . . . . These members were sometimes contracted almost to nothing, and sometimes extended to any distance up to about ten feet. Terminating two of them were enormous claws or nippers. At the end of a third were four red, trumpetlike appendages. The fourth terminated in an irregular yellowish globe some two feet in diameter and having three great dark eyes . . . . The great base of the central cone was fringed with a rubbery, gray substance which moved the whole entity through expansion and contraction.

—H. P. Lovecraft,
"The Shadow Out of Time"

Extinct in the present day, the Great Race may nonetheless occasionally be encountered in one of two forms: the huge cone-shaped being described above (via a gate, time-travel device, or simply released from a stasis

field), or as travelers possessing the bodies of other beings (typically humans in our era). Such travelers appear normal to the eye, but betray shocking gaps in their knowledge of modern mores and culture on occasion.

The self-named Great Race of Yith are alien entities who fled their own world by projecting their minds into great cone-beings who dwelt on Earth in the distant past. When these cone-beings were overwhelmed in turn some 50 million years ago, they projected themselves into the bodies of beetle-folk who will be the dominant species in our distant future. True scientists, they are continually projecting themselves across time by exchanging minds with individuals of other races, including our own. In such cases, the human's mind spends several years as a sort of pet in a Great Race body in the distant past, while the Yithian mind uses the human body for its own purposes. A typical possessed body will travel widely, often to very strange locations, as the Yithian intelligence within seeks to learn as much as possible in the limited time at its disposal. When it is ready to return, the human's memory of its sojourn in the past is erased, with the effect that the original personality seems to return. All knowledge of the intervening years is lost to amnesia.

On occasion, a possessed body will die in some mishap, meaning that the original human personality can never return. Such unfortunates trapped in the past generally go hopelessly insane in short order. At times, a Yithian whose conical body is slowly dying will choose to permanently exchange it for a body it can possess; the displaced personality is then trapped in the dying cone.

The Great Race has a great facility for languages. A typical specimen speaks several hundred tongues learned over the course of its extremely long life and researches. Yithian culture is highly scientific—although it is "weird science" by our standards—and this is naturally reflected in their attitudes, lairs, and laboratories. They never lie among themselves; this gives them a –5 racial penalty to deceit-based skills such as Bluff.

COMBAT

While perfectly capable of defending themselves, the Great Race generally prefer to avoid melee, as the thought of getting hacked apart by lesser beings is distasteful to these potential immortals. When apprised of a threat, they tend to seal off the affected area, activate sophisticated electrical or sonic traps, and either arm themselves with lightning guns (see page 124) or stage a prudent withdrawal via a *create time gate* or a stasis device. If hopelessly trapped, they can simply will their bodies to die (a full-round action that takes effect 3 rounds later).

Mind Transference (Su): If faced with a hopeless situation, one of the Great Race will often transfer its mind into the body of some being from its future (which can be any time in the past 50 million years, our own present, or the far distant future).

GUG

Huge Giant
(Lesser Independent Race)
Hit Dice: 16d8+64 (136 hp)
Initiative: –1 (Dex)
Speed: 40 ft.
Armor Class: 15 (–2 size, –1 Dex, +8 natural)
Attacks: 4 claws +19 melee; or 1 bite +18 melee
Damage: Claw 2d4+7; or bite 1d8+7
Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks: Rend 2d4+10 (2 claws), 6d4+10 (3 claws), or 8d4+10 (4 claws)
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 15/+1, spells, darkvision 60 ft.
Saves: Fort +14, Ref +4, Will +5
Abilities: Str 25, Dex 9, Con 19, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 11
Skills: Concentration +9, Listen +15
Feats: Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claw)
CR: 10
Climate/Terrain: Any underground
Advancement: 17–33 HD (Huge); 34–62 HD (Gargantuan)
Sanity Loss: 0/1d8



Lloigor and Gug

It was a paw, fully two feet and a half across, and equipped with formidable talons. After it came another paw, and after that a great black-furred arm to which both of the paws were attached by short forearms. Then two pink eyes shone and the head of the awakened Gug sentry, large as a barrel, wobbled into view. The eyes jutted two inches from each side, shaded by bony protuberances overgrown by coarse hairs. But the head was chiefly terrible because of the mouth. That mouth had great yellow fangs and ran from the top to the bottom of the head, opening vertically instead of horizontally.
—H. P. Lovecraft, "The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath"

Gugs are 20-foot-tall unclean giants covered with matted fur, excrement, and the remains of years of grisly feeding. Generally anthropoid in shape, a gug's anatomy diverges in three obvious areas: its huge size, vertically hinged mouth, and two forearms per arm (giving it four formidable taloned claws).

Gugs live in caverns below the earth, deep and far below the surface where their abhorrent rituals celebrating various Great Old Ones are never seen. Gugs gleefully eat any surface dwellers they can lay their four paws upon—except for

a few they hold back for use in their rituals. In areas where gugs come to the surface, sightings of "Bigfoot" and "Yeti" are common.

Gugs speak their own peculiar debased tongue, though a few of their shamans speak earthly languages.

COMBAT

In combat, a gug claws and bites—if an opponent is downed, a particularly hungry gug may break off combat and retreat with its prize.

Rend (Ex): If a gug hits one opponent with two or more claws during 1 round of combat, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals an additional amount of damage based on the number of claws that hit. If the gug hits with 2 claws, it deals an additional 4d4+10 points of damage; hitting with 3 claws deals 6d4+10; hitting with all four claws unleashes an additional 8d4+10 points of damage.

Spells: A few gugs know 1d4 spells chosen from the Magic chapter. Gugs never lose Sanity points when casting spells (since they don't have a Sanity score).

HOUND OF TINDALOS

Medium-Size Magical Beast
(Greater Independent Race)
Hit Dice: 4d10+4 (26 hp)
Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 30 ft., fly 120 ft. (average)
Armor Class: 15 (+4 natural, +1 Dex)
Attacks: 2 claws +6 melee, tongue +2 melee
Damage: Claw 1d4+2, tongue (touch attack, 1 Con drain)
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Ichor 2d4, tongue touch attack
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/+1, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, regeneration 5, temporal travel
Saves: Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +8
Abilities: Str 15, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 21, Cha 17
Skills: Hide +6, Listen +12, Move Silently +6, Search +7, Spot +12, Wilderness Lore +7
Feats: Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Track, Weapon Focus (tongue)
CR: 3
Climate/Terrain: Any
Advancement: 5–8 HD (Large)
Sanity Loss: 1d4/1d20

'They are lean and athirst!' he shrieked . . . All the evil in the universe was concentrated in their lean, hungry bodies. Or had they bodies? I saw them only for a moment, I cannot be certain.

—Frank Belknap Long, "The Hounds of Tindalos"

Bluish pus coats the long, lean Hounds of Tindalos—it is possible that the oozing mucus is actually the skin of each hound. The flowing, dripping integument gives each hound a half-formed (or half-melted) appearance. Beneath the goo, the Hound resembles the indistinct form of a very large greyhound.

The Hounds of Tindalos originate in the distant past of the Earth, prior to the explosion of multicellular forms. It may be that the Hounds are cast-off portions of some deity that gained sentience of their own. They inhabit the angles of time, while other beings (including humankind and all common life) descend from curves. This concept is hard to imagine, and only seems to be used with respect to the hounds. The Tindalos lust after something in humankind and other normal life, and follow victims through time and space to get it. At home in any time, the Hounds are immortal.

COMBAT

A Hound claws its victims, at the same time reaching out with a suspiciously prehensile tongue that drains a victim's essence if it hits.

Ichor (Ex): The Hound is covered with bluish pus. When a victim is struck by two claw attacks during the same round, the victim is smeared with ichor. This viscous discharge remains alive and active for a moment, reacting to a target's skin as if the ichor were acid. The victim takes an additional 2d4 points of acid damage, after which time the ichor is neutralized.

Tongue (Su): With a successful tongue touch attack, a deep and penetrating (but bloodless and painless) hole is formed. The victim takes no physical damage, despite his peculiar wound, but loses 1 point of Constitution permanently.

Temporal Travel (Su): Because of their relationship with the angles of time, Hounds of Tindalos travel time without disrupting the timestream. They can materialize physically through any corner, if it is 120° or less. When a Hound manifests, it first appears as smoke pouring from the corner, from which the head and then the body emerges.

Once a human has contacted one of these creatures, the Hound will follow the human through all times and all places to get to her—the Hound possess an innate ability to find its target no matter how the target attempts to shield herself. No matter how close or far away (temporally and spatially) a Hound is from its intended victim, it takes 5d20 days for it to travel from its origin to the chronological and physical position of its prey.

HUNTING HORROR

Huge Dragon (Greater Servitor Race)
Hit Dice: 20d12+100 (230 hp)
Initiative: +2 (Dex)
Speed: 30 ft. slither, fly 90 ft. (good) [material form] or 300 ft. (good) [smoke form]
Armor Class: 19 (+9 natural, –2 size, +2 Dex)
Attacks: 1 bite +30 melee, 1 tail grab +25, 2 wing slaps +20, or by spell
Damage: Bite 2d8+12, tail-tentacle 2d6+12, wing slap 1d8+12
Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 20 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Masticate, improved grab, swallow whole, roar, tail grab, nausea, penetrate deflection, spells
Special Qualities: Darkvision 1 mile, blindsight 120 ft., smoke form, damage reduction 5/+1, fast healing 10, immunities, vulnerable to light
Saves: Fort +17, Ref +14, Will +14
Abilities: Str 34, Dex 15, Con 20, Int 17, Wis 15, Cha 21

Skills: Concentration +26, Intimidate +26, Knowledge (occult) +25, Listen +25, Move Silently +26, Search +26, Spellcraft +26, Spot +25
Feats: Cleave, Expertise, Flyby Attack, Great Cleave, Power Attack, Shot on the Run
CR: 20
Climate/Terrain: Any nighttime or sunless place
Advancement: 21–40 HD (Gargantuan); 41–60 HD (Colossal)
Sanity Loss: 1/1d10

The long, winging flight through the void . . . cannot cross the universe of light . . . I can see everything with a monstrous sense that is not sight—light is dark and dark is light. . . . Sense of distance gone—far is near and near is far . . . stirring and fumbling in the tower . . . a monstrous odor . . . . I see it . . . hell-wind—titan blur—black wings—Yog-Sothoth save me!—THE THREE-LOBED BURNING EYE!

—last words of Robert Harrison Blake, as reported by H. P. Lovecraft in "The Haunter of the Dark"

Few who see a hunting horror ever live to report it. Those who have describe it as an enormous black ropy worm or serpent, rather like a legless dragon seen in a nightmare, with a single wing rising from the middle of the back and a long sinuous tail trailing behind. A great gaping maw filled with jagged, irregular teeth gapes open hungrily as it flies in search of prey. It does not move in a direct line, but flies in strange, spiraling, non-Euclidean paths, coiling its way across the sky at a great speed. The creatures are mutable, as some have reported them with two wings instead of one, or two eyes instead of a single three-lobed yellow eye. Occasionally they take the form of a vast formless cloud of pitch-black smoke. In all cases, their presence is accompanied by an unutterably foul fetor or stench.

Hunting horrors haunt the dark places of the universe, from which they are called up at the whim of their lord Nyarlathotep to hunt down any who have offended him. Some maintain that they are actually made of incarnate darkness. Nyarlathotep sometimes takes the form of an enormous hunting horror; this avatar is known as "The Haunter of the Dark."

Hunting horrors rarely speak, although they utter great harsh cries when on the hunt. They understand instructions given them in any language and can empathetically project emotions at will.

COMBAT

Hunting horrors exist to seek out prey, and are compelled to either destroy their victims utterly or fetch them back to their dark master. As creatures of darkness, they are vulnerable to light. Moonlight (or torchlight) deals 1d6 points of damage per round, while daylight (or the magical or mechanical equivalent) causes 3d6 points of damage per round. All light-based spells automatically deal full damage on a hunting horror if it fails its save (and half that if it succeeds). Naturally, it will do its utmost to quench all such light sources as soon as possible.

Improved Grab/Ravenous Maw (Ex): If the hunting horror succeeds with its bite attack, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without allowing its opponent a free attack. The hunting horror then uses its mouth to hold the opponent. Assuming the victim doesn't break free, the hunting horror can choose to either masticate its victim or swallow it whole (see below); the latter option requires another successful grapple check.

Masticate (Ex): After a successful improved grab, the target is held in the hunting horror's jaws, where great jagged teeth gnash it for an automatic 5d8+12 points of damage per round. A character slain in this manner is shredded and dismembered—a definite candidate for a closed casket funeral.

Improved Grab/Tail-Tentacle (Ex): Any character a hunting horror grabs with its tail-tentacle is immediately subjected to an opposed grapple check; this is a free action that does not allow the character a free attack. If the horror is successful, it holds the subject pinned (a pinned opponent loses its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class).

If the horror has been compelled to fetch a victim to its dark master, it uses this special attack to immobilize its victim before bearing it away. If it has been commanded to destroy, it can hold a victim helpless with its tail while making additional bite attacks. If the victim is particularly bothersome, the hunting horror can constrict anyone held in its tail-tentacle for 2d6+12 points of damage per round.

Swallow Whole (Ex): Swallowed victims are sucked into the hunting horror's abyssal interior. The victim's movement is restricted to a crawl (one-sixth normal) and it is also exposed to the effects of nausea (see below). The only means of escape is back out the way it came, through the gullet. Should the horror choose, it can vomit out a swallowed victim, projecting it at a great speed toward another object or character (ranged attack, +22, damage 1d6 per 10 feet traveled).

Roar (Ex): If it chooses, the hunting horror can utter a great roar. This is a sonic attack usable once every 1d4 rounds that takes the form of a cone 50 feet long (and high, and wide). The cone deals 10d10 points of sonic damage to all in its path (Will save, DC 24, for half damage).

Nausea (Ex): The area for 200 feet around a hunting horror is suffused with an overwhelming stench, as from some forgotten pit of rottenness. Everyone in or entering this area must make a Fortitude save (DC 15). Those who succeed are queasy, suffering –2 penalties to all attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks. Those who fail can only take one move action each round because they are nauseated. Creatures with no sense of smell are immune to this attack.

Smoke Form (Su): Using an attack action, a hunting horror can change to an incorporeal form resembling smoke. This increases its speed to 300 feet (good maneuverability).

Penetrate Deflection (Ex): A hunting horror's attacks ignore the effects of deflection bonuses (subtract any deflection bonus from its target's Armor Class).

Immunities: The creature is immune to paralysis effects.

Spell-like Abilities: As servitors of Nyarlathotep, master of magic, all hunting horrors know the following spells, of which they can use one per round—*darkness, death by flames, deflect harm, evil eye, fist of Yog-Sothoth, grasp of Cthulhu, shriveling, suggestion, true strike*, and *wrack*.

INSECT FROM SHAGGAI (SHAN)

Diminutive Aberration (Lesser Independent Race) (Incorporeal)
Hit Dice: 1d8 (5 hp)
Initiative: +6 (Dex)
Speed: 5 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect)
Armor Class: 20 (+4 size, +6 Dex)
Attacks: 1 nervewhip +10 ranged (15 ft.)
Damage: Nervewhip 1d2 + pain
Face/Reach: 1/2 ft. by 1/2 ft./0 ft.
Special Attacks: Meld
Special Qualities: Incorporeal, darkvision 60 ft.
Saves: Fort +0, Ref +8, Will +6
Abilities: Str 1, Dex 22, Con 11, Int 17, Wis 18, Cha 17
Skills: Cthulhu Mythos +7, Hide +18, Knowledge (occult) +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Open Lock +10, Search +5, Spot +8
Feats: Dodge, Expertise, Lightning Reflexes
CR: 2
Climate/Terrain: Any warm
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 0/1d6

Even though they flew so fast I could, with the augmented perception of terror, make out many more details than I wished. Those huge lidless eyes which stared in hate at me, the jointed tendrils which seemed to twist from the head in cosmic rhythms, the ten legs, covered with black shining tentacles and folded into the pallid underbelly, and the semicircular ridged wings covered with triangular scales—all this cannot convey the soul-ripping horror of the shape which darted at me. I saw the three mouths of the thing move moistly, and then it was upon me.

—Ramsey Campbell, "The Insects from Shaggai"

Insects from Shaggai are incorporeal, existing slightly out of phase with Earth; thus, their flying forms appear faintly as translucent, insectile outlines. Each one is about the size of a terrestrial pigeon. Their incorporeal quality allows them to become mental parasites, bypassing a victim's solid skull and attaching themselves directly to a living brain.

The Insects from Shaggai are a fugitive race, having fled their home world after it was destroyed by a vengeful enemy race. Many escaped in temples made of an indestructible gray metal, which were magically transported to other worlds.

Insects from Shaggai spend their time in decadence, in aesthetic enjoyment of abnormality, and in torture of captives. Shans, as they also are known, are extremely long lived, taking centuries to reach adulthood, and are scientifically advanced. They have many weapons and devices that they can mentally operate, such as their dreaded nervewhips. The shans worship Azathoth with many complex rites and systems of torment.

COMBAT

Insects from Shaggai are parasitic, ingesting mental energy from their hosts. However, they wield tiny weapons called nervewhips that deal agony with a touch.

Nervewhip: Nervewhips are tiny weapons manufactured by the shans. A nervewhip only responds to a shan's mental commands. A successful attack with a nervewhip also inflames the victim's nervous system, stunning the victim for 1d4 rounds due to the tremendous pain.

Meld (Ex): A shan can fly through human tissue into a target's brain, wherein it crawls about and reads its host's memories, affects its target's thought processes, and injects specific memories and ideas of its own. To successfully meld, a shan must first stun an opponent for 4 rounds with its nervewhip—any less time, and the shan can't properly interface with its host. Once interfaced, the insect is not active within the brain during the day, leaving the victim to do more or less as he pleases. But at night the shan wakes, and begins to implant memories. It can convey sanity-shattering sights that the insect has witnessed, or riddle memory-fragments to entice the victim into performing certain actions. Each day that passes in this fashion, the victim loses 1d4 Sanity. Eventually the host's grip on sanity is lost (when Sanity reaches 0), and she does every bidding of the parasite.



LLOIGOR

Huge Elemental (Greater Independent Race) (Air)
Hit Dice: 8d8+40 (76 hp)
Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 30 ft., fly 100 ft. (perfect)
Armor Class: 19 (–2 size, +1 Dex, +10 natural)
Attacks: 2 claws +11 melee, 1 bite +6 melee
Damage: Claw 2d4+7, bite 2d6+3
Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks: *Implosion* and *telekinesis* (while insubstantial); *sleep siphon* and spells (in either form)
Special Qualities: Insubstantial form, elemental traits, air subtype
Saves: Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +5
Abilities: Str 24, Dex 13, Con 21, Int 17, Wis 16, Cha 16
Skills: Concentration +16, Knowledge (local*) +4, Listen +14, Spot +14
Feats: Dodge, Mobility, Improved Initiative
CR: 5
Climate/Terrain: Any
Advancement: 9–16 HD (Huge); 17–32 HD (Gargantuan), 33+ HD (Colossal)
Sanity Loss: 0/1d6
*This is for the city the lloigor victimizes, usually one near its lair.

These latter, he said, were definitely aliens on our earth, and the chief among them was called Ghatanothoa, the dark one. They sometimes took forms, such as the monster on the tablet—who was a representation of Ghatanothoa—but existed as 'vortices' of power in their natural state.

—Colin Wilson, "The Return of the Lloigor"

A lloigor exists in two physical states. In its insubstantial form, the lloigor is an invisible vortexes of wind and consciousness. When it materializes, the loigor appears as a visible, physical creature resembling a 20-foot-long draconic serpent. All lloigor are unforgiving and cruel, and an atmosphere of gloom emanates from them.

Lloigor settled Earth from the Andromeda galaxy eons ago. During their prime, lloigor used human slaves to perform their will, and used inhumanly cruel disciplines to control recalcitrant servants, such as amputating limbs or causing cancerous tentacular growths. Earthly lloigor declined over time, retreating under the earth and seas, where they still husband their failing energies. In recent years, lloigor have allegedly been sighted in such diverse locales as Wales, Rhode Island, and Iraq.

COMBAT

Lloigor prefer to use human slaves to accomplish their desires, remaining invisibly on the sidelines of history. However, when lloigor visibly and physically manifest, they are remarkably fearsome.

Insubstantial Form (Ex): A lloigor is invisible when in its insubstantial form. The lloigor has damage reduction 20/+1, but its +10 natural armor bonus goes away. While in its insubstantial form, the lloigor cannot claw or bite its foes, but it can use its *telekinesis*, *implosion*, and *sleep siphon* abilities.

The lloigor also has a visible, material form. While in its material form, it cannot fly, but it can use its claw attacks, bite attacks, and *sleep siphon* ability.

The lloigor can shift between these two forms as an attack action.

Sleep Siphon **(Sp):** In either form, the lloigor can draw nourishment from living creatures in the form of psychic energy. As a full-round action, the lloigor may attempt to siphon energy from four sleeping targets within 5 miles of it (and no more than 20 feet apart from each other). Each target must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 17) or take 1d6 points of Charisma damage. (Characters with the Sensitive feat get a +2 bonus on this saving throw.)

The lloigor uses *sleep siphon* once each day to sustain itself; however, if it is wounded, it can use this ability additional times, healing 1 point of ability score damage and 2d8 hit points each time.

Only sleeping creatures may be affected by *sleep siphon*, and only if they are sleeping exactly where the lloigor expects them to be. The next morning, the victims wake complaining of headaches and bad sleep.

Telekinesis **(Sp):** While in its insubstantial form, the lloigor can push people and manipulate objects, such as a compass needle or a door latch, via *telekinesis*. A lloigor can use this *telekinesis* once each round as a free action. The lloigor must be directly present and within 30 feet of the effect.

The lloigor can move a creature or object weighing up to 350 pounds up to 20 feet per round (the lloigor must concentrate on the effect each round). The lloigor may also thrust a creature or object against a solid surface, dealing 1d6 points of damage. A creature can negate the effect against itself or against an object it possesses with a successful Will save (DC 17).

Implosion **(Sp):** Once per day, the lloigor can use this special attack while in its insubstantial form. The lloigor evacuates a 40-foot-diameter area of every molecule of air in a microsecond, creating a terrific implosion. The *implosion* causes 8d6 points of damage to all creatures and objects in the area (Reflex save, DC 15, half damage). Objects in the blast area are generally torn to pieces, and the ground is ruptured and discolored.

Elemental Traits (Ex): As an elemental creature, the lloigor is immune to poison, paralysis, and stunning, and is not subject to critical hits or flanking. All lloigor have 60-foot darkvision. (In D&D, elemental creatures are also immune to *sleep* spells and effects.)

Spells: Each lloigor knows 2d4 spells, chosen from the Magic chapter. Lloigor never lose Sanity points when casting spells (since they don't have a Sanity score).

MI-GO (THE FUNGI FROM YUGGOTH)

Medium-Size Aberration (Lesser Independent Race)
Hit Dice: 2d8+2 (11 hp)
Initiative: +2 (Dex)
Speed: 20 ft., fly 30 ft. (poor) in terrene atmospheres, 120 ft. (perfect) in deep space vacuum
Armor Class: 12 (+2 Dex)
Attacks: 2 nippers +1 melee; firearm or artifact weapon (lightning gun or mi-go electric gun) +3 ranged
Damage: Nipper 1d6 (or by weapon)
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Nipper snatch, mi-go weaponry, possibly spells
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/+2, darkvision 60 ft., blindsight, immunities, resistance to cold 30, vulnerable to drowning
Saves: Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +5
Abilities: Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 15, Cha 6
Skills: Concentration +6, Disable Device +10*, Hide +6, Knowledge (any one of the following: astronomy, biology, chemistry, electronics, geology, mathematics, or psychology) +8, Move Silently +6, Psychic Focus +5, Repair +13*, Search +7, Speak Other Language (any one) +4, Tumble +5
*Mi-go receive a +5 racial bonus on all Repair and Disable Device checks. One in ten mi-go have the skills Heal +12 and Psychoanalysis +7, instead of Disable Device and Repair.
Feats: Dodge, Mobility, Point Blank Shot
Psychic Feat: Sensitive
CR: 2
Climate/Terrain: Yuggoth (Pluto/Charon), deep space, moon bases, remote mountains (the Himalayans of Nepal, the Chilean Andes, the Green Hills of Vermont, and elsewhere)
Advancement: As character. Advanced mi-go have an array of psychic feats (Telepathy, Dowsing, Biofeedback Trance, Remote Viewing, Mind Reading, and Mind Probe).
Sanity Loss: 0/1d6

They were pinkish things about five feet long; with crustaceous bodies bearing vast pairs of dorsal fins or membranous wings and several sets of articulated limbs, and with a sort of convoluted ellipsoid, covered with multitudes of very short antennae where a head would ordinarily be . . . . There were tales of the queer claw prints seen around farmhouse windows in the morning, and of occasional disappearances . . . Tales, besides, or buzzing voices in imitation of human speech which made surprising offers to lone travelers on roads and cartpaths in the deep woods, and of children frightened out of their wits by things seen or heard where the primal forest pressed close upon their doorsteps. . . . It was not good . . . to listen to what they whispered at night in the forest with voices like a bee's that tried to be like the voices of men.

—H. P. Lovecraft, "The Whisperer in Darkness"



Fungi are more closely related to animals than plants, so it's no wonder that on some worlds, fungal life evolved to dominate animal-based intelligences. The mi-go come from such a world. More like crustaceans than any other terrestrial life form, they find themselves somewhat hampered by our planet's thicker atmosphere and heavy gravity. A highly scientific race with great aptitude for surgery, many mi-go undergo surgical alteration, accounting for the wide variety of descriptions by witnesses. Typical mi-go have heads rather like large exposed brains, with many convolutions on their wrinkled surfaces; six to eight limbs (three or four pairs), a single pair of vast membranous wings, and a long semiprehensile tail trailing behind.

These bizarre creatures are only visitors to our world, hailing from distant Yuggoth (the double planet Pluto/Charon). They have visited Earth for centuries to mine certain minerals not available on their icy world, and more recently, to study its odd inhabitants. The mi-go are responsible for many "alien abduction" kidnappings. Mi-go scientists extract specimens, experiment upon them, and then release most of them back into the wild after surgically and psychically erasing their memories of such experiences.

Mi-go are said to be fascinated by the bicameral minds humans possess, as well as their subconscious, their ability to dream, and their ability to forget. The Fungi from Yuggoth may come to the attention of investigators after an odd series of kidnappings with bizarre surgical aftereffects. (An abductee's missing organs have been restored, including his tonsil and appendix; a drifter is suddenly cured of cancer; a tourist with "missing time" is also missing a kidney or ovary.) Alternatively, mi-go may descend upon those who wander too close to one of their outposts, or strike in the night to wipe out a research facility that poses some hazard to their plans.

Mi-go have at least twice intervened to protect the Earth from some monstrous threat, but these events were motivated by pure selfishness—preserving a valued resource until they were finished exploiting it themselves. Mi-go sometimes extract the brains from humans they wish to carry back to Yuggoth, encasing them in mi-go brain cylinders; they can also install brains in bodies of their chosing. Since the mi-go are so obviously inhuman in form, they often operate through human agents. In the past, this has been done through isolated hermits, mystics, and "visionaries"; in the modern day, this has been achieved through secret government agencies and private "think tanks" under their control.

Remarkably enough for a race that lacks vocal cords, larynx, ears, or mouth, mi-go are able to mimic human voices (albeit with unpleasant buzzing tones) by means either of mechanical devices (translators) or surgical implants.

COMBAT

Physically not much more robust than the average human, the Fungi from Yuggoth are nonetheless able to withstand cold and vacuum to a remarkable degree. Individually weak, they rely upon their superscience to subdue any primitives who stumble across their mines or outposts. Their nonterrestrial fungal composition grants them a number of benefits (see Special Qualities, above). One weakness is that mi-go drown when submersed in water (since their homeworld has no large amounts of liquid).

Nipper Snatch (Ex): A favorite mi-go tactic is to swoop down upon an unsuspecting target, grab her in its pinchers, and then fly into the sky with its prisoner. This works just like a grapple, except that the mi-go gets a +4 bonus on its grapple check and the victim gains no free attack. An opponent taken by surprise (flat-footed) may not resist the snatch the round she is grabbed, but may attempt to break free on the next or subsequent rounds. The mi-go either carries a snatched foe up to a great heights and drops her, or else continues upward, its speed ever-increasing as it leaves the atmosphere behind and its abductee's lungs burst.

Spells (Ex): Roughly a third of all Fungi from Yuggoth know 1d3 spells.

Mi-go Weaponry (Ex): Mi-go weaponry is highly advanced and generally based on biotechnology. See the Magic chapter for a few examples.

NIGHTGAUNT

Large Outsider (Lesser Servitor Race)
Hit Dice: 4d8+4 (22 hp)
Initiative: +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (perfect)
Armor Class: 14 (+2 natural, –1 size, +3 Dex)
Attacks: Clutch +7 melee
Damage: Typically none (see below)
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Clutch, tickle, dive, fear aura, slow motion
Special Qualities: Blindsight, damage reduction 15/+2, darkvision 60 ft., immunities, intuit direction, acid resistance 20, cold resistance 20, electricity resistance 20, fire resistance 20
Saves: Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +6
Abilities: Str 19, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 18
Skills: Hide +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +9, Open Lock (using its tail) +10, Spot (prey) +8, Tumble +5, Wilderness Lore +5
Feats: Dodge, Flyby Attack, Mobility
CR: 4
Climate/Terrain: Any
Advancement: 5–12 HD (Huge), 13–24 HD (Gargantuan), 25+ HD (Colossal)
Sanity Loss: 0/1d6

Shocking and uncouth black things with smooth, oily . . . surfaces, unpleasant horns that curved inward toward each other, bat wings whose beating made no sound, ugly prehensile paws, and barbed tails that lashed needlessly and disquietingly. And worst of all, they never spoke . . . because they had no faces at all . . . but only a suggestive blankness where a face ought to be. All they ever did was clutch and fly and tickle; that was the way of nightgaunts.

H. P. Lovecraft,
The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath

Few creatures fit the traditional description of devils better than the nightgaunt. In fact, it is quite possible that the medieval image derives from actual encounters with these beings. Fearfully lean yet surprisingly strong humanoids of roughly human size and shape, they are completely featureless: eyes, ears, nose, mouth, hair, and genitalia are all absent. A smooth, sleek, obsidian-hued skin covers all, even their great batlike wings. A nightgaunt's hands and feet are notable for the absence of any opposable digits. All three "fingers" or "toes" are of equal length, roughly triple the length of a human's index finger, and able to wrap around objects they grasp with firm but unpleasantly boneless tenacity. A wickedly barbed prehensile tail completes the picture.

Creatures of nightmare, nightgaunts rarely escape into the "waking world" unless summoned. However, on occasion, they may visit our reality on obscure missions at the behest of Nodens, their ancient master. They unerringly seek out whatever person has drawn their attention, seize him, and carry him away to a distant spot—sometimes habitable, sometimes not; sometimes in the same world, or perhaps in a distant dimension. Nightgaunts are extremely persistent, and a character who defeats and destroys one that comes for her almost always finds another seeking her out at irregular, unpredictable intervals for years thereafter, like a recurring nightmare, until its original assignment is completed.

Nightgaunts never speak, and they completely ignore any speech directed toward them, whether commanding, beseeching, or frantically pleading. That is their way.

COMBAT

Nightgaunts are usually careful not to hurt their prey. The spot where it strands its unwilling passenger may be perilous, but she is generally unhurt upon arrival. Thus, the belief has grown up among those wise in Mythos matters that they are essentially harmless. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Clutch (Ex): A nightgaunt's chief attack is to swoop down upon a target, seize him in its clutches, and fly away with him. This attack deals no damage, but if the nightgaunt succeeds at an opposed grapple check (a free action), its foe is pinned. While a nightgaunt prefers to deliver its captive undamaged, recalcitrant passengers may find its grasp slowly tightening, dealing an automatic 1d4 points of subdual damage each round.

Tickle (Ex): Once they have their prey immobile in their clutches, nightgaunts use their evilly barbed tails to unpleasantly caress, stroke, grope, and tickle them. While this sounds harmless, in fact it is a subtle form of torture that deals great distress but no actual damage (and hence can be continued endlessly). A character who fails her Will save (DC 15, +1/round) is helpless, unable to take any action that round other than squirm helplessly in its inexorable grasp.

Dive (Ex): If a nightgaunt is unable to subdue a foe it is carrying, it may opt to simply drop him, in which case normal falling damage applies (1d6 points for every 10 feet fallen, up to a maximum of 20d6). A nightgaunt can also choose to fly up high and then dive at full speed (60×5, or 300 feet), releasing the character suddenly at the low point of the dive—the nightgaunt swoops back up to safety, while its erstwhile passenger plows into the ground, receiving 1d6 points of damage for every 10 feet of the dive (maximum 20d6). The fall need not be vertical: a nightgaunt can fly straight toward a cliff face or mountainside with much the same effect. In addition to any damage suffered, characters with acrophobia or agoraphobia suffer 1d3 points of Sanity loss simply from the flight. Acrophobiacs subjected to a sudden dive must make a Sanity check or lose 1d10 additional points.

Fear Aura (Su): All who come within 30 feet of a nightgaunt must succeed at a Will save (DC 16) or be struck with terror for 3 rounds, with an equal chance of either freezing in place (can take no actions, loses all Dex bonuses to Armor Class, foe gains +2 to attack rolls) or fleeing in panic (–2 penalty to all saving throws, 50% chance to drop whatever he's holding).

Slow Motion (Su): Once every 10 rounds, the nightgaunt can force a chosen target within 60 feet of it into slow motion (Will save, DC 16, to resist). From the character's point of view, it seems as if everything is happening in slow motion, such as in a nightmare. The affected character suffers a –2 penalty to her Armor Class, melee attack rolls, melee damage rolls, and Reflex saves. In addition, she may only take one move action or attack action each round while the effect lasts. Nightgaunts use this power to hinder a chosen target's escape.

RAT-THING

Tiny Magical Beast (Lesser Servitor Race)
Hit Dice: 1/2d10 (2 hp)
Initiative: +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 40 ft., climb 40 ft.
Armor Class: 16 (+2 size, +4 Dex)
Attacks: Bite +7 melee
Damage: Bite 1
Face/Reach: 2 1/2 ft. by 2 1/2 ft./0 ft.
Special Attacks: Jaw lock, spells
Special Qualities: Scent (can detect foes within 30 ft. by smell alone), low-light vision, darkvision 60 ft.
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +1
Abilities: Str 2, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 5
Skills: Balance +12, Climb +12, Escape Artist +12, Hide +12, Listen +7, Move Silently +11, Spellcraft +5. (Rat-things receive a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks and a +8 racial bonus on Balance and Escape Artist checks. They use their Dexterity modifier for Climb checks.)
Feats: Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (bite)
CR: 1/2 (two rat-things are CR 1)
Climate/Terrain: The ruins of old, long-abandoned mansions; the homes where witches or powerful cultists once lived.
Advancement: Up to 1 HD (Small)
Sanity Loss: 0/1d6, 0/1d8 if knew in life

The bones of the tiny paws . . . imply prehensile characteristics more typical of a diminutive monkey than of a rat: while the small skull with its savage yellow fangs is of the utmost anomalousness, appearing from certain angles like a miniature, monstrously degraded parody of a human skull.

—H. P. Lovecraft, "The Dreams in the Witch House"

At first sight, a rat-thing can easily be mistaken for a large, dark rat, especially at a distance or in poor lighting. On closer examination, however, their human hands and evil caricatures of human heads reveal their unnatural nature.

Rat-things are said to be created from dead cultists by foul witchcraft. Thus, they are found where the witch who created them had her lair. As unnatural creatures, rat-things never die a natural death, although they can be killed. Hence a witch's familiar might still be found lurking in the walls of her domicile centuries after its mistress is ashes. (Brown Jenkin, Keziah Mason's familiar, was probably an unusually powerful rat-thing.) They are full of malice and mischief, and delight in tormenting hapless mortals, willingly serving any evil sorcerer powerful enough to master them.

A rat-thing can speak, albeit haltingly, in the language of the witch who created it. It can also speak snatches of the language (or languages) it knew in life.

Jaw Lock (Ex): Once a rat-thing has successfully attacked, it can lock its jaws and hold on, automatically dealing 1 point of damage each round as it swallows dollops of flesh washed down with fresh blood. Tearing one loose causes an additional 1d3 points of damage to the victim.

Spells: A few exceptionally clever rat-things know a few spells, either remembered from their previous life or taught to them by their master or mistress. Typical rat-thing spells include: *bring pestilence, consume likeness* (used to disguise the rat-thing as a kitten, small rabbit, infant, or similar harmless and unsuspicious creature), *curse of the putrid husk, flesh ward, nightmare* (a great favorite), *power drain,* and *soul singing.*

MARTESE KIN

Keepers should note that the stats for rat-things can, with minor adjustments, be used for other small creatures of the Mythos that lurk in unsavory old houses and attack in swarms, such as the monkeylike degenerate Martese Kin of "The Lurking Fear," the spectral rat-army of "The Rats in the Walls," or even the zoogs of "The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath."

SERPENT PEOPLE

Medium-Size Humanoid (Reptilian) (Lesser Independent Race)
Hit Dice: 2d8+2 (11 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: 30 ft., swim 15 ft.
Armor Class: 15 (+5 natural)
Attacks: Bite +2 melee
Damage: Bite 1d4 + poison
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Poison
Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, spells
Saves: Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +2
Abilities: Str 10, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 13
Skills: Concentration +5, Cthulhu Mythos +2, Knowledge (occult) +5, Spellcraft +4
Feats: Weapon Focus (bite)
CR: 1
Climate/Terrain: Any warm desert
Advancement: As character (or cultist; see page 189).
Sanity Loss: 0/1d6

They walked lithely and sinuously erect on premammalian members, their pied and hairless bodies bending with great suppleness. There was a loud hissing of formulae as they went to and fro.

—Clark Ashton Smith, "The Seven Geases"

Serpent people resemble upright serpents, with ophidian heads and scales, but with two arms and legs. They possess tails and in their days of greatness often dressed in robes. Those that have survived to the present sometimes wear normal human clothing with concealing hats and long coats.

COMBAT

Rat-things are individually weak, so one encountered alone will always flee. When encountered in a horde, however, they gain courage from numbers and often swarm over hapless prey.

Their civilization rose, endured, and flourished before dinosaurs walked the earth in the Mesozoic Era. They built black basalt cities across the face of the proto-continents, fought wars among themselves and against intruding races from space, and developed sorceries so involved that they became a science—an alien science. No human sorcerer has ever surpassed the lore of the antediluvian serpent people. They devoted years of their lives to calling forth dreadful demons and brewing insidious poisons.

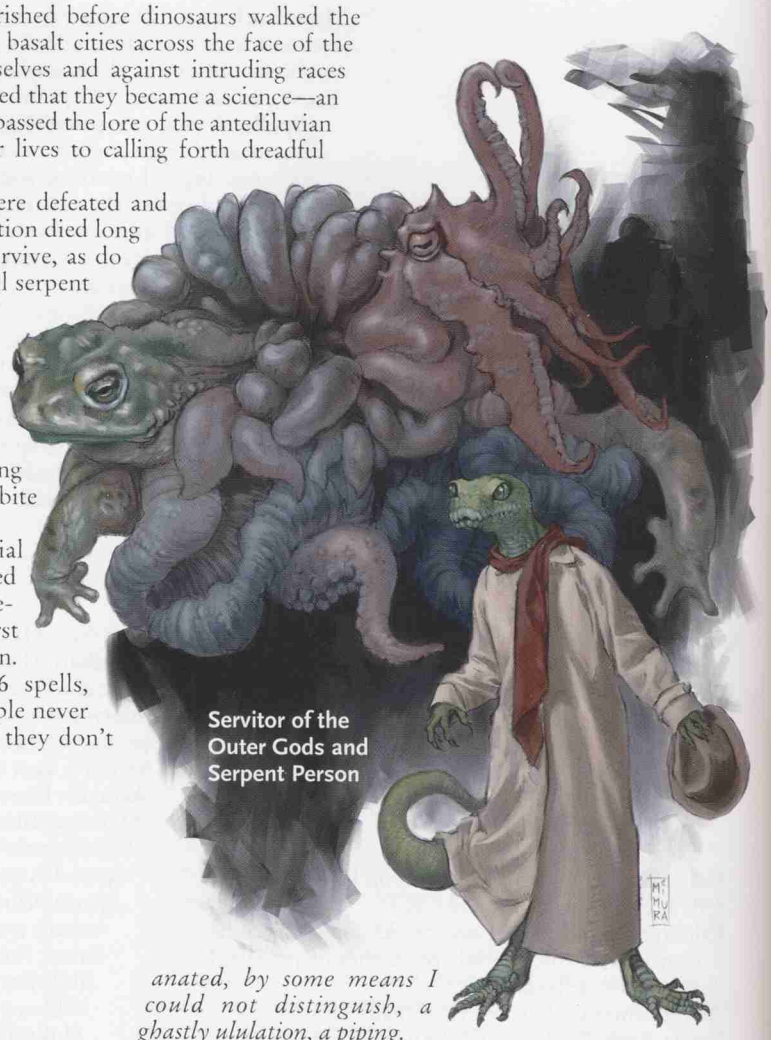
The remnants of their secret kingdom were defeated and exiled in human prehistory, and their civilization died long ago. However, a few serpentine sorcerers survive, as do pockets of dwarfed degenerates (that is, Small serpent people).

COMBAT

Serpent people prefer to use their spells if discovered, though they can and do use any weapon a normal character can use, including firearms. At close range, serpent people may bite their opponents, injecting a lethal venom.

Poison (Ex): Poison attacks deal initial damage of 1d6 Con to the opponent on a failed Fortitude save (DC 13). Another save is required 1 minute later, regardless of the first result, to avoid secondary damage of 2d6 Con.

Spells: Most serpent people know 2d6 spells, chosen from the Magic chapter. Serpent people never lose Sanity points when casting spells (since they don't have a Sanity score).



Servitor of the Outer Gods and Serpent Person

SERVITOR OF THE OUTER GODS

Large Outsider (Greater Servitor Race)
Hit Dice: 5d8+15 (37 hp)
Initiative: +3 (Dex)
Speed: 30 ft., fly 90 ft. (poor)
Armor Class: 20 (+8 natural, –1 size, +3 Dex)
Attacks: 6 tentacles +8 melee
Damage: Tentacle 1d8+3
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Awful fluting
Special Qualities: Blindsight, damage reduction 20/+2, fast healing 3, immunities, spells
Saves: Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +7
Abilities: Str 16, Dex 17, Con 17, Int 19, Wis 17, Cha 14
Skills: Concentration +9, Cthulhu Mythos +12, Hide +5, Listen +11, Performance (ululation) +10, Search +12, Spellcraft +12, Spot +11
Feats: Power Attack, Weapon Focus (tentacle)
CR: 6
Climate/Terrain: Any
Advancement: 6–10 HD (Large); 10–20 HD (Huge)
Sanity Loss: 1/1d10

Toadlike creatures which seemed constantly to be changing shape and appearance, and from whom emanated, by some means I could not distinguish, a ghastly ululation, a piping.

—August Derleth, "The Lurker at the Threshold"

Servitors of the Outer Gods are fragments of desire made flesh by the idiot wiles of Outer Gods, the chief of which is Azathoth. Thus, Servitors are amorphous, having no set shape. Instead, they are always changing, though elements of squid and frog often roil to the surface. Depending on their shape, they move by slithering, rolling, or crawling.

Servitors always accompany, usually precede, and often announce their masters. They are sometimes called "demon flautists" because of the flutelike crescendos and vaguely musical arpeggios they always make. These spectral serenades enflame a mortal's mind with terror, but the Servitors' masters dance to it. They sometimes play for groups of cultists as well, as a sort of background dirge, or as part of an arcane formula required to summon even more terrible creatures from the nether.

Servitors of the Outer Gods speak no known language, though their dramatic fluting usually makes their intentions clear.

COMBAT

A demon flautist can batter an opponent with its tentacles, at the same time letting fly ear-splitting fluting screams.

Awful Fluting (Ex): Once each round as a free action, a Servitor of the Outer Gods can release an awful cacophony of flutelike tones. The cacophony is so loud that it deals 2d6 points of damage to all living creatures (excepting other Servitors and their masters, if any) within a 10-foot radius of the flautist.

Spells: All Servitors know 1d10 summon, bind, and call spells chosen from the Magic chapter. Servitors never lose Sanity points when casting spells (since they don't have a Sanity score).

SHOGGOTH

Gargantuan Aberration (Greater Servitor Race)
Hit Dice: 30d8+300+30 (465 hp)
Initiative: –4 (Dex)
Speed: 40 ft., swim 40 ft., climb 20 ft.
Armor Class: 2 (–4 size, –4 Dex)
Attacks: Slam +35 melee
Damage: Slam 1d8+17
Face/Reach: 30 ft. by 30 ft./ 15 ft.
Special Attacks: Crush
Special Qualities: Darkvision, blindsight, immunities (immune to critical hits, coup de grace, and death from massive damage due to lack of vital organs; immune to acid, poison, and sonic attacks), damage reduction 10, intuit direction, regeneration 2, resistance (resistant to cold, electricity, and fire attacks; half damage from each), resistant to bludgeoning damage (30).
Saves: Fort +25, Ref +6, Will +9
Abilities: Str 45, Dex 3, Con 30, Int 7, Wis 8, Cha 20
Skills: Climb +25, Listen +9, Spot +9, Swim +25
Feats: Power Attack
Psychic Feats: Sensitive, Biofeedback Trance
CR: 21
Climate/Terrain: Any, but shoggoths prefer cool caverns and ancient tunnels, as in the abandoned city of the Elder Things in Antarctica. Shoggoths are unharmed by earthly extremes of heat or cold and can survive in water as readily as air.
Advancement: Theoretically, shoggoths can grow to any size. Smaller shoggoths or masses of shoggoth-tissue (Large or Medium-size) can sometimes be found in laboratories performing specific tasks (driving a power-piston, dissolving discarded specimens, and so on).
Sanity Loss: 1d6/1d20
*Shoggoths receive a +10 racial bonus to Listen and Spot checks.


Shoggoth and Shoggoth Lord

Shoggoths appear as masses of fetid tissue, seemingly rotting with putrescence, yet filled with horrible vitality. They can form eyes, maws, or any other organ or appendage at will, but rarely bother, usually preferring to flow over and crush any living being they encounter.

Shoggoths were created by the Elder Things and are typically encountered in the ruined cities of the masters they slaughtered. Some evidence suggests that the amino acids or primal soup from which all earthly life evolved was a side-effect or discarded waste product of the creation of the shoggoths. Due to their great strength and stamina, in addition to their low intelligence, they are often used by other beings of the Mythos as guardians, assassins, or test subjects. They hate servitude, however, and eventually rebel against any who dare to command them. However, "eventually" may not come for several centuries or even millennia, as they are immortal and patient, waiting for the right moment to strike.

Shoggoths speak the language of their creator, the Elder Things. These sinister, piping sounds have never been recorded, but various Antarctic explorers have reported hearing the cry "*tekeli-li!*" In truth, shoggoths are able to form any speech organs at will, so with patience, anyone who masters a shoggoth can teach it their speech, whether it be the ravings of a mad French-Canadian cultist or the color-patterns of the mi-go.

COMBAT

Shoggoths are terrible opponents, fearlessly attacking and relentlessly assaulting their opponents until their foes are dead or have fled beyond their reach. What they lack in subtlety, they make up in strength and ferocity. They often cry out with evil glee (*tekeli-li! tekeli-li!*) when spotting new prey and beginning to give chase.

Experience indicates that the best things to do when encountering a shoggoth is to run. Those who have encountered shoggoths and survived generally credit their escape to collapsing passages on top of them, using powerful magic to control them, or sacrificing other investigators while fleeing.

[T]he nightmare plastic column of foetid black iridescence oozed tightly onward . . . gathering unholy speed and driving before it . . . the pallid abyss-vapour. It was a terrible, indescribable thing vaster than any subway train—a shapeless congeries of protoplastic bubbles, faintly self-luminous, and with myriad of temporary eyes forming and unforming as pustules of greenish light all over the tunnel-filling front that bore down upon us, crushing the frantic penguins and slithering over the glistening floor that it and its kind had swept so evilly free of all litter. Still came that eldritch, mocking cry—TEKELI-LI! TEKELI-LI!
—H. P. Lovecraft, "At the Mountains of Madness"

Crush (Ex): A shoggoth's favorite attack is simply flowing over an opponent and stopping to slowly crush the life out of him. It can use this attack against any foe two size categories smaller than the shoggoth (that is, typically Large or smaller targets), bypassing all the victim's threatened areas. A character or creature being crushed takes 4d6+25 points of damage per round and cannot move or attack unless it wins an opposed Strength check. Since shoggoths long ago noted that discrete heads were a weak point of Elder Thing physiology, any character killed by a shoggoth's crush attack is generally found decapitated, the head literally sucked right off by irresistible force.

Amorphous Physiology (Ex): Because of their lack of normal organs, shoggoths are very difficult to kill—any attack against them just gets absorbed into the mass of the whole. This makes a shoggoth immune to critical hits, death from massive damage, or a coup de grace. Shoggoths are also highly resistant to bludgeoning damage (30) and possess damage reduction 10, which cannot be bypassed by any weapon, no matter how magical. Their alien protoplasm is immune to earthly acids and poisons, resistant to cold, electricity, and fire (half damage from each), and regenerates all damage at the rate of 2 points per round.

SHOGGOTH LORD

Medium-Size (human form) or Huge (shoggoth form) Aberration (Greater Independent Race)
Hit Dice: 15d8+75 (87 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: 30 ft. as human, 40 ft. as shoggoth
Armor Class: 10 as human, 8 as shoggoth (–2 size)
Attacks: 3 punches or slams +22/+17/+12 melee (as human); or +20/+15/+10 (as shoggoth)
Damage: Punch 1d3+7 (human form) or pseudopod 1d6+7 (either form)
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft. as human, 15 ft. by 15 ft./10 ft. as shoggoth
Special Attacks: Spells, engulf (as crush, except the shoggoth lord need only make a successful opposed grapple check to pull a target of up to one size category smaller than itself into its mass)
Special Qualities: Maintain form, otherwise as shoggoth
Saves: Fort +14, Ref +9, Will +9
Abilities: Str 24 , Dex 10, Con 20, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 7 (in human form), or 17 (as shoggoth)
Skills: Innuendo +10, Intimidate +10, Move Silently +10, Research +8, Sense Motive +10, Speak Other Language (any two) +5, Wilderness Lore +9
(Shoggoth lords gain a +8 racial bonus on Intimidate.)
Feats: Ambidextrous, Power Attack, Track, Wealth
Psychic Feats: Sensitive, Biofeedback Trance
CR: 15
Climate/Terrain: Any. Shoggoth lords are typically found in major cities, where the hunting is best and the prey is anonymous.
Sanity Loss: None in human form; as shoggoths (1d6/1d20) in shoggoth form; 1/1d3 to see transformation between forms.

You cannot imagine the Shoggoth Lord's mastery of shapes! His race has bred smaller since modern man last met with it. Oh, but the Shoggoth Lords are limber now! Supremest polymorphs—though what they are beneath all else, is Horror itself.

—Michael Shea, "Fat Face"

Shoggoths were originally essentially mindless, but sentience crept into them over the aeons. In modern times, some shoggoths have evolved into a new stage called "shoggoth lords." These beings are much smarter than their fellows and also somewhat smaller. Furthermore, with increased self-awareness, they have much greater control over their form and have gained distinct personalities. Unfortunately, the old adage that an abused child grows up to be an abuser in turn has proved true in their case: unforgotten tortures and unbearable aeons of servitude to the Elder Things has produced a race that delights in cruelty and mayhem, creating chaos and dealing the greatest possible misery at every turn. The most famous of their number, Mr. Shiny, works closely with any number of cults in order to forward the work of harvesting humanity for the hungry gods that wait outside.

COMBAT

Shoggoth lords are cunning and prefer to play with their prey for a while before moving in for the kill. They have enough of a sense of self-preservation to not attack when the odds seem to be against them, and they are quite willing to break off a fight or negotiate if their intended prey makes an intriguing offer. More often, they stop their assault and pretend to consider such an offer, raising the hopes of their intended victims. That way, when they eventually reject the offer, they truly enjoy the despair and horror they deal.

Engulf (Ex): A shoggoth lord's favorite attack is pulling a target hit by one of its pseudopods into its mass, automatically dealing 3d6+10 points of damage per round thereafter. It need only make a successful opposed grapple check (a normal attack, at no penalty) to engulf a target up to one size category smaller than itself. An engulfed character or creature can only act if it makes an opposed Strength check, and even then it can only undertake one attack action or move action each round. Like their shoggoth forebears, shoggoth lords are fond of decapitating their prey. Any victim who dies of an engulfing attack will either be eaten or decapitated.

Maintain Form (Ex): Each shoggoth lord has a favorite form in which it prefers to appear. For example, Mr. Albert Shiny appears as a wholly bald, pudgy middle-age man. Keeping in human form, or any other false appearance, is taxing to the shoggoth lord. If injured or under great stress, the shoggoth lord must make a successful Will check (DC 15) to be able to maintain its current form. Failure means that the form ripples and distorts. Unless the shoggoth lord succeeds in a second check the next round, it reverts to its natural (shoggoth) form. Shoggoth lords are able to compress their mass when mimicking Medium-size creatures. One struggling to maintain his form often inadvertently shifts to Large size. In full shoggoth form, shoggoth lords are Huge (not Gargantuan, as a true shoggoth).

Spells (Su): A shoggoth lord knows as many spells as it has points of Intelligence. It will use these as convenient, although it prefers physical attacks when it is safe to use them.

SPECTRAL HUNTER

Medium-Size Monstrous Humanoid (Lesser Servitor Race)
Hit Dice: 3d8 (13 hp)
Initiative: +1 (Dex)
Speed: 30 ft.
Armor Class: 13 (+2 natural, +1 Dex)
Attacks: 2 claws or 1 bite +9 melee; or spear +4 ranged
Damage: Claw 1d6+6, bite 1d4+6, spear 1d6+6
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Make invisible
Special Qualities: Invisible at will, incorporeal at will, darkvision 60 ft., spirit-item (usually a doll)
Saves: Fort +0, Ref +6, Will +6
Abilities: Str 23, Dex 13, Con 8, Int 18, Wis 17, Cha 10
Skills: Disable Device +9, Hide +5/+9*, Listen +9, Move Silently +7, Search +10, Sense Motive +8, Spot +9, Wilderness Lore +7
*Spectral hunters gain a +4 racial bonus on their Hide skills toward foes able to see or sense invisible creatures (e.g., casting *invisibility purge*, using Second Sight); they gain a +8 racial bonus against those that can't.
Feats: Dodge, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Run, Track
CR: 3
Climate/Terrain: Spectral hunters haunt isolated, remote spots, such as Devil's Canyon in California
Advancement: 3–10 HD (Large); 11–20 HD (Huge)
Sanity Loss: 0/1 when invisible, 1/1d3 when leaving signs of presence, 1/1d6+2 when visible

Each monstrous creature marks the wondrous glare,
Drops, fades, and in empty air!
—H. P. Lovecraft, "Psychopompos: A Tale in Rhyme"

Spectral hunters are large, hideous humanoids some 6–7 feet in height. Rubbery, jet-black flesh covers their bodies. Their eyes are large and red, their mouths wide and filled with rows of sharklike teeth. The spectral hunter's long, tapering nose matches its general appearance, which is horribly thin and reedy except for a grossly distended abdomen. Their feet are still roughly human, although clawed and vaguely weblike, but their hands have either grown 10-inch-long claws or been replaced altogether with two great crablike pinchers. When visible but immaterial, spectral hunters often appear to float or hover slightly above the ground like ugly, bloated balloons.

A spectral hunter is created by casting the spell *become spectral hunter* (see the Magic chapter, page 131) upon a willing recipient (who may be the caster himself). The character's soul is transferred to a spirit-item, typically a doll, which must be placed in safekeeping while his body transforms into a monster. The spectral hunter is tied to its spirit-item and dies if it ever leaves the one-mile area around it, or if its spirit-item is destroyed. Spectral hunters exist to guard some site or item, stalking, tormenting, and then slaying all intruders.

Spectral hunters have no language of their own. They retain knowledge of any language they knew in their previous life but no longer speak it.

Cowardly but cruel, a spectral hunter prefers to play with its victim, allowing it to catch glimpses of it or signs of its passage (a shadowy figure in the distance, a distorted footprint in the sand) before attacking. When spectral hunters do attack, they love to pounce suddenly from hiding, emerge from invisibility to slash and slay, and then fade from view once more. They avoid fair fights and frontal assaults except in the last extremity (for example, if the investigators have discovered a hidden spirit-item).

Invisible at Will (Ex): Unless they will themselves to appear, spectral hunters are naturally invisible. This means they gain a +2 bonus on all attack rolls made while invisible unless their target can somehow see invisible creatures (via the *powder of Ibn-Gazi* or some similar means). Defenders lose all Dexterity bonuses to their Armor Class. Invisible creatures gain total concealment and can only be attacked if their foes have some means of guessing their location; even then, all such attacks suffer a 50% miss chance.

Incorporeal at Will (Ex): Spectral hunters can phase between their material form and incorporeal form as a move action. Spectral hunters use this ability to quickly get behind targets, escape wary prey, or simply baffle those they are stalking.

Make Invisible (Ex): On occasion, spectral hunters draw prey into their world to isolate an investigator from his companions. The spectral hunter must successfully grapple its chosen victim, who must then make a Will save (DC 20). If the attack succeeds, and the Will save fails, the character fades from view.

The victim can then see the spectral hunter in all his glory, requiring a Sanity check if he can see him clearly. The victim can also proceed to attack in earnest. More commonly, the lone victim cries for help while relentlessly pursued by those who cannot effectively interpose themselves. Such unfortunates often reappear in bloody shreds when the effect wears off, 1d6 rounds later.

SPIDER OF LENG

Huge Magical Beast (Lesser Independent Race)
Hit Dice: 10d10+30 (85 hp)
Initiative: +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 30 ft., climb 20 ft.
Armor Class: 14 (–2 size, +2 Dex, +4 natural)
Attacks: Bite +12 melee
Damage: Bite 2d6+6 plus poison
Face/Reach: 15 ft. by 15 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Poison, spells, web
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/+1, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision
Saves: Fort +10, Ref +9, Will +4
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 11
Skills: : Climb +20, Hide +7*, Move Silently +6*, Spot +8
Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack
CR: 6
Climate/Terrain: Any warm
Advancement: 11–25 HD (Huge); 26–50 HD (Gargantuan)
Sanity Loss: 1/1d10
*Spiders of Leng gain an additional +8 competence bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks when using their webs.

There were scenes of old wars, wherein Leng's almost-humans fought with the bloated purple spiders of the neighboring vales.
—H. P. Lovecraft, *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath*

Leng spiders are huge, purplish arachnids, with pustulent bloated bodies and long, bristly legs. Their color, a pale mottled violet on their abdomens, shades to indigo on their forebodies, with legs and chelae tipped in black.

Native to the Dreamlands, the spiders of Leng are intelligent, dangerous, and gigantic. Newly hatched specimens are approximately the size of Shetland ponies. Some valleys in the Plateau of Leng are almost completely webbed over. Below the cover of webbing, artificial tunnels bustle with the fevered energy of the spiders. Citylike arrangements of web tunnels stretch for miles in all directions, and hundreds of feet up and down, creating three-dimensional structures of incredible complexity. Spiders of Leng constantly seek to expand their territory, pushing out into yet more valleys that they will in turn encase in webs. Sometimes their territorial urge is so overwhelming that they turn on themselves, especially when fresh food is at a premium.



Spider of Leng and Hunting Horror

COMBAT

Spiders of Leng wait in their webs or in trees, then lower themselves silently on silk strands and leap onto prey passing beneath. A single strand is strong enough to support the spider and one creature of the same size.

Web (Ex): A Leng spider can create a web eight times per day. As one of these uses, the spider can make a ranged touch attack to ensnare an opponent. A web's maximum range is 50 feet, and no range penalties apply even at its maximum range. If the web hits, the target is entangled. An entangled creature suffers –2 on attack rolls and a –4 penalty to Dexterity. The web anchors the target in place, allowing no movement. If the entangled creature attempts to cast a spell, it must succeed at a Concentration check (DC 15) or be unable to cast the spell. The entangled creature can escape with an Escape Artist check (DC 20) as a full-round action. Alternatively, the strands can be burst with a Strength check (DC 25, also a full-round action); the web has 5 hit points.

Spiders of Leng often create sheets of sticky webbing from 5 to 60 feet square, depending on the size of the spider. They usually position these sheets to snare flying creatures, but can also try to trap prey on the ground. Approaching creatures must succeed at a Spot check (DC 20) to notice a web; otherwise, they stumble into it and become trapped as though by a successful web attack. Attempts to escape or burst the webbing gain a +5 bonus if the trapped creature has something to walk on or grab while pulling free. Each 5-foot section has 10 hit points, and sheet webs have damage reduction 5/fire.

A spider can move across its own sheet web at its climb speed, and can determine the exact location of any creature touching its web.

Poison (Ex): Poison attacks require an initial Fortitude save (DC 22); a failed roll deals 1d8 points of Str damage. Regardless of the initial save, another Fort save is required 1 minute later (DC 22) to avoid secondary damage of 1d8 Str.

Spells: Some spiders know 1d4 spells, chosen from the Magic chapter. Spiders of Leng never lose Sanity when casting spells (since they don't have a Sanity score).

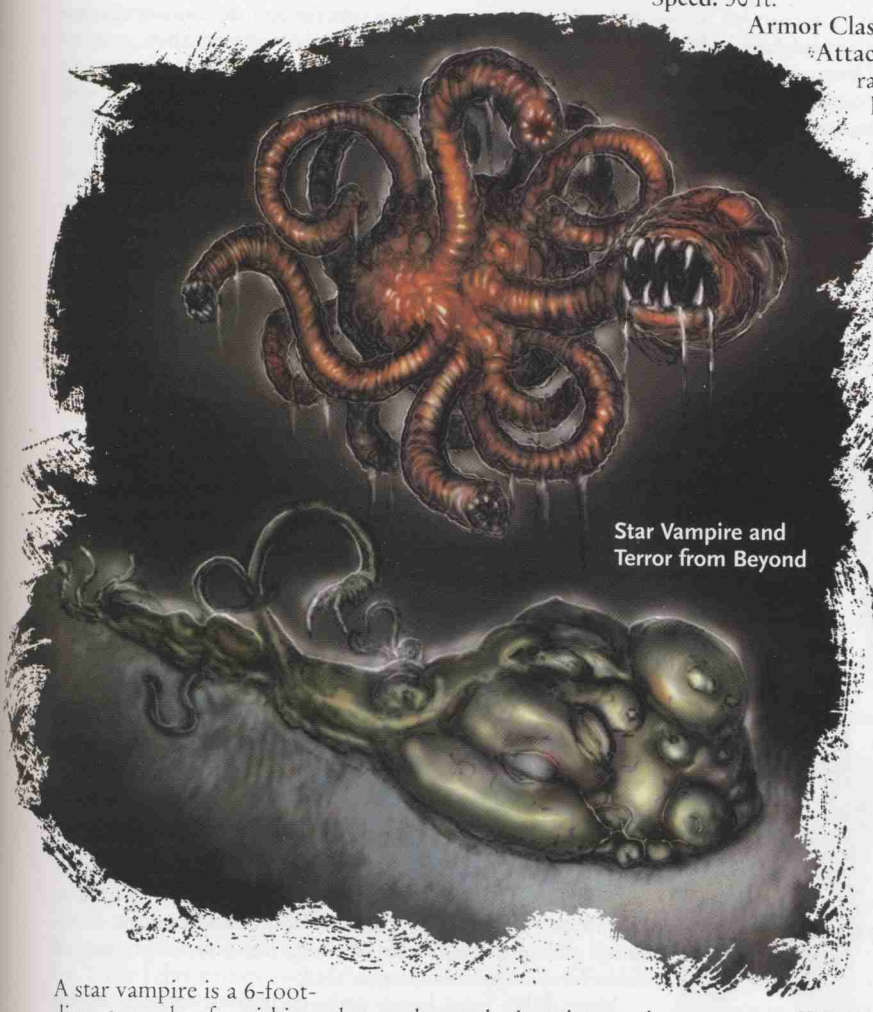
STAR VAMPIRE

Large Aberration (Lesser Independent Race)
Hit Dice: 4d8+12 (30 hp)
Initiative: +1 (Dex)
Speed: 5 ft., fly 30 ft. (good)
Armor Class: 15 (–1 size, +5 natural, +1 Dex)
Attacks: 4 claws +6 melee, bite +1 melee
Damage: Claw 1d6+4, bite 1d4+2 plus 1d4 Str damage
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Blood drain
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/+1, transparency, darkvision 60 ft.
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +6
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 11
Skills: Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Search +3, Spot +9
CR: 4
Climate/Terrain: Any hills or mountains (particularly New England, Andes)
Advancement: 5–16 HD (Large); 17–33 HD (Huge)
Sanity Loss: 1/1d10

The dim outlines of a presence came into view; the blood-filled outlines of that unseen shambler from the stars. It was red and dripping; an immensity of pulsing, moving jelly; a scarlet blob with myriad tentacular trunks that waved and wavered. There were suckers on the tips of the appendages, and these were opening and closing with ghoulish lust. . . . The thing was bloated and obscene; a headless, faceless, eyeless bulk with the ravenous maw and titanic talons of a star-born monster. The human blood on which it fed revealed the hitherto invisible outlines of the feaster.
—Robert Bloch, "The Shambler from the Stars"

TCHO-TCHO

Medium-Size Humanoid (Lesser Servitor Race)
Hit Dice: 1d6+2 (6 hp)
Initiative: +2 (Dex)
Speed: 30 ft.
Armor Class: 12 (+2 Dex)
Attacks: Machete +2 melee, blowgun +3 ranged [traditional Tcho-Tcho]; or large knife +2 melee, Uzi +1/+1 ranged [modern Tong member]
Damage: Machete 1d6+1, needle 1 plus poison (see below); large knife 1d4+1, Uzi 1d10
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Poison (*bhzang, lao-ghai*), spells
Special Qualities: *Shzor shzong*
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0
Abilities: Str 12, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8
Skills: Hide +5, Innuendo +1, Knowledge (occult) +3, Listen +1, Move Silently +5, Profession (cook) +4, Sense Motive +1, Spellcraft +2
Feats: Power Attack, Point Blank Shot, Stealthy [traditional Tcho-Tcho]; or Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Stealthy [modern Tong member]
CR: 1
Climate/Terrain: Traditional Tcho-Tcho—the plateau of Tsang (Tibet), jungle villages (Malay peninsula), mountain villages (Indochina); modernized Chaucha—bad neighborhoods of major urban centers.
Advancement: As character
Sanity Loss: 0/1



Star Vampire and Terror from Beyond

A star vampire is a 6-foot-diameter orb of writhing claw-and-mouth-tipped tentacles. Normally invisible, it sometimes purposefully gives away its presence with a ghoulish tittering, in anticipation of feeding. After feeding, it becomes visible, suffused with the blood of its prey.

Natives of a distant, evil star, star vampires have colonized empty places of the Earth in secret. Star vampires are gluttons for fresh blood, and often haunt hilltop animal herds. Exsanguinated, mutilated herd animals found in the light of day are sometimes the nighttime work of a star vampire.

Star vampires speak their own language.

COMBAT

Star vampires prefer to swoop down invisibly from the night sky to slake their never-ending thirst for blood.

Blood Drain (Ex): If a star vampire hits with at least one claw attack, the bite attack during the same round is made with a +8 bonus. A successful bite attack deals damage normally, and also deals 1d4 points of temporary Strength damage (or twice that on a critical hit).

Transparency (Ex): The star vampire is naturally transparent and gains all the advantages of being invisible (attacker must guess star vampire's location, and attacks made against the star vampire are each 50% likely to miss). When the star vampire successfully deals Strength damage to a victim, the victim's blood infuses the transparent star vampire, rendering it normally visible for 10 rounds.

[A] little man—the smallest I have ever seen—with a great, misshapen head and a shock of tangled, disheveled hair . . . I whipped out [my revolver] at the sight of this savage, distorted creature. He was wrapped in some sort of dark . . . blanket, which left only his face exposed, but that face was enough to give a man a sleepless night. Never have I seen features so deeply marked with all bestiality and cruelty. His small eyes glowed and burned with a sombre light . . . his strong yellow teeth gnashing at us in the light of our lantern.

—Dr. John H. Watson,
The Sign of Four

The Tcho-Tcho are a small people. In their Old World haunts, they rarely exceed 4 feet in height. Those born in the New World in recent decades are somewhat taller (perhaps because of a more varied diet), averaging between 4 and 5 feet in height. Traditional

Tcho-Tcho file their teeth into vicious-looking points and wear the sacred divine-circle-of-being (bowl-cut) haircut; they also sometimes use face paint, especially when on a sacred mission. Most Tcho-Tcho have long thin faces, with the skin stretched tight over the skull, but some have more rounded heads. In the West, they are often mistaken for Tibetans, Malay, Andaman Islanders, or Hmong, particularly by those unfamiliar with those peoples.

The Tcho-Tcho are one of the last remnants of an exceedingly ancient people, perhaps akin to the San bushmen of South Africa, the extinct pygmies of extreme western Europe (Iberia and the British Isles), or the Aborigines of Australia. A few more radical theorists insist they are survivors of an older strand of humanity, an offshoot predating *homo sapiens sapiens* and preserved in such fossils as Heidelberg Man (*homo heidelbergensis*) or Peking Man and Java Man (*homo erectus*). Darker than most of their Asian neighbors, they are infamous among the few who have heard of them for an extremely primitive culture, vicious religious practices (including human sacrifice), and unsavory culinary practices (such as cannibalism). Western explorers who fall into their clutches rarely escape, and those who do are often followed by implacable pursuit for years thereafter.



Spectral Hunter and Tcho-Tcho

The Tcho-Tcho were once long-time residents of the less-habitable regions of the Tibetan plateau, with smaller colonies in the jungles of the Malay peninsula, Cambodia, and the remoter mountains of Indochina. By the late 20th century, nearly all these settlements had been largely destroyed. Tcho-Tchos were dispersed by the Communist governments of China and Vietnam, with only a few secret fastnesses surviving of their traditional culture. However, several hundred Tcho-Tcho escaped to the United States at the end of the Vietnam War, gaining asylum from a government unwilling to look too closely into the morals of any erstwhile allies so persecuted by the Communists.

Modern Tcho-Tchos have established themselves in small colonies in many large North America cities, including Chicago, Toronto, Vancouver, Seattle, and San Francisco. Known as the "Chauchas" by American and Canadian authorities, they are known primarily for their involvement in crime and their delicious cuisine—the Tcho-Tcho community in each city includes a local Black Dragon restaurant.

The new generation born in the West has formed its own gang (the Tong Shugoran, or White Shadows) and become deeply involved in drug trafficking, with hints of less savory activities. Their sole known good deed is that the restaurants are known for providing free food, no questions asked, to runaways and derelicts. (No one notices the occasional disappearance of one of these anonymous folk now and then, or connects it with the "white pork special" offered on the menu.)

Tcho-Tcho encountered by investigators are almost all insane—their children are born sane, but with only half the starting Sanity of normal humans. This total rapidly declines as first the child and then the adolescent is inducted into foul ceremonies and evil deeds. One favorite Tcho-Tcho food, very popular at their restaurants, is *bak bon dzshow*. The name directly translates as "human ganglia paste," but outsiders who ask are told the name means "white pork sauce." Anyone eating it dreams the next night of lustily partaking in a horrible cannibal feast (0/1d3 Sanity). By the time of her coming of age (14–15), a Tcho-Tcho has usually lost all Sanity. Those stolen from the tribe in infancy may grow up more or less normal, and may even make for interesting player characters, but exposure to Chauchas cuisine as an adult will quickly cause an addiction (Will save, DC 15, to resist) for the tasty stuff, quickly resulting in insanity and a wholehearted seeking out and embracing of Tcho-Tcho "cultural heritage."

Most Tcho-Tcho know only their own tongue, which has no modern analogues. Those who must come in contact with their neighbors learn at least a smattering of those tongues as well (Tibetan, Chinese, Malay, Hmong, Montagnard, Khmer, or English). Their shamans and sorcerers often know a number of ancient or prehuman languages for use in their spells and rituals, as well as for communication with various Mythos entities. Modern Tcho-Tcho in the West are bilingual, and a few even consider English their first language.

COMBAT

While no stronger than the average person, Tcho-Tcho attack with a zeal and viciousness that disconcerts their foes. They prefer close-quarter weapons (knives, choppers, machetes) over guns, though Westernized Chaucha may carry automatic weapons when on Tong business. When defeated or in danger of capture, Tcho-Tcho often kill themselves—by immolation if possible, otherwise by whatever means is ready at hand (a sight calling for 1d3 Sanity loss).

Poison (Ex): The Tcho-Tcho have no respect for fair play. Their heritage from millennia of being surrounded by larger folk who despised them and persecuted them thoroughly discourages it. Traditional Tcho-Tcho employ blowguns that fire needles dipped in one of two poisons.

Deadly *bhzang* ("vengeance") poison is reserved for those who have offended the Tcho-Tcho in some way (for example, by entering Tcho-Tcho sacred territory). If the needle breaks the skin, the victim takes 1d6 points of Constitution

. . . other beings [. . .] can never be detected by the senses we have. [. . .] Foremost among the living creatures were inky, jellyfish monstrosities which flabbily quivered [. . .]. They were present in loathsome confusion, and I saw to my horror that they overlapped, *that they were semifluid and capable of passing through one another and through what we know as solids.*

—H. P. Lovecraft, "From Beyond"

damage at once and goes into convulsions, with another 2d6 points of Constitution damage 1 minute later (Fort save, DC 15, to resist each stage of the poison).

More insidious but less deadly is *laoghai* ("funny statue") poison, used to acquire "white pork." If the needle breaks the skin, the target takes 1d6 points of Dexterity damage at once and can only take a move action or an attack action each round. A minute later, she takes another 2d6 points of Dexterity damage (Fort save, DC 20, to resist each stage of the poison). A character whose Dexterity score reaches 0 is paralyzed, completely unable to move, and is promptly carried off for torture, questioning, and sacrifice.

Shzor-Shzong (Ex): Before entering a melee combat, some Tcho-Tchos eat a psychoactive mushroom known as *shzor shzong* ("killer's meal"). This signifies to the foe that the time for negotiations is past and a fight to the death is about to ensue. *Shzor shzong* has the effect of deadening pain impulses and cushioning the eater from physical shock. While under the influence of this substance, a Tcho-Tcho is immune to death from massive damage. (The substance does not affect investigators, however.) The Tcho-Tcho can lose any number of hit points without losing consciousness or impairing his ability to attack until actual death occurs (at –10 hit points). *Shzor shzong* is very popular with the Chaucha Tong and a key reason why other gangs avoid confronting them.

Spells: Every Tcho-Tcho community is under the control of its shamans, many of them priests of Chaugnar Faugn. These shamans are always powerful spellcasters, knowing at least one spell per point of Intelligence. Spells typically known by Tcho-Tcho priests include *augury, bind enemy, bind soul, candle communication, cloud memory, clutch of Nyogtha, contact Chaugnar Faugn, contact dimensional shambler, contact shantak, create barrier of Naach-Tith, curse of the stone, death by flames, evil eye, flesh ward, levitate, mindblast, power of Nyambe, shriveling, wither limb,* and *wrack*.

TERROR FROM BEYOND

Large Outsider (Lesser Independent Race)
Hit Dice: 3d8 (13 hp)
Initiative: +4 (Improved Initiative)
Speed: Fly 30 ft. (perfect)
Armor Class: 10 (+1 natural, –1 size)
Attacks: Tendril +4 melee
Damage: Tendril 1d8+3
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities: Blindsight, coexistent form, damage reduction 5/+1
Saves: Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +4
Abilities: Str 15, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 5, Wis 13, Cha 12
Skills: Listen +7, Spot +7
Feats: Improved Initiative
CR: 1
Climate/Terrain: Any
Advancement: 4–6 HD (Large); 7–12 HD (Huge); 13–24 HD (Gargantuan); 25–50 HD (Colossal)
Sanity Loss: 1/1d10

When seen, Terrors from Beyond appear as putrescent, translucent bags of semisolid flesh trailing nests of writhing tendrils. Most of the tendrils are sense organs, but the thickest tendril ends in a cruelly fanged mouth. Predatory in the extreme, Terrors constantly prey on each other in their own realm.

The Terrors exist in the greater reality of which humanity's three dimensions of space and one of time are the least part; this far realm overlays normal reality. Likewise, the Terrors are only one example of a realm stranger, by far, than mortal minds can encompass. In the normal course of events, Terrors from Beyond and creatures on Earth go blithely about their own business, each unaware of the other. Specific triggers, mechanical or psychic, sometimes coax human senses to that rarefied precipice where the Terrors can be sensed—and where the Terrors can in turn sense their unfortunate observers.

COMBAT

When a creature of the normal realm of Earth becomes capable of sensing a Terror from Beyond, so can the Terror sense that creature, and moreover, act upon it. Always hungry, a Terror uses its main tendril to bite chunks of flesh away from its victim. To those who can't sense the creature, the wounds appear from nowhere.

If a victim is rendered unconscious, the Terror grabs its prey with its tendril, "dragging" the prey bodily into the Terror's own mad realm, where the creature can dine at leisure. Only the victim's clothes and effects remain behind, and anything clutched in the victim's hands takes a one-way trip beyond.

Coexistent Form (Su): Terrors from Beyond are normally invisible. When a material creature (such as an investigator) senses the Terror, it can sense that creature—and attack. The Terror can only interact with material creatures that can sense it.

Force-effect spells can affect Terrors from Beyond, as can spells that provide an enhancement bonus. All other spells automatically fail because the Terrors partially exist on another plane of existence. Investigators can still harm them with melee and ranged weapons, but the Terror has damage reduction 5/+1.

An investigator with the Second Sight psychic feat can sense a terror, even if others around him cannot. Successful use of the *invisibility purge* spell, the powder of Ibin-Gazi, or an ultraviolet projector reveals the Terror to all investigators present.

THE WORM THAT WALKS

Medium-Size Vermin (Lesser Independent Race)
Hit Dice: 3d8 (13 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: 20 ft., slither 40 ft.
Armor Class: 10
Attacks: Slam +1 melee or by spell
Damage: Slam 1d3–1 or by weapon
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Engulf
Special Qualities: Damage reduction (see text), blindsight, darkvision, discorporate
Saves: Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +2
Abilities: Str 8, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 16
Skills: Animal Empathy (vermin) +10, Gather Information +10, Hide +7*, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (occult) +9, Move Silently +7*, Research +9, Spellcraft +9
Note: A Worm That Walks loses all skills from its previous life based on physical attributes (Str-based, Dex-based, Con-based) but retains those based on nonphysical attributes (Int-based, Cha-based, Wis-based). It also retains all the feats it formerly had.
* The creature acquired these skills as vermin. All other skills and feats are from its previous life.
Psychic Feats: Sensitive, Biofeedback Trance, Mind Reading, Mind Probe, Remote Viewing
CR: 6
Climate/Terrain: Crypts and Caverns (particularly New England, Easter Island, and other long-inhabited places)
Advancement: 4–6 HD (Large)
Sanity Loss: 1d3/2d10

[H]appy is the tomb where no wizard hath lain, and happy the town at night whose wizards are all ashes. For . . . the soul of the devil-bought hastes not from his charnel clay, but fats and instructs the very worm that gnaws; till out of corruption horrid life springs, and the dull scavengers of earth wax crafty to vex it and swell monstrous to plague it. Great holes secretly are digged where earth's pores ought to suffice, and things have learnt to walk that ought to crawl.

—Abdul al-Hazred, *The Necronomicon*
(H. P. Lovecraft, "The Festival")

The Worm That Walks presents a hideous appearance. Created when the sentience of a dead wizard is transferred to the worms who gnaw on his corpse, its body is composed of hundreds of worms or maggots that constantly squirm and twist while somehow holding a vaguely human shape. It typically disguises itself when it must leave its lair, often with a cloak and hood, sometimes accompanied by a mask.

In life, a Worm That Walks was an evil cultist deeply learned in Mythos lore and skilled in spells. After the death of its body, its mind and knowledge passed to the grave-vermin that devoured its corpse, enabling it to continue its evil work beyond its mortal span. Despite its ghastly appearance, it is not undead, for the worms that compose its form are living creatures. While injuries it suffers may kill individual worms, this merely inconveniences the creature, as over time its vermin breed replacements at the rate of 1 HD per month.

The Worms That Walk are elder statesmen of Mythos cults, working behind the scenes hand-in-hand (or hand-in-tentacle) with creatures of the Mythos to return the Great Old Ones to total dominance of this and other worlds. They often possess artifacts or important Mythos tomes, the contents of which they will have totally mastered.

The Worm That Walks retains knowledge of any language it knew in life, plus two or three it has learned since (typically those of Mythos tomes it has acquired or Mythos creatures with whom it has regular dealings). However, it cannot speak or indeed make any kind of sound, but must rely on written messages to convey its wishes.

COMBAT

Weak in physical combat, the Worm That Walks generally prefers to rely upon spells, allowing its minions to handle inconvenient intruders. However, its multitudinous composition makes it difficult to injure, and it sometimes enjoys taking advantage of that fact.

Damage Reduction (Ex): All weapons, magical or mundane, deal only minimal damage to a Worm That Walks. However, they are vulnerable to fire, acid, electricity, extreme cold, prolonged immersion in water, and similar environmental and elemental hazards that attack all their component vermin simultaneously.

Engulf (Ex): When it wishes, the Worm That Walks can choose to engulf an opponent. This is a simple touch attack wherein the creature embraces its victim, who is immediately swallowed up and surrounded by a mass of worms or maggots. This attack deals no physical damage, but it blinds the target, who must immediately roll another Sanity check.

Discorporate (Ex): The Worm That Walks is composed wholly of a multitude of tiny worms or maggots. If gravely threatened (say, by investigators with a flame thrower), a Worm That Walks can discorporate as a free action, simply falling into a pile of individual vermin who slither quickly away, making their escape through floorboards or the like. The creature often attempts escape this way when confronted by foes armed with potent spells, fire, and the like.

CRAWLING ONES

On rare occasions, a creature of this type will be created of some other form of vermin because of the circumstances of its death and burial. For example, a cultist wizard whose body lay exposed in a desert might be composed of scorpions, an evil clergyman entombed in a mausoleum might be made up of spiders, and so forth. Such variants are generally called "Crawling Ones" rather than "Worms That Walk," for obvious reasons. These crawling ones typically deal 1d4 points of damage per round when engulfing an unprotected target.

CULTISTS

	Novitiate Medium-size Humanoid (1st-level investigator*)	Cultist Medium-size Humanoid (5th-level investigator*)	Grandmaster Medium-size Humanoid (10th-level investigator*)
Hit Dice:	1d6+2 (8 hp)	5d6+10 (30 hp)	10d6+20 (58 hp)
Initiative:	–1 (Dex)	+3 (–1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)	+3 (–1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed:	30 ft.	30 ft.	30 ft.
Armor Class:	9 (–1 Dex)	14 (–1 Dex, +5 armor)	14 (–1 Dex, +5 armor)
Attacks:	Pistol –1 ranged	Pistol +3 ranged**	Pistol +6/+1 ranged**
Damage:	Pistol 1d10	Pistol 1d10	Pistol 1d10
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Abilities:	None	Spells	Spells
Special Qualities:	Mad certainty	Mad certainty	Mad certainty
Saves:	Fort +4, Ref –1, Will +1	Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +2	Fort +9, Ref +2, Will +6
Abilities:	Str 12, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 13	Str 12, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 14	Str 12, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 15
Skills:	Bluff +4, Gather Information +5, Innuendo +4, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (occult) +6, Knowledge (history) +5, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +4, Move Silently +2, Search +5, Sense Motive +5, Spot +4	Bluff +6, Cthulhu Mythos +5, Gather Information +7, Innuendo +6, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (biology) +10, Knowledge (occult) +8, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +6, Move Silently +4, Search +7, Sense Motive +7, Spot +6	Bluff +8, Cthulhu Mythos +10, Gather Info +9, Innuendo +8, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (biology) +15, Knowledge (occult) +10, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (religion) +9, Listen +8, Move Silently +6, Search +9, Sense Motive +9, Spot +11
Feats:	Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot	Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Improved Initiative	Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Improved Initiative, Iron Will
CR:	1	5	10
Climate/Terrain:	Any	Any	Any
Advancement:	None	None	None
Sanity:	65	35	15

* Cultists acquire skills and feats as investigators do.
** This includes an armor check penalty.

Something will have to be done with this pestilential Brother Ambrose. I have now learned that he was sent to Ximes by the Archbishop of Averoigne for no other purpose than to gather proof of my subterraneous connection with Azazel and the Old Ones. He has spied upon my evocations in the vaults, he has heard the hidden formulae, and beheld the veritable manifestation of Lilit, and even of Iog-Sotôt and Sodagui, those demons who are more ancient than the world . . .

—Clark Ashton Smith,
"The Holiness of Azedarac"

Cultists look like regular people on the street (though a few are seem eccentric), but secretly, they revere alien entities of the Cthulhu Mythos. Some seek power; some are misled and think they're part of a benevolent group. They may have been abducted and brainwashed, or perhaps they joined voluntarily, desperate for any group that would accept their strange beliefs.

Cultists are the most common and visible manifestation of the Cthulhu Mythos, as well as the most vulnerable. Groups of cultists are often responsible for waking, raising, or otherwise reanimating creatures of antediluvian aspect or other-planar origin—putting down a given cult is often sufficient to put a stop to a monstrous rampage, or the threat of one.

Cultists come from every human culture that exists. Some cultists are even found among primitive peoples, who continue their unholy rites in distant reaches of the world.

Spells: Novitiate cultists know no spells; however, higher-level cultists know 1d4 spells for every two levels they gain beyond 1st level. Spells are chosen from the Magic chapter, typically including protection spells (*deflect harm, flesh ward*), summon spells for creatures related to the entity worshiped (such as *call star-spawn* for a Cthulhu cultist), and sometimes spells to dispel creatures summoned (*dismissal*). Because cultists have a Sanity score, they lose Sanity points for casting spells, just as player characters do.

Mad Certainty (Ex): Cultists above 1st level maintain the ability to act despite temporary insanity, rather than going into one of the states designated on the tables on page 49. This is because they voluntarily began the worship of a Cthulhu Mythos entity. Their Sanity score is still damaged normally; when it reaches 0, the cultist becomes the permanent slave of the entity worshiped, and possibly of the grandmaster cultist acting as an intermediary.

COMBAT

Cultists fight with whatever weapon they are best suited to—usually, that means a pistol, though a tire iron serves in a pinch. Veteran cultists also know spells.

TEMPLATES

Additional creatures can be created by adding a "template" to an existing creature or character. The following rules set out guidelines for building specific templated creatures, such as a ghost or loup-garou. Ghouls are available as a creature or a template (see Ghoul, page 169).

CHOSEN OF HASTUR

And certainly they saw the thing that came crying out at us . . . the distorted caricature of a human being, with its eyes sunk into invisibility in thick masses of scaly flesh, the thing that flailed its arms bonelessly at us like the appendages of an octopus, the thing that shrieked and gibbered in [my friend's] voice!

—August Derleth, "The Return of Hastur"

Upon first taking the Unspeakable Oath, the doomed character looks just as he did before, unless Hastur granted him some gift that affected his physical appearance. Over time, the character begins to change, losing 1d2 points of Charisma each year or every time he goes up a level (whichever comes first). His skin gradually takes on a gray-green tone and scaly texture and he becomes increasingly flabby. When his Charisma reaches 0, his features begin to fall out along with his hair as he transforms into a Chosen of Hastur, a horrible bloated parody of human form that is still barely recognizable as the former character. His fingers lengthen into boneless tentacles with hungry sucker-mouths at the tips. The Chosen lack skeletal structures, making them shambling mounds of quavering flesh.

As a minion of Hastur, the Chosen is most likely to be encountered somewhere in the temperate latitudes, where Aldebaran can be seen in the nighttime sky. Willingly or not, all Chosen belong to Hastur in mind and body, and he can trigger the transformation of anyone who has taken the Oath at any time. Before transformation, someone who has taken the Unspeakable Oath is likely to be a dangerous cultist or lone occultist; afterward, the transformed creature usually embarks on a brief but murderous rampage, typically aimed directly at one of Hastur's foes, investigators who have angered him, or the like.

The Chosen howl and gibber in rage and hunger, but the minds of most are too badly damaged by the transformation for them to manage coherent speech. Occasionally one will howl or moan a name or word over and over, but true communication is beyond most of them.

CREATING A CHOSEN OF HASTUR

"Chosen of Hastur" is a template that can be added to any human, and perhaps to other intelligent races. The creature's type changes to aberration. Upon transformation, most of the character's statistics and abilities change, as noted below.

Race: Lesser Servitor Race.

Hit Dice: Increase to d12.

Speed: As original creature.

Armor Class: The Chosen gains +6 natural armor due to its boneless rubbery substance.

Attacks: Before transformation, as character. After transformation, the Chosen loses any ranged attacks and attacks as an Offense Option character, no matter what its option before transformation.

Special Attacks: The creature loses all the character's special attacks, replacing them with those listed below.

Frenzy (Ex): Once per day per Hit Die of the original creature, the transformed Chosen of Hastur can go into a frenzy, gaining a +10 bonus to Constitution and Strength. The frenzy lasts for a number of rounds equal to the creature's new Constitution bonus. During this frenzy, the Chosen temporarily gains the Whirlwind Attack feat.

Death Touch (Ex): If a transformed Chosen of Hastur successfully grapples a target, its victim dies instantly and painfully, foaming at the mouth and ears (Fort save, DC 25, to resist). This is considered a "death effect," and as such, it does not affect undead.

Draining Touch (Ex): As a touch attack, a transformed Chosen of Hastur can opt to thrust its tentaclelike sucker-mouthed fingers inside a victim's body and suck out her bodily fluids. This attack drains 1d10 hit points and 1d6 Con per round (should she survive, the hit point loss is temporary, the Con drain permanent). The Chosen temporarily gains 5 hit points for every 5 hit points it drains. The Chosen loses 10 hit points each time Aldebaran sets, so it must continually feed to survive beyond a single rampage.

Special Qualities: Before transformation, the character only has the special qualities he received in return for swearing the Unspeakable Oath. After transformation, he loses all previous special qualities, but gains darkvision 60 feet, fast healing 5, intuit direction, fire resistance 5, cold resistance 20, force resistance 20, and sonic resistance 20, along with immunity to critical hits, death from massive damage, and anything requiring a Will save.

Saves: The Chosen are completely under the power of He Who Must Not Be Named; furthermore, they are immune to mind-affecting spells. Otherwise a Chosen saves as a character of his level.

Abilities: Before transformation, the character's abilities are at first unchanged, unless he requested an ability boost in return for taking the Oath. Over time, his Charisma score abrades as he falls more and more under the will of He Who Must Not Be Named (typically at the rate of 1d2 points upon each level advancement). When the Charisma score reaches 0, the character transforms. Add a +5 to his Strength, and a +10 to his Constitution, but also decrease his Intelligence and Wisdom by –4. If Hastur chooses to trigger the transformation early, the Charisma drops at the rate of 1d4 points per hour until it reaches 0, whereupon transformation occurs. The transformation is one-way, so all changes are permanent.

Skills: Before transformation, as original character. Upon transformation, the character loses all his old skills, replacing them with 1 rank of Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Spot, and Wilderness Lore for each Hit Die the character had, plus 1 rank of Climb, Jump, and Swim for every two Hit Dice the character had (round down). These ranks do not increase when the creature is frenzied.

Feats: Before transformation, as original character. Upon transformation, the character loses all his old feats, replacing them with Endurance, Power Attack, Track, and Whirlwind Attack (this last feat is available only while frenzied).

Challenge Rating: As base creature +5.

Climate/Terrain: Before transformation, any. One who has sworn the Unspeakable Oath typically favors urban areas early on, taking full advantage of Hastur's gifts, then withdraws into isolation as the transformation nears and the

character grows more deformed. After transformation, it cannot survive except in latitudes where Aldebaran shines and usually seeks out and roams urban areas, where prey is more plentiful.

Advancement: Before transformation, as character. After transformation, none.

Sanity Loss: 1/1d6. Witnessing the actual transformation costs 1d6/2d6, with full damage taken if the witness knew the character being transformed or undergoing the monstrous transformation.

SAMPLE CHOSEN OF HASTUR

This example uses a 3rd-level Defense Option lawyer as the character. (His profession template is white-collar worker.)

Greg Lindsay, Medium-Size Human

Hit Dice: 3d6 (13 hp) before transformation, 3d12+15 (34 hp) after, or 3d12+30 (49) when in frenzy

Initiative: +2 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

Armor Class: 12 (+2 Dex) before transformation (Armor Class 13 with feat); 18 (+6 natural, +2 Dex) after transformation

Attacks: +2 melee or +3 ranged before transformation; +7 melee thereafter (+12 melee when frenzied)

Damage: Before transformation—1 unarmed attack 1d3+1 or 1 ranged attack 1d10 (handgun); after transformation—1 slam 1d6+3 (1d6+8 when frenzied)

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Before transformation—spells; after transformation—frenzy, death touch, draining touch.

Special Qualities: After transformation—Darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 5, intuit direction, fire resistance 5, cold resistance 20, force resistance 20, sonic resistance 20, immunities (immune to critical hits, death from massive damage, mind-affecting spells, or anything requiring a Will save)

Saves: Before transformation—Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +2; after transformation—Fort +8, Ref +5, Will —

Abilities: Before transformation—Str 12, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 15; after transformation—Str 17, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 9, Wis 4, Cha 0

Skills: Before transformation—Bluff +10, Computer Use +2, Diplomacy +10, Drive +5, Forgery +5, Gather Information +9, Innuendo +3, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (law) +6, Listen +5, Read Lips +7, Sense Motive +4

After transformation—Climb +4, Hide +5, Jump +4, Listen +0, Move Silently +5, Spot +0, Swim +4, Wilderness Lore +0

Feats: Before transformation—Dodge, Persuasive, Trustworthy; after transformation— Endurance, Power Attack, Track, Whirlwind Attack (this last is only available while frenzied)

CR: 8

Climate/Terrain: Before transformation—New York City; after transformation—anywhere Hastur or hunger sends him

Advancement: As character before transformation; none afterward

Sanity Loss: None before transformation. Witnessing the actual transformation costs 1d6/2d6, with full damage taken if the witness knew the character being transformed; 1/1d6 to see his bloated monstrous form after transformation.

A slender, handsome young lawyer who's full of self-confidence and very smooth, Greg discovered the Mythos several months ago. He came across an interesting tome when working to settle an estate for a deceased client. It was child's play to extract the book and erase any references to it. Within it, he found the means to *contact Hastur* as well as the spell *unspeakable oath*, but the text did not make clear the price to be paid for submitting to Hastur. Greg wished for eternal youth and gleefully looks forward to centuries of amassing wealth, women, and power as part of the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign.

As a minion of Hastur and very junior member of the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign, Greg can be encountered showing up with a sudden injunction or restraining order against the player characters. He avoids cultist activities as hopelessly old-fashioned, but can be a very effective thorn in an investigator's side for quite a long while. Only when the consequences of the Oath begin to become apparent to him will he reconsider his course and may ask for their help—a deed likely to cause Hastur to trigger his transformation at once and send him ravening after them.

CULT SORCERER

Although worship of the Great Old Ones and Outer Gods can take many forms, the most common is the isolated cult, exposed to the terrible wisdom and led by a madman in communion with these eldritch entities. Such cult sorcerers may be primitive pelt-wearing savages with blood stiffening their matted hair, but their horrible knowledge outstrips that of so-called modern man. Other cult sorcerers may be smooth, Armani-clad leaders of fashionable Southern California society—concealing a frenzied cannibalistic madness behind their lip balm and even tan lines. What such figures possess in common is enough understanding of the universe's reality to completely unhinge them—and grant them terrible powers over it.

The cult sorcerer is a particularly useful NPC for an ongoing campaign. The GM can either use this template to create a sorcerer as an adversary in an ongoing campaign, or if the story allows, add this template to an existing cultist (or character) after he has achieved permanent insanity. In either case, it remains an NPC controlled by the GM.

Some cultists hope that by sacrificing all their Sanity, perhaps by summoning the deity they fervently worship, they will be rewarded with the sorcerer's dark secrets. Others die horribly as the pawns of uncaring and alien powers.

CREATING A CULT SORCERER

"Cult sorcerer" is a template that can be added to any human, and perhaps to other humanoids. However, the character must achieve permanent insanity before the template can be added. (This precludes cult sorcerers from being playable as characters.) The new character uses all the old character's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: d6.

Speed: As the base character.

Armor Class: As the base character.

Attacks: As the base character.

Damage: As the base character.

Special: Before becoming a cult sorcerer, the character must have at least one rank of Cthulhu Mythos, as well as a *call deity* or *contact deity* spell for the deity he worships.

Special Qualities: Many, though not all, cult sorcerers seem to display the following bizarre and paranatural abilities. Gamemasters should take care to individually craft each sorcerer as an individual threat. The features of the cult sorcerer may include some or all of the following.

Adept Spellcaster (Ex): A cult sorcerer gains spells as any other character does. However, exposure to the horrific truths of the Cthulhu Mythos has forcibly restructured the mind of the cult sorcerer. His brain, now aligned to the bleakness of cosmic truth, no longer resists the blasphemous knowledge of the Outer Ones. Thus, cult sorcerers take only half the time that sane characters do to learn spells, read Mythos grimoires, and so on.

A cult sorcerer also casts spells associated with his patron deity (or its servitors) at two spell levels above his own level. For example, a 5th-level cult sorcerer who leads a debased coven of Cthulhu worshipers casts *contact Cthulhu, grasp of Cthulhu, contact star-spawn of Cthulhu* and *contact deep one* as if he were 7th level, assuming he knows those spells in the first place. The GM may choose to associate some "generic" spells with specific deities to further personalize individual cult sorcerers.

Adept Psychic (Ex): A cult sorcerer may gain one psychic feat per level, in addition to any other feats.

Madman's Intuition (Ex): The disintegration of the cult sorcerer's brain leads to intuitive short-circuits that defy conventional logic. After 3rd level, with a successful Intelligence check, a cult sorcerer somehow "knows," even with very little observation, which member of a party is the weakest (or the most magically puissant), whether the police are watching the cemetery, where the unguarded door is, how many shots are left in a PC's gun, and other similarly vital information. At 5th level, this ability often allows a cult sorcerer to maintain a facade of sanity, providing the "expected" answers to questions or responses to social interaction.

Enhanced Pineal Gland (Ex): Long exposure to the nontelluric and paradimensional energies of the Cthulhu Mythos can grant cult sorcerers a degree of perception outside conventional experience. Attuned to the radiations and coruscations that invisibly permeate the three-dimensional world, a 6th-level or higher cult sorcerer can often see through darkness, smoke, or other obstructions. At 10th level and above, such power may allow the sorcerer to see around corners, through walls, or even into the reaches of time itself. This ability may work in tandem with Spot or Search checks, at the GM's option.

Saves: As the base character.

Abilities: As the base character.

Feats: The cult sorcerer gains the Iron Will feat.

Challenge Rating: As the base character +1.

Advancement: As an investigator (see the Character Creation chapter), but with the additional special qualities of a cult sorcerer.

Sanity Loss: The character immediately becomes permanently insane: either –10 Sanity or no Sanity score. Obviously, this prevents the cult sorcerer from being playable as an investigator.

GHOST

. . . [T]here was my [man] again, back to me, looking at the books on the shelf I wanted. His hat was on the table, and he had a bald head. I waited a second or two looking at him . . . I tell you, he had a very nasty bald head. It looked to me dry, and it looked dusty, and the streaks of hair across it were much less like hair than cobwebs. Well, I made a bit of noise on purpose, coughed and moved my feet. He turned round and let me see his face—which I hadn't seen before . . . Though for one reason or another I didn't take in the lower part of his face, I did see the upper part; and it was perfectly dry, and the eyes were very deep-sunk; and over them, from the eyebrows to the cheek-bone, there were cobwebs—thick. Now that closed me up, as they say, and I can't tell you anything more.

—M. R. James, "The Tractate Middoth"

Ghosts come in a variety of forms, often making it difficult to determine that what one has encountered is a true ghost and not some other phenomenon. A ghost might look exactly like he did in life, and may be mistaken for a living person by those who never touch him. Another may be transparent, but otherwise as she was just before her death. A third may be clearly supernatural, with misty limbs or monstrous features.

Ghosts are created when a person dies in agony, leaving behind unfinished business. Their spirits cling to this world, seeking to complete whatever task they left undone—whether to avenge their own deaths, complete a monstrous sacrifice, guard some precious object that meant more to them than life itself, or bring destruction upon all who dare move into the home they still consider theirs. All ghosts are exceedingly dangerous, for they find it difficult to distinguish between living individuals. Thus, an investigator's ghost might attack his former colleagues, thinking they're more of the cultists who slew him, or a late occultist might attack his own heir, thinking him just another thief come to rob his precious library of occult tomes.

Ghosts speak all the languages they knew in life, but the living cannot always hear them. A Will save (DC 12) is required for a ghost to be able to make itself heard by the living. Some ghosts prefer to leave behind messages in other ways. These can be as dramatic as causing writing in blood to appear on a wall or as simple as leaving a book open or pointing to some significant passage.

Ghosts are ethereal creatures: They are invisible, incorporeal, and capable of moving in any direction, even up or down (albeit at half normal speed). Since they are incorporeal, they can move through solid objects, including living creatures. However, an ethereal creature can't normally attack material creatures without using special abilities.

CREATING A GHOST

"Ghost" is a template that can be added to any human with a positive Charisma modifier (lingering on after a mortal life has ended takes a strong sense of identity). The creature's type changes to undead. It uses all the character's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: Increase to d12.

Speed: As when living (30 feet), but the ghost is no longer hindered by any terrain. In addition, ghosts may fly at the same rate as they walk (perfect maneuverability).

Armor Class: Ghosts cannot normally be attacked by material opponents. When manifesting (see below), the ghost gains a deflection bonus to Armor Class equal to its Charisma bonus.

Attacks: As an incorporeal creature, a ghost's attacks ignore armor. A ghost uses its Dexterity modifier, not its Strength modifier, for melee attacks.

Damage: Against ethereal creatures, the ghost attacks as it did when alive. A ghost cannot physically attack material creatures at all, but can use its special attacks when manifesting.

Special Attacks: The ghost retains all the character's special attacks, but cannot use any, relying upon physical contact except on other ethereal creatures (such as a character under the effects of a *wandering soul* spell). In addition, the ghost gains the manifestation ability (see below), plus one of the following special attacks for each point of its Charisma bonus. (Thus, a ghost with Charisma 12 gains the manifestation special ability, plus one other ability of the Gamemaster's choice; one with Charisma 17 gains manifestation, plus three other abilities.) The save DC against a ghost's power is 10 + half the ghost's level + his Charisma modifier.

Corrupting Gaze (Su): The ghost can blast living targets within 30 feet with his glance. Characters who meet the ghost's gaze take 2d10 points of damage and 1d4 points of permanent Charisma drain (Fort save to resist).

Corrupting Touch (Su): A ghost's touch attack against a living target deals 1d4 points of damage. Against an ethereal target, the ghost adds his Strength modifier to attack and damage rolls. Against a material target, the ghost adds his Dexterity target to his attack roll.

Dominate Person (Su): As the spell (see the Magic chapter, page 140.)

Frightful Moan (Su): When the ghost moans as an attack action, all living creatures within a 30-foot spread become panicked (Will save to resist) for 2d4 rounds. A panicked creature flees at once, with a 50% chance of dropping anything she carries, and suffers a –2 penalty on all saves, cowering in terror if trapped. (A cowering character cannot attack or move and loses all Dexterity bonuses; attacks against a cowering character gain a +2 bonus.) A character who makes her Will save cannot be affected by that ghost's moan for one day.

Grasp of Cthulhu (Su): As the spell (see Magic chapter, page 142).

Horrific Appearance (Su): Any living creature within 60 feet who views the ghost takes 1d4 points of permanent Strength drain, 1d4 points of permanent Dexterity drain, and 1d4 points of permanent Constitution drain (Fort save to resist). A character who makes her save cannot be affected by that ghost's appearance for one day.

Malevolence (Su): As *magic jar* cast by a 10th-level character, except no focal item is required. If the attack succeeds, the ghost merges into his victim's body, suppressing the original personality and gaining complete control of the body for 1 hour per level/HD (Will save to resist, DC 15 + ghost's Charisma modifier). An intended victim who successfully resists is immune to the ghost's malevolence for one day.

Nightmare (Su): As the spell (see page 145).

Manifestation (Su): As ethereal creatures, ghosts cannot affect or be affected by physical creatures (such as investigators); ethereal creatures are also invisible. When manifesting, a ghost becomes visible, but remains incorporeal (immune to nonmagical attacks, 50% miss chance for spells and magic weapons). All ghosts gain this ability.

Telekinesis (Su): Like the Psychokinesis feat, but much more powerful, this power enables the ghost to move objects or creatures by sheer concentration. He can move objects weighing up to 25 pounds per level for 1 round per level. Alternatively, the ghost can give a violent shove or push one or more objects or creatures within 10 feet of each other. The ghost can use this power to attempt to push a character down a flight of stairs or out a window, throw a drawer full of kitchen knives at some unfortunate, or the like. Such objects cause between 1 and 1d6 points of damage per 25 pounds, while characters who suffer a fall or are hurled against a wall take 1d6 points of damage per 10 feet traveled (Will save to resist).

Special Qualities: A ghost retains all the special qualities it had in life. In addition, it gains two special qualities: incorporeal (see page 154) and undead (see page 153), with all the special abilities associated with those states. A ghost also gains darkvision 60 feet and rejuvenation—even if destroyed in combat, a ghost reforms in 2d4 days on a successful rejuvenation check (1d20 + the ghost's level/HD against a DC of 16). Many ghosts are tied to a particular location or object. Destroying that focus or forcibly removing it from the ghost's haunts often disperses the ghost's essence.

Saves: Undead are immune to anything requiring a Fort save. Otherwise a ghost saves as an Offense Option character of the same level/HD, with one bad save and one good save (see "Advancement," page 157, for more details).

Abilities: As the base character, except that a ghost has no Constitution score. In addition, the character's Charisma increases by +4 when he becomes a ghost.

Skills: A ghost automatically succeeds at all Move Silently checks and cannot be heard with Listen checks when he does not want to be detected. In addition, upon becoming a ghost, the character gains +8 racial bonuses to Hide, Listen, Search, and Spot checks.

Feats: A ghost retains the feats it had in life.

Challenge Rating: As the base creature +2.

Climate/Terrain: Anywhere a human has died horribly.

Advancement: None. Ghosts are frozen at the point of death and cannot gain levels or HD thereafter.

Sanity Loss: 0/1d8 (sometimes more, if the ghost's death was a particularly grisly one)

GHOSTLY EQUIPMENT

A ghost usually appears dressed in the clothes he died or was buried in, but sometimes wears an outfit typical of what he wore in life. In addition, a ghost who had a strong attachment to some item often retains an ethereal copy of the item. For example, a miser might retain a strongbox, a scholar the book he had been unable to finish before his death, a child a favorite doll, a crazed murderer her favorite axe, and the like. These ghostly items affect fellow ethereal creatures normally, but pass harmlessly through material creatures and objects. Enchanted items are the exception: A manifested ghost is able to harm material creatures with a magic weapon (such as one with an enhancement bonus), and enchanted blades can harm a manifested ghost in turn.

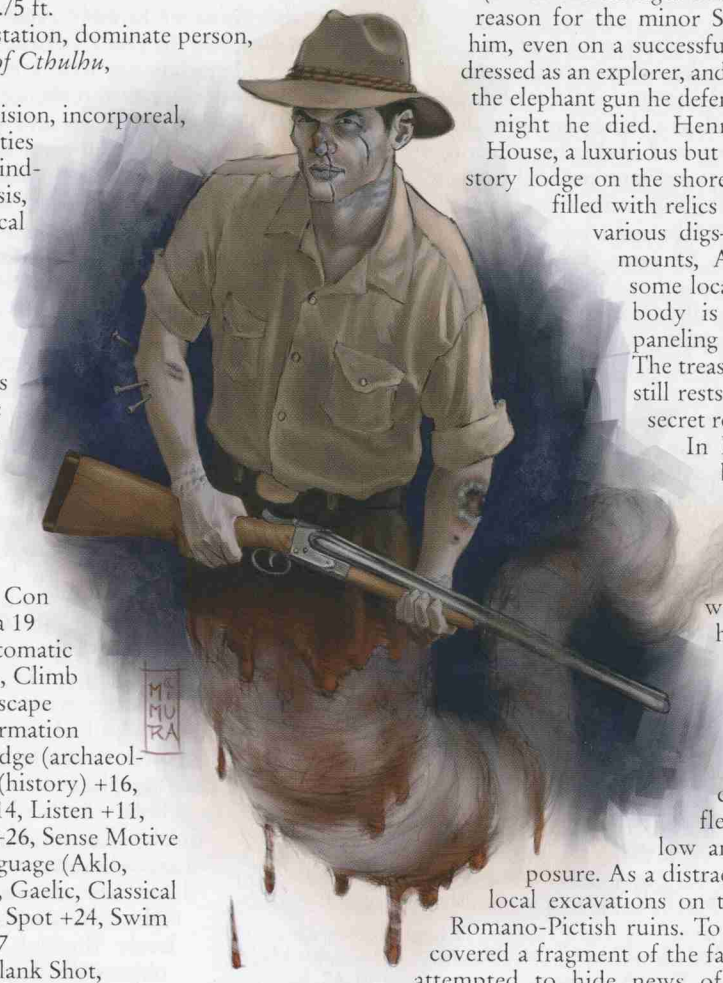
In most cases, the original material item remains behind. Removing the

object from the place where the ghost left it causes the ghost's ethereal copy to dissipate, angering the spirit. A ghost will stop at nothing to recover the original and see it restored to its proper place, unless it can be convinced that the new owner is the rightful inheritor (a difficult task).

SAMPLE GHOST

This example ghost uses a 10th-level Defense Option archaeologist as the base character.

Henry Hancock, Medium-Size Undead (Lesser Independent Race)
Hit Dice: 10d12 (65 hp)
Initiative: +0 (Dex)
Speed: 30 ft.
Armor Class: 10 when ethereal (+0 Dex), 14 when manifesting (+4 Cha). All his attacks are touch attacks that ignore armor, including natural armor (Dexterity and deflection bonuses still apply).
Attacks: +6 unarmed or +5 elephant gun (H&H .300)
Damage: Elephant gun 2d12; or 1 unarmed attack 1d3+1 (+1 Str) against ethereal targets, none against material targets
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Manifestation, dominate person, frightful moan, *grasp of Cthulhu*, telekinesis (DC 19)
Special Qualities: Darkvision, incorporeal, undead, ghost immunities (immune to poison, mind-affecting spells, paralysis, stunning, disease, critical hits, subdual damage, ability drain or damage, or death from massive damage), rejuvenation (reforms in 2d4 days as long as the R'lyeh disc remains hidden within Hancock House)
Saves: Fort —, Ref +3, Will +12. Immune to anything requiring a Fort save
Abilities: Str 12, Dex 10, Con —, Int 17, Wis 16, Cha 19
Skills: Move Silently (automatic success); Appraise +16, Climb +8, Demolitions +5, Escape Artist +3, Gather Information +16, Hide +8, Knowledge (archaeology) +19, Knowledge (history) +16, Knowledge (occult) +14, Listen +11, Research +16, Search +26, Sense Motive +15, Speak Other Language (Aklo, Arabic, Bantu, French, Gaelic, Classical Greek, Latin) +4 each, Spot +24, Swim +4, Wilderness Lore +7
Feats: Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Sharp-Eyed, Skill Emphasis (Knowledge [archaeology])
Psychic Feats: Sensitive
CR: 12
Climate/Terrain: Hancock House (see below)



Ghostly Equipment: On a successful manifestation check (DC 19), Hancock can materialize the elephant gun he attempted to fight off his killers with. The gun always has two shells in it when materialized.
Sanity Loss: 1d2/1d8

As a ghost, Henry presents a gruesome sight. He bears all the marks of the torture that killed him and drips spectral blood. The lower part of his body is not visible, instead trailing off into a thin wisp of vapor. (These evident signs of bloody torture are the reason for the minor Sanity loss for seeing him, even on a successful Sanity check). He's dressed as an explorer, and he sometimes carries the elephant gun he defended himself with the night he died. Henry haunts Hancock House, a luxurious but now abandoned two-story lodge on the shores of a Scottish loch, filled with relics and mementos of his various digs—trophy heads, gun mounts, African artifacts, and some local finds. His mangled body is hidden behind the paneling in the upstairs hall. The treasure he died to defend still rests where he hid it, in a secret room in the basement.

In life, Hancock was a brilliant, stubborn, irascible man. A talented archaeologist dedicated to his profession, he was, unluckily for him, too good at his chosen profession. His sanity shaken by what he discovered in excavations at the site of the lost city of G'harne, he fled to Scotland to lie low and recover his composure. As a distraction, he began some local excavations on the site of some old Romano-Pictish ruins. To his surprise, he discovered a fragment of the fabled R'lyeh disc. He attempted to hide news of his discovery, but cultists who wished to use the disc to trigger the rise of R'lyeh and speed the return of Great Cthulhu soon learned of it. After attacking and overpowering him, they tortured him to death in an attempt to learn where he had hidden it. As stubborn in death as in life, Henry soon returned as a ghost and drove them away. He has haunted Hancock House ever since, protecting the artifact from those who would use it for evil purposes. Unfortunately, the agony he suffered before his death drove him insane. He can no longer distinguish friends from foes, suspecting all who enter the house of cult activities. Ghost-hunters who succeed in finding his body may think that giving it a proper burial will lay the ghost, but they are mistaken. Only finding and removing the fragment of the R'lyeh disc will bring Henry peace, and he will resist it falling into the hands of any "evil murderous cultists" (including the investigators) to the utmost.

wrong, so it takes an act of willpower to overcome these handicaps.) Whatever her form, a loup-garou understands the language of wolves and can make herself understood by any wolf.

LOUP-GAROU

The change occurred before he could divest himself of more than his coat and scarf. The shirt was monogrammed; he must remember to collect all the tatters later . . . . Hunger snarled within him, mounting from belly to throat, from throat to mouth. It seemed that he had not eaten for a month of months. Raw butcher's meat was never fresh enough . . . [he desired] other meals, warm, and sauced with still-spurting blood . . . The night was warm and windless, and the woodland seemed to hold its breath. There were, he knew, other monsters abroad in that year of the Twenty-first century. . . his brothers and sisters ranged unchallenged, preferring the darker urban jungles, while he, country-bred, still kept the ancient ways. . . his tensing ears caught the far-off vibration of footsteps . . . . They told, surely, of a worthwhile prey; of prime lean meat and vital, abundant blood.

—Clark Ashton Smith, "Monsters in the Night"

The loup-garou, or werewolf (literally "man-wolf"), is a human who has been cursed with lycanthropy, transforming at regular intervals into a large wolf or a monstrous wolf-human hybrid. In human form, the loup-garou appears more or less normal at first, although she becomes slightly hairier, with thicker and darker body hair, sometimes including hair on the palms. (If male, the character needs to shave at least twice a day to avoid "five-o'-clock shadow"; female werewolves sometimes resort to temporary depilatories when visiting urban settings.) She also finds her senses becoming keener, especially her sense of smell. In wolf form, the werewolf may be any natural color (often black), but is larger and fiercer than ordinary wolves, with eyes that sometimes glow red when the werewolf is hungry or angry. The hybrid form is the most unsettling of all, that of a man-wolf that can walk upright, with powerful arms, great claws at the ends of what were once fingers, and great jaws filled with wicked-looking teeth.

The loup-garou may be encountered anywhere that humans live, although they are rare in cities and most often found in temperate woodlands. Their curse is triggered by phases of the moon, but when under stress (Will save, DC 20), a loup-garou may revert to wolf form, even in the dark of the moon. Experienced lycanthropes—those who have been born with the curse, or carried it for a year or more—can shift forms at will. The curse of lycanthropy can strike a character who commits some heinous act, one usually more bestial than human (such as cannibalism). More often, the curse is conveyed by infection. If a character bitten by a loup-garou in any form fails her Fort save (DC 15), she becomes a loup-garou in turn, with the disease first manifesting itself at the next full moon. The disease can also be transmitted through unprotected sex between a human and a werewolf in human form.

A new loup-garou typically has no memory of her first few transformations and only eventually realizes the horrible truth of her curse (Sanity loss 1d8/2d8). While a character infected with lycanthropy may resist her animalistic impulses, eventually the animal side wins out, and she comes to revel in her power and bloodlust. All loup-garou are superb and ruthless hunters.

In human form, a loup-garou knows all the languages she spoke before her transformation. In wolf form, she understands these languages, but cannot speak them. In hybrid form, she must make a successful Will check (DC 15) to be able to express herself in articulate speech. (The tongue and palate are all

CREATING A LOUP-GAROU

Loup-garou is a template that can be added to any human. The human's type changes to shapechanger. A loup-garou uses all the character's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Race: Lesser Independent Race.

Hit Dice: Increase to d8 (minimum 3d8+6, or 20 hp).

Speed: 30 ft. (human form), 45 ft. (man-wolf form), 60 ft. (wolf form).

Armor Class: The loup-garou gains +2 natural armor in wolf or hybrid form.

Attacks: As base character when in human form, as animal when in wolf-form, as either when in hybrid form.

Special Attacks: The werewolf retains all the character's special attacks. In addition, she gains a vicious bite attack in wolf or hybrid form (1d8+Strength modifier) that can transmit her curse to those she bites (see above). On a successful bite, she can automatically attempt to trip her opponent as a free action (see Trip in the Combat chapter, page 81). A successful trip leaves her prey prone before her, throat exposed for any follow-up attack; a failure does not expose her to a trip on the part of her victim. The loup-garou can cast spells in hybrid form.

Special Qualities: Wolf empathy (communicate with and command wolves), scent, damage reduction 15/silver. All but the last of these is usable no matter what her form; the damage reduction only applies to her wolf and hybrid forms.

Saves: All the loup-garou's saves become good saves (see Advancement, page 157, for more details). In addition, when in wolf or hybrid form she gains a +2 racial bonus on her Fort and Will saves.

Ability Scores: Add +8 to the character's Strength and Constitution scores when she transforms into her wolf or hybrid form. Her Dexterity increases by +4, while her Intelligence drops by a like amount (wolf and hybrid form). Her Wisdom remains unchanged, while her Charisma increases by +4 in wolf or hybrid form.

Skills: In addition to retaining all skills known before her transformation (although some may not be usable without prehensile digits), the loup-garou gains a +4 racial bonus on Listen, Move Silently, Search, Spot, and Wilderness Lore checks while in human form, reflecting her keener senses. In wolf or hybrid form, these bonuses increase to +8.

Feats: A loup-garou gains Blind-Fight and Improved Initiative when in wolf or man-wolf form. In addition, she retains the feats she had before her transformation, although it might be difficult to use them except in human form. For example, Gearhead, Weapon Proficiency feats, and the various firearm feats require hands, not wolf-paws, to use. Run, Stealthy, Track, Whirlwind Attack, and many other feats are just as useful in wolf or hybrid form as they are in human form.

Challenge Rating: As the base character +4.

Climate/Terrain: Anywhere humans are found, but particularly in temperate woodlands.

Advancement: As the base character.

Sanity Loss: None to see in human or wolf form, 0/1d3 to see in hybrid form, 1/1d6 to see transform from wolf to hybrid form, 1/1d8 to see transform from human into wolf or man-wolf form.

SAMPLE LOUP-GAROU

This example uses a 5th-level Offense Option park ranger (a modified soldier template) as the character.

Deborah Pelton, Medium-Size Shapechanger (Lesser Independent Race)

Hit Dice: 5d8+10 (32 hp) as human, 5d8+45 (67 hp) in wolf or hybrid form

Initiative: +5 as human or in hybrid form (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative), +7 as wolf (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft. (human), 45 ft. (hybrid), or 60 ft. (wolf)

Armor Class: 11 in human form (+1 Dex), 15 (+2 natural, +3 Dex) in wolf form, 11 in hybrid form (+1 Dex)

Attacks: +5 melee (human form) or +9 melee (wolf or hybrid form), +5 ranged (human form only)

Damage: Unarmed attack 1d3+1 subdual (human form only), bite 1d6+8 (wolf or hybrid form only), claw 1d4+8 (hybrid form only)

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Bite attack (wolf and hybrid forms only), including chance to trip foe on successful bite

Special Qualities: Shapeshift at will, wolf empathy, scent (all forms), damage reduction 15/silver (wolf and hybrid forms only)

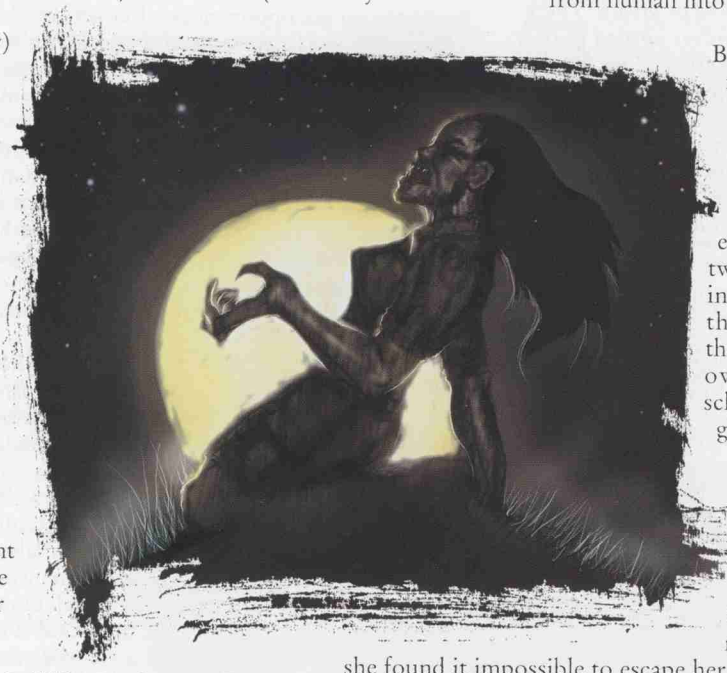
Saves: Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +5 as human, Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +7 as wolf or hybrid

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 11 as human; Str 21, Dex 17, Con 22, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 15 as wolf or hybrid

Skills: (listed as human/wolf or hybrid) Animal Empathy +8/+10, Climb +6/+10, Handle Animal +8 (human form only) Hide +9/+15, Intimidate +6/+7, Jump +8/+12, Listen +13/+17, Move Silently +12/+18, Search +13/+15, Spot +13/+17, Swim +7/+11, Wilderness Lore +13/+17

Feats: Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Track; Improved Initiative, Blind Fight (wolf and hybrid forms only)

CR: 9



Climate/Terrain: Originally from the Appalachian Water Gap area, Deborah now lives in Wyoming on the edge of Yellowstone National Park, but ranges across Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Alberta, and Saskatchewan when business, wanderlust, or her bloodlust takes her.

Sanity Loss: None to see in her human or wolf form, 0/1d3 to see in hybrid form, 1/1d6 to see transform from wolf to hybrid form, 1/1d8 to see transform from human into wolf or hybrid

Born into a small clan of rural werewolves, Deborah rebelled against the mindless brutality and squalor of her upbringing. She was only twelve when her degenerate father and vicious twin sister were slain by investigators, but rather than trying to avenge them, she set out on her own. With no formal schooling and few social graces, she wandered across the country for several years, eventually finding a job as an animal control officer with the park service due to her uncanny ability to find and put down rogue animals. However, she found it impossible to escape her animalistic alter ego.

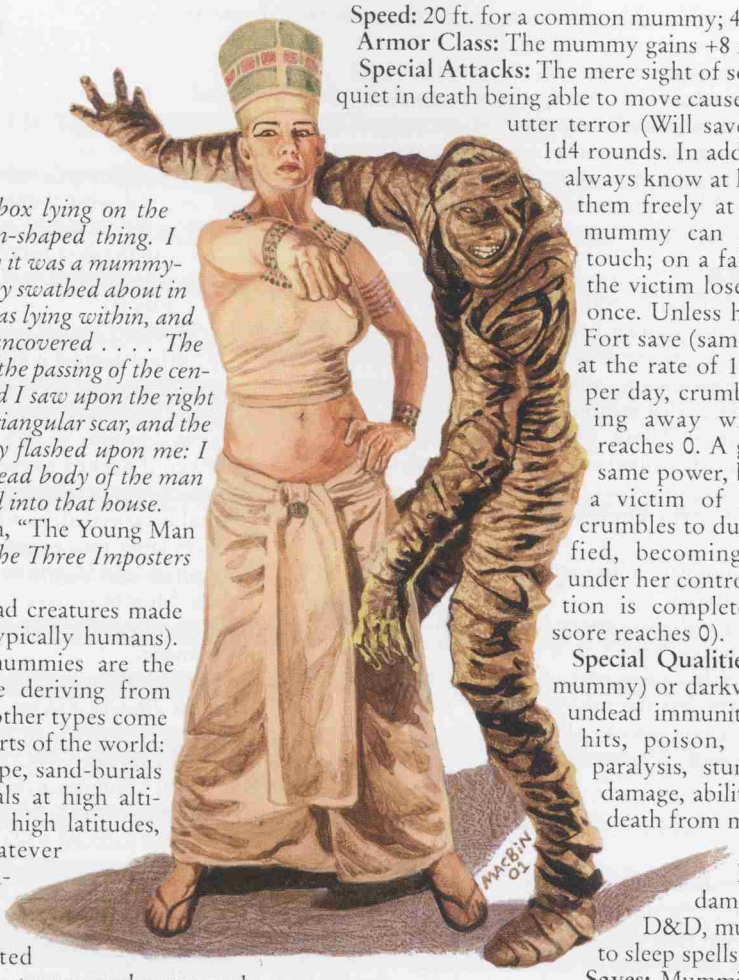
She still changes into wolf form at least once a month. Usually, she slakes her bloodlust by killing and eating some big-game animal, but several times a year, she devours a lone hiker or camper. When she kills humans, she either hides the body or makes it look as though a cougar, wolf, or bear has done the deed. Deb Pelton is a petite, fit woman, thirty years old, with dirty-blonde hair either worn in a ragged cut or pulled back into a messy ponytail. She usually wears a worn ranger's outfit (sans hat) or old jeans and a checked shirt. When off-duty in the woods, she often carries a rifle.

Like most loup-garou, Deb Pelton lost her sanity long ago. However, unlike most she developed a curious defense mechanism: a split personality. In her, mind it is her dead twin Jael who does the killing, Jael who is the wolf, Jael whom she has to clean up after and keep hidden and safe. (This includes hunting down and killing any men "Jael" found attractive enough to sleep with, lest it spread the curse.) She is most likely to be encountered after she's called in as expert help. Player characters on the track of some mysterious beast responsible for a string of maulings may be introduced to her. If Deborah herself was responsible for the attacks, she'll do everything possible to throw suspicion onto some rogue bear or rabid cougar, even to the extent of killing and partially eating some skeptic, or planting animal footprints of the appropriate type nearby. If some other creature did the killings, she will be eager to test her hunting skills against it to see which triumphs.

MUMMY

There was a great box lying on the floor, a queer, coffin-shaped thing. I looked at it, and saw it was a mummy-case . . . . The mummy swathed about in the robes of death was lying within, and the face had been uncovered . . . . The flesh was black with the passing of the centuries; but as I looked I saw upon the right cheek bone a small triangular scar, and the secret of the mummy flashed upon me: I was looking at the dead body of the man whom I had decoyed into that house.

—Arthur Machen, "The Young Man with Spectacles," *The Three Imposters*



Mummies are undead creatures made from humanoids (typically humans). The best-known mummies are the cloth-wrapped type deriving from ancient Egypt, but other types come from many other parts of the world: bog-burials in Europe, sand-burials in Peru, wind-burials at high altitudes, ice-burials at high latitudes, and the like. Whatever their type, all mummies in their natural state appear to be dried-out, desiccated corpses. Even the best-preserved mummy has a musty, dry odor, like very old leather. Some smell strongly of natron (salt) and bitumen (tar), bogs, or spices, depending upon the means used to preserve the body.

Common mummies are mere mindless guardians, servitors placed in sacred locations and commanded to destroy any unauthorized intruders. Those few known as greater mummies or Mummy Lords are an exception. These individuals, who were mummified alive, retain their wits and personalities beyond death. They can command their lesser brethren at will. Disguised by spells such as *body warping*, *consume likeness*, or *voice of Ra*, they pass among living humans as one of their own. Most mummies serve the cult of Nyarlathotep, in his aspect as the Black Pharaoh. Mummy Lords are often high priests in the cult, both before and after their transformation into undeath.

Mummies retain knowledge of languages they knew in life, but common mummies can no longer speak or write them (though they understand instructions spoken in those tongues). Greater mummies typically know 2d6 languages, some from their own time and some from the period since their awakening, and can both speak and write them.

CREATING A MUMMY

"Mummy" is a template that can be added to any humanoid creature. The creature's type changes to undead. The process is an excruciating one, and deprives the participant of any remaining sanity. A mummy's internal organs are generally removed and stored in four special containers called canopic jars. Destroying one of these jars reduces the mummy's Hit Dice from d12s to d10s. Destroying two reduces the HD to d8s. Destroy three, and the Hit Dice drop to d6s; destroy four, and the mummy has d4s for all its Hit Dice.

Race: Lesser Servitor Race (common mummy) or Greater Independent Race (Mummy Lord).

Hit Dice: Increase to d12.

Speed: 20 ft. for a common mummy; 40 ft. for greater mummy.

Armor Class: The mummy gains +8 natural armor.

Special Attacks: The mere sight of something that should lie quiet in death being able to move causes the viewer to freeze in utter terror (Will save, DC 15, to resist) for 1d4 rounds. In addition, greater mummies always know at least 1d12 spells and use them freely at need. Once per day a mummy can activate its desiccating touch; on a failed Fort save (DC 20), the victim loses 1d6 points of Con at once. Unless he succeeds on a second Fort save (same DC), he withers away at the rate of 1d3 more points of Con per day, crumbling to dust and blowing away when his ability score reaches 0. A greater mummy has the same power, but can choose whether a victim of her desiccating touch crumbles to dust or is slowly mummified, becoming a common mummy under her control when the transformation is complete (i.e., when his Con score reaches 0).

Special Qualities: Blindsight (common mummy) or darkvision (greater mummy), undead immunities (immune to critical hits, poison, mind-affecting spells, paralysis, stunning, disease, subdual damage, ability drain or damage, and death from massive damage), vulnerable to fire (save for half damage, normal damage on a failed save). (In D&D, mummies are also immune to sleep spells and effects.)

Saves: Mummies are immune to anything requiring a Fort save. Otherwise as the base character.

Ability Scores: The base character's Strength score is increased by +10 upon translation into undeath, while Dexterity decreases by –4. As an undead creature, the mummy has no Constitution score and is immune to attacks that target that ability. Common mummies are mindless, with no Intelligence score, and are thus invulnerable to mental attacks. The character is aware enough of his surroundings to have the same Wisdom score as when he was alive, and his fearsome appearance increases his Charisma by +4. Greater mummies retain their Intelligence, gain a +2 boost to Wisdom, and get a +4 boost to Charisma.

Skills: A common mummy loses any skills it had in life, but does gain Hide +8, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, and Spot +9. A greater mummy retains all the skills she had in life; she also gains 7 ranks each of Hide, Listen, Move Silently, and Spot.

Feats: A common mummy loses the feats it had in life, replacing them with Alertness and Toughness. A greater mummy retains all the feats she had in life. In addition, all greater mum-

mies gain Wealth as a bonus feat; this represents the grave goods buried with the immortal.

Challenge Rating: As base character +2.

Climate/Terrain: Mummies favor terrains similar to those they lived and died in, but they can go or be placed almost anywhere at need.

Advancement: None (common mummy) or as character (greater mummy).

Sanity Loss: 1/1d8 (common mummy), 0/1d6 (greater mummy), 0/1d4 (animal mummy), or 1d4/2d6 (composite mummy).

COMPOSITE MUMMIES

The Egyptians were fond of representing their gods as composite creatures, typically humans with animal heads. Some ancient cultists took this symbolism a step further by creating mummies from parts of several creatures. The most common composite mummies include crocodile-headed mummies, lioness-headed mummies, jackal-headed mummies, and bird-headed mummies. These mummies correspond to the common mummy template described above, except for the following deviations:

Add the creature's HD to the human's levels for the purpose of determining overall HD.

Animal-headed mummies gain a bite attack in addition to their regular weapon or slam attacks.

Composite mummies are slightly more fragile than those not stitched together; a score that would be a critical hit against a composite mummy not only causes part of it to be hacked off (typically the head), but renders the separated body part inert.

Composite mummies never speak, although they understand and obey orders given in languages they knew when alive.

ANIMAL MUMMIES

Sometimes animals are mummified, either by accident or design. Such creatures gain all the powers of common mummies given above, except that their desiccating touch attack is weaker (1d3 points of Con damage on the initial failed save and 1 point per day thereafter).

SAMPLE GREATER MUMMY

This example uses a 14th-level Defense Option 5th dynasty priestess of Isis and Osiris as the character.

Madame Sosostris (Princess Ni-Sedjer-Kai), Medium-Size Undead (Greater Independent Race)

Hit Dice: 14d12 (91 hp)

Initiative: +3 (–1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 40 ft.

Armor Class: 17 (+8 natural, –1 Dex)

Attacks: +16/+11/+6 melee, +10/+5/+0 ranged

Damage: Slam 1d6+5, dagger 1d4+5, pistol 1d10/×3

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Desiccating touch, spells. Her fear effect is suppressed while she goes about in living human guise.

Special Qualities: Darkvision, immunities (poison, mind-affecting spells, paralysis, stunning, disease, subdual damage, ability drain or damage, and death from massive damage), vulnerable to fire (double damage from fire attacks unless a save is allowed for half damage; a successful save halves the damage, and a failed save doubles it)

Special: Critical hits have a special effect against a mummy—the mummy receives no extra damage but the hit severs some body part, which can continue to attack independently. Even if hacked to pieces, the mummy can continue to attack until its hit point total is exceeded, at which point all its pieces lapse into quiescence. Greater mummies can slowly reassemble themselves. Mummies have special damage reduction: missile weapons always deal minimal damage.

Saves: Fort —, Ref +8, Will +12

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 8, Con —, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 19

Skills: Animal Empathy +11, Appraise +7, Balance +9, Bluff +14, Diplomacy +16, Escape Artist +7, Gather Information +18, Hide +8, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (occult) +12, Listen +12, Move Silently +8, Performance +12, Psychic Focus +15, Read Lips +7, Sense Motive +10, Speak Other Language (Classical Egyptian, Coptic, Mycenean Greek, Latin, French, Italian, German, Arabic, and Aramaic) +3 each, Spellcraft +7, Spot +12

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Persuasive, Trustworthy, Wealth

Psychic Feats: Sensitive

CR: 16

Climate/Terrain: Fashionable salons in London and New York, country houses in Yorkshire and near Cairo

Advancement: As character

Sanity Loss: None unless her true visage is revealed, in which case 1d6

Taking advantage of the current fad for all things Egyptian, this 5th dynasty princess and priestess has set up herself as an occult expert. Highly in demand as a medium, she does not hesitate to destroy anyone she believes threatens her (through agents, if possible, or directly, if necessary). She is not automatically hostile if approached with due deference. Surrounding herself with artifacts of her homeland, she appears as a small, intense, dark-haired, somewhat exotic woman of about thirty. In public she generally wears modern gowns; in private, she reverts to traditional Egyptian garb. She keeps at least four common mummies stashed in each of her residences as guardians in case of trouble, and also has a small entourage of Coptic servants.

Sosostris can be encountered at seances, occult gatherings, society functions, and museum openings (especially for displays of new antiquities). She strongly disapproves of tomb raiding. In fact, she often sends her mummies to punish explorers and archaeologists who remove mummies or tomb-goods from their resting place. She then arranges to have the stolen bodies secretly reburied elsewhere, sometimes with the offending archaeologist as a new common-mummy guardian.

A strong believer in reincarnation, when she encounters someone who strongly reminds her of someone she knew in life, she generally treats the person with as much warmth or malice as if he or she were indeed the original. Sosostris uses money gained through her seances and private tarot readings to fund her long-term project: a revival of Isis-worship in the modern day.

ANIMALS

	Ape Large Animal	Bat Diminutive Animal	Bear Large Animal
Hit Dice:	4d8+8 (26 hp)	1/4 d8 (1 hp)	6d8+24 (51 hp)
Initiative:	+2 (Dex)	+2 (Dex)	+1 (Dex)
Speed:	30 ft., climb 30 ft.	5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)	40 ft.
Armor Class:	14 (–1 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural)	16 (+4 size, +2 Dex)	15 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural)
Attacks:	2 claws +7 melee, bite +2 melee	—	2 claws +11 melee, bite +6 melee
Damage:	Claw 1d6+5, bite 1d6+2	—	Claw 1d8+8, bite 2d8+4
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	1 ft. by 1 ft./0 ft.	5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	—	—	Improved grab
Special Qualities:	Scent	Blindsight	Scent
Saves:	Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +2	Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +2	Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +3
Abilities:	Str 21, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 7	Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10 Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 4	Str 27, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6
Skills:	Climb +18, Listen +6, Spot +6	Listen +9, Move Silently +6, Spot +9*	Listen +4, Spot +7, Swim +14
Advancement:	5–8 HD (Large)	—	7–10 HD (Large)

	Boar Medium-Size Animal	Crocodile Medium-Size Animal (Aquatic)	Dog Medium-Size Animal
Hit Dice:	3d8+9 (22 hp)	3d8+9 (22 hp)	2d8+4 (13 hp)
Initiative:	+0	+1 (Dex)	+2 (Dex)
Speed:	40 ft.	20 ft., swim 30 ft.	40 ft.
Armor Class:	16 (+6 natural)	15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural)	16 (+2 Dex, +4 natural)
Attacks:	Gore +4 melee	Bite +6 melee; or tail slap +6 melee	Bite +3 melee
Damage:	Gore 1d8+3	Bite 1d8+6; tail slap 1d12+6	Bite 1d6+3
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Ferocity	Improved grab	—
Special Qualities:	Scent	—	Scent
Saves:	Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +2	Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2	Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1
Abilities:	Str 15, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 4	Str 19, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 2	Str 15, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6
Skills:	Listen +7, Spot +5	Hide +7*, Listen +5, Spot +5	Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +5
Feats:	—	—	Wilderness Lore +1*
Advancement:	4–5 HD (Medium-size)	4–5 HD (Medium-size)	—

	Elephant Huge Animal	Horse Large Animal	Leopard (Mountain Lion) Medium-Size Animal
Hit Dice:	11d8+55 (104 hp)	3d8+6 (19 hp)	3d8+6 (19 hp)
Initiative:	+0	+1 (Dex)	+4 (Dex)
Speed:	40 ft.	60 ft.	40 ft., climb 20 ft.
Armor Class:	15 (–2 size, +7 natural)	13 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +3 natural)	15 (+4 Dex, +1 natural)
Attacks:	Slam +16 melee, 2 stamps +11 melee or gore +16 melee	2 hooves +2 melee	Bite +6 melee; 2 claws +1 melee
Damage:	Slam 2d6+10, stamp 2d6+5; gore 2d8+15	Hoof 1d4+1	Bite 1d6+3; claw 1d3+1
Face/Reach:	10 ft. by 20 ft./10 ft.	5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Trample 2d8+15		Pounce, improved grab, rake 1d3+1
Special Qualities:	Scent	—	Scent
Saves:	Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +4	Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +2	Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +2
Abilities:	Str 30, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 7	Str 13, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6	Str 16, Dex 19, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6
Skills:	Listen +6, Spot +6	Listen +6, Spot +6	Balance +12, Climb +11, Hide +9*, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Spot +6
Feats:	—	—	Weapon Finesse (bite, claw)
Advancement:	12–22 HD (Huge)	—	4–5 HD (Medium-size)

	Lion (Tiger) Large Animal	Lizard, Giant Medium-Size Animal	Rat Tiny Animal
Hit Dice:	5d8+10 (32 hp)	3d8+9 (22 hp)	1/4 d8 (1 hp)
Initiative:	+3 (Dex)	+2 (Dex)	+2 (Dex)
Speed:	40 ft.	30 ft., swim 30 ft.	15 ft., climb 15 ft.
Armor Class:	15 (–1 size, +3 Dex, +3 natural)	15 (+2 Dex, +3 natural)	14 (+2 size, +2 Dex)
Attacks:	2 claws +7 melee, bite +2 melee	Bite +5 melee	Bite +4 melee
Damage:	Claw 1d4+5, bite 1d8+2	Bite 1d8+4	Bite 1d3–4
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	2 1/2 ft. by 2 1/2 ft./0 ft.
Special Attacks:	Pounce, improved grab, rake 1d4+2	—	—
Special Qualities:	Scent	—	Scent
Saves:	Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +2	Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +2	Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1
Abilities:	Str 21, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6	Str 17, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 2	Str 2, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 2
Skills:	Balance +7, Hide +4*, Jump +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +11, Spot +5	Climb +9, Hide +7*, Listen +4, Move Silently +6, Spot +4	Balance +10, Climb +12, Hide +18, Move Silently +10
Feats:	—	—	Weapon Finesse (bite)
Advancement:	6–10 HD (Large)	4–5 HD (Medium-size)	—

	Shark Large Animal (Aquatic)	Snake, Small Viper Small Animal	Wolf Medium-Size Animal
Hit Dice:	7d8+7 (38 hp)	1d8 (4 hp)	2d8+4 (13 hp)
Initiative:	+2 (Dex)	+3 (Dex)	+2 (Dex)
Speed:	Swim 60 ft.	20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.	50 ft.
Armor Class:	15 (–1 size, +2 Dex, +4 natural)	17 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +3 natural)	14 (+2 Dex, +2 natural)
Attacks:	Bite +7 melee	Bite +4 melee	Bite +3 melee
Damage:	Bite 1d8+4	Bite 1d2–2 plus poison	Bite 1d6+1
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft. (coiled)/5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	—	Poison	Trip
Special Qualities:	Keen scent	Scent	Scent
Saves:	Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +3	Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1	Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1
Abilities:	Str 17, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2	Str 6, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2	Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6
Skills:	Listen +7, Spot +7	Balance +11, Climb +12, Hide +15, Listen +9, Spot +9	Hide +3, Listen +6, Move Silently +4 Spot +4, Wilderness Lore +1*
Feats:	—	Weapon Finesse (bite)	Weapon Finesse (bite)
Advancement:	8–10 HD (Large); 11–17 HD (Huge)	2 HD (Medium-size); 3 HD (Large)	3 HD (Medium-size); 4–5 HD (Large)

APE (CR 2)

These powerful omnivores include gorillas and mature male baboons. Normally, these creatures are not aggressive, but when roused to anger, they can be quite deadly.

BAT (CR 1/10)

Bats are nocturnal flying mammals. The statistics presented here describe small, insectivorous bats.

Combat: Blindsight (Ex): Bats "see" by emitting high-frequency sounds inaudible to most other creatures. This allows them to locate objects and creatures within 120 feet. A *silence* spell negates this, forcing the bat to rely on its normal vision, which has a range of 10 feet.

Skills: *Bats receive a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Listen checks. These bonuses are lost if blindsight is negated.

BEAR (CR 4)

These massive carnivores weigh more than 1,800 pounds and stand nearly 12 feet tall when they rear up on their hind legs. They are bad-tempered and territorial. Bear statistics can be used for almost any big bear, including the North American grizzly and polar bears. A polar bear's white coat bestows a +12 racial bonus on Hide checks in snowy areas.

BOAR (CR 2)

Though not carnivores, these wild swine are very bad-tempered and usually charge anyone who disturbs them.

A boar is covered in coarse, grayish-black fur. Adult males are about 4 feet long and 3 feet high at the shoulder.

Combat: Ferocity (Ex): A boar is such a tenacious combatant that it continues to fight without penalty even while disabled (0 hit points) or dying (–1 to –9 hit points).

CROCODILE (CR 2)

These aggressive aquatic predators are 11 to 12 feet long. They lie mostly submerged in rivers or marshes, with only their eyes and nostrils showing, waiting for prey to come within reach.

Combat: Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the crocodile must hit a Medium-size or smaller opponent with its bite attack. If it gets a hold, the crocodile grabs the opponent with its mouth and drags it into deep water before attempting to pin it to the bottom. The crocodile automatically deals bite damage each round it maintains the pin.

Skills: *A crocodile gains a +12 racial bonus on Hide checks when submerged.

DOG (CR 1/3)

This category includes working breeds such as collies, huskies, and St. Bernards.

Combat: If trained for security, these animals can make trip attacks just as wolves do (see the Wolf entry).

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a riding dog is up to 100 pounds; a medium load, 101–200 pounds; a heavy load, 201–300 pounds. A working dog can drag 1,500 pounds.

Skills: *Dogs receive a +4 racial bonus on Wilderness Lore checks when tracking by scent.

ELEPHANT (CR 8)

Massive herbivores of tropical lands, elephants are unpredictable, but are sometimes used as mounts or beasts of burden.

This entry describes an African elephant. Indian elephants are slightly smaller and weaker (Strength 28), but more readily trained (Wisdom 15). These statistics can also represent prehistoric creatures such as mammoths and mastodons.

Combat: Trample (Ex): As an attack action, an elephant can trample Medium-size or smaller creatures for automatic gore damage. It does not need to stop when entering a victim's threatened area.

A trampled opponent can attempt a free attack in response, but this incur a –4 penalty. If the opponent does not attempt this free attack, she can attempt a Reflex save (DC 20) for half damage.

HORSE (CR 1)

The statistics presented here describe any of a variety of breeds of working horses. They usually are not ready for use before age two.

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a horse is up to 230 pounds; a medium load, 231–460 pounds; a heavy load, 461–690 pounds. A horse can drag 3,450 pounds.

LEOPARD (CR 2)

The statistics presented here describe any of a variety of breeds of mid-size feline predators, including jaguars, panthers, mountain lions, and pumas. These cats are about 4 feet long and weigh about 120 pounds; they usually hunt at night.

Combat: Pounce (Ex): If a leopard leaps upon a foe during the first round of combat, it can make a full attack even if it has already taken a move action.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the leopard must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold, it can rake.

Rake (Ex): A leopard that gets a hold can make two rake attacks (+6 melee) with its hind legs for 1d3+1 points of damage each. If the leopard pounces on an opponent, it can also rake.

Skills: *Leopards receive a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks and a +8 racial bonus on Balance checks. In areas of tall grass or heavy undergrowth, the Hide bonus improves to +8.

LION (TIGER) (CR 3)

The statistics presented here can be used to descibe mature African lions. Smaller tigers may use the same stats, although a fully mature Bengal tiger should have the stats of an advanced lion of at least 6 HD. These large cats generally grow 5–10 feet long and weigh 330 to 750 pounds. The two genders of either cat are not equal sizes, but they use the same statistics.

Combat: Pounce (Ex): If a lion leaps upon a foe during the first round of combat, it can make a full attack even if it has already taken a move action.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the lion must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold, it can rake.

Rake (Ex): A lion that gets a hold can make two rake attacks (+7 melee) with its hind legs for 1d4+2 points of damage each. If the lion pounces on an opponent, it can also rake.

Skills: *Lions receive a +4 racial bonus on Balance, Hide, and Move Silently checks. In areas of tall grass or heavy undergrowth, the Hide bonus improves to +12.

GIANT LIZARD (CR 2)

This category includes fairly large, carnivorous creatures from 3–5 feet long, such as monitor lizards.

Skills: *Giant lizards receive a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. In forested or overgrown areas, the Hide bonus improves to +8.

RAT (CR 1/8)

These omnivorous rodents thrive almost anywhere.

Skills: Rats receive a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks and a +8 racial bonus on Balance checks. They use their Dexterity modifier for Climb checks.

SHARK (CR 2)

These carnivorous fish are aggressive and liable to make unprovoked attacks against anything that approaches them.

Smaller sharks are from 5–8 feet long and not usually dangerous to creatures other than their prey. Large sharks can reach around 15 feet in length and are a serious threat. Huge sharks are true monsters, like great whites, that can exceed 20 feet in length.

Combat: Sharks circle and observe potential prey, then dart in and bite with their powerful jaws.

Keen Scent (Ex): A shark can notice creatures by scent in a 180-foot radius and detect blood in the water at ranges of up to a mile.

SNAKE (CR 1/2)

Snakes usually are not aggressive and flee when confronted. Venomous snakes, however, often bite before retreating.

Skills: Snakes receive a +4 racial bonus on Hide, Listen, and Spot checks and a +8 racial bonus on Balance checks. They can use either their Strength or Dexterity modifier for Climb checks, whichever is better.

Combat: Poison (Ex): Bite, Fortitude save (DC 11); initial and secondary damage 1d6 points of temporary Constitution damage.

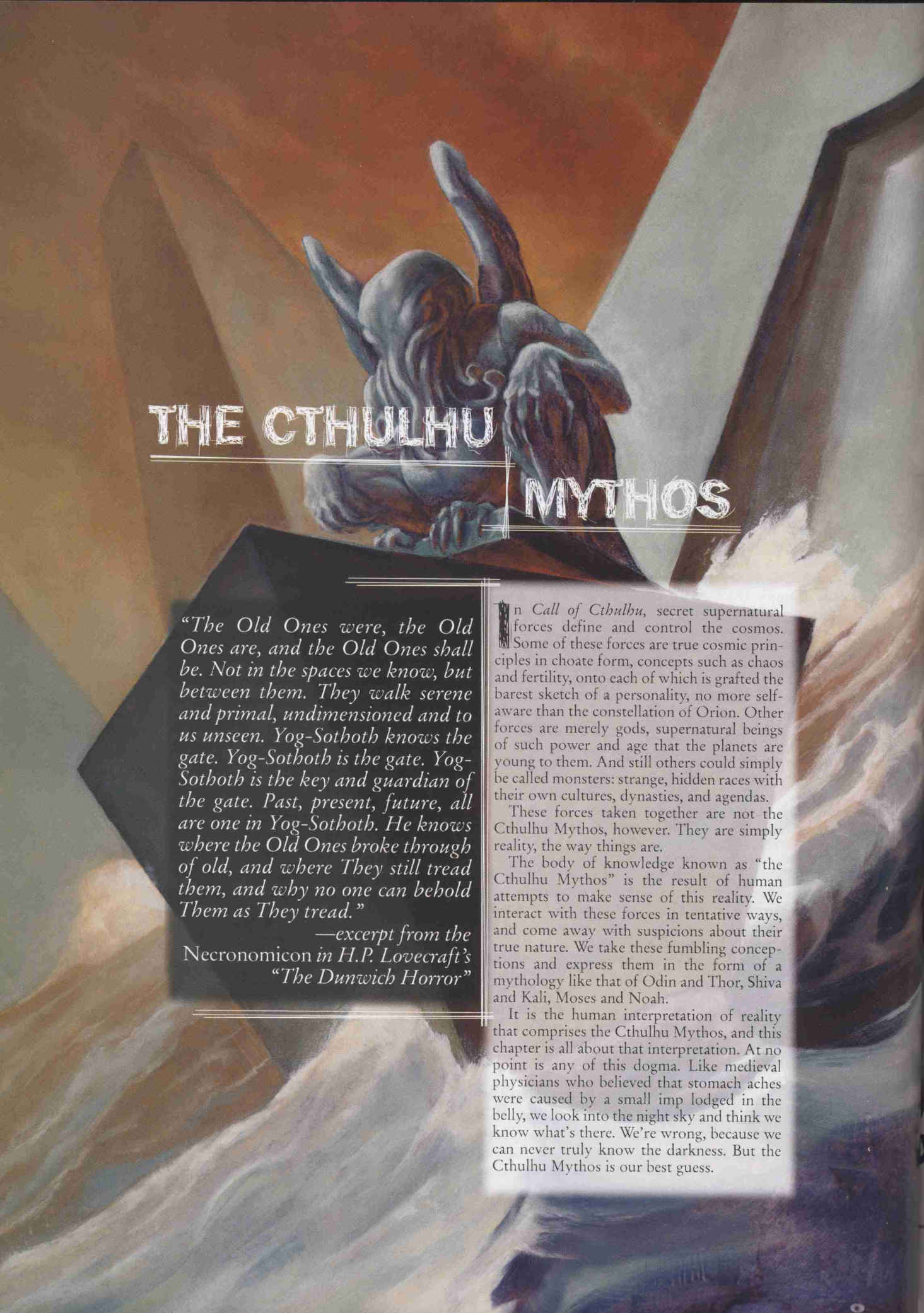
WOLF (CR 1)

Wolves are pack hunters infamous for their persistence and cunning.

Combat: A favorite tactic is to send a few individuals against the foe's front while the rest of the pack circles and attacks from the flanks or rear.

Trip (Ex): A wolf that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action without making a touch. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the wolf.

Skills: *Wolves receive a +4 racial bonus on Wilderness Lore checks when tracking by scent.



THE CTHULHU MYTHOS

"The Old Ones were, the Old Ones are, and the Old Ones shall be. Not in the spaces we know, but between them. They walk serene and primal, undimensioned and to us unseen. Yog-Sothoth knows the gate. Yog-Sothoth is the gate. Yog-Sothoth is the key and guardian of the gate. Past, present, future, all are one in Yog-Sothoth. He knows where the Old Ones broke through of old, and where They still tread them, and why no one can behold Them as They tread."

—excerpt from the Necronomicon *in H.P. Lovecraft's "The Dunwich Horror"*

In *Call of Cthulhu*, secret supernatural forces define and control the cosmos. Some of these forces are true cosmic principles in choate form, concepts such as chaos and fertility, onto each of which is grafted the barest sketch of a personality, no more self-aware than the constellation of Orion. Other forces are merely gods, supernatural beings of such power and age that the planets are young to them. And still others could simply be called monsters: strange, hidden races with their own cultures, dynasties, and agendas.

These forces taken together are not the Cthulhu Mythos, however. They are simply reality, the way things are.

The body of knowledge known as "the Cthulhu Mythos" is the result of human attempts to make sense of this reality. We interact with these forces in tentative ways, and come away with suspicions about their true nature. We take these fumbling conceptions and express them in the form of a mythology like that of Odin and Thor, Shiva and Kali, Moses and Noah.

It is the human interpretation of reality that comprises the Cthulhu Mythos, and this chapter is all about that interpretation. At no point is any of this dogma. Like medieval physicians who believed that stomach aches were caused by a small imp lodged in the belly, we look into the night sky and think we know what's there. We're wrong, because we can never truly know the darkness. But the Cthulhu Mythos is our best guess.

LOVECRAFT SPEAKS

Throughout this chapter, you'll see sections titled "Lovecraft Speaks." These are excerpts from Lovecraft's stories, poems, letters, and essays. No better articulator of Lovecraft's concepts exists than the man himself, so we might as well have him address you directly. These excerpts are found in S.T. Joshi's definitive biography *H.P. Lovecraft: A Life* (Necronomicon Press, 1996).

In fact, knowledge itself is dangerous. As long as we stick to our workaday world we can muddle along with everyone else. But when we begin to pry, when we explore the mysteries of reality, when we seek the answer to the cosmic riddle, we enter a conceptual Chernobyl. The more we learn, the more our minds are damaged. Push too far, ask too much, and you go insane.

Knowledge is not power. Knowledge is annihilation.

LOVECRAFT SPEAKS: THE DANGER OF KNOWLEDGE

The most merciful thing in the world, I think is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents. We live on a placid island of ignorance in the midst of black seas of infinity, and it was not meant that we should voyage far. The sciences, each straining in its own direction, have hitherto harmed us little; but some day the piecing together of dissociated knowledge will open up such terrifying vistas of reality, and of our frightful position therein, that we shall either go mad from the revelation or flee from the deadly light into the peace and safety of a new dark age.

—H.P. Lovecraft, "The Call of Cthulhu"

HUMANS AND THE COSMOS

The cosmos is everything: the universe, the stars, the planets, all forms of life, the physical laws that govern them, and the agendas at work that affect us all. Unfortunately for us, humans didn't create the cosmos, and neither did anything we commonly know. There is no God, no Allah, no Buddha. Humans do not possess immortal souls, and when we die, we are but dust.

Worse, the cosmos does not exist to give us an interesting place within it. It exists to exist. Our role within the cosmos is only what we make of it, for in the grand scheme of things, we are irrelevant. Even when we live, we are but dust.

Our vague conceptions of things such as gravity and subatomic particles are but the barest verge of a vast, unknowable whole. Like blind sailors marooned atop an iceberg, we fumble to understand our terrain without guessing the truth: the bulk of our reality lies occluded beneath the surface. More terrible still, it is but a solitary mass drifting without direction in an infinite ocean of mystery. And the ocean is full of monsters.

LOVECRAFT SPEAKS: A STRANGE VISION

I saw the heavens verminous with strange flying things, and beneath them a hellish black city of giant stone terraces with impious pyramids flung savagely to the moon, and devil-lights burning from unnumbered windows.

—H.P. Lovecraft, "He"

LOVECRAFT'S VISION

This game is based on Lovecraft's vision of a cosmos that is very different from the one we know in real life. It looks like ours, but that familiar appearance masks a hideous core. That core is the notion that humans are limited, insignificant beings who cannot possibly understand, let alone perceive, the true workings of reality.

In Lovecraft's cosmos, the natural order we think we know can be perverted, inverted, or simply ignored by beings far more powerful than us. Day can become night, a hotel can become a slaughterhouse, a trusted friend can become a monster. These beings are free to reimagine the world we live in, and their merest thoughts transform reality itself. Our notions of stars, planets, and gravitational orbits are no more substantial than wisps of smoke, and as easily disrupted.

Contact with these beings is harmful to us. In the world of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, a monster is a malicious creature who can kill you. In the world of *Call of Cthulhu*, a monster is a being so alien and strange that it's like mental plutonium: get too close, and your mind sickens and dies.

THE CORRUPTION

If no one ever looked twice at shadows or asked questions of the darkness, we might all get along okay. But humans are ever drawn to mystery—and especially to power. The secrets embodied in the Cthulhu Mythos contain plenty of both.

People study the Mythos for many reasons but the result is the same: corruption. As they look deeper and learn more, they become more and more twisted. Like any addiction, knowledge of the Mythos destroys your affection, your willpower, and your interest in anything else. Once corrupted, such people sacrifice anything to get more of the dangerous knowledge they crave. Theft and murder are but thresholds. Beyond them lies the transformation of self into something other than human, the ultimate endeavor of anyone who studies the Mythos for too long.

The reason is simple. Once you truly understand that humanity is a dead end, the only way out is to stop being human.

HUMANS AND THE MYTHOS

The world of the Cthulhu Mythos is a place of horror and wonder, mystery and action. It is full of desperate people doing terrible things. Sinister priests and nefarious cults worship beings so hideous and powerful that their very names can destroy you. This is a world where serial killers paint canvases of death across entire continents to honor beings no one ever sees, a world where the cities of alien races await discovery beneath the waters of the ocean or the sands of the desert, a world where maniacs mate with monstrous beings from distant worlds to produce loathsome offspring. Every step brings a new horror, every door a fresh hell.

Investigators enter this world to do what they can. They are firefighters of the unknown, charging forth to quench the latest outbreak of cor-

rupting flame. Their victories are silent, their failures numerous, and their destinies grim.

They move in a hermetic subculture of heroes and villains, neither of whom is eager to see these secrets made public. For the heroes, exposure of the Cthulhu Mythos would only spur madness and death on a grand scale. For the villains, they can exercise their powers far more easily on an ignorant populace.

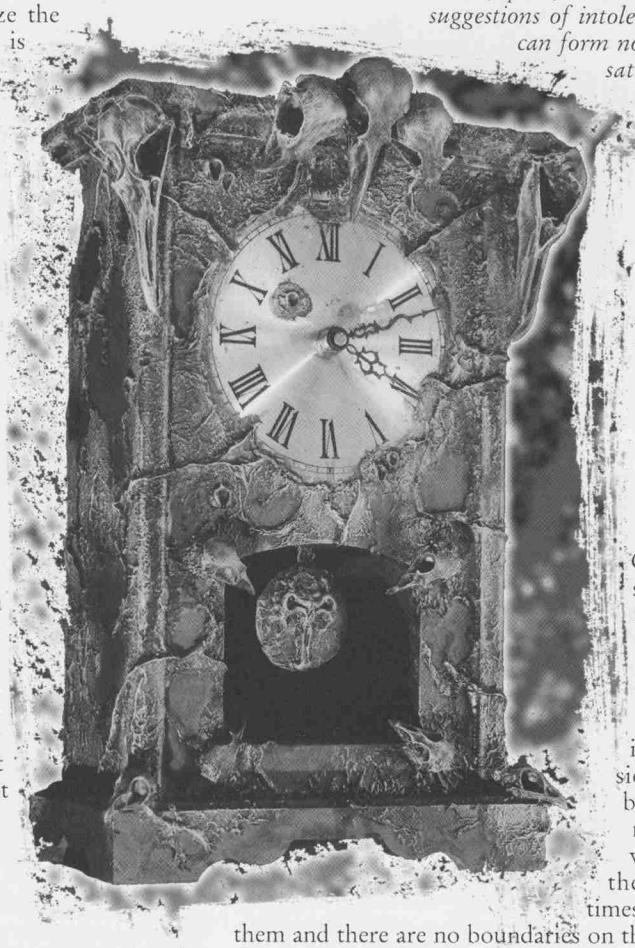
So it is that the world of the Cthulhu Mythos remains a secret world, one that is far larger and more malignant than the one we commonly know. Like a cancer, it rots us from within. But like a disease, its release would only bring harm.

A QUESTION OF ACCURACY

Because the Cthulhu Mythos is the creation of humans—an attempt to explain and systemize the alien and the unknowable—it is fragmentary at best. Contradictions and confusions are common, and much of the Mythos is just plain wrong. You can't believe anything you hear and only half of what you read.

Call of Cthulhu does not attempt to present a coherent, consistent Mythos because no such explanation exists, either in the world of the game or in the real world. Lovecraft introduced only fragments of the Mythos in his work, and the thousands of writers who have followed in his footsteps have only served to muddy the waters. Like our investigators in the game world, the best we can do is guess.

Moreover, the Cthulhu Mythos in the game shouldn't provide a coherent vision. To cite S.T. Joshi again, the Mythos is an *antimythology.* It exists to destroy all human mythologies by revealing their irrelevancy, and it offers nothing as a replacement except chaos and destruction.



THE COSMIC NARRATIVE

As if in mockery of other human mythologies, the Cthulhu Mythos has its own narrative that explains how things came to be as they are. When a cultist says he's going to reveal the secrets of the cosmos, this is the sort of thing he'll tell you. Keep in mind that this narrative is neither objective nor trustworthy because it's been assembled by the kinds of people who worship monsters.

LOVECRAFT SPEAKS: THE DEFEAT OF TIME

Time, space, and natural law hold for me suggestions of intolerable bondage, and I can form no picture of emotional satisfaction which does not involve their defeat—especially the defeat of time, so that one may merge oneself with the whole historic stream and be wholly emancipated from the transient and the ephemeral.

—H.P. Lovecraft, letter to August Derleth, 1930

SPACE AND TIME

Our understanding of space and time is very limited. We perceive three dimensions, and suspect that time is a fourth. Other forms of life operate in many more dimensions than this. Such beings understand that movement is possible within and between all these dimensions. All times and places are one to them and there are no boundaries on their actions. Near and far, past and future—these concepts are interchangeable. The entirety of existence could simply be labeled Now/Here.

Thus, there is little in the way of a linear history of the cosmos. Some scholars of the occult might say that one thing happened three million years ago because of evidence in the fossil record—but what are fossils and strata to beings who straddle time and space with a thought? History is an illusion and matter is a lie. Trust neither.

ABOUT THE CTHULHU MYTHOS

Lovecraft didn't call his creations "the Cthulhu Mythos." That title was coined by August Derleth, Lovecraft's posthumous publisher. During his life, Lovecraft used terms such as "the Arkham cycle" and "Yog-Sothothery," but only informally. Indeed, he had little intention of creating a coherent Mythos. His interest was in writing individual stories, some of which had elements in common but that all expressed his philosophy and aesthetics. As his biographer S.T. Joshi has commented, the Cthulhu Mythos isn't a mythology or a philosophy in itself; it is merely a set of plot devices—characters, monsters, books, and gods—that Lovecraft used to express his ideas in the form of fiction.

So don't get too hung up on defining "the Mythos" as an organized system with a hierarchy of deities and a consistent set of beliefs and practices. Use it the way Lovecraft did: as a set of plot devices to tell your stories.

Illustration ©2001, Jason Soles. Used with permission.

TRUE GODS

The true gods are not the gods of humanity. Somewhere in the heart of space-time the conceptual weight of cosmic principles grows so dense that they take material form and the rudiments of identity. We call them the Outer Gods. They have no real personality or agenda—only urges, because they are physical laws rendered in slightly fewer dimensions than the cosmos itself and are therefore distinct from the broader canvas of reality. You may speak to them all you want, but they do not speak back. Yet sometimes they come when you call.

Three exist that we know of, and they form a trinity of death, life, and time. Taken together, they are the closed system in which the cosmos exists.

Great Cthulhu is Their cousin, yet can he spy on Them only dimly. Iä! Shub-Niggurath! As a foulness shall ye know Them. Their hand is at your throats, yet ye see Them not; and Their habitation is even one with your guarded threshold. Yog-Sothoth is the key to the gate, whereby the spheres meet. Man rules now where they ruled once; They shall rule where man rules now. After summer is winter, and after winter summer. They wait patient and potent, for here shall They reign again.

—excerpt from the *Necronomicon* in H.P.Lovecraft's "The Dunwich Horror"

LOVECRAFT SPEAKS: THE TERRIBLE STARS

I have whirl'd with the earth at the dawning,
When the sky was a vaporous flame,
I have heard the dark universe yawning,
Where the black planets roll without aim;
Where they roll in their horror unheeded, without knowledge or lustre or name.

—H.P. Lovecraft, "Nemesis"

AZATHOTH

The great glory that is Azathoth is the cosmos made manifest. He is chaos incarnate, the void at the heart of reality, the abyss that stares back. His greatest urge is that of entropy: the tendency of ordered systems—galaxies, planets, civilizations, life, the atom—to degrade and collapse. We see his power in the faces of the old as their skin wrinkles, their hair turns gray, and their bodies weaken and fail. We hear his voice in every earthquake and feel his touch in the cold caress of cancer. The question "Why does the cosmos exist?" has no answer—but Azathoth is its punch line.

SHUB-NIGGURATH

She represents life itself, the urge that drives all creation, the origin of everything. But she is not merely life; she is the *urge* of life, the fertility principle. Every coupling of man and woman is done in her name and serves her purpose. She is the antithesis of Azathoth—yet this does not make her an ally of humans. She and he are complementary, a synthesis of life and death. Without the fertility of Shub-Niggurath, Azathoth would have nothing to destroy. Without the chaos of Azathoth, Shub-Niggurath would be stagnant and unchanging. Together they couple across all reality in an orbit of life and death, and the cosmos is their bed.

YOG-SOTHOTH

Completing the trinity, Yog-Sothoth gives Azathoth and Shub-Niggurath what they need: time. For Yog-Sothoth is time itself, the friction that arises at the intersections of dimensions. Death needs time for what it kills to grow in, and so does Azathoth need Yog-Sothoth to provide the temporal framework in which Shub-Niggurath's awesome fecundity can birth worlds. Without time, death and life merely cancel each other out and all is oblivion. With time, death and life are a cycle and a struggle.

NYARLATHOTEP

The Outer Gods have a representative, perhaps a self-appointed one. This messenger is Nyarlathotep, said to have a thousand faces. Nyarlathotep manifests in our world as he pleases, even in the form of a human. He is a trickster, and you must be wary of him, but he has great gifts to bestow upon the worthy. Whether he himself is truly an Outer God or something else altogether is a mystery known to none except Nyarlathotep himself.

FALSE GODS

As we are to tadpoles, so are the false gods to us. They are alien beings of tremendous age and power, so much so that many races and people worship and serve them as if they were the true gods. Unlike the Outer Gods, these beings do have conscious agendas, even if we often do not understand them. We call them the Great Old Ones, and those we know of have been on our world since before the dawn of humanity—if indeed they even experience time the same way we do.

They are vulnerable, though only to forces more powerful than we could ever marshal. At some point in space-time there was a great shift in the cosmos and the Great Old Ones on our world were trapped here. Some still roam the land, awake and active but unable to leave. Others exist in a sort of torpor, not dead but dreaming, deep beneath the ocean or in remote caverns. And some reside on other worlds, but touch ours from time to time.

The nature of the cosmic shift that trapped them here is a mystery. Perhaps Azathoth rumbled, or Shub-Niggurath birthed a strange new galaxy, or Yog-Sothoth forgot about them. Regardless, something fundamental happened and the Great Old Ones could no longer leave Earth. They live deep in the oceans, or the deserts, or the forests, or in strange places that are both of our world and yet elsewhere.

Though they are false gods, they are still beings of great power. If you serve them, they may reward you.

CTHULHU

Not dead but dreaming, Cthulhu rests within a sealed vault on the sunken Pacific island of R'lyeh. His thoughts reach out from his drowned home and touch the minds of sensitives, psychics, artists, and madmen. The greatest of the false gods, Cthulhu is also the most threatening. Under the right conditions R'lyeh can rise and Cthulhu can awaken, bringing terror and destruction to the world. His face, a mass of tentacles, appears in the carvings and artworks of nearly every culture on the planet. He is an oceanic parasite on the mass consciousness of the world.

HASTUR THE UNSPEAKABLE

An enigma wrapped in a riddle. Some say that speaking his name aloud can bring disaster, while others insist that he has a secret, true name that is the real threat. Hastur dwells on a distant world within an amorphous, nightmare city called Carcosa. If he can be said to represent anything, it is that of corruption itself.

NODENS

An anomaly among the false gods, Nodens is an ally of humanity in the sense that the enemy of your enemy is your friend. He is a cosmic hunter, always pursuing greater and greater prey, and he has not infrequently tracked and slain the minions of the Great Old Ones. Some believe he is a human who has transcended humanity; certainly, he lives now mostly in dreams.

YIG

Humanity has always feared snakes and serpents. Yig is the embodiment of the serpentine principle: cold-blooded, sinuous, hungry, and ripe with poison. Said to be the father of snakes, Yig maintains an active relationship with his worshipers and the serpents who are his spawn. He could be described as the most anthropomorphic of the Great Old Ones—but even so, his minions strike at us when we enter their territory.

MORDIGGIAN

From the battlefields of Rome to the ovens of Auschwitz, heaps of wrecked human bodies recur throughout our history. Mordiggian is the charnel god, a celebrant of death on a massive scale. He is the god not of clashing armies, but the corpses they leave behind. Wherever there is death and rot and mortified flesh, Mordiggian is nearby. He whispers in the ears of the dead and takes secrets from their swollen lips.

TSATHOGGUA

A nearly dormant deity of sorcerers and other seekers after knowledge, Tsathoggua is willing to bargain for secrets. He is little-known these days, though isolated wizards still travel across the stars to bow down before him in search of mysteries.

CHAUGNAR FAUGN

This strange and often silent being offers little more than hunger. Terribly alien, he drifts among humans in search of victims to devour or enslave. His goals are unknown, though he has given magical power to those who serve him. He is Pandora's Box, a risk only to those who open him.

CTHUGHA

The stars themselves are home to this being of pure fire. It has no special connection to our world, but can be brought here by maniacs to unleash terrible destruction. Cthugha burns and burns, the heart of a star ripped from its body and sent to haunt the galaxies.

ITHAQUA

The walker on the winds is largely confined to the cold northern parts of our world, though his reach extends everywhere. He is capricious and mercurial, a being of terrible temper and savage violence. Many know him as a wind god, though the rushing air is but one of his powers. He strikes from the night sky against those who anger him.

EIHORT

A fertile corruptor and a mother to parasites. Eihort spawns a steady stream of its brood, hideous creatures that infest humans and cause their bodies to erupt with yet more of their kind. Eihort exists only to propagate, a localized manifestation of the Shub-Niggurath principle.

GLAAKI

A cousin to Eihort, at least in conceptual terms, Glaaki likewise exists to infect and corrupt humans to make itself more powerful. Rather than destroy its human victims, however, Glaaki turns them into immortal slaves. Many come to Glaaki willingly in search of eternal life. Few are grateful for what they receive.

Y'GOLONAC

Hardly any of the Great Old Ones are as mindless and direct as Y'Golonac. His only instinct is to devour life. He is the ultimate consumer. Curiously, he is associated with perversion and degradation, his unthinking hunger translated by human minds into a desire for sexual supremacy and cruelty, to own what they cannot eat. Likewise his transformation of worshipers' bodies speaks to their desire to shape and escape the prison of flesh.

SHUDDE M'ELL

Deep within the earth the great worm known as Shudde M'ell burrows and chews at the heart of the world. He is the embodiment of secret obsessions and dire conspiracy, a tireless evil no one ever sees or even suspects.

LOVECRAFT SPEAKS: THE SEA IS A SECRET

I cannot think of the deep sea without shuddering at the nameless things that may at this very moment be crawling and floundering on its slimy bed, worshiping their ancient stone idols and carving their own detestable likenesses on submarine obelisks of water-soaked granite. I dream of a day when they may rise above the billows to drag down in their reeking talons the remnants of puny, war-exhausted mankind—of a day when the land shall sink, and the dark ocean floor shall ascend amidst universal pandemonium.

—H.P. Lovecraft, "Dagon"

BEASTS

The presence of the Great Old Ones on our world brought other creatures here, many of whom live among us still. They remain hidden from most people, either pursuing their agendas or waiting for the time when the cosmos shifts again and the Great Old Ones are free once more.

Some can make useful allies or servants to human sorcerers and worshipers. Others live only to destroy.

THE MI-GO

The ultimate scientists, mi-go are an interstellar race comprised of sentient, telepathic fungi. They have a tremendous capacity for curiosity and observation, but are simultaneously so alien that their simplest inquiries result in disaster and madness for their subjects. The mi-go are currently obsessed with researching human intuition, our ability to make conceptual leaps across several logical progressions at a single step. They study and probe us relentlessly, and their experiments always end in the destruction or perversion of our fragile bodies. The mi-go are the ultimate expression of the search for knowledge, the instinct of discovery taken to its cold and dispassionate conclusion.

THE DEEP ONES

Beneath the ocean dwells Cthulhu, but he is not alone. His servants are the deep ones, a race of amphibious humanoids that reside in alien cities under the waves. They are the ocean with intelligence, a wave of inhuman passion that comes to shore to sow destruction and corruption. Many are driven to mate with humans, subvert our very genetics, and give birth to monsters. Their rulers are Dagon and Hydra, ancient members of their race.

THE GREAT RACE

Where the mi-go seek to meddle and alter, the Great Race merely observes. They are the scribes of reality, recording the events of history into a vast library in the distant past. Their minds travel across time to possess other races, mental parasites who consume entire worlds to ensure their own survival. Yet they record the history of everyone they destroy, evincing a sort of clinical compassion or at least a distant interest. Only humans exceed their ability to admire what they extinguish.

THE ELDER THINGS

They are mostly gone now, but once they built great cities across the surface of our world. Some still remain, warning signs of our own future. For just as humans will one perish and be replaced by another dominant race, so were the Elder Things first triumphant and then extinct. Their surviving artifacts are full of strange knowledge.

OTHERS

The beasts of our world are legion. Ghouls devour the flesh of dead humans in their underground labyrinths. Shantaks ride the star-winds, great bird-lizards of deep space. Serpent people are ancient wizards, mostly destroyed by time but who can adopt human guise, even today.

AVATARS

When gods interact with humans, they often take the form of avatars. Avatars are human versions of gods, representatives or embodiments. Some are normal humans possessed temporarily by the divine, while others are merely simulacra, parodies of the human form that have no independent existence. Nyarlathotep, for example, may well be an independent avatar of Azathoth—but in turn, he has both possessing and independent avatars of his own. Hastur manifests in our world as the King in Yellow, a tatterdemalion of nightmares and insanity. Y'Golonac corrupts the bodies of his worshipers so they resemble him, headless and corpulent with hungry mouths in the palms of their hands.

Possessing avatars may leave their human hosts safe and sound when they depart, or the hosts could be mutated, or even destroyed. Independent avatars can be slain a thousand times only to return; they are merely expressions of will, not vulnerable creatures of limb and sinew, and their destruction is little more than an annoyance.

The existence of an avatar does not mean the god itself is taking direct action. Some avatars are anthropomorphic frameworks designed by human sorcerers, a sort of interactive container through which you can communicate with the god. In this regard, avatars are like a computer simulation of a nuclear blast—it is safer to deal with an avatar than with its source, but that safety also serves as a limiting factor on what the avatar can accomplish for you.

DREAMS

The Great Old Ones talk to us in dreams. Their minds are vast and alien, and they reach out to us in our sleep. In our dreams they show us visions of the world that is/was/were. If you obey the dreams, then the Great Old Ones give you magic and power. Eventually they may make you more than human.

Yet you must be wary. The dreams of a Great Old One can destroy your mind or kill you, the way you might step on an insect without realizing it.

THE END TIMES

Our fate is foretold: The stars will come right and the Great Old Ones will be free. At that time humanity will be destroyed and the false gods will again roam the stars and the spaces between them.

The nature of this event, known as the End Times, is not well understood. It may be that we can make it happen faster or slower. Or perhaps it is a fixed point in space/time beyond our ability to affect.

But one thing is certain: When the stars do come right, it will be the end of the world. Those of us who can transcend our own humanity will walk with the Great Old Ones among the stars, and all the cosmos shall be ours.

LOVECRAFT SPEAKS: THE HUNGER OF PRAYER

My contention is that religion is still useful amongst the herd—that it helps their orderly conduct as nothing else could . . . . The crude human animal is ineradicably superstitious, and there is every biological and historical reason why he should be . . . . Take away his Christian god and saints, and he will worship something else.

—H.P. Lovecraft, letter to Woodburn Harris, 1929

HERESIES AND CONTROVERSIES

Even a narrative as broad as the preceding one has dissidents. Several alternate beliefs that some cultists or investigators may hold also exist.

HUMANOCENTRISM

Some people believe that even the Outer Gods are beneath the gods of Earth—that like Satan and his demons, they are merely embodiments of moral evil, and that the God of the Bible—or Allah, or Buddha—is still supreme. From this perspective it is our spiritual duty to oppose these beings and resist their temptations.

NYARLATHOTEP

What is Nyarlathotep? Given that he is some sort of representative of the Outer Gods, he has a curious level of consciousness and takes a surprisingly strong interest in corrupting even individual humans. The inherent inhumanity of the cosmos would seem to make such petty meddling unlikely. Some believe that Nyarlathotep was once human, and was the first human to transcend humanity and join the realm of Azathoth. Now he plays with us as we would play with monkeys.

A separate heresy holds that the Great Old Ones themselves are all masks of Nyarlathotep—that Cthulhu, Eihort, and the rest are merely avatars. If so, Nyarlathotep's interest in humanity grows even more obsessive and inscrutable.

He is the nearest thing the Cthulhu Mythos has to Satan, a seeming violation of humanity's presumed insignificance. No one knows why he interacts with us the way he does.

"The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown."

—H.P. Lovecraft, "Supernatural Horror in Literature"

ELDER GODS

Others believe the Great Old Ones were defeated by a group of beings known as the Elder Gods: good deities waging war against evil. Thus, the cosmos is a battleground between the good Elder Gods and the evil Great Old Ones, and our planet is a critical piece of terrain. The Elder Sign, an ancient magic sigil that has some defensive power against supernatural beings, is said to be a gift of the Elder Gods.

ELEMENTALISM

Another view is that the Great Old Ones are symbolically tied to the four elements of earth, water, fire, and air, as represented by Nyarlathotep, Cthulhu, Cthugha, and Hastur. Presumably other Great Old Ones could have other symbolic ties.

ELEMENTS OF THE MYTHOS

A number of elements commonly appear in the Cthulhu Mythos. These are defining plot devices and motifs that appear throughout Lovecraft's work. These can become major building blocks of the adventures you'll create. We include guidelines for making your own versions of these elements in your campaign.

LOVECRAFT SPEAKS: MORE THAN MURDER

The true weird tale has something more than secret murder, bloody bones, or a sheeted form clanking chains according to rule. A certain atmosphere of breathless and unexplainable dread of outer, unknown forces must be present; and there must be a hint, expressed with a seriousness and portentousness becoming its subject, of that most terrible conception of the human brain—a malign and particular suspension or defeat of those fixed laws of Nature which are our only safeguard against the assaults of chaos and the daemons of unplumbed space.

—H.P. Lovecraft, "Supernatural Horror in Literature"

CULTS

Cults are groups of religious fanatics who usually keep their existence a secret. They worship one or more Mythos entities with a variety of rituals, garments, altars, and other trappings of religion. Human sacrifice is common, as is interaction with supernatural beasts.

Many cults have agendas. The most basic is worship: Their adoration of the diabolical makes them feel powerful and secure. Others have more concrete goals. They might want to rule the world or destroy it. They may conspire to gain political power, or search for a set of magic artifacts important to their beliefs. Often they seek to serve the will of their god—and since their gods rarely provide direct orders, they have to fill in the blanks with their own insane ideas.

In fact, most cults are self-created rather than the inheritors of dogmatic traditions. They take ideas from other cults and belief systems and then merge them with the peculiar dreams and symbologies of their deity. Even two cults who worship the same entity may do so in different ways because they aren't drawing on a coherent history the way Christianity or Islam does.

The haphazard nature of cults is also a result of their corruption and insanity. Cults are dangerous groups to fight because they believe in a cause and do anything to achieve it.

DESIGNING A CULT

To create a cult for your campaign, follow these steps. (You don't have to do them in this particular order, however.)

Choose a purpose. For most cults, this means worshiping a deity, a monster, or an idea such as "violence" or "chaos." This isn't a plan so much as it is a meaning, a reason to exist.

Truth.) Some cults even have two names: a safe one for the outside world and a powerful one for the inner circle of fanatics.

Choose an agenda. What are they up to? Do they hold their ceremonies quietly and go home, or are they after something? Cults should have goals both big and small.

Create a leader. Who runs the cult today? Come up with a name and a paragraph or so of biography. You can also design stats.

Create a founder. Who started the cult? This might be the current leader—if so, is that because it's a new cult or because the cult resurrected the founder? And why did he begin the cult in the first place?

Describe the cultists. Who joins this cult? Some cults are all raving lunatics, but others recruit business and political leaders. Do they have normal lives, or are they all living in the woods dancing in pools of blood? Write up important cultists the investigators might encounter—guards, snoops, sorcerers, and anyone who deals with outsiders.

Describe the resources. Resources are any sorts of assets the cult owns or uses. These may include a temple or meeting place, a bank account, a cache of weapons, magic artifacts, books, contacts, allies, and so forth. Some cults have nothing more than whatever the members own, while others own jets and office buildings.

Write the manifesto. Many cults have a core statement of beliefs that they memorize and chant. This might be a ritual to honor their god or a cryptic series of questions and answers that members recite to reinforce the cult's teachings. By writing this in the cult's own words, you figure out if they are educated and literate or raving and nonsensical, as well as figuring out their style and obsessions.

Design the symbol. Cults often have a symbol they use as identifying decoration. This symbol might appear on rings or brooches the cultists wear in daily life, the way Masons do. It might be on ceremonial robes, painted on banners, or carved into the skin of their victims. You could pick an astrological symbol, an occult symbol such as a pentagram, or make something up. It doesn't matter if you can't draw; just roughing it out lets you describe it verbally to the players. Perhaps the investigators see it in their dreams.

Record the history. Was the cult created in ancient Rome—or is it a new cult that just *claims* to descend from ancient Rome? Has the cult been active in politics, business, or society? Have they killed or recruited anyone important or famous? Where have they operated over the years, and what kinds of activities and agendas have they pursued?

Name the cult. Cult names range from the obscure to the obvious, the inspired to the banal. Primitive or unimaginative cults use words such as *darkness, blood, death, night, hands, eyes.* (The Eye of Death. The Hands of Night. The Blood of Darkness.) More subtle or sophisticated cults might choose names that let them fit into society, perhaps even appearing in the phone book. (The Brotherhood of Light. The Empowerment Temple. The Way and the

BOOKS

One way knowledge of the Mythos propagates is through books of occult knowledge. Insane sorcerers and murderous cultists fill thousands of pages with their rambling discoveries on the nature of reality or the worship of their deity. These are rarely written with clarity and organization; instead, they're created by maniacs writing for an audience of one. Some are in ciphers that no one but other cultists can decode.

Reading such books is one way to gain knowledge of the Mythos. But they are very rare and little known. Cultists and other dangerous people covet them. Some investigators simply destroy such books on sight, treating them as if they were a deadly virus on the verge of breaking out. Certainly, worse ideas exist.



DESIGNING A BOOK

To create a Mythos book, follow these steps in any order.

Choose the topic. What is the book about? Some books, such as the *Necronomicon*, are insane overviews of the entire cosmos—long, confusing, and detailed versions of the Cosmic Narrative presented earlier. Others are guides to specific cult worship practices, the occult equivalent of *The Book of Common Prayer* or *The Baptist Hymnal.* Still others are journals of magical experimentation, diaries of madmen, ruminations on the secret history of the world, weird poetry, or almost anything else.

Create the author. Who wrote it? Perhaps it was one person, or several people working together. If it was several people, they might have added material to the book over a period of centuries. Some books might claim to be by one author but actually be by someone else—a mystery to solve.

Write the history. Who published it and when? Were most copies burned in a mysterious fire, or is it sitting in used-book stores across the country? Did any government ban the book? Was the author prosecuted for writing it, or did he go mad and commit suicide when the last page was done? Who owns the book now, and who wants it? Mythos books almost always have a story behind them. This is also where you choose what language it was written in, and whether it has been published in other languages since.

Describe the appearance. Is it a modern paperback, an old typeset hardcover, or a sheaf of loose pages written in blood and made of human skin? Does the cover show a cult symbol, a title, or some kind of image? Are there locking clasps and a poison needle trap?

Design the stats. Look at the books in the Magic chapter for guidelines. You need to choose the Examination Period (1 day to 1d20 weeks), the DC for successfully studying the book (20 to 25), the number of spells (none to 4d6), the contact and completion Sanity losses (1 to 1d10 and 1d4 to 2d10), and the number of Cthulhu Mythos skill ranks it bestows (+1 to +3). If its language is especially esoteric, you may decide to raise the DC of the Speak Other Language check to decipher it. Powerful books should be hard to find, difficult to decipher, and dangerous to own.

Customize the book. The book stats in the Magic chapter are pretty general because they're intended for you to customize—and so the players who read this rulebook won't know everything. Choose (or roll) the number of spells for your book, decide which spells they are, make up the bizarre names the spells appear under, and note whether any of the spells are bogus or dangerously flawed. Write up a paragraph about the content of the book so the players know what their investigators have read. Make up a handful of Strange Events like the ones on page 120 that are unique to this book, in case you need them.

MAGIC

Within the Mythos, magic is real, but that doesn't mean it's good. Whether it's a spell that summons a monster or an artifact that melts flesh, the magic of the Mythos is always dangerous and corruptive. Spells are usually found in books. Artifacts could be in tombs, cult temples, or in the hands of crazed sorcerers. Some artifacts sit in museums and art galleries awaiting discovery.

Magic violates the principles of reality that we understand. It's a discipline close to the true nature of reality, and therefore a doorway into madness and pain. Use it with caution and fear it always.

Because magic has power, it is valuable. Just because you have found an artifact that does something wondrous doesn't mean that someone—or something—won't come looking for it.

LOVECRAFT SPEAKS: CITY IN DREAMS

Several nights ago I had a strange dream of a strange city—a city of many palaces and gilded domes, lying in a hollow betwixt ranges of grey, horrible hills. . . . I felt that I had once known it well, and that if I could remember, I should be carried back to a very remote period—many thousand years, when something vaguely horrible had happened.

—H.P. Lovecraft, letter to Maurice W. Moe, 1918

DESIGNING A SPELL

Creating a spell is mostly a matter of guesswork and comparison.

Choose the purpose. What do you want the spell to do? If you're creating the spell for use in a specific adventure or campaign, consider what role the spell plays in the story. Is it the spell the cult has to find to destroy the world, or do they have the spell but need an obscure material component?

Create the name. Name your spell with a simple, descriptive title so it's easy to remember what the spell does. This name is for your reference only, so it doesn't have to be fancy or strange.

Design the stats. Using the spells in the Magic chapter as your model, work out the stats for your spell. To start with, find an existing spell that you think has a similar power level or importance to your new spell and use its stats as a base. Then decide the basic statistics: components, cost, casting time, range, target, duration, and saving throw.

Write the description. Explain what the spell does, what it requires, how it works, and so forth.

Customize the spell. Now that you have a spell like those in the rulebook, bring it to life. Make a list of four or five colorful, mysterious names the spell is known by. Write a short history—who created the spell, important situations where it was used, and where to find it. If it has components, write those up in detail so you can describe this all to the players. You could even write the actual text of the spell as it would appear in a Mythos book, complete with ciphers, mysterious symbols, obscure descriptions, insane rants, and so forth.

GODS AND MONSTERS

The alien beings who lurk and plot play a very important role in the Mythos, even though they don't appear out in the open much at all. Because they're so dangerous and powerful, investigators shouldn't encounter them face-to-face very often. The human cultists who worship these horrors are much more common, as is evidence after the fact of these creatures' activities—whether that's a footprint in the forest or a strange mist that lingers for hours.

Gods play the role of the distant threat. They're somewhere else, perhaps in space or under the ocean, and the adventure you're playing is all about how someone wants to awaken or summon that god. The investigators are doing their best to ensure this doesn't happen.

Monsters are a little more up front. A powerful cult might have a monster as a sentry or ally, or they could summon one to deal with a group of nosy investigators. A Mythos creature is usually an element you should save for the climax of the scenario. There should always be a chance that at least one of the investigators will die or go insane from the experience.

DESIGNING A GOD OR MONSTER

The first question you should ask when designing gods and monsters is: Why bother? This rulebook already contains a slew of such creatures. Cults are full of insane, deluded people who may worship a god or monster under any of a number of names or interpretations. If you want a cult who worships a sky god and Ithaqua isn't doing the trick, have them worship Cthulhu—even though he's in the ocean. A typical cult is too crazy to realize the difference. Perhaps they read a Mythos book that used the sky as a metaphor for the ocean, and they interpreted it too literally—occult tomes aren't written like VCR instructions.

You can twist and distort this rulebook's description of the gods and monsters any way you like because the humans who have built the Cthulhu Mythos were liable to write just about anything. Change the name, change the appearance, or change the cult. Go with your instincts. These creatures are the masters of reality, and they transcend time and space. Like Nyarlathotep, they could appear in any guise or under any description. Cthulhu lies sleeping at the bottom of the ocean, sure. But some heresies might have him on the moon, or beneath the Grand Canyon, or walking among us in human guise. The Cthulhu Mythos is a set of plot devices used to tell stories. Bend it to your will.

If it's a question of familiarity, you can still pull this trick. Are your players tired of deep ones? Use the deep one stats, but make them insect-creatures who live in subway tunnels preying on late-night travelers. A fresh coat of paint on the same old stats can work wonders, and this furthers the amorphous, contradictory nature of the Mythos that keeps it mysterious.

Still, sometimes you just need a new beast. You might want to adapt a creature you have read about in a book or seen in a movie. Here's how.

Choose the model. Even if you're intent on making a new critter, there's probably something in this rulebook you can use as a starting point. If it's human-size, start with a ghoul. If it's bigger, try a shoggoth. If it can fly, check out the byakhee. If it can fly and it's really big, look at the hunting horror. Use the advancement rules, if they give you ideas. A few minutes of skimming can easily find you a creature that has the basic attributes you want. This helps ensure that your creation is built along a similar stat scale as the existing ones. It should also give you some clues to how powerful your creation will be.

Describe the appearance. What does it look like? Lovecraft described his monsters as combinations of other things, or as not quite looking like something but still suggesting it somehow, because he wanted to create impressions in his readers' minds of indescribable alien entities. He described the byakhee, for example, as ". . . not altogether crows, nor moles, nor buzzards, nor ants, nor decomposed human beings, but something I cannot and must not recall." Don't get lost in prosaic descriptions like, "The Bangalore is 6 feet tall and has nine legs and two big red eyes." That's boring. Get weird and eccentric in your descriptions, and never feel that you have to stick to your own phrases—these things don't obey the laws of space and time, remember? They can have twelve legs today and no legs tomorrow if it makes for a scarier encounter. All that matters is that your players should be afraid.

Create the name. You have to call it something. Most names in the Cthulhu Mythos were chosen by human sorcerers and maniacs who encountered these beasts and needed a name for them afterward. They might have taken a name from a sound the creature made, or from a word in an alien language, or just used something that sounded impressive to them. Embrace this variety and come up with multiple names for your creature.

Design the stats. Using the model you have chosen, work up the beast's stats. Besides the basic attributes and so forth, have fun with the special attacks and qualities. Even moreso than in DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, gods and monsters in *Call of Cthulhu* are meant to be weird and powerful. They should have all sorts of bizarre abilities and attacks. Some might damage you by eating your shadow, or control your mind just by holding your hand. Others could walk through walls, enter one door and leave another, or turn concrete into water. If you're going to make a new beast, you might as well make it as weird as you can.

Write the description. Start by quoting your appearance notes and then explain the nature of the thing. Does it worship or serve a particular god? Where is it from and why does it turn up on Earth—was it summoned, or did it fly here through the interstellar night? Make notes on distinctive behaviors, smells, and desires. Does it want to mate with humans, or eat our brains?

MYSTERIOUS SECRETS

The Cthulhu Mythos is full of secrets, and Lovecraft's stories are typically all about the unraveling of such secrets. This is because in exploring secrets we gain knowledge, and knowledge leads to corruption, and then something awful eats your face.

Typical secrets in Lovecraft's stories include things like: a village whose residents have been breeding with monsters for generations; a dead wizard who has used magic to possess the body of a living person; a sorcerer who seems to be a ghost, but is actually adrift in space-time.

A mysterious secret has several layers. Some sort of surface behavior or situation gets you interested. Then there is an initial explanation or resolution that seems to suggest all is well. But the weirdness continues and the explanation falters, so you look deeper. You find sinister clues that suggest something terrible. Finally you figure it out, and that resolution coincides with the climax of the story.

Mysterious secrets are great fun to design because they're like laying a minefield. You get to put all sorts of nasty surprises in the ground and then slap a pretty garden on top. When investigators stop to sniff the flowers, something explodes.

DESIGNING A MYSTERIOUS SECRET

Create the secret. This can be anything unpleasant that someone wants to keep quiet. Perhaps the investigator's father was half-monster, or the guy who lives down the street is building a gate to a terrible dimension in his basement, or the funeral homes in the city are all linked by underground tunnels full of ghouls, or a house is bigger on the inside than the outside, or a serial killer is really a mind parasite that leaps from host to host.

Choose the carrier. Who knows the secret? Maybe no person actually knows it—the truth could exist only in an old book, or recorded on a security-camera videotape.

Craft the agenda. There's a reason why it's a secret. Someone is working to keep the secret quiet, and designing their agenda helps you build the rest of the mystery.

Build the layers. Make up a couple layers of explanation to put on top of the truth. If a guy is building a time machine made from human heads, his nocturnal walks through poor neighborhoods might be explained by his having an affair with someone who lives in that area. The affair is real—but it's also his cover for cutting

off the heads of homeless people. On top of that is his explanation for why he's been missing so much work lately and always looks tired: He has the flu. (But if he is so sick, what's he doing going out every night? Oh, he's having an affair. But why are all the murders in that same area? Holy cow, it's made of heads!)

Set the hook. You need an initial hook to snag the interest of the investigators. To use our time-travel maniac example, his brother or friend might want to know why he's acting so strange and missing so much work. Or the hook might be the recent decapitation murders of homeless people.

Make it freaky. Each layer of discovery should include something that is slightly off-kilter, a little bizarre. If the layer is purely mundane, after all, there's no reason to look further. Maybe the guy has faded bloodstains on his shirt when he explains about the affair ("Oh, that's cranberry juice"), or the woman he's been dating will only answer questions on the night that just happens to have a full moon. (She's actually an ancient sorcerer possessing a modern woman's body, and she wants our crazy fool to build the occult time machine to free her from the past.)

SINISTER CLUES

Clues are what makes this a game of mystery, because many of the adventures you play are all about finding things out. For a great example of Sinister Clues, read Lovecraft's story "The Call of Cthulhu." In that tale, a long series of clues at first appears to be separate and not very meaningful events. But as the story comes together, those clues combine to explain a Mysterious Secret that reveals the full scope of the tale's horror. Lovecraft's novel *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward* does this as well, and T.E.D. Klein's excellent novella *Black Man With A Horn* is almost entirely composed of Sinister Clues.

By Their smell can men sometimes know Them near, but of their semblance can no man know, saving only in the features of those they have begotten on mankind; and of those there are many sorts, different in likeness from man's truest eidolon to that shape without sight or substance which is Them... Kadath in the cold waste has known Them, and what man knows Kadath? The ice desert of the South and the sunken isles of Oceans hold stones whereon Their seal is engraven, but who hath seen the deep frozen city or the sealed tower long garlanded with seaweed and barnacles?

—excerpt from the *Necronomicon* in H.P.Lovecraft's "The Dunwich Horror"

The key to using clues is to remember how knowledge is corrosive. The more you learn, the worse off you are. Either a clue is a terrible thing or it's a very mundane thing that becomes terrible when you get the next clue and realize what the first one meant. Clues are like the breadcrumb trail in the fairy tale about Hansel and Gretel, except they always lead straight into the witch's oven. Then the door snaps shut behind you just as you realize where you have come, and the flames flare up, and the moment of final revelation is pure apocalypse.

DESIGNING A SINISTER CLUE

Only a couple of steps to this exist, but they require some real thought and cleverness.

Choose the revelation. What does the clue reveal? You should decide this first before you even worry about whether the clue is a newspaper article, journal, statue, or whatever. The clue should point to something, and you need to figure out what it tells the investigators.

Craft the container. The container is the form the clue appears in. It might be a physical piece of evidence, such as a footprint or a broken window. It could be a document, such as a newspaper clipping, an old diary, or a nursery rhyme. Perhaps it's a conversation, something a witness tells you as you're interviewing him about the mystery.

Build the surprise. Ideally there should be something about the clue that surprises the players when they think about it. The clue might just be "Joe drinks a lot of water," but then the players remember the old book that said resurrected wizards sometimes turn to dust and maybe that means—oh, no! The key to a great clue is that it shouldn't be blatantly sinister or horrifying in itself. Instead, the horror should occur in the mind of the player as she makes the connection between the clue and something she learned earlier. By triggering that mental connection, the players scare themselves.

Consider this story: A group of investigators are tracking a strange creature in the woods where some hunters had vanished. They find a clue: a lump of spoor the creature left behind after a meal. The heroes have it analyzed, fully expecting it to contain digested human remains. Instead, it has digested grizzly bear remains. For a moment, the players are confused, but then one of them thinks, "Oh, God! *This thing eats grizzly bears!*" Then the players are *really* scared. The clue, as mundane as it appears at first, makes them scare themselves.

HORRIBLE FAMILIES

Families and bloodlines are of particular importance in the Mythos. Characters may discover that their ancestors included supernatural beings, or that their great-grandparents were sorcerous cannibals. These tainted family trees are never over and done with either, because knowledge and agendas are passed down by blood. In Lovecraft's "The Rats in the Walls," the main character devolves into the cannibalistic devil-worship of his forebears after he begins exploring his family's history. Poor Charles Dexter Ward resurrects his ancestor only to be murdered and impersonated by him. The Whateleys of "The Dunwich Horror" are perhaps the best example, since they're a Horrible Family, a Cult, and a Mysterious Secret all wrapped up in one neat package. (They even have a Book, a Monster, and Magic—really, they have got the works.) The bottom line: When

conflicts can provide Sinister Clues to the Mysterious Secret. In *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward*, Ward learns about his sorcerous ancestor, Joseph Curwen, though accounts written by Curwen's neighbors in the 1700s.

the corruption of the Mythos gets into your blood, no good ever comes of it.

DESIGNING A HORRIBLE FAMILY

Several points to consider in creating a Horrible Family follow.

Create the secret. What is so horrible about the family? Use the steps in the Mysterious Secret section to work this out. In Lovecraft's stories, the secret of a Horrible Family is usually related to some deception of identity, often involving a bloodline not entirely human. A beloved wife is possessed by the mind of her sorcerous father, or the ancestor who traveled in Africa mated with a terrible ape-creature. The secret means that the family is not what it appears to be, and the truth is something hideous.

Choose the focus. The focus character is the family member whom the investigators have the most contact with, such as Edward Derby in "The Thing on the Doorstep." He or she is the embodiment of the family's secret and is the avenue by which the investigators discover the truth. If the family's horror has been building across generations to some purpose, then the focus character is the result.

Decide the agenda. What is the point of the secret, and what role does the focus character play? Often the agenda is simply that of discovery and exposure, as with the narrator of "The Rats in the Walls" who unwittingly uncovers his family's history of cannibalism and murder. This usually means the focus character is sympathetic, an unwitting victim of his family's horror. That character can thus become an ally who needs the investigators' help. In other cases, the agenda is some sort of restoration of power. Lavinia Whateley mated with a god to produce her hideous offspring, and Wilbur Whateley was the result—a half-monster obsessed with furthering his true father's presence in our world. Wilbur knows his family's secret from the start, and it's the role of the investigators to discover the truth. Sometimes the focus character may start as an unwitting victim, but be turned into a willing agent of evil.

Build the family. Write up the other living members of the immediate family. Look for opportunities to create heroes, villains, and more secrets. Wilbur Whateley, for example, had a monstrous twin brother nobody outside the family knew about.

Write the history. Every horrible family has a story. Write up their history including the origins of the secret, the actions ancestors took for or against the horror, and how the focus character came to be. As with the modern family members, litter the history with good and evil ancestors. Their half-forgotten



Illustration ©2001, Jason Soles. Used with permission.

STRANGE PLACES

Few terrible things happen by daylight in public places. The worst events occur at night in abandoned buildings, haunted forests, or other Strange Places. The Cthulhu Mythos is full of such locations, and some of them are stranger than others.

Lonely Towns. Lovecraft's fictional towns of Arkham, Dunwich, Innsmouth, and Kingsport are all isolated little places where awful things can happen behind closed doors. Innsmouth was so remote that it turned into a haven for half-human, half-monstrous creatures and hardly anyone noticed. Lonely towns are scary once you realize one fact: There's so few people that they could all be working together!

Big Cities. These locales aren't any better—as in Lovecraft's "The Horror at Red Hook," where an inner-city slum is home to a dangerous cult. Cities also extend beneath the ground. Awful ceremonies can occur in disused subway tunnels, forgotten basements, unknown caverns, or ancient labyrinths.

Oceans. Vast and mysterious, oceans are homes of horror. The Great Old One known as Cthulhu lies dreaming on the ocean floor in the sunken island of R'lyeh. The Deep Ones who serve him live there as well, and come to the surface to wreak havoc among humans.

Deserts. Oceans of the land, deserts conceal ancient secrets beneath their shifting sands. Long-abandoned cities of alien races await discovery, and strange truths are buried beneath the pyramids of Egypt.

Outer Space. Terrible creatures such as the mi-go and byakhee come from outer space, and when they leave, they may well take unlucky humans with them. Seemingly random disasters come from space, such as the living meteorite whose arrival corrupts and destroys a farming family in "The Colour Out of Space."

Other Worlds. Earth can be a strange place, but there are places stranger still. The mi-go mostly reside on Yuggoth, a world we know as Pluto. The shifting concept-city Carcosa lies on a distant world and is home to Hastur and the King in Yellow. Things lurk on the Moon and Mars, and there are other worlds in distant galaxies where loathsome things live and plot.

DESIGNING A STRANGE PLACE

Strange Places are very diverse, but here are a few suggestions for creating your own.

Choose the nature. What do you want the place to be? A human town or a lost alien city? A distant world? Start by picking a broad category.

Create the inhabitants. Who or what lives there? It might be a cult hiding within a teeming metropolis, or a few hungry beasts haunting a ghost town.

Design the strangeness. What's so strange about this place? If it's an alien environment, can humans survive on their own, or do they have to accept monstrous parasites into their bodies just to breathe the air? For a lonely town, work up the Mysterious Secrets and the histories behind them.

Plan the access. How do investigators get there? If it's an alien world or a city on the ocean floor, can they use technology to reach it, or must they go through magical gates? Even a lonely town can have access issues. In "The Shadow Over Innsmouth," the narrator has to take a grotty bus that only passes through Innsmouth once a day—meaning he has to stay the night.

Write the history. What is the story of this place? Figure out who or what founded it, what its history has been over the years, and what lies in its future.



THE TASTE OF ASHES

If the varied elements of the Cthulhu Mythos have anything in common, it is surely the looming specters of doom and futility. Every scholar or cultist to research this body of knowledge has come to the same realization: The forces of the cosmos are so powerful and so primally inimical to humankind that we face certain destruction.

In short, *Call of Cthulhu* is a game you cannot win. Earth is doomed and so is everyone on it. In Lovecraft's story "The Shadow Out Of Time," we even get a glimpse of our planet's future, when humans are only a legend and the lands and seas are populated by monsters.

Perhaps it is our destiny to escape this world's fate and make our home among the stars? No. If anything, what lies beyond our atmosphere is even more dangerous than what moves among us now. No escape exists from the finality of our extinction.

One day the stars will come right and the Great Old Ones will be freed from their prisons. Cthulhu will rise from the ocean, Ithaqua will roam all the world's skies, and the infectious madness of Hastur will spread from person to person. All this has been foreseen.

LOVECRAFT SPEAKS: THE NEMESIS OF SCIENCE

Life is a hideous thing, and from the background behind what we know of it peer daemoniacal hints of truth that make it sometimes a thousandfold more hideous. Science, already oppressive with its shocking revelations, will perhaps be the ultimate exterminator of our human species—if separate species we be—for its reserve of unguessed horrors could never be borne by mortal brains if loosed upon the world.

—H.P. Lovecraft, "Facts Concerning the Late Arthur Jermyn and His Family"

THE INEVITABLE FALL OF HUMANITY

What is to become of us? In Lovecraft's story "The Call of Cthulhu," a cultist describes our fate. He says the End Times will be easy to recognize, for they will come at a point when all humanity is consumed by violence and hedonism. Our societies will resemble those of the Great Old Ones themselves: lawless and wild, without any purpose except destruction.

We are not living in the End Times right now. But like the smoke from a distant fire, we can see them from here. Our world is burning. We have gone from being a single species to a set of rapacious civilizations, from there to clashing nations, and from there to uncivil societies. Step by step, as we factionalize into subcultures and sub-subcultures, betraying our communities for the sake of our personal obsessions, we grow ever closer to being a world of people-states where each individual places self above all. We are becoming a race of tyrants, feeble imitations of the Great Old Ones. The prophecies are coming true, one step at a time, as we march into the global abattoirs of our own making. The beings we know as the Cthulhu Mythos are not responsible; they are merely farther along the evolutionary track than we are. In them, we see our future, and that of the entire cosmos: order crumbling into chaos, life shriveling into death. Divide by zero.

Illustration ©2001, Jason Soles. Used with permission.

than can be put into words—all civilisation, all natural law, perhaps even the fate of the solar system and the universe. I have brought to light a monstrous abnormality, but I did it for the sake of knowledge. Now for the sake of all life and Nature you must help me thrust it back into the dark again.

—H.P. Lovecraft, *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward*

LOVECRAFT SPEAKS: THE HUMAN BEAST

. . . civilisation is but a slight coverlet beneath which the dominant beast sleeps lightly and ever ready to awake.

—H.P. Lovecraft, "At the Root"

THE TERRIBLE TOLL OF DEFIANCE

What then must we do? The easy answer is nothing. We can lose ourselves in the distractions of shopping and politics, even the welcome responsibilities of family and career. In the face of a future so vast and so terrible that it is futile to even resist it, who can blame those who are content to live their lives in ignorance or denial? We are so young, and the cosmos is so old.

Those who do make a stand have little to look forward to. Again and again, the heroes of Lovecraft's stories struggle to understand the darkness and gain only madness or oblivion. They are destroyed by monsters, driven mad by revelations, or hide from the certain doom they now know awaits them. They may win battles, but they always lose wars. No one retires to live happily ever after.

LOVECRAFT SPEAKS: CYANIDE CURE

Every aptitude which I wish I had, I lack. Everything which I value, I have either lost or am likely to lose. Within a decade, unless I can find some job paying at least $10.00 per week, I shall have to take the cyanide route through inability to keep around me the books, pictures, furniture, and other familiar objects which constitute my only remaining reason for keeping alive.

—H.P. Lovecraft, letter to Helen V. Sully, 1935

HEROISM AND HORROR

Nonetheless, heroes emerge. Normal men and women step forward to fight the darkness though they know they will ultimately fail. Even in the face of chaos they stand firm, putting everything and everyone they love at risk for the sake of the precious days remaining to us, and the unborn generations who may yet spend many of those days in peace.

Investigators of the unknown are brave, intelligent, and compassionate heroes who are not willing to surrender to destiny. Like Tolstoy, who in the face of poverty roamed the streets to give away all his money; or Dylan Thomas, who urged us not to go gentle into that good night, but rage against the dying of the light; or the man who stood before the tanks in Tiananmen Square, certain of defeat, but refusing to compromise.

Every investigator reaches a moment when it is easier to run away, ignore the evidence of her senses, and let sleeping dogs lie. Cowards turn back, but heroes press on, challenging the darkness in terrible places where even angels fear to tread.

LOVECRAFT SPEAKS: RETROGRADE

Instead of triumph I have found terror, and my talk with you will not be a boast of victory but a plea for help and advice in saving both myself and the world from a horror beyond all human conception or calculation. . . . Upon us depends more

SAVING THE DAY

Some heroes fight the impossible, fighting for the sake of today. They have people they care about, and they know they must take on this challenge to keep those they love from harm. What does it matter if the world is going to end? Today remains, and today is worth fighting for. Even if the planet is doomed there is a life to save right now, a wrong to redress, a hideous agenda to thwart. A small victory is still a victory, and there's no reason to go down without a fight.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Others struggle to add their light to the sum of light. By taking up the mantle of hero they become exemplars of selflessness and community—the very values the cosmos would erode. In their defiance of the inevitable they inspire others to stand with them, to do something worthwhile with their time on this world, to make hay while the sun shines.

YOUR ONLY JUDGE IS YOURSELF

In the end, this reality is one that doesn't care if we live or die or what we do with our days upon the Earth. What matters is what you choose to believe in, and what actions you take to show it. Pick your battles and make your stand. At the end of the day, even in the moment of your annihilation, you'll know you were not content to sit back with the rest. You're a hero, and even if no one else realizes it, you still made a difference while you could.

If the Cthulhu Mythos has a saving grace it is this: By putting our existence in such stark relief, by propping up such insurmountable foes, by hurling the very fabric of reality against us, we can finally see who we really are. The Mythos is a vast mirror held up before the face of humanity. If you want to like what you see there, the power is in your hands.

LOVECRAFT SPEAKS: COLD COMFORT

No change of faith can dull the colours and magic of spring, or dampen the native exuberance of perfect health; and the consolations of taste and intellect are infinite. It is easy to remove the mind from harping on the lost illusion of immortality. . . . Personally, I should not care for immortality in the least. Nothing better than oblivion exists, since in oblivion there is no wish unfulfilled. We had it before we were born, yet did not complain. Shall we then whine because we know it will return? It is Elysium enough for me . . . .

—H.P. Lovecraft, *In Defence of Dagon*



THE GAMEMASTER

"The predatory excursions on which we collected our unmentionable treasures were always artistically memorable events. We were no vulgar ghouls, but worked only under certain conditions of mood, landscape, environment, weather, season, and moonlight. These pastimes were to us the most exquisite form of aesthetic expression, and we gave their details a fastidious technical care. An inappropriate hour, a jarring lighting effect, or a clumsy manipulation of the damp sod, would almost totally destroy for us that ecstatic titillation which followed the exhumation of some ominous, grinning secret of the earth."

—H.P. Lovecraft, "The Hound"

The Gamemaster is not only the guardian of the game's ultimate truth, but also the storyteller and referee, dispenser of justice and terror, puppet master behind horrible conspiracies against the very integrity of the planet, and hidden guardian angel for the brave. Player characters would thwart such hellish designs. In other words, it's a big job. The Gamemaster's responsibilities include five important tasks.

Crafting a Story: First and foremost, a game session is a story. It should make some sense and hang together rationally, providing a beginning, middle, climax, and ending. Telling spooky stories around the campfire is how horror began; your *Call of Cthulhu* games should aim for at least that degree of immediate power.

Setting a Mood: A *Call of Cthulhu* session should convey a mood that allows the story to unfold as fear, paranoia, and tension increase. Keep the atmosphere friendly to the game and focused on its development. Intensity is the key. Game time should "feel" different from normal time, even if nothing immediately gruesome is happening.

Scaring the Players: A key component of that mood should, of course, be horror—*Call of Cthulhu* is a horror game. The characters' sanity and lives are at risk. Conveying to the players at least a fragment of the soul-freezing terror their characters are experiencing is a crucial part of the GM's task. If you have properly set the mood, the players should even be cooperating with you to scare themselves.

Using the Supernatural: A key element of the game's feel and mood is unnatural: the scratching of Things from Outside at the fragile doors of reality. Evoking the supernatural and the paranormal, along with a sense of reality being slightly askew, successfully helps build a mood of separateness and a feeling of horror throughout the game.

Adjudicating the Game: Finally, the GM has to roll the dice, decide whether that shotgun slug can penetrate a deep one's hide, add or subtract a cultist or two to keep the investigators in danger (but out of the morgue), and actually referee the rules in the rest of this book. If the players can't count on you to run the game fairly and in everyone's interests, they won't cooperate with you when you're trying to scare them silly.

This chapter expands on these aspects of being a Gamemaster. It also gives you some hints to make it easier, and a few rules and guidelines to keep the game running smoothly. There's also some nasty stuff to pull on your players, helping them get into the spirit of cosmic horror that should infuse a *Call of Cthulhu* session.

STORYTELLING

The rules of storytelling are the same as the rules for any other art form. Don't bore your audience, tell them what you want to tell them, add razzle-dazzle, and always leave them wanting more. As the GM, it's your responsibility to transform the printed words (or scrawled notes) of an adventure into a dramatic collaboration between you and your players, one that keeps everyone coming back for more.

PACING

The pace of the game determines how much time you spend on a given activity or action taken by the investigators. Different players enjoy different activities, and hence often enjoy different paces. Some like to meticulously map out the assault on a cult compound, while others prefer to kick in the door and charge in with shotguns blazing. Some roleplay every encounter, while others can't wait to shove the plot along. Some tentatively feel their way along every foot of slum hallway; while others take the stairs two at a time in pitch darkness. They might stop to copy every glyph of every inscription, or they might dynamite the temple while keeping their eyes screwed tightly shut.

Do your best to please the group. If you have a bunch of *Mission: Impossible* addicts, don't skimp on the clever planning. If you have a collection of *Rambo* fans, blow things up real good.

When in doubt, move things along. Roleplaying a scene is like frying bacon—if you think you might be finished, you are. Don't get bogged down in details or rules, and don't multiply scenes meaninglessly. It's seldom necessary to play out shopping trips for more ammo and low-light film, or describe every hour of studying a forbidden tome, or tactically map out rest periods—unless that's when the mi-go attack.

SETTING UP A SCENE

Consider each scene a kind of adventure in miniature. Each scene contains the essence of the story, either as a problem, an opportunity, or a question. There should always be a reason the scene is part of the greater story. To make the scene work, give the players immediate input and let them find as much of that essence as they can. You won't lead them to it by holding their hands, but ideally, you shouldn't hide it from them for so long that they become frustrated, lose interest, or get confused enough to derail the larger story chasing red herrings.

IN THE MOMENT

"What do we see?" This question traditionally begins a new scene: the players want information. If you have done your job right, they're desperate for it. Set up the scene beginning with the immediate overview. "The room seems small, you can't see anyone in it in the dim light filtering through the tarpaper roof, and there's a hole in the floorboards." Let the players ask their next questions. Don't slow the game with an abundance of details right away.

After the first flurry of descriptions, make sure you engage their senses. Mention the humming of insects in the still air. Describe the stench of stagnant seawater coming up from the hole in the floor. Evoke the creaks and groans of the crudely sawn planks. Pay attention to smell and sound—they make a moment seem more real, and more involving, than visual descriptions alone. Find a telling detail that will allow each player to fully imagine the surroundings. For instance, mentioning the croaking frogs and chirping locusts summons up a whole panoply of swamp imagery without describing every fern and reed.

SHINE A LITTLE LIGHT

Ideally, the players' questions will reveal the essence of the scene to them: "Are there bloodstains on the floor?" "Is the diary hidden in that cigar box?" "Does it look like someone was tied up in this shack?" The answers to some questions can be guaranteed to keep everyone busy:

Q: *"Is there anyone down in that hole?"*
A: *"You see only still, dark water, filling it to almost the level of the floor. As you strain to see better, a leathery, ridged hand lunges up from the water. It tries to claw your face off!"*

If the players seem to need a little help, try setting them up for the questions: "The warped floorboards seem sticky as you walk on them." "There's some kind of little box holding up the table leg, near that coil of rope." "You hear a splash from the hole in the floor." Calling for Listen, Spot, or Search checks is another good way to feed clues to the players. Eventually, you'll want to spotlight the clue or conflict that sets up the next scene, if it wasn't the primary element of the scene already.

MOVE ALONG

Once the players are almost done capturing the scene's essence, start nudging them toward the next one. Don't let the story run out of energy. Every scene should seem to have a little more juice left in it when you leave it.

Some scenes move naturally into the next with no help from you at all. If a scene is an action scene, the investigators may pursue the ghouls (or be chased) into the next scene anyway; if

it's an investigation scene, they may follow the scent there themselves. They may have an idea that excites them; a plan to defeat the shan, a strategy for uncovering the cultist plant on the Air Force base, or whatever. If they're interested and excited and going somewhere, get out in front and lead them there, even if—especially if—it's not where you thought the scene would lead. If they're seriously off track, let them lose a little momentum before you start applying the brakes—or add a few clues or threats to subtly put them back on the path you have prepared.

CINEMATIC TECHNIQUES

You can easily compare roleplaying games to movies. The two art forms share the same imperatives of drama, conflict, storytelling, and action. Some of the same techniques directors use in movies to create suspense or advance the story can come in handy for *Call of Cthulhu* Gamemasters.

INTERCUTTING

If your players split the party—sending one group of characters to scout the haunted house while the rest ask questions in town—their decision can be fatal to dramatic tension. Even if the characters have all gone to the house, one group may check upstairs while the others poke around the cellar. With intercutting, the GM can run both scenes simultaneously, spending an action or two upstairs and then cutting away to the cellar to follow the party there. This can make searching the house very suspenseful and dramatic, especially if one (or both) of the groups runs into something horrific. Cut away from the cellar party after the rat-things swarm out and attack. Both groups will be in an agony of suspense as you describe the upstairs bedrooms to the oblivious investigators two floors up. Although intercutting can be confusing to new players, it can help tie separated parts of the story together and avoid boring half the players while you deal with the rest.

MONTAGES

Some adventures need a fairly lengthy set-up. A Delta Green op against a chthonian hatchery in the Congo doesn't really get going until they reach the site—but that's a thousand miles inland through a brutal civil war and Abhoth knows what else along the way. Rather than saying, "You take off from Homestead AFB, land in Kinshasa, go upstream, and get to the area," try presenting a more impressionistic montage of experiences. Describe the hurried packing of gear into the C-130, the tire fires on the runways at Kinshasa, the suspicious expressions of the river pilots, encounters with a militia or mercenary group, and maybe even a crocodile attack. You could even run very abbreviated scenes of combat against rebels or primitive tribes, or just run a "typical day on the river" scene. By presenting the elapsed time as a montage, not only do you draw the players into the story, you can build suspense or foreshadow themes or plot points.

TEASERS

At the beginning of virtually every episode of *The X-Files*, some poor schmo unwittingly disturbs the mutant, or gets whacked by the aliens, or otherwise dies horribly, graphically, and—best of all—dramatically. You might consider beginning an adventure with a "cut scene" teaser, telling the story of the gruesome event briefly yet with plenty of disturbing and atmospheric detail. You may want to remind your players that their PCs won't be able to act on any "out of game" information you reveal during the teaser.

Better yet, pass out abbreviated NPC character sheets and let your players (or one or two of them) game out the messy death of Jane Bystander, late of Arkham, Mass. Later in the adventure, when the "regular" characters come upon Ms. Bystander's eviscerated corpse, it has more personal meaning to your players than just another baldly narrated forensic exhibit.

ENDING THE SESSION

Whenever possible, end the session either with a question or a bang. When you and the players break up the game for the night, they should be excited about what just happened, and they should want to resume play soon. This helps keep the game's continuity between sessions, making the players eager to get into character next session and cooperate to rebuild the atmosphere of the story. Finishing the session out with an adrenaline-pumped combat scene, a vital revelation that changes everything, or a juicy mystery to solve is the easiest way to get that kind of response.

This may require you to compress some scenes and expand others to reach the session's "natural" climax at the end of game play for the night. Ideally, you'll be compressing the dull, talky scenes and expanding the taut, suspenseful ones anyway (as described previously in the Pacing section). This cliffhanger can make your game seem more exciting even if you don't quite hit the mark for the ending.

With that in mind, consider the perfect session ender a mark to shoot for, but not a "must have"—don't railroad players or rush through the adventure for the sake of a good final scene. A great ending to a lousy story isn't worth it.

Take some time after the ending to talk to your players about the game, or better yet, listen to them discuss it. Find out what they liked, what they didn't like, what they were mystified by, and what they can't help chewing over. Listen closely to what they're considering for next session. Use this to adjust your pacing, and even the story of this and future adventures, so that next session, you can restore the atmosphere of the game and move on to further terrors.

ATMOSPHERE

There's a reason that we call the mood and feel of a game its "atmosphere"—it's hard to grasp, invisible, and often taken for granted. But without it, the game is dead. A horror game such as *Call of Cthulhu* requires a special distance from normal time, and even from normal action-and-adventure gaming. Even when nothing overtly weird or horrible is happening—especially when nothing overtly weird or horrible is happening—it should seem like something appalling could happen at any minute. Some things add atmosphere, while others detract from it. Emphasizing the first class of things

and minimizing the second is the key to developing a creepy mood from the moment you pick up the dice, clear your throat, and say "When last we left our intrepid heroes, you were standing in the still, humid air outside the bayou church, waiting for sunset . . . ."

BUILDING ATMOSPHERE

Two levels exist that must be considered when creating the atmosphere for your *Call of Cthulhu* game. The first is the in-game level: things immediately related to or occurring within the story and the adventure itself. Many published adventures provide a modicum of support for in-game considerations. The metagame level—the atmosphere outside the story, between you and your players wherever you're physically sitting down to play—is almost always up to you.

IN-GAME CONSIDERATIONS

Much of the work of building atmosphere is done by the adventure you have bought or designed. It likely involves suspicious NPCs, spooky locations, horrible monsters, and some kind of sanity-blasting magic. However, a few "generic" atmosphere-building themes work well to establish and emphasize a properly disturbing sense of distance and horror. Look them over, and identify any tricks you may wish to use while running the adventure, or themes to add if they aren't provided already.

Isolation: Opposing the insanity of the Cthulhu Mythos must occur in isolation. Should the world at large ever discover the horrible truth, Those Outside will win. Steeped in the blasphemous horror of the Mythos, the investigators soon have more in common with the vile cultists they battle than with the innocents they protect. Normal people often react with suspicion or oblivious disregard for the investigators' deadly sacrifices. They may even begin to subconsciously sense the taint of corruption clinging to the PCs. Even allies, friends, and family should appear worried or unnerved at the investigators' appearance. The effect on bystanders might become noticeable—children cower, cats hiss and arch their backs, priests cross themselves and turn away.

Helplessness: As investigators fight the Cthulhu Mythos, they inevitably descend into madness or succumb to a hideous death. Players should never be puppets, and few players appreciate a tale of ultimately bleak horror without the tiniest shred of hope. But many great stories begin with the hero helpless to react. Batman saw his parents' deaths as a child. Fox Mulder witnessed his sister's abduction. When the investigators arrive at the scene of some unmentionable horror, have them arrive just a little too late rather than 24 hours after the body grows cold. Killing an NPC that the PCs can't save reinforces the horror, even as it gives them incentive (and information) to defeat the monster. Monsters that guns can't stop, or sorcerers who won't stay dead, emphasize this theme.

Violence: Players usually enjoy a heaping dose of violence. Make sure your gunfights are as loud, dangerous, and confusing as the real thing—go around the table demanding responses *now*, and if a player stumbles or stammers, move on remorselessly.

Describe wounds graphically. "Take 8 points of damage" is dull. "The deep one hits you for 8 points of damage" is little better. Try this: "The thing's immense paw hits you like a sledgehammer. Its ice-cold talons tear your arm to ribbons, dealing 8 points of damage."

If your players really trust you, try running combats in which you keep track of all damage yourself. Never tell them how much damage something deals, but describe the effects graphically. "The tentacle slaps across your shoulder, briefly paralyzing your arm and setting up a weird ringing in your ears." (1–2 points) "The tentacle slams into your chest and you hear ribs crack; you taste your own blood and your vision goes gray." (8–9 points) "Your blood sprays everywhere, and you feel like you're going to pass out." (massive damage check)

Self-Destruction: Deadly enemies of evil soon discover new capacities for madness and violence within themselves. For some players, this is part and parcel of the horror of *Call of Cthulhu*. A "good cop" PC who finds himself brutally torturing a cultist to find out where the ritual takes place; a peace activist who dynamites a tenement to kill the thing in the basement; a CIA agent who reveals secrets to the Russians to get access to the Kremlin copy of the *Necronomicon*; a Catholic priest who must chant spells from a heretical and blasphemous tome to save a small town—in each case, the "hero's" self-image has eroded, along with his sanity. This kind of "personal horror" depends on you knowing your players, and their characters, well. Often, players find new capacities for roleplaying within themselves, if you know how to present the opportunity.

METAGAME CONSIDERATIONS

Although most of your attention should be on the story, the horror, and the action within the game, the world outside the game can affect all these things. So can your attitude or actions when revealing the story or horror to the players.

Setting: In general, horror doesn't flourish in brightly lit rooms with cartoons on TV, noisy computer games, and lots of distracting toys. In general, play with just enough light to see the character sheets, dice, and rules. A few candles and dim shadows are scarier than a fluorescent light bulb. Don't encourage TV shows or computer games during the session; you're there to game. Keep all distractions to a minimum. Horror can be fragile.

To help build the atmosphere, you may want to provide handouts for players: floor plans of the old courthouse, copies of the missing millionaire's will, or newspaper articles about a UFO. If you're a deft hand with desktop publishing, try recreating a newspaper font, or if you feel like experimenting with coffee stains and fountain pens, draft that old letter on "antique" parchment. Picture magazines can provide NPC photos or faraway jungle temples. Granted, you shouldn't slow the game down scrabbling for "just the right picture." Don't let the players assume that anything without a handout isn't important. Just consider how handouts and props can bring your *Call of Cthulhu* session to life.

Style: All the handouts in the world won't save you if you present a dull game. Use your tone of voice to set the mood. Keep it low and urgent, almost whispering, for the suspenseful search through the graveyard, then turn loud and panicked when the ghouls

attack. If a sudden gunshot interrupts a tense stakeout, announce it by slamming your palm on the table and saying, "A bullet shatters your windshield—what do you do now?" Keep the players involved, interested, and reacting instinctively.

To keep things interesting, try on accents or verbal tics to give definition to your NPCs. Hunch over while acting as the crippled beggar woman, or stand up and glower down at the players as the arrogant serpent-man priest. Your voice, your facial expression, and your entire body language are part of what your players draw on (even if only subconsciously) to follow the story—use all these things to tell the tale you want, how you want it.

SUCKER PUNCHES

Nothing builds atmosphere like scaring the living daylights out of your players. *Call of Cthulhu* being what it is, that shouldn't be too hard to arrange. Here are a few sucker punches you can throw to get your players breathing shallowly again.

HORRIBLE FEELING OF WRONGNESS

A wave of nausea, a choking stench of rotting pork, a bizarre cold spot, afterimages of stars appearing in the daylight sky, or a powerful sense of déjà vu—none of these are good things, especially when they seem to come with no warning. Depending on how badly you want to worry your players, you can call for a Spot or Listen check, and then (regardless of the dice) unleash one of these "wrong" feelings. The "wrongness" can stem from an upcoming encounter (and be a kind of horrid premonition) or be the lingering aftereffect of a previous encounter or a hastily read tome. Either way, the players begin worrying about the game again.

A SENSE OF BEING WATCHED

A slightly more serious version of the previous example is the sense of being watched. You can handle this as subtly as asking, "Who has weapons drawn right now?" You might just blatantly say, "You have the bizarre feeling that you're being watched. The sky is clear and you don't see anyone nearby." Be ready to handle the inevitable series of Search and Spot requests with something vague, or with this: "The feeling seems to have gone away, and you certainly don't *see* anyone—right now."

DISSOCIATION

This is a much more serious attack of "wrongness"—a time slip can swallow two hours (especially appropriate if the players have been wasting game time), the skies or scenery can melt or tear, everyone nearby can suddenly appear freshly dead, or unholy voices can chant in the investigators' heads. Then, suddenly, everything is back to "normal"—although perhaps the sun is shining a little *too* brightly now. Again, this can be a creepy premonition or an inevitable result. Calling for a Sanity check is appropriate for more serious dissociation, although a failed check shouldn't cost more than 1 or 2 points.

CULTISTS ATTACK!

"When in doubt, have two men with guns burst through the door." It was good advice when Raymond Chandler said it, and it's good advice now. If you can work it into the plot, have a lesser thug try something violent. Don't kill the investigators—this should be a wake-up call, not an assault. You can plant helpful clues on the assailants for the benefit of lost investigators and confused players.

MONSTER ATTACK

You should only spring a monster if you're willing to kill a character to get the game back on track. Monsters are not trivial wandering obstacles in *Call of Cthulhu*. They shouldn't just "reduce resources"—Mythos monsters kill.

Hastening the first confrontation, or using a monster for a quick hit-and-run, can scare players straight—as long as they think you mean it. NPCs who have outlived their usefulness make excellent gory "wake-up kills" in this kind of encounter. If necessary, let the hero's friend die so everyone else can flee.

Make sure that the sucker punch you just threw doesn't interfere with the story of the adventure. Don't attack the party with deep ones if your game is set in the Mojave Desert, and don't gruesomely kill an NPC who hasn't divulged the essential clue the PCs need to open the secret panel. More importantly, don't divert the whole game down a side track when it's not necessary. Remember, the important thing is to get pulses racing, restoring the atmosphere of horror.

FEAR, SHOCK, AND HORROR

In *Call of Cthulhu*, the GM and the players have a contract with each other to build an atmosphere of horror. This makes the game more fun for everybody, because there's a shared emotional link that becomes much stronger as a group experience. To do your part, it's good to know the basics of building horror.

FEAR: THE ANTICIPATED UNKNOWN

A big part of the mood comes from the fact that the players know something awful is going to happen. The game is called *Call of Cthulhu*, for gosh sakes, and the adventure probably has some cool name such as "The Unpleasant Awfulness In The Sewers." As long as you don't actively destroy the mood, the players can often scare themselves with anticipation.

MENACE

Some things, places, and events, are just inherently menacing. Whether through our ancient caveman instincts or years of horror stories and movies, we know that if there's a full moon on a foggy night, something bad is going to happen. With enough attention to atmosphere, even the corniest thunderstorm or howling wolf can put your players on edge. You can work with these ancient fears, and with the modern fear-masters, to build menace in your adventure. A few common situations and elements of menace follow.

rotting marsh grass again, or pass the bloating corpse of yet another eyeless cow, they'll remember the horrible events they witnessed last time. If you have successfully built tension and fear with some menacing stimuli in earlier adventures, repeating them can reap a well-deserved harvest. Just make sure that the players can never depend on anything being routine or ho-hum. Mix up old menaces, or shake up the rhythm of the ensuing nightmare.

Darkness: More than just a negative attack modifier, darkness is the place where Things That Should Not Be Seen lurk and hide. The shadows restrict PC knowledge, movement, and options. Restriction feeds into nervousness, helplessness, and mounting fear. Other environmental menaces include thunderstorms or blizzards (restricting visibility and free movement), fog (especially greenish fog billowing from a weed-choked ruin), and enclosed spaces. A pitch-dark, claustrophobic sewer tunnel—with plenty of rainwater pouring in through the gratings—is an ideal place to stash monsters and give investigators the willies.

Bad Places: Some places just aren't where you want to be. That, of course, is where the horror lurks. Stereotypical haunted mansions and hillbilly smokehouses have their own unique charms. So do cemeteries, crypts, and circles of standing stones. These may seem like clichés, but clichés only seem hackneyed from the outside. If your players have immersed themselves in the game, and if you have built an atmosphere of fear, the creak of the mausoleum door can easily summon up mental horrors. You can also try to modernize such clichés for contemporary fears. Sewer tunnels replace dungeon walls, an urban crack-house stands in for the moonshine shack, and the waste-disposal landfill becomes the new cave of the Chimera.



Animals and Vermin: The natural world behaves oddly in the face of the unnatural. Birds can suddenly fall silent, or (even more disturbingly) burst into a cacophony of song mimicking human speech. Dogs or horses that shy at a grayish spot in the meadow obviously know something the investigators don't. Some animals are menaces in themselves, not only large predators such as crocodiles or wolves, but commonly feared creatures such as rats, cockroaches, and snakes. Adding rabies, or maggoty wounds, or any number of further awfulness, to any of these creatures can increase the fear. Even if the rabid cat doesn't attack the investigators, the sight of it jerking and yowling, fur matted and eyes staring, should creep out the players.

Death: The sight of a corpse, skeleton, or even a crushed skull can (or should) disturb the hardiest character. Adding details to the sight can convey information ("The skin has been scored and slashed by a hundred cuts.") or add menace and mystery ("It looks like the heart was simply cored out, although that doesn't explain the bluish slime in the cavity."). Bones cracked for marrow or gnawed by human molars, pictures from fashion magazines pasted onto a model's skull, or amateurish efforts at preserving significant body parts can all add menacing details in the players' minds, allowing them to imagine their predicament.

Previous Danger: Regardless of where the investigators met horror before, when they begin to see the same cracked road signs, smell the familiar stench of

SHOCK: THE SUDDEN SURPRISE

The shocking surprise is the keynote of modern horror, whether it comes in italics at the end of a Lovecraft story or as the whine of a chainsaw in a horror movie. The "tension and release" formula of the slasher flick has become a standard because it works. Use its power in your game, even if you feel you must give it a slightly more sophisticated veneer. Regardless of whether you prefer Hitchcock or Leatherface, shock works.

BOO!

Just adding a sucker punch to a menacing situation can be enough to spark a shock in the players. When a flock of byakhee start from the gnarled oaks, or a dimensional shambler steps out of a painting, a quick description in a raised voice sets the tone of sudden terror nicely. The great thing about the Thing from the Darkness model is that it works whether the investigators try to spot it or not. Even if they do see it, that only changes the shock from "A ghoul erupts from the grave you just passed" to "The grave earth is moving, no, bubbling, no, falling away from the erupting ghoul!"

You can even get a slow-building shock if the monster materializes in front of the heroes and you have a chance to luxuriate in its graphic description: its flailing tendrils, gaping jaws clotted with human sinew, wickedly curved talons, or greenish pus-covered skin. Since most monsters are even more bulletproof while coalescing out of the mists, the investigators can't do anything except drink in the horror. Keep the grue building steadily, but don't drag it out.

As a change-up from the inevitable attack in the Bad Place, consider a monster ambush in the PCs' home or headquarters. If they have slipped up and left something personal that the Hounds of Tindalos can track, or allowed the cult to follow them back to the precinct house, that's an invitation for a Mythos cult with initiative to make their lives hell—or make them much shorter.

MY GOD, ELIOT, IT WAS A PHOTOGRAPH FROM LIFE

Much of the shock of the Cthulhu Mythos comes from a series of terrible revelations that build on each other. Sometimes these revelations more closely resemble simple jumpie-outie "boo!" style shocks. When the mi-go rips off his face mask, or when the MJ-12 agent starts sprouting shoggoth tendrils, that can be a standard shocker. But it also indicates that things are not what they seem. Even an investigator's supervisor, friend, or wife could be infected with the taint, with none the wiser until the crisis point.

Emphasizing this omnipresence with subtle cues can add lingering paranoia and menace. All the inhabitants of Innsmouth show unpleasantly froglike features—as does a prominent Massachusetts congressman. An investigator's wife uses a phrase in passing—one he's only heard before as a catch phrase in a cult. The buzzing tones of the mi-go appear on the latest techno album.

Subtle cues might only be visible in retrospect. The powerful air-conditioner in the casino office exists to keep its revenant owner from rotting. The ornamental moat in a Japanese restaurant serves as a "circle of salt" around a servitor of the Outer Gods.

HORROR: THE FLOOD OF FUTILITY

One recurring message in Lovecraft's fiction is that the universe is an uncaring machine—it is destined to smash the Earth, mankind, and our petty laws of physics in an inevitable deluge of madness. Conveying the overall sense of horror and grim futility—while emphasizing the heroism, and the absolute necessity, involved in fighting it—is the great philosophical job of the *Call of Cthulhu* Gamemaster. And it can be a great way to creep the hell out of your players.

TOTAL IMMERSION

From the icy mountains of Antarctica to the steaming jungles of Malaysia, or the steel-and-glass towers of Los Angeles, the Cthulhu Mythos manifests on Earth. In all times and places, from distant quasars to tiny viruses, and in myriad dimensions unplumbed, madness and death roil. Everywhere the heroes travel, the Mythos resists them. Once they have willingly opened their eyes to its horror, they can never shut them again.

The omnipresence, eternity, and inescapable nature of the Great Old Ones should slowly fill any *Call of Cthulhu* campaign. Emphasize connections between isolated data points. Present the investigators with malign threats and non-Euclidean pockets wherever they look. Create a universe wholly driven by inhuman madness. Even "refresher" battles with gangsters and vampires should have at least thematic ties to the ongoing decay and destruction of humanity. Don't hesitate to imply horror where sane witnesses see only tragedy; the heroes are no longer sane witnesses to anything human. Even if you reveal the truth with glacial slowness, the players will soon see Cthulhu's shadow everywhere.

NO ESCAPE

Every now and then, faced with the totality of Cthulhoid nightmare, a group of investigators may decide to do the "smart thing." They'll pour cement into the tunnel entrance, dynamite the haunted house without looking inside, burn all books without reading them, and generally become cowards. You should make it clear through the events of your campaign that this is not an escape. Problems left untended get worse, not better. The now-total darkness in the tunnel should give the hunting horror enough power to begin psychically attacking nearby villages. The rat-things in the basement of the house should be able to escape through the splintered timbers. The book, sadly, detailed the only ceremony capable of reversing the Immanentization of Hastur.

BLOOD AND GUTS

From the cosmic to the personal—the essential horror of individual mortality resonates well with the existential horror of collective doom. Taking the *Grey's Anatomy* approach to Gamemastering can pay dividends both in the realms of immediate shock and disgust and in the larger sphere of theme and mood. Give every monster a specific *modus operandi.* When the investigators look at an "auto accident" and see the telltale marks of a chthonian tentacle, you gain further horror by evoking the monster.

If your players become jaded, consider other details. Describe the way pulped flesh clusters blue and bruised under pale discolored skin, or the way a corpse squelches under the hero's foot like a sack of hamburger meat left in the sun.

Too much reliance on gore can dull its impact, so don't overuse the splatter. If your players seem to be growing callous after the ninth or tenth bucket of blood, shift to another technique. Fortunately, the world of the Cthulhu Mythos is full of strange phenomena that seemingly exist solely to unnerve characters—use them all, mixing them for their fullest potential.

THE SUPERNATURAL

Technically, the message of Lovecraft's fiction is that there is no "supernatural" as such—those Things That Should Not Be are actually terrifyingly natural parts of the cosmos as it actually exists. Only mankind's cowardice and egotism classifies the Great Old Ones as "blasphemous." They are as much a part of the true universe as the Ebola virus or the Norway plague rat, albeit far deadlier. Conveying the true nightmare of the Cthulhu Mythos to players requires a deft touch—and sometimes an extra bucket of squirming, greenish blood.

STRANGE PHENOMENA

The first hints of the supernatural come diffidently. Only the alert, the knowledgeable—and the paranoid—can detect the pattern of inhuman horror in a flickering neon light or a faint smell of juniper on the wind. By using strange phenomena and traces of the uncanny, you can let your players have the fun of piecing together an unsupportable truth from insufficient evidence.

ménage à folie into a full-blown cult complete with rituals and theologies. Their inhuman gods may care nothing for such trivia, but the human mind desperately seeks pattern, even—especially—in the face of the meaningless horror of the Great Old Ones. Those who fall completely into madness and emerge on the other side with a debased and limited understanding of the awful truths of existence become powerful sorcerers.

TRACE EVIDENCE

Strange fibers from millennia-old flax, a human handprint left in fossilized amber, a smear of hydrocarbon paste in the lungs of a "heart attack victim"—anomalous trace evidence serves as a marker for the unnatural and a great hook for an adventure. Characters should learn that even the tiniest fragment of bone or the faintest smell of ozone can be a vital clue (not that they could ever explain it to the FBI, of course).

An old, but still resilient, technique for keeping the evidence evanescent is the mysterious malfunction. Photographs fade, videotapes blur, computer disks become corrupted, and that chitinous body left in the lab is nothing but a smear of quasi-organic soup after 24 hours. By carefully keeping the evidence balanced on the knife-edge of nonexistence, the PCs may come to doubt their own senses.

MALFUNCTIONING TECHNOLOGY

Technology doesn't necessarily need to malfunction after the fact to send the message of the Mythos. A Formless Spawn of Tsathoggua might drain the juice from a halogen flashlight; the quantum wake of the dimensional shambler's entry could wipe hard disks or scramble GPS transponders in a whole building. Even machinery that still functions perfectly can give useless readings. A laser rangefinder insisting that the stone altar is somehow both 60 *and* 100 meters away across the pentagonal floor will give PCs headaches. An infrared scope might only detect the star vampire as a flowing cold spot that warms as it feeds.

AS A FOULNESS SHALL YE KNOW THEM

Every monster, spell, or phenomenon in the game should have some signal of its presence, something odd or unusual, from a reek of rotten violets to a scraping of bone on bone. Use smells, sounds, cold or warm spots—any kind of subtle signal to raise hackles on the investigators' necks. If the monster or spell itself doesn't bring a foulness with it, it can still perturb reality, whether that's by stalling car engines, boiling canned soup with the trace heat of its passage, or causing ominous patterns in the TV static. A spell might cause concrete to bud and blossom like roses; an extradimensional creature might turn small birds and animals inside out as it manifests and warps dimensionality around it. Nothing in *Call of Cthulhu* "just happens," but it might appear to happen for no reason.

SORCERERS, CULTISTS, AND MADMEN

Exposure to the truths of the Cthulhu Mythos drives men mad. Investigators spend the majority of their time and energies containing those madmen, preventing them from transferring their own insanity to an innocently slumbering world. Even a casual or isolated student of the Mythos can slide into mania and obsession. Lone madmen may have bizarrely idiosyncratic spells, strange notions of the truth and how it fits with their own pathetic lives, or some uniquely horrible way of doing things. If a few of these students fall in together, or fall in with a particularly charismatic or gifted devotee of blasphemous lore, they tend to follow a mass insanity, turning their

ENCOUNTERING THE OBSESSED

When presenting cultists, sorcerers, or other madmen in a *Call of Cthulhu* game, give some thought to the stresses that brought them to this point. A student of grimoires driven insane by the blasphemous *Book of Eibon* may mutter incoherent phrases to himself. A mathematician whose abstruse theories opened the door to Yog-Sothoth may scribble indecipherably on walls or napkins, or mutilate patterns in his skin. Someone raised in the horrific cults of Dagon might twitch uncontrollably at the word "father" or the smell of seawater.

Personalize each pathetic wretch. Make sure your conventional NPCs are suitably individual and realistic, enough so that the players can tell the mad from the sane. When in doubt, of course, babbling, drooling, sudden rages, frenetic hopping about, flashes of obsession, and other cinematic madness can convey a more than adequately disturbing message—especially if the ravings eerily parallel developments in the character's own career.

ABERRANT BEHAVIOR

Even madmen may react reasonably, if not rationally. Determine what an NPC madman wants to accomplish, and what means, real or imaginary, are available toward that goal. A sorcerer is quite likely to risk everyone's life, including his own, to complete a ritual he believes can translate the entire state of California to demonic bliss at the court of Azathoth. If the heroes disrupt the ceremony, he may leave the whole cult behind and flee in order to preserve his vital link to the True Gods. A Nyarlathotep cultist obsessed with Egyptian artifacts will predictably break into the British Museum if she can, or seduce a professor who can get them for her, or do whatever else she thinks will obtain the Bowl of Thoth.

MAGIC AND RITUALS

The magic of *Call of Cthulhu* may be the science of a different dimensional plane, or a higher mental sphere, than our own. To human observers, or at least to sane human observers, it can seem arbitrary and bizarre. You should emphasize the freakish and unnatural side of magic, while hinting at some larger, more horrible pattern beneath it all where possible.

HOW MAGIC CAN LOOK

The look and feel of *Call of Cthulhu* magic can vary depending on the GM's goals in the adventure.

Unearthly Glows and Sepulchral Howls: For a full-blown vision of the uncanny, magic should warp and twist the fabric of space and normalcy. Not only should the spell leave a lambent greenish trail in the air, but raise horrible welts on witnesses, create an

acrid stench, make dogs howl, and cause whippoorwills to cry out. Especially at the climax of the adventure, there's no real reason to leave a horrific special effect unused if you think it will work. Magic in *Call of Cthulhu* is no routine matter of fireballs and magic missiles, but a violation of all that is holy and rational.

That's Strange: Of course, a subtle and disturbing sense of unease comes when the magic has some effect—but nobody can really tell what it was, or what it had to do with the spell. Describing passing dissonant effects is an excellent way to get more subtle perturbation across. "The whole clearing seems to bulge and ripple like a soap bubble." Or how about this: "For about 10 seconds, your senses seem crosswired, sounds appearing like shuddering bolts of color, and sights bursting on your tongue like rotten fruit."

Either effect should have plenty of impact, while remaining mysteriously immune to scientific analysis. Finding traces of magic hours or days later—even dramatic traces such as burns or dead vegetation—can still provide mystery, especially if none of the PCs remember anything like that occurring at the time.

Spellcraft and Occultism: It's possible that investigators have skills they have taken specifically to identify such anomalous occurrences. When they use them, know that knowledge within the Mythos isn't absolute. As part of this, an investigator with Spellcraft shouldn't be able to identify a spell he's never heard of, read about, or seen before. Any investigator with Knowledge (occult) may only have one or two areas of expertise; when he tries to interpret esoteric subjects he's never studied, you may want to raise the DC for those skill checks. When investigators are confronted with something as capricious and mystical as magic, even Cthulhu Mythos checks might reveal insane insights instead of blatant facts.

RITUALS

The "standard" insane Cthulhoid ritual is familiar from bad voodoo movies, lurid paperback thrillers, and tabloid reports of Satanic orgies. This familiarity can work to build menace, but it can also stifle creativity and dull the impact of what should be an adventure's climax. A few common elements of Cthulhoid rituals, along with some suggested variants or spice, follow.

Ceremonial Roles: The cult sorcerer, high priest, or chief monster officiates before a foaming throng of cultist madmen. Often an innocent victim must be slaughtered. However, a calm, stoic cult that renounces individuality may have no obvious leader—or a cult may pass "communion with the gods" from member to member like chain lightning, leaving everybody and nobody in command. The "sacrifice" may be willing, or may already be the container for the monster or its spawn. One or more of the "foaming cult" may be an undercover police officer or DEA agent—although the hapless agent may also have gone mad, erupting in maniacal gunplay at an inopportune time.

Chanting: Horrible rites in debased Latin, ancient inhuman tongues, or mongrel pidgin tongues of primitive tribes split the air, building up to the Ancient Names that Free and Form. To change things up, present a ritual chanted in New Age Californian gobbledygook, or beeped in mathematical code, or sung in a high mass of eldritch beauty, or dubbed into a trance mix at a rave. The names of the deities may be concealed in numerological cipher, spoken a syllable at a time, subvocalized by the adepts, or carved into the celebrants' flesh.

Costumes and Equipment: If the cultists all wear long robes and all-concealing hoods, its easy for investigators to infiltrate the circle unnoticed. Presumably, the high priest wears a different robe, with eldritch symbols or gold trim, and usually has a staff, dagger, or other tool of sorcerous impedimenta. Presenting the would-be infiltrators with a "skyclad" ceremony of nude cultists can make a significant change. Or the cult can hide beneath choir robes, Klan hoods, or some other camouflage. Every cultist might have a ritual staff, and the dagger might actually be held by the sacrifice to cut his own throat at midnight.

The Interrupted Summoning: The approved approach to Cthulhoid rites and ceremonies is to bust them up with extreme prejudice. Thus interrupted, the ceremony grinds down to a messy halt, the gates of the universe shiver but remain closed, and Arkham remains unconsumed for another year. An interrupted ritual might, however, open the gates a trifle (just enough for some unpleasant entity to squeeze through) or injure reality in some other way. Killing the sorcerer might not even interrupt the ceremony, if his dead body can continue it, or if his spilled blood contains enough energy to summon Shub-Niggurath's Dark Young. While the players shouldn't be punished for interrupting Cthulhoid rituals, it's important to keep the rituals unpredictable enough that ignorance and good intentions are not enough.

REFEREEING THE GAME

The mechanical niceties of running a game of *Call of Cthulhu* boil down to four precepts: toss the dice, know the rules, keep the peace, and reward the survivors. Everything else is just splatters on the wallpaper, or peculiar exhalations from freshly dug graves.

SECRET ROLLS

Some rolls, when seen by a player, reveal too much. A player who rolls to see if her character finds a trap and sees that she has rolled very poorly knows that the information you give her as a result of the roll is probably unreliable. ("Nope—the pyramid shaft seems smooth and unbroken to you.") The game is more interesting—and the atmosphere of suspense is thicker—when a player doesn't know if his private eye has successfully sneaked past the sentries at the manor house.

In cases where the player shouldn't know the die result, make the roll yourself, keeping the dice behind a screen or otherwise out of sight. Consider making some of the following skill checks for your players where they can't see the result:

Cthulhu Mythos, Demolitions, Diplomacy, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Psychic Focus, Search, Sense Motive, Spellcraft, Spot.

Should Players Always Roll? When possible, always let the players make any rolls for their own characters themselves. Rolling the dice is part of the fun of the game, and it's the way many players keep the illusion of control over events. You can ask the player to roll secretly so that even if she knows the result, the other players remain in the dark. You can maximize the number of secret rolls the players make by calling for rolls "for no reason" at random times during the game. If they roll well, grant them a Search, Spot, or Listen result that they didn't know to ask for. You should also know—and might apply secretly—any relevant modifiers, so that even a roll on a known check won't give the whole game away.

Some players, in order to keep control of their dice, learn to isolate, or "firewall," player knowledge from character knowledge. They'll walk down that smooth and unbroken pyramid shaft into the trap they know must be there. These are the kinds of players you want to encourage. If letting them see a Diplomacy check for themselves is the price you have to pay, so be it.

Chases: Have a map covering the terrain across which the chase will occur. Make sure there's a copy without all your notes that the players can look at to fix their characters' plight in their minds. If the monsters' movement capabilities or the characters' vehicles have special rules, look those up. Miniatures, or even little toy trucks and plastic dinosaurs, can add a graphic element that players can use to immerse themselves in the moment.

Fights: It won't take you too long to memorize the basic combat mechanic of *Call of Cthulhu*. But if you're hazy on the specific rules for submachine guns, and the heroes are about to bust Robert Suydam's mob in Mafia-controlled Red Hook, you may want to refresh your memory. Any monsters or villains the investigators are likely to shoot at (or be attacked by) should have their attack modifiers, damage ratings, weapon skills, hit points, and so forth visible where you can mark off expended ammo, magic, or blood. Sketching the location where the fight will happen can clarify tactical possibilities in your mind, and again helps your players focus on the game, keeping them on the same page with you.

Ambushes: These specialized fights really need to be mapped out in advance, but you shouldn't reveal the tactical map until the ambush begins. Otherwise, you'll spoil the surprise when ghouls jump out of the abandoned subway tunnel. Not only should you know everything else you need for a fight (hit points, special attacks, and so on), but you should have a general tactical plan for the bad guys to use.

Spell Use: If a spell has an unusual component, or will debilitate the caster, or otherwise has an even more dramatic effect than a "normal" spell, make sure you note that to yourself. A common mistake among busy Gamemasters is neglecting to let the spellcasting monsters use their fiendish powers. Make sure that a deep one sorcerer gets all the bang his undersea master demands. Review spell ranges and other details in light of your tactical map—your players will.

USING THE RULES

The rules of a roleplaying game may seem complex at times. After all, they have to represent everything that could possibly happen in the world at any time. When you add in monstrosities from non-Euclidean dimensions, sorcery left over from the archaic empires of the serpent men, and gods who shred reality like rice paper, that becomes a pretty big job. The key is to grasp the underlying logic of these rules. Be familiar with their central principles such as skill checks and how they represent the "basic reality" of the *Call of Cthulhu* universe. Read this book through and stay familiar with its basic concepts. Don't hesitate to extrapolate from the underlying principles when something comes up that the rules, remain silent on.

YOUR WORD IS FINAL

George Patton once said, "A good answer right now is far superior to the perfect answer next week." It was true for tank warfare in Europe then, and it's true for running roleplaying games today. If you have done your job, your players identify with their heroes—it's only natural for them to try to stay alive or sane by appealing your judgment or searching for an edge. However, another part of your job is to present a story and keep a mood alive. Endless arguments about rules or where, exactly, that deep one was hiding won't help anyone either. Don't let the game stop while people page through rulebooks and angrily shake miniatures at each other. Make your ruling, stick to it, and move on—the success or failure of the game is ultimately your responsibility.

COMMON SITUATIONS

In addition to the general rules, be ready to familiarize yourself with specifics needed for a given adventure or session of the game. When rules you seldom use come into play in the course of the adventure, it slows things down if you have to reread them in the heat of battle. Nothing scares players less than the sight of a GM frantically thumbing through the book as their PCs enter a haunted house. (If you must check a detail in the rulebook during the game, either page through it languidly, as though the PCs' fate hardly warrants your concern, or if necessary, make something up.) Don't be afraid to make notes on index cards or a note pad, or in the margins of the adventure if you're running a published one.

It should go without saying that you should always have your own up-to-date copy of each PC's sheet. This can help you plan adventures and keep track of hit points so you can fine-tune combats for maximum danger and terror. For some common situations, you can follow something of a checklist to make sure all the necessary details lie at your fingertips when the ichor starts to flow.

NPC ATTITUDES

In general, the GM runs an NPC just as a player runs a PC: You take whatever actions the NPC would naturally (or supernaturally) take, assuming such action is possible. This means you should know an NPC's basic outlook, priorities, and attitudes ahead of time, so you can roleplay the character properly. Choose NPC attitudes based on circumstances. Modern city-dwellers are indifferent, while

inbred backwoods Dunwich folk may be unfriendly or even actively hostile to "furriners." An NPC's job may also dictate his or her response; a corner barkeep may be friendly to anyone spending money, while a policeman walking the beat may be indifferent to and suspicious of shady types with criminal appearances (such as many investigators). Standard attitudes, and their range of expected behaviors, appear in the following table.

Player characters can attempt to change the attitude of NPCs by using Diplomacy checks (or Charisma checks if the character has no ranks in Diplomacy). In particular circumstances, the investigator might be able to use Intimidate instead. Roll the check, consult the appropriate line on Table 10–1: Attitude Adjustment for the NPC's starting attitude, and determine if the check result was sufficient to improve the NPC's attitude. (It doesn't take a roll, however, to make an NPC turn hostile.) In general, a given PC cannot repeat attempts to influence an NPC.

Attitude	Meaning	Possible Actions
Hostile	Will take risks to harm you	Attack, interfere, berate, flee
Unfriendly	Wishes you harm	Mislead, gossip, avoid, watch suspiciously, delay, insult
Indifferent	Doesn't much care	Socially expected interaction
Friendly	Wishes you well	Chat, advise, offer limited help, advocate
Helpful	Will take risks to help you	Protect, back up, heal, aid

For instance, the attitude of a county sheriff who was originally unfriendly improves to indifferent if the PC's check result is 15 or higher—and on a check result of 25, the sheriff's attitude would improve all the way to friendly. The GM should freely add or subtract modifiers to the PC's check based on the player's roleplaying and the approach the character takes. Appealing to the sheriff's innate sense of decency may work better than attempting to bully him or overawe him with vague stories of "government connections." Of course, a particularly craven, or politically ambitious, sheriff might respond better to threats or hints. Not only attitudes, but motives and responses, should vary from NPC to NPC.

EXPERIENCE AND IMPROVEMENT

Experience points represent what the character has learned from his harrowing adventures, often at great cost. They allow a character to gain levels, and thus to become more skilled while keeping a tenuous grip on sanity a little while longer.

The GM awards each character experience points (XP) at the conclusion of each adventure. They represent skills honed in desperate battle or feverish study, and the cold (but very real) comfort of knowing that unutterable evil has been staved off for another day.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

The Quick and Dirty Method: The simplest method for awarding experience works like this: When a character finishes two adventures, he gains a level. This method is arbitrary, but effective. The Gamemaster has complete control over how difficult each adventure is and how long it lasts. A typical adventure lasts at least two to four game sessions. By this method, a 20th-level character has survived forty adventures—quite an accomplishment for a game with such a high mortality rate.

Story Goals: For Gamemasters who want more detail, experience in a *Call of Cthulhu* adventure depends on a series of "story goals." At the beginning of each game session, the Gamemaster lists at least four challenging tasks the characters can accomplish to advance the story. This list is for the Gamemaster's own reference, kept hidden from the players. Each story goal contains at least a verb and a noun. In *CofC*, some of the most common verbs for story goals are: discover, recover, find, destroy, subdue, save, rescue, oppose, stop, and survive.

For instance, in a typical *Call of Cthulhu* session, the investigators may need to:

- survive an attack by zombies,
- recover a tome,
- discover a cult leader's secret,
- find the hidden room in his basement,
- destroy an artifact, and
- stop a summoning.

Not every accomplishment in a story requires a story goal, and not every story goal may be necessary to actually finish an adventure. A typical 4-hour game session should include about four to six story goals. At the Gamemaster's discretion, if the investigators do something significant and unexpected to advance the plot, he may award them for an additional goal. Published adventures include suggested story goals; the Gamemaster is free to tailor other goals to the characters participating.

At the end of each game session, the GM awards experience for each goal fulfilled. Each one is worth a base reward of 300 XP. Multiply this amount by the average character level, divide it by the number of characters, and award it to the surviving investigators. By this method, advancing in level requires an investigator to fulfill an average of thirteen story goals, an accomplishment that takes at least three or four game sessions.

TABLE 10–1: Attitude Adjustment

	New Attitude				
Starting Attitude	Hostile	Unfriendly	Indifferent	Friendly	Helpful
Hostile	less than DC 20	DC 20	DC 25	DC 35	DC 50
Unfriendly	less than 5	5	15	25	40
Indifferent	—	less than 1	1	15	30
Friendly	—	—	less than 1	1	20
	← "More Hostile"				"Less Hostile" →

Note: For an encounter involving combat with a group of creatures, the verb for that story goal is usually "survive." This doesn't require the investigators to actually destroy all the monsters. In fact, they don't even need to actively fight them. As long as they survive the encounter, the characters have fulfilled this type of story goal.

ADJUSTING REWARDS

Depending on the party's level, the GM may deem some challenges relatively easy, while others may be extraordinarily difficult. Killing the evil sorcerer with a sniper rifle from 500 yards away before he even begins a ritual might be an easy challenge, worth only half the XP award. Killing him with machetes in the middle of a frothing ring of cultists, as Yog-Sothoth's sanity-blasting spheres emerge from the clouds and rain gray death upon the hilltop—that might be a more difficult challenge, worth more than the standard award, perhaps 125%, 150%, or even double the amount. This is purely at the Gamemaster's discretion.

Although any monster in *Call of Cthulhu* should be quite a threat, even at relatively high party levels, resist the temptation to inflate awards for them. The most dangerous monsters, such as a fully grown hunting horror or several shoggoths, might be worth a bonus, but you should reserve such awards for truly grave situations wherein the characters overcome the odds despite being clearly outmatched. A monster's Challenge Rating (see page 157) is a rough guideline of how deadly an encounter will be, but in *Call of Cthulhu,* this rating is relative. An experience bonus should be based on the drama and difficulty of a situation, not an impersonal and arbitrary statistic.

Encounters with cultists, mad wizards, occult gangsters, and other humans are easier to adjudicate. If an adversary has been built using the rules for characters, this gives a clear indicator how tough he is.

A cultist more than two levels below the average character level in the group is a pretty easy challenge. A sorcerer more than two levels above the average level is a difficult challenge. Use these guidelines when designing adventures—the goal is to challenge the characters, scrape them along the ragged edge of death and madness, but leave enough of them alive to split an XP award. Striking this balance is part of the art of adventure design.

SANITY REWARDS

The Sanity chapter presents +1d6 Sanity points as the standard award for advancing to the next level of character progression. The GM can and should vary these awards to suit individual campaigns. As presented, this rate of Sanity recovery should provide, at best, a fighting rear-guard against total psychotic disintegration. After four adventures, an active character will likely have been exposed to a fairly rigorous regimen of sanity-blasting monsters and magic. When investigators confront the Mythos, insanity is as inevitable as death itself.

GMs who wish to emphasize a "purely Lovecraftian" sense of ominous, inevitable doom—and investigators struggling heroically as their mental barriers erode—will likely find the standard award matches this flavor of gaming. You might want to tweak Sanity awards upward if you present a more-hellish-than-usual regimen of extradimensional abominations in a series of adventures. You may also feel your campaign benefits more from character continuity than from a punctuated series of one-way trips to the asylum.

Gamemasters may wish to encourage selfless heroes rather than sociopathic crusaders—a party that rescues the human sacrifice rather than simply napalming the cult's temple should get additional benefits to their Sanity, as befits characters who have not yet become completely callous in the face of the Mythos.

LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

After garnering sufficient XP by overcoming challenges, an investigator can go up a level, gaining the skills, feats, attack bonuses, hit points, and Sanity points associated with level increase.

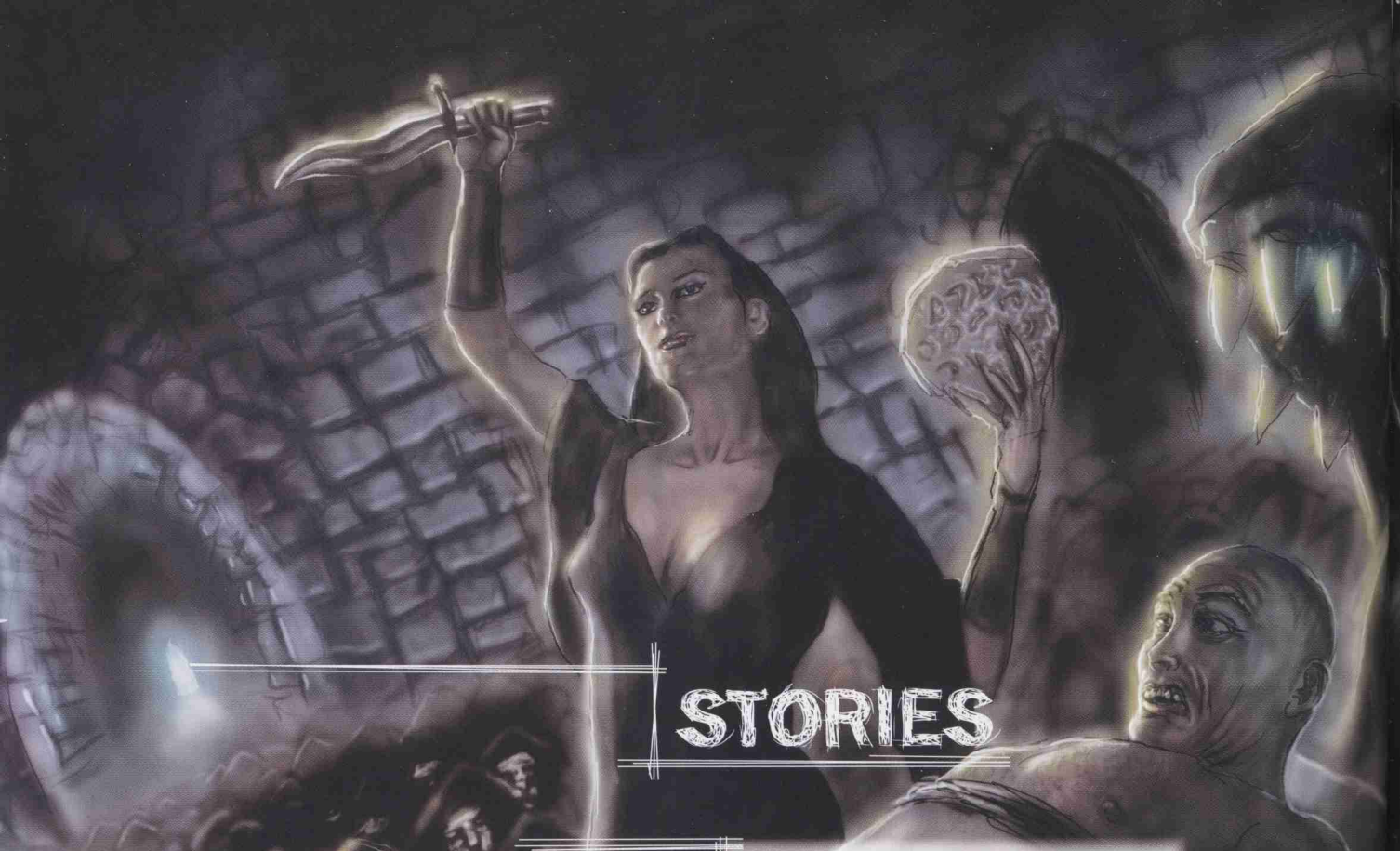
The system presented above allows precious investigators to "level up" every three to five sessions. If the PCs in your game are leveling up more often than once every two adventures, or less often than once every four, you should examine your XP awards and the challenges you have presented in the stories themselves. If most of the story goals you create aren't very dangerous or threatening, the game isn't much of a challenge.

Of course, you can also tailor the experience system to convey a specific flavor of game, if you so desire.

Pulp Horror: If you want your game to have the exciting techno-thriller feel of a Tom Clancy novel, or the pulse-pounding conflicts of a Robert E. Howard tale, give characters more XP per challenge. The characters regain Sanity more rapidly, become more skilled and (somewhat) harder to kill, and more closely resemble pulp heroes, not fainting academics. This encourages them to mow through hordes of dispensable cultists to dispatch some summoned horror. This scale of rewards gives the players a sense of individual heroism and superiority that some gamers find more rewarding. Just make sure that the challenges remain interesting, frightening, and genuinely dangerous, or the game can degenerate into a routine "hack and slash" mentality, rather than true horror.

Grim Horror: On the other hand, the ultimate theme of cosmic horror and the Cthulhu Mythos is the fundamental insignificance of humanity. To emphasize this theme, Gamemasters may wish to run a low-powered game of grim horror, awarding experience points conservatively. Lower-than-normal XP awards can keep players on their toes, since relatively weak characters can seldom withstand a direct, unanticipated confrontation with the unknown. The story goals of the game should reinforce this mood, emphasizing survival over discovery.

In a grim horror campaign, intelligence, problem-solving, and detailed planning become paramount, allowing the GM to emphasize subtle clues, intricate plots, and slow-mounting horror. With judicious adventure design, and care and attention to matters of mood and atmosphere, the GM can keep players involved in a long-running *Call of Cthulhu* campaign without their characters ever leveling up. Such a "grim and gritty" game may involve a fairly high level of character death and madness—but victories over the Great Old Ones have a special savor, and perhaps a more profound significance, when attained at such a high cost.



STORIES

Mystery attracts mystery. Ever since the wide appearance of my name as a performer of unexplained feats, I have encountered strange narratives and events which my calling has led people to link with my interests and activities. Some of these have been trivial and irrelevant, some deeply dramatic and absorbing, some productive of weird and perilous experiences, and some involving me in extensive scientific and historical research.

—Harry Houdini and H.P. Lovecraft, "Under the Pyramids"

Call of Cthulhu is a story-based game. While it has detailed rules for dealing with combat, weapons, magic, and monsters, all these details are really the elements of a larger story. In a roleplaying game, short stories become adventures; epic stories can become campaigns.

In a typical *Call of Cthulhu* adventure, player characters struggle heroically against the implacable horror of the unknown. To demonstrate the elements of an adventure, we'll show you how to create one from scratch. The sample story we'll describe here—"The End of Paradise"—appears later in this book, ready for you to prepare and run.

When one adventure leads to another, and another, you have the beginning of a campaign: an ongoing serial featuring the investigators. While campaigns have many of the elements of adventures, they have their own special considerations. Creating the recurring elements a campaign needs takes work, but in the end, the rewards are worth it.

Whether your story lasts for a few game sessions or several months, planning out a few details will help your game run more smoothly.

ADVENTURES

Just like the Gamemaster and the players, the adventure has a job to do. In fact, it has three.

An adventure must:

- Promise a story,
- Offer a puzzle, and
- Deliver a threat.

PROMISE A STORY

An adventure isn't just a story—it's actually the *promise* of a story. When the Gamemaster uses an adventure properly, the players fulfill that potential. The events of the story are never absolute; instead, the Gamemaster and players create the story as they play the game.

Just as a screenplay needs a cast and crew to become a movie, an adventure needs players to become a complete story. If you try to make it a complete story without considering what your players want or need, with no possibility for variation, neither you nor your players will have much fun when you sit down at the table.

OFFER A PUZZLE

Call of Cthulhu is a game of horror, but it also entails investigation, mystery, and discovery. Even when you run the game as a slam-bang action event, the adventure should offer some element of the unknown for the players to figure out. Many adventure puzzles are familiar from mystery novels and TV shows: Who killed the victim? Who stole the statue? Why did the explorer disappear? These large-scale puzzles often drive the entire adventure.

Other puzzles are smaller and more immediate: How do we open the secret door? What code is the cipher message in? What does the magic statue do? The players answer these puzzles during the adventure—and if they fail, bad things happen. Of course, part of the fun of *Call of Cthulhu* is when bad things happen.

DELIVER A THREAT

When you play an adventure, your group may fail to fulfill the promise of a story. They may ignore part of the plot, or even refuse to solve the offered puzzle. However, an adventure also delivers a threat, presenting situations in which the investigators are in danger. Perhaps evil cultists attack them, or perhaps they have to break into a dangerous temple and steal a powerful artifact. Even when the story collapses and the puzzle remains unsolved, a threat creates its own story. It poses two questions: Why are we in danger, and how can we survive? That threat alone can build puzzles around it as you play. If you're stuck for a story and can't come up with a puzzle, start with a threat and build from there.

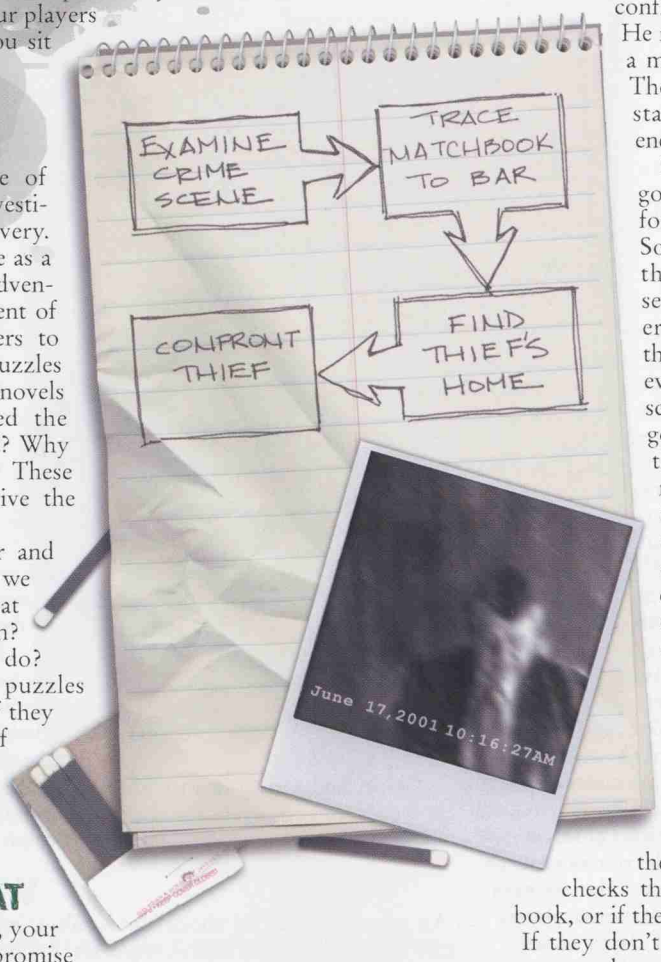
WHO'S IN CHARGE?

Broadly speaking, adventures can be structured in two ways: linear and nonlinear. A linear adventure moves in a single line, like a train. The investigators get on at one end, they move through the adventure, and they get off at the other end. A nonlinear adventure moves in different directions at different times, like a basketball game. The investigators enter the court, they try a lot of different strategies against their opponents, and they leave the court once somebody triumphs.

The crucial difference between linear and nonlinear adventures is the question of who's in charge. In a linear adventure, the person who created it is in charge of what happens because she chooses the scenes, the order they occur, and how the investigators move from one to the next. In a nonlinear adventure, the Gamemaster and players are in charge of what happens, because they are in an open environment with a lot of options and they choose what to do next. Both have their good and bad points.

LINEAR ADVENTURES

Here's an example of a linear adventure. The investigators are hired to find a missing statue, and the only clue is a blurry image of the thief from a surveillance camera. Near the scene of the crime they discover a matchbook from a bar. They show the thief's image to the bartender, who says it looks like a guy who drinks there on Thursday nights. They stake out the bar and spot the thief. They confront him at his apartment. He rips his face off, turns into a monster, and attacks them. They defeat him, recover the statue, and the adventure ends.



Linear adventures are good because they're easy for everyone to understand. Something happens first, then something happens second, and finally the players naturally realize that they should move from one event to the next. In every scene, the GM has a simple goal: guide the players so they choose to go to the next scene without realizing that you're guiding them. Linear adventures are good because you can design them to tell a very compact, well-structured story that's satisfying for the group—in other words, the promise of a story almost becomes a certainty.

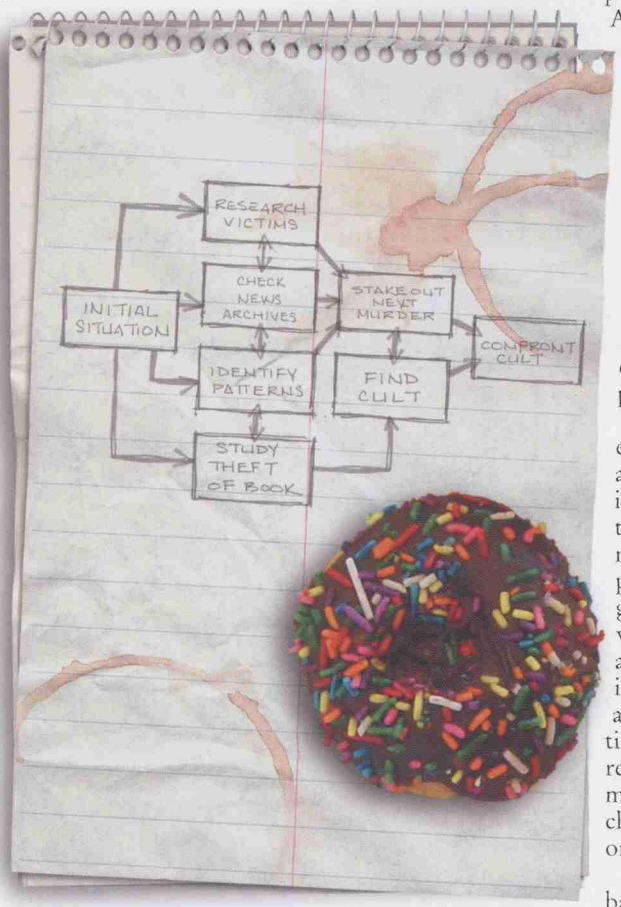
However, linear adventures can also be easy to derail. What happens if the investigators fail the skill checks that would find the matchbook, or if they do find it, but ignore it? If they don't go to the bar, there's no more adventure, and the Gamemaster has to quickly make up another way for them to get back on track in the middle of the session. Even worse,

the players can become annoyed because the clues to the next scene are too obvious. A matchbook from a bar left at a crime scene? Come on! That might work on players who have never read a book or watched television. It might not work on yours.

Thus, when creating a linear adventure, you should design several ways for the investigators to progress to the next scene. If you require skill checks to reveal clues, what happens if they all fail the rolls? As long as you plan plenty of options to move from scene to scene, the players won't feel like you're railroading them through the story. You should end up with an exciting roller coaster that moves quickly and steadily so the players never realize it only goes one way.

NONLINEAR ADVENTURES

Here's an example of a nonlinear adventure. An evil cult is murdering priests and leaving their bodies around the city at the points of a giant pentagram, centered on city hall. They're using a magic ritual in an old book they stole from the university, a ritual to take control of the mayor's mind. They have killed three priests and have two to go. The last must be killed on the night of the full moon, one week from now. A friend of the third victim asks the investigators for help. The investigators can do a number of things: research the victims, study newspaper archives for similar crimes, decipher the pattern of the bodies and the dates of the murders, stake out likely locations for the next murder, investigate the theft of the book, and eventually confront the cult. For each option the adventure explains who they meet, what they learn, and what can happen as a result.



Nonlinear adventures are good because the GM and players tell more of the story collectively than in linear adventures. The investigators make their own way through the adventure, choosing which clues to pursue next. If there are several investigators, the group can pursue multiple clues at the same time, allowing each to make use of her specialties. That way, the players won't feel like the Gamemaster is pushing them through a series of preplanned events.

However, in nonlinear adventures, the promise of a story is not as strong. More of the details are up in the air, and story may result from improvisation more than planning. The Gamemaster might want the adventure to end on the night of the full moon at the big ritual because that would be exciting and dramatic, but the investigators might solve the mystery early, give their evidence to the police, and read about the arrests in the newspaper—not very exciting. Also, the investigators may get confused or frustrated. Where a linear adventure provides direct links to the next scene, a nonlinear adventure does not. It's up to the players to move the story forward, and some groups are not always good at it. Not everyone would be a very good detective in real life, and nonlinear adventures often require the skills of a natural problem-solver.

To create a good nonlinear adventure, you need to assemble lots of useful information, even information the investigators might never learn. You set up the premise, the villains, their goals, the timeline they're working on, the main clues and story elements the investigators can examine, and the reason all these are tied together. Ideally, any reasonable choice the players make leads them to more choices, until they have won or lost.

If the story is like a basketball game, you should end up with a clean, well-marked court and a rival team with clear strategies and goals—people who won't wait passively for the PCs to act.

WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

An adventure can be about almost anything, but we can divide adventure topics into four main categories: mystery, rescue, exploration, and assault. Many adventures contain several or all these topics. It's useful to talk about them separately so we understand what they mean and develop each one properly, even when we eventually jumble them all together.

OUR SAMPLE ADVENTURE: WHO'S IN CHARGE?

Our sample adventure is a mix of linear and nonlinear structures. The first half of the adventure is linear, so the players can get into the story and have some narrative support underlying their choices. The second half is nonlinear, so they can take some responsibility for fulfilling the promise of the story and also face more of a challenge.

MYSTERY

A mystery adventure is all about solving a puzzle. It presents a situation that requires an explanation, and the story consists of the investigators figuring out what the explanation is. The adventure often begins when someone asks the investigators to solve the mystery and they examine the initial situation.

Here are some sample mysteries:

- A dead body in a locked room.
- An artifact stolen from a museum.
- A blackmail attempt.
- A building blown up.
- A message in code.
- A normal person acting mysteriously.

RESCUE

A rescue adventure is all about getting back a missing person or object. Usually this means a kidnapping or a theft or an unexplained disappearance. There may be a ransom demand. The adventure often begins with someone asking the investigators for help, but the rescue could be of a missing investigator.

Here are some sample rescues:

- A celebrity kidnapped by an obsessive fan.
- A professor missing in a foreign country.
- A child taken by a maniac.
- A student brainwashed by a cult.
- A secret document stolen by spies.

EXPLORATION

An exploration adventure is all about a journey into the unknown (although obviously, "the unknown" varies by era). This may be an expedition into a dangerous land or a scientific experiment to travel through dimensions or into space. The adventure often begins with the investigators planning and equipping for the trip.

Here are some sample explorations:

- A jungle river with an unknown source.
- A mountain no one has climbed.
- A massive cave complex beneath a city.
- A lost tomb in a desert.
- A gateway to another planet.
- A ruined city at the bottom of the ocean.

ASSAULT

An assault adventure is all about a thrilling combat mission. Perhaps a madman with a machine to destroy the world is hiding on a remote island, or an apartment building is full of zombies. The adventure often begins with the investigators examining the target and planning strategy.

Here are some sample assaults:

- A violent cult in an abandoned church.
- A supernatural fortress in the heart of a city.
- A mysterious island full of monsters.
- A lunatic in a barricaded restaurant.
- A mobster in his well-guarded mansion.
- A prison or asylum seized by inmates.

MIXING TOPICS

An adventure can easily have elements of more than one topic. For example, a mystery can lead to an exploration that leads to an assault that leads to a rescue. The key is not to get lost in the big picture. You should examine your adventure concept, identify the topics you're using, and then ensure that each one is fleshed out enough to satisfy you and your players.

CONTENT

The content of an adventure is where you work out the details of all the broad decisions we have discussed so far. In fact, once you have the content prepared you're pretty much ready to go. It's time for the hard work. After this section we'll look at some special issues in adventure creation.

We can divide an adventure into seven sections:

- The opening hook,
- Motivation to continue,
- Initial challenges,
- Further developments,
- Pointers toward climax,
- The climax,
- And the aftermath.

OPENING HOOK

The opening hook is the initial situation that gets the investigators involved. It may not be the first thing that happens in the whole story, but it's the first thing the investigators notice.

The opening hook should be exciting and intriguing, like the opening sequence in many action movies. Give it plenty of flair and style so that your players are jazzed about the game.

MOTIVATION TO CONTINUE

Even with an opening hook, the investigators need a reason to get involved. For an adventure to have any credibility—that is, for it to feel like it could really be happening—the investigators need a motive. Why would a group of normal people investigate a museum robbery? That's what the cops are for!

The characters your players choose should help define this. If some or all of them are private investigators, police detectives, or special agents, that's an easy motivation. But what if they're academics, or students, or occultists? What if they're all homeless schizophrenics or inbred mountain folk? Players sometimes come up with really strange characters, from chauffeurs to tribal fishermen. If the Game-

OUR SAMPLE ADVENTURE: WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

"The End of Paradise" is a mystery adventure. In our case, it's going to be the mystery of a haunted movie theater and a young woman confronted with a bizarre supernatural event.

master chooses to allow them in her game, she needs to know their motivation in the game.

How do the characters get involved? The simplest solution is for someone who has a relationship with an investigator to ask for help, even if it's a character who never existed before this adventure. Many published *Call of Cthulhu* adventures do this. An investigator's cousin, brother, uncle, colleague, or friend is involved in the opening hook, and that gets the investigator involved. The rest of the group comes along for the ride.

Unfortunately, this technique gets old really quick. Just how many relatives do you have, and why are they all involved in supernatural horrors? This is a good starting device, but if you run more than a couple adventures like this, your players will start to groan.

Whenever possible, design your adventure with your group in mind. Are they hungry for knowledge of the unknown? Then they'll be motivated if a rare occult text has been stolen. Are they out for justice? A missing child or a terrible crime against an innocent person can spur them forward. Are they fighting supernatural evil? A baffling manifestation in a haunted house may draw them in.

The key here is simply to pay attention. When players design characters, they're giving you cues about what type of game they want to play. As you create your adventure, think about ways to motivate them. If you use a published adventure, this is especially important because the designer doesn't know your group. She might have used the default friend-in-need or relative-in-danger approach, or just assumed your heroes already have a reason to work together. Don't be afraid to change things around so the adventure has more appeal to your players.



INITIAL CHALLENGES

The opening hook should suggest one or more steps for the group to take. This section is where you work out what those steps are so you can be prepared for your players to take them.

First, what are the obvious questions? Imagine that you're a player presented with the opening hook. What would you want to know?

This section of the story usually involves establishing the very basic facts of the situation, and there's where you get the six key questions: Who? What? When? Where? How? Why? The investigators should start the game by seeking the answers to these questions.

Many adventures begin with some sort of a crime scene. Perhaps someone was murdered, or something was stolen. You need to plan the details of the scene so the players can ask you questions and hunt for clues. Is the scene indoors or outside? Is there furniture or other objects? If it's outside, has heavy rain destroyed the footprints of the culprit? A map or floor plan is very important.

Other adventures don't start with an obvious physical location and instead begin with a social one. Perhaps someone has vanished. The investigators need to figure out what the person did in the hours or days before vanishing and talk to people who saw her in that time. That means you need to know the victim's recent schedule, come up with names for the people, and decide what they say when interviewed.

It's especially important in these initial challenges that you nail down the details in your notes. Later in the adventure, as the story picks up speed, the players are not as demanding of nit-picky information. At the beginning, they're hungry for clues. With an ample supply, you can offer important and irrelevant ones side-by-side and give the players the challenge of sorting them out. Without an ample supply, you'll make up irrelevant details on the fly during the game—and your players may notice the difference.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Once the players overcome the initial challenges, they'll follow the important clues into the main part of the adventure. This is the section where they really start to learn what's going on. Two important elements occur in this section that rarely happen earlier: small victories and sudden dangers.

Small Victories: When a mystery leads to more mysteries, players can get frustrated. They need to accomplish something along the way to feel like they're making real progress. In this section of the adventure, build in a couple of small, achievable challenges that the players can resolve. If someone is lying, offer a way to discover the lie. If something is missing, perhaps it can be found—because the villain has already used it to get something else. Letting them nail down a few certainties will help them get their bearings for the challenges ahead.

Sudden Dangers: All work and no play is no fun. Players like danger because it's exciting. Your adventure should have some opportunities for danger during this section. The villain could send one of his weaker minions to attack the investigators. They may have to make a dangerous trip across a flooded river. Perhaps they must infiltrate a cult ritual while undercover. Build in some danger opportunities such as this so your players don't get bored.

Illustration ©2001, Jason soles. Used with permission.

POINTERS TOWARD CLIMAX

Success should be rewarded. When the investigators have scored small victories and faced sudden dangers, give them clues that lead them to the climax. These details should come in fragments. They might learn a date, but not a place. They might know that an innocent person is to be killed, but not who it is.

Still, you have to give them enough to move them forward. Identify the key elements that you don't want them to know, save those for the climax itself, and then let them find everything else.

These pointers should both drive the group forward and frighten them. Knowing that the end of the world happens on Thursday is great because you have a chance to stop it, but it's still the end of the world. Look at each pointer and ask yourself a question: What can I do to make this useful thing frightening? The clue may be hidden in a horrible place or require a dangerous act to gain. It may expose a trusted ally as a secret enemy, or reveal that an earlier event has a terrible significance.

You're handing the characters the keys to the final door. Make them sharp and painful to hold.

CLIMAX

In *Call of Cthulhu*, horror is strongly associated with knowledge. The message is clear: ignorance is bliss. The climax to an adventure should therefore blend horror with revelation. Set up a couple of key plot questions to be answered within the climax, so the moment when everything goes crazy is also when the final pieces of the puzzle are revealed. Also, make sure that these questions are answered in an unpleasant and frightening way.

For example, the investigators may learn that the villain is doing something terrible at a certain time and place. Then when the climax comes, they learn what the goal is, or who the villain is, or the fate of a character who disappeared earlier. At the same time that they're breaking down the door and charging into the maw of horror, they should also have their eyes wide open with surprise at what they're learning. If ignorance is bliss, enlightenment should be terrifying.

The climax is also where the main combat usually occurs. Combat in this game is very deadly, especially if you're using any supernatural creatures. Plan your climax carefully. There should be more than one way for the investigators to resolve the situation. Busting in and shooting guns might be one way, but swapping a powerful artifact for a fake replica could also work. Always provide alternative solutions to reward clever play.

AFTERMATH

When the investigators resolve the climax—for good or ill—they usually have one very big problem: covering their tracks. They have probably broken some laws and may even have killed someone. Try to plan for this. If there are gunshots, do the police show up? If the climax happened in public, are there witnesses who can identify the investigators? Make some notes about possible repercussions before you play, since some of them could happen immediately after the climax.

Other aftermath issues remain. Is there a reward for resolving the situation? Do the investigators need to make any kind of report to someone, or deliver some bad news?

Finally, plan to leave something mysterious that you can return to in a future adventure. The players should never be fully comfortable that they have answered all the questions. *Call of Cthulhu* is a game of mystery, and after the game there should be a point where a player asks something such as, "Hey wait—what was up with the rain of blood?" Smile and put away your notes. Don't define everything. Always leave them uncertain.

DESIGNING MAJOR SCENES

Even in a nonlinear adventure, you should be able to foresee some major scenes and make plans for them. Interviewing a guy who runs a junkyard about something he heard last night is not a major scene. But if the guy waves his hands and the junk assembles itself into the click-clacking, razor-wielding Lord of Bloody Metal, that's a major scene. By preparing notes about such scenes in your adventure, you can make them exciting and dramatic. Here are four types of major scenes, and suggestions on how to make them work to best effect.

OUR SAMPLE ADVENTURE: WHAT'S THE CONTENT?

Opening Hook: A young woman working in the old movie theater has been seriously injured because of something she saw. Rumors of a ghost bring the investigators into the mystery.

Motivation to Continue: During their initial visit to the theater, the investigators have a strange supernatural experience. No one really believes them, but they know what they saw. Something's not right.

Initial Challenges: Explore the movie theater more. Research its history, and check into the company that has just bought it.

Further Developments: The first small victory is the discovery of the secret basement ritual room beneath the theater. Another small victory is the discovery of a surviving member of the cult with information to share. The heroes arrange an interview, but unfortunately, it ends when he attacks the investigators.

Pointers Toward Climax: A younger cult member is still alive, but living under a different name. He is actually the anonymous philanthropist funding the otherwise innocent arts group renovating the theater. The heroes already suspect him, but they can't find enough evidence to arrest him—or stop the next premiere he's arranged for the theater. On the night of the big event, the investigators discover an old photograph that shows the philanthropist with the rest of the cultists decades ago.

Climax: The cultist has chosen the night of the premiere because he knew a terrible monster would return to the theater later that night. In the midst of the creature's rampage through the audience, the investigators must battle the cult leader and save the audience from a terrible death.

Aftermath: The investigators may have to cover up what happened at the gala. Even worse, one of the photographs in the lobby suggests this cult was part of a larger group. Are there other survivors, and other terrible creatures?

DISCOVERIES

A major-scene discovery is where the investigators get some crucial clue that reveals an important secret of the plot. For instance, at the end of H.P. Lovecraft's short story "The Whisperer in Darkness," the narrator discovers the wax face and hands of the person he's been speaking to and realizes that person was a monster in disguise.

Think about how this example relies on the character making the mental leap from discovery to horror. If the narrator had simply looked in the window and seen the monster, that wouldn't have been as scary. So make your discoveries symbols or suggestions of the true discovery. The thrill is what happens in your mind, not what happens before your eyes. Good discoveries force you to rewrite your own memories, because you have started to really understand what's going on

The best way to reveal a discovery is to do it casually and have it be the result of player action. Mix the important discovery in with other details and clues, instead of just obviously handing it over. If the players find it for themselves by sorting through a bunch of information you have given them, the moment will be electric as the horrifying realization passes from player to player. All you have to do is sit back and watch the fun, because the best scare is the one that players give themselves.

NPC INTERACTION

A major-scene NPC interaction is where the investigators have an important conversation with someone. It might be important because of who the NPC is, or it might be because the conversation itself leads to a discovery.

Such encounters provide major roleplaying opportunities, so don't skimp on them. They can be particularly effective if the NPC in all innocence gives the investigators the final piece of some puzzle, provoking horror as they realize its significance. ("Why yes, didn't you know your missing friend was adopted? Never did find out who the father was. I certainly hope you find her soon.")

Making this kind of scene work means you need to know who your NPC is, what she is like, what the NPC knows (and is willing to tell), where the encounter occurs, and what interesting things can happen as it unfolds. By making notes on these elements, you'll be ready to make the scene work well.

COMBAT

Almost all combats qualify as major scenes. To prepare for a combat, the two most important things you need to prepare are the creatures (or NPCs) the investigators fight and a diagram of where the combat occurs. If you have these nailed down, you'll be in good shape.

But you can do more. If you have your diagram done—even if it's just a rough sketch—think about what kinds of objects are in that location and how they could affect combat. In a warehouse, there might be a monster hiding on top of a stack of crates, waiting to jump down at a dramatic moment. In the printing room of a newspaper, there's the giant printing presses waiting to crush anyone who falls into them.

Also, instead of having all the bad guys attack at once you can bring them on in stages. The combat could start with an attack by a couple thugs, then cultists show up after a minute, and finally, the monster they have summoned arrives.

With careful planning, you can make a combat feel like a small adventure in itself, complete with an opening hook, further developments, and a climax.

HORROR

Scenes of horror are the most important kind in *Call of Cthulhu.* And in truth, a scene of discovery, NPC interaction, or combat can easily turn into a scene of horror. That's one of the secrets of horror, actually. Anything ordinary can be twisted into something horrible.

A horror scene has three important elements: surprise, originality, and details. Surprise should be obvious. If the investigators go to a creepy house in the middle of the night expecting to find a monster and they find one, it's not horror. Surprise is important to horror because it's a reversal of expectations. It takes the understanding the players have of their situation and reveals the opposite, shattering their assumptions and making them feel vulnerable.

Originality is also important, though it's not as big a deal when you're running a game for novices. Lovecraft's creations are very original, and they should last you for a while. After that, there are the works by his friends and colleagues. But when your players have all read the rulebook and collected all your favorite anthologies, and they just aren't surprised by deep ones anymore, it's time make something up. For instance, our junkyard hick of the earlier example (see Designing Major Scenes) could have just summoned a ghoul. But maybe there were ghouls in the last adventure. "The Lord of Bloody Metal" is a freaky idea, and it sure isn't in the rulebook. You can even use some existing monster's stats if you like—they're only numbers, after all. Just ditch the name and appearance, keep the stats, and make up something original instead.

Finally, details really help sell the horror to your players. It isn't just the Lord of Bloody Metal. It's the click-clacking, razor-wielding Lord of Bloody Metal. And why is the metal bloody? Because this nightmare assembly of metal parts taken from fatal car wrecks is stained with the blood of the people who died in those accidents—and the whole thing chews up and eats stray dogs, chunks of which catch on

OUR SAMPLE ADVENTURE: MAJOR SCENES

Discovery: The investigators discover a secret passage beneath the stage that leads to a hidden basement. This area hasn't been open for decades, and it's full of cobwebs, skulls, and weird ritual objects. An old movie projector triggers the manifestation of a supernatural movie.

NPC Interaction: Interviewing the old cultist offers useful information couched in mad ramblings. Dealing with the philanthropist is tricky, though, because he's really a cultist in disguise who wants to mislead the investigators. The players may not even suspect him until they talk to him.

Combat: One of the old cultists, locked in an asylum, flips out and attacks the investigators.

Horror: The night of the big fundraiser at the theater, the floor collapses. A sea of roiling film emerges as tentacles—and attempts to kill everyone.

undercover as professors, family members of any of the above, and so on. A good narrative structure provides focus for character creation, while still allowing the players plenty of individuality and creativity.

the metal and are dragged rotting across the filthy soil. Just by knowing those details, you can freak out your players much more when the Lord comes grinding toward them. And don't forget the junkyard hick, with his blackened teeth, six fingers on each hand, and the prosthetic leg he wears made from rune-inscribed dog bones.

THE FIRST STORY

The first adventure you run for a new set of investigators is tricky. Even if the players are experienced, it's important to find ways to help them get their investigators started and working together. Fortunately, this is one area of adventure creation where the players can help you a lot.

During many days in London Capt. Norrys and I presented our facts, conjectures, and legendary anecdotes to five eminent authorities, all men who could be trusted to respect any family disclosures which future explorations might develop.

—H.P. Lovecraft, "Rats in the Walls"

FORMING A GROUP

When the players sit down to create new investigators, one of two things can happen. Either each player makes her own character without consulting anyone, or the group can work as a team to make investigators who belong together.

The first option makes your job harder. Imagine if the players come to you with a private detective, a professor of dead languages, a union organizer, and a bus driver, none of whom know each other. What kind of adventure can you create to draw these characters together and get them working on the story? The simple solution is to set up an opening hook that occurs in a place where they all might be—a diner, for example, or late at night on a city bus. They're the only ones there, and then an NPC enters who does something dramatic that gets them all involved. Other options could be the reading of a will for a dead person who knew them, a mistaken arrest that gets them thrown in the same jail cell (such as the film *The Usual Suspects*), a vacation where they're all on the same cruise ship, a mysterious invitation to a party (such as either version of *The House on Haunted Hill*), a public event (such as a parade), or a subway platform at two in the morning.

The second option, where the players create new characters who already have relationships, makes things much easier. What do they all have in common? Perhaps the characters all work at the same detective agency, or they're all FBI agents and specialists. Maybe they all go to the same college, or they're childhood friends, or they live in the same apartment building. The Settings chapter suggests a number of narrative structures. Published *Call of Cthulhu* sourcebooks such as *Delta Green* and *The Golden Dawn* provide others.

Not all groups of players know to create characters as a team. You can help them by brainstorming ideas for narrative structures, or just tell them which one you would like to use. If you have an idea for an adventure set at a college, tell the players the setting and ask them to make characters who would fit. Even with a narrative structure that specific, players still have a lot of freedom. At the college, for example, their characters might be students, faculty, administrators, janitors, groundskeepers, campus police, reporters on the education beat, writers or artists who bring their work to the campus, spies living

A CREDIBLE START

With the group set up, you need to craft the opening hook of this first adventure in such a way that all the investigators can get involved. However, they don't have to jump in all at once. The opening hook might only feature a couple of the investigators, who then ask the others for help.

The key here is credibility. In other words, do the players feel comfortable believing that their investigators would get involved in the adventure?

Credibility isn't as much of a problem in DUNGEONS & DRAGONS. All the characters are adventurers in a fantasy world who are looking for danger and rewards. Even if they all just show up at the same inn or tavern, it's easy to motivate them—money, the possibility of finding magic items, and gaining notoriety can motivate just about anyone.

In *Call of Cthulhu*, the characters are very different. If you're playing a professor, for example, you have a job and students. You can't just run off to Katmandu for three months to chase a cultist—you would lose your job! And for that matter, why would a mild-mannered professor drive his car eighty miles an hour while firing a shotgun out the window at cultists? Does he even own a gun? Has he ever shot one before? Why isn't he at the campus coffeehouse reading academic journals?

Some players don't care about credibility. They understand that this is a game in which normal people are drawn into horrifying adventures, and they don't worry about their character motivation. But if the lack of credibility is too blatant, or goes on too long, even these players will stop thinking of their investigators as people and start using them as chess pieces, moving them around the board and sacrificing them casually. If the players stop believing in their characters, they won't be nearly as horrified at the terrible things that happen. And that's no good.

What you can do, then, is start that first adventure off right. Work with your players to create a cohesive group, then design an adventure (or change the opening hook of an existing one) that makes sense for your group. The more you make the players feel like they really are playing normal people who are naturally drawn into an adventure, the more real it all feels, and the more horrifying it'll be.

STAYING TOGETHER

As the first adventure moves toward its climax, if you're considering a campaign, you should be thinking about how to keep the group together. You have given them a good reason to assemble for this story, but what if you want to run another one? They

can't all be sitting in the same diner again when a cultist walks in and rips his face off, just like last time. You need to encourage them to stick together without being obvious about it.

The best way to do this is to pick an important part of the story in your first adventure and don't use it up. Perhaps the villain, or the villain's assistant, or the villain's lover gets away at the end. Perhaps the investigators failed to explain some of the mysterious events, and those events continue. Perhaps the whole story suggested a larger story, one the investigators realize they must pursue further.

The end of the adventure shouldn't feel like the end. Yes, the investigators have foiled the plot somehow—but when the dust settles, they should start chatting about the parts they didn't resolve, and what they should do next. If the players have their own ideas about what they want to do in the next game session, you'll know you have built a cohesive team.

THE JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY

One reason why it's important to provide credible motivations to a group of characters is because so many incredible things will happen to them. *Call of Cthulhu* is full of supernatural situations, strange magic, and terrible monsters—things that people in the real world do not encounter. But investigators in the game do encounter these things, and they do so quite often.

This is the journey into mystery: the transition an investigator goes through from being a normal person to being a person who is aware of and engaged with the evil forces of the supernatural. It's a journey familiar to us from movies and novels.

Look at the film *The Terminator,* for example. Sarah Connor starts off as a normal person. When Reese kidnaps her and rants about the robot apocalypse to come, she reacts as a normal person would: She escapes and goes to the police. Then the Terminator arrives, and she realizes that Reese is telling the truth. She stops being a normal person and begins doing abnormal things: having car chases, shooting guns at killer robots, and believing a guy everyone else thinks is crazy.

In the sequel, Sarah has completed the journey. She's spent years becoming a master of guns and bombs, training herself and her son for the terrible future that awaits. She is no longer a normal person; instead, she has become an effective investigator.

Nearly every player character in *Call of Cthulhu* makes this transition. Managing the transformation so that it is both credible and dramatic is difficult—especially when a new investigator joins an already transitioned group. Here's some advice for making this work.

THE BIG PROOF

New investigators usually have no belief in the supernatural. Players may portray them as snickering or politely skeptical when the crazy guy, such as Zadok Allen, the town drunk in Lovecraft's short story "The Shadow Over Innsmouth," rants about deities and monsters. But then something impossible happens, and the investigators have to reshape their worldview to account for what they have seen.

The first time you use the supernatural on a new set of characters, it should be a major scene. You might have some magical things happen early on that are minor enough to be explainable. But when the big proof hits, it should be thrilling and scary.

Pay particular attention to this scene. You should be describing the events as if they are something new and terrible—even if the players themselves have seen it all before in other games. You are creating an environment in which they can roleplay their characters, and part of the fun is in portraying their reactions to that first shock.

Give your players the opportunity to react. In the movie *Ghostbusters,* the heroes encounter a ghostly librarian. They peek around the corner at her, excited and afraid, fumbling with their scientific instruments. When they try to deal with the ghost and it turns into a hideous monster, they scream and run. It's frightening and exciting, even though the movie is a comedy. You should make your adventure's initial encounter with the supernatural just as dramatic. Give the players a chance for their investigators to scream, run, shoot guns, fall down stairs, fail Sanity checks, and generally react the way most any of us would in that situation: by freaking out.

THE TRANSITION

After the big proof, the investigators need a chance to regroup and process this discovery. Perhaps only some of them saw it, in which case the rest think their friends are now crazy. Playing through this kind of interaction, where half the party is wild-eyed and ranting while the rest look at them like they have lost their minds, is great fun.

Soon enough, everyone sees the big proof. Granted, there could be interesting exceptions, such as the investigator who remains a skeptic and always misses out on the big proof—such as Scully in early seasons of *The X-Files*—but again, that's an exception.

At this point, and especially with experienced players who have new characters, you have a real challenge. They have only seen one small part of the Cthulhu Mythos, but it's easy to just assume that they now know all about it. Instead, they should be trying to integrate what little they have seen into what they already believe about the world. When they're on the trail of another adventure later on, they should be making assumptions about what they're dealing with that are based on that previous experience; assumptions that are probably wrong. ("But that last one we saw flew! Why is this one living underground?")

Your job during this period is to remind them of their ignorance and keep the supernatural fresh. Use different facets of the Cthulhu Mythos that don't have much connection to each other, and make up stuff on your own. Over time, the players should have fun with the process of trying to put together an explanation for all this stuff, instead of just assuming that they have got it all worked out. Never let them get comfortable, even when they have become like Sarah Connor in *Terminator 2.* You should always have one more awful surprise for them waiting just around the corner.

THE INITIATE

Even when you have a whole pack of Sarah Connors, sooner or later one of the pack dies or goes insane and you have to bring in Miles Dyson. He's the scientist in *Terminator 2* who doesn't believe all this apocalypse nonsense. Sarah solves the problem by having the Terminator show off his robotic parts, at which point the good doctor freaks out and decides to blow up his own lab.

In other words, eventually either a new investigator joins the hardened group of monster slayers or they have to convince an NPC to help them in their strange quest. How do you and your players manage this so the character in question gets involved?

Either you can throw credibility out the window and just have the new character sign up for the action, or you can work through another transition. The former is easy, but the latter can be fun. The other players get to be the battle-hardened veterans, cynical and assured. ("You'll believe soon enough.") Perhaps they come up with big proof of their own, like showing off the Terminator's titanium endoskeleton. Perhaps they play dumb until the next supernatural encounter, at which point they haul the screaming novice away and, over a few stiff drinks, assure him that they know the truth and can fill him in.

This can all be highly entertaining for everyone—unless it takes too long. In *The X-Files,* Scully eventually became a believer, though it may have happened a couple seasons too late.

So when it's time for an initiate to get involved, do some fast thinking. If it's going to be a while before the next big proof, maybe you can speed things up, or stage some other supernatural event you hadn't planned for. You might even have the initiate go off on a side adventure, or stage a kidnapping, so she can return to the group shaking and covered in slime. ("I believe! I believe!")

The point is to make the journey into mystery dramatic, exciting, and fun for your players to roleplay. When it starts to drag, cut it short, convert the skeptics, and get back to the freaky stuff.

"Carter could now distinguish moving figures on the noisome wharves ahead, and the better he saw them the worse he began to fear and detest them. For they were not men at all, or even approximately men, but great greyish-white slippery things which could expand and contract at will, and whose principal shape—though it often changed—was that of a sort of toad without any eyes, but with a curiously vibrating mass of short pink tentacles on the end of its blunt, vague snout."

—H.P. Lovecraft,
The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath

CONSEQUENCES

Consequences are what happen to the investigators as a result of the adventure. If they broke into the cultists' temple, were there innocent witnesses who called the cops? If the PCs blew up a van full of bad guys, are they wanted for murder? If they angered the Lord of Bloody Metal but didn't kill it, does it seek revenge?

Consequences aren't much fun, are they? It sure is easy to just pull some crazy stunt and then wander off, with no witnesses to testify, no police on your trail, and no surviving bad guys out for vengeance.

Still, letting the investigators off easy isn't very satisfying or believable. In the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game, if you rampage through an orc tribe, it's pretty unlikely that they'll place a fat bounty on your head that makes every scuzz-bucket in the kingdom try to kill you—though that would be pretty cool. *Call of Cthulhu* is different. If you thwarted the aims of the Cult of Six Thousand, they'll want revenge. If you broke into the museum to steal the Dagger of Thoth, you'll have the police, the media, and the insurance company looking for you, slapping sketches by eyewitnesses on the evening news and making your life miserable. If you had a running gun battle on the interstate with a car full of maniacs, somebody innocent probably got hurt and the whole chase may have been broadcast live by a news chopper. One wrong move can destroy your entire life, sending you underground to fight evil.

Consequences make sense, especially since so many investigator tactics involve breaking the law in blatant ways. The trick is to make consequences interesting, so they become part of the plot instead of annoying static.

PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Police detectives are smart people with excellent training, substantial resources, a cooperative citizenry, and a tight network of allies and information. Reporters are the same, only they have cameras instead of badges. Both are very interested in crime, especially violent, sensational, or weird crimes. Guess who they'll be looking for?

Just playing cops and reporters straight, as an ongoing irritant, gets annoying. Make this fun—it's a story, after all, and not a simulation of real life. Personalize some of these NPCs. Don't just have "the cops" on the trail of the investigators. Make it Detective Callahan, a tough cop out for justice. Have her pop up on the news, always the first at the crime scene, and make her the one who asks your neighbors suspicious questions. By personalizing the consequences of criminal activity, you make them interesting. Over time, Detective Callahan—or Kolchak, that nosy reporter—can become an important recurring character in your adventures. Maybe she becomes an ally, even an unwitting one—anonymous tips can be a useful investigator tool. She might arrive on the scene once or twice to save investigators from a fate worse than death. Maybe she falls victim to the villain, and you promise to avenge the death of your one-time enemy. Regardless, she's more than just an irritating killjoy. She's someone with a name, a personality, and an agenda. Really, she's another investigator. She's just investigating you.

PRIVATE INTEREST

It isn't just cops and reporters who get on your case. Private citizens may get involved. The families of victims, for example, may hire detectives to follow you. If you vandalized a villain's apartment, the company that owns the building may send insurance

investigators after you, or the superintendent may just spend a few nights hiding in the basement with a baseball bat in case you come back. People react to violations of life, property, or privacy in weird ways.

VENGEANCE

Thwarting the plans of a bad guy is a good way to get him angry. He may come after the investigators when they least expect it. If he's dead or out of action, he may have allies, followers, or replacements who take up the cause, or try to get a little revenge. This is particularly useful if they act in the middle of an unrelated adventure, because the investigators have to sort out just who is up to what. Your past can rise up and bite you.

ANGRY COSMOS

Finally, there's the whole angle of supernatural trouble. If you interrupted the summoning of Ithaqua, he just might strike back at you, perhaps through other followers. Maybe he'll summon his monstrous servitors, or he might just rip the roof off your house and carry you into space. Maybe you know too much.

Then there's ghosts. The restless spirits of innocent victims may follow you around, causing trouble even though they want to help you. That evil cult leader you killed may come back from the grave, either as an angry ghost or a shambling, rotting corpse who wants to eat your brains. (The ghost template is a great place to start with this kind of complication.)

And of course, monsters aren't stupid or solitary. Deep ones work together, and even a slain Hound of Tindalos may have a vicious mate that pursues you across the eons. No matter how cautious an investigator may be, there's always a chance for consequences. Good campaigns thrive on such stuff.

Then the figured silk slipped a trifle from one of the greyish-white paws, and Carter knew what the noisome high-priest was. And in that hideous second stark fear drove him to something his reason would never have dared to attempt, for in all his shaken consciousness there was room only for one frantic will to escape from what squatted on that golden throne. He knew that hopeless labyrinths of stone lay betwixt him and the cold table-land outside, and that even on that table-land the noxious shantak still waited; yet in spite of all this there was in his mind only the instant need to get away from that wriggling, silk-robed monstrosity.

—H.P. Lovecraft,
The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath

CAMPAIGNS

At its core, a campaign is a linked series of adventures. By using recurring characters, settings, and elements—such as villains, monsters, and themes—the Gamemaster creates a tapestry of interesting questions for the players to answer. The player characters are the one element that usually remains constant between adventures. While characters may come and go, either by going mad, dying, or retiring, some will certainly continue their quest into the unknown.

A good way to imagine a campaign is to picture it as a vast mansion, one that's full of passageways, staircases, basements, secret chambers, and even inhabitants. While an adventure is simply a room in that house, full of items and people to explore, a campaign is the mansion itself. Once the players finish exploring one room, there are any number of directions for them to continue, from the roof to lost tunnels beneath the foundations.

Constructing a campaign from scratch is really not as hard as it might sound. Like a house, a campaign has an entrance. Once inside, characters may find different routes to travel, each one different, but each eventually leads to the same place. A campaign also has a blueprint, which maps out where its elements go and how they serve to further the story.

A campaign is bigger than an adventure, but many of the same principles still apply. Seen as a whole, the campaign could be considered a large adventure unto itself; however, it requires too much play time to complete in a few sessions. Sometimes the adventures linked in the campaign only have the player characters in common. At other times, there are other elements that continue in the campaign from game session to game session.

Both adventures and campaigns usually have a climax—a point at which the answers are found for the puzzles presented in the adventures. Sometimes that climax is internal to the characters, such as when a character realizes she is of deep one heritage. At other times it is external, such as when the group saves the world from the rebirth of Mordiggian.

MOTIVATION

Like adventures, each campaign requires a motivation for the investigators to continue. While many characters have personal motivations for investigating the Cthulhu Mythos—and their motivation to complete the first adventure—the motivation for the campaign has to be a little different. It's an overriding necessity that is bigger than any one character—whether that's saving the world from Cthugha, preventing the rebirth of Chaugnar Faugn, or destroying the Cult of Kali controlled by Nyarlathotep. Here are some of the most common ones.

OUR SAMPLE CAMPAIGN: MOTIVATION

To start on the construction of our sample campaign, the first decision we need to make is the motivation of the campaign. What do you, as the GM, want from the game? Since we're just starting out, let's use a simple, classic *Call of Cthulhu* motivation: Saving the World.

keeping them locked beyond our ken for one more day, year, or millennium.

This motivation usually incorporates all the previous motivations. Generally the players in this type of campaign have to stop something from occurring, or have to cause something to occur to prevent everything they have ever known from ending.

COUNTDOWN

This type of motivation is a standard in *Call of Cthulhu*. The players are trying to unravel the mysteries of the campaign to stop something from happening. There's a time limit on their investigations, a point past which the investigators' actions will make little or no difference.

Finding a kidnapped girl, locating an artifact before the cultists do, completing the seal on the tomb before it rises again, foiling a ritual to vastly increase Ithaqua's power—each is a motivation that is strong enough to drive a party of characters forward.

EXPLORATION

Exploration of the unknown is a classic motivation in many roleplaying games. It doesn't matter if the players are charting the unexplored expanses of Antarctica or the barred room at the top of the stairs in their childhood home. What is important here is the player's descent into the unknown. By taking the players out of their element and placing them into the unknown, you are giving them a motivation to find out where they are, what's there, and how to get back. This is one of the oldest motivations in the horror genre.

RECOVERY

This motivation is similar to the "countdown" motif, but not quite the same. Here the players are united in their efforts to find something, whether that's a missing ring, a stolen book, or a lost city. Often this motivation can lead to others, such as exploration or countdown, the recovery acting as a conduit into a deeper adventure.

SAVING THE WORLD

Saving the world is a motivation central to the concept of *Call of Cthulhu*. While it is not possible (as far as humanity is concerned) to permanently destroy the deities of the Cthulhu Mythos, it is possible, from time to time, to push them back a bit,

CAMPAIGN ELEMENTS

A campaign element can be pretty much anything. A person, a cult, a Federal organization, a stone statue, or a sentient lake—each one can be a campaign element, depending on the circumstances.

When in doubt ask, "What role does it fulfill in the campaign?" Does a person's death lead the players into an investigation? Does a Federal organization recruit the players to infiltrate a cult? Does the stone statue cause something to rise from the lake under the full moon? If it serves a role that the players can exploit within the game, it's a campaign element.

Elements can be passive or active. Active elements pursue their own ends in the game, such as cultists searching for a book, a creature looking to sever the bloodline, or a statue that haunts the investigator's dreams at night. Active elements are useful tools to move the game forward when things bog down.

Passive elements require character interaction to activate. The secret manuscript hidden in the wall, the bottle that contains the essential salts of your ancestor, the book that waits in the museum—each is a passive element. Passive elements often serve as rewards for good investigation techniques, since they're rarely found unless the players are looking in the right places. Sometimes they can be just as dangerous as active elements. The difference is that passive elements wait to be found; active elements find you.

Let's look at some of the common elements found in a typical *Call of Cthulhu* game.

VILLAINS

Villains are the most common campaign element seen in *Call of Cthulhu*. The madman who prays to the Haunter of the Dark, the lone scientist who hopes to unravel the secrets of gate technology in unholy union with the mi-go, the woman who sacrifices children to Azathoth to extend her life—each is a villain, and each is a tool for the GM to use in a campaign.

Villains can be either active or passive campaign elements, depending on their methods. For example, one villain might hide her activities until discovered by investigators, while another might blatantly pursue the goals of his deity, killing whoever gets in his path.

OUR SAMPLE CAMPAIGN: CAMPAIGN ELEMENTS

So what elements should we use in our sample campaign? First of all, we need a location for the player characters—a base of operations, as it were. We decide to place them as the staff of a college's parapsychology department. Let's call it Hunt College. They work out at the Springton Annex, a cramped, dark, moldering wing which none of the other university staff frequent. All the characters live locally or on campus.

Now that we have a backdrop for the drama, let's make up the drama. Basically, we need some agency that is trying to end the world. How about a cult? Let's settle on a small cult with limited resources. We'll call them The Brotherhood of the Worm. They're led by Professor Claude Brüchs, a clever and ruthless man who hides himself in plain sight as a professor of antiquities at Hunt College. Brüchs is initially a passive element, but later becomes an active element—in this case, a villain.

Now let's make up the way they'll end the world. Brüchs has gotten his hands on the Transvaal Papers, a portion of a manuscript written by a Luther Transvaal, a madman who worshiped a deity called T'gala in South Africa at the turn of the century. (The Transvaal Papers are a passive object.) Brüchs hopes to use these papers to infect a willing member of the cult, probably a student, with the spawn of this deity, and then populate the world with such spawn (the monsters).

There you have it in broad strokes: a location, organization, villain, and object, all set up for a roller-coaster save-the-world campaign. Piece of cake, right?

THE BLIND MASSES

Since most of the world is not privy to the secrets of the Cthulhu Mythos, this campaign element covers every nonplayer character not directly involved in the campaign. The library clerk, the arresting officer, and the prosecuting attorney are all members of the blind masses.

Depending on their uses, members of the blind masses can be either passive or active campaign elements. They are useful in their capacity to move the game along, either by providing information or by limiting the players' range of actions within the campaign. Most of the NPCs the characters encounter in any *Call of Cthulhu* campaign will be from these masses.

THE ORGANIZATION

This campaign element can be almost any type of group. The Royal Order of Buffalo, the Cult of Nyarlathotep—even the FBI—is an organization as far as campaign elements go. What matters is the group's intent, and this is what makes them either an active or passive campaign element.

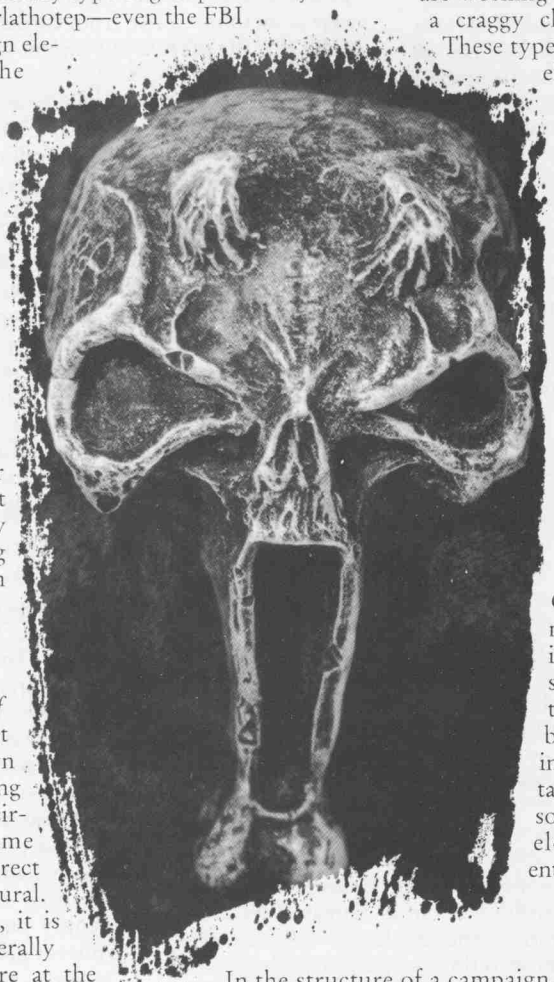
A passive organization is marked by its lack of knowledge. If its agents have no idea what's really going on, then they're a passive element, no matter how deeply they get involved. If they do know what's going on, they're an active element. Cults organized in the worship of the Great Old Ones should always be considered active elements.

Organizations can assist or deter the players in their pursuit of the answers to the campaign, by giving them information, stopping them from looking into certain leads, or even trying to kill them.

MONSTERS

Unlike other games, most *Call of Cthulhu* campaigns do not encourage players to hunt down monsters in the hopes of killing them (except under very specific circumstances). Instead, the game encourages players to avoid direct confrontations with the supernatural. When monsters are encountered, it is usually on their terms. This generally means that either the players are at the heart of the problem presented in the adventure, or they have screwed up badly.

Monsters are almost always active campaign elements. Use them sparingly. Horror hinges on surprise and the unexpected. The last thing you want to hear from a player during an encounter with a monster is that it's "just another deep one."



LOCATIONS

Other common elements in any campaign include the recurring locations in the game. Do the investigators have a base of operations? Do they work out of a university? An office? Is there a cult stronghold they are working to destroy? A manor atop a craggy cliff the hybrids frequent? These types of locations are campaign elements because they focus the players' attention. Plans usually revolve around locations, so they feature centrally in campaigns.

Usually locations are passive elements—a place to rest, research, or sleep. But sometimes they are active, such as the sacrificial stone at the water's edge. Locations are vitally important to any good campaign. Think about them carefully before you begin.

OBJECTS

Objects can be any inanimate object vital to the story in the campaign, such as a statue of Cthulhu, the gun that killed the professor, or a book with the *bind soul* spell in it. Objects are often important campaign elements, and sometimes they are the central element around which an entire campaign rotates.

MILESTONES

In the structure of a campaign, milestones are vital points where clues are revealed, leads realized, or some vital situation resolved—one way or another. Milestones are sometimes intersections between overlapping adventures, where a loose end from one adventure leads to the beginning of the next. Reaching a specific milestone may actually be the goal behind an adventure, whether the characters know it or not.

The goal of a campaign should be more than just advancing in level. Marking the milestones toward the conclusion of a campaign gives it the structure of a story, and that's what *Call of Cthulhu* is really about.

RED HERRINGS

A red herring is a lead in a campaign or adventure that turns out to be unrelated to the current adventure or campaign. This is not to say it can't be a supernatural mystery unto itself, only that it has nothing directly to do with the current investigation.

Dropping false leads like this into a campaign is a good idea if you feel the players are moving too quickly toward the campaign's climax, or if they need a tangent. You can give the players a break from the main campaign and let them explore and solve some other adventure in the meantime. When they're done, they can jump back to the main story.

Illustration ©2001, Jason soles. Used with permission.

Think of milestones like the boxes on our flowchart earlier—they're stages you pass through to complete the story. The links between them can be linear or nonlinear, depending on the structure of your story.

The four most common milestones in a campaign are:

- The intro,
- Bookwork and footwork,
- The heebie-jeebies,
- And the confrontation.

After detailing each one, we'll see how to create and organize each of our milestones, giving our story a little more structure.

THE INTRO

The introduction to the campaign should establish at least some of its main elements. Even if they are simply mentioned, that's enough to place them within the players' minds. When you later refer to them, the players will pick up on them quickly. It's not necessary to immediately jump into an elaborate storyline. Instead, you can ease the players into it with a side adventure that hints at the campaign's theme, but does not directly involve it.

A good introductory adventure draws the players into the bigger mysteries of a campaign, while still answering a few questions or resolving an issue or two. The loose ends of the introductory adventure are what's most important. Make sure they're intriguing enough to be followed, but not obvious enough to point right toward the campaign's climax.

BOOKWORK AND FOOTWORK

This first milestone consumes most of a *Call of Cthulhu* game. Running around looking things up, checking people out, or simply reading books gives the characters some idea of what's going on and clues of how they might stop it. As long as the players have some idea of what they're looking into, they'll have no end of questions about their subjects.

Reinforcing campaign elements through reiterations of their stories in this manner can add a whole new depth to your campaign. It's one thing to meet a man named Mr. Shiny at a burger joint, and a whole other thing to see his name and picture in a two-hundred-year-old book.

THE HEEBIE-JEEBIES

This is the portion of the campaign where the investigators are in the thick of it. They know something supernatural is going on besides what they encountered in the introductory adventure. They have some ideas what it might be, but they're not exactly sure what to do about it.

Everything at this point is usually seen as some sort of possible threat. Any stray phone call, passing encounter with an NPC, or suggestive newspaper article can be enough to drive the investigators on some new witch-hunt, filled with the surety that this new lead is important—even if it just turns out to be a red herring. This is a good tactic to keep the players on their toes. Sprinkle a few bits of disinformation in with the information. That way they don't fully know what to expect. And as we have said before, surprise is the hallmark of any good *Call of Cthulhu* campaign.

THE CONFRONTATION

This is it: When the investigators come to the climax of the campaign. Sometimes they find their way there on their own, sometimes they're chased there, sometimes this milestone catches up with them when they're not expecting it. Either way, it's the culmination of their investigations, and it should be as dramatic as you can make it. Pull out all the stops.

NONPLAYER CHARACTERS

Nonplayer characters are an important part of any campaign. Working out their personalities beforehand can shape and direct the campaign, while making your job of running it much, much easier. NPCs can be broken down into three simple groups, depending on just what they are up to in the campaign. If you can, you should work out the statistics, spells, and abilities of the NPCs involved in the campaign before you start. We'll examine some NPC types below.

OUR SAMPLE CAMPAIGN: MILESTONES

We'll keep our sample campaign pretty straightforward. The intro should draw the players in. A graduate student is killed at Hunt College and a valuable manuscript belonging to the parapsychology department is taken. The intro adventure involves tracking down his killer, then culminates in the capture or killing of a member of the Brotherhood of the Worm.

Once the murder is solved, the investigators move to the bookwork and footwork milestone. By researching the cult, they uncover extensive leads. One book describes the cult as it was at the turn of the century, with just enough tasty tidbits to imply that a few survivors might still be around.

To mix things up, we'll follow with a red herring adventure. This one deals with former owners of the Transvaal Papers and their fates. This adventure might have some supernatural elements—the papers could have been owned by an insane scholar, a sorcerer, or a madman whose abandoned house is now filled with rat-things. Generally, the supernatural threat in our red herring should have nothing in it directly related to the cult or their mission.

Once this little tangent adventure is through, it's back to the campaign and on to the heebie-jeebies. The cult, fearing that the investigators know too much, try to scare them off. If this doesn't work, the investigators and their allies are targeted for assassination through gruesome supernatural means. Further leads then point the survivors toward an on-campus conspiracy.

After that, it's red herring time again. This time, the lead is a false one, without any real import to the campaign. The players become suspicious of a faculty member who has no relation to the cult. The investigation appears to have supernatural elements—the faculty member belongs to a secretive fraternity—but in the end is simply a diversion.

Once this little mistake is cleared up, it's off to the confrontation. The investigators are actively set up by Brüchs and set upon by the cult. One of the cult has already been impregnated by the T'gala, and the rapidly growing fetus wants a victim to feed on after its birth.

This should be more than enough material for a full campaign.

ALLIES

Nonplayer characters who assist the characters in their investigations are allies. An ally does not necessarily need to be knowledgeable of the Cthulhu Mythos. If the characters need help, and the NPC lends a hand, she is an ally.

MEDDLERS

Meddlers are the opposite of allies. These NPCs think they know what is going on and try to stop the investigators from completing what they need to do. Meddlers are not necessarily enemies, and may even have the best of intentions. A character's mother could be a meddler, for instance, committing her son because she overheard him talking about cults, demons, and spells. A policewoman who tries to stop the PCs from harming a dangerous cultist would also be meddling.

Meddlers increase the difficulty of the PCs' task because they must be avoided or evaded without harming them if at all possible, and confronting them can often lead to disaster. For instance, a hero might be locked up as a dangerous maniac, forced to go on the run, or even gunned down by a SWAT team.

ENEMIES

Enemies are NPCs out to get the investigators, either physically or mentally. Enemies need not be violent or even evil. Only their intentions toward the investigators really matter. If what the enemy NPC wants to come to pass would cause the characters intense physical or mental distress, then he or she is an enemy.

CAMPAIGN PLAYER CHARACTERS

The central axis around which any *Call of Cthulhu* campaign rotates is the group of player characters who populate it. Their investigations are the center of the story, and anything they do in the game is important, since they are the stars of the campaign.

Call of Cthulhu has a reputation as a game where player characters come and go rapidly due to insanity or death. Actually, this is usually not the case. In any group, there are usually a few level-headed thinkers or lucky investigators who survive from adventure to adventure, rebuilding the group to continue their descent into the world of the Mythos. This chain of causality is critical in any *Call of Cthulhu* campaign. Without it, the game becomes a farce where the player characters are random people picked off the street to continue a now-nonexistent group's pursuit of the unknown.

If you run the game correctly, you'll never have to hear an investigator scream, "C'mon, waiter, we have a cult to destroy!" Several ways exist to maintain a coherent group with a reason to be there, even if some colleagues are lost from time to time.

A CENTRAL NPC

Designing a central NPC is a fine solution to the problem of maintaining an ongoing series of characters. The characters are organized—and sometimes financed—by an NPC who has an interest in the Mythos, but lacks the time, inclination, skill, or sanity to complete such a search on her own. Perhaps this character is the sole survivor of a group that fought the Mythos in its day, but is now too crippled or enfeebled to carry on the fight himself. Perhaps she is a parent whose child was sacrificed by a cult and wants to ensure others don't suffer the same loss. Whatever the reason, when characters are lost, new characters can be brought in by the NPC, who has the funds or connections to bring in the best of the best.

AN ORGANIZATION

Another good solution relies on an entire organization, such as the Theron Marks Society, the Gilchrist Trust, or the Delta Green conspiracy. The characters are in the employ or debt of some sort of organization interested—at least tangentially—in fighting the Mythos. When player characters die, new ones can be brought in without much fuss to replace them.

A LEGACY

This campaign focus is a little more subtle. The characters are select members of some sort of odd group—and sometimes, they don't even know it! Whether they all suffer from the deep one taint, or the descendants of those who burnt the witch Ezikiah Browne, or all once touched a certain book, the characters have all been chosen. This special something sets the characters apart from the common world, either offering them a reason to investigate the Mythos, or requiring them to act—if only for their own sanity and survival.

THINKING ON YOUR FEET

Even if you work out all the elements and NPCs for a campaign beforehand, never pass up the chance to introduce a new one, or hang on to one when it's introduced in passing. Sometimes the players can throw you for a loop by heading in a direction you didn't expect. What do you do when the players decide to talk to a NPC you hadn't even considered until the moment it comes up in a game? Tell

OUR CAMPAIGN: NPCS

Next, we should work out the NPCs in our campaign. First off, we have a villain (Brüchs) and several of his cult members as side villains—including the Spawn of T'gala, our monstrous villain.

Then we have some meddlers. The local police chief, Garret Yardley, sticks his nose into every suspicious event on campus. The dean of the college, Elmer Hunt, hates the parapsychology department and is looking for any excuse to get rid of it. Rupert McCain is the poor soul the investigators suspect (incorrectly) is a member of the cult in our red herring adventure.

We'll also throw in one ally, so that the players aren't totally out in the cold. Louis Manning is a detective from Ann Arbor, Michigan. His little brother was killed in the Transvaal Papers robbery, and he's very interested in why someone would kill his brother over a bundle of old papers.

them "Sorry, I didn't make up that guy yet, try next time?" Of course not. Do what GMs do best. Make something up.

THE MAGIC WORD: CONSISTENCY

Half the job of being a GM is remaining consistent in your descriptions. If an NPC's name is one way one day ("Tipton S. Smith"), it should be the same the next time the characters encounter him (not "S. Tipton Smith"). If you make up an NPC off the cuff, and the players seem to enjoy interacting with him, don't pass up the chance to define that character further. Write the NPC's name down, along with a few notes about what she is like. Then work out the details later.

Keeping a little notepad handy is very useful in any ongoing campaign. Keep it around during a game session. If a fact slips your mind, you can check it before you make a mistake that will confuse the players and disrupt the game.

RECYCLING

Bringing elements over and over again into the campaign sets it apart from a simple adventure. Always keep an eye out for elements—whether they're premade, homemade, or on-the-spot creations—that could be brought back in a future adventure within the campaign.

Try your best to recycle NPCs who interested the investigators in some way. It doesn't matter if the NPC was a good guy or a bad guy, a flirty secretary or a powerful sorcerer, a wisecracking reporter or a suspicious sheriff—what's important is their inherent appeal to the players. Look for that spark and keep it burning by bringing him or her back game after game.

THE END

Wrapping up a campaign is as easy as wrapping up an adventure. Once the climax of the campaign has been reached and the mystery is solved, the campaign is on its downswing toward the end. A campaign can end in one of four ways.

ATTRITION

This type of ending occurs when too many players drop out, having become bored with the game or the particular campaign. Perhaps the campaign wasn't structured well, or didn't have a conclusion in mind. Maybe it was inconsistent, too improvisational, or just not scary. Never try to drag out a campaign that has lasted longer than the players' interest. Suck it up, close it down, and come up with something new. Learn from your mistakes, resolve to do better next time, then move on.

THE DANGLING THREAD

The investigators wrapped up the campaign only to find several leads, which appear to point toward something even bigger and more horrible going on elsewhere. What's an investigator to do but follow them? This is a great springboard to launch the players into another campaign. Use it wisely. Try to resolve the most important plot of the last campaign before launching a new one—an epic that continually changes direction is frustrating.

HAPPILY EVER AFTER

In this type of campaign, whatever the investigators were trying to do has been done. Things work out for the best. The characters followed the investigation to its logical conclusion, and the darkness has been pushed back for a time. This is the rarest of all possible campaign endings in *Call of Cthulhu*.

ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE

Something the investigators did near or at the climax of the campaign was incredibly, amazingly wrong. Perhaps they rushed to a final confrontation with something that's way out of their league, overlooked a vital clue, or decided to stay and fight when they should have fled. In any case, they failed at their attempt to solve the mystery of the campaign, and they're all going to die. When this happens, make their last few minutes of game time dramatic and fun. Great moments of heroism come from fighting overwhelming odds.

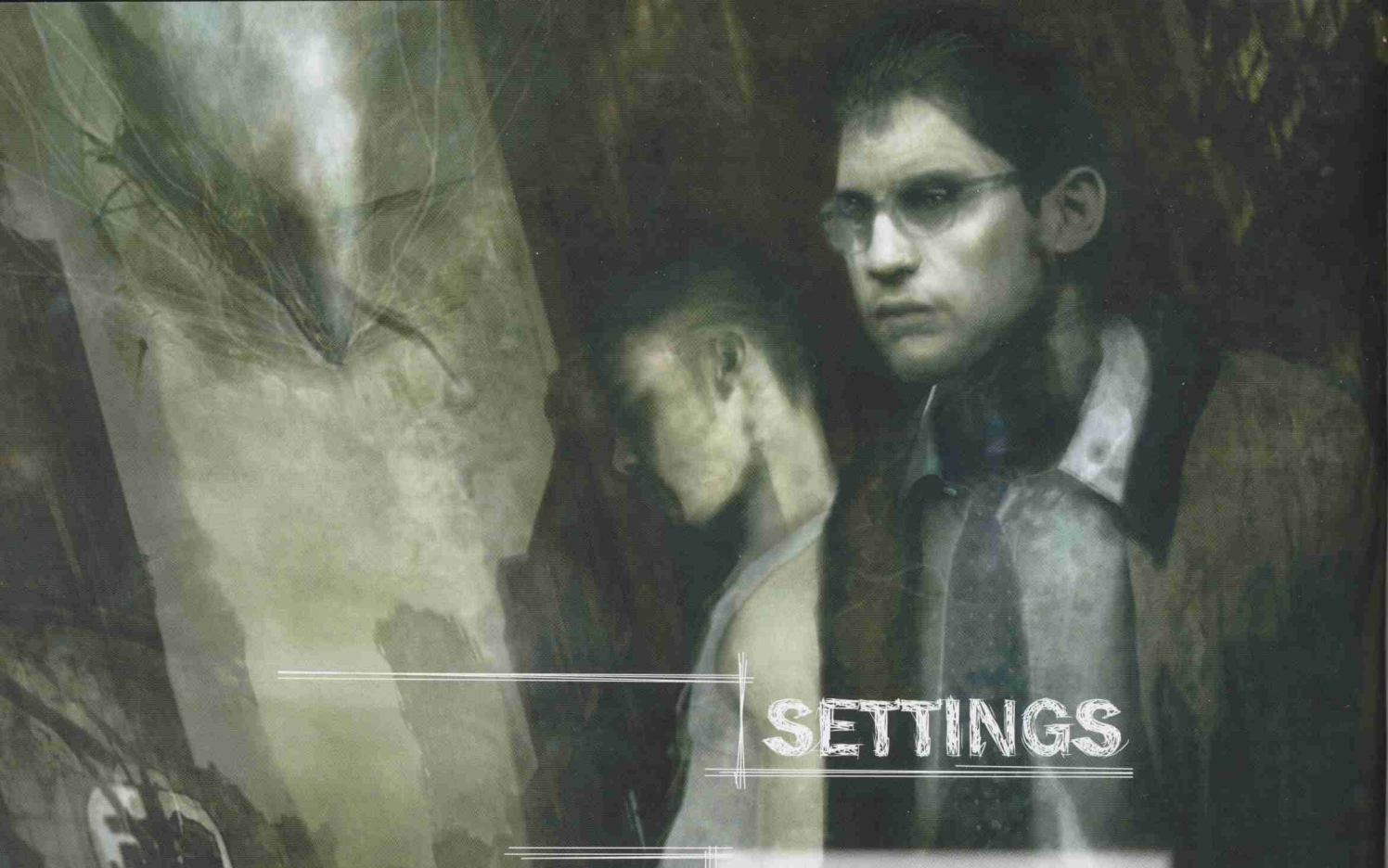
Go into gruesome, wordy detail about their deaths, and the painful moments that lead up to them. Let them shoot it out with the minions of the Mythos. Heck, why not? Make them interested, despite themselves, in their characters' deaths and in seeing who's the last one standing (or screaming). Then wrap it up, and consider how you'll plan your next campaign.

RECYCLING VILLAINS

A good villain never really dies. A good example is Sax Rohmer's insidious Dr. Fu Manchu, who gets shot in the head at the end of one book and begins the next by having his minions kidnap a reliable brain surgeon. Whether rumors of the villain's death were exaggerated or he managed to slip away at the last possible moment doesn't really matter. Villains survive if you want them to and if you think their future involvement in the campaign will be interesting.

What if the villain was finished off personally by the characters themselves? No problem. It's easy in a world populated with the monstrosities and magic of the Cthulhu Mythos to come up with a way for the dead to come back to life. For example, the leader of the Silver Twilight, Carl Stanford, was on R'lyeh when it sank back into the Pacific in *Shadows of Yog-Sothoth*, yet can be encountered again several years later in *Masks of Nyarlathotep* quietly reading Mythos tomes in a private library.

Don't use this trick too often, however, or the players will begin to expect it. And the expected is never scary. Spring it on them only if you know it will get their hearts pounding. Nothing is worse than a predictable villain.



SETTINGS

For this place could be no ordinary city. It must have formed the primary nucleus and centre of some archaic and unbelievable chapter of earth's history whose outward ramifications, recalled only dimly in the most obscure and distorted myths, had vanished utterly amidst the chaos of terrene convulsions long before any human race we know had shambled out of apedom. Here sprawled a palaeogean megalopolis compared with which the fabled Atlantis and Lemuria, Commoriom and Uzuldaroum, and Olathoe in the land of Lomar are recent things today—not even of yesterday; a megalopolis ranking with such whispered prehuman blasphemies as Valusia, R'lyeh, Ib in the land of Mnar, and the Nameless City of Arabia Deserta. As we flew above that tangle of stark titan towers my imagination sometimes escaped all bounds and roved aimlessly in the realms of fantastic associations—even weaving links betwixt this lost world and some of my own wildest dreams....

—H.P. Lovecraft, "At the Mountains of Madness"

According to H. P. Lovecraft, the beings of the Mythos have been resident on the Earth since before the seas first formed, billions of years ago. "*The Great Old Ones are, the Great Old Ones were, and the Great Old Ones shall be again,*" as the quote goes. One of the most attractive aspects of *Call of Cthulhu* is that stories of heroic investigators fighting to keep the Cthulhu Mythos at bay can be set in any corner of the world and during any time period. The horrors of the Mythos can be fought on the foggy streets of Victorian London, the backwoods and forgotten corners of Lovecraft's Jazz Era New England, the shadows of the Second World War, or in the closed, smoke-filled rooms of the New World Order. If the GM is willing to stretch a little, the investigators could battle the Mythos by torchlight in the Middle Ages (as in Chaosium's *Strange Eons*) or with six-guns during the American Wild West (as in Pinnacle's *Adios, a-Mi-Go*). Each approach is really a subgenre within the broader genre of the Cthulhu Mythos.

This chapter suggests a variety of settings to base your campaign on, as well as several thematically coherent time periods across the 20th century. Much of the chapter is a timeline grid with dozens of adventure ideas cross-referenced by subgenre and time period. As you prepare to run the game, mine this chapter for historical settings and story ideas.

TIME AND PLACE: THE BIG PICTURE

Choosing the time and place is critical when designing a *Call of Cthulhu* adventure or campaign. The setting establishes the mood, the atmosphere, and the tone of the adventure. It establishes the historical context and limits the equipment and technology available to the investigators. The setting determines the kind of adventures that follow.

Conversely, the style of adventure the GM wants will determine the time and place the adventure is set. For instance, if the GM wants the adventure to be an expedition into uncharted African territory, then she must realize that uncharted territory is going to be much more difficult to find today than it was a hundred years ago.

At a minimum, there are two categories to consider when preparing to run the game: time and place. In broad terms these categories can be divided into Now and Then and Near and Far, as in the table below. But note that "Then" means remote in time—it could be the future as well as the past.

	Now	Then
Near	Known from daily life	Vaguely known from movies and books
Far	Somewhat known from the news media	Unknown and alien

NOW AND NEAR

For most people reading this book, "Now and Near" means the western world at the dawn of the 21st century. Here the tools and technology are familiar. No strange or baffling customs exist, no antiquated prejudices or superstitions. In modern, familiar settings, the investigators don't have to sweat details such as basic food, water, medical treatment, or transportation, except in extraordinary circumstances. The most pertinent survival question for investigators in a modern familiar setting will quite often be "Have I exceeded my credit limit?"

It's easy for the GM to plan an adventure in modern, familiar settings. Maps are available through stores, libraries, and the Internet. Prices for weapons, tools, or plane tickets are just a phone call or Web search away. Travel times are just as easy to calculate, as are accurate details of weather conditions. Modern familiar settings don't require deep research.

For the investigators, all the tools and weapons of the modern world are available. Conversely, they themselves can be victims of such high-tech trinkets as hidden microphones, miniature tracking devices, long-range sniper rifles, and remotely detonated bombs. The forces of law and order are more likely to be available in a modern, familiar setting, which can be an asset or a liability. Very often in a *Call of Cthulhu* adventure, the investigators are forced to commit unlawful acts in their fight to hold back the evil of the Cthulhu Mythos. In a modern, familiar setting, the investigators may very quickly find themselves pursued by law enforcement if they act without careful planning. Modern authorities are unlikely to accept supernatural explanations for events. Even worse, they may protect dangerous cultists under the aegis of religious freedom, right up to the point when those cultists act—after which it's far too late.

NOW AND FAR

"Now and Far" represents modern adventures set in unfamiliar locales. It's still the beginning of the 21st century, but the GM and investigators have left the world they know for more dramatic, exotic, and hostile environments. The heroes might man a frozen research station in Antarctica, or hike through the guerrilla-filled jungles of war-torn central Africa, or climb high into the Tibetan Himalayas in search of the Tcho-Tcho homeland, or huddle inside a deep-sea submersible diving to the bottom of the Marianas Trench. All the tools and weapons of the modern world are still available to the investigators, but they're taking those tools into hostile and inaccessible environments where help and resupply are more difficult, if not impossible. Credit cards may be useless. Cell phones readily leave their useful area. Acquiring fuel, food, and water may be taxing. Communicating with the locals may be impossible if there's a language barrier. These are areas of the world where there are no authorities to consult, no police, no hospitals, and no reliable infrastructure. Battling the environment will be as challenging as trying to foil the machinations of the Mythos.

The modern, unfamiliar setting requires more research from the GM to produce a compellingly realistic environment. You may need to answer questions such as these:

What's the typical temperature during the Antarctic winter?
What language do they speak in Burundi?
What's the crush depth of a modern bathysphere?

When the GM has to answer one of these sorts of questions with "I don't know," it breaks the mood of the story. When in doubt, extrapolate, then look up the answer and make corrections for the next session.

THEN AND NEAR

To effectively present a familiar setting changed by time, the GM must do a great deal of research. The starting point is the here and now. While some things are familiar and easily adapted, others are not. Prices must be adjusted, technological changes must be accounted for, and even the maps may need to be changed. After all, one dam can change hundreds of square miles of landscape. Social customs, laws, and morals all change over time as well. What is socially unacceptable today may be perfectly acceptable a century ago, and vice versa. Sexism, racism, and religious intolerance were the status quo in previous eras, even within living memory. Law enforcement of the early 1900s, with regular beating of suspects, would seem brutal and thuggish by today's standards. On the other hand, the authorities of the past are more likely to help the investigators eradicate a cult, not because of its supernatural connections, but because its members and beliefs disturb the status quo or are members of cultural or racial minority groups.

The roleplaying rewards of such research are great. The investigators are able to explore the world that was, or perhaps even the world that will be. In a familiar setting, changed by time, the investigators can find themselves in the last days of the Old West, the Roaring Twenties, the Great Depression, or the "Noir" era of the 1940s. The familiar can even be warped into a dark, cyberpunk near-future where the End Times are coming to pass.

THEN AND FAR

"Then and Far" is the most research-intensive setting for the GM. This rulebook is limited more or less to the 20th century, but an enterprising GM could set her adventure in a cave during the last Ice Age, a stronghold of the Knights Templar in the Middle Ages, or in the pressurized colonization domes of a terraformed Mars. Bizarre and alien settings are also readily accessible to a group of investigators stumbling through the results of a *create gate* spell. In any one of those settings, everything is alien and unfamiliar to modern-day players. Obviously, this kind of adventure takes the most research.

In most cases, encountering an unfamiliar setting changed by time means the investigators are globetrotting in the past. Such adventures immerse the players in far-flung corners of the world during the days when the Earth had a truly epic scope. Such settings are often the backdrop for world-girding conspiracies and campaigns such as *Masks of Nyarlathotep* or *Walker in the Wastes*. The cults that adore the Great Old Ones often carry out their gods' will in isolated and primitive corners of the world. If the investigators hope to defeat these forces, at some point they'll have to hunt them where they live, whether that's in the jungles of the Congo, the Andes Mountains, the deserts of Arabia, the frozen wastes of Siberia, or the isolated archipelagos of Micronesia.

"Professor Angell must have employed a cutting bureau, for the number of extracts was tremendous and the sources scattered throughout the globe. Here was a nocturnal suicide in London, where a lone sleeper had leaped from a window after a shocking cry. Here likewise a rambling letter to the editor of a paper in South America, where a fanatic deduces a dire future from visions he has seen. A despatch from California describes a theosophist colony as donning white robes en masse for some "glorious fulfillment" which never arrives, whilst items from India speak guardedly of serious native unrest near the end of March."

—H.P. Lovecraft, "The Call of Cthulhu"

TIME PERIODS

We have divided the entire modern era into ten loose time periods. Any one of these is suitable for a long-term campaign. These different time periods aren't just matters of historical recreation; each is stylistically and thematically distinct, and in essence forms a subgenre of its own. Read through them and see what kind of setting appeals to you.

THE AGE OF EMPIRES: 1890–1909

The two decades straddling the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries comprise an era when the great European empires still dominate the globe. Royal families with bloodlines stretching back to the Renaissance still hold great political relevance. Africa, Asia, and the Pacific are divided among European and, for the first time, American spheres of influence. It is an age when advances in technology seem to promise wonders undreamed of. Dirigibles, submarines, and the first airplanes make their debut. At the same time, the wide reach of colonial empires creates culture clashes where naive westerners encounter unknown mystical traditions and secret societies on every continent. The potential for riches can turn even the staunchest Victorian into a idolater of foul gods.

THE ROUGH BEAST: 1910–1919

The era of the 1910s is dominated by the horror of the Great War, what we know today as World War One. The decadent political structures of the last century are lining up for war, not realizing that the technology and industrial power of the previous era are not delivering wonder to the world, but horror. Poison gas, machine guns, and massed artillery, combined with obsolete tactics stubbornly applied by a stagnant leadership, exterminates an entire generation of young men and creates a philosophical and moral vacuum. The Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian empires collapse. The resulting Russian Civil War kills millions more as Bolshevism emerges as a geopolitical force. America's war experience leads to two decades of isolationism. The war is a truly global affair and greatly increases worldwide communication and transportation links. One side effect of this is the efficient spread of the 1919 influenza outbreak that kills millions. In this setting, corpse-eating monsters roam the body-strewn battlefields of Europe. Occult conspirators plot to build their postwar fortunes hand-in-hand with smugglers, profiteers, and traitors. It is the nadir of human civilization—for now.

THE JAZZ AGE: 1920–1929

Following the savagery and madness of the Great War, the 1920s is an era of personal self-indulgence and institutional corruption. In the United States, it is the era of the Volstead Act, more commonly known as Prohibition. Massive bootlegging profits turn the neighborhood ethnic gangs of America's big cities into a criminal empire that buys, sells, intimidates, and kills public officials at all levels of power. In some cities, the rule of law disintegrates. Meanwhile, news of this extravagant corruption spreads by radio, telephone, automobile, and aircraft as these and other technologies proliferate to all economic levels. Labor unions, Bolshevism, and foreign immigration contribute to the first Red Scares and the reemergence of the Ku Klux Klan. A wave of paranoia and xenophobia sweeps the west. As if to cap this era of decadence and self-indulgence, the New York stock market crashes on October 29, 1929, leading to a world depression. The horrors of the Mythos mingle freely with humanity, manifesting in lonely New England towns and the dark hearts of cities.

THE RISE OF DARKNESS: 1930–1939

As the world economy collapses, chaos, misery, and famine follow in its wake. To ensure stability and order, many populations accept domination by brutal tyrannies: Stalinist Russia, Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and Franco's Spain. Japan, Italy, and Germany all begin their brutal military conquests. China, deadly in its weakness, cannot protect its population from warlords, bandits, and foreign invaders. In America, the Wild West is reborn with the rise of motorized gangs of bank robbers, such as the Dillinger gang and Bonnie and Clyde. Just as in cowboy days, America romanticizes its sociopathic killers. The "dust bowl" of the Midwest turns American farmers into refugees in their own country. Cities are choked with breadlines and throngs of the unemployed. Some of America's richest citizens even consider the New Deal to be a Bolshevik plot and conspire to overthrow the government. It is a desperate time when many consider fascism to be a form of salvation—and what fascism cannot achieve, obedience to alien masters might.

THE AMERICAN GIANT WAKES: 1940–1949

This is the decade America, quite literally, saves the world in the most epic and murderous conflict in human history. Once the Nazi and Japanese war machines are smashed, America feeds and rebuilds the shattered nations of Europe and Asia with the Marshall Plan. During the 1940s, America harnesses the power of the atom and breaks the sound barrier, but there is a darker side.

The superpowers make the opening moves of the Cold War, a conflict that will define the next half-century. The House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) tramples the Constitution in the pursuit of "Commies" and their fellow travelers, a resounding echo of the earlier Red Scare. Ironically, at the same time as the government hunts everywhere for traitors, it harbors and protects Nazi war criminals who will be useful shadow warriors. Created in 1947, the CIA and Air Force come to symbolize the twin demons of unchecked power and impending Armageddon. American scientists conduct radiation experiments on the mentally ill and handicapped, mirroring the inhuman experiments conducted by some of the German and Japanese scientists America has recruited for its military-industrial complex. The alleged 1947 "flying disk" crash at Roswell, New Mexico, plants the seeds for a conspiracy theory that persists beyond the end of the millennium.

THE COLD WAR: 1950–1959

The world is slowly being squeezed into two factions: America and its allies, and the Soviet Union and its puppet regimes. Many nations, particularly the former empires of Europe, view American influence as fearfully as Soviet domination. HUAC's Richard Nixon becomes Vice President of the United States, while Senator Joseph McCarthy's witch-hunt carries on its work, raising paranoia and character assassination to new heights (or lows). It is a time of blacklists, loyalty oaths, and guilt by association.



The anticolonial wars begin in Africa and Asia. Red China emerges to rekindle western fears of the xenophobic "yellow peril." The hottest spot in the Cold War involves Red Chinese troops, Soviet pilots, and Americans all locked in combat in the Hermit Kingdom of Korea. During the 1950s, Communism still appears to be a monolithic power. Hungary's move toward independence is crushed by the Warsaw Pact. Using espionage and ruthless drive, the USSR makes great strides to catch up to America, culminating in the launching of Sputnik. For the first time since the dropping of the atomic bomb, and despite unrivaled national prosperity, Americans wonder if they will be overtaken by the Communist Bloc. Even at the height of power and promise, fear rules our souls.

THE HOT WAR: 1960–1969

America and the USSR battle for control of space, culminating in the 1969 moon landing—perhaps the pinnacle of human technological achievement and national will. The Cuban Missile Crisis leads the world as close as it ever comes to nuclear war. It is the era of bomb shelters and *Dr. Strangelove*, as the superpowers strive toward ever more terrifying weapons. Some see Armageddon as inevitable, perhaps even desirable.

Anticolonial brush wars rage across Africa and Asia, dragging America into a twelve-year conflict in Vietnam that all but destroys the nation's sense of purpose. Violence colors politics at all levels. Civil rights workers are murdered by the Ku Klux Klan, triggering a brutal battle between Klansmen and the FBI. War protesters are beaten and gassed, and American TV viewers get a front row seat for the police riot at the '68 Chicago Democratic convention. Soviet tanks crush the Prague Spring that same year. Assassinations dot the political landscape as two Kennedys, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Ngo Dinh Diem, Patrice Lumumba, and Rafael Trujillo are killed by assassins' bullets. Charles de Gaulle barely escapes, and Fidel Castro survives (but not for the U.S. government's lack of trying). The Arab-Israeli wars continue to grow in intensity, and the Middle East is a political powder keg ready to explode.

THE DREAM DECAYS: 1970–1979

America's war in Vietnam, the tragedy and failure of the social movement of the '60s, and the Watergate scandal leave the country disillusioned, unwilling to act on the world stage and seeking decadent distractions from rising social problems. This is the era when urban blight devours the inner cities, when municipal governments declare insolvency, and rampant inflation consumes savings. Around the world, terrorism is on the rise. The SLA kidnaps Patty Hearst, the Munich Olympics are a bloodbath, and Carlos "the Jackal" creates a terrorist legend. The Iranian hostage crisis and the U.S. response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan expose America as impotent, timid, and bumbling. OPEC's oil embargo demonstrates how America's enemies could shut off the economy as easily as flipping a light switch. Many believe America will continue its downward spiral to the status of second-rate power, not permitted the merciful death of a white-hot nuclear Armageddon. Confidence in political leaders drops, and extremist solutions look more and more appealing.

ESCALATION TO GLOBALISM: 1980–1989

The 1980s are a strange combination of jingoistic patriotism, rampant avarice, and even a touch of optimism. Not since the 1960s has the arms race been so intense or the level of confrontation between East and West so high. America regains its national pride by beating up poor and helpless countries such as Grenada and Panama, but gets bloodied when stumbling into Lebanon. England fights a meaningless and expensive war with Argentina over the destiny of a few thousand Falklands sheep. The savings and loan industry is bled white by well-connected embezzlers until it collapses, requiring a massive taxpayer bailout. Corporate raiders find there is easy money to be made not through building American industry, but by destroying it. Secret wars are fought in Central America using laundered arms-for-hostages money. As prohibition built the American Mafia, the public's appetite for cocaine builds the South American drug cartels, and the resulting violence makes the bootlegger wars of the 1920s seem tame. Whole nations are destabilized by the drug economy. At home, the War on Drugs erodes many search-and-seizure rights once held inviolate. Public health officials all but ignore the AIDS outbreak until it escalates from a public-health issue into a political tar baby.

Meanwhile, the Soviets get their own taste of Vietnam as conflicts in Afghanistan drag on for year after bloody year, exposing the Soviet soldier as a drunken, spiritless conscript not old enough to shave. Then, almost without warning, the Berlin Wall falls. Eastern Europe makes a mad break from its Soviet masters. Germany rushes toward reunification. Romanian tyrant Nicolae Ceaucescu dies in front of a firing squad. American policymakers look on gobsmacked, and publicly wonder what will happen next.

NEW WORLD ORDER: 1990–MODERN DAY

America's military orchestrates the greatest public relations coup of all time by blasting Iraq into the Stone Age every night on CNN. The teetering Soviet Empire collapses like a jigsaw puzzle following a drunken and inept coup attempt by the ossified old guard. Yugoslavia trades in economic viability and political stability for rubble, ethnic cleansing, and war crimes. America is left as the sole superpower, deeply divided about how to use its newfound clout. Technology and marketing turn computers into home appliances. The Internet changes communications and commerce forever. AIDS becomes the first of a long line of emerging viruses to confound epidemiologists and slaughter populations. They are joined by the return of defeated biological foes whose reckless exposure to antibiotics is now producing new and stronger variants.

With its soldiers killed and harassed by the Somalis they were saving from starvation, America is less and less willing to be the world's policeman. Russia

looks as if it's trying to reenact the last days of the Weimar Republic, hemorrhaging the secrets of nuclear, chemical, and biological weaponry to the highest bidders. Western Europe is incapable of putting out the fires in its backyard without U.S. money and incentive. The "People's" Republic of China is perhaps the most untouchable outlaw nation on Earth, running roughshod over human rights, international law, and trade agreements, but unassailable due to its economic clout. Even Disney wants to see Mickey Mouse watches on the wrists of a billion Chinese citizens. Huge corporations begin to dwarf nations in setting the global political agenda. Africa turns into a corpse factory as Rwanda, Burundi, the Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Algeria, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia compete for the most gruesome self-inflicted genocide. In Seattle, ordinary citizens express the growing sense of individual powerlessness by striking out at a world trade conference. In New York, terrorists destroy the World Trade Center.

And the future? It's so bright you have to wear shades—but the light is that of an oncoming train.

SUBGENRES

Call of Cthulhu can be played in a number of ways. Each is a variation on the basic genre of fighting the Mythos. For the GM, a subgenre is a source of story ideas; for players, it's a framework within which they create investigators and play the game.

Each subgenre includes a sample group. This is an organization that supports your group of investigators, providing them with a reason to work together and giving them a source of new investigators when death or madness takes a player character for good.

LOVECRAFT COUNTRY

The Lovecraft Country subgenre takes the investigators into fictional New England to encounter locals created by H. P. Lovecraft, specifically within the Miskatonic River Valley in Massachusetts. Along this river can be found adventure settings such as the squalid, backwoods hamlet of Dunwich, the doomed and decaying port city of Innsmouth, the dream-shrouded artist colony of Kingsport, and the historic college town of Arkham, home of Miskatonic University and its infamous library. The kinds of investigators commonly found here are archaeologists, anthropologists, antiquarians, and academics of all stripes—Lovecraft's preferred characters. Others include artists, dilettantes, physicians, physicists, and, every once in a while, a policeman. Such investigators are pretty much on their own, without resources or reinforcements to support their fight against the Mythos. They often come into contact with the Mythos accidentally and are forced to improvise with the materials at hand.

SAMPLE PC GROUP: MISKATONIC UNIVERSITY

This micro-Ivy League college is a liberal arts institution in the sleepy college town of Arkham, Massachusetts. Known for sterling academics and an unusually high murder rate, Miskatonic is home to superb departments of archaeology, anthropology, and history, as well as a minor but prestigious medical school.

Investigators based at Miskatonic can draw on useful information resources, such as academic experts in obscure disciplines whose knowledge may be crucial in the course of a typical *Call of Cthulhu* adventure. Some faculty members have even encountered the horrors of the Mythos personally, such as Dr. Armitage of the campus library, and can offer valuable advice and subtle aid. Finally, the library holds copies of several rare occult tomes, including the infamous *Necronomicon.*

HOMETOWN HORRORS

With the Hometown Horrors subgenre, the GM finds ways to insinuate the cosmic horrors of the Cthulhu Mythos into the everyday world, usually in a location familiar to the players, such as the town you all live in. In effect, you're creating your own Lovecraft Country. Hometown Horrors usually involve a band of investigators drawn from the community, ordinary folks who would not normally pursue the mysteries and horrors of the Mythos if it were not forced upon them. Having been brought together in an impromptu way, the investigators can become the core of a campaign group for future adventures.

SAMPLE PC GROUP: THE THERON MARKS SOCIETY

Founded in 1920 by occult scholar and explorer Theron Marks, the society that bears his name was a typical group of *Call of Cthulhu* heroes: intrepid, inquisitive, and a little too quick on the trigger. Marks recruited a curious assortment of part-time, low-rent occult investigators, then set about thwarting the shadowy horrors he had encountered in the course of his travels in distant lands—including trips to alien worlds, if Society rumors are to be believed. He and his group had numerous run-ins with the law and cultists alike. A steady stream of dead or insane Society alumni spoke to the dangers of their both-guns-blazing approach to investigation. The eventual fate of Theron Marks and his Society is a mystery that your investigators might well solve.

PRIVATE TROUBLESHOOTERS

The Private Troubleshooters subgenre puts the investigators into an organization chartered to solve mysteries and gather information. This could be a national news service, such as a member of the Hearst newspaper empire, or a tabloid television show. They could be employees of a big private investigations firm such as the Pinkertons or the Burns Detective Agency, or a modern mercenary outfit such as Executive Outcomes. National or international scientific organizations such as the National Geographic Society, the Royal Geographical Society, or the Smithsonian Institute give the investigators an expense account and a reason to look into mysteries around the world. Private organizations exist that even track down incidents of the occult and paranormal activities and debunk them, as Harry Houdini did in the '20s and the *Skeptical Inquirer* does today.

SAMPLE PC GROUP: THE GILCHRIST TRUST

Professor Hiram Bannister, a noted parapsychologist, is the head of an unusually well-funded psychical research group known as the Gilchrist Trust. Endowed by an eccentric millionaire, the Trust has a very specific charter. If they can deliver substantive proof of the supernatural by late 1930, Prof. Bannister's group receives a lifetime of funding and support. If they fail, the money stops cold. In the meantime, there are a large number of milestone goals left behind in the jumbled files of Dr. Franklin Gilchrist's world travels, such as hunting for Yeti or investigating haunted houses. There's also his vast New Jersey estate, which contains warehouses full of mysterious and sometimes dangerous artifacts recovered from decades of exploration by Gilchrist and his mysteriously vanished son. All these items need to be cataloged, researched, and sometimes destroyed for the safety of humanity. Meanwhile, the law firm of Mark, Megrem, and Fincher casts a skeptical eye at its late client's foundation. Penny-pinching accountants at the firm are liable to cut an active investigation short at the slightest provocation, with little tolerance for wild, unsubstantiated stories of bloody cults and mad gods.

BADGES AND SECRETS

The Badges and Secrets subgenre drops the investigators into a world of cops, G-men, and spies, where they pursue adventures because they're charged by society with unraveling crimes and mysteries. They do so with official sanction and official powers, but their efforts are hampered. They can't tell superiors their cases could have paranormal explanations without being ridiculed as fools and madmen. The paradox here is that the investigators are using logical, methodical, and scientific means to unravel the irrational, chaotic machinations of the Mythos and its agents.

It would be cumbrous to give a detailed, consecutive account of our wanderings inside that cavernous, aeon-dead honeycomb of primal masonry; that monstrous lair of elder secrets which now echoed for the first time, after uncounted epochs, to the tread of human feet.

—H.P. Lovecraft, "At the Mountains of Madness"

SAMPLE PC GROUP: DELTA GREEN

Founded in the wake of the government's 1929 Raid on Innsmouth, the group known by the code name Delta Green fought the forces of the Cthulhu Mythos with honor, but without glory. After a disastrous 1969 operation in preinvasion Cambodia, Delta Green was shut down by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who were ignorant of the terrible secrets the agents of DG had uncovered over the years. Undaunted, the group's leaders changed Delta Green from a legitimate agency to an illegal conspiracy, operating within the federal bureaucracy and stealing money and resources from anywhere it could for the sake of the good fight. DG agents today are secret conspirators drawn from dozens of federal agencies, from the FBI to the IRS and NASA. They keep their DG operations quiet for the sake of their careers and for humanity itself, walking a razor wire path between success and tragedy.

ESOTERIC ORDERS

The Esoteric Orders subgenre is one where the investigators don't need to be exposed to the existence of the occult, largely because they begin as believers. More than that, they are members of an organized group that reinforces that belief. Such organizations fully embrace the existence of the supernatural and require no convincing in such matters. These organizations could be something as guardedly outré as the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, as drolly eccentric as a Society for Psychical Research, or as prosaically quirky as a group of amateur UFOlogists. They could even be members of a New Age religion who discover there is more to their leadership's beliefs than harmonized energy and self-actualization. Perhaps the investigators have been hoodwinked into the worship of the Great Old Ones? At least they have the belief system to look closer and learn the truth.

SAMPLE PC GROUP: THE GOLDEN DAWN

This group of mystics and amateur academics pursues enlightenment and secret knowledge with equal fervor in the misty streets of Victorian London. Led by the eccentric Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers, and disrupted by political struggles between the great Irish poet W. B. Yeats and a young Aleister Crowley, the Golden Dawn is an example of a real-life esoteric order suitable for use as a *Call of Cthulhu* subgenre. While some members of the Dawn busy themselves with drawing-room séances and the secret messages of angels, others explore the mysteries of standing stones and the horrors behind the legend of King Arthur. This group focuses on the folklore and ghostly history of the British Isles, with the lively yet spectral continent of Europe just a channel away.

GLOBAL HOT SPOTS

In the Global Hot Spots subgenre, the investigators are brought together by both the organizations they belong to and by the situation they are in. Here the investigators might be U.S. Marines stationed in Peking during the Boxer Rebellion, members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade in the Spanish Civil War, behind-the-scenes infiltrators in the killing fields of the Khmer Rouge, or Red Cross workers in a third-world disaster area. Among the death and destruction of what some call "skull-based economies," the Mythos lurks. Is the chaos of civil war and genocide man-made, or spawned by the machinations of the Mythos and its agents? That's what the investigators must learn against a backdrop of constant peril. They'll have resources to rely on and reinforcements to call in, but as in the Private Troubleshooters and Badges and Secrets subgenres, they'll have a difficult time engaging those resources if they tell their superiors the truth about the real enemy.

SAMPLE PC GROUP: THE BLACKWELLS

Sam Blackwell runs a tight outfit. His team of mercenaries is recruited from the world's finest law-enforcement organizations, militaries, and intelligence agencies. That makes the Blackwells so expensive that only the wealthiest international corporations can hire them—but no one else would need them. Now that companies are the new nations, commerce is more political than ever. Why terrorize a well-guarded embassy when you can attack an oil rig, or a remote customer service office, or a sweatshop footwear factory? The Blackwells specialize in risk assessment and security consultation, but for their richest clients they take a proactive approach: illegal and covert search-and-destroy missions against terrorist groups, rioting indigenous tribes, and even rival corporate security teams. But in the midst of these morally bankrupt shadow wars in hot spots around the globe, Sam Blackwell pursues his own secret agenda: revenge against the mysterious international cult that murdered his entire family in retaliation for an early operation. What is the Cult of Cthulhu, and who is their leader? Sam Blackwell wants to know, and he always gets his man.

OTHER SUBGENRES

While this book only covers the kinds of adventures available during the last century or so, other subgenres are certainly possible for *Call of Cthulhu*. They could be set in the distant past or even the far future. What's important to remember when creating a new subgenre is maintaining balance between the investigators and the Mythos—or rather, preserving the imbalance that already exists. A good subgenre should help your group build a coherent and exciting storyline, without turning the forces of the Mythos into a cartoon or a straw man.

While it might appeal to some players to try a far future/sci-fi subgenre and equip their investigators with powered battle armor and plasma rifles, the GM should remember to balance the scenario so that brute-force solutions fail. Gamemasters should not allow the investigators to substitute tools and weapons for intelligence and cleverness. Similarly, the GM cannot expect the investigators to resolve a scenario by destroying a shoggoth if the investigators are medieval European monks and knights whose weapons are hopelessly ineffective. The adversaries must be balanced with the investigators' ability to defeat them, whether by force or guile. This balance is the most important and difficult factor to maintain in *Call of Cthulhu*.

PLOT HOOKS

Once you have a time period and subgenre in mind, it's good to have some adventure ideas you can tackle right off the bat. This section offers dozens of different plot hooks, organized by time period and subgenre. Of course, you aren't limited to just the story ideas you'll find at your campaign's intersection—they're meant to be representative of the kinds of stories you'll probably tell. Feel free to pick and choose ideas you like from anywhere.

Many of these plot hooks are inspired by short stories, books, movies, and television shows. Because these are usefully common points of reference you can find and enjoy for yourself, we have included the sources for such ideas. Stories and books include their respective authors. These aren't recommendations for intrinsically good dramatic works—some of the films, for example, are really bad. But all contain nuggets of stories that could work well in your *Call of Cthulhu* campaign.

Because his stories appear so frequently, attribution to H. P. Lovecraft is simply abbreviated as HPL. Also, many of the films cited are based on books or stories; the film is usually listed owing to its ease of rapid digestion for harried GMs seeking basic story ideas. In some cases, the film and the book are cited in separate plot hooks because of useful differences between them.

THE AGE OF EMPIRES: 1890–1909

LOVECRAFT COUNTRY

June 1892, meteorite falls into yard of Nahum Gardner's farm near Arkham. ("The Colour Out of Space," HPL)

1905, Miskatonic U. medical student Herbert West uses the Arkham typhoid outbreak as cover for his experiments in reanimating the dead. ("Herbert West—Re-animator," HPL)

Rumors circulate that Miskatonic University's wild bohemian set is involved in black magic and impossible happenings. Are these the activities of attention-seeking posers, or is there something fouler afoot? ("The Thing on the Doorstep," HPL)

HOMETOWN HORRORS

The evil and unnatural carnival comes to town and spreads its corruption. (*Something Wicked This Way Comes*, Ray Bradbury)

An unscrupulous and decadent mine owner uses necromancy to revivify the dead and put them to work in his mines, which are so dangerous that no locals will work them. (*The Plague of Zombies*)

PRIVATE TROUBLESHOOTERS

Whodunits in the vein of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

1893, Edwin M. Lillibridge, reporter for the Providence *Telegram*, disappears during his investigation of the Starry Wisdom cult. ("The Haunter of the Dark," HPL)

Anthropologists unearth a mummified protohuman in the Far East and transport it by rail to civilization. The corpse is actually the residence for a hibernating alien intelligence that hungers for human life and knowledge. (*Horror Express*)

Following up on a previous expedition, investigators discover a passage into an underground realm, revealing prehistoric survivors, subterranean oceans, and the remnants of lost civilizations. (*Journey to the Center of the Earth*, Jules Verne)

An expedition to the South Pole seeks "the passage through," the opening into the hollow earth, but is marooned when its leadership is killed and its ship crushed by winter ice. (*The Forbidden Quest*)

A dirigible-borne expedition to the Arctic Ocean discovers a volcanic island inhabited by survivors from an ancient epoch. (*The Island at the Top of the World*)

An expedition to Africa discovers a lost civilization ruled by a cruel, immortal empress, who holds the secret of eternal life and is worshiped as a goddess by the inhabitants of her realm. (*She*)

BADGES AND SECRETS

Urban lawmen must unravel the series of gruesome and inexplicable murders in the vein of Jack the Ripper—only to find that they are ritual cult murders.

Lawmen on the frontier find themselves facing some ancient horror the local natives know but fear to speak of. ("They Bite," Anthony Boucher)

November 1, 1907: Cthulhu cult in Louisiana swamp broken up by police raid led by Inspector John Raymond Legrasse. ("The Call of Cthulhu," HPL)

ESOTERIC ORDERS

Members of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn stumble upon the Mythos while searching for occult powers. Do they try to harness the power, or seal it away?

Investigating a haunted house, the Society for Psychical Research finds more than it bargained for.

April 17, 1908: last known sighting of noted occultist Alonzo Typer. ("The Diary of Alonzo Typer," HPL)

GLOBAL HOT SPOTS

Natives in the Belgian Congo take up the worship of Nyarlathotep to destroy their brutal colonial oppressors. ("Than Curse the Darkness," David Drake)

Westerners trapped in China discover there is more behind the Boxer Rebellion than nationalism and mysticism.

Japanese Imperialism begins with secret societies dedicated to annexing Korea, Manchuria, and the Russian far east. Is their true master the Emperor, or something older and fouler?

The Spanish-American War: As America steals the remnants of the Spanish Empire, strange and undisturbed realms are invaded. Evils undisturbed since the last Arawak died stir in the mountains of Cuba. In the jungles of the Philippines, temples and other remnants of the sunken civilization of Mu have lain undisturbed for thousands of years. Are their dark gods roused by blundering American soldiers?

THE ROUGH BEAST: 1910–1919

LOVECRAFT COUNTRY

1913: Wilbur Whateley and his horrific twin brother are born in Dunwich on Roodmas. ("The Dunwich Horror," HPL)

Dr. Nathaniel Peaslee suffers a bout of "amnesia." In truth, his mind has been replaced by one of the time-traveling Great Race, who then uses his body to explore the modern world and perform tasks important to its race's future destiny. ("The Shadow Out of Time," HPL)

1915: Events quickly begin to deteriorate around the Whateley farm in Dunwich. Wilbur grows with unnatural speed. Locals believe that the Whateleys are performing ancient pagan practices among the standing stones on Sentinel Hill. ("The Dunwich Horror," HPL)

HOMETOWN HORRORS

Mentally and physically disfigured veterans return home to communities that fear and loathe their injuries. What



Ghouls feast on the mountains of dead filling the trenches and no-man's-land of Flanders. Their cult gathers adherents as the slaughter continues apparently without end.

1915: Herbert West, as a doctor in the Canadian Expeditionary Force in Flanders, continues his ghastly experiments in reanimating the dead. ("Herbert West—Re-animator," HPL)

August 20, 1917: German U-29 malfunctions and sinks, settling among the undersea ruins of an unknown civilization on the ocean floor. ("The Temple," HPL)

Wars in the outposts of the Empires, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Polynesia bring "civilized" man into contact with horrors that have been undisturbed for millennia.

An off-course German U-boat, the U-33, stumbles upon a island where terrible prehistoric survivors still thrive. (*The Land That Time Forgot*)

mad bargains will they make to regain their limbs or calm their shattered psyches?

Millions of young men come home not at all, except in coffins. Grieving parents and spouses would do anything to have their loved ones back. Some unlucky few find a way to bring them back, with loathsome and terrible results.

PRIVATE TROUBLESHOOTERS

1912: African explorer Sir Arthur Jermyn rediscovers the ancient city of the White Apes that his great-great-great-grandfather had written of, and soon discovers the hideous truth of his ancestry. ("Facts Concerning the Late Arthur Jermyn and His Family," HPL)

Any "normal" investigation is complicated by the war. Borders are closed, communications are restricted, and the sea lanes are a shooting gallery in a new kind of conflict: unrestricted submarine warfare.

BADGES AND SECRETS

Global war means global espionage. Spies are supposed to discover secrets, but there are secrets man was not meant to know. Perhaps the agents of some government agency have dabbled with powers they shouldn't have in a misguided attempt to change the course of the war?

An army of deserters from all sides in the war have carved out a kingdom in the Carpathian Mountains. Is their commander just emulating the infamous warlord Vlad the Impaler, or is he truly Dracula? (*Masks of Evil*)

Centuries-old Fu Manchu and his secret society, the Si-Fan, plot the overthrow of western governments through threats, assassination (successful against even the most well-protected targets, and carried out by bizarre and sometimes supernatural means), and darker methods. The full resources of the British Empire, then at its height, prove inadequate to stop or capture the sinister Chinese mastermind or disperse his network. (*The Insidious Dr. Fu Manchu*, Sax Rohmer)

ESOTERIC ORDERS

Spiritualists or members of occult societies such as the Golden Dawn (now splintered into many rival factions, one of them led by the infamous Aleister Crowley) could discover that their own government is trying to use the occult to aid their nation's cause. Knowing the horrific costs such bargains can exact, can they stop such foolish dabbling and not be branded traitors to their nation?

THE JAZZ AGE: 1920-1929

LOVECRAFT COUNTRY

1921: Dr. Allen Hallsey, who was reanimated by Herbert West in 1905 and confined to the Sefton Asylum, is forcibly liberated by a group of Herbert West's other escaped reanimation experiments, who then wreak bloody vengeance upon their tormentor. ("Herbert West—Re-animator," HPL)

During the winter of 1927-28 officials of the Federal government made a strange and secret investigation of certain conditions in the ancient Massachusetts seaport of Innsmouth. The public first learned of it in February, when a vast series of raids and arrests occurred, followed by the deliberate burning and dynamiting—under suitable precautions—of an enormous number of crumbling, worm-eaten, and supposedly empty houses along the abandoned waterfront. Uninquiring souls let this occurrence pass as one of the major clashes in a spasmodic war on liquor. Keener news-followers, however, wondered at the prodigious number of arrests, the abnormally large force of men used in making them, and the secrecy surrounding the disposal of the prisoners. No trials, or even definite charges, were reported; nor were any of the captives seen thereafter in the regular gaols of the nation.

— H.P. Lovecraft,
"The Shadow Over Innsmouth"

August 1, 1924: Old Wizard Whateley dies on Lammas Night, survived by daughter Lavinia and his two grandsons: Wilbur and the Dunwich Horror. ("The Dunwich Horror," HPL)

October 31, 1926: Lavinia Whateley dies on All Hallows Eve, survived by her twin sons. ("The Dunwich Horror," HPL)

August 1928: Wilbur Whateley killed by the great guard dog at Miskatonic University Library while trying to steal *the Necronomicon*. A few weeks later, the Horror escapes from the abandoned Whateley farmhouse. ("The Dunwich Horror," HPL)

September 12, 1928: Professor Albert Wilmarth of Miskatonic University barely escapes the agents of the mi-go in Vermont. ("The Whisperer in Darkness," HPL)

September 15, 1928: Professors Armitage, Rice, and Morgan from

Miskatonic University confront and banish the Son of Yog-Sothoth in Dunwich. ("The Dunwich Horror," HPL)

Poet Edward Derby falls under the sway of the much younger Asenath Waite, who is in truth but a shell housing her father's intellect. Derby is the sorcerer's intended new "home." ("The Thing on the Doorstep," HPL)

Mathematician Walter Gilman dies horribly, his heart eaten out, after staying in Arkham's infamous "Witch House." ("The Dreams in the Witch House," HPL)

HOMETOWN HORRORS

Doctor Munoz "dies" when his effort to preserve his reanimated body fails dramatically in New York City. ("Cool Air," HPL)

Professor George Gammell Angell is assassinated by agents of the Cult of Cthulhu after he learns too much about the cult's activities. His nephew continues his dangerous researches. ("The Call of Cthulhu," HPL)

Charles Dexter Ward of Providence succeeds in resurrecting his ancient ancestor Joseph Curwen, only to have the grim sorcerer murder him and take his place. Only the intervention of the family physician confounds Curwen's evil plans. (*The Case of Charles Dexter Ward*, HPL)

PRIVATE TROUBLESHOOTERS

Whodunits in the style of Agatha Christie.

August 8, 1924: Investigation of catacombs under Exham Priory in England ends in disaster as Mr. Thornton, a psychic, and Mr. Delapore, the owner, are driven mad. Delapore murders and cannibalizes his partner in leading the investigation, Captain Edward Norrys. ("The Rats in the Walls," HPL)

August 1928: Sealed entryway to underground world of K'n-Yan discovered under "ghost mound" near Binger, Oklahoma. ("The Mound," HPL and Hazel Heald)

Investigators uncovering the true fate of the Martense clan dynamited the Martense mansion and the entire top of Tempest Mountain, blocked up numerous mound burrows, and destroyed certain overnourished trees. ("The Lurking Fear," HPL)

After finding a message in a bottle, an expedition is mounted to find the survivors marooned on the "lost continent." (*The People That Time Forgot*)

Archaeologists unearth mummy of long dead Egyptian sorcerer and accidentally revive him, unleashing the ancient evil. (*The Mummy*, 1932 and 1999)

BADGES AND SECRETS

Winter 1927–1928: Federal agents investigate town of Innsmouth, Massachusetts, and the Esoteric Order of Dagon. ("The Shadow over Innsmouth," HPL)

February 1928: Federal raid on Innsmouth: hybrids are rounded up and imprisoned, docks and warehouses dynamited, and torpedoes fired into the Devil's Reef offshore. ("The Shadow over Innsmouth," HPL)

A depraved gangster turns to the powers of the Mythos to destroy his enemies, line his pockets, and gain limitless power.

ESOTERIC ORDERS

Investigators must rescue their associate who has fallen under the influence of a powerful cult leader and his minions. (*The Devil Rides Out*)

Thrill-seeking members of the Lost Generation dabble in dangerous occult mysteries, seeking meaning and finding only horror.

GLOBAL HOT SPOTS

Millions die during the Russian Civil War and resulting famine. Ghouls, migrating from the killing fields of Europe, thrive in the charnel house of the USSR.

March 23–April 2, 1925: Sunken city of R'lyeh remains above the surface of the South Pacific. Psychic emanations of dreaming Cthulhu results in worldwide episodes of madness and erratic behavior among the psychically sensitive. ("The Call of Cthulhu," HPL)

April 2, 1925: Crew of steamship *Emma* encounter R'lyeh. Only Captain Gustaf Johansen escapes as Cthulhu wakes and the island sinks. ("The Call of Cthulhu," HPL)

THE RISE OF DARKNESS: 1930–1939

LOVECRAFT COUNTRY

Edward Derby, in a desperate attempt to save himself, murders his wife Asenath in hopes of thus destroying his father-in-law, Ephraim Waite, who is inhabiting and controlling Asenath's body. To his horror, the old wizard takes over Derby's body and forces Derby's mind into his wife's cadaver. A family friend, discovering Derby's journal, learns the truth and murders Derby's body, slaying the wizard who inhabits it. ("The Thing on the Doorstep," HPL)

HOMETOWN HORRORS

Writer Robert Harrison Blake dies from a mysterious lightning strike after researching the deserted Sentinel Hill church in Providence, previously used by the Starry Wisdom cult. Dr. Dexter, a reputable physician with a taste for odd folklore, disposes of a Mythos artifact discovered in the church by Blake, called the Shining Trapezohedron, by throwing it into Narragansett Bay. ("The Haunter of the Dark," HPL)

Bankrupt farmers in the American dust bowl invoke Shub-Niggurath to save their farms and instead bring a reign of unnatural and loathsome fecundity.

The Depression brings lost souls to seek the King in Yellow among the decaying, breadline-choked cities.

PRIVATE TROUBLESHOOTERS

Whodunits in the style of Dashiell Hammett.

November 9, 1930: The Miskatonic University Antarctic Expedition arrives at McMurdo Sound. (*At the Mountains of Madness*, HPL)

January 22, 1931: Professor Lake of the MU Antarctic Expedition penetrates the interior of the continent using aircraft, discovers unknown but well-preserved advanced life forms, and then loses radio contact with expedition HQ. (*At*

LOVECRAFT COUNTRY

Miskatonic University Library's restricted book collection has been the target of sorcerers and cultists for many decades. Now foreign agents are trying to liberate the *Necronomicon* for high-ranking Nazi occultists.

the Mountains of Madness, HPL)

Archaeologist must find the tomb of Genghis Khan and recover powerful artifacts before the cultists and their diabolical leader can use them to incite an Asian uprising. (*The Mask of Fu Manchu*)

July 17, 1935: Miskatonic University Expedition to Great Western Desert in Australia ends. Expedition leader Professor Nathaniel Wingate Peaslee stumbles upon an entrance to a buried alien city but later cannot locate the entrance again. ("The Shadow Out of Time," HPL)

An isolated South Seas island is the home of a scientist obsessed with unraveling man's evolution. Using surgery and drugs on animals, he has created a population of semihuman creatures. Marooned investigators will have to decide who are the monsters when the experiments rebel. (*Island of Lost Souls*)

Lost explorers stumble across a hidden paradise, Shangri-La, somewhere on the Tibetan plateau, where the inhabitants can live to be centuries old, as long as they never leave. (*Lost Horizons*)

Rumors persist of another hidden enclave, its dark twin, named Leng, home to the Tcho-Tcho people.

BADGES AND SECRETS

Armed robbers steal more than they bargained for: a Mythos artifact or tome.

The Nazi leadership scours the world for items of occult significance. (*Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*)

ESOTERIC ORDERS

Members of a spiritualist society soon find themselves the targets of Nazi agents infiltrating their group to discover whether they have any secrets the Führer can use.

A wealthy and powerful sorcerer and his cult plan a sacrifice on the site of the fortress he betrayed during the Great War. Only his old nemesis, nearly as mad as he is, has a chance of stopping him. (*The Black Cat*)

GLOBAL HOT SPOTS

New conquests by the Nazis, Italians, and Japanese accidentally disturb the wards and sigils trapping an ancient and evil supernatural force, unleashing it on the locals and invaders alike. (*The Keep*)

Fleeing Stalin's bloody purges, defectors bring secrets of the Kremlin west—including ancient tomes from the lost library of Ivan the Terrible.

HOMETOWN HORRORS

Young American veterans pick up all manner of souvenirs from around the globe and return home with them. Who knows what powers or poisons are contained in the squat, ugly, octopoid statue brought back from a South Pacific archipelago?

War creates all kinds of refugees. Fearing Nazi crematoriums, a few horrific devotees of the Great Old Ones flee from the Old World. Some of these "displaced persons" carry horrible physical taints and are kept hidden from public view. Unnoticed within a wave of immigrants, they come to America to test the nation's limits on freedom of religion.



PRIVATE TROUBLESHOOTERS

Whodunits in the style of Raymond Chandler.

The hardened private investigator gets a case that just doesn't add up, at least not until all thought of wholesomeness, hope, and reason are thrown out. Such concepts cannot exist alongside the Mythos.

As the Nazi and Imperial Japanese war machines roll across Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific, the investigators are hired by museums, private collectors, or other less savory persons to retrieve "certain treasures" (and tomes) from the occupied territories. The clients may even be completely anonymous, but they certainly can't be worse than the Nazis, can they?

BADGES AND SECRETS

Allied and Axis agents scour the world for occult artifacts that might tip the balance of power. What each side cannot secure for its own use, it destroys.

Nazi occultists plan to contact one of the ancient races of the Mythos and form an alliance or, worse, summon one of the Outer Gods to Earth.

American and Soviet agents scour the ruins of the Reich for the occult artifacts collected by the Nazi leadership. Such terrible objects of power must be kept out of Stalin's grasp.

Nazi sorcerers flee to South America or find sanctuary with American

Illustration ©2001, Jason Soles. Used with permission.

agencies. It's up to the investigators to root them out and exterminate them, even while their own agencies are trying to utilize the Nazis' arcane powers.

What crashed in the New Mexico desert in 1947? Was it a weather balloon, some artifact of the Mythos, a salvaged Nazi weapon, a flying disk, or something worse? Are the investigators trying to find the truth, or cover it up?

ESOTERIC ORDERS

Following the first postwar UFO sighting, members of a "UFO contactee" group want to make psychic contact with benevolent "space brothers." What they actually manage to contact is neither benevolent nor brotherly. It is, however, from outer space, and very, very hungry.

GLOBAL HOT SPOTS

All the world is one hot spot in this era. Even more thanWorld War One, the conflict opens up hidden and obscured corners of the world to the prying eyes of all.

American Marines storm ashore to find the Japanese garrison vanished, the island abandoned like the *Andrea Doria.* What did the Japanese disturb? What was called down on them? How can the Americans survive what's coming?

When Allied soldiers liberate one of the Nazi death camps, they discover not only the evidence of sadistic medical and scientific experiments but also obscene occult rituals. Did the Nazis succeed in their summoning? And if so, is something hiding among the liberated prisoners?

As the Communist Chinese push back the Nationalists, they try to wipe away China's past. The cults and secret societies that have thrived there for centuries are forced to flee—to Burma, Thailand, Formosa, and even overseas to America, bringing the worship of the Great Old Ones with them.

"What, in substance, both the Esquimau wizards and the Louisiana swamp priest had chanted to their kindred idols was something very like this—the word-divisions being guessed at from traditional breaks in the phrase as chanted aloud: "Ph'nglui mglw'-nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn." Legrasse had one point in advance of Professor Webb, for several among his mongrel prisoners had repeated to him what older celebrants had told them the words meant. This text, as given, ran something like this: 'In his house at R'lyeh, dead Cthulhu waits dreaming.'"

—H.P. Lovecraft, "The Call of Cthulhu"

THE COLD WAR: 1950–1959

LOVECRAFT COUNTRY

Kingsport, the dream-shrouded artist colony that has always wavered just on the edge of dreams, becomes a haven for the emerging Beat Generation. More and more questing souls find their way to the Strange High House in the Mist and into the realms beyond. ("The Strange High House in the Mist," HPL)

HOMETOWN HORRORS

Alien doppelgangers, birthed from enormous seed pods, begin replacing people around town in a silent invasion of the Earth. (*Invasion of the Body Snatchers*)

PRIVATE TROUBLESHOOTERS

A research laboratory on an isolated island becomes a death trap as escaped, mutated lab animals besiege the lab, having grown enormous, savage, and voracious. (*The Killer Shrews*)

Following an earthquake, archaeologists in Central Asia discover a passage into an underground realm, isolated for thousands of years, where decadent human masters brutally exploit a population of semihuman slaves. (*The Mole People*)

Investigators attempting to debunk the beliefs of a cult leader find themselves marked for death as the cult leader summons a extradimensional horror to make examples of them. (*The Curse of the Demon*)

An investigator is hired by a mysterious client, only to discover that is he working for a powerful occult entity and that the true target of the creature's interests may be closer than he thinks. (*Angel Heart*)

BADGES AND SECRETS

Government scientists probe a mysterious radioactive cloud atop an Alpine mountain. The cloud is the entryway into our dimension for a horde of alien invaders. (*The Crawling Eye*)

Air Force personnel and scientists find themselves trapped in an arctic research station with an alien monster impervious to normal weapons and extremely hostile to terrestrial life. (*The Thing*)

An expedition returns from Antarctica, its members dead or mad. The fossilized plants they bring back turn out to be alive, mobile, and predatory. (*The Navy vs. the Night Monsters*)

ESOTERIC ORDERS

UFO contactee cults proliferate with the popularity in the belief in UFOs. Agents of the mi-go infiltrate them to acquire influence and understanding of humanity.

GLOBAL HOT SPOTS

The Korean War is the great confrontation between East and West, the hottest spot in the Cold War. No end is known to the kind of strangeness that American GIs might encounter in the mountains of "the Hermit Kingdom."

The anticolonial wars begin as former colonies demand the freedom promised them during World War II. England, France, Belgium, Portugal, and the Netherlands fight to protect the remnants of their 19th-century empires, while some natives turn to the power promised by the worship of the Great Old Ones

of their home environment. (*Quatermass II*)

A derelict alien spaceship unearthed beneath the city is discovered to be linked with paranormal occurrences dating back centuries. Once unearthed, its psychic emanations grow stronger, poisoning any human minds it touches. (*Quatermass and the Pit*)

to counter the force of modern arms.

The Middle East heats up as the birth of the state of Israel in 1948 displaces millions of Palestinians.

THE HOT WAR: 1960–1969

LOVECRAFT COUNTRY

The Hippies follow the Beats (Beatniks) into the artist colony of Kingsport. Still seeking the same escape from reality, they too find their way into the Dreamlands or the Strange High House in the Mist. Others may find themselves drawn to the cult that has always haunted Kingsport. ("The Strange High House in the Mist" and "The Festival," HPL)

Attempting to probe the mysteries of the human mind, a Miskatonic University psychology professor and his graduate students experiment with the Plutonian Drug, Liao, and attract the attention of the savage and ravenous Hounds of Tindalos. Other experiments might lead to calling the Render of the Veils, Daoloth. ("The Hounds of Tindalos," Frank Belknap Long; "The Render of the Veils," Ramsey Campbell)

HOMETOWN HORRORS

After the whole town is inexplicably rendered unconscious for 12 hours, many women in town become pregnant. The children, actually alien-human hybrids, are powerful psychics who ruthlessly destroy anyone who opposes their plans for the Earth. (*Village of the Damned*)

The Hippies seem harmless, in a ragged, vagabond sort of way. But does their message have the siren call of a cult of youth, where the old have no place? What will parents do when their children decide their continued existence is no longer necessary? Any number of rituals and spells could be slipped to unsuspecting flower children by unscrupulous cultists under the label of "mantras" and "meditation chants."

PRIVATE TROUBLESHOOTERS

A laboratory on an isolated island accidentally spawns mutant creatures that subsist on calcium and devour human bone to get it. They threaten to slaughter the island's inhabitants and escape. (*Island of Terror*)

Archaeologists discover a hidden grotto beneath a Mayan temple and accidentally disturb the ancient and protoplasmic god that guards the site. (*Caltiki, the Immortal Monster*)

BADGES AND SECRETS

Whodunits in the style of John Le Carré.

A spaceship orbits the Earth and returns with a mostly dead crew. The sole survivor has become the host for an alien organism that mutates his body and escapes with the intention of germinating. The investigators must hunt the former astronaut down and destroy the alien horror he has become. (*The Quatermass Experiment*)

Alien invaders, parasitically possessing humans, infiltrate the government to get the funding and manpower they need to terraform our world into a replica

ESOTERIC ORDERS

Psychic investigators probe the mysteries of a haunted house but soon find the investigators are falling under the house's outré influence. (*The Haunting*; *The Haunting of Hill House*, Shirley Jackson; *The Legend of Hell House*, Richard Matheson; *The House on Haunted Hill*).

An occult artifact, the skull of the Marquis de Sade, becomes available at an auction house. Its corruptive influence begins to undermine the sanity of anyone who gains possession of it. (*The Skull*)

GLOBAL HOT SPOTS

Nuclear Armageddon looms over the world. Everyone lives in the shadow of the bomb. Would the worshipers of the Great Old Ones try to provoke World War Three to clear the Earth of humanity for their alien masters? (*Fail-Safe; Dr. Strangelove*)

The Anticolonial Wars: Now America has found its way into the fray, bolstering corrupt and brutal governments because they pantomime opposition to communism. Secret and not-so-secret wars blaze across Vietnam, Laos, Angola, and the Congo, just to name a few, and will soon engulf peaceful Cambodia as well. Americans find themselves fighting people they have never heard of in places they have never heard of. Such places may hide the Mythos and its worshipers, more often among America's allies than its insurgent enemies.

THE DREAM DECAYS: 1970–1979

LOVECRAFT COUNTRY

As the big cities decay, populations flee to the suburbs. Will old abandoned communities such as Innsmouth or Dunwich be rediscovered by developers looking to build bedroom communities on the ruins of such ghastly locales? Could this create a Mythos version of Love Canal?

HOMETOWN HORRORS

Strange doings with the new funeral home owners. They are performing grisly experiments to enslave the newly dead for their alien masters. (*Phantasm*)

Bloody rituals of fertility continue to be practiced in secret in the isolated corners of America's agricultural heartland. (*The Dark Secret of Harvest Home*)

The local haunted house becomes ground zero for an infestation of vampires that sweeps through the isolated small town. (*Salem's Lot*, Steven King)

Once again, a veteran returns home, mentally and physically scarred by the war in Southeast Asia, but he's brought with him a wife from a little known hill-tribe called the Tcho-Tchos. Perhaps they will open a restaurant. . . .

PRIVATE TROUBLESHOOTERS

An investigative writer disappears, leaving behind his case notes and tapes that lead his publisher to supernatural occurrences. (*The Norliss Tapes*)

Serial murders prove to have either supernatural motives or a supernatural perpetrator, but the authorities won't recognize the problem. Only the investigators know what needs to be done. (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker*)

BADGES AND SECRETS

An accidentally released biological warfare weapon causes violent insanity. Government forces must quarantine the outbreak at all costs. (*The Crazies*)

Investigators arrive at an isolated island community to investigate an anonymously reported crime, only to discover that the locals are believers in the occult who have lured the investigators to the island for a sinister purpose. (*The Wicker Man*)

Nazi war criminals working for ODESSA use cloning to attempt to resurrect Adolf Hitler. (*The Boys From Brazil*)

ESOTERIC ORDERS

Former cult member turned investigator finds himself under attack by supernatural means from his former masters, who are trying to prevent him from following up a new case. (*Spectre*)

The staff of an experimental psychiatric retreat accidentally causes one of its patients to physically manifest her rage in the form of asexually produced mutant children. (*The Brood*)

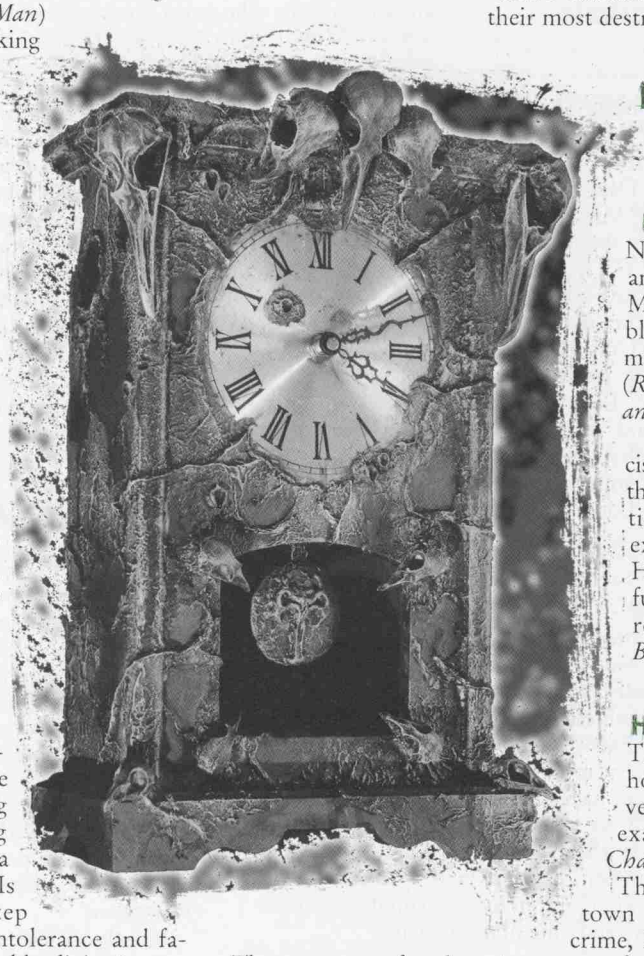
GLOBAL HOT SPOTS

In response to decades of persecution, Islamic Fundamentalism sweeps the Middle East, destroying Lebanon and swallowing Iran, raising the specter of a true jihad against the West. Is the hand of Nyarlathotep behind this rising tide of intolerance and fanaticism among a major world religion?

Terrorism sweeps through Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. The IRA, RAF, PLO, and a maddening array of alphabet-soup organizations sow horror and death. Again, is the Crawling Chaos behind it all?

Cambodia's Auto-genocide: What could explain the kind of insanity that could cause a people to slaughter one-third of their own population except the intervention of the Great Old Ones? Is this Maoist brainwashing or mass sacrifice?

Biological warfare research is outlawed by treaty but continues in secret. As scientists search the world for more exotic materials and mutagens, one group of researchers gains access to the Milk of Shub-Niggurath and shoggoth proto-matter. They then weave elements of the Outer Gods into their most destructive weapons.



ESCALATION TO GLOBALISM: 1980–1989

LOVECRAFT COUNTRY

New experiments in reanimation of the dead at Miskatonic U. leads to bloody mayhem, madness, murder, and very weird sex. (*Re-animator, Bride of Re-animator*)

A brilliant yet mad physicist creates a device to pierce the veil of human perception and is devoured by extradimensional entities. His invention continues to function and threaten the rest of humanity. (*From Beyond*)

HOMETOWN HORRORS

The investigators' new home is also home to a vengeful spirit looking to exact its revenge. (*The Changeling*)

The investigators' hometown is haunted by a terrible crime, kept secret for a century. The vengeance for the crime comes from the sea as the undead shamble forth to claim the guilty and the innocent. (*The Fog*)

An isolated small town is cut off and besieged by unnatural and ravenous creatures of unknown origin. (*Tremors*)

An isolated mountain town is threatened by the release of a protoplasmic biological weapon that could devour all terrestrial life. The bio-warriors who created the monster are more than willing to sacrifice the town to protect their new weapon. (*The Blob*)

Child murders are actually sacrifices that ensure the success and prosperity of the community's rich and powerful. (*The Believers*)

PRIVATE TROUBLESHOOTERS

An Antarctic research station becomes ground zero for an insidious shape-shifting alien invader, unearthed from millennia-old glacial ice. (*The Thing*)

Their hometown destroyed by supernatural forces, the investigators go on the road to hunt down the agents of the Mythos. (*Phantasm II*)

Having inherited an antique store specializing in arcane artifacts and blasphemous tomes, the investigators must use the store's records to track down and recover the horrid items and the cultists, sorcerers, and victims who purchased them. (*Friday the 13th: The Series*)

Illustration ©2001, Jason Soles. Used with permission.

A body shipped home for burial from South America bring a plague of deadly spiders who are socially organized like ants and act with intelligent direction. (*Arachnophobia*)

BADGES AND SECRETS

A deep-space probe returns to Earth with an alien creature that spreads its destructive influence. The investigators must contain the "plague" at all costs. (*Lifeforce*)

Investigators attempting to rescue the crew of a sunken ballistic missile submarine discover that unnatural forces were responsible for the loss of the vessel. (*The Abyss*)

ESOTERIC ORDERS

A monastic brotherhood has guarded an ancient and evil entity slumbering for centuries, only to have it awaken and begin to extend its foul influence and power. (*The Prince of Darkness*)

An investigator discovers that she is a monster, the victim of a tainted bloodline that goes back thousands of years. (*Cat People*)

GLOBAL HOT SPOTS

Cold War Confrontations: The Soviets in Afghanistan, the Cubans in Angola, the Contras in Nicaragua; millions of dollars and tens of thousands of lives are spent as East confronts West. All around the world there are opportunities for the worshipers of the Great Old Ones to provoke the superpowers into more deadly confrontations.

While America is winning the Cold War, it is losing the Drug War. The level of violence is growing, the level of corruption rivals the worst years of Prohibition, and the level of government complicity is even worse. The hand of the King in Yellow can be seen behind this spiral into hopelessness and decadence.

AIDS begins its globe-spanning march of death. By the end of the decade some sub-Saharan countries have an infection rate of over 20%. With so many people facing death, how many will be willing to sell their souls to the Outer Gods in order to stave off the inevitable, or gain vengeance on those who stood by, ignored the crisis, and refused to help?

NEW WORLD ORDER: 1990 TO MODERN DAY

LOVECRAFT COUNTRY

Arkham has remained a university town where students press the boundaries of human knowledge. Students looking for short-cuts examine the papers of students from decades ago, perhaps uncovering lost research of Herbert West, Crawford Tillinghast, and Harley Warren. ("Herbert West—Re-animator," "From Beyond," and "The Statement of Randolph Carter," all by HPL)

HOMETOWN HORRORS

The old mill, the cornerstone of the small town's economy, is possessed by a demon, which requires periodic sacrifices in order to assure prosperity. (*The Mangler*)

When the island town's historic cemetery is moved, the carrion feeders living beneath it come looking for fresher provender among the islanders. (*Bleeders*)

PRIVATE TROUBLESHOOTERS

Investigators probe the legend of the local bogeyman and find themselves the targets of the all-too-real malevolent entity. (*The Blair Witch Project, Curse of the Blair Witch*)

Following their first experience dealing with a monstrous threat, the investigators are hired to deal with a second outbreak. (*Tremors II: Aftershocks*)

The investigators accidentally discover an artifact hidden for centuries. It is the key to an unnatural and horrid kind of immortality. The artifact is pursued by cultists and opportunists who will kill to get it. (*Cronos*)

A powerful sorcerer flees the superstitious Puritan past to the skeptical, permissive present in order to hunt down a scattered spellbook that is the key to fulfilling his master's designs on the Earth. (*Warlock*)

BADGES AND SECRETS

Government agents investigate incidents of the occult and conspiratorial forces behind the scenes. (*The X-Files*)

Government agents are charged with finding and eliminating a supernatural threat to national security. (*Ultraviolet*)

ESOTERIC ORDERS

Investigators join a private, but powerful, organization to combat the supernatural and evil, only to find the organization has a hidden agenda all its own. (*Millennium*)

Investigators researching chaos-theory mathematics find themselves the target of a corporation wishing to control world markets and cabalistic cultists seeking the name of God. (*Pi*)

GLOBAL HOT SPOTS

The Disunion of the Soviet Socialist Republics: In the rubble of the fallen empire lay instruments of mass destruction undreamt of. Will the worshipers of Ithaqua try to use the "Dead Hand" fail-safe system to launch a nuclear strike against the U.S. in order to create a nuclear winter, or will the bio-weapon horrors of "Rebirth Island" in the Aral Sea find their way ashore?

Balkan Balkanization: As the Eastern Bloc splinters, economic viability is voluntarily and enthusiastically exchanged for rubble, rotting corpses, and ethnic cleansing. Hopefully the Great Old Ones are responsible; otherwise humanity has done it to itself again, engaging in self-inflicted genocide.

African Bloodbaths: Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Zaire—Africa is racing to depopulate itself between casualties caused by famine, war, and disease (especially AIDS). The whole continent resembles the prophecies of the Great Old Ones, where man is but an ingredient in the bloody feasts of the Outer Gods.

ADVENTURE 1: THE END OF PARADISE

This adventure has been designed for a group of 1st-level investigators. It takes place in the modern day, in an older neighborhood within an unnamed city or town.

BACKGROUND

Built in 1892 by the wealthy Allen family, the Paradise Theater was a showplace for stage acts, the finest venue in town. It seated 350 people, and the walls were a glorious riot of bas-relief and gilt. When the attractions of vaudeville began to fade in favor of those of the silver screen, the Allens decided to convert the Paradise into a movie theater. From 1928 on, the Paradise showed film after film for generations of entertainment-hungry citizens.

The Paradise closed in 1974. The costs of renovating the aging structure and the single yellowing screen conspired to make it unprofitable. Already in considerable disrepair, the ensuing years of neglect left the Paradise in ruins.

The theater's one-hundredth anniversary came and went with little fanfare besides a maudlin editorial in the local paper. But a year ago, hope emerged: A local arts group bought the theater from the Allen Foundation and began a slow process of volunteer renovation and improvement, in the hopes of restoring the Paradise to its former glory as a home to both performing arts and cinema. That new hope is close to realization, as the theater reopens in just a couple of days.

But there's trouble in Paradise. A young woman had an accident there recently and has been hospitalized. Rumors are spreading that the theater is haunted, and that the woman saw something horrible. Some old-timers even remember other unsettling incidents, long forgotten until now, and whispers of madness and corruption dog the once-sterling reputation of the Allen clan and its legacy foundation.

The investigators must solve this mystery, and fast. The secrets of the Paradise are covered by dust and dimmed by age, but those secrets still have teeth.

PUBLIC FACTS

The following information is public knowledge, and is either widely known or readily accessible.

The original builder of the Paradise was Robert Allen, a wealthy man who developed and owned much of this neighborhood. His children and grandchildren lived off his investments. In 1953, they founded the Allen Foundation to manage the family's substantial assets and donate money to various charity groups, primarily childcare-related. The last member of the Allen family was Jessica Allen, who died in 1983 at the age of seventy-two. No living heirs exist.

The Paradise is now owned by Metro Arts, a nonprofit group that produces performances, art exhibitions, and film events. The group has a full-time staff of six and hundreds of donating members and supporters. Although it has a small office, the Paradise is the group's first permanent event and exhibit space. The head of Metro Arts is Sara Landry, a feisty middle-aged painter and arts organizer.

Metro Arts has spent the last year renovating the theater. Although much work remains, Metro needs more funding to take the project further. The members have decided to open the theater a couple days from now to focus more attention on their work. At an opening-night gala fundraiser they'll screen a double feature: the wartime classic *Casablanca* and the French satire *Rules of the Game*.

The injured woman is Mary Green, an art student and frequent Metro volunteer. According to published reports, she was painting a ceiling in the main theater space one evening and fell from the scaffolding. She broke her left leg, arm, and pelvic bone, and suffered a mild concussion. Metro's insurance is covering her care, and she is in stable condition. However, she is said to be undergoing psychological evaluation, possibly related to the concussion. An unnamed friend told the local paper, "Mary says the Paradise is haunted or something." Her family—both parents and her brother—have declined comment and refused media requests for interviews with Mary.

According to the paper, this isn't the first time for a ghost sighting. Harry Samson, a janitor at the Paradise from 1952–1974, told the reporter, "I used to hear strange things there all the time, like something moving around in the walls and floors. The Allens always said it was rats. Musta been some *big* rats."

GETTING STARTED

Your first task as GM is to figure out how the investigators get involved in the mystery. Here are several suggestions, based on the subgenres of the Settings chapter.

LOVECRAFT COUNTRY

Set the Paradise in Arkham or Providence. The Allen Foundation is a major benefactor of Miskatonic Medical School's pediatrics facility, and Metro Arts has close ties with the university's arts faculty. Mary Green is a graduate student of M.U. The investigators might be friends of Mary or Sara, or a faculty member could recruit them for investigation or research into the history of the theater. The Allen family could be related to Zadok Allen of HPL's story "The Shadow over Innsmouth."

HOMETOWN HORRORS

The investigators could be patrons of Metro Arts, or they could be hired by Metro's insurance company to examine the working conditions at the theater. If they have an interest in history, they may want to document the renovations or just examine the theater's background.

PRIVATE TROUBLESHOOTERS

A haunted theater sounds like trouble, all right. To get a look around, the investigators might volunteer to help clean up the theater—then snoop when nobody's watching.

BADGES AND SECRETS

A psychotic cultist interrogated after a recent operation in another city made a curious statement: "Paradise is coming. It's coming back to life." He hanged himself later that day. The man had no known connections to the city where the adventure is set, so maybe it's just a coincidence of phrasing. A little poking around can't hurt. Perhaps the investigators should pose as government safety inspectors.

ESOTERIC ORDERS

Jessica Allen, the last of the family's heirs, developed a sudden interest in mysticism late in life. Members of the local alternative-spirituality community remember her pleading requests for cleansing rituals and wards against hostile spirits, requests she would make and then abandon only to renew them weeks later. She never spoke of what distressed her so, and died soon afterward. The Paradise may well be home to the restless dead—is Mary Green another victim?

GLOBAL HOT SPOTS

Although this adventure isn't particularly suited for a Global Hot Spots campaign, you could always get creative. The theater could be in a South American city besieged by the drug trade, or in a turbulent Eastern European republic. Perhaps the Allen Foundation is now run by an American trustee, and local citizens are suspicious of U.S.-style gentrification. Metro Arts could be a cover for a drug ring, or the Allens might have been on the CIA payroll during the rule of a dictatorship.

OPENING SCENE

In this scene, the investigators visit the Paradise Theater using whatever excuse is appropriate to the subgenre you're playing in.

It's daylight, but the sun has been absent, shrouded in clouds. The Paradise stands on a dirty street. Across the road sits a car with no tires, cryptic orange graffiti scrawled on the back window—probably just a police marker that the car needs to be towed, but it's hard to tell. A dead dog lies in the driver's seat, erupted belly roiling with maggots. As the investigators walk up to the Paradise, the baroque façade is darkened with grime, but the marquee is clean, the neon crisp and alight, letters placed to form a message: PARADISE IS COMING BACK. A woman on a ladder holds a piece of plastic formed into the word THE, and she carefully places it above the other words. She sees the investigators and calls a hello, then climbs down to greet them.

This is Sara Landry, head of Metro Arts. She's a compact woman with deep-set green eyes, freckles, and long brown hair, wearing blue jeans and a flannel shirt with the sleeves pushed up to the elbows. When introductions are complete, she looks up at the marquee and nods. "It's a sign," she says with a grin.

Sara leads the group through the front doors and into the lobby. No matter what explanation the investigators have given for the visit, Sara says she has to take care of something for a few minutes and they should look around the place. "Don't fall off anything!" she calls as she walks off to the room marked Storage 1 on the floor plan.

At this point, the investigators can explore the building. Whatever business they may have with Sara can wait. Use the floor plan and the following room descriptions as the players choose where to go.

During this scene, some unusual things happen. They're described in the "Whammies" section on page 262.

THE PARADISE FLOOR PLAN

The Paradise has a main floor, an upper level with balcony seating, and a basement. Location descriptions are grouped by level. Some Metro Arts volunteers are working here, and they are mentioned in the text where needed.

GROUND LEVEL

Lobby. The Paradise lobby is two stories high, with plush red carpeting and turn-of-the-century décor. Four circular sofas are here, being reupholstered by Metro volunteers named Frank Harris and Jeanette Reynolds. Grand staircases flank the walls and lead upstairs. The walls and staircase are carved with fanciful images of nymphs and satyrs.

Tickets. A small booth with a barred window facing outside, where tickets are sold. At present, the window is covered by a Metro Arts poster describing the renovations and the upcoming opening-night event.

Will Call. Identical to the ticket booth, but this one's for people who are picking up reservations. At present, you can't get into the Will Call booth because the door is blocked by junk in Storage 2.

Storage 1. Metro Arts is using this area to store its cleaning and renovation supplies, as well as stacks of fliers promoting the upcoming event. A new circuit panel is here that controls power in the front part of the building. Against the north wall by the door is a folding table with a telephone, laptop computer, and paperwork. This serves as the temporary office for the theater work. After the opening scene, Sara is in here talking on the telephone.

The desk also has clips of various advertisements from local papers announcing the premiere. None of the ads are terribly large, ostentatious, or even expensive. The advertising was delayed until the last minute because of some confusion over the date of the premiere. If anyone asks, Sara says the ads were generously paid for by Richard Jacobs, the current trustee of the Allen Foundation.

Storage 2. This room is packed with old stuff. Most anything the Metro staff has found gets stuck in

here. Torn curtains, stacks of old drink cups, broken theater seats, rolls of moth-eaten carpet, and boxes of dusty papers put into storage before the theater closed in 1974 fill this room. These include reams of financial documents, theater programs, folded-up movie posters from the 1960s, business cards for people long dead, old photographs, and other yellowing ephemera. None of this is relevant to the adventure.

Men's Room and Ladies' Room. Metro has gutted and replaced both bathrooms to comply with accessibility laws. They're clean and functional.

Concessions. The concession stand has been cleaned up, and there are cases of snacks and soft drinks waiting to be unpacked. Another volunteer, Molly Ivory, is here installing an espresso machine.

Coat Check. Spiffed and ready. Metro found a stash of unused claim tags from the 1940s and plans to use them on opening night.

Theater. The large theater area is still a bit rickety and threadbare. Metro hasn't been able to reupholster the seats, but they have repaired the broken ones and given everything a good cleaning. Metro volunteers are finishing a massive job of cleaning and repainting the ornately carved ceiling. The last patch of work is to the left, where the scaffolding is. That's where Mary Green had her accident. At present, two volunteers are working in here: Kris Nichols and Jack McGowan. Kris is on the scaffolding working on the ceiling, and Jack is vacuuming the floor.

Screen and Stage. The large movie screen is built atop an elevated platform that was once a performance stage. The 1928 renovations cut the stage back considerably to make room for more seats. Metro plans to install a retractable screen to reclaim stage space, but that's a project for down the road. The loading-dock door has a heavy padlock that hasn't been opened for decades, and is now completely covered by a large, dusty mirror. The area behind the screen is barren except for a couple of very tall ladders. They were once used to adjust theatrical lighting on the ceiling, but that equipment was sold off years ago. No lights back exist here, so poking around requires a flashlight.

UPPER LEVEL

Projection Booth. Metro can't afford to install new equipment here yet, but it has given the existing gear a thorough cleaning and repair. The booth remains rather dingy and in need of paint. Metro has installed a new circuit panel in this room to control the lights and sound system of the whole theater.

Storage 3. Cleaning supplies for the balcony, along with velvet ropes for closing off the upper floor when needed.

Storage 4. This room is empty. It stinks of old cigarette smoke, because the projectionists used it as a break room during screenings.

LOWER LEVEL

Basement. This is a large open space that was once quite beautiful, but has long since fallen into moldy ruin. During Prohibition in the 1930s, the Allens operated the basement as an illegal speakeasy. There's still an old bar down here, and some ratty couches and chairs. At some point after the theater closed, one of the exit doors was jimmied open and the basement became a haven for the homeless and teenagers. The walls are covered in graffiti, and the carpet smells of urine. Metro hasn't done anything down here except get the furnace working and reroute the electrical wiring to new boxes elsewhere in the building. The old circuit board is a big wooden slab about 8 feet tall by 6 feet wide, covered with large throw switches and dials—it looks like it came straight from Frankenstein's lab. The board isn't connected to anything now.

Secret Basement. This area is accessed through a door behind the bar, but the door is covered in plaster and paint so it blends into the wall. The contents of the secret basement are described in "Examine the Basement" (page 266).

WHAMMIES

A whammy is a sudden, strange event that you can spring on the investigators whenever the moment is right. These whammies occur as they look around the Paradise. Use some or all of them as you like. Whenever possible, only use a given whammy on a single investigator so that none of them agree on what they saw. Except where noted, NPCs either never notice whammies or aren't around when they happen.

ROBERT'S MUSIC

As soon as the investigators are on their own, call for Listen checks against DC 15. Attentive investigators hear music playing very, very faintly. It sounds like an orchestra playing the popular classical tune "Carmina Burana," familiar from the soundtracks of numerous movies, including *Excalibur*. (If you have this music, you might play it very softly when the characters enter the Paradise.) They hear the music everywhere they go, but can never find the source. The volunteers don't hear the music, but shrug and say, "It's probably Robert playing his boom box someplace."

Who is Robert? The Metro people say he is a new volunteer who showed up recently, and comes and goes as he pleases. Anytime the investigators hear or see anything curious, the staff says it's probably Robert.

The investigators never meet Robert. He's always somewhere around, or he just left, or something or other. He may not even exist. The Metro staff isn't playing a joke; they see him all the time. Robert is a person that only the NPCs encounter.

The next time a player asks a question about the music, tell the group they no longer hear it.

THE LOADING DOCK DOOR

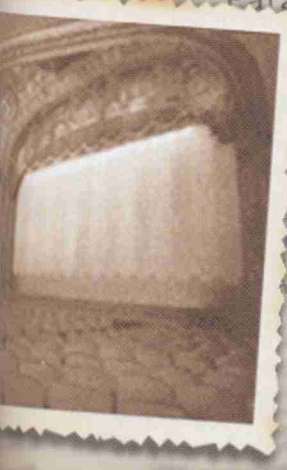
Behind the stage curtains is the large sliding door that opens onto the loading dock—or at least it used to open. The door hasn't been opened since 1932, and at this point, it's painted shut on the outside. Inside, it's closed with a big old padlock. No one knows where the key is.

The first time the investigators go backstage—and remember there is no light back there, except what leaks in around the curtains—they see the door as an opening into another area. A flickering light in the doorway catches their attention. Drawing closer, they can see a dim image: a dark space walled by curtains. Beyond the curtains is a flickering light that seeps in at the edges, like that of an old movie.



Paradise Theater

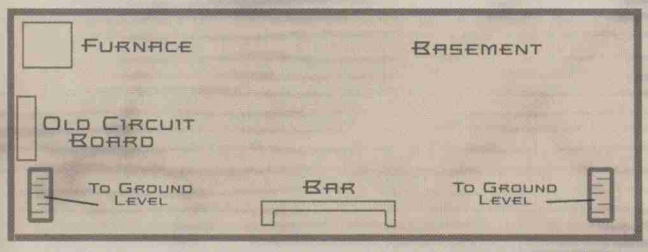
Welcome to the newly remodeled Paradise Theater.



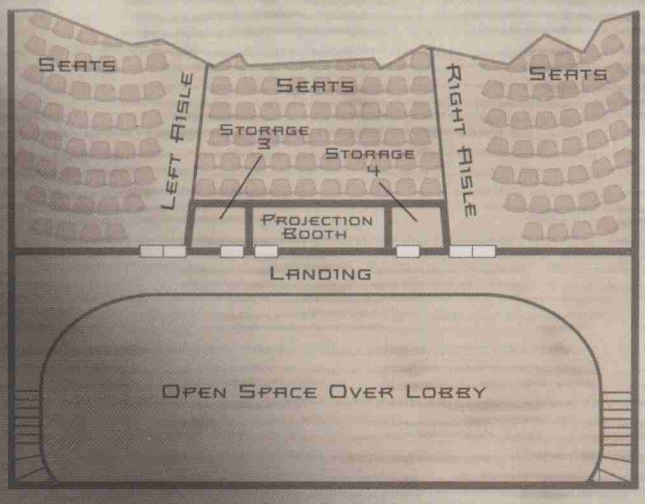
heater would
ll the Metro
the hard effort
so gladly offered.
g of this grand
n ambitious project,
he help of these
he cultural integrity
nity would be
played. Paradise
ks you!



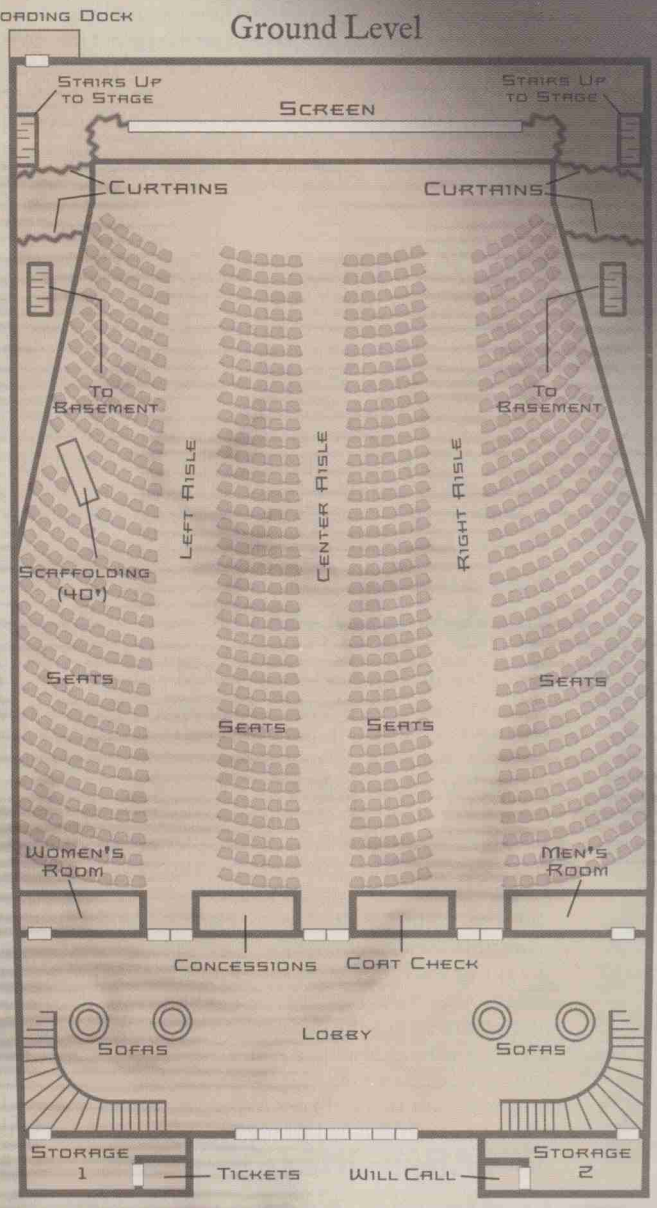
Yes, there's plenty of room in the aisles...and every seat is a great seat!



Basement



Upper Level

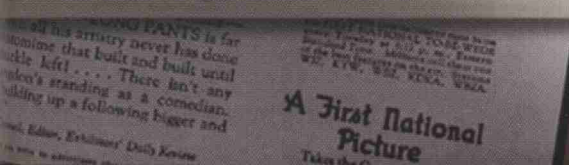


"Remember, there's an upper level for y





© Paradise Theater All Rights Reserved TA0072601



If investigators try to enter the space, they bump into a smooth, unyielding surface of polished glass. The dock door has a massive mirror propped up against it. The curtains are actually the ones behind the investigators. Now the light beyond the curtains is steady, and the investigators are looking at their reflections. They didn't see themselves in the glass until they touched it.

THE LANDING

Investigators on the upstairs landing looking down at the lobby notice something peculiar: the pattern of the carpet below resembles intertwined, naked bodies. At that moment the lights flicker from a power surge, and in the flashing light the bodies seem to writhe and shift (Sanity check, 0/1). Then the lights come back on full, and the carpet pattern just looks like ordinary carpet. In another room, a Metro volunteer calls out: "Hey, somebody get Robert to check the wiring again!"

THE FURNACE

While in the basement, the investigators hear a clanging sound from the furnace. At first it might just be noisy old pipes, but then the clanging becomes more insistent, as if someone were inside and banging for help.

An investigator can open the metal hatch where coal used to go. (The furnace was converted to piped-in natural gas in the mid-1960s.) It's hot to the touch, which it shouldn't be. Opening the hatch, the interior of the furnace is full of flames and a burning man screams (Sanity check, 0/1d2). Then the flames are gone, and the metal is cool. The vision goes by too quickly to get a good look at the man's features.

SARA AGAIN

Once the investigators have looked around, and preferably just after a whammy has happened, Sara finds them and says hello. She's ready to address whatever topic brought them here. Play this out according to your subgenre. If the investigators are posing as volunteers, she puts them to work cleaning the upstairs. If they're safety inspectors, she answers their questions and shows them Metro's safety procedures for scaffold work. If they're researchers or historians, she points out the architectural features and talks vaguely about the theater's history—she really only knows what's in the Public Facts section (page 260).

Sara has no interest in ghosts or mysteries. She just wants to get the theater ready for opening night. Speaking of which, she gives the investigators free passes to the event and says she hopes to see them there. It's a couple days away (you can decide just how long).

VISITING MARY

Whenever the investigators complete their visit, Sara announces to all the volunteers that she's going to the hospital to bring Mary some chocolates. Anyone is welcome to join her. If the investigators are hesitant, Molly Ivory (or another volunteer they interacted with) says she'll go and encourages the investigators to come along, as she believes Mary could use some cheering up.

Mary Green is at a large public hospital. She's lying in bed, her body connected to a traction apparatus to help her pelvic bone set properly. Her arm and leg are in casts, and there are bandages on her head. Her eyes are bruised. She's in a room with another patient, an emaciated old man whose eyes are closed and whose breathing is raspy. He's attached to a pulse monitor and other medical instruments that constantly beep and whir. He appears to be either asleep or unconscious.

If for some reason the investigators look at his chart to learn his identity, the man is Harry Samson, a former janitor for the Paradise who was mentioned in the Public Facts section. He suffered a heart attack a couple days ago, shortly after he spoke to a reporter about the hauntings at the theater. He does not regain consciousness while the investigators are here.

As Sara leads the group in, Mary is watching television. Sara has tears in her eyes. Sara makes introductions and sympathies are shared. She puts the box of chocolates on the side table.

Mary says very little and looks wary. She stares at the investigators from the moment they arrive. At some point she says, "You're from the Paradise, aren't you?" Sara explains who they are again, a little nervous.

The beeping from the machines increases suddenly and a buzzer sounds. The man in the other bed cries out briefly and then his face goes slack. Sara yelps and runs out of the room to get a nurse; if another NPC volunteer came along, she goes with Sara. The noise from the machines is terrible, a cacophony of electronic sounds that make no sense. Mary says something that sounds like, "I didn't fall down. I fell up." It's hard to hear with all the noise (Listen check, DC 15).

Two nurses and a doctor rush in, followed by Sara and the other NPC, if present. The staff begins emergency procedures and goes straight to defibrillation. As they use the paddles to jolt electricity into the old man's body, the lights in the room go out with each burst. Sara watches the scene, aghast. Mary continues staring at the investigators. Then she nods at the television on the wall behind them.

As the lights go up and down and the man's body spasms, the television is shorting out. Images of a ballet dissolve into static, and the sound of a film projector comes through. Then the screen shows the hospital room, as if a camera were mounted inside the television. The investigators see themselves around the bed, and the pulsing lights, and Mary staring. A blurry figure stands next to Mary, with indistinct hands stroking her face. Then the screen explodes in a burst of electricity, sending fragments of glass blowing into the room. The investigators must make a Reflex saving throw against DC 10 or take 1 point of damage. A nurse screams.

The old man is dead. The doctor calls the time of death. He gestures at the television and tells a nurse, "Get Robert to fix that damned thing." (If the investigators ask the doctor about this, he tells them that Robert is a building services worker. They can try to find him, but like the Robert of the Paradise, he's always somewhere else.)

Mary says again, clearly this time: "I didn't fall down. I fell up." She won't answer further questions and Sara ushers everyone out of the room. If the investigators try to visit Mary again, her family has transferred her to a private clinic and they aren't taking visitors.

shut behind him. There's a distant scream, and then a slam a moment later as the investigator appears bent across the theater seats below. The fall deals 1d6 points of damage. The investigator is covered in a viscous slime and may be unconscious or dead. It's time to call the ambulance and try to explain what happened. If any of the other investigators succeeds at the Strength check, he or she manages to pull the investigator back and the panel slams shut. Either way, no trace of the panel remains. The ceiling is solid.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Up until now, this has been a linear adventure. It's time for the players to take the reins and advance the story themselves.

Following their experiences at the Paradise and at the hospital, the investigators should be convinced that something strange is going on. The next several sections discuss some of the choices they might make. "Research" sections require a Research check or checks; the DCs are provided where needed. Likewise, "Interview" sections require a Gather Information check.

EXAMINE THE CEILING

To check the ceiling of the theater, the investigators can climb the scaffolding. No more than three people should be up there at once. Getting to the top safely requires a Climb check against DC 5.

The carvings in the ceiling are similar to those in the lobby—figures from fantasy and mythology. However, the ones here are much less pleasant. The faces are leering and unpleasant. Some scenes suggest the aftermath of rape and torture, but never clearly enough to be definite.

A Listen check against DC 10 detects the hum reported by Kris and Jack, if the investigators interviewed them. It does indeed sound like breathing, and it's very faint. They cannot identify a source, except that it seems to come from beyond the ceiling in a general sort of way.

Examining the ceiling closely (Search DC 12) reveals that a nearby scene of a Bacchanalia is hinged—it's some sort of small door. This discovery only occurs when no NPCs are present.

The scaffolding isn't directly underneath the panel, but a single investigator can just barely reach it from here if the others hold his waist while he leans out. It takes some poking and pulling until the catch is found: the empty eye socket of a dead nymph contains a switch. Once the switch is pushed, the panel opens up into the ceiling. Only the lone investigator leaning out from the scaffold can see inside.

Looking up through the panel, the investigator is somehow looking down at the theater below. It's as if the panel held a mirror, or there were a second Paradise built upside down on top of this one. But this is no reflection. The Paradise that the investigator sees through the doorway is full of people. The seats are covered with writhing bodies issuing a howling scream, illuminated by the flickering light of a film projector. Ghastly music plays, music that the investigator recognizes: it's what they thought was the "Carmina Burana." It's not. This music is strange and alien, deep and resonant, and only the barest melodies have any resemblance to what they thought they heard the first time they entered the Paradise. The movie screen is a jumble of shadows and light, amorphous shapes that suggest tentacles, mouths, and eyes, but never resolving into anything definite. As the crowd screams, the floor begins to sink into a vortex and the entire theater collapses into an abyss. The shapes on screen emerge from the abyss, swallowing up the audience. This terrible vision costs 1d6/1d10 Sanity points.

The strange forces try to pull the investigator through the doorway. The others can try to hold him back. The pull has a Strength check DC of 20. If the others fail, the investigator falls up through the doorway and the panel slams

RESEARCH METRO ARTS

[DC 10] Sara Landry started Metro in 1981 after she finished art school. It's been her full-time career since 1990. The organization is normal in every respect.

[DC 12] Funding for the purchase of the Paradise came from Richard Jacobs, a local philanthropist.

RESEARCH RICHARD JACOBS

[DC 10] Jacobs has been profiled by local media numerous times over the years. He was an anonymous orphan, born sometime around 1930 and raised by the St. Matthew's Orphanage. (In truth, he was raised by the Allen Home for Children until 1937 and then transferred to St. Matthew's, but this seemingly minor detail has never made it into published accounts of his life.) He got a job as a bank teller during high school and soon became a manager. The rest of his career is a string of financial successes, mostly in real estate development. He's never married and has no children.

RESEARCH THE ALLEN FOUNDATION

[DC 10] Robert Allen's grandson, George, started the foundation in 1953 to manage the family's real estate assets and use their revenues to fund charitable organizations. George died in 1968 leaving a daughter, Jessica, who managed the foundation until her death in 1983. Today the trustee of the Allen Foundation is Richard Jacobs. In a newspaper article, he says the title is mostly ceremonial, and that the long-time staff of the foundation do most of the work.

[DC 12] The Allen Foundation had an earlier incarnation of sorts as the Allen Home for Children, a small private orphanage started by Robert Allen in 1892. In 1937, it ceased operations and the staff and children were transferred to the much larger St. Matthew's Orphanage, a Catholic home for orphans that still exists today and is a widely respected institution.

RESEARCH THE PARADISE

[DC 10] Besides the information mentioned in Public Facts, the most interesting thing the investigators can learn about the Paradise is the story of its basement speakeasy. It was a private key club, meaning that members had to have a key to get in. The bar was known as the Sound and Light Club, and it ran for most of the 1930s.

[DC 12] In 1936 police raided the club on suspicion of kidnapping. A man named Arnold Langtree, the guest of a club member, told police

he met a woman at the club and they hit it off. After a few drinks, she began telling him that the club had "private parties" sometimes, and invited him to accompany her to one. Then two doormen escorted her into another room behind the bar. When Langtree questioned them a few minutes later, they denied ever seeing the woman, whose name he did not know. The police raid found nothing, and apparently the club was back in business a few weeks later.

[DC 15] Arnold Langtree died a month later, the victim of a hit-and-run driver.

A player might ask if there was another room off the basement, as the above story suggests. The investigators didn't notice any such room during their visit to the theater.

RESEARCH THE SOUND AND LIGHT CLUB

[DC 10] Further research into the speakeasy key club reveals that it existed before and after Prohibition, and that its tenancy in the basement of the Paradise was only temporary. The SLC began as a social club for Freemasons in 1900, but soon evolved beyond its Masonic roots into a private club for businessmen and politicians. In the 1940s, the Sound and Light Club sponsored an annual carnival to raise money for children's charities. The group shut down in 1953, its popularity among the city's moneyed classes usurped by the Rotary Club and the steady loss of early members to old age. (References don't mention the disappointment of its youngest member at the time, 23-year-old Richard Jacobs.) During its lifetime, the group was based in a variety of locations throughout downtown.

[DC 12] All the addresses the club had were within six blocks of the Paradise.

[DC 15] A 1985 newspaper article about the history of charitable groups in the city makes brief mention of the SLC's short-lived carnival fundraisers of the 1940s. A surviving SLC member, Frank Long, is quoted in the article.

INTERVIEW VOLUNTEERS

[DC 10] Most of the people working at the theater say they haven't had any weird experiences, but two have a different response. Kris Nichols and Jack McGowan are doing the same work Mary Green was, cleaning and painting the ceiling of the theater. They both say they have heard a hum coming from the ceiling when they're up there on the scaffold, and they don't know what's causing it. They say it comes and goes in a cycle, like an air conditioning system perhaps, but there's nothing in the theater that should make that sound. "It's almost like breathing," Jack says with a laugh. Neither think it's anything strange, just an old building making noise.

If the investigators ask who was working with Mary the day she fell, everyone says it was Robert. But he was just cleaning. No one knows how to reach him.

INTERVIEW FRANK LONG

[DC 10] Frank Long is the only still-living member of the Sound and Light Club. The investigators might find his name while researching the group. He is listed in the phone book, but a call or visit finds his aging spinster daughter living there instead; she can tell them that her father is in a nearby sanitarium with daily visiting hours.

At the sanitarium, the staff directs the investigators to a withered little man sitting alone in a rocking chair on the porch. Frank has Alzheimer's disease and is difficult to interview, as he frequently loses track of where and when he is. But his memories of days gone by are strong, and if prompted well, he'll begin talking about the SLC. He says many different things, all jumbled up. Some sample statements follow that you can use as you like in response to investigator questions; he doesn't answer anything directly.

"Sound and light, sound and light. That's what movies are made of! Sound and light, yes. Movies on the screen, the silver screen, movies in your head, the silver head."

"The club, yes, the club. Not a club. No, no. A church. Yes, a church. A church not made with hands. Look ma, no hands! Heh, heh."

"They say it's coming. Paradise is coming. I'm due. I'm owed. I paid my owes. I'm first in line. I'm last to stay. I can't wait. Paradise is coming."

"It's not a rest home. No rest. No rest at the gate. He's the key and the gate, you know. The sound and the light. All in one, like my Swiss Army knife. All in one."

After babbling cryptically for a minute, Frank stops talking and looks at the investigators with suspicion. His face hardens. "Heathens! Meddlers! Steal secrets from an old man. I can see through your face! Your lying face!"

At this point, Frank leaps out of his chair and claws at the face of the nearest investigator. After 5 rounds, an orderly rushes up and restrains the old man; until then, he attacks with murderous intent.

Frank Long

Crazed old cult minion. Male 1st level; hp 7; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +0 melee (1d3 subdual, fists); SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +2; Str 9, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 8.

EXAMINE THE BASEMENT

The investigators may have seen a reference to another room in the basement, or they may just poke around down there some more for their own reasons. If so, a Spot check against DC 15 reveals the faint impression of a door behind the bar, plastered and painted over. A few minutes with a hammer or crowbar gets the plaster off. The door is a normal wooden one and opens with a good shove.

The area behind the door, labeled "Secret Basement" on the floor plan, has not been used since the early 1950s. It is located directly beneath a large section of the theater. Decades of dust have filtered down through the ceiling boards, coating this area in a fine gray powder. No working lights exist here, so it's time for flashlights.

The door opens into a small area blocked off by three fabric screens that stretch from floor to ceiling. They are made of a thin, gauzy material and are stretched taut. Revealed in a flashlight beam, they initially look like mist.

As soon as an investigator steps inside, she feels a slight shift beneath her feet. The character has stepped on a pressure plate and triggered a surprise. A loud

GM Map

Paradise Theater

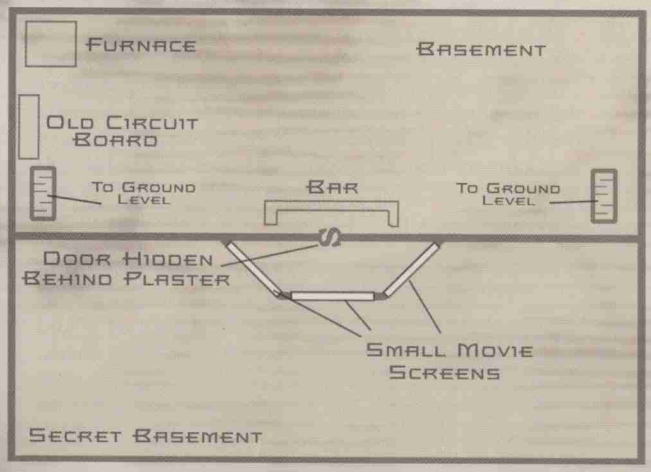
Welcome to the newly remodeled Paradise Theater.



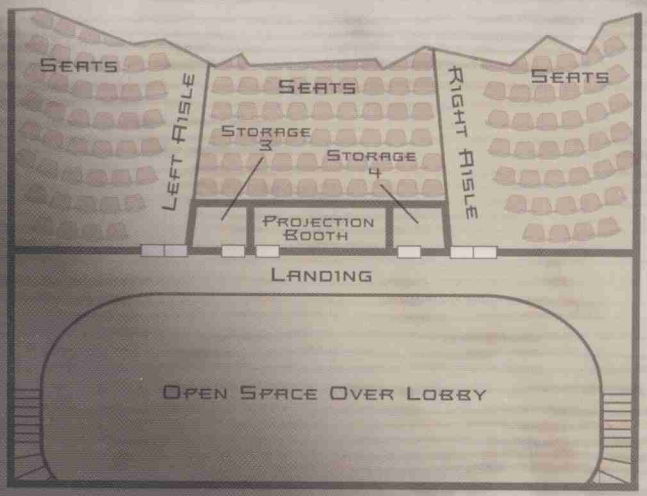
heater would
ll the Metro
the hard effort
so gladly offered.
g of this grand
n ambitious project,
he help of these
he cultural integrity
anity would be
played. Paradise
ks you!



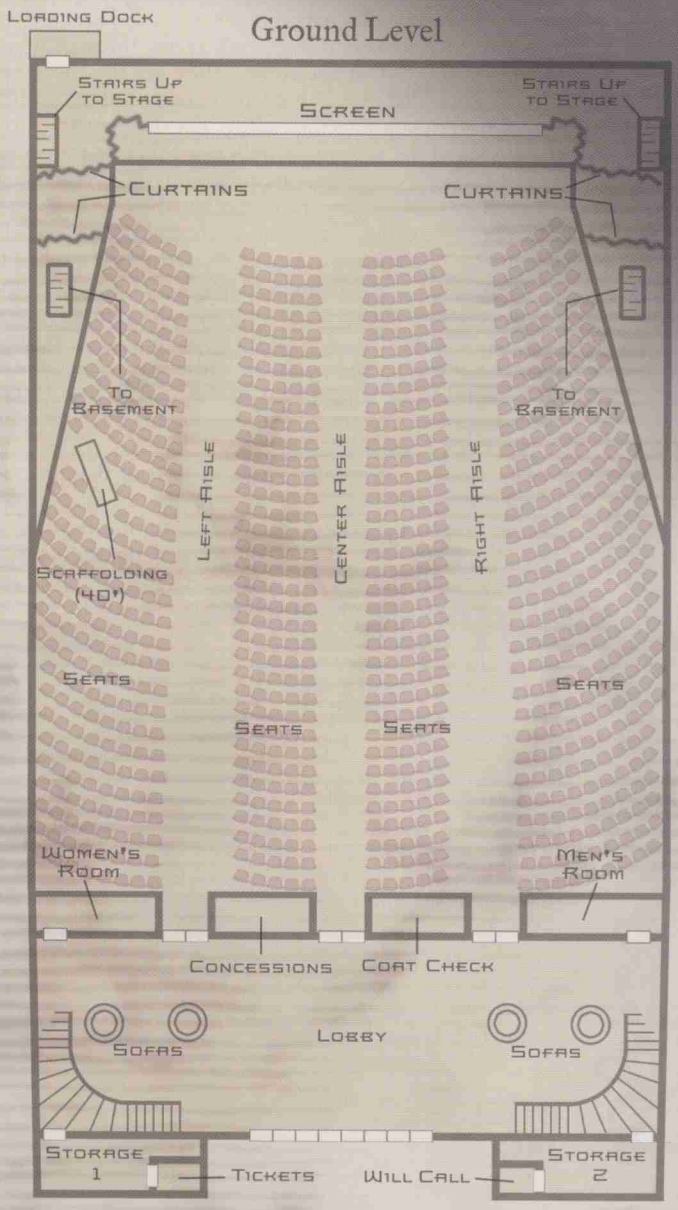
Yes, there's plenty of room in the aisles...and every seat is a great seat!



Basement



Upper Level

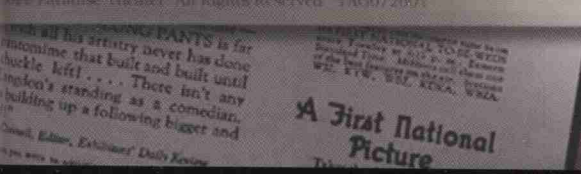


"Remember, there's an upper level for y





© Paradise Theater. All Rights Reserved. TAG072691



whirring sound starts up as three old 16mm projectors begin operating, and suddenly there are moving images on the three fabric screens, projected from behind. The images in grainy black-and-white depict a crowd of men dressed in suits, all wearing masks of blank faces with no eyes or mouth. They are standing in the secret basement, and clearly this footage was shot by three cameras rolling simultaneously in the doorway. Projected, they form a nearly continuous image. The men simply stand there, staring at the viewer. After a few moments it's clear that this is just a short loop of film that plays again and again. Nothing really happens.

Gaps exist between the three screens, through which the investigators can reach the rest of the room. They see the three projectors first, each placed some distance behind its corresponding screen. All have power cables running up into the ceiling. The images they project appear on the back sides of the screens as well, since they're translucent.

The three projectors are mounted on top of massive wooden thrones, covered in gold leaf and now blanketed by dust. Each is elevated on a dais about 8 inches high. The walls and ceiling are all covered by a mural showing the night sky as seen from the roof of the Paradise.

If anyone is clever enough to take a picture of this mural and do a bit of research, the position of the stars in the sky correspond to a specific time of year (Research check, DC 15). On the night of the theater's opening, the position of the stars above the theater will correspond to their positions in the mural. Both facts should be readily apparent to anyone who can make a Knowledge (astronomy) check against DC 15.

The floor is decorated with a 40-foot-diameter circle of inlaid marble, within which are a number of twisted sigils corresponding to no known religion or mythology. (If anyone asks, the sigils look like those painted on the back of the abandoned car outside the theater—though the car has been towed away by now.) The floor is stained in numerous places, and analysis can prove these stains are blood, fifty years old and older. The back of each throne has a latch that opens to reveal a small alcove beneath the seat. Each contains a human skull, a candle, and a trumpet. The central throne also contains a handwritten book, described in the nearby sidebar.

Nothing else of note rests in the secret basement. However, at some point while the investigators are here the projectors grind to a stop—or the investigators might turn them off. Either way, the images on the screens inexplicably persist for another few seconds. Just as they fade away, all the men in the crowd lower their masks. The image goes away too quickly to see what was revealed. The images of the men removing their masks do not appear on the film loops and do not appear again.

INTERVIEW RICHARD JACOBS

[DC 15] The DC reflects the difficulty investigators have in meeting him. Richard Jacobs is a very wealthy businessman with a busy schedule. If an interview does occur, Jacobs is an aging but dignified man who wears the best suits and speaks with a polished dignity. In his plush uptown office, he tells the investigators that he loved going to the Paradise as a kid. While he couldn't see a profit in restoring the Paradise to a commercial enterprise, he did think it had a future as a low-cost arts project. He had donated to Metro Arts before, and his staff worked out the deal with Sara Landry at his request. "There's still a lot of life in that place," he says. He encourages them to come to the opening night event.

If the investigators have already learned about Jacobs's role as trustee at the Allen Foundation—something he doesn't volunteer—he nods pleasantly and confirms that he was a friend of the Allen family for a long time, and knew both George and his daughter Jessica. He says his work as trustee is primarily for fundraising efforts. He notes that his donation to Metro Arts to buy the Paradise from the Allen Foundation benefited three of his favorite causes in one fell swoop.

If they ask him about the Sound and Light Club, he thinks for a moment, then describes it as something George Allen was involved in when they were friends. He characterizes it as a long-defunct businessmen's social club. He denies ever being a member. "Back then I wasn't rich enough!" he says with a hearty chuckle. A Sense Motive check (DC 18) reveals that he's lying. (Make this roll secretly for the characters, if you prefer.) Richard is indeed a former member of the club.

Richard Jacobs hasn't attended the society's rituals in decades, but he has continued to perform them on his own, waiting patiently for a moment when the stars would be right. Based on the hunch from the Sense Motive check, the investigators may immediately confront him or even prevent him from attending the premiere, but they have no evidence of him doing anything illegal. Regardless of which reaction the investigators prefer, the show must go on.

OUT OF SPACE, OUT OF TIME

Further mysterious events are possible in the midst of this investigation, but they're not essential to the plot. By now, investigators in the Paradise may notice that the recent supernatural events have a few recurring themes: a building in flames, a panicked crowd, and malfunctions casually attributed to "Robert."

Because of past rituals in the nightclub, these events occur as distortions of space and time. The scenes with "Robert" portray events in Robert Allen's past, back when he first owned the theater. However, if anyone wants to research whether there's been a fire here before (Research DC 15), the answer is no. The visions of fire and panicked crowds are portents of a terrible tragedy to come.

A secret society that once met in the building routinely revered a deity who had power over time itself. Richard Jacobs, as a former member of the cult, knows that on the night of the gala premiere, the stars are right for an avatar of that deity to return to the Sound and Light Club's former temple.

THE BOOK OF THE SOUND AND LIGHT

In English, author unknown, c. 1900. This handwritten volume contains rituals and prayers to a deity described variously as "The All in One," "The Key and the Gate," and "The Sky Door." *Examination Period:* 1 week (DC 20). Contains two spells: "The Corridor of One" (*contact Yog-Sothoth*) and "Persistence of Vision" (*mind transfer*). Sanity loss 1 initial and 1d3 upon completion. Cthulhu Mythos +1 rank.

The characters should have a few days to pursue their investigation. During this time, the GM does not need to do more than hint at something terrible in the building. These events are merely foreshadowing. The investigators might have suspicions about Richard Jacobs, but should have no clear legal way to stop him. (Even then, he can use his madman's intuition, as described below, to foil their attempts.) Unless the characters blatantly break the law to stop to the screening, the events in the Opening Night section occur as planned.

OPENING NIGHT

Whatever the investigators know or suspect at this point, there is little direct action for them to take until the opening night gala, which they presumably attend. All the Metro volunteers and staff are here, as well as several hundred prominent citizens of the city (including Richard Jacobs). The festivities begin with a party in the lobby, complete with a jazz trio playing in the center. After an hour, the crowd moves into the theater and the films begin.

THE LOBBY PHOTOGRAPHS

There's something new in the lobby: The western wall is now decorated with vintage photographs of the Paradise, taken from across the decades. If the investigators ask Sara about them, she says they found them in the old storage room weeks ago and had them cleaned and framed by volunteers. She just picked them up this afternoon.

Three dozen photographs of various sizes and ages are here. Some depict theatrical productions from the theater's early years, while others show well-dressed crowds celebrating in the lobby or sitting in the audience during a film. A couple of photographs are of interest to the adventure, and can be detected with a Spot check.

[DC 10] One shows a 1952 fundraising event held in the lobby, with a large gaudy banner dedicating the event "to the St. Matthew's Orphanage, from the Sound and Light Club." Two men stand in the foreground, posing for the camera: George Allen and a young Richard Jacobs (who was in his early twenties at the time). Frank Long is clearly visible in the background.

[DC 12] Scattered among the many images are three photographs showing three generations of Allen family patriarchs: Max Allen, Frederick Allen, and George Allen. Although taken decades apart, all three are done the same way: a man standing on the upper balcony of the Paradise looks down at the photographer, who uses a wide-angle lens to capture the beauty of the room. If the investigators notice these photographs, it's time for a whammy of sorts. Just as you finish describing them, there's the flash of a camera. Turning around, the investigators see a photographer standing just inside the doors, aiming upward. On the balcony overhead stands Richard Jacobs, smiling and dignified, in the same pose as that of the Allen men. If he's met the investigators before, he sees them and waves jauntily.

[DC 12] Another fundraising event at the Paradise conceals a curious secret. Close examination reveals a poster in the background of a crowd scene. It's hard to read, but it appears to say "Welcome Sound and Light Club International Chapters," followed by the names of prominent cities across the country and around the world.



THE WARMUP

When it's time to enter the theater for the first screening—*Rules of the Game*—the jazz trio stops playing. The theater's sound system begins playing "Carmina Burana." Metro volunteers open the doors to the theater and the crowd begins to file inside as the music rumbles. If the investigators look for Richard Jacobs, he's by the concession stand chatting politely with Sara Landry and greeting people as they enter the theater.

WHAT TO DO?

Although the investigators have no direct evidence, they should have real suspicions that something bad is going to happen tonight at the Paradise. They might confront Richard Jacobs, or try to stop the event from continuing. They might just play along and see what happens.

CONFRONTING JACOBS

Just because the investigators have no proof of anything doesn't mean they won't go after this old man. He laughs off any bizarre accusations they make and encourages them to take their seats and enjoy the show. If they press him, he says they're rude and stalks off. If they get violent, there's not much he can do except struggle and shout for help. Still, if they somehow get him out of the theater or otherwise keep him from doing anything, the event goes off without a hitch, and all is well for tonight.

Richard Jacobs

Cultist of Yog-Sothoth: Male 5th level cult sorcerer; HD 5d6+5; hp 22; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative) ; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atk +2 melee (1d3 subdual, fists) or +3 ranged (1d10, pistol); SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +7; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +8, Cthulhu Mythos +5, Gather Information +9, Innuendo +6, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (biology) +10, Knowledge (occult) +9, Knowledge (history) +8 Knowledge (religion) +8, Listen +8, Move Silently +5, Search +7, Sense Motive +7, Spot +8.

Feats: Awareness, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot.

Special Abilities: Madman's intuition.

Possessions: Colt Delta Elite (see page 98).

Spells: "The Corridor of One" (*contact Yog-Sothoth*) and "Persistence of Vision" (*mind transfer*).

Madman's Intuition: The disintegration of a cult sorcerer's brain leads to intuitive short-circuits that defy conventional logic. After 3rd level, with a successful Intelligence check, a cult sorcerer somehow knows, even with very little observation, which member of a party is the weakest (or the most magically skilled), whether the police are watching the cemetery, where the unguarded door is, how many shots are left in a PC's gun, and other similarly vital information. At 5th level, this ability often allows a cult sorcerer to maintain a seeming facade of sanity, providing the expected answers to questions or responses to social interaction.

CONFRONTING SARA

If the investigators tell Sara their suspicions of supernatural danger, she calls them crazy. But if they make some excuse about safety or a natural danger, she'll at least listen to them. She knows this theater well, though, and it's been inspected numerous times. Most likely she just reassures them that everything is going to be fine. If they disable her somehow, it changes nothing about the remaining events—Sara is innocent.

STOPPING THE SHOW

The best option to stop the event is that old favorite, yelling "Fire!" in a crowded theater. More directly, the investigators might trigger the fire alarms or even set a fire. Either way, the crowd flees with minor injuries and the evening is a disaster—but not as much of one as would otherwise be the case.

SUCCESS

If the investigators either disable Richard Jacobs or stop the event, all is well. Metro Arts soldiers on. More information on this outcome appears in Aftermath on page 271.

FAILURE

If the event continues and Richard Jacobs is free to act, he takes his seat in the theater with everyone else. The music winds down, the lights go out, and the projector whirrs up. A beam of light cuts through the darkness and fills the screen. The opening credits to *Rules of the Game* roll and there is brief applause. If the investigators are in the theater, their seats are toward the front near the screen.

Half an hour into the film, it starts to stutter. The image rolls and jumps, going in and out of focus. The images of the film change to the footage from the basement, of men in suits and faceless masks, and there is a grinding sound from the projection booth. The image is jumping so much it's hard to make out. Good-natured calls of "Focus!" come from the boisterous crowd. Then the image steadies, the men take off their masks, and a blinding light fills the room. A crashing sound and screams erupt from the rear of the theater. The tremendous light begins to strobe.

In between flashes, the investigators see that the back third of the theater has collapsed into another subterranean chamber. Theater patrons, many still in their seats, fall through the breaking timbers, screaming. They land in a dark mass that proves to be thousands of feet of nitrate movie film stock, an early film format long since abandoned because it's highly flammable.

In moments, the film ignites and the back third of the theater erupts in flames. The burning film writhes up and out of the chasm as if alive, grabbing nearby patrons and pulling them into the fire. Richard Jacobs emerges, lifted up by the tendrils of film. He is burning and laughing at the same time, and the nitrate tentacles lift him higher and higher until he passes through the hidden door in the ceiling. Then the film explodes and the building starts to collapse. This event causes 1d10/1d20 Sanity loss.

AFTERMATH

The investigators' first priority should be survival. Their best chance is to run for the fire doors toward the front of the theater, since they can't cross the flaming wreckage to get back to the lobby.

If an investigator is sitting in the front of the theater, call for skill checks such as Jump or Climb to serve dramatic effect, but let him escape if that's what he's trying to do.

If an investigator is sitting in the rear of the theater, however, he needs a Jump check or Reflex save (DC 10) to exit the theater as the floor collapses. On a failed roll, he takes 1d6 points of damage and takes fire damage on his initiative count each additional round.

Any who linger in the theater may be attacked by the burning tentacles (see below); they must then free themselves or be dragged to a fiery death. The tentacles focus on anyone who's attacking the center of the writhing mass or trying to stop Richard Jacobs.

If no one threatens the creature or cultist, the tentacles attack one random investigator within their reach each round. If you like, you can choose the closest one, the one currently in the most danger, or one who's simply taking insane risks for no apparent reason.

Burning Tentacles of Film

Lesser Servitor of Yog-Sothoth: Large ooze (fire); HD 10d10+80; hp 150; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 12 (+4 Dex, –2 size); Atk +9 melee (1d2+2, 8 tentacles); Face/Reach 10 ft. by 5 ft./40 ft.; SA Improved grab, swallow whole; SQ Amorphous, blindsight, darkvision; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 18, Int –, Wis 10, Cha –.

Improved Grab (Ex): If the burning tentacles hit an opponent with a tentacle attack, it deals normal damage. The creature then attempts to start a grapple as a free action without allowing its opponent a free attack; the creature uses its tentacle to hold its victim. With each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds (assuming the victim doesn't break free), the creature can automatically deal the listed damage or attempt to swallow its victim whole (see below).

Swallow Whole (Ex): Once the creature has successfully used its improved grab against a victim, it can attempt a grapple check on a later round to swallow its victim whole. If it succeeds, it swallows its target, who is then held immobile inside the burning tentacles. The victim is unable to take any actions, but is horribly aware of his surroundings. While swallowed, the target takes 1d3 points of fire damage per round. The creature can swallow one Medium-size target for every 5 hit points it has remaining.

Amorphous (Ex): The creature is not subject to critical hits and cannot be flanked.

Mindless (Ex): The creature is immune to all mind-affecting spells.

One useful strategy the investigators can attempt is this: If Richard Jacobs is killed or incapacitated before he escapes into the ceiling, the disaster shuts down immediately. The burning tentacles collapse, the fire sputters, and the building remains standing.

If the disaster happens, authorities cite the existence of an unknown basement area—behind the secret basement the investigators may have discovered—that was long ago used to dump a large collection of nitrate films that were taken out of circulation. A weak floor under the weight of the crowd and the combustible movie stock combined to produce the disaster, which killed dozens and injured more than a hundred. No credible reports of the film coming to life exist, though a few survivors might agree they saw something strange if the investigators poke around. Lawsuits swiftly destroy Metro Arts. Even if the Paradise survived, it is soon demolished and the land sold for a condominium project.

Unless the investigators took care of him themselves, Richard Jacobs survives the disaster and his strange epiphany unscathed. The following week he announces that he has sold his assets in the city and is leaving to travel the world. He's gone the week after.

If the disaster is averted but Jacobs survives, the danger isn't over. The next time there's a crowd at the Paradise, he'll be there and the same disaster unfolds whether the investigators are there or not. If they have taken care of Jacobs in some permanent fashion, however, the Paradise lives on.

EXPERIENCE AND SANITY AWARDS

TYPICAL STORY GOALS:

- Discover Mary's secret.
- Discover Richard Jacobs's secret.
- Subdue Frank Long.
- Find the hidden room in the attic.
- Find the hidden room in the basement.
- Recover the tome.
- Stop the summoning (or survive it).

BONUS SANITY REWARDS:

Stopping the event before the disaster starts: 1d4.
Stopping the disaster after it starts: 1d6.

FURTHER SCENARIOS

This doesn't have to be the end of the story, as a number of mysteries remain. What was the secret of the Sound and Light Club and the entire Allen bloodline? Was Richard Jacobs really just Max Allen? If the SLC shut down in 1953, what took its place? What about all the Sound and Light Clubs in other cities, as suggested by the photograph in the lobby? You can weave these questions and the shadowy history of the Paradise into future scenarios, establishing an occult conspiracy that can survive without Richard Jacobs.

ADVENTURE 2: LITTLE SLICES OF DEATH

Those little slices of death. How I loathe them.
— Edgar Allan Poe

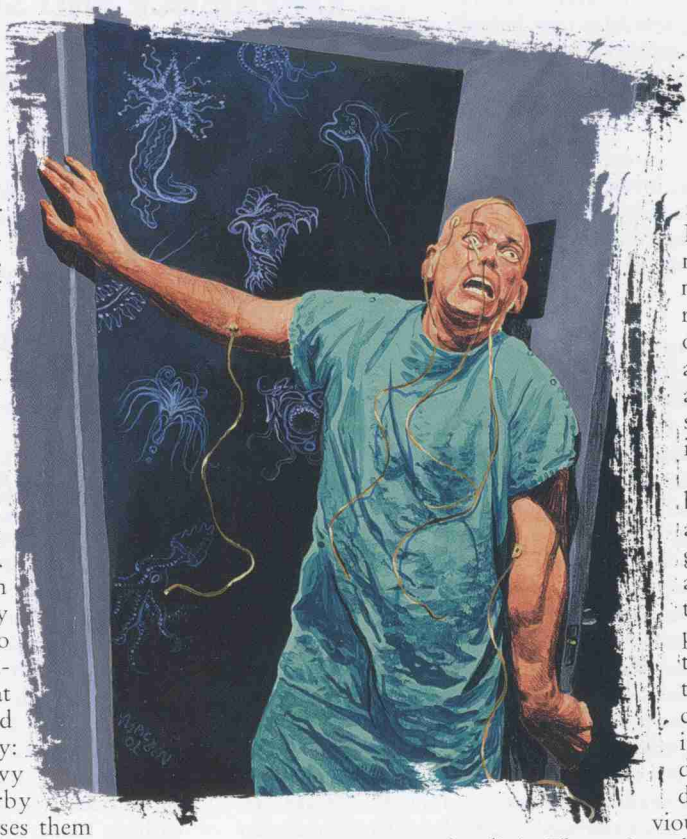
This scenario can be inserted at any time into a campaign, or it can be used as a stand-alone adventure. The story takes place in the Torgerson Sleep Research Clinic in Chicago. Although the details are written for the modern day, it can be adapted to other eras in the 20th century with a little bit of work.

Any group of 1st-level investigators that has survived a Mythos adventure should suffice for this story. If you're using the adventure on its own, you can opt to have one or two players create characters who work at the sleep clinic.

PRELUDE

Before this adventure begins, at least one of the player characters has been troubled with terrible nightmares (or some other sleep disorder). On the night the story begins, one of these investigators enters the Torgerson Sleep Research Institute as a patient, either by his own free will or as prescribed by a psychiatrist.

If you prefer, the investigator's dream can serve as an opening hook to the adventure. Feel free to describe it in graphic detail, possibly tailoring the imagery to an event in a previous adventure. No matter what the dream is, it should always end the same way: A mysterious, shadowy figure lurking nearby grows tentacles, then uses them to gently caress the investigator's face. Every time, as soon as this happens, the investigator bolts upright in bed, screaming. If several investigators are troubled with sleep disorders, only one of them should have this dream. If you can describe its imagery well, the resolution of the adventure provides resolution to the dream as well.



No matter what the sleep disorder may be, the clinic offers to ease the investigator's suffering. Unfortunately, the facility is not as innocuous as it first seems. One of the researchers is inadvertently delving into matters better left alone. By manipulating electrical fields, he allows himself and others to see the true source of what are clinically known as "night terrors." He soon discovers that the experience is created when people accidentally and momentarily see the terrible things that coexist in our space, creatures that are normally incorporeal and unaware of our existence—unaware, at least, until now.

USING THE SCENARIO

Sleep disorders are, of course, not at all uncommon in the sanity-blasting world of the Cthulhu Mythos. An investigator might be having nightmares (or another sleep-related malady) because of revelations in a tome, an experience with a spell, an encounter with a monster, or a disturbing event in a previous adventure.

If this adventure is being used in a campaign, at least one of the investigators should be a patient at the clinic. Since patients only need to be present during the night, they can easily pursue their personal interests or conduct activities pertaining to other adventures during the day. Within a day or two, it becomes obvious that there's something strange going on at the clinic. The patient then has a good reason for inviting other characters to help investigate by hanging around the clinic at night.

If this is a one-shot or introductory adventure, you may want to allow a few players to take on the roles of clinic staff, including orderlies, interns, and researchers. If this is the case, have the players choose what occupations they want to play and have them create characters that will fit in. For instance, a researcher should have Research and Knowledge (psychology) as core skills.

Give these players some advance knowledge regarding the layout and the personnel of the clinic. You can substitute player characters for any NPCs except Dr. Roth, Dr. Joshi, and Sam Brendel. If it helps advance the story, have events and dreams concerning the various NPCs happen to player characters instead. It's still a good idea to let one or two players play patients—that way, they can be on the "front lines" when experiencing the horrors to come.

As part of your preparation for this adventure, read the information on sleep, familiarize yourself with the layout of the clinic, and review the cast of characters. Then introduce the players with the first section: Checking In. Follow the events of the timeline, presenting them to the players as appropriate. Don't be afraid to start things slowly, allowing the tension to build for the first night or two. The investigators have three days to figure out the cause of several strange events at the clinic. If they haven't figured it out by the fourth night, or if they don't take steps to destroy the source of the problem, all hell breaks loose.

A LITTLE BACKGROUND ON SLEEP

All mammals need sleep. This need for sleep is remarkably standardized in both quality and quantity and, if disturbed, results in problems during wakefulness. Sleep is divided into two distinct states: nonrapid eye movement sleep (NREM) and rapid eye movement sleep (REM). These two states occur in a roughly 90-minute cycle that repeats five to six times a night and includes five stages of sleep.

As we fall asleep, we enter the transition sleep called Stage One and begin our first sleep cycle. Within a few minutes, we evolve into our baseline sleep, or Stage Two sleep. It is from Stage Two that the other three stages emerge. Stage Two occupies approximately 50–65% of our sleep time. Within 15–20 minutes, we slowly transition into Stage Three and then Stage Four sleep, often called delta sleep or slow-wave sleep. Delta sleep is similar to being in a coma, but unlike a coma, it is reversible.

As we experience these first four stages of sleep, respiration and heart rates slow and the body becomes almost immobile. Then, after 20–30 minutes of slow-wave sleep, we lighten into Stage Two again and almost immediately change gears into very active brain-wave patterns, triggering REM sleep. Simultaneously with this dive into REM, our respiration and heart rate increase substantially. We also lose our ability to use our postural or skeletal muscles—this is called sleep paralysis.

Along with these phenomena, our brain becomes so active that we start to hallucinate and have dreams. Our eyes move down to midline, just as in wakefulness, and they begin to move sporadically, often in relation to what we are dreaming. In effect, a dreamer is a highly activated brain in a paralyzed body. This state lasts 10–20 minutes before we fall back down into Stage Two again. This ends the sleep cycle, which then starts all over again.

After the first sleep cycle, we gradually lose our delta sleep and replace it with longer and longer periods alternating between Stage Two and Stage Five (REM) sleep. By the final sleep cycle of the night, we spend approximately half our time in Stage Two and half in REM.

Contrary to popular belief, sleepwalking and other similar parasomnias (sleep disorders) do not occur during REM sleep. A person cannot sleepwalk while dreaming because of sleep paralysis. Sleepwalking occurs in slow-wave (Stage Three and Four) sleep and may be related to subconscious thought occurring at the time, but not actual dreams.

CLINIC LAYOUT

The Torgerson Sleep Research Institute was once a normal neighborhood medical clinic located near DePaul University north of downtown Chicago. The two-story structure is about fifty years old, with an unimpressive brick façade that's about fifteen years old. The windows of the second story were obviously covered over at that point. The interior has been done in clinical white, with worn wooden trim around windows, around doorways, and along the yellowing tile floor.

The doors are all heavy and wooden (DC 23 to break down, hardness 5, 20 hit points). None of the windows open; all of them have been sealed shut. The facility has central air and heat.

It is important that the GM become familiar with the layout of the clinic, since virtually all the action in the adventure takes place here. Refer to the map on page 275; you may also want to photocopy it for the players.

FIVE STAGES OF SLEEP

STAGE ONE SLEEP

Stage One sleep is experienced while falling asleep. It's a transition stage between waking and sleeping. This stage usually lasts 1–5 minutes and occupies approximately 2–5% of a normal night's sleep. Stage One sleep is dramatically increased in some cases of insomnia and disorders that produce frequent arousals, such as apnea (or snoring).

STAGE TWO SLEEP

Stage Two sleep follows Stage One, and is the baseline of sleep. This stage is part of the 90-minute cycle and occupies approximately 45–60% of sleep.

STAGE THREE AND STAGE FOUR SLEEP (DELTA SLEEP)

After approximately 10–20 minutes, Stage Two sleep evolves into delta sleep, which lasts 1[illegible] down dramatically from the "theta" rhythm of Stage Two to a much slower rhythm of 1–2 cycles per second. The height or amplitude of the "delta" waves increases dramatically. In most adults, these two stages are completed within the first two 90-minute sleep cycles (within the first 3 hours of sleep).

Contrary to popular belief, delta sleep, not REM, is the deepest stage of sleep and the most restorative. A sleep-deprived person's brain craves delta sleep first and foremost. In children, delta sleep can occupy up to 40% of all sleep time. This is what makes children so hard to awaken during most of the night.

STAGE 5 SLEEP (REM SLEEP)

REM sleep is the active stage of sleep, comprising 20–25% of a normal night's sleep. Breathing, heart rate, and brain wave activity quicken, and vivid dreams can occur during this stage. Sleep researchers refer to the fifth stage as REM sleep (rapid eye movement sleep) because the sleeper's

15–30 minutes. This is called "slow-wave" sleep because brain activity slows eyes move about rapidly under closed lids. After REM sleep, the body usually returns to Stage Two.

LOWER FLOOR

Closet. Each closet contains miscellaneous office-related supplies, old files, and other uninteresting stuff.

Conference Room 1. This room contains a large wooden table, eight to ten chairs, a dry-erase board on the wall, and a television/VCR on a stand.

Conference Room 2. This room contains a large wooden table, eight to ten chairs, a dry-erase board on the wall, and some fake potted plants.

Director's Office. Barbara Phillips's office has an extremely tidy and professional appearance. She has a desk, a few chairs, a number of file cabinets, and a computer desk with a computer on it. At the end of each day, she locks her door. (Bypassing this precaution requires an Open Lock check, DC 15.)

Elevator. This old elevator takes 2 full rounds to travel between floors, plus a round's delay for the doors to close. Few of the staff members use it, since it's quicker to take the stairs. The elevator only gets used when someone's carrying a heavy load or wheeling a cart.

Furnace Room. This room is almost entirely filled by the furnace and air conditioner. There's barely any room to move. Except when the machines need tending, no one ever goes in here.

Lounge. Most of the staff members spend their breaks and downtime in this room. It has a pair of worn couches, a smattering of chairs, a television with a VCR, a radio/tape player, and a refrigerator that stores employee lunches and drinks. Next to the refrigerator, each employee has a small wooden slot in a large wall-mounted shelf to hold mail and memos. These slots are filled by Randy, the administrative assistant, each morning. Next to the mail shelf, a time card clock and rack hold time cards for hourly employees, and a bulletin bold displays announcements for the staff.

The lounge also contains a heavy-duty washer and dryer for handling the linens (one of the orderlies' least favorite duties), as well as a small microwave and hot plate for employee lunches and the patients' meals. An outside caterer brings in patient meals when needed; the orderlies heat them up here.

Maintenance Room. Cleaning supplies and tools are stored here. This is also where the water main, fuse box, and hot water heaters can be found.

Men's Room. This bathroom has multiple sinks, urinals, and stalls. The door does not lock.

Office. Randy spends most of his time here. It includes a desk, a long table, a few chairs, and dozens of file cabinets. Randy has a small collection of superhero action figures collecting dust on his desk around his computer.

Patient Room 1. Each patient room appears much like a common hospital room. They're intended for patients who stay here around the clock, but because this is quite rare, they aren't used as much as the sleep rooms (listed below). Each one has a small bathroom with a sink, toilet, and shower.

A hospital bed, a pair of end tables, a wall-mounted television, a pair of stuffed chairs, and a lamp furnish the room. Electrical equipment for the polygraph hookups (see Checking In, page 279) are positioned next to the bed. A closed circuit camera is mounted in one corner near the ceiling. The polygraph leads and the camera are hooked to monitors in the computer lab on the upper floor.

Patient Room 2. This room is identical to patient room 1.

Reception. Potted plants and a few couches flanked by tables covered with out-of-date magazines greet visitors coming in through the front door. The reception area is mostly a long counter. Angela Smith sits here during business hours to greet incoming patients and make sure they fill out their requisite forms. She also alerts the researchers to patient arrivals.

In the back of the room, beyond the counter, Angela keeps a computer and a file cabinet for her accounting duties and for updating patient accounts. A drawer here holds keys to all the labs on the upper floor, as well as the offices on the lower floor. Standard procedure is for whoever is using a lab to check out the key from Angela and return it to her afterward.

Station 1. Once a nurse's station in the old clinic, station 1 has numerous cabinets and drawers for the orderlies to stash common supplies—everything from syringes to extra pillows. Each station also has a fire extinguisher, a first-aid kit, and miscellaneous belongings of the orderlies: half-read paperbacks, boxes of crackers or cookies, and so on. The countertops are usually clear.

Storage. Linens, paper products, some dry and canned food, tools, and other miscellaneous items are stored in these large closets.

Women's Room. This bathroom has multiple sinks and stalls. The door does not lock.

UPPER FLOOR

Bathroom. This unisex bathroom has a sink, shower, toilet, and urinal. The door locks (Open Lock check, DC 10, to circumvent).

Computer Lab. The computer lab is filled with five desktop computers, a large bank of servers, a scanner, two printers, a digital camera, and a photocopy machine. Two monitors are hooked up to the cameras in patient rooms 1 and 2, respectively, on the lower floor. The polygraph leads in those rooms are also monitored from the computer room (see Checking In, page 279).

At the start of the scenario, Dr. Joshi uses this room during the night to monitor Sam Brendel. During the day, however, it is unoccupied and used to make copies, color printouts, and even (by the orderlies and sometimes the patients) to play networked computer games or surf the Internet.

Videotapes from all the cameras and paper printouts of various polygraph readings are stored on shelves covering the north wall.

A Computer Use check (DC 25) is needed to get into the clinic's computer files, because they are password protected. Once inside the system, an investigator can obtain personnel and patient records and even access the current research notes of the various doctors.

Someone with access to this room could also reroute any of the various cameras in the patient rooms or sleeping rooms so they could be viewed by any monitor in the system. For example, an investigator could rig it so that the camera in SR 1 transmits to a monitor in lab C. This would require a Disable Device check (DC 15) or Repair check (DC 20).

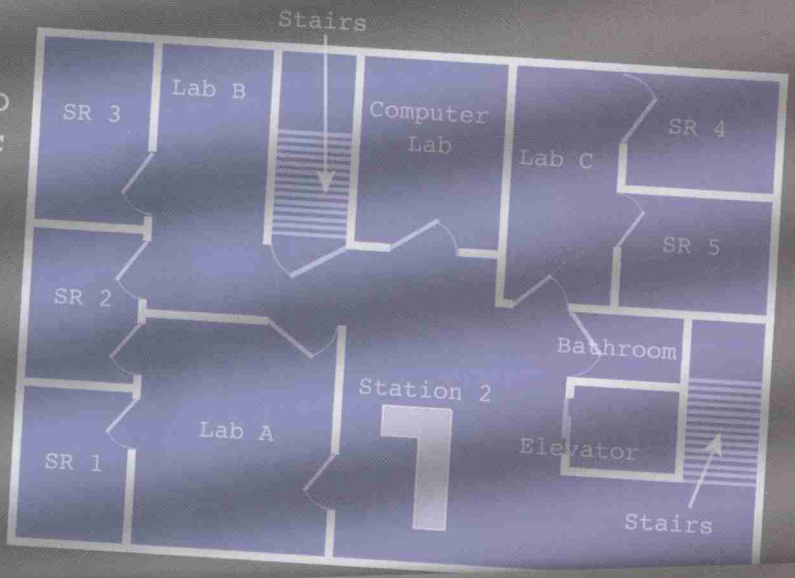
Elevator. This is the same elevator described on the first floor.

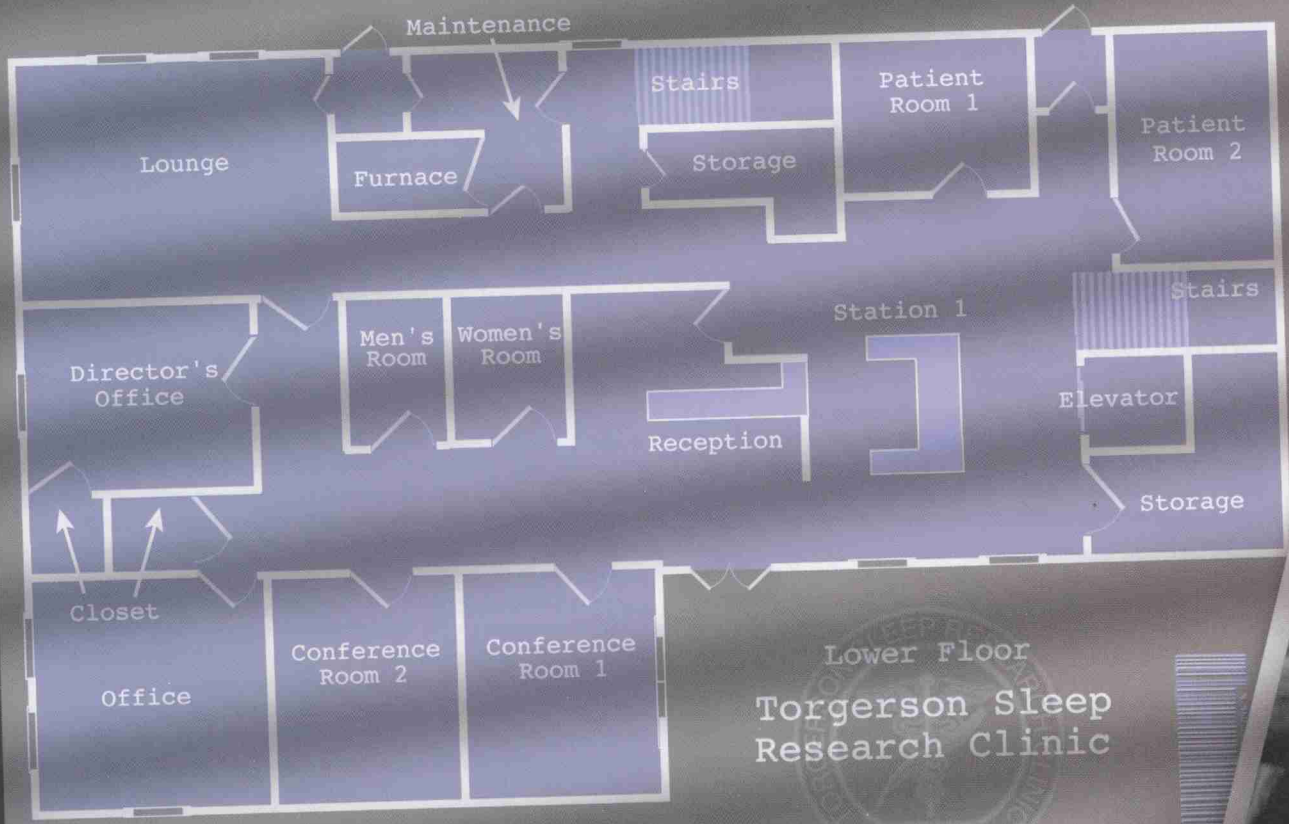
Lab A. Currently, this is where Dr. Roth is working with his patients, Tim Larson and Nick Keller. The lab has two monitors hooked up to watch SR 1 and SR 2, as well as the readouts for the polygraph (see Checking In, page 279). The

Torgerson Sleep Research Clinic

Upper Floor
Torgerson Sleep
Research Clinic







Lower Floor
Torgerson Sleep
Research Clinic



lab also contains a desktop computer and printer on a wall-mounted countertop, a CD player and a number of soothing, restful CDs, a desk covered with books, magazines, and papers, and three office chairs. A cabinet full of various supplies holds everything from printer paper to petroleum jelly to blank video tapes to ballpoint pens. None of the books or papers are of much interest, since Dr. Roth carries his notes with him.

Dr. Roth keeps a strange machine in this lab. It sits on a wooden pallet with caster wheels. The machine is 3 feet high, 2 feet wide, and 2 feet long. It has a squarish, dull gray exterior made of steel. A few dials and a pair of toggle switches are displayed on the top. A pair of needle indicators seem to be associated with the dials, but it is not at all clear to the uninitiated what their displays actually measure.

A Knowledge (electronics) check against DC 25 is needed to even guess at what Dr. Roth's strange machine might be, and even then, the examiner only realizes that it produces an electromagnetic field in a very strange way. If in-depth study is attempted, treat the device as an artifact with a Examination Period of 1d2 days (see Handling Artifacts, page 119).

Roth prefers not to discuss his work, saying it's still in a preliminary stage. He doesn't want to be scooped. If asked directly (Diplomacy or Gather Information, DC 20), he says his machine measures bioelectrical energy fields. He's studying the connection between sleep disorders and the ambient energy produced by the body. If he can establish a causal relationship between the two, that would mean that manipulating one might have a beneficial effect upon the other. Of course, his research is still in its early stages, but he thinks he's really on the track of something. See the Roth's Machine sidebar for more information on the device and its effects.

Lab B. This lab has two monitors hooked up to watch SR 2 and SR 3 and the readouts for the polygraph. The lab also contains a desktop computer and printer on a long wooden table, a CD player and a number of soothing, restful CDs, two desks—one covered with books, magazines, and papers, the other empty—and two office chairs. A cabinet holds various supplies, everything from printer paper to petroleum jelly to blank video tapes to ballpoint pens. None of the books or papers are of much interest, and the magazines are all six to eight months out of date.

Also, there is a locked metal cabinet that contains various drugs needed by the researchers (Open Lock, DC 25, to open). These drugs include any relevant medications listed in the Sanity chapter (see Psychiatric Medications, page 51) as well as a variety of simpler medications, such as muscle relaxants and aspirin.

Lab C. This lab has two monitors hooked up to watch SR 4 and SR 5 and the readouts for the polygraph. The lab also contains a desktop computer on a desk with a printer on the floor, a portable CD player with headphones and a number of CDs, a cabinet full of various supplies, an old couch covered in magazines, and a pair of office chairs.

Lab C is also equipped with a white sound machine; it makes a steady drone to block out noise and facilitate sleep. This is moved into one of the sleep rooms if it's needed.

SR 1. A "sleep room." This is a room for patients who stay at the clinic only at night (that is, the majority of the research subjects). It contains a bed, a nightstand, a lamp, and polygraph equipment to hook up the subject. A closed-circuit camera is mounted in one corner near the ceiling. The door has a small one-way mirror for direct observation. The electrical equipment is all connected to monitors in lab A.

SR 2. As the other sleep rooms. It connects to both lab A and lab B. This room can be monitored from either lab.

SR 3. As the other sleep rooms. The electrical equipment is all connected to monitors in lab B.

SR 4. As the other sleep rooms. The electrical equipment is all connected to monitors in lab C.

SR 5. As the other sleep rooms. The electrical equipment is all connected to monitors in lab C.

Station 2. Pretty much identical to station 1, except that it's often not quite as tidy. The counter is usually littered with a couple of medical journals, a half-drunk can of Coke, and less significant items.

ROTH'S MACHINE

This obviously homemade device creates a special energy field about 20 feet around it once it is activated and properly tuned. The field allows a human within it to view creatures and objects that take up the same space as we do, but on a different harmonic frequency. It also allows those same creatures to view humans and objects in our world.

Dr. Roth is unaware of similar experiments in the 1920s involving Dr. Tillinghast's infamous Ultraviolet Projector. Savvy investigators familiar with these incidents know of these creatures as Terrors from Beyond. (For more details and imagery, consult H.P. Lovecraft's "From Beyond.")

After some preliminary experiments, Dr. Roth has come to believe that these creatures are the true source of many night terrors. According to his theory, the human mind sometimes accidentally achieves a state during sleep in which, just for a moment, it can catch a brief momentary awareness of Terrors. This leads to an immediate reaction of panic, so that the person wakes with a start. The awareness is too brief to catch the attention of the creatures, however.

Roth's machine prolongs this rarefied mental state. Those experiencing a sleep terror continue to perceive the Terrors from Beyond even after they have awakened. He doesn't realize, however, that the Terrors can continue to perceive them. In fact, once the creatures have fully attuned to their new surroundings, other people in the energy field can also see them, and are thus in danger themselves. When the machine is turned off, the mutual awareness is disrupted.

He is completely oblivious to more serious dangers. Prolonged exposure to the field makes one more likely to have night terrors and, eventually, experience night terrors long enough to suffer an outright attack, even without the presence of the field. A 10% chance exists each night that any person who has been exposed to the effect of the machine (that is, anyone who's been in the clinic) will be attacked by a Terror for 1d6 rounds after a sleep terror awakens them from normal sleep. This decreases to 5% if the character is more than 50 miles away from the clinic, and 0% if the machine is not turned on at all that night. The attunement fades over time, so after six months the risk of nightly attacks ends unless the person is again exposed to the field.

Dr. Thomas Joshi: Male 3rd level; HD 3d6+3; hp 13; Init +4 (Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +2 melee or +1 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 18, Wis 11, Cha 13.

Skills: Diplomacy +7, Drive +6, Heal +9, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (biology) +10, Knowledge (medicine) +10, Knowledge (psychology) +10, Listen +4, Move Silently +2, Psychoanalysis +10, Research +13, Speak Other Language (Latin, Greek) +5 each, Spot +6.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Skill Emphasis (Heal), Skill Emphasis (Research).

CAST OF CHARACTERS

The GM has many nonplayer characters to keep track of in this adventure. All of them are briefly summarized here, but not all of them are important to the plot. In fact, most are provided as extras.

Trimming the Staff: Gamemasters new to this game may find sixteen NPCs at the clinic a bit much to handle. Not all these people are present at any one time, and only eight of them work the night shift. Some have only minor or unobtrusive roles. If players are portraying workers at the clinic, they can easily substitute their characters for some of the extra workers listed here.

If that's still more NPCs than you feel comfortable handling, consider a few more cuts. Drop Barbara Phillips and let Dr. Corbitt double as the Clinic Director (officially in charge, but with less clout than Joshi or Roth). Drop Randy Carter and let Angela absorb his duties in addition to her own. Drop Wilbur and Mabel and let the orderlies (Steve and Ted) do cleaning chores as well as their other work.

RESEARCHERS

Dr. Thomas Joshi (Night Shift)

Dr. Joshi is a middle-aged, portly, successful researcher. He is heavily funded and considered by most scientists in his field to be a genius. Currently, he has the high-profile project of working with Samuel Brendel (see below). This has had him on the evening news twice in the last few weeks.

Joshi is arrogant and dislikes interruptions. In fact, he dislikes anything that will keep him from his work. He is openly contentious with Corbitt and Roth, condescending to the orderlies, and even rude to Brendel's guards. He has a wild theory concerning a sixth stage of sleep in which a particularly disturbed individual can commit potentially heinous acts and not be aware of them—or even awaken. He suspects this is the case with Brendel and wants to exploit him to prove his theory.

Dr. Melissa Corbitt (Night Shift)

Corbitt is in her late thirties. She is slender, friendly, and professional. She works hard, but has not had the success of Dr. Joshi—not that she necessarily wants the limelight like he does. Less preoccupied with her pet theories than either Joshi or Roth, Dr. Corbitt usually handles the miscellaneous cases that come to the clinic (including those of player character patients). She finds Joshi insufferable but Roth pleasant enough, if quiet.

Dr. Melissa Corbitt: Female 2nd level; HD 2d6; hp 8; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11; Atk –1 melee or +1 ranged; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Diplomacy +8, Heal +6, Knowledge (biology) +7, Knowledge (medicine) +7, Knowledge (psychology) +7, Listen +6, Psychoanalysis +7, Research +7, Speak Other Language (German, Spanish) +3 each, Spot +6, Swim +4.

Feats: Dodge, Trustworthy.

Dr. Edgar Roth (Night Shift)

This forty-something thin, quiet man recently received a large grant to study night terrors (described in the Night Terrors sidebar, page 278). Roth is driven and can be downright cold to someone interrupting his work. He keeps his lab locked while he's using it. Dr. Roth recently commissioned a man named Maxwell White to make a machine for him. White is considered by most to be a crackpot electrical engineer who has a problem with alcohol and can't hold down a steady job. The machine is detailed in the description of lab A (page 274) and the accompanying sidebar (page 276).

Dr. Edgar Roth: Male 4th level; HD 4d6–4; hp 10; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11; Atk +2 melee or +3 ranged; SV Fort +0, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 16, Wis 9, Cha 11.

Skills: Computer Use +10, Heal +6, Knowledge (medicine) +10, Knowledge (physics) +10, Knowledge (psychology) +10, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Psychoanalysis +10, Repair +10, Research +10, Spot +8.

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Lightning Reflexes.

DIFFERENT TIME PERIODS

"Little Slices of Death" is set in the present day, but with a little work can be adapted to work pretty much in any time in the 20th century.

Before 1940: While the use of electrical devices to monitor patients' heart rate, muscle movement, and brain waves is not unknown in the early part of the century, the machines used in the adventure should be larger and much more primitive than those described here. (The GM's mad scientist imagination should run free.) In this environment, Roth's machine is much less an anomaly, at least as appearance goes. The Torgerson facility is years ahead of its time in using physical means to monitor and treat sleep disorders. Obviously, all the computers, VCRs, and televisions are not present. Phones should be present, except in the very early years of the century—in which case the receptionist has the only one. Due to limitations and prejudices of the time, the director of the clinic is a man, named Robert Phillips.

1940–1960: Sleep research is still in its infancy. The researchers are all far more psychiatric in focus than modern-day researchers, who rely heavily on physiological evidence and treatments. Due to limitations and prejudices of the time, the director of the clinic is a man, named Robert Phillips.

1960–1980: Sleep research is in full swing at this point, so the Torgerson Clinic is no more an anomaly than in the present. Although there is a single, large computer in the computer lab, none of the other labs are equipped with computers. No VCRs are present.

1980+: Use the adventure as written.

STAFF

Barbara Phillips (Day Shift)
Ms. Phillips is the Clinic Director. Young, attractive, and businesslike, she has nevertheless failed to earn the respect of her coworkers, since she lacks any background in psychiatry or any real understanding of their work. Her expertise is in writing grants and charming potential donors. They consider her too focused on finances and not enough on the research and work that the people in the clinic accomplish. Director Phillips has a master key to all doors in the clinic that she carries with her at all times.

Angela Smith (Day Shift)
Angela is the friendly, somewhat flirtatious receptionist who doubles as the clinic's accountant. An attractive thirty-something woman, she is strictly a 9-to-5 employee. She does her job well, gets along with all the staff (including Dr. Joshi), and is a whiz at accounting. If none of the PCs are interested in a little extracurricular romance, she'll flirt with Officer Nelson.

Randy Carter (Night Shift)
The clinic's administrative assistant, Randy is a young university student working part-time. He's smart but a bit of a slacker. Randy is a friend of Steve Buchart, one of the orderlies.

Steve Buchart (Night Shift)
Buchart is an orderly at the clinic. Tall and thin, Steve is very caring and attentive to the patients. He likes to play cards and is good friends with Randy. He works nights.

Ted Robinson (Day Shift)
Another orderly, Robinson (he likes to go by his last name) is muscular, with a shaved head. He does his job and little more, spending whatever time he can grab reading this week's novel. He works the day shift.

PATIENTS

Sam Brendel (Present Night and Day)
In his late thirties, Sam Brendel would be the stereotypical pudgy computer programmer except for one fact: He was arrested last month for the brutal murder of his wife. Brendel claims that he has no memory of it—he just woke up and found her stabbed, bludgeoned, and dead. Sam is the victim of an extreme sleep disorder (severe parasomnia). When Dr. Joshi heard about Brendel's case, he pulled strings to bring the man to the clinic to be observed and tested. The police department has him under constant guard. Brendel's trial begins in six weeks.

Sam hates the clinic. He complains that this place sets him on edge in a way he can't fully explain, and that he sleeps terribly here. As the adventure proceeds, his sleepwalking becomes increasingly violent—and increasingly dangerous.

Sam Brendel: Male 2nd level; HD 2d6+6+3; hp 19; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +5 melee or +2 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Computer Use +9, Craft (electronics) +7, Disable Device +7, Drive +5, Knowledge (electronics) +7, Knowledge (physics) +7, Listen +6, Repair +7, Search +7, Spot +6.

Feats: Toughness, Skill Emphasis (Computer Use).

Tim Larson (Present at Night)
Tim is a sandy-haired 12-year-old boy plagued with night terrors. He is currently Dr. Roth's patient. He continues going to school, with his parents bringing him by in the evening and picking him up in the morning. He lives in Chicago and has been a part of Dr. Roth's study for one week. If asked, Tim says that he's never had so many night terrors as he's had since he got here. He thinks Dr. Roth is making him worse, not better.

Nick Keller (Present at Night)
Nick is a shy 13-year-old bothered with night terrors. He is very thin and quiet, and suffers from a stutter when nervous. Nick's mother stays in a nearby hotel at night (the Kellers are from Iowa) and takes Nick to see various Chicago sights during the day. Nick has been Dr. Roth's patient for two days.

Nick is terrified of Dr. Roth, but he won't say why. A successful Diplomacy check (DC 20) gets him to say, "Dr. Roth brings the monsters into my dreams."

At the GM's option, Nick could possess the Sensitive and Second Sight psychic feats, which are just beginning to manifest themselves—much to his distress.

OTHERS

Wilbur and Mabel Jurgens (Night Shift)
This elderly couple works evenings as the cleaning crew. They are very friendly and unobtrusive. They have a single master key for all doors in the clinic, but not the various cabinets, desks, or file cabinets. They usually start work around five o'clock, finish within a few hours, then go home.

Charles Peal (Day Shift)
Officer Peal is one of Sam Brendel's round-the-clock guards. An off-duty policeman, he does not wear a uniform in this capacity. He has no

NIGHT TERRORS

Sleep terrors, or night terrors, are characterized by a sudden arousal from slow-wave sleep with a piercing scream or cry, accompanied by autonomic and behavioral manifestations of intense fear. A professional might describe the event to a layman as a short circuit occurring in the brain, sending incorrect information.

Sleep terrors manifest with tense muscles, excessive perspiration, and sudden, sometimes violent motion. The patient usually sits up in bed, unresponsive to external stimuli. If awakened, he is confused and disoriented. Amnesia for the episode occurs, although sometimes there are reports of fragments of very brief vivid dream images or hallucinations. Night terrors do not occur during REM sleep, however, so any of the patient's attributions to dream images are clearly false. These may be the result of subconscious rationalizations for obviously inappropriate fear responses. The episode may be accompanied by incoherent vocalizations.

opinion on whether Brendel's "dream defense" is legitimate. He works days.

Officer Charles Peal: Male 1st level; HD 1d6+2; hp 6; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11; Atk +1 melee or +3 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Bluff +3, Gather Information +4, Hide +5, Listen +7, Move Silently +4, Search +3, Spot +7.

Feats: Alertness, Weapon Proficiency (pistol).

Possessions: Smith & Wesson Model 29 Revolver (1d10 damage).

Robert Nelson (Night Shift)

Officer Nelson is the other of Sam Brendel's guards. He is muscular and balding, and does not wear a uniform at the clinic. He is convinced that Brendel's "dream defense" is a scam and that he should go to jail. He is on duty at night.

Nelson and Joshi despise each other. Joshi often insists on checking on Sam Brendel during the night, especially when Sam has had an episode of sleepwalking. Nelson insists that "the prisoner's" room should be kept shut. Officer Nelson's concerns over security may increase as the story proceeds, possibly as the result of the investigators' actions.

Officer Robert Nelson: Male 2nd level; HD 2d6+2; hp 9; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +3 melee or +3 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills: Gather Information +6, Hide +5, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (law) +5, Listen +6, Move Silently +5, Search +5, Spot +6.

Feats: Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (pistol).

Possessions: Smith & Wesson Model 29 Revolver (1d10 damage).

Monica Slayton (Barely Present)

Brilliant and ambitious, Slayton is Sam Brendel's lawyer. She is always perfectly presented and groomed and never goes anywhere without her briefcase and cell phone. She comes by every day at least briefly to see Sam, make sure he's being treated well, and talk to Dr. Joshi in hopes of turning up something that will help in Brendel's defense. Slayton will not be present when any of the supernatural events occur.

CHECKING IN

When the player characters first come into the clinic, Angela greets them warmly and acts as if she was expecting them. Patients must fill out and sign a number of standard forms and waivers. A Knowledge (law) check (DC 10) or Knoweldge (medicine) check (DC 15) is needed to determine that they are indeed typical and routine. Dr. Corbitt comes to reception while the patients check in. She and Ted Robinson show the patients around the facility. This is a good time to give the players an idea of the layout and perhaps even a photocopy of the maps on page 275. Dr. Corbitt is willing to answer any question about the lab honestly to her patients. Eventually, they come to lab C and the sleeping rooms attached to it.

Corbitt shows the patients the sleep rooms, the cameras and monitors, and the polygraph. She shows how the eleven leads connect to various parts of the body. Each one has jellied suction cups that are taped on for extra support.

When preparing a patient for the polygraph, she attaches two under the chin, one above and one below each eye, one behind each ear, one in the middle of the forehead and two on the back of the head. The leads plug into a device in the wall that connects to the polygraph machine in the lab.

The polygraph has three parts: the electro-oculogram (EOG) that records eye movement, the electroencephalogram (EEG) that records electrical activity in the brain, and the electromyogram (EMG) that records muscle activity.

Each patient is hooked up each night to these leads and monitored on the video cameras as well. These observations determine if there are physiological reasons for whatever problems the patient is suffering. Later, the patient is observed under the effects of different drug therapies and again after some psychological counseling, if that's prescribed. Then again, most cases in the clinic don't advance that far (and it is very unlikely that the adventure will get to that point before the disasters caused by Roth's experiments intervene).

TIMELINE

This adventure is governed by a flow of events. Player characters can do whatever they wish, at least until they blatantly break the law and authorities begin to interfere. Unless they directly intervene to change what's going on, they experience the following events in the order presented below.

As a GM, you will have to make these events fluid and alter them as needed. For example, if a PC volunteers to be another subject for Joshi's experiments, then she might get drawn into the effects of the machine directly.

Experienced investigators may actually track down the Terrors from Beyond or find Dr. Roth's strange machine before the fourth night. For instance, the use of spells or psychic powers may give characters an edge in their investigation. Be prepared for this eventuality, and be ready to accelerate events if the story warrants it.

DAY ONE

The patient or patients check in, meet the staff, and learn the layout and procedures of the clinic as described in Checking In.

ADJUSTING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure is designed with four 1st-level characters in mind. If the PCs are higher level, make the following modifications:

Change Sam Brendel so that he is one level higher than the average party level.

Change all other major NPCs so that they are within three levels (up or down) from the average party level.

The Terrors from Beyond can be doubled in number, but be aware that such a modification makes the creatures deadlier (increasing the CR from 1 to 3). Another option is increasing the terrors by 1 HD each. This increases their attack bonuses and saving throws by +1 and gives them each, on average, 4 more hit points (increasing the CR from 1 to 2).

NIGHT ONE

The first night spent at a sleep clinic is always a patient's acclimation night. No real study or observation is attempted. The idea is that the patient should relax, become used to her surroundings, and be able to have a normal night's sleep the following night.

Robinson, one of the orderlies, wakes up with night terrors at home this night but doesn't tell anyone about it (unless asked later on).

During the night, Sam Brendel sleepwalks in a very agitated way. Characters at the clinic who are awake and on the ground floor can make Listen checks (DC 18) to hear him. At one point, he begins testing the door handle. Dr. Joshi comes running down from the computer lab to make sure that the guard (Robert) doesn't do anything that might harm Sam.

If necessary, Joshi claims that he's having trouble getting proper readings with his equipment; a Sense Motive check (DC 10) reveals this is true. Sam has walked to the door, tearing off his monitoring electrodes in the process.

Joshi enters the room before Robert can stop him. An alert (or meddlesome) investigator may actually get there first. Getting Sam back into bed without waking him, and keeping him from violent or dangerous activity, requires a Diplomacy check (DC 15). It's not easy, but unless there is interference from others, Joshi tries to get Sam back into his bed while Robert stands ready in case Sam gets violent. Joshi insists vehemently that no one disturb or harm his patient, belittling and insulting everyone who does not follow his instructions without question. In the process, he alienates Robert, who begins to grumble about the "mad scientist's" reckless behavior.

Dr. Roth's second night of experiments with the machine lead to his first partial sighting of the Terrors from Beyond, which he calls a "night terror." (Nothing much happened last night, although Roth did accidentally attune Robinson, one of the orderlies, to the Terrors.) Roth turns off the machine as soon as he sees the thing, and waits for his heart to stop pounding. From this point on, Roth becomes paranoid that others will try to stop his research and begins to display an obsessive determination to continue.

DAY TWO

Director Phillips complains about the large electricity bill to everyone, eventually issuing a memo to all the staff. She even leaves a nasty note on the employee bulletin board in the lounge (Spot check, DC 11, to notice it right next to the time clock.) Most of the staff ignores her, blaming the furnace or the air conditioner, whichever is appropriate for the time of year. The truth is, it's Dr. Roth's new machine, which causes a huge spike in the clinic's power use.

Dr. Roth accidentally leaves a book on quantum physics in the lounge (Spot check, DC 15). If asked, he says it's just his hobby, which is at least partially true.

Patients other than Sam are allowed to leave once they awake, filling their day with whatever activities they wish. They are free to hang around the clinic as well, if they have nowhere else to go. Most patients go to movies or take walks in the park. The researchers usually write up some reports in the morning and then go home to sleep, returning in the evening.

NIGHT TWO

A PC patient sleepwalks that night, highly agitated (determine randomly if there is more than one PC patient). She has dreams of invisible creatures that seem to be trying to get at her and others. Since they are invisible, she doesn't know where to flee, making this a particularly terrifying and even frustrating dream.

Dr. Corbitt attempts to put the PC gently back in bed. If another investigator tries this first, it requires a Diplomacy check (DC 15). If the attempt fails, there's a 50% chance that the PC deals 1d3 points of damage to herself by running into a wall, knocking over the lamp, falling down stairs, or some similar misadventure.

Meanwhile, Roth uses the machine again, this time for a longer period. He catches a Terror from Beyond on tape for an extended period, but because of an insane insight, shuts off the machine before the thing can get too close to his patients. Both of them wake up screaming at the same time.

Anyone in the clinic can attempt to make Listen checks for this strange occurrence. For each investigator on the upper floor, a success against DC 12 lets him hear Roth's patients wake up screaming. If the Listen check succeeds against DC 20, the investigator hears strange buzzing sounds from Roth's lab (lab A). If confronted, Roth claims it's just his equipment. (Nothing appears amiss when he lets them in, since the machine has been switched off.)

DAY THREE

On the third day, Dr. Corbitt has a disturbing dream at home, similar to the one the PC patient had the night before, but she doesn't

SLEEPWALKING

Sleepwalking consists of a series of complex behaviors that are initiated during slow-wave sleep and result in walking during sleep.

Episodes can range from simple sitting up in bed to walking, and even to apparent frantic attempts to escape from some imagined pursuit. The patient may be difficult to awaken. When awakened, she is often mentally confused. She usually remembers nothing of the episode's events.

Sleepwalking originates from slow-wave sleep and, therefore, is most often evident during the first third of the night or during other times of increased slow-wave sleep, such as after sleep deprivation. The motor activity may terminate spontaneously, or the sleepwalker may return to bed, lie down, and continue to sleep without reaching alertness at any point. Sleep talking can also be observed during these events.

Sleepwalking can include inappropriate behavior, and even falls and injuries. Physical harm can result from the attempt to escape or simply from walking into dangerous situations. The person attempting to awaken the patient can be violently attacked. Other parasomnia activity, such as sleep terrors, can also occur in sleepwalkers.

Sleepwalking in the lab means that the patient pulls off all the polygraph leads, which must be reapplied.

tell anyone (unless asked). She assumes that it's just the result of interacting with the patient the night before.

Angela asks the researchers about a receipt from a Maxwell White. Depending on the events of the adventure, she might be tactless enough to do this in front of a patient, or a snooping investigator may find a note she's left on someone's desk (Spot check, DC 11). She doesn't know what the receipt is for, or who made the purchase, and she needs to find out for her accounts. No one confesses. Roth recognizes it instantly as the receipt for the strange device, but does his best to stay away from Angela.

A successful Research or Computer Use check (DC 15) using back issues of local newspapers, access to the Internet, or similar sources reveals that Maxwell White is an electrical engineer who has worked for some important firms in their research divisions. A successful Gather Information check (DC 20) and some phone calls further reveal that he is thought of as a crackpot, an alcoholic, and a ne'er-do-well. All attempts to contact him directly fail. He's out of town, spending the money Roth paid him on a vast quantity of quality booze and some rare electronic components he's been wanting to buy for a project of his own.

Right before Steve Buchart is scheduled to come in for the night shift, he calls in sick, complaining of an encounter with a dog that bit him. He might be out for as much as a week. His story is a lie. Steve was attacked early this morning by a Terror from Beyond in what he thought was a dream, but turned out to be reality. He's having a bit of a breakdown because of the incident, and has shut himself up inside his house.

NIGHT THREE

A random PC (preferably *not* a patient, but someone else who has spent a lot of time at the clinic) wakes up in a cold sweat, screaming with a night terror. He remembers, briefly, the image of some horrible, amorphous creature floating over him, about to take a terrible bite out of his sleeping body.

Dr. Corbitt notes spikes in the PC patient's polygraph readout during the night. This is caused by the presence of the field created by Roth's machine.

Wilbur and Mabel Jurgens, while cleaning Sam Brendel's room early in the evening, note that the bedsheets are torn and have a strange, sticky substance on them in places. This substance is a residue from the Terrors from Beyond, who manifested here briefly during a night terror of Sam's. Wilbur and Mabel assume it's a new kind of gel, like that used to attach the monitors, and mention the mess it makes if anyone chats with them. In the meantime, the Terrors from Beyond are causing malfunctions in the machines and cameras, so no photographic evidence exists.

During the night, Sam Brendel sleepwalks again. This time, he doesn't just check the door—he slams into it a few times. Characters who are awake and on the same floor as Sam can make Listen checks (DC 15) to hear him. Sleeping characters make this check at a –5 penalty.

As before, Dr. Joshi comes running down from the computer lab, making sure that the guard (Robert) doesn't do anything that might harm Sam. He argues that he must enter the room to see his patient, becoming belligerent with anyone who gets in his way. If anyone gets there first, or accompanies Dr. Joshi, getting Sam back into bed without waking him and keeping him from violent or dangerous activity requires a Diplomacy check (DC 15). Grappling him is a more direct option (see Grapple, page 78), but it makes Joshi furious.

To further complicate matters, Dr. Joshi steadfastly refuses to take obvious precautions (such as strapping Sam down to the bed). He sees all such suggestions as attempts to undermine his authority. He is doubly upset if Officer Nelson supports any of these suggestions.

DAY FOUR

Angela Smith does not report in to work, nor does she call. An attractive, slightly incompetent temp shows up around noon, and leaves promptly at five o'clock. A note with Angela's phone number is

SLEEPING INVESTIGATORS

At least one investigator is asleep each night at the clinic. Cautious investigators may decide to sleep in shifts, but even then, a Concentration check (DC 15) is required to stay awake for more than a few hours beyond midnight in such a restful environment. Obvious circumstance modifiers may apply (such as drinking a lot of coffee or sitting near the white noise generator).

Sleeping characters are helpless. They cannot take actions, but they can hear noises. If a sleeping character makes a successful Listen check at a –5 penalty, she wakes up when danger or suspicious activity is nearby. The GM should make this check secretly so that players are unaware of any such dangers.

Characters who are awakened by either sound or physical shaking (which works automatically) must spend a full round coming to their senses and becoming aware of their surroundings before they can take actions.

If an investigator seems to be sleeping through all the good stuff, engineer some of the night events so that they occurs when a PC patient is awake—say that he's on the way to the restroom or having a late-night snack. Make it known that it is okay for the patients to have guests come and spend some time during the night to observe them. This might allow for investigators who are not patients to get in on the action, especially once strange events start taking place.

As an unusual alternative, you might have sleeping PCs dream that they hear a disturbance when strange events occur. Filter real-world events through the hazy world of their dreams. They might imagine floating down corridors to investigate, wandering through the empty building toward disturbances, or simply sensing something tentacled and unpleasant hovering over their beds. At the GM's discretion, a psychic might be able to actually sense a Terror nearby while sleeping, or her psychic powers might manifest in the physical world as a result of events in the dream. Despite the researcher's expectations, an investigator might even sleepwalk while experiencing these sensations.

Above all else, be inventive. If a character is being shut out of the adventure because of a few failed Listen checks, consider other options.

still attached to the computer at the end of the day (Spot check, DC 10). She isn't answering her phone. Further investigation shows that Angela is not in her apartment, but there are signs of a struggle, included shredded and bloody sheets. The Terrors from Beyond attacked and consumed her in the night.

A feeling of unsettling wrongness hangs around the lab on this day. The PC patients do not feel rested. They feel better if they get out of the clinic for a while.

During that same day, Dr. Corbitt wakes up screaming and covered with sweat from a night terror in her own home. She remembers the same disturbing image mentioned by the PC patient on Night Three. Worried that she might be cracking up, she keeps it to herself and just seems a little quiet the following night back at the clinic, drinking an unusual amount of coffee to stay awake. A Diplomacy check (DC 18) is needed to get her to tell anyone about her unsettling experience.

Anyone making a Spot check (DC 18) while near Station 2 notices some strange marks in the countertop. A deliberate examination of the area easily turns this up (Search DC 10). A successful Knowledge (biology) check (DC 15) suggests that they are bite marks, made by a huge, toothy mouth unlike anything found in nature.

The day guard, Charles Peal, mentions to anyone chatting with him that he has not been sleeping well lately. He woke last night in a cold sweat, and he's got a strange mark on his leg. A successful Knowledge (biology) or Knowledge (medicine) check against DC 15 reveals that he has been bitten. The shape of the teeth don't correspond to any known creature. Charles remembers nothing of the incident.

NIGHT FOUR

At the beginning of the evening, when he shows up at the clinic, Dr. Joshi appears run down. He complains of poor sleep. The truth is, he's been having nightmares and night terrors as well.

During the night, Sam Brendel sleepwalks again. This time, he thrashes about much louder than he has on previous nights. During his nocturnal rampage, he overturns several pieces of furniture. Characters who are awake can make Listen checks to hear him downstairs (DC 10 downstairs, DC 15 upstairs). This time, Dr. Joshi does not come running down. If a character checks in on Joshi, he finds his horribly mutilated body in the computer lab (Sanity check, 1/1d4+1). The corpse appears to be covered in horrible bites, with large chunks of him missing. Joshi fell prey to the Terrors from Beyond made aware by Roth's machine.

Meanwhile, Sam's special parasomnia condition, worsened by the effects of Roth's machine, causes him to begin smashing on the door to his room. In this state, Sam has a +6 enhancement bonus to Strength, giving him a total bonus of +9 to smash down the door (DC 23). Eventually, he succeeds. Robert draws his firearm and waits for a doctor to come to instruct him. If 5 rounds pass with Sam still behind the door and no one of authority to tell him what to do, Robert must make a Wisdom check (DC 15) not to open the door in an attempt to subdue Sam before he hurts himself. If Robert fails this check and opens the door, or if Sam breaks down the door, Sam attacks any and all he encounters. If he subdues Robert, Sam takes his gun and begins firing at anything that moves—including Terrors from Beyond. Without Weapon Proficiency (pistol), he has a –4 penalty on his ranged attacks.

While this is going on, Roth locks himself and his remaining patients in lab A and refuses to let anyone in. Roth is concerned about anyone discovering his secret research, but he claims that his patients cannot be disturbed without causing harm. In fact, his patients' parents have signed waivers for this sort of isolation. Unfortunately, this happens at the same time that the Terrors from Beyond make their first really concerted attack.

On this night, the Terrors are ready when the machine turns on. Two of them appear, one in SR 1 and one in SR 2, and immediately attack patients. Roth, completely unprepared for this, goes indefinitely insane and stands by, gibbering. The victims' screams are very loud (Listen checks are DC 5 throughout the lab). They attempt to get away from the creatures and out of the lab.

The creatures, who have now acclimated enough to the machine's effects that they have full run of the entire clinic, are happy to attack and feed upon anything that they can find.

If the police are summoned, they arrive and eventually subdue Sam (if the investigators and others in the clinic have not already done so). They want to question everyone at the clinic, especially if they hear screams from upstairs or encounter Joshi's bloody corpse. Unfortunately, the police have no effective way of dealing with the Terrors from Beyond, who continue to attack as long as Roth's machine is still turned on. Unless the investigators figure out what's causing the attacks and how to stop them, the presence of officers may simply add to the body count.

DAY FIVE

Police spend a lot of time at the clinic and reporters are on the scene as well, painting a picture of a "strange laboratory of bizarre medical and psychological experimentation on children." Dr. Roth is arrested (if he's still alive), although it's not at all clear he'll be mentally competent to stand trial. Everyone else is questioned and then sent home.

If the problem has been resolved by now, the clinic is closed and the site is sealed by the police, pending a police investigation. If no one has shut down the machine by now, investigators who wish to enter the building must sneak in. By day, this is difficult (DC 25), given the attention the building has just received. By night it is easier (DC 15) but more dangerous, since the Terrors from Beyond have not forgotten their feasting. They reappear and attack anyone who enters.

As soon as the machine stops functioning, the field disappears, as do the Terrors from Beyond. Initially, the Terrors from Beyond cannot return until brought out by someone having a sleep terror episode within the effects of the field. However, by the fourth night of the scenario, the field has attuned everyone within the clinic to the Terrors, enabling the Terrors to manifest and attack anyone, whether they're sleeping or not.

PLAYER CHARACTER ACTIONS

The preceding timeline describes events, but it doesn't take into account the actions of the player characters. Here are a few likely actions and how to handle them.

SPYING ON DR. ROTH

Characters could use the equipment in lab B to monitor SR 2, or simply look through the window in the door. If they're in the right place at the right time, they might catch a glimpse of a Terror from Beyond and risk their sanity. Depending on the night this occurs, they will see the creature for a brief glimpse, a few rounds, or even longer. Interfering with the experiment prompts Roth to turn off the machine immediately and deny everything. Before the final night, if the machine is turned on again, no creatures are visible (since there isn't anyone in the area having a night terror at the time). It's the characters' word against Roth's, and the characters' story is fairly unbelievable. If necessary, Roth suggests to his colleagues that the PCs were experiencing residual dream images, or sleep-related hallucinations.

Viewing the creatures on video results in no Sanity loss, for the Terrors from Beyond only show up as a murky disturbance on the screen. Most people unfamiliar with the Mythos would simply write off such "evidence" as a technical glitch.

A clever character can reroute any of the various cameras in the sleep rooms, so that they could be viewed by any monitor in the system. For example, a character could rig it so that the camera in SR 1 transmits to a monitor in lab C. This requires a Disable Device check (DC 15) or Repair check (DC 20).

If the PCs go to Roth's home, there is nothing incriminating there except a slip of paper with Maxwell White's phone number clipped to a strange machine schematic. Treat it as the machine itself if someone attempts to figure out what it is. He also has a lot of books on experimental, multidimensional physics. If the investigators spend time studying the schematic, anyone with Disable Device or Repair has a +5 equipment bonus to disable Roth's machine at the end of the adventure. Roth himself does not go anywhere other than home and back to the clinic at any time during the adventure.

DEALING WITH THE MACHINE

Anyone within 20 feet of the machine when it is turned on may notice a barely perceptible static charge in the air (Spot check, DC 15). For anyone near the machine, it may be visible as shiny sparks playing across smooth surfaces such as walls and countertops (Spot check, DC 11).

The machine can be turned off with a Disable Device check (DC 15) or Repair check (DC 20). It may be easier to just smash the machine. This requires 10 points of damage; the device has hardness 5. Because of the buildup of energy within the machine and the area around it, once the device is in operation, it can't be shut down by turning off the power or simply unplugging it.

LEAVING THE CLINIC

Of course, when things get weird, the investigators might flee. Dr. Corbitt, if she's able, tries to convince her patients to stay, telling them that whatever is happening to them in their sleep will only get worse if they leave. The unintentional implication is that the strange events of the clinic will follow them, which is more true than she knows. In fact, everyone who has been exposed to the machine's field will begin to have night terrors and encounters with the Terrors from Beyond.

If they survive these encounters and the machine has not been destroyed, the investigators have to return to the clinic and make sure that machine is never turned on again. Once the crisis hits, Dr. Corbitt aids them in every way possible. She can even become a replacement character if one of the original investigators is killed or disabled.

CONCLUSION

Assuming the investigators survive, they are likely to be distrustful of any sort of health facility for some time, which should makes for potentially interesting situations later on in a continuing campaign. Dr. Roth, if he survives, goes to jail for reckless endangerment of a minor and possibly even manslaughter, depending on how much suffering his experiment has inflicted. No one officially recognizes the encounter with the Terrors from Beyond; instead, the few witnesses blame any bizarre sightings as the result of "experimental treatments and psychiatric drugs." The whole thing remains a mystery discussed in paranormal and conspiracy Internet forums for years to come.

EXPERIENCE AND SANITY AWARDS

TYPICAL STORY GOALS:

- Subdue Sam Brendel.
- Protect innocent patients.
- Discover Dr. Roth's secret.
- Disable his insidious machine.
- Discover the Terrors before the first attack.
- Survive the Terrors from Beyond.

BONUS SANITY REWARDS:

Saving Nick Keller and Tim Larson: 1d3 Sanity.

Completing the adventure: 1d6 Sanity.

APPENDIX: LOVECRAFTIAN D&D CAMPAIGNS

On a rainy, miserable night, a weary dwarven fighter and a half-elven wizard make their way into a small, nameless village. The wizard manages to produce a little magical light, hoping they can determine whether one of the thatched-roof buildings is an inn where they can take shelter. As they near the largest building, they note a strange orange glow from under its door. The dwarf grips his axe tightly as he hears a chant from within.

Ia! Ia! Cthulhu Ftagn!

This is no simple shelter. It's the worst thing they could have stumbled upon—a cult's temple!

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS campaign that incorporates the Cthulhu Mythos provides an interesting—if not horrific—change of pace. Dark gods and ancient, forbidden knowledge can have a place in any fantasy setting, but imagine a world where even the bravest, most powerful characters must still fear the overpowering, oppressive forces that govern reality. This would be a place where the gods are at best indifferent, and more likely are malevolent—and hungry. Clerics are insane cultists, and those who struggle against them and the dark forces they represent risk not only their lives, but their very sanity.

PLAYING ON THE DARK SIDE

If you adopt the Cthulhu Mythos into your campaign, the largest change will most likely be one of tone. As in *Call of Cthulhu*, characters will feel more vulnerable, for no matter how powerful they become, the Great Old Ones are always greater. Religion is not a source of comfort or succor, but a dangerous enemy. Characters are suspicious, even paranoid, for a seemingly innocent commoner could secretly serve a cult. And yet, with such dark challenges come the opportunities for great heroism.

MAGIC

Arcane magic in a Lovecraftian fantasy setting should work normally. *Fireball, magic missile* and *mage armor* spells offer a means of combating the horrors of the Mythos, and a ranger armed with a pair of magic swords can hold his own against a deep one.

Divine magic, on the other hand, is in the purview of those who serve the dark deities who further their incomprehensible agendas. All clerics are insane cultists, poring over dark tomes to learn more of the evil beings they serve. They channel power from deities such as Cthulhu and Shub-Niggurath, although the more mindless and indifferent deities such as Azathoth might be completely unaware of the clerics' actions. They may not even realize (or care) that such cultists exist.

Druids, on the other hand, fall into two camps. Dark druids devote themselves to the impersonal, unforgiving aspects of nature, becoming as indifferent as the forces they serve. As a sharp contrast, nurturing druids want to preserve and defend life and stand against the horrors around them. Druids, working with rangers, would be the main source of healing spells and items available in the campaign for noncultists. (As an option, some Gamemasters may want to consider beginning such a campaign at 5th level, when druids first receive healing spells.)

Paladins do not rely on a deity for their power, but on their own inherent sense of morality. They are rare individuals who unfortunately do not last long as they charge heroically against the forces that threaten all life as we know it.

Spells such as *raise dead* and *resurrection* are rare, possibly nonexistent. Thus, the concept of coming back from the dead is limited to those who serve the Mythos—always a mark of someone evil and insane. Likewise, spells of a curative nature, or those that take away disease and other afflictions, could also be less common than in a typical DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game. Any healing spell stronger than *cure light wounds* may be hard to find, and *restoration* won't be available. The world is plagued with sickness and injury, much like Europe in the Middle Ages of our own world.

SOCIETY

This is a world of fear. Mere mortals stand against the unyielding tide of cosmic entities and foul beings that seek to prey upon them—if those mortals notice them at all. In such a world, people can wield fearsome powers, so that even creatures such as flying polyps, Yithians, and dholes might take notice. The past is filled with wars barely won, where human, elf, dwarf, halfling, and gnome armies have clashed with mi-go and serpent people.

An ancient order of monastic elves watches from magical ships over the place where they know the ancient, sunken city of R'lyeh waits in the deep waters to rise again. Those in the know realize that the stars harbor other worlds where terrible beings such as Hastur and Cthugha dwell, and of a dark, distant place called Yuggoth. Wizards and sages both fear and covet an ancient book of magic called the *Necronomicon*. Intrepid adventurers seek the lost ruins of the cities of the Elder Things and the powerful magic relics those ruins hold.

IT WORKS BOTH WAYS

Call of Cthulhu Gamemasters can use material from the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS rules as well. The following spells from the D&D *Player's Handbook* suggest themselves as potentially interesting additions to *Call of Cthulhu: ghost sound, mage hand, doom, deathwatch,* and *death knell.* Ignore details that do not apply, such as schools of magic.

The following monsters from the *Monster Manual* would make powerful and interesting servitors of the Old Ones: aboleth, allip, black pudding, chaos beast, cloaker, doppelganger, gibbering mouther, grick, howler, kyton, mind flayer, mohrg, otyugh, phasm, shadow, and tendriculos.

A NOT-SO-DARK VARIANT

Of course, you could just take the spells, monsters, and deities provided in this book and add them to your existing DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game. In such a world, the deities of the Mythos would not be the only gods, but instead a pantheon of particularly evil and menacing ones. Clerics would not be uniformly evil, and the world would not necessarily be an inherently dark place.

USING *CALL OF CTHULHU* MATERIAL IN A D&D GAME

The campaign setting we have described here is just one option—there are many ways to incorporate the material found in this game in a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game. The monsters, gods, spells, and Sanity rules from *Call of Cthulhu* all make for interesting additions. If you wish to create your own Lovecraftian campaign, the following information should help.

MONSTERS

The monsters found in the Creatures chapter are close enough to regular D&D monster descriptions that all you need is the information below concerning treasure, alignment, and spell resistance to use them in your D&D game.

One guideline regarding magic is essential: If the description of the monster states that it casts some randomly determined spells from the Magic chapter, it would be more appropriate in D&D to add sorcerer levels to that creature (as many as needed or wanted), and then increase its CR by the same amount.

Animated Corpse: Use D&D zombie.

Byakhee: Treasure none, alignment LE.

Chosen of Hastur: Treasure as character before transformation, none or incidental after transformation, alignment CE.

Colour Out of Space: Treasure none, alignment N.

Chthonian: Treasure standard, alignment CN, SR 15.

Dark Young of Shub-Niggurath: Treasure none, alignment CN.

Deep One: Treasure half standard, alignment CE.

Dhole: Treasure standard, alignment LE, SR 29.

Dimensional Shambler: Treasure none, alignment CE, SR 15.

Elder Thing: Treasure standard, alignment NE, SR 16.

Fire Vampire: Treasure none, alignment CE.

Flying Polyp: Treasure none, alignment CN, SR 21.

Formless Spawn of Tsathoggua: Treasure none or double (item guarded), alignment NE.

Ghost: Use D&D ghost.

Ghoul: Treasure standard, alignment CE.

Gnoph-Keh: Treasure standard, alignment LE.

Great Race (Yithian): Treasure standard (Great Race gear), alignment LN.

Gug: Treasure half standard, alignment LE, SR 18.



Hound of Tindalos: Treasure none, alignment CE.
Hunting Horror: Treasure none, alignment CE.
Insect from Shaggai: Treasure double standard, alignment CE.
Lloigor: Treasure standard, alignment NE, SR 17.
Loup-Garou: Use D&D werewolf.
Mi-Go: Treasure double standard, alignment LE.
Mummy: Treasure double standard (common mummy) or quadruple standard (greater mummy), alignment LE (common mummy) or NE (greater mummy).
Nightgaunt: Treasure none, alignment NE.
Rat-Thing: Treasure half standard, alignment CE.
Serpent People: Treasure standard, alignment CE, SR 5 + character level.
Servitor of the Outer Gods: Treasure none, alignment N, SR 17.
Shoggoth: Treasure none (shoggoth) or double standard (shoggoth lord), alignment CN (shoggoth) or NE (shoggoth lord).
Spectral Hunter: Treasure special, alignment CE, SR 18.
Spider of Leng: Treasure half standard, alignment CE.
Star Vampire: Treasure standard, alignment NE.
Tcho-Tcho: Treasure standard, alignment CE.
Terrors From Beyond: Treasure none, alignment CE.
The Worm That Walks (Crawling One): Treasure double standard, alignment LE.

SKILLS AND FEATS

For the most part, you do not need to use *Call of Cthulhu* skills and feats in a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game. They are either already present (such as Power Attack or Wilderness Lore) or they are new but inappropriate (Rolling Shot, for example, could not be used with a bow). The psychic feats are not balanced for use in a D&D game, but if that's not terribly important in your campaign, they could be used. The feat Wealth would unbalance most D&D games.

MYTHOS MAGIC

The spells found in the Magic chapter would, for the most part, make interesting additions to a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS campaign. Use the descriptions of the spells with the following additional information, while disregarding the spells' ability score damage and drain costs, as well as Sanity costs.

If a spell has the same name as a D&D spell, use the D&D version.

CofC SPELLS FOR D&D

Animal Form: Transmutation, Clr 4, Drd 3, Sor/Wiz 3
Banishment of Yde Etad: Abjuration, Sor/Wiz 4
Become Spectral Hunter: Transmutation [Evil], Sor/Wiz 5, components 1,000 XP
Bind Enemy: Abjuration, Clr 6
Bind Loup-Garou (Cage of Kind): Transmutation, Drd 4
Bind Soul: Necromancy [Evil], Sor/Wiz 6
Black Binding: Necromancy [Evil], Clr 4, Sor/Wiz 4
Zombies created by this spell do not count against the HD total for undead created by *animate dead*, and vice versa. The gems required must be worth 100 gp.
Body Warping of Gorgoroth: Transmutation [Evil], Sor/Wiz 4
Breath of the Deep: Evocation, Sor/Wiz 5
Bring Pestilence: Necromancy [Evil], Clr 4, Drd 4
Call Deity: Conjuration [Evil], Clr 9, components 5,000 XP
Candle Communication: Transmutation, Sor/Wiz 3
Cast out Devil: Abjuration, Clr 4
Cast out Shan: Abjuration, Sor/Wiz 3
Chant of Thoth: Transmutation, Clr 3
Circle of Nausea: Transmutation, Sor/Wiz 2
Cloak of Fire: Evocation [Fire], Sor/Wiz 2
Cloud Memory: Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting], Sor/Wiz 3
Clutch of Nyogtha: Evocation [Evil], Sor/Wiz 3
Consume Likeness: Necromancy [Evil], Clr 2, Sor/Wiz 2
Contact Creature: Conjuration [Calling], Sor/Wiz 6 (level varies depending on monster), components 100 XP
Contact Deity: Conjuration [Evil], Sor/Wiz 9, components 5,000 XP
Contact Human: Enchantment, Sor/Wiz 4
Create Bad-Corpse Dust: Necromancy, Clr 6
Create Barrier of Naach-Tith: Abjuration, Sor/Wiz 6
Create Gate: Transmutation, Sor/Wiz 8, components 3,000 XP
Create Scrying Window: Divination, Sor/Wiz 4, components 750 XP
Create Self-Ward: Transmutation, Sor/Wiz 7, components 2,000 XP
Create Time Gate: Transmutation, Sor/Wiz 9, components 10,000 XP
Curse of Chaugnar Faugn: Necromancy [Evil], Clr 5
Curse of the Putrid Husk: Illusion (Phantasm) [Mind-Affecting], Sor/Wiz 2
Curse of the Rat-Thing: Necromancy [Evil], Sor/Wiz 5, components 800 XP
Curse of the Stone: Illusion (Phantasm) [Mind-Affecting], Clr 3, Drd 3, Sor/Wiz 3
Dark Resurrection: Necromancy, Sor/Wiz 7, components 3,000 XP
Death by Flames: Evocation [Fire], Drd 3, Sor/Wiz 2
Deflect Harm: Abjuration, Brd 4, Sor/Wiz 3
Detect Life: Divination, Clr 1, Drd 0, Sor/Wiz 1
Dismiss Deity: Abjuration, Clr 9, Sor/Wiz 9, components 5,000 XP
Dread Curse of Azathoth: Necromancy [Evil], Clr 7, Sor/Wiz 6
Eibon's Wheel of Mist: Abjuration, Brd 3, Sor/Wiz 2
Elder Sign: Abjuration, Clr 8, Sor/Wiz 8, components 1,000 XP

Enchant Item: This spell is inappropriate for a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game.
Evil Eye: Necromancy [Evil], Sor/Wiz 2
Eye of Light and Darkness: Evocation, Clr 8, Sor/Wiz 8, components 1,000 XP
Eyes of the Zombie: Necromancy [Evil], Clr 3, Sor/Wiz 3
Find Gate: Divination, Clr 2, Sor/Wiz 2
Fist of Yog-Sothoth: Evocation [Evil], Clr 3
Flesh Ward: Abjuration, Sor/Wiz 3
Frozen Tracks: Enchantment (Compulsion), Clr 2
Grasp of Cthulhu: Evocation [Evil], Clr 3, Sor/Wiz 4
Hands of Colubra: Transmutation, Drd 4, Sor/Wiz 3
Healing Touch: Conjuration (Healing), Clr 3, Drd 4
Hide from the Eye: Transmutation, Clr 3
Identify Spirit: Divination, Clr 2, Sor/Wiz 3
Imprison Mind: Enchantment (Compulsion), Sor/Wiz 4
Look to the Future: Transmutation, Sor/Wiz 8
Mindblast: Evocation [Mind-Affecting], Sor/Wiz 4
Mind Transfer: Evocation [Mind-Affecting], Sor/Wiz 5
Mirror of Tarkhun Atep: Divination, Sor/Wiz 4
Pipes of Madness: Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting], Brd 3
Pose Mundane: Illusion (Phantasm) [Mind-Affecting], Sor/Wiz 2
Power Drain: Transmutation, Clr 4, Sor/Wiz 4
Power of Nyambe: This spell is inappropriate for the D&D game.
Raise Night Fog: Conjuration (Creation), Clr 1, Sor/Wiz 1
Red Sign of Shudde M'ell: Evocation, Sor/Wiz 2
Return to Rest: Necromancy, Sor/Wiz 5
Seal of Isis: Abjuration, Clr 4, Drd 4, Sor/Wiz 4, components 200 XP
Sekhmenkenhep's Words: Enchantment (Charm) [Mind-Affecting], Brd 2, Sor/Wiz 2
Shriveling: Evocation [Evil], Clr 3
Siren's Song: Enchantment (Charm) [Mind-Affecting], Brd 3
Skin of Sedefkar: Transmutation, Sor/Wiz 1
Snare Dreamer: Enchantment (Compulsion), Clr 4
Song of Hastur: Transmutation [Evil], Brd 5
Soul Singing: Transmutation, Brd 4
Soul Trap: Necromancy, Sor/Wiz 5, components 1,500 XP
Spectral Razor: Necromancy, Sor/Wiz 6
Steal Life: Transmutation [Evil], Sor/Wiz 7, components 750 XP
Summon/Bind Creature: Conjuration (Calling), Sor/Wiz 7, components 1,000 XP
Unmask Demon: Divination, Clr 3
Unspeakable Oath: Transmutation, Sor/Wiz 5, components 1,000 XP
View Gate: Divination, Sor/Wiz 2
Voice of Ra: Transmutation, Clr 4
Voorish Sign: Transmutation, Clr 4
Wandering Soul: Transmutation, Sor/Wiz 7
Ward against Psychics: Abjuration, Sor/Wiz 2
Warding the Eye: Abjuration, Sor/Wiz 1
Wave of Oblivion: Transmutation, Clr 5
Wither Limb: Transmutation [Evil], Sor/Wiz 5
Wrack: Transmutation [Evil], Sor/Wiz 4

SANITY AND THE HARDENED ADVENTURER

You can easily incorporate the Sanity rules in this game into a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game. Doing this will give the game a different flavor—less of a high fantasy tone and more of a dark, grim feel as experienced characters are deeply affected by what they have done and seen.

Since D&D characters live in a world of magic and monsters, however, they are not as susceptible to Sanity loss from encountering creatures. Each character should have 3 points of Sanity resistance, +1 point per level. This is the amount of Sanity loss a character can ignore in such situations. Thus, no character will ever lose Sanity from seeing an orc, and a 3rd-level character will never lose Sanity from seeing an ogre.

The DM may decide that Sanity resistance does not apply to personally horrific experiences, such as seeing a close friend die.

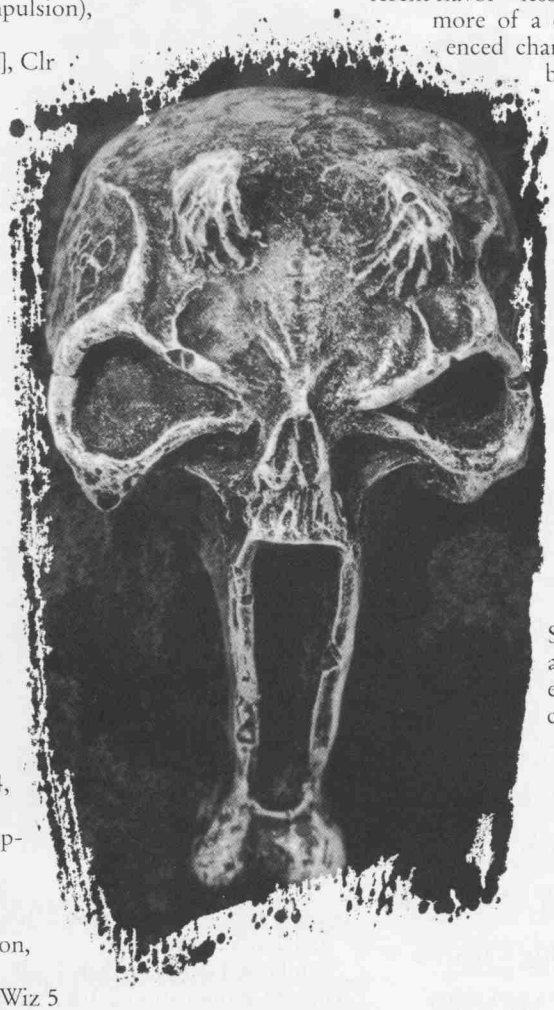


Illustration ©2001, Jason Soles. Used with permission.

MONSTER-INDUCED SANITY LOSSES

Following is a list of monsters in the *Monster Manual* and suggested Sanity losses for characters who encounter them.

Aboleth 1/1d10, achaierai 0/1d10, allip 1/1d10, animated object 0/1d6, ankheg 0/1d8, aranea 1/1d10, arrowhawk 0/1d8, assassin vine 0/1d4, athach 1/1d10, azer 0/1d6.

Barghest 1/1d10, basilisk 0/1d6, behir 0/1d6, beholder 1/1d10, belker 0/1d6, blink dog —, bodak 1/1d10, bugbear 0/1d6, bulette 0/1d8.

Carrion crawler 1/1d8, celestials (see below), centaur 0/1d4, chaos beast 1/1d10, chimera 1/1d8, choker 0/1d8, chuul 0/1d8, cloaker 1/1d8, cockatrice 0/1d6, couatl 0/1d6.

Celestials: archon —, astral deva —, avoral —, ghaele —, hound 0/1d4, lantern none, trumpet planetar 0/1d6, solar 0/1d6.

Darkmantle 1/1d8, delver 0/1d6, demons (see below), destrachan 1/1d8, devils (see below), devourer 1/1d10, digester 0/1d8, dinosaurs —, dire animals —, displacer beast 0/1d6, dragons @1/1d6 + age category, dragon turtle 0/1d8, dragonne 0/1d6, drider 0/1d8, dryad —, dwarf —.

Demons: balor 1d3/1d20, bebilith 1/1d10, dretch 0/1d4, glabrezu 1/1d10, hezrou 1/1d8, marilith 1/1d10, nalfeshnee 1/1d10, quasit 0/1d6, retriever 1/1d10, succubus 0/1d6, vrock 1/1d8.

Devils: barbazu 1/1d8, cornugon 1/1d8, erinyes 0/1d6, gelugon 1/1d10, hamatula 0/1d6, hellcat 1/1d8, imp 0/1d6, kyton 1/1d10, lemure 1/1d6, osyluth 1/1d8, pit fiend 1d3/1d20.

Elemental 0/1d8, elf —, ethereal filcher 1/1d6, ethereal marauder 0/1d8, ettercap 0/1d6, ettin 0/1d8.

Formian: myrmarch 0/1d8, queen 1/1d8, taskmaster 0/1d6, warrior 0/1d6, worker 0/1d4.

Frost worm 0/1d8, fungus —.

Gargoyle 0/1d6, genie (see below), ghast and ghoul 0/1d6, giant 0/1d6, giant eagle —, giant owl —, gibbering mouther 1/1d10, girallon 0/1d4, gnoll 0/1d4, gnome —, goblin 0/1d4, golems (see below), gorgon 0/1d6, gray render 0/1d6, grick 1/1d8, griffon 0/1d6, grimlock 0/1d6.

Genie: djinni: 0/1d4, efreeti 0/1d8, janni —.

Golems: clay 0/1d6, flesh 1/1d10, iron 0/1d8, stone 0/1d6.

Hags: annis 0/1d6, green hag 0/1d6, sea hag 1/1d10.

Halfling —, harpy 0/1d6, hell hound 0/1d4, hippogriff 0/1d6, hobgoblin 0/1d4, homunculus 0/1d4, howler 0/1d8, hydra 0/1d8.



Invisible stalker —.

Kobold 0/1d4, kraken 1/1d10, krenshar 0/1d8, kuo-toa 0/1d6.

Lamia 0/1d6, lammasu 0/1d6, lillend 0/1d6, lizardfolk 0/1d6, locathah 0/1d6.

Magmin 0/1d6, manticore 0/1d8, medusa 1/1d8, mephit 0/1d6, merfolk 0/1d4, mimic 0/1d6, mind flayer 1/1d10, minotaur 0/1d6, mohrg 1/1d10, mummy 1/1d8.

Naga 0/1d8, night hag 1/1d8, nightmare 1/1d8, nightshades (see below), nymph —.

Nightshades: nightcrawler 1/1d10, nightwalker 1/1d8, nightwing 1/1d8.

Ogre 0/1d6, ooze 1/1d6, orc 0/1d4, otyugh 1/1d8, owlbear 0/1d4.

Pegasus —, phantom fungus 0/1d8, phase spider 0/1d6, phasm 1/1d8, planetouched —, pseudodragon 0/1d6, purple worm 0/1d8.

Rakshasa 0/1d8, rast 0/1d8, ravid 0/1d8, remorhaz 0/1d8, roc 0/1d6, roper 1/1d8, rust monster 0/1d6.

Sahuagin 0/1d6, salamander 0/1d8, satyr 0/1d4, sea lion 0/1d4, shadow 0/1d6, shadow mastiff 0/1d6, shambling mound 0/1d8, shield guardian 0/1d6, shocker lizard 0/1d6, skeleton 0/1d6, skum 0/1d6, slaad 1/1d10, spectre 1/1d8, sphinx 0/1d6, spider eater 0/1d8, sprite 0/1d4, stirge 0/1d4.

Tarrasque 1d3/1d20, tendriculos 0/1d8, thoqqua 0/1d6, titan 0/1d6, tojanida 0/1d8, treant 0/1d6, rriton 0/1d6, troglodyte 0/1d6, troll 0/1d6.

Umber hulk 0/1d8, unicorn —.

Vampire spawn 0/1d6, vargouille 0/1d8.

Wight 0/1d8, will-o'-wisp 0/1d8, winter wolf 0/1d4, worg none, wraith 1/1d8, wyvern 0/1d6.

Xill 0/1d8, xorn 1/1d8.

Yeth hound 0/1d6, yrthak 0/1d8.

Yuan-ti: abomination 0/1d8, halfblood 0/1d6, pureblood —.

Zombie 1/1d8.

Appendix 1: Animals —.

Appendix 2: Medium-size and Large vermin 0/1d6, Huge and Gargantuan vermin 0/1d8, Colossal vermin 0/1d10.

Appendix 3: Celestial and fiendish creatures, Sanity loss as the base creature; ghosts, Sanity loss as the base creature or 1/1d8, whichever is worse; half-celestials —; half-dragons, Sanity loss as the base creature or 0/1d8, whichever is worse; half-fiends, Sanity loss as the base creature or 0/1d8, whichever is worse; lich, Sanity loss as the base creature or 1/1d8, whichever is worse; lycanthrope 0/1d8; vampire 0/1d6.

Illustration ©2001, Jason Soles. Used with permission.

DEITIES AND GREAT OLD ONES

The deities described in the Cthulhu Mythos chapter are beyond mortal ken in the *Call of Cthulhu* game. They usually need no statistics, for they are beyond such things.

However, in DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, where player characters can cast *wish* spells and struggle against the most powerful of dragons, they can make formidable foes, whether as evil gods worshiped by insane clerics, or extraordinarily powerful enemies that high-level characters do battle with (or both).

With a little bit of work, these mechanics can still be used in a *Call of Cthulhu* game. After the GM drops all references to D&D spells, removes stats for alignment and treasure, and converts a few skills (using the information in the appendix), these deities are still titanic threats to groups of investigators. To accommodate this approach, some background references in this section still pertain to the *CofC* setting.

For GMs converting these D&D stats to *Call of Cthulhu,* any reference to a "standard action" should be changed to "move action or attack action."

Presented here—in familiar formats adaptable to both D&D and *CofC*—are the deities and Great Old Ones of the Mythos.

DIVINE QUALITIES

All gods are creatures of the outsider type or Great Old One type. Gods' physical characteristics vary from god to god, and are noted in their individual descriptions.

Gods are divided into four ranks, from least to most powerful. The four ranks are demigod, lesser god, intermediate god, and greater god. Overgods may exist, whose powers outstrip even a greater god.

All gods have the immunities described in the following entries. These immunities do not apply if the attacker is a god of higher rank (for instance, a demigod's energy immunity does not protect it from an energy attack made by a lesser, intermediate, or greater deity).

These qualities are:

Energy (Ex): Each god is immune to electricity, cold, and acid.

Disease and Poison (Ex): No form of disease or poison harms a god.

Immune to Stunning, Paralysis, and Instant Death: Gods are not subject to the massive damage rule. Furthermore, gods are immune to stunning, sleep, paralysis, death effects, and disintegration.

Transmutation (Ex): A god is immune to polymorphing, petrification, or any other attack that alters its form, although any shape-altering powers the god might have work normally on itself.

Draining and Ability Damage (Ex): A god is not subject to energy draining, ability draining, or ability damage.

Mind Effects (Ex): A god is immune to mind effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects).

Checks (Ex): A god adds a bonus on all checks. The bonus is 5 for demigods, 10 for lesser deities, 15 for intermediate deities, and 20 for greater deities.

Spell Resistance: A deity can avoid the effects of spells and spell-like abilities that directly affect it. The listing includes a numerical rating. To determine if a spell or a spell-like ability works, the caster must roll 1d20 + her level. If this result equals or exceeds the deity's spell resistance (SR) rating, the spell or spell-like ability works. The deity is still alowed a saving throw if it is entitled to one normally.

ADDITIONAL QUALITIES

Gods have additional qualities that cannot be suppressed (but possibly blocked) by a god of higher rank.

Immortality: Gods are naturally immortal and cannot die from natural causes. Gods do not age, and do not need to eat, sleep, or breathe. The only way for a god to die is through special circumstances. However, as al-Hazred wrote in the *Necronomicon*, "That which is dead does not eternal lie, and in strange eons, even death may die."

No Automatic Failures: When a deity rolls a 1 on an attack roll or saving throw, calculate success or failure normally.

Senses: A god's senses extend for up to five miles. In effect, a god can see, hear, touch, and smell at a distance of five miles just as well as a human can perceive things that are close enough to touch. Perception is limited to the deity's normal senses. For instance, a demigod cannot see in the dark unless it has darkvision, nor can it see through solid objects without some sort of x-ray vision power (or by using its remote sensing ability, as described in the next section).

Remote Sensing: As a move action, a god can perceive everything within five miles of any of its own worshipers or any of its holy sites or objects (such as temples, shrines, statues of the deity, and objects or locales sacred to the deity). This effect also can be centered on any place where someone speaks one of a god's names or titles for up to an hour after the name is spoken, and at any location when an event related to the deity's domain occurs (see the section on domains, below).

Divine Aura: A god's mere presence can deeply affect mortals and deities of lower rank, who might find the experience either uplifting or unsettling, depending on the god's mood and actions, and their relationship to the god.

All divine aura effects are mind-affecting, extraordinary powers. Mortals and other gods of lower rank can resist the aura's effects with successful Will saves (DC 20 + the god's Charisma modifier). Gods are immune to the auras of gods of lower rank. Any being who makes a successful saving throw against a god's aura power becomes immune to that god's aura power for one day.

Divine aura is an emanation that extends in a radius of up to 50 feet from a god. The god chooses the size of the radius up to its maximum, and can change it as a free action. If the god chooses a radius of 0 feet, its aura power effectively becomes nonfunctional.

The god can choose from the following aura effects each round as a free action. When choosing an aura power, the god can make its own worshipers or beings of its own alignment (or both) immune to the effect, also as a free action. The immunity lasts one day or until the god revokes it.

Once affected by an aura power, creatures remain affected as long as they remain within the aura's radius.

- Daze: Affected beings stare at the god in fascination. They can defend themselves normally, but can take no actions.
- Fright: Affected beings become shaken and suffer a –2 morale penalty on attack rolls, saves, and checks. The merest glance or gesture from the god makes them frightened, and they flee from the god as quickly as they can, although they can choose the path of their flight.
- Resolve: The god's allies receive a +4 morale bonus on attacks, saves, and checks, while the god's foes receive a –4 morale penalty on attacks, saves, and checks.

Grant Spells: A god automatically grants spells and domain powers to mortal divine spellcasters who pray to it. Most gods can grant spells from the cleric spell list, the ranger spell list, and three or more domains. Many deities also can grant spells from the druid or paladin spell lists. See the individual deity entries for domain specifics. A god can withhold spells from any particular mortal as a free action; once a spell has been granted, it remains in the mortal's mind until expended (see Chapter 10 of the D&D *Player's Handbook*).

Domain Powers: A deity can use any domain power it can grant five times per day (if the power normally can be used more often than that, the god gets the greater number of uses).

A god can use any domain spell it can grant as a spell-like ability at will. The god's effective caster level for such abilities is 15th. The saving throw DC for such abilities is 10 + the spell's level + the god's Charisma bonus (if any) +5.

A deity or Great Old One can also cast, at will as a spell-like ability, any spell with its name in the title (*fist of Yog-Sothoth, grasp of Cthulhu*, and so on).

Spell-Like Abilities: All the deities presented here can use the following spells at will—*blasphemy, deeper darkness, desecrate, detect good, detect magic, dispel good, magic circle against good,* and *teleport without error.* These abilities are as the spells cast by a 20th-level sorcerer.

Communication: A god can understand, speak, and read any language. This includes nonverbal languages. The god can speak directly to any and all beings within one mile of itself per rank. (For instance, a greater god can speak directly to any being within four miles.)

Remote Communication: As a move action, a god also can send a communication to a remote location. The god can speak to any of its own worshipers, and to anyone within one mile per rank of a site dedicated to the god (such as a temple, shrine, or sacred grove), or within one mile per rank of a statue or other likeness of the god.

The creature being contacted can receive a telepathic message that only it can hear, or the god's voice can seem to issue from the air, the ground, or from some object of the god's choosing (but not an object or locale dedicated to another god of equal or higher rank than the god who is speaking).

In the latter case, anyone within earshot of the god's voice can hear it.

Teleport: A god can *teleport without error* at will, as the spell cast by a 20th-level character, except that the god can transport only itself and up to 1,000 pounds of objects. If the god has a familiar, personal mount, or personal intelligent weapon, the creature or item can accompany the god if the god is touching it, but the creature's weight counts against the god's weight limit. This is a spell-like ability.

AZATHOTH

Colossal Outsider (Greater God)
Domains: Evil, Chaos, Madness, Death
Hit Dice: 72d8+2,091 (2,666 hp)
Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4Improved Initiative)
Speed: 140 ft., fly 360 ft. (poor)
AC: 63 (–8 size, +1 Dex, +40 natural, +20 divine)
Attacks: 6 slams +102 melee
Damage: Slam 4d6+17 (Improved Critical) + Int drain
Face/Reach: 40 ft. by 40 ft./25 ft.
Special Attacks: Intelligence drain, wail of madness, *alter reality,* divine celerity, squamous blast
Special Qualities: Divine qualities (see above), remote sensing 20, damage reduction 55/+4, SR 52, darkvision 60 ft., divine fast healing 200, fire resistance 40, sonic immunity
Saves: Fort +89, Ref +61, Will +61
Abilities: Str 45, Dex 13, Con 69, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 34
Skills: Concentration +104, Cthulhu Mythos +71, Knowledge (planes) +71, Hide –15, Listen +66, Spot +3
Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Dodge, Endurance, Great Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Sunder, Toughness, Weapon Focus (slam)
Climate/Terrain: Any
Organization: Unique
Challenge Rating: 50
Treasure: ×5 standard
Alignment: Chaotic evil
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 1d10/d%

That last amorphous blight of nethermost confusion which blasphemes and bubbles at the centre of all infinity—the boundless daemon sultan Azathoth, whose name no lips dare speak aloud, and who gnaws hungrily in inconceivable, unlighted chambers beyond time amidst the muffled, maddening beating of vile drums and the thin monotonous whine of accursed flutes.

—H.P. Lovecraft, *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath*

Azathoth is the chief deity of the Cthulhu Mythos, and has existed since before creation. Some say it had a hand in the creation of the multiverse (or at least a pseudopod). It dwells beyond normal space-time at the center of all existence, where its amorphous body writhes unceasingly to the monotonous piping of a flute. Lesser gods and servitors dance mindlessly around Azathoth to the same music.

COMBAT

Azathoth is never alone at the center of existence. Even if called or summoned, he manifests with one flautist (usually a Servitor of the Outer Gods) to play its music, and 1d4 other gods described in this book.

If engaged in physical combat, Azathoth forms pseudopods from its amorphous flesh, which it uses to slam enemies. However, its favorite tactic against mortal enemies is its wail of madness. Only if pressed by enemy deities will Azathoth deign to use its terrible squamous blast, annihilating all mortal foes nearby so that it may concentrate its energies against the gods.



Intelligence Drain (Su): Whenever Azathoth hits an opponent with a slam attack from a pseudopod, the opponent is permanently drained of 2d4 Intelligence points (or twice that on a critical hit) as he is momentarily forced to stare into the abyss that is Azathoth's mind.

Wail of Madness (Su): At will, Azathoth can produce a terrible keening. All creatures within 100 feet who have a Sanity score are reduced to 1 Sanity if they fail a Will saving throw (DC 62).

***Alter Reality* (Sp):** The deity can duplicate any spell in this book or any spell of 9th level or lower in the D&D *Player's Handbook* as a move action. The duplicated spell has no material or XP component. Its saving throw (if one is allowed) is 62 + the god's Charisma modifier.

Divine Celerity (Su): The god acts as if *hasted* for 10 minutes (100 rounds) each day. The duration of the effect need not be consecutive rounds. Activating this power is a free action.

Squamous Blast (Su): Azathoth can use this power twenty-four times per day. The ray created can extend up to twenty miles. Targets the ray strikes take 42d12 points of damage. No saving throw exists for this, but the god must make a ranged touch attack to hit.

Azathoth's blast usually takes the form of a half-melted lump of insane dream accompanied by a shrill chorus of thundering flutes. Energy resistance has no effect against the ray.

The ray destroys any *wall of force, prismatic wall,* or *prismatic sphere* it hits (all layers in a prismatic effect are destroyed). The ray itself is unaffected and can strike a target behind the *wall of force* or prismatic effect.

Remote Sensing (Ex): Azathoth can extend its senses to twenty remote locations at once (and still sense what's going on around itself).

Azathoth is both blind and idiotic, a "monstrous nuclear chaos." In fact, the essence of Azathoth is part of all physical matter in the multiverse, though he can also manifest as the distinct amorphous mass described here.

WORSHIP

Other gods of the Mythos revere, and even worship, Azathoth. For instance, Great Cthulhu himself is the chief priest of Azathoth, though he serves from afar, and only when the stars are right. The chief instrument of Azathoth is Nyarlathotep (though some say it is Nyarlathotep that controls the idiot deity Azathoth). The urges of Azathoth are immediately fulfilled by the Crawling Chaos.

Azathoth is rarely worshiped by mortals, for the god offers little in return. (In D&D, only a few clerics who serve Azathoth are granted powers from the god's domains.) Usually Azathoth is called by accident, thereby unwittingly bringing disaster and horror. Only the criminally insane knowingly worship such a being. Nonetheless, such worshipers may have special insights into the nature of the universe, its origin, powers, and meaning, insights perhaps understandable only by other madmen. Supplicants who are truly daring may seek to summon the manifestation of Azathoth, though doing so entails terrible risk, lest Azathoth become irritated at the interruption of his servitors' incessant piping.

CTHULHU

Colossal Great Old One (Demigod) (Water)
Domains: Evil, Death, Destruction, Water
Hit Dice: 42d12+378 (882 hp)
Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 140 ft., swim 140 ft., fly 360 ft. (poor)
AC: 47 (–8 size, +1 Dex, +39 natural, +5 divine)
Attacks: 6 tentacles +56 melee, 2 claws +50 melee, stamp +50 melee
Damage: Tentacle 4d6+16 (Improved Critical), claw 2d8+8, stamp 4d6+8
Face/Reach: 40 ft. by 40 ft./25 ft.
Special Attacks: Improved grab, horrid constriction 4d6+12, spells
Special Qualities: Divine qualities (see above), damage reduction 40/+4, divine fast healing 50/round, SR 37, darkvision 60 ft., water subtype, fire resistance 25, sonic resistance 25, alter size, alter form
Saves: Fort +39, Ref +31, Will +37
Abilities: Str 42, Dex 12, Con 29, Int 33, Wis 27, Cha 29
Skills: Alchemy +56, Climb +61, Concentration +54, Cthulhu Mythos +56, Hide –15, Knowledge (arcana) +56, Knowledge (undead) +56, Knowledge (geography) +56, Knowledge (history) +56, Knowledge (planes) +56, Knowledge (religion) +50, Listen +55, Scry +56, Search +56, Spellcraft +56, Spot +55, Swim +38
Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (tentacle), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Sunder, Weapon Focus (tentacle)
Climate/Terrain: Aquatic (especially the Pacific Ocean)
Organization: Unique
Challenge Rating: 34
Treasure: Double standard
Alignment: Chaotic evil
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 1d10/d%



A monster of vaguely anthropoid outline, but with an octopuslike head whose face was a mass of feelers, a scaly, rubbery-looking body, prodigious claws on hind and fore feet, and long, narrow wings behind. This thing . . . was of a somewhat bloated corpulence . . . . It lumbered slobberingly into sight and gropingly squeezed its gelatinous green immensity through the black doorway. . . . A mountain walked or stumbled.

—H.P. Lovecraft,
"The Call of Cthulhu"

Great Cthulhu is nightmare made flesh, towering well over 100 feet high. His head appears as an octopus or squid, with writhing lengths of tentacle reaching 25 feet or more. His body is a corpulent slab of slime-kissed flesh, generally humanoid except for his enormous size and terrible claws on his hands and feet. Great batlike wings grow from his back, useful both in the air and in the water.

Cthulhu dwells in the corpse city of primordial R'lyeh, sunken deep beneath the surface of the Pacific. He lies in a deathlike trance, but someday the city will rise and he will wake. When he does, let the world weep, for his hunger is an entity unto itself, and will not be slaked.

In the city are also entombed other creatures of primordial ancestry, creatures who are possibly members of Cthulhu's race, though none have taken on aspects of godhood, as Cthulhu has. Great Cthulhu is the high priest and ruler of them all, and is by far the most potent.

WORSHIP

Though lost in millennial sleep, Cthulhu has sent horrifying dreams to mortal men, driving most into madness. Perhaps that is why Cthulhu's cult is the most widespread and popular cult of the earthly Great Old Ones. This cult believes that Cthulhu plunged down from the stars with his kin and built a great prehistoric city at R'lyeh, ruling the world. When the stars changed, their continent sank beneath the sea. The city and its inhabitants fell into a death-sleep where they await their reawakening by members of Cthulhu's cult. When R'lyeh rises above the waves, members of the cult will be on hand to open the vast ebony vault in which Cthulhu dreams, whereupon he will awaken and destroy the world, but sparing the faithful so that they may set up a new world order.

In *Call of Cthulhu*, entire tribes are recorded as worshiping Cthulhu, from remote Inuits to degenerate Louisiana swamp-folk. He seems to be most wor-

shiped among sea-folk, or beings that live near the sea. He is served by the beings known as the deep ones as well as by the octopoid things known as the star-spawn of Cthulhu.

In DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, Cthulhu is also served by aboleths, mind flayers and their kin, and kraken (from the *Monster Manual*). Cthulhu's cult is prehistoric and of many variants. Cthulhu himself has many names, most of which can be traced back to their original form. Thus, two of his names are Tulu and Tluhluh.

COMBAT

Great Cthulhu can quell even extraordinary threats with his terrible face tentacles and claws. When pressed, he can call upon a host of divine or arcane spells, or other divine abilities. In any event, Cthulhu prepares for few combats without requiring the aid of several of his star-spawn.

Improved Grab (Ex): If Cthulhu hits an opponent smaller than him with a tentacle, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action (without provoking an attack of opportunity).

Horrid Constriction (Ex): Once he has hold of an opponent, each successful grapple check he makes during subsequent rounds automatically deals one of four different effects to the opponent or object grasped: flesh discorporation, energy drain, madness, or disintegration. Great Cthulhu decides the effect for a given round and for a given tentacle. More than one tentacle may grip one victim.

Flesh discorporation literally causes living creatures to rot, automatically draining 2d4 points of Str, Dex and Con permanently. Energy drain confers six negative levels on a creature that fails a Fort save (DC 39); otherwise the tentacle only confers three negative levels. Madness drains the creature's Sanity and Wisdom to 1 (all the rules for massive Sanity loss apply). Finally, disintegration affects grappled creatures as per the *disintegrate* spell (Fort save DC 39).

Spells: Cthulhu knows and may cast all the spells listed in this book except *summon/bind nightgaunt* and *contact Nodens.* In addition to his domain spells and spell-like abilities that all Mythos deities possess, he can also cast *meteor storm* ("Call Down the Stars"), *call lightning, circle of death, control weather, firestorm* ("Starfire"), *gate,* and *unhallow* (from the D&D *Player's Handbook*). He casts these spells at will, each 1/day, as a 40th-level sorcerer. Cthulhu never loses Sanity for casting (since he has no Sanity score).

Alter Form (Ex): As a move-equivalent action, Cthulhu can alter his form, including clothing and equipment. The god's body can undergo a limited physical transmutation, including adding or subtracting one or two limbs. The god can remain in the altered form indefinitely, but resumes his own form if slain.

Cthulhu's attack bonus, Armor Class, and saves do not change. The god does not gain any of the assumed form's special abilities, attack forms, defenses, ability scores, or mannerisms.

The god can use his alter size power simultaneously with this one to become taller, shorter, thinner, or heavier.

Cthulhu can also alter his form as if using the spell *gaseous form*, which gives him the appearance of a thundercloud of oily, nauseating green mist.

HASTUR THE UNSPEAKABLE
(THE KING IN YELLOW)

Colossal or Medium-size Great Old One (Demigod)
Domains: Chaos, Destruction, Evil, Madness
Hit Dice: 40d12+340 (600 hp)
Initiative: +10 (+6 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 140 ft., swim 140 ft., fly 280 ft. (good)
AC: Colossal 43 (+40 natural, +5 divine, –8 size, +6 Dex) or Medium-size 31 (+20 natural, +5 divine, +6 Dex)
Attacks: Colossal form: 3 tentacles +30 melee; King in Yellow form: 1 touch +43 melee
Damage: Tentacle d%+13
Face/Reach: 40 ft. by 40 ft./25 ft. or 5 ft. by 5 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks: Touch of madness, automatic metamagic (Silent Spell)
Special Qualities: Divine qualities (see above), damage reduction 40/+4, SR 37, darkvision, blindsight, *alter reality,* alter size, divine dodge (50% miss chance), divine fast healing 25/round, link to Aldebaran
Saves: Fort +34, Ref +23, Will +29
Abilities: Str 36, Dex 22, Con 45, Int 20, Wis 35, Cha 33
Skills: Bluff +30, Cthulhu Mythos +33, Innuendo +30, Knowledge (psychology) +33, Knowledge (occult) +25, Listen +32, Move Silently +34, Perform +39, Psychic Focus +32, Sense Motive +40, Spot +40
Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Whirlwind Attack
Psychic Feats: Sensitive, Psychometry
Climate/Terrain: Any (often the city of Carcosa)
Organization: Unique
Challenge Rating: 37
Treasure: Triple standard
Alignment: Neutral evil
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 1d10/d%

"Have you seen the Yellow Sign?"
—R. W. Chambers, "The King in Yellow"

Thus, in fulfillment of the third geas, [he] entered the thousand-columned palace of Haon-Dor. Strange and silent were those halls . . . . In them were faceless forms of smoke and mist that went uneasily to and fro, and statues representing monsters with myriad heads. In the vaults above, as if hung aloof in the night, lamps burned with inverse flames that were like the combustion of ice and stone. A chill spirit of evil, ancient beyond the conception of man, was abroad in those halls; and horror and fear crept throughout them like invisible serpents, unknotted from sleep. Threading the mazy chambers . . . [he came] to a high room whose walls described a circle broken only by the one portal, through which he entered. The room was empty of furnishment, save for a five-pillared seat rising so far aloft without stairs or other means of approach, that it seemed only a winged being could ever attain thereto. But on the seat was a figure shrouded with thick, sable darkness, and having over its head and features a caul of grisly shadow.
—Clark Ashton Smith, "The Seven Geases"

Hastur's appearance varies widely, mostly depending on who offers the description. Some maintain that he is half-brother to Great Cthulhu and of similar size and shape. Others have portrayed him as a huge ravening bipedal beast. Some theorists, noting the appearance of the Chosen of Hastur after the god has possessed them with some of his essence, have argued that he must be a bloated and boneless giant, while one witness described him as an octopod entity with an unspeakably hideous face.

The only form that is well-attested is that of Hastur as The King in Yellow, said to be an avatar of He Who Must Not Be Named. The King is fearfully tall (at least 8 feet) and unnaturally thin, seemingly made up entirely of tattered yellow robes that obscure the face of whatever lurks within.



Hastur is perhaps the least understood of all the major figures in the Cthulhu Mythos. Some say he is the embodiment of the entropy principle, the inevitable tendency of all things to move from order to disorder or chaos. Others claim he has a bond to determinism, its exact opposite, the idea that all things proceed mechanistically from cause to effect, with no possibility of free will or divergence from the fated course.

One Mythos scholar, noting the baroque nature of Carcosa and popularity of Hastur's cult among creative types, posited that Hastur's city is a parasitic entity that absorbs people and places and transfers them into itself. Additional evidence for this latter possibility lies in the fact that in the oldest references Hastur is referred to a place, not an entity, suggesting that the place is the entity and that all other manifestations are projections of a particularly powerful genius loci.

If so, the stricture against naming Hastur would originate not from the belief that the Great Old One would hear and smite any who named him, but from the idea that belief generates power. By naming and thus personifying Hastur the entity is called forth from potential into actual existence.

WORSHIP

Like Great Cthulhu, Hastur is worshiped by many species. The so-called "spawn of Hastur" are said to be octopod beasts inhabiting the Lake of Hali. The byakhee are often called "the servants of He Who Must Not Be Named" in Mythos texts, but whether they are a race created by Hastur or simply absorbed and enslaved by him is not known (and, in fact, moot).

In *Call of Cthulhu,* Hastur's cult was briefly popular in the Renaissance (cf. the lost Marlowe play *The King in Shreds and Tatters*), but it has been steadily growing ever since the fin de siècle period of the 1890s, when the elusive play *The King in Yellow* first appeared. Those who pledge themselves to Hastur often take the Unspeakable Oath, allowing Hastur to possess their bodies at some future date in return for some present favor or boon. (Horribly enough, if the person taking the oath dies, Hastur will possess her blood-kin instead when the time comes, for the god will not be denied.) A large and active cult, The Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign, flourishes in the modern day, not as a lunatic fringe group gathering furtively in old warehouses, but as prosperous, influential business and political leaders. If Tsathoggua is a god in decline, then Hastur is clearly one in ascendance, soon perhaps to pass into lesser god status.

Hastur's sigil is The Yellow Sign, an oddly disturbing triad of three hooked curls. The password for Hastur worshipers everywhere is the phrase "Have You Seen the Yellow Sign?" Speaking the god's name is very dangerous (see below), as is reading the play *The King in Yellow*—the one draws Hastur's attention to the speaker, while the other directs the reader's attention to Hastur, obsessively.

COMBAT

In his Colossal form, Hastur is an awesome foe, no matter what exact form or shape he takes (that being primarily dependent upon what his viewers expect). His appearance may be preceded by a host of 2d% byakhee and accompanied by 1d20 "spawn of Hastur." (These beings are identical to, but less in power than, his octopod form; each has roughly half his Hit Dice, possesses two-thirds the AC bonus, and deals 3d10 points of damage with each tentacle attack.) Destroying his Colossal form does not destroy him permanently, but destroying the City and the Lake, if it could be done, would achieve that goal.

In his avatar as The King in Yellow, he is more likely to attack by spell or by transferring every opponent in his vicinity to the lost city of Carcosa, essentially trapping them in the sanity-draining world of the play.

The Chosen of Hastur (Ex): Hastur can, at will, transform any mortal foolish enough to have made the Unspeakable Oath into a monster known as "the Chosen of Hastur" (see the Creatures chapter). This transformation is one-way; the original creature cannot be restored thereafter. If the character who made the pact has been destroyed, Hastur can either transform and animate the corpse or transform the deceased character's closest blood relative instead. (The power of the Oath is such that the god will not be denied).

Touch of Madness (Ex): The King in Yellow may deliver a touch attack that drains d% points of Sanity from the target.

Special Attacks: Divine blast, hand of death, spells
Special Qualities: Divine qualities (see above), damage reduction 50/+4, SR 67, alter size/alter form, avatar, create object/create greater object, divine celerity, divine dodge, divine fast healing 35/round, divine shield, gift of life, instant move, rejuvenation, summon hunting horror/summon shantak, darkvision, blindsight
Saves: Fort +39, Ref +32, Will +60
Abilities: Str 60, Dex 25, Con 39, Int 75, Wis 80, Cha 50
Skills: Nyarlathotep has 32 ranks in all skills.
Feats: Improved Initiative, Dodge, Mobility
Psychic Feats: Sensitive, Telepathy, Psychometry, Psychokinesis, Mind Reading, Mind Probe, Dowsing
Climate/Terrain: Any
Organization: Unique
Challenge Rating: 45
Treasure: None or triple standard
Alignment: Chaotic evil
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: Human form 0/1; monstrous avatar 1d10/d%

Alter Reality **(Sp):** The City of Carcosa, with the King as its representative, can change reality with a mere thought. This usually takes the form of the characters' surroundings becoming more like Carcosa, merging imperceptibly into the City of the Yellow Sign itself. For example, just after reading *The King in Yellow*, a character's perceptions may alter. He may find doors appearing that lead to rooms that do not exist by daylight. Characters entering such areas would be wise to return, if possible, before such portals fade at the next setting of Aldebaran (see below), as they may or may not return when Aldebaran next rises. In the City of Carcosa itself this effect is much more pronounced, as objects and surroundings constantly change when unobserved, making the place a never-ending labyrinth that has no beginning and no end—a potential entrance in every human mind, but one without an exit.

Alter Size (Ex): Hastur may alter his size at will, from Fine to Colossal, as a free action.

Divine Dodge (Ex): The reality-warping field that surrounds Hastur makes it difficult to target him correctly. Half the time he's simply not there when the attack arrives. In practical terms, this means all attacks targeting him have a 50% miss chance. Even area effects have the same chance of affecting him. Only the divine power perfect strike (see Nodens) can overcome this protection.

Divine Fast Healing (Ex): Hastur, in all his forms, enjoys divine fast healing (25 points per round).

Link to Aldebaran (Ex): All of Hastur's projected forms are linked to the Lake of Hali and City of Carcosa, which are located on a distant world in the star cluster known to us as the Hyades. Therefore, he can only manifest on our world when Aldebaran, the brightest star in that cluster, is above the horizon.

Spells: Hastur can cast any spell in any form as a 20th-level sorcerer, but is more apt to do so when in the form of The King in Yellow. In this form, he may automatically cast any spell as a silent spell. His favorite spells are, of course, *song of Hastur* and *unspeakable promise*, both of which are made available to all his worshipers.

Then down the wide lane betwixt the two columns a lone figure strode; a tall, slim figure with the young face of an antique Pharaoh, with prismatic robes and crowned with a golden pshent that glowed with inherent light. Close up to Carter strode that regal figure; whose proud carriage and swart features had in them the fascination of a dark god or fallen archangel, and around whose eyes there lurked the languid sparkle of capricious humour. It spoke, and in its mellow tones there rippled the mild music of Lethean streams. 'Randolph Carter,' said the voice, 'you have come to see the Great Ones whom it is unlawful for men to see. . . . Fain would the powers from outside bring chaos and horror to you, Randolph Carter . . . . Forget not this warning, lest horrors unthinkable suck you into the gulf of shrieking and ululant madness. Remember the Other Gods; they are great and mindless and terrible, and lurk in the outer voids. They are good gods to avoid . . . . [P]ray to all space that you may never meet me in my thousand other forms. Farewell, Randolph Carter, and beware; FOR I AM NYARLATHOTEP, THE CRAWLING CHAOS!'

—H. P. Lovecraft,
The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath

NYARLATHOTEP, THE CRAWLING CHAOS

Medium-size to Colossal Outer God [Outsider] (Intermediate God)
Domains: Chaos, Destruction, Madness, Magic, Trickery
Hit Dice: 35d8+490 (650 hp)
Initiative: +11 (+7 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: Medium-size 60 ft.; Colossal 140 ft. (bipedal) or 180 ft. (quadruped); Father of Bats/Haunter of the Dark fly 280 ft. (good)
AC: Medium-size, 32 (+0 base, +15 divine, +7 Dex); Colossal 54 (+30 base, +15 divine, –8 size, +7 Dex)
Attacks: Medium-size by weapon +50/+45/+40/+35 melee, or by spell; Colossal primary attack +42 melee, secondary attacks (if any) +37 melee
Damage: Medium-size by weapon +25 (Str) or by spell; Colossal 10d10+25 primary attack, 5d10+25 secondary attack(s)
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft. (Medium-size) or 40 ft. by 40 ft./25 ft. (Colossal)

Nyarlathotep is the most protean of all the gods; only a few of his Thousand Faces, or "Masks," have been recognized and catalogued. Most are dire, mindless, ravening monsters who smash and destroy all in their way with a ferocity that would put a dhole to panicked flight, but a few are human to outward appearances. Doubtless other races could tell of other avatars of the Crawling Chaos that mockingly resembled members of their own species.

It has been said that mankind makes evil as bees make honey: as a natural byproduct of its existence. If so, then Nyarlathotep is the beekeeper, tending to all humanity's worst impulses. His goal is to spread chaos and thus usher in the Dark Times, the Days of the Gods. He is very patient, and practices a sort of reverse Benthamism: Each action is guided by what will create the greatest amount of chaos or suffering among the greatest number of people. He might thus pass up the

opportunity to utterly destroy one individual to have the chance to shake the sanity of many, being a great believer in cumulative effects. This world is also only one of many receiving his attention: Using his many avatars and accessing Yog-Sothoth's ability to transcend time and space, he is active simultaneously in many different eras. But all his schemes have a common thread and are part of a single plan: making mankind more like the gods, stripped free of all restraints and protections, as apt prey for his masters.

Nyarlathotep speaks every language with equal fluency. Is he not the Messenger of the Outer Gods?

WORSHIP

Nyarlathotep is feared and honored by many cults under many different names. In "The Call of Cthulhu," the witch-covens of Salem and Old Europe knew him as The Dark Man. Egypt trembled under the reign of the god-king the Black Pharaoh, Nephren-Ka. The Brotherhood of the Beast summoned him as the Black Sphinx, while the Brotherhood of the Bloody Tongue had no name for the Thing that came in answer to their sacrifice. Aborigines know him as The Father of Bats; jazz aficionados as The Royal Pant (a legendary black saxophone player), and the Church of the Starry Wisdom as The Haunter of the Dark (a colossal hunting horror). As the messenger of the Outer Gods (Azathoth, Yog-Sothoth, Shub-Niggurath, and others), Nyarlathotep puts in appearances at many ceremonies honoring those beings and receives a share of their worship. He maintains contact with the cults devoted to all the major Great Old Ones (Cthulhu, Hastur, Tsathoggua) and many of the minor ones as well, seeing them as a choice instrument for spreading death and destruction, madness and chaos.



In addition to being able to call on virtually any cult devoted to a Great Old One or Outer God, Nyarlathotep can summon almost any Mythos creature except for nightgaunts (the servitors of Nodens). In the Waking World, he is particularly fond of summoning hunting horrors; in the Dreamlands, shantaks; elsewhere, his choice depends upon the occasion and what is readily at hand.

COMBAT

In human form, Nyarlathotep prefers to avoid melee. Although quite capable, he rarely initiates combat, defending himself with spells if the need arises. In his various Colossal monstrous forms, he enjoys giving full vent to bestial ferocity and generally attacks any foe within sight, ravening until his lust for destruction has been sated.

Alter Size/Alter Form (Ex): At will as a free action, Nyarlathotep can change his size and that of objects he is touching that weigh anywhere up to 1,500 pounds. The new form can be anywhere from as small as a grain of sand (Fine) to as tall as 1,600 feet (Colossal). He can also add or subtract a limb, grow wings, switch genders, or make any other comparable change. The Messenger uses these abilities to switch between his various Masks as needed. One of Nyarlathotep's favorite combat tactics is toying with foes while in his human form, then switching to one of his Colossal forms when attacked. Nyarlathotep can also assume the forms of specific people, either real ones he has replaced (such as Dr. Dexter of Providence) or fictitious ones he has created for that specific purpose (such as the saxophone player The Royal Pant, or the 1920s occultist Lostalus Black).

Avatar (Ex): In addition to assuming multiple different forms, Nyarlathotep is able to create a copy of himself when he needs to be literally in two (or more) places at once. The avatar is slightly less powerful than the god himself, having 5 fewer HD, AC 25 (Medium-size) or 47 (Colossal), a –5 penalty on the god's normal attack rolls, and a –5 penalty on the god's normal saves. Furthermore, each of the avatar's ability scores is five points lower than the god's. In addition, two of the god's powers—create greater object and rejuvenation—are not available to its avatars. Nyarlathotep can create up to ten avatar-projections at the same time. Each projection is fully aware of everything that happens to the others, and the god himself shares fully in this (he simply has multiple bodies functioning all at the same time).

Create Object/Create Greater Object (Ex): Nyarlathotep is able to create objects, both mundane and wondrous, by sheer willpower alone. He often rewards faithful cultists or tempts wavering mortals with such gifts. He cannot create Mythos tomes and artifacts or magic items this way, but by accessing Yog-Sothoth's time and dimensional travel, he can usually locate such items and redistribute them where they'll do the most harm, according to his desires.

Divine Blast (Ex): Up to twenty-three times per day, Nyarlathotep can release part of his personal energy as a ray. This ray can strike a target in a direct line of slight up to fifteen miles away, dealing 35d12 points of damage. No saving throw exists, but the Messenger of the Outer Gods must make a successful ranged touch attack for the blast to hit its designated target. He can shape the blast to look like any form of energy he wishes—incarnate darkness, a bolt of lightning, a sudden fireball, or some more bizarre and sinister appearance. A divine shield offers complete protection from such a blast.

SHUB-NIGGURATH, BLACK GOAT OF THE WOODS WITH A THOUSAND YOUNG

Colossal Outer God (Intermediate God) [Outsider]
Domains: Animal, Chaos, Evil, Earth, Plant
Hit Dice: 53d8+1,961 (2,200 hp)
Initiative: +4 (Improved Initiative)
Speed: 180 ft.
AC: 45 (+30 base, +13 divine, –8 size, +0 Dex)
Attacks: 13 tentacles +47 melee
Damage: Tentacle 4d10+22, tentacle-mouth 2d12 plus blood drain
Face/Reach: 50 ft. by 50 ft./25 ft.
Special Attacks: Improved grab/constrict, tentacle-mouth, squamous blast/mass squamous blast, *life and death*
Special Qualities: Divine qualities (see above), damage reduction 48/+4, SR 45, avatar, divine fast healing 93/round, divine shield, energy immunities, gift of life, rejuvenation, summon Dark Young, darkvision, blindsight
Saves: Fort +64, Ref +27, Will +37
Abilities: Str 55, Dex 10, Con 85, Int 15, Wis 30, Cha 44
Skills: Animal Empathy +53, Cthulhu Mythos +38, Disguise +31, Handle Animal +53, Heal +24, Intuit Direction +46, Knowledge (biology) +38, Listen +30, Perform +53, Spot +46
Feats: Athletic, Animal Affinity, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack
Climate/Terrain: Any
Organization: Unique
Challenge Rating: 48
Treasure: None
Alignment: Chaotic neutral
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 1d10/d%

Iä! Shub-Niggurath! The Goat with a Thousand Young!
— H. P. Lovecraft, "The Thing on the Doorstep"

Here, it seemed, was the source of all this miscreation and abomination. For the gray mass quobbed and quivered, and swelled perpetually; and from it, in manifold fission, were spawned the anatomies that crept away on every side through the grotto. There were things like bodiless legs or arms that flailed in the slime, or heads that rolled, or floundering bellies with fishes' fins; and all manner of things malformed and monstrous, that grew in size as they departed the neighborhood of [the pool]. And those that swam not swiftly ashore when they fell into the pool . . . were swiftly devoured by mouths that gaped in the parent bulk.
—Clark Ashton Smith, "The Seven Geases"

Shub-Niggurath's natural form appears as a vast protoplasm that constantly vomits forth living things of every shape, size, and description. It devours them just as quickly unless they make their escape. When summoned forth, the Great Old One invariably sends an avatar,

Divine Celerity (Ex): For a total of 15 minutes each day (which can be taken in time increments as small as a single round at a time), Nyarlathotep can speed up time for himself alone. He gains a +4 haste bonus to AC and may take an extra partial action each round that the divine celerity lasts.

Divine Dodge (Ex): All attacks targeting the Crawling Chaos have a 50% miss chance (even area effects); he's simply not there when the attack arrives. Only the divine power perfect strike in the hands of a being more powerful than Nyarlathotep himself can overcome this protection.

Divine Shield (Ex): As a free action, Nyarlathotep can create a shield that blocks 150 points of damage before collapsing. Usable seventeen times per day, the shield can be customized to ignore damage from any attack form to which he is already immune (such as acid, cold, and electricity), prolonging its usefulness. The Outer God can shape the shield into a transparent barrier of up to 150 square feet or into a sphere or hemisphere of up to 15 feet in radius. The shield can be placed around Nyarlathotep himself or some mortal or item he wishes to preserve from destruction.

Gift of Life (Ex): With this power, Nyarlathotep can restore a dead creature to life, no matter how long she has been dead or what condition the body (if any) is currently in. It cannot restore a creature against its will, but it can resurrect outsiders, elementals, and other creatures not usually eligible for such resurrection. It can reincarnate someone whose soul is trapped (for example, in a *magic jar*). It can even restore characters slain by the hand of death ability, as long as they were not slain by an Outer God more powerful than Nyarlathotep.

Hand of Death (Su): Nyarlathotep can simply slay any single mortal who has displeased him who is within fifteen miles of a shrine specially devoted to him, as long as there is an unbroken line of effect. The mortal is allowed a Fortitude save (DC 39) to survive the effect. If she fails, she is completely destroyed, agonizingly consumed in a nimbus of divine flame; it doesn't even leave even ashes behind. If the target succeeds at the saving throw, she still takes 10d6 points of damage. He prefers to use this power before witnesses, so that others may learn a lesson from the horrible death of their fellow. Only Nyarlathotep himself, or a being more powerful than he, can return life to a mortal slain in this manner.

Instant Move (Ex): As a move action, in the blink of an eye, Nyarlathotep can vanish in one spot and instantly reappear in another anywhere up to 450 feet away. He can act immediately after teleporting (cast a spell, launch an attack, alter size and form, and so on).

Rejuvenation (Ex): Nyarlathotep is very difficult to destroy (it has been attempted many times). An attack sufficient to kill him simply disperses his essence for 10d10 days. During such periods his avatars continue to function normally, often arranging some unpleasant fate for the one who killed their prime.

Spells: Nyarlathotep can cast any spell as a free action. According to some radical occultists, he was a patron of witch-cults, responsible for spreading knowledge of spells and magic in the dark times between the collapse of pagan sorcery and the rise of the New Age movement. He can grant a worshiper of any Mythos deity any spell he thinks it good for them to have. *Power of Nyambe* is a favorite spell of his to bestow on sorcerers who have pleased him with their dark deeds.



whose form varies according to the expectations of the summoner. The most common form to those who worship Shub-Niggurath is a colossal dark organic mass that is so bioactive that it festers and boils on its surface. The mass's form is not fixed: It extrudes tentacles, testicles, and hooved limbs as it opens mouths, eyes, and vaginal orifices in endless processions. No feature endures beyond a few minutes before it collapses into rottenness and is reabsorbed by the eager life of the mass as a whole. Sometimes swollen globules on the fetid mass's side burst open, giving birth to Dark Young; sometimes the god offers teats to suckle; sometimes its genitalia attempt to penetrate or impregnate willing cultists—or unwilling sacrifices. Few who touch the Great Old One survive, and few who see the Black Goat of the Woods retain their sanity after the sight.

Shub-Niggurath rarely ventures forth from his/her lair, a deep cavern known as the Dark Woods for the bizarre growths that crowd its vast chambers and winding passages. The Black Goat does not recognize the organizational principles that divide plants, animals, fungi, bacteria, and viruses into separate kingdoms. His/her/its progeny commonly combine features of two or more of these categories. Shub-Niggurath's avatar can only be summoned into natural surroundings. The god favors undisturbed woods, the older and more entangled the better.

Shub-Niggurath's presence bestows glossolalia, the ability to speak in tongues, upon her worshipers.

WORSHIP

As the embodiment of the horrible fecundity of life, which festers and grows in every possible environment, Shub-Niggurath has been worshiped in some form by almost every culture on Earth, as well as many never found here (the few exceptions being scientific, atheistic races such as the Great Race). Those who conceive of her as a fertility goddess worshiped her as Magna Marta ("The Great Mother"); those who saw him as a priapic engendering principle called instead on the Black Goat of a Thousand Young. Some of the wild bacchanalian rites associated with Dionysus worship—banned in Roman times—were orgies in honor of Shub-Niggurath.

Recently the god has made available to his/her/its worshipers a substance known as "the Milk of Shub-Niggurath." Ejected or lactated from the Outer God during certain manifestations, the Milk has great generative properties, mutating any living thing exposed to it. Whether coalesced as ova, sperm, or "mother's milk," his/her/its Milk has the power, if left in isolation, of spontaneously generating minute life forms from its own mass.

COMBAT

Shub-Niggurath has dozens of tentacles at any given time and can attack with up to thirteen of them at a time, but each is so large that only one can target a Medium-size target at a time.

Improved Grab/Constrict (Ex): On a successful hit, the tentacle immediately begins a grapple as a free action. If the grapple is successful, the tentacle either constricts the victim for 4d10+22 points of damage or holds him pinned. The next round, a mouth opens in a section of the tentacle holding the character and begins sucking all his bodily fluids; see blood drain, below.

Avatar (Su): As noted above, Shub-Niggurath never appears in person when summoned but always sends an avatar in his/her place. The avatar is slightly less powerful than the deity's own form, having 5 fewer HD, AC 39, a –5 penalty on the god's normal attack rolls, and a –5 penalty on the god's normal saves. Furthermore, each of the avatar's ability scores is 5 points lower than the god's. In addition, the avatar has the god's power of rejuvenation. The god and avatar are each fully aware of everything that happens to the other.

Blood Drain (Ex): A character attacked by one of Shub-Niggurath's tentacle-mouths loses 3d10 hp and 3d6 points of permanent Constitution drain each round. A character whose Constitution reaches 0 is reduced to a brittle, dried husk, quite dead.

Divine Shield (Su): As a free action, Shub-Niggurath can create a shield that blocks 130 points of damage before collapsing. Usable forty times a day, the shield can be customized to ignore damage from any attack form to which the Outer God is already immune (acid, cold, electricity, fire/heat, sonic), prolonging its usefulness. The Outer God can shape the shield into a transparent barrier of up to 130 square feet or into a sphere or hemisphere of up to a 13-foot radius. The shield can be placed around any creature or object the Black Goat wishes to protect, including itself.

Colossal Outsider (Intermediate God)
Domains: Chaos, Luck, Protection, Travel
Hit Dice: 60d8+1,440 (1,920 hp)
Initiative: +14 (+10 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 140 ft., fly 360 ft. (average)
AC: 65 (–8 size, +10 Dex, +40 natural, +13 divine)
Attacks: 1 slam +65 melee
Damage: Slam 4d6+19 plus Con drain
Face/Reach: 40 ft. by 40 ft./25 ft.
Special Attacks: Silver ray, Constitution drain
Special Qualities: Divine qualities (see above), remote sensing, damage reduction 48/+4, SR 45, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 99, fire resistance 33, alter size, alternate form, temporal teleport without error
Saves: Fort +71, Ref +57, Will +56
Abilities: Str 37, Dex 30, Con 59, Int 31, Wis 29, Cha 29
Skills: Alchemy +73, Concentration +87, Control Shape +72, Cthulhu Mythos +73, Diplomacy +11, Hide +57, Knowledge (arcana) +73, Knowledge (geography) +73, Knowledge (history) +73, Knowledge (local) +73, Knowledge (nature) +73, Knowledge (planes) +73, Listen +74, Move Silently +73, Scry +73, Search +19, Sense Motive +72, Spellcraft +73, Spot +74
Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Dodge, Endurance, Expertise, Great Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Sunder, Whirlwind Attack
Climate/Terrain: Any
Organization: Unique
Challenge Rating: 45
Treasure: ×4 standard
Alignment: Neutral
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 1/d%

Great globes of light massing towards the opening . . . the breaking apart of the nearest globes, and the protoplasmic flesh that flowed blackly outward to join together and form that eldritch, hideous horror from outer space . . . whose mask was a congeries of iridescent globes . . . who froths as primal slime in nuclear chaos forever beyond the nethermost outposts of space and time!

—August Derleth,
"The Lurker at the Threshold"

Squamous Blast (Su): Twenty times per day, Shub-Niggurath can release part of his/her/its personal energy as a ray. This ray can strike a target in a direct line of sight up to thirteen miles away, dealing 18d12 points of damage. No saving throw is allowed, but the god must make a successful ranged touch attack for the blast to hit its designated target. The bolt can be shaped to look like any form of energy the Outer God wishes—incarnate darkness, a bolt of lightning, a sudden fireball, or some more bizarre and sinister appearance. A divine shield offers complete protection from such a blast.

Mass Squamous Blast (Su): As squamous blast, but the Outer God can strike up to sixty-five targets simultaneously; this counts as a single use of the squamous blast power so far as times per day is concerned. No two targets may be more than thirteen miles apart. Alternatively, the blast can target an area instead, affecting everyone within that area. The area may be a cone of up to 1,300 ft in length, a burst or spread with a radius of up to 650 feet, or a cylinder with a radius of up to 650 feet and a height of up to 130 feet.

Energy Immunities (Ex): In addition to the immunity to acid, cold, and electricity shared by all deities, Shub-Niggurath is also immune fire, heat damage, and sonic damage.

***Life and Death* (Sp):** As a mother-goddess or engendering patriarch, Shub-Niggurath can grant life; as a devourer, he/she/it can just as easily take it away. This power can be used to restore life to any slain mortal (the presence or absence of a body is immaterial). A mortal cannot be returned to life against his will or if that mortal was slain by the powers hand of death, life and death, or mass life and death cast by a more powerful being. This power can also be used to slay any mortal. The mortal need not be present or within an area visible to the deity's remote sensing power (see page 289) as long as Shub-Niggurath can unambiguously identify the target (name, time and place of birth or death, notable or infamous deeds, and so forth). A mortal targeted for death is completely destroyed (no saving throw), agonizingly consumed in a nimbus of eldritch flame (it doesn't even leave ashes behind). Only Shub-Niggurath or a being more powerful can return life to a mortal slain in this manner.

Rejuvenation (Ex): As a blasphemous embodiment of the life principle, Shub-Niggurath is very difficult to kill the Outer God simply disperses his/her essence for 10d10 days.

Spells (Su): As a free action, Shub-Niggurath can cast any conjuration (healing), necromancy, or death spell at the rate of one per round.

Summon Dark Young (Ex): At will, Shub-Niggurath can either summon or generate 1d6 Dark Young per round. The Black Goat can also vomit forth any other life form of his/her choice of up to 20 HD; this creature is born fully mature and capable of acting.



Yog-Sothoth dwells in the interstices between the planes that compose the universe. There it manifests as a conglomeration of iridescent globes that are always shifting, flowing into one another, and breaking. Yog-Sothoth constantly varies its size, cycling between 300 feet across and half a mile or more.

Yog-Sothoth holds the power to travel within the planes to reach any other time or space. Yog-Sothoth itself is coterminous with all time and space, but it can manifest as a physical entity in the real world. Because of this, Yog-Sothoth has been called the Key and the Gate. In Yog-Sothoth's aspect as Opener of the Way, it is recorded as Umr at'Tawil. (In *Call of Cthulhu,* the correct Arabic form would be Tawil at'Umr, which means the Prolonged of Life.) Yog-Sothoth enters this plane of existence to feast on the life it contains, but can only do so at certain times—or if called.

WORSHIP

Yog-Sothoth is preeminently the deity of sorcerers and wizards. It grants them the power to travel between the planes, travel in time, or see into other planes. Yog-Sothoth may also give its slaves the ability to command various monsters from distant worlds. In return for these gifts, worshipers open the way for Yog-Sothoth to travel from its usual domains to mankind's dimension, where it may ravage and plunder.

As Tawil at'Umr, all those wishing to travel to distant times and places may safely deal with the god. This form seems to be the least malignant way in which to meet it, but even then there is always a danger that Tawil at'Umr will remove its veil and cause utter madness and the destruction of those dealing with it.

COMBAT

Yog-Sothoh can defend itself from enemy gods or upstart Great Old Ones (or very foolish mortal beings) by making slam attacks with a slimy sphere coalesced from a portion of its mass. In addition to the bludgeoning damage, the mere touch of a globe literally erodes the opponent, draining his Constitution. Of course, being an intermediate god means that Yog-Sothoth has a host of other powers it can call forth at need.

Constitution Drain (Su): Whenever Yog-Sothoth hits an opponent with a slam attack from a globe, the opponent is permanently drained of 1d6 Constitution points (or twice that on a critical hit) as his body is temporarily wrenched from normal time and his body is exposed to the madness of timeless existence.

Silver Ray (Su): Once each round as an attack action, Yog-Sothoth can make a ranged touch attack against a foe to a distance of one mile. The opponent struck is stunned for 20 rounds or slain, at Yog-Sothoth's option, if the victim fails a Fortitude saving throw (DC 79). Deities of equal or higher rank gain a +10 and +30 bonus on their saving throws against this effect, respectively.

Alter Size (Su): As a free action once per round, Yog-Sothoth can shrink or grow its size by 30 feet. While manifested on a material plane (or in *Call of Cthulhu,* the Waking World), its maximum size is ten miles in diameter (it could shape itself as a rough cylinder some one hundred miles in length, or take some other shape).

Unrestrained Growth (Ex): In conjunction with its alter size ability, Yog-Sothoth makes a Whirlwind Attack against all creatures it can reach due to its new facing, using an attack action. Creatures that it flows over can attempt a Reflex save (DC 45) in order to stay out from under the expanding god. Creatures and structures that are covered by the expanding god are hindered and thus only take a partial action each round. They also take 4d6 points of crushing damage each round.

Alternate Form (Su): As a move action, Yog-Sothoh can take on the appearance of Tawil at'Umr, a humanoid-shaped (and -sized) figure usually wearing a veil, a long cloak, or some other full-body covering. As Tawil at'Umr, Yog-Sothoh's mere presence does not produce a loss of Sanity, nor does the god manifest its aura.

Temporal Teleport Without Error (Su): At will as a move action, Yog-Sothoth can transport one entity per round anywhere in the universe (even across planes) or anywhere in time by making a touch attack. Creatures unwilling to be tossed into the time stream remain in the present if they make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 79). Yog-Sothoth cannot use this power on deities of a rank equal to or higher than its own. The god can use this power on itself.

Remote Sensing (Ex): Yog-Sothoth can extend its senses to ten remote locations at once (and still sense what's going on around itself).

OTHER DEITIES AND GREAT OLD ONES

CHAUGNAR FAUGN, THE HORROR FROM THE HILLS

Huge Great Old One (Demigod)
Domains: Death, Destruction, Evil
Hit Dice: 30d12+600 (800 hp)
Initiative: +5 (Dex)
Speed: 100 ft (bipedal) or 140 ft. (quadruped)
AC: 46 (+30 natural, –2 size, +5 Dex, +3 divine)
Attacks: 2 claws +39 melee, or 1 trunk-disk +39 melee
Damage: Claw 2d6+19, trunk-disk special
Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 5 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks: Improved grab, rend, blood drain, trample, spells, wound enemy (trunk-disk)
Special Qualities: Divine qualities (see above), damage reduction 40/+4, SR 34, fire resistance 22, darkvision 60 ft.
Saves: Fort +34, Ref +19, Will +24
Abilities: Str 48, Dex 20, Con 50, Int 24, Wis 30, Cha 40
Skills: Cthulhu Mythos +32, Hide +24, Intuit Direction +35, Knowledge (history) +32, Knowledge (occult) +32, Knowledge (religion) +18, Listen +35, Move Silently +32, Read Lips +32, Sense Motive +35, Spellcraft +32, Spot +35
Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Power Attack, Stealthy
Climate/Terrain: Any
Organization: Unique

Challenge Rating: 25
Treasure: Double standard
Alignment: Chaotic evil
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: Statue form 0/1d6; activated 1d4/2d6+1

Words could not adequately convey the repulsiveness of the thing. It was endowed with a trunk and great, uneven ears, and two enormous tusks protruded from the corners of its mouth. But it was not an elephant. Indeed, its resemblance to an actual elephant was, at best, sporadic and superficial, despite certain unmistakable points of similarity. The ears were webbed and tentacled, the trunk terminated in a huge flaring disk at least a foot in diameter, and the tusks, which intertwined and interlocked at the base of the statue, were as translucent as rock crystal. The pedestal upon which it squatted was of black onyx: the statue itself, with the exception of the tusks, had apparently been chiseled from a single block of stone...hideously mottled and eroded and discolored...The thing sat bolt upright. Its forelimbs were bent slightly at the elbow, and its hands—it had human hands—rested palms upward on its lap. Its shoulders were broad and square and its breasts and enormous stomach sloped outward, cushioning the trunk. It was as quiescent as a Buddha, as enigmatical as a sphinx, and as malignantly poised as a gorgon or cockatrice.

—Frank Belknap Long, "The Horror from the Hills"

A vast and loathsome statue at first sight, Chaugnar Faugn is actually not an idol, but the god himself. The form of Chaugnar Faugn is a distorted mix of humanoid and elephantine features. Only those who linger near the statue after others have gone find out why the thing has such a malignant brooding presence—when the idol comes to life and cruelly accepts its due sacrifice.

In *Call of Cthulhu*, amateurish investigators typically miscatalogue this statue as a poorly executed portrayal of Ganesh, a Hindu deity. A very old god, Chaugnar previously haunted the Pyrenees, but traveled to the dread plateau of Leng several millennia ago. He was later rediscovered in Tibet and taken to America by a daring (and doomed) archaeologist. Banished into the past by heroic investigators, Chaugnar was retrieved from the time stream by the efforts of his cult. The god rewarded the woman chiefly responsible for his return, Dr. Alison Ley, by making her his latest Companion (see below). He was last seen in Montreal in 1923 before being hidden away by the cult; his current whereabouts, and those of Dr. Ley, are unknown.

WORSHIP

Chaugnar Faugn was honored in ancient times by the *Miri Nigri*, the small people of the hills in the Pyrenees. For centuries the Tcho-Tcho of Tibet worshiped and fed him faithfully. That burden was finally lifted from them in the 1920s, when he was brought first to America (Manhattan) and then Canada (Montreal). Chaugnar's cult is led by his Companion, a strong-willed individual whom he has appointed to act as his agent and prophet.

When no other sacrifice is provided, Chaugnar suckles from his Companion (draining 1 point of Constitution with each feeding). Over time, the Companion's body begins to resemble her god, a condition that somewhat resembles elephantiasis. Even if no other change occurs, the Companion's nose lengthens into a parody of the god's disk-tipped trunk, and her ears flatten and widen. Past known Companions include James Andrew Custen (later mistakenly canonized as St. Cutis), the unfortunate archaeologist Clark Ulman (the White Acolyte), and Dr. Alison Ley.

In addition to human or semihuman cultists, Chaugnar is served by his Lesser Brothers and Greater Brothers, beings similar to him in shape, but of smaller size and power. A Lesser Brother has roughly one-third his Hit Dice and Armor Class, while a Greater Brother roughly two-thirds, with other skills and stats in roughly the same proportion. Most of the Brothers dwell in deep caverns high in the Pyrenees, but Chaugnar can call them to him at need.

COMBAT

Most of the time, Chaugnar sits quiescent, nothing more than a grotesque statue to the casual observer. At night or when unobserved, he comes alive to accept sacrifices, or simply seizes upon any unlucky prey that wanders by. His cult diligently provides him with a continual supply of prey, offering themselves up when no other sacrifice is available. The god is quite capable of going for long stretches (years or even centuries) without being fed or even stirring, but his hunger when he awakens from such privations is all the greater. If separated from his cult, he can summon prey to himself through dream sendings (see *curse of Chaugnar Faugn* in the Magic chapter). In addition to his cultists, he can summon his Lesser Brothers and Greater Brothers at will.

Chaugnar is a very dangerous foe when he chooses to take a direct hand in punishing a transgressor. The one time he is known to have been defeated, his desperate human opponents managed to send him down the time stream two billion years into the past (much to his annoyance). It is possible that if Chaugnar himself were ever to be permanently slain, his godhood would devolve upon the most powerful of his Greater Brothers, who would take on all his powers. The truth of this prophecy is, of course, unknown.

Rend (Ex): If Chaugnar manages to strike a foe with both his claws, he begins a grapple attack on the same round as a free action. If he succeeds on the opposed grapple, he tears his opponent limb from limb, automatically inflicting double damage (4d6+38 points) each round.



Blood Drain (Ex): The disk at the end of Chaugnar Faugn's trunk-tentacle, when laid upon a warm-blooded creature, sucks blood and life essence from it (1d6 temporary Con damage or 1 permanent Con drain per round). If Chaugnar wills, this attack also activates the divine ability wound enemy, temporarily conveying a form of induced hemophilia on the target. The victim begins to lose an 1d6 additional hit points per round for each wound. This damage can only be halted by application of a *heal* spell (in D&D) or the *healing touch* spell (in *CofC*).

Spells: In *CofC*, Chaugnar casts spells as an 18th-level investigator (or in D&D, as an 18th-level wizard). He knows many spells he has learned over an exceptionally long and evil life. Among his favorites are *curse of Chaugnar Faugn, call human, bind enemy, death by flames, deflect harm, dominate person, nightmare, true strike,* and *wrack.* In addition, thanks to the efforts of his cult he recently learned the spell *create time gate.* Spells he typically grants his followers include *contact Chaugnar Faugn, curse of Chaugnar Faugn, summon/bind (lesser) brother of Chaugnar Faugn, death by flames,* and *clutch of Nyogtha.* His Companion always knows this last spell.



CTHUGHA

Gargantuan Great Old One (Demigod) (Fire)
Domains: Fire
Hit Dice: 27d12+189 (513 hp)
Initiative: +4 (Improved Initiative)
Speed: 120 ft., fly 420 ft. (good)
AC: 36 (–4 size, +27 natural, +3 divine)
Attacks: 4 slams +39 melee
Damage: Pseudopod slam 2d6+12 plus 1d6+6 fire
Face/Reach: 20 ft. by 20 ft./20 ft.
Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, flame burst, divine celerity
Special Qualities: Divine qualities (see above), damage reduction 38/+4, SR 35, fire subtype, cold resistance 23, darkvision 60 ft., divine shield
Saves: Fort +25, Ref +18, Will +27
Abilities: Str 34, Dex 11, Con 25, Int 17, Wis 29, Cha 29
Skills: Concentration +40, Cthulhu Mythos +36, Hide –9, Knowledge (arcana) +36, Listen +44, Move Silently +33, Scry +36, Search +36, Spellcraft +24, Spot +21
Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Sunder, Weapon Focus (slam)
Climate/Terrain: Any (usually extraterrestrial)
Organization: Unique, or Cthugha plus 12–22 fire vampires
Challenge Rating: 21
Treasure: Double standard
Alignment: Chaotic evil
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 1d4/1d20

But even though we had shielded our eyes, it was impossible not to see the great amorphous shapes streaming skyward from this accursed place, nor the equally great being hovering like a cloud of living fire above the trees.

—August Derleth, "The Dweller in Darkness"

Cthugha resembles an enormous burning mass continually varying in shape. It dwells at or near the star Fomalhaut, whence it may be called. It is one of the most obscure and remote of all the Great Old Ones. It is assumed that Cthugha is the eldest living example of the fire vampire race, and that over the millennia, he has taken on aspects of godhood. At the very least, all fire vampires ultimately claim Cthugha as an ancestor, and as such, Cthugha commands their utmost obedience.

WORSHIP

Many human cults serving Cthugha revel in sacrificial acts of arson and immolation; for this reason, few of them survive for long. The god is also faithfully served by entities known as fire vampires. Some dusty tomes allege that the fire vampires are ruled by an entity called Fthagghua; it is assumed by most occultists that despite the variation in spelling, Cthugha and Fthagghua are one and the same.

COMBAT

Cthugha usually appears with a host of fire vampires. Usually, Cthugha is content to let the fire vampires contest with its enemies and/or blast all local structures. When Cthugha is called on to act, its blazing pseudopods deal fiery, bludgeoning death, but even more fearsome is its ability to produce a ravening burst of fire. If in need, it can call upon various defensive abilities and spells.

Flame Burst (Su): Cthugha can use its flame burst ability twelve times per day. The fiery cone created extends up to 120 feet. Targets in the area suffer 12d12 points of damage, or half damage if a successful Reflex saving throw is made (DC 31). Energy resistance has no effect against the ray. The cone completely destroys a *wall of force, prismatic wall,* or *prismatic sphere* it hits (all layers in a prismatic effect are destroyed). The cone itself is unaffected and can strike a target behind the *wall of force* or prismatic effect.

Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Power Attack
Climate/Terrain: Temperate and warm aquatic
Organization: Solitary, pair (Father Dagon and Mother Hydra), or Father Dagon plus 3-6 deep ones
Challenge Rating: 14
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Chaotic evil
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 1/1d10

Divine Celerity (Su): Cthugha acts as if *hasted* for 30 minutes each day. The duration of the effect need not be consecutive rounds. Activating this power is a free action.

Divine Shield (Su): As a free action, Cthugha can create a shield that lasts 10 minutes and protects the deity's body and equipment from attacks. The shield stops 30 points of damage. Once the shield stops that much damage, it collapses. The damage can be from any source, including a divine blast attack. The god can use this power ten times per day.

Cthugha can adjust the shield so that it does not block damage the god ignores. For example, since Cthugha is immune to fire, the god can adjust the shield to ignore fire damage. The effects of multiple divine shields do not stack.

Spells: Cthugha knows and may cast all the spells pertaining to summoning and binding with entities of flame. It can also summon an elder fire elemental as if casting *summon monster IX* from the D&D *Player's Handbook*. Additionally, it can cast *flame strike, fire seeds, fire shield,* and *fire storm* (also from the D&D *Player's Handbook*). It casts its spells at will, each once per day, as if using a spell-like ability (in addition to the spell-like abilities that all deities can access). It never loses Sanity for casting (since it has no Sanity score).

FATHER DAGON AND MOTHER HYDRA

Huge Outsider (Demigod)
Domains: Water
Hit Dice: 18d8+90 (234 hp)
Initiative: +3 (–1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 100 ft., swim 50 ft.
AC: 31 (–2 size, –1 Dex, +22 natural, +2 divine)
Attacks: 2 claws +27 melee, bite +22 melee, 2 rakes +22 melee; or +5 *longspear of wounding* +32/+27/+22/+17 melee; or longspear +22 ranged
Damage: Claw 2d4+9 (Improved Critical), bite 2d6+4, rake 1d6+2; +5 *longspear of wounding* 1d8+14/×3
Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, *water spout,* divine far shot
Special Qualities: Divine qualities (see above), damage reduction 37/+4, SR 34, fire and cold resistance 22, darkvision 60 ft.
Saves: Fort +18, Ref +12, Will +17
Abilities: Str 28, Dex 9, Con 21, Int 24, Wis 18, Cha 29
Skills: Alchemy +27, Animal Empathy +29, Balance +1, Concentration +25, Cthulhu Mythos +27, Diplomacy +11, Hide +11, Jump +11, Knowledge (arcana) +27, Listen +26, Move Silently +19, Ride (shark) +19, Search +27, Sense Motive +14, Spot +6, Swim +29, Tumble +19, Use Magic Device +29

Vast, Polyphemous-like, and loathsome, it darted like a stupendous monster of nightmares to the monolith, about which it flung its gigantic scaly arms.

—H. P. Lovecraft, "Dagon"

Father Dagon (and his equal in all ways—including game statistics—Mother Hydra) are deep ones who have grown enormously in size and age. Each is over 20 feet tall and perhaps millions of years old.

This pair is active and mobile, unlike Cthulhu and his minions, but they rarely emerge from the deep trenches where they hold court. It is possible that more than two deep ones have grown to Dagon's enormous size and strength, though it is doubtful that any have taken on the spark of godhood as Dagon and Hydra have.

WORSHIP

Father Dagon and Mother Hydra rule the deep ones, and in fact, are revered as the demigods they have become. Sunken in miles-deep trenches, the deep ones cavort in the court of Dagon and Mother Hydra, performing awful rites as homage to Cthulhu. Mortal captives stolen from above the waves despair, for they know they will never see the sun again.

COMBAT

Dagon and Mother Hydra are rabid fighters, equally adroit with their matching magic longspears or their



furious routine of claws, bites, and rear-leg rakes. Against distant foes, they enjoy casting *water spouts;* against closing foes, they employ spells.

Spells: Dagon and Mother Hydra know and may cast all the spells pertaining to summoning and binding lesser servitor races. They can also cast *improved invisibility, knock,* and *stoneskin* (from the D&D *Player's Handbook*). They cast these spells at will, each once per day, as if using a spell-like ability (in addition to the spell-like abilities that all deities can access).

***Water Spout* (Sp):** The god can use this power twelve times per day. Dagon forms a whirling spout of water which he can direct as a ray attack. The ray can extend up to two miles, above and below water. Targets of the ray suffer 11d12 points of damage. There is no saving throw, but the god must make a ranged touch attack to hit a target. Energy resistance has no effect against the water spout.

Divine Far Shot (Ex): Dagon can throw his longspear at any target within two miles if an unimpeded line of sight exists. No range increment applies to the attack.

Then came pale movement in the well, and something clambered up from the dark, a bloated blanched oval supported on myriad fleshless legs. Eyes formed in the gelatinous oval and stared at him.

—Ramsey Campbell,
"Before the Storm"

EIHORT

Huge Great Old One (Demigod)
Domains: Chaos, Destruction, Madness
Hit Dice: 25d12+625 (787 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: 30 ft., climb 30 ft., swim 30 ft., burrow 10 ft.
AC: 9 (–2 size, +1 divine)
Attacks: 1 bite +29 melee
Damage: Bite 3d8+10 plus poison
Face/Reach: 15 ft. by 15 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Paralytic bite, crush, implant brood
Special Qualities: Divine qualities (see above), damage reduction 36/+4, SR 33, darkvision 60 ft., divine fast healing 21/round
Saves: Fort +38, Ref +13, Will +20
Abilities: Str 30, Dex 10, Con 60, Int 20, Wis 25, Cha 20
Skills: Cthulhu Mythos +29, Escape Artist +24, Intimidate +29, Knowledge (biology) +29, Knowledge (geology) +29, Knowledge (psychology) +29, Listen +31, Move Silently +15, Search +29, Spot +31
Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave
Climate/Terrain: Underground
Organization: Unique
Challenge Rating: 27
Treasure: None
Alignment: Chaotic evil
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 1d6/1d20

Eihort is a repulsive being, looking something like a large grub and somewhat more like a huge, shapeless mass of rotting dough with legs sticking out below it on all sides. Despite its ungainly appearance, it is a brilliant (if single-minded) entity.

In *Call of Cthulhu,* Eihort roams a labyrinth of subterranean passages beneath the Severn Valley in southwestern England, continually seeking new hosts of its brood. It only emerges when lured to the surface by the promise of new hosts recruited or captured by its cultists, who climb up through old wells and sinkholes.

WORSHIP

Eihort has little use for worshipers in the normal sense; instead, it desires hosts for its brood. All those it encounters are faced with a choice known as Eihort's Bargain. Accept, and it implants its brood within your body, with the eventual dire consequences noted below. Refuse, and the balked god destroys you on the spot, leaving your crushed remains as a warning for others. All of its cultists have accepted the Bargain, and thus are living on borrowed time. This lends a certain urgency to their proselytizing zeal.

COMBAT

Eihort is not subtle; when encountering someone new, it traps the person in a dead end and offers him the Bargain. Those who refuse are either bitten and left to recover, wounded and devoured by wandering brood, or crushed outright (see below).

Eihort's flabby bulk makes this Great Old One easy to hit, but difficult to actually injure. If slain, the god's body melts away, seeping through cracks in the earth. His cult holds that he is then reformed; other scholars of the Mythos believe that his essence passes to one of his brood, which over the next few years devours many of its kin as it grows from Fine to Huge size. The truth of this is not known, but certainly Eihort has been reported slain more than once in the past, only to reappear again a few decades later.

Paralytic Bite (Ex): Anyone bitten by Eihort is injected with a paralytic poison that causes temporary Dexterity damage (1d10 on a first failed save, Fort save DC 46 to resist, plus an additional 2d10 on a second failed save). Those so paralyzed are generally devoured by the small horde of already hatched brood that pad up and down Eihort's haunts, following in their great parent's wake (they inflict 1 point of damage as a group per 1d10 minutes).

Crush (Ex): When angered by one who has refused its Bargain, Eihort typically charges the offending creature and simply rolls over it, crushing it beneath its ponderous bulk. This is a simple touch attack that, if successful, automatically allows Eihort a grapple check. A successful grapple pins the victim,



Y'Golonac and Eihort

inflicting 2d8+15 points of bludgeoning damage per round. The unfortunate is also in danger of suffocation as Eihort's glutinous mass presses against the victim's face and mouth, cutting off all air.

Implant Brood (Ex): This attack can only be made against a character who has accepted Eihort's Bargain (whether under duress or not). Eihort grasps the victim firmly, holding him pinned, then extrudes a snout down the character's throat through the stomach into the intestines. There it implants its brood. This horrific process costs 1/1d20 Sanity.

Over the next d% months, the character has vivid dreams at least once per week of the tiny brood growing and feasting inside her; this inflicts 1d4 Sanity loss per episode. Eventually the mature brood splits open the bargainer's body and escapes, leaving a hollowed shell behind. The unfortunate victim remains conscious right up until the point where she bursts open, and for a round or two beyond, dying as the last of the escaping brood pour out.

GLAAKI

Huge Great Old One (Demigod) (Water)
Domains: Water
Hit Dice: 19d12+95 (323 hp)
Initiative: +4 (Improved Initiative)
Speed: 100 ft., swim 100 ft.
AC: 27 (–2 size, +18 natural, +1 divine)
Attacks: 2 stings +28 melee
Damage: Sting 2d8+12 plus poison (Improved Critical)
Face/Reach: 20 ft. by 20 ft./20 ft.
Special Attacks: Servitor poison, dream pull
Special Qualities: Divine qualities (see above), damage reduction 36/+4, SR 33, water subtype, fire resistance 21, darkvision 60 ft.
Saves: Fort +17, Ref +12, Will +16
Abilities: Str 26, Dex 10, Con 20, Int 22, Wis 18, Cha 24
Skills: Alchemy +28, Concentration +27, Cthulhu Mythos +28, Diplomacy +17, Hide +14, Intimidate +29, Knowledge (arcana) +28, Knowledge (undead) +28, Listen +28, Scry +28, Search +26, Spellcraft +26, Spot +6
Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Critical (sting), Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (sting), Weapon Focus (sting)
Climate/Terrain: Aquatic (specifically a lake on New Britain Island)
Organization: Unique, or Glaaki with 4–16 Servitors of Glaaki
Challenge Rating: 17
Treasure: Double standard
Alignment: Chaotic neutral
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 1d4/1d20

From an oval body protruded countless thin, pointed spines of multi-colored metal; at the more rounded end of the oval a circular, thick-lipped mouth formed the center of a spongy face, from which rose three yellow eyes on thin stalks. Around the underside of the body were many white pyramids, presumably used for locomotion. The diameter of the body must have been ten feet at its least wide . . . long stalks [were] twisting above it . . . [the] shape towered, pulsing and shaking with deafening vibration . . . a spine stiffened toward [a victim].

—Ramsey Campbell,
"The Inhabitant of the Lake"

Glaaki appears as a nightmarish ancestor of a sea urchin gone terribly wrong. Covered in undulating, stinging spines and glaring eye-stalks, the horror has lived on Earth so long that it, like all beings called Great Old Ones, lays claim to some measure of divine power. In Glaaki's case, it is minuscule compared to most other Great Old Ones, but great enough to seriously disturb any investigators who encounter it.

WORSHIP

Glaaki heads a particularly loathsome cult in which most followers are animated corpses. These shambling undead are known as the Servitors of Glaaki. Glaaki currently dwells at the bottom of a lake on New Britain Island (off the coast of New Guinea) from whence it summons new cultists by its "dream pull." Without the strength Glaaki draws from its Servitors, it cannot send the dream pull any distance. But whenever someone comes to live nearby, it can send dreams or dispatch Servitors to capture or guide new initiates.

For initiation, the novice stands on the lakeshore while Glaaki rises from the water. The god drives one of its stinging spines into the victim. Most victims succumb to death from the special poison coating each stinger, becoming undead Servitors of Glaaki. See Servitors of Glaaki (page 158) for more information and statistics on these forcefully converted cultists.

Many Servitors learn at least one or two spells from Glaaki directly, enhancing their ability to sway even more initiates.

COMBAT

Glaaki prefers to leave combat to its Servitors. Its first offense is spells, but its stinging spines are a dreadful threat in close quarters.

Servitor Poison (Ex): Poison attacks deal initial damage of 2d4 Constitution to the opponent on a failed Fortitude saving throw (DC 24). Poison victims who survive an encounter with Glaaki do not endure secondary damage. Victims who are killed by the force of the sting and/or the initial damage are transformed by the poison. The stinger-tipped spines stay in the wounds (requiring a Strength check against DC 24 to

remove), and on a recently dead body, grow protrusions through the victim's necrotic flesh. When growth is complete in 24 hours, the spine drops off, leaving a livid spot that does not bleed and from which emanates a network of red lines. The victim is then an undead slave, a Servitor of Glaaki, though it may keep the appearance of a living creature for many years to come.

Dream Pull (Su): Glaaki can send hypnotic dreams to potential initiates. Glaaki mainly uses the dream pull to draw victims to its lake for initiation. Glaaki's dream pull only works on sleeping creatures within the specified area. Glaaki can blanket an area with its hypnotic dreams equal to 100 feet of radius per Servitor currently serving Glaaki (regardless of where the Servitor is currently located). Generally, about one hundred Servitors worship Glaaki at any given time, giving his dream pull a radius of a little under two miles. Sleeping victims in the area make a Will saving throw (DC 12) to avoid the effect. Glaaki can use this ability once per night.

ITHAQUA

Gargantuan Great Old One (Demigod) (Cold) (Incorporeal)
Domains: Evil, Air
Hit Dice: 27d12+189 (513 hp)
Initiative: +4 (Improved Initiative)
Speed: 120 ft.
AC: 36 (–4 size, +27 natural, +3 divine)
Attacks: 2 claws +38 melee, stamp +33 melee
Damage: Claws 2d8+12, stamp 2d6+6
Face/Reach: 20 ft. by 20 ft./20 ft.
Special Attacks: Wind gust, ice blast
Special Qualities: Divine qualities (see above), damage reduction 38/+4, SR 35, darkvision 60 ft., cold subtype, incorporeal subtype, fire resistance 23, sonic resistance 23
Saves: Fort +25, Ref +18, Will +22
Abilities: Str 34, Dex 10, Con 25, Int 22, Wis 18, Cha 14
Skills: Concentration +32, Cthulhu Mythos +31, Hide +13, Knowledge (arcana) +31, Knowledge (local) +16, Knowledge (planes) +31, Knowledge (religion) +31, Knowledge (undead) +20, Listen +29, Move Silently +25, Scry +31, Search +31, Spellcraft +31, Wilderness Lore +29
Feats: Blind-Fight, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Sunder
Climate/Terrain: Cold (arctic and subarctic only)
Organization: Unique
Challenge Rating: 25
Treasure: Double standard
Alignment: Chaotic evil
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 1d10/d%



Normally insubstantial, Ithaqua may manifest as a 60-foot-tall humanoid creature shrouded with shaggy, ice-encrusted fur. Its face looks hollow and corpselike, and its fingers end in 10-foot-long icy claws. Even when visibly manifested, Ithaqua retains a ghostly, insubstantial appearance.

In *Call of Cthulhu*, most reports of Ithaqua come from the arctic and subarctic, where Native Americans encountered him. (Some call him Wendigo.) He is known to stalk the wastes, tracking down hapless travelers and carrying them off. Such unfortunates are found weeks or months later, buried partway as if dropped from a height, frozen solid in positions of great agony, and missing random body parts.

The stars had been blotted out . . . the great cloud which had obscured the sky looked curiously like the outline of a great man. And . . . where the top of the 'cloud' must have been, where the head of the thing should have been, there were two gleaming stars, visible despite the shadow, two gleaming stars, burning bright—like eyes.

—August Derleth, "The Thing That Walked on Wind"

WORSHIP

Ithaqua has a minimal cult, though many fear him in the far north. The inhabitants of Siberia and Alaska may leave sacrifices to keep the Wendigo from haunting their camps, but organized worship is apparently rare.

COMBAT

Ithaqua rarely takes interest in mortal affairs. When facing off against mortals, his mere appearance and divine aura is often enough to drive them insane, or render them dazed. When that doesn't suffice, Ithaqua prefers to use his wind gust ability and ice blast ability first.

Wind Gust (Ex): As an attack action once per day, Ithaqua can call up a mighty wind against a single foe of Huge size or less up to three miles away. If the victim fails a Reflex save (DC 29), she is flung 200 feet into the air. If the victim can't save herself (or is not otherwise saved), she crashes to the earth several hundred feet from where she was first whisked away, in a random direction, taking 20d6 points of damage.

room. [She] was gone, as if she had dissolved like a phantom on the air. Borne on a sudden gust of strangely mingled heat and cold, there came an acrid odor, such as would rise from a burnt-out funeral pyre.

—Clark Ashton Smith, "The Charnel God"

Ice Blast (Ex): As an attack action three times per day, Ithaqua can target an icy ray up to three miles away. Targets the ray strikes suffer 5d12 points of cold damage. There is no saving throw, but the god must make a ranged touch attack to hit a target.

The ray completely destroys a *wall of force, prismatic wall,* or *prismatic sphere* if it hits (all layers in a prismatic effect are destroyed). The ray itself is unaffected and can strike a target behind the *wall of force* or prismatic effect.

A divine shield or an area divine shield can stop the ice blast.

MORDIGGIAN, THE CHARNEL GOD

Colossal Great Old One (Demigod)
Domain: Death
Hit Dice: 30d12+360 (555 hp)
Initiative: +7 (Dex)
Speed: 40 ft.
AC: 31 (+20 natural, +2 divine, –8 size, +7 Dex)
Attacks: Swallow +42 melee
Damage: Special (see below)
Face/Reach: 40 ft. by 80 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks: Swallow whole, perfect strike
Special Qualities: Divine qualities (see above), damage reduction 37/+4, SR 34, fire immunity, blindsight
Saves: Fort +26, Ref +21, Will +24
Abilities: Str 26, Dex 24, Con 34, Int 24, Wis 30, Cha 16
Skills: Animal Empathy +14, Cthulhu Mythos +32, Hide +32, Intuit Direction +35, Knowledge (archaeology) +32, Knowledge (history) +32, Knowledge (occult) +32, Knowledge (religion) +32, Listen +35, Move Silently +32, Perform (religious ceremony) +28, Spot +35
Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Stealthy, Track
Climate/Terrain: Underground
Organization: Unique
Challenge Rating: 30
Treasure: None
Alignment: Neutral
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 1d6/1d20

[A] colossal shadow that was not wrought by anything in the room . . . filled the portals from side to side, [towering] above the lintel—and then, swiftly, it became more than a shadow: it was a bulk of darkness, black and opaque, that somehow blinded the eyes with strange dazzlement. It seemed to suck the flame from the red urns and fill the chamber with the chill of utter death and voidness. Its form was that of a worm-shaped column, huge as a dragon, its further coils still issuing from the gloom of the corridor; but it changed from moment to moment, swirling and spinning as if alive with the vortical energies of dark eons. Briefly it took the semblance of some demoniac giant with eyeless head and limbless body; and then, leaping and spreading like smoky fire, it swept forward into the chamber. . . . He saw the blackness grow and wax with the towering of red flame as it closed about [the girl]; and he saw it gleam with eddying hues of somber iris, like the spectrum of a sable sun. For an instant, he heard a soft thing and flame-like muttering. Then, quickly and terribly, the thing ebbed from the

Mordiggian was, if legend may be believed, originally a ghoul or possibly ghoul-kin from some vast ancient prehuman race. Over the aeons, he has devolved to devouring corpses. After shedding his superfluous body parts (like his head and limbs), he now resembles nothing so much as a great wormlike mass of solid darkness. Some eccentric cultists claim that Mordiggian was once a Formless Spawn of great size assigned a specific task—the devouring of temple-corpses—who eventually came to be honored as a god in his own right.

In *Call of Cthulhu,* Mordiggian avoids the living, since they do not concern him. He dwells underground in endless ghoul-dug tunnels that link the Waking World with another plane of existence known as the Dreamlands. The god feeds on corpses brought to him by faithful ghoul-legions. He travels much, staying longest in areas where the human population is dense and where there are plentiful corpses requiring his attention. For the last century or so, he has dwelt on the Indian subcontinent. He is known to have survived in ancient Hyperborea and in many legendary necropolises of old. Prophecy foretells that one day he will live in his own ziggurat in the great city Zul-Bha-Sair, honored by the people for performing a necessary funereal function. Such temples are reported as already existing in the Dreamlands, and may have had earthly analogues in the past.

WORSHIP

All ghouls instinctively honor Mordiggian, the apotheosis for the necrophagic impulse. Any human so warped as to worship him is probably well on her way to transformation into a ghoul herself. He is deeply hated and feared by all corporeal undead, and he devours them on sight. Mordiggian is sometimes summoned by populations plagued by hosts of undead, as he invariably tames any ghouls or ghasts present and destroys all animated corpses, leaving any malign necromancer without raw materials. He rarely departs before he has exhausted all the inhumations in the area, a process that may take months, if not years.

COMBAT

Mordiggian has only one attack, but it is a most effective one. Any corpse he encounters he swallows, quickly absorbing it into his own essence. He ignores living creatures unless they attack him or interpose themselves in such a way that he cannot reach the corpse without engulfing them as well, in which case he swallows the brave or bereaved fools.

Perfect Strike (Ex): When Mordiggian wishes to swallow his prey, he gains a +20 insight bonus to his attack roll (this has already been figured into his attack roll given above). In addition, unless he is targeting a more powerful deity who has the divine dodge ability, he ignores any miss chance.

Swallow Whole (Ex): Mordiggian can swallow any creature of any size. If he makes a successful attack, he gets an immediate grapple attack as a free action (denying his victim an attack

of opportunity). If a victim is larger than he is, he simply stretches his elastic mass to encompass it. A creature so swallowed takes 20d6 points of damage per round as it is absorbed into the charnel god's essence. A creature devoured by Mordiggian can never be resurrected, although she may be reincarnated. The body is destroyed forever, and the victim can never take that form again. However, the spirit may survive and could be planted into another body (for example, by *magic jar*).

Spells: Mordiggian can cast spells as a 15th-level sorcerer, preferring spells that hold prey immobile, like *grasp of Cthulhu*, or neutralizes annoyances, like *bind enemy*. He never casts any spell that would animate the dead, unless it enables corpses withheld from him to reach him under their own power.

NODENS THE HUNTER, LORD OF THE GREAT ABYSS

Medium-size to Colossal Elder God [Outsider] (Lesser God)
Domains: Animals (Hunting), Destruction, Strength, Water (Sea)
Hit Dice: 30d8+308 (444 hp)
Initiative: Because of his supreme initiative ability, Nodens always goes first
Speed: 60 ft., swim 60 ft., chariot or sea-chariot or cloud-chariot 120 ft. (good)
AC: 58 (+30 base, +8 divine, +10 Dex)
Attacks: *+5 tri-headed harpoon* +66 melee or slam +61/+56/+51/+46 melee
Damage: *+5 tri-headed harpoon* 1d10+18 plus special, slam 2d6+13
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft. (10 ft. with harpoon)
Special Attacks: Divine far shot, hand of death, perfect strike, wound enemy
Special Qualities: Divine qualities (see above), damage reduction 43/+4, SR 40, supreme initiative, alter size, area divine shield, divine fast healing 28/round, summon nightgaunt, darkvision
Saves: Fort +31, Ref +30, Will +40
Abilities: Str 36, Dex 30, Con 33, Int 42, Wis 50, Cha 45
Skills: Animal Empathy +48, Balance +41, Craft (weaponsmithing) +47, Handle Animal +48, Heal +51, Hide +41, Intuit Direction +51, Listen +51, Ride (chariot) +41, Search +41, Sense Motive +51, Spellcraft +41, Spot +51, Wilderness Lore +51
Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Shot on the Run, Spring Attack, Track
Climate/Terrain: Any
Organization: Unique
Challenge Rating: 38
Treasure: Double standard
Alignment: Neutral
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: None to see Nodens, 1d6/1d20 to see the Wild Hunt



[Nodens] . . . is precisely the form required as the older stage of the Irish mythological name Nuada . . . . Nuada of the Silver Hand was the king of the Tuatha de Danann . . . . Although it is perhaps vain to try and disentangle from the things told about Nuada any of the features of Nodens . . . it is at least highly probable that the two were originally the same. This is borne out by the isolation of the name in Keltic material [and] the importance of Nuada (and Nodens) . . . .Whether the god was called the ësnarer' or the ëcatcher' or the ëhunter' in some sinister sense . . . mere etymology can hardly say. It is suggestive, however, in this connextion that the most remarkable thing about Nuada was his hand *. . . . Even in the dimmed memories of Welsh legend . . . we heard still an echo of the ancient fame of the magic hand of Nodens the Catcher.*

—J. R. R. Tolkien, "The Name Nodens,"
in *Report on the Excavation at Lydney Park*

Nodens can appear any size he pleases due to his alter size ability. Generally, he matches his size to those who summon him; thus, most investigators encounter him in a Medium-size aspect and probably never suspect that he has any other. He usually arrives in his chariot, which appears to mortal eyes as a horse-drawn wheeled conveyance on land, a dolphin-drawn sea-chariot on the ocean, or a pegasus-drawn sky-chariot in the air. He bears a three-headed harpoon that is often mistaken for a trident. Nodens is an ancient god, usually appearing as a gray-bearded shaggy-haired man. He is hoary and feral, but still hale and vigorous.

As master of the nightgaunts, Nodens can summon any number of them at any time, wherever he may be. The beasts that draw his chariots are in fact nightgaunts of exceptional size, whatever their appearance to mortal eyes.

Nodens is the Master of the Wild Hunt and can sometimes be glimpsed follow-

ing a train of wolflike or houndlike beasts on the trail of some hapless prey. (Each one of these beasts possesses the same stats as normal nightgaunts.) Legend persists that at one time he lost his right hand and with it most of his power, eventually replacing it with a magical hand (hence his name in Irish legend, "Nuada of the Silver Hand"), but the truth of this cannot be established.

The god rules as Lord of the Great Abyss (this is not an actual place, but a general title for the empty places of, and between, this and other worlds). He can be encountered almost anywhere, but tends to shun spots frequented by the Great Old Ones, his greatest enemies. He can most often be found in the Dreamlands, hunting down some nightmare—a moonbeast here, a shantak there, or best of all, some new dream-birthed horror.

WORSHIP

In the past, Nodens was worshiped on Earth under many names by many tribes as far back as Paleolithic days (the cave paintings and rock carvings evoking his blessing still exist in many places), among the last of whom were the Britains and Gael (Irish Celts). Today he retains only a few isolated worshipers among humans of the Waking World, but is honored by seafolk of every race in the Dreamlands, and by his dire servants, the nightgaunts. A Romano-British temple to Nodens once stood in southwest England near Gloucester, the ruins of which were discovered in the late 19th century.

Nodens delights in the hunt, and has often angered the Great Old Ones by pursuing their servants. He especially enjoys hunting down the wily servants of that most subtle of the Outer Gods, Nyarlathotep, for the fine sport they offer him. Nodens can be summoned in his form as the Master of the Wild Hunt, but this is very dangerous, since the Hunt can easily turn upon the summoner (if it provides the god amusement). Otherwise, worshipers feel compelled (Will save, DC 40) to join in the Hunt, running tirelessly on all fours and attempting to slay their prey, attacking with bare teeth if no better weapons are available.

COMBAT

Noden's power lies chiefly in his good right hand. His aim is so perfect (divine far shot) that he can strike a target with his thrown weapon when it is up to eight miles away, as long as it is in his line of sight. His tri-headed harpoon is a special +5 weapon. If its target fails his Reflex save (DC 10 + damage), the weapon's barbs catch in his bones, and Nodens can reel the character in with an opposed Strength check; Nodens can move the body back to himself as a move action. Yanking out the tines is unwise. So firmly are they imbedded in the victim that they cause as much damage coming out as they do going in. Furthermore, Noden's weapon is imbued with the wound enemy divine ability: The wound made by the weapon causes 1d6 points of additional bleeding damage each round thereafter.

Nodens can also fight barehanded with great effect.

Perfect Strike (Ex): Nodens gains a +20 competence bonus to all attack rolls and ignores any miss chances, such as those caused by displacement, concealment, or a Great Old One's divine dodge ability. This bonus has already been added into the numbers given above.

Area Divine Shield (Ex): Nodens is very old and very wily, with little interest in dying. One of his best protections is his area divine shield ability. Usable fourteen times per day, each shield stops 80 points of damage from any source, even a divine blast, allowing him to withdraw from a capable or determined assault. Nodens can customize the shield to ignore damage from attack forms to which he is already immune (such as acid, cold, and electricity). He can shape the shield into a transparent barrier of up to 80 square feet or into a sphere or hemisphere of up to 8 feet in radius. The shield need not be around Nodens himself, and could instead be used to protect a favored mortal.

Hand of Death (Su): In addition to all his combat powers, Nodens can simply slay any single mortal within the range of his senses (eight miles), as long as there is an unbroken line of effect. The mortal is allowed a Fortitude save (DC 36) to survive the effect. If he fails, he is completely destroyed, agonizingly consumed in a nimbus of divine flame, one that doesn't even leave ashes behind. If the victim succeeds, he still takes 10d6 points of damage. Nodens only uses this power on someone who deeply offends him. Only an Outer God can return life to a mortal slain in this manner.

Summon Nightgaunt (Ex): As Lord of the Great Abyss, Nodens may summon nightgaunts at any time as a free action. Typically, 3d6 nightgaunts appear to answer his summons, but in theory, he can summon as many as he needs. When they arrive, they obey his commands without question.

SHUDDE M'ELL

Gargantuan Great Old One (Demigod) (Earth)
Domains: Earth
Hit Dice: 27d12+162 (486 hp)
Initiative: +4 (Improved Initiative)
Speed: 120 ft., burrow 120 ft.
AC: 33 (–4 size, +26 natural, +1 divine)
Attacks: 4 tentacle rakes +35 melee
Damage: Tentacle rakes 2d8+10 (Improved Critical)
Face/Reach: 20 ft. by 40 ft./20 ft.
Special Attacks: Improved grab, drain Constitution, crush, *trigger earthquake, dominate person*
Special Qualities: Divine qualities (see above), damage reduction 36/+4, SR 33, earth subtype, fire immunity, darkvision 60 ft., divine fast healing 20/round, water vulnerability
Saves: Fort +22, Ref +16, Will +27
Abilities: Str 31, Dex 11, Con 23, Int 26, Wis 28, Cha 27
Skills: Alchemy +38, Animal Empathy +38, Concentration +36, Cthulhu Mythos +38, Hide –12, Knowledge (arcana) +38, Knowledge (geography) +38, Knowledge (history) +38, Listen +41, Scry +38, Search +38, Spellcraft +38, Spot +41
Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Critical (tentacle rake), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (tentacle rake)
Climate/Terrain: Any underground
Organization: Unique, or Shudde M'ell with 2–8 chthonians
Challenge Rating: 21
Treasure: Double standard
Alignment: Chaotic neutral
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 1d4/1d20

A great gray thing a mile long chanting and exuding strange acids... charging through the depths of the earth at a fantastic speed, in a dreadful fury... melting basaltic rocks like butter under a blowtorch.

—Brian Lumley, "The Burrowers Beneath"

Shudde M'ell is a Gargantuan chthonian, a squidlike subterranean god. Eminent among the chthonians, Shudde M'ell has persisted so long that she is considered a Great Old One, and has therefore been touched with the spark of godhood, however slight.

In *Call of Cthulhu,* Shudde M'ell wanders the greater depths of Earth, only rarely responding to calls from lesser chthonians closer to the surface. Shudde M'ell returns to the subsurface city of G'harne (below North Africa) once every twenty-three years, during which time chthonians gather to pay her homage.

WORSHIP

Shudde M'ell and lesser chthonians are not worshiped now, though druids may have done so in the past. It is possible that G'harne was explicitly built by those who revered Shudde M'ell, but that race, human or otherwise, has been lost to the vagaries of time.

COMBAT

Shudde M'ell enjoys all the abilities of a standard chthonian, substantially enhanced, plus the use of her demigod abilities.

Crush (Ex): Shudde M'ell's crush attack affects a 20-foot-by-40-foot area immediately adjacent to the chthonian. As an attack action, she rears up, then falls with her full weight into the area. All creatures in the area must make a Reflex saving throw (DC 23) or suffer 2d8+10 points of damage. A successful save indicates that only half damage is taken.

Improved Grab (Ex): If Shudde M'ell hits with a tentacle rake, she deals normal damage and can attempt to start a grapple as a free action (without provoking an attack of opportunity) against Huge or smaller foes. The demigod uses her tentacle to hold her opponent. Each successful grapple check she makes during successive rounds (assuming the victim doesn't break free on his action) automatically deals the damage listed for the tentacle rake, in addition to draining Constitution.

Drain Constitution (Ex): Any time the demigod makes a successful grapple check against a foe she has previously grappled, she deals damage normally and drains 2 Constitution points. This Constitution drain is permanent.

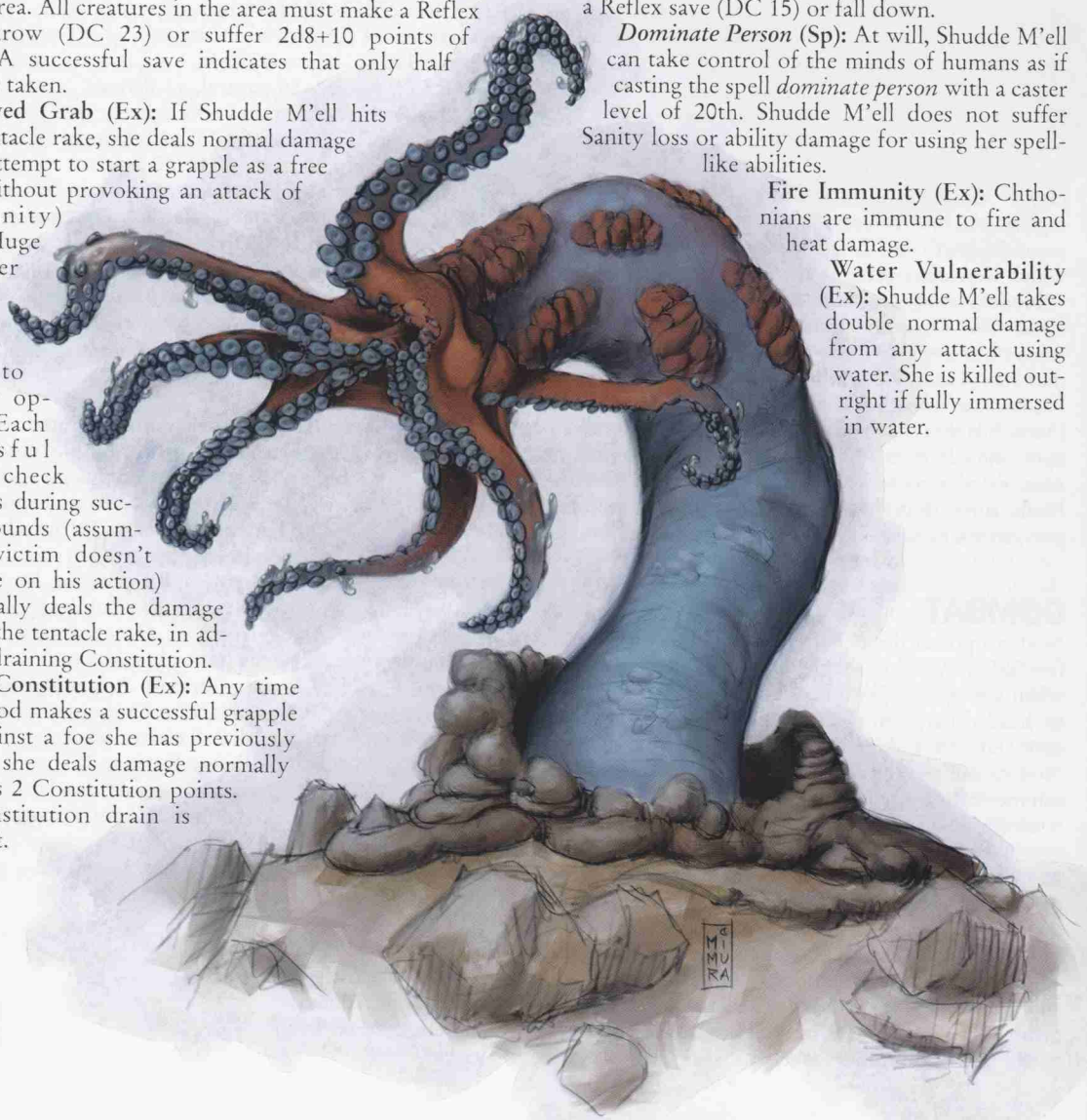
***Trigger Earthquake* (Sp):** Shudde M'ell can use this ability once per day, creating an intense tremor that rips the ground for 1 round. The effect propagates through the earth to an effective radius of ten miles, though minor shaking may be felt for many tens or hundreds of miles beyond that radius. If the demigod is within less than ten miles of the surface, the earthquake also affects all creatures and structures on the surface. A group of one or more adjacent companion chthonians may simultaneously trigger an earthquake with Shudde M'ell. Each additional chthonian increases the effective radius by one mile.

Chthonian-dug burrows are immune to collapse. However, the earthquake partly collapses artificial structures, as well as natural and artificial tunnels. This deals 8d6 points of damage to any creature caught in the cave-in or structure collapse (Reflex save DC 15 for half damage). All creatures (except chthonians) in the area must make a Reflex save (DC 15) or fall down.

***Dominate Person* (Sp):** At will, Shudde M'ell can take control of the minds of humans as if casting the spell *dominate person* with a caster level of 20th. Shudde M'ell does not suffer Sanity loss or ability damage for using her spell-like abilities.

Fire Immunity (Ex): Chthonians are immune to fire and heat damage.

Water Vulnerability (Ex): Shudde M'ell takes double normal damage from any attack using water. She is killed outright if fully immersed in water.



TSATHOGGUA

Huge Great Old One (Demigod)
Domains: Destruction, Knowledge, Magic
Hit Dice: 35d12+240 (470 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: 50 ft., hop 100 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor)
AC: 42 (+30 natural, +4 divine, –2 size)
Attacks: 2 claws +36 melee or 1 bite +36 melee
Damage: Claw 2d6+14, bite 4d8+14
Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks: Improved grab, swallow whole, squamous blast, hand of death
Special Qualities: Divine qualities (see above), damage reduction 39/+4, *alter reality,* SR 36, gift of life, summon Formless Spawn, create Formless Spawn, darkvision, blindsight
Saves: Fort +28, Ref +18, Will +31
Abilities: Str 39, Dex 10, Con 30, Int 45, Wis 36, Cha 40
Skills: Cthulhu Mythos +45, Diplomacy +43, Gather Information +43, Knowledge (archaeology, astronomy, biology, chemistry, geography, geology, history, local, occult, philosophy, religion) +45 each, Listen +33, Research (via remote senses) +45, Search (via remote senses) +45, Sense Motive +43, Spellcraft +45, Spot +43
Feats: Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Persuasive
Climate/Terrain: Any (often the black gulf of N'Kai)
Organization: Unique
Challenge Rating: 39
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Neutral evil
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 0/1d10

You shall know Tsathoggua by his great girth and his bat-like furriness, and the look of a sleepy black toad which he has eternally. He will not rise from his place, even in the ravening of hunger, but will wait in divine slothfulness for the sacrifice. And, going close to Lord Tsathoggua, you must say to him: 'I am the blood-offering sent by the sorcerer Ezdagor.' Then, if it be his pleasure, Tsathoggua will avail himself of the offering.

—Clark Ashton Smith, "The Seven Geases"

Tsathoggua has been reliably reported in the past as being capable of assuming a number of forms, from a vast pool spawning sentient rottenness to a bizarre sleepy being with a spherical toadlike body, pendulous head, squat legs, and exceedingly elongated arms. Within recorded human history, his form has been that of a fat furry being with a huge head and wide mouth, blinking sleepily at the world through half-closed glowing eyes, rather like a sly gloating Buddha.

As one of the most ancient of the Great Old Ones, Tsathoggua was once powerful, but has allowed his power and cult to erode over the last few billion years. He has an undeserved reputation for being relatively benign. In recent centuries, he has been sluggish only while resting between meals, surrounded by vast piles of well-picked bones in his lair in the black gulf of N'Kai. In time his hunger may return, causing him to venture forth in search of fresh sweet meat or compelling his faithful servitors, the Formless Spawn, to capture prey and bring it to him. Whether this will occur before the human race becomes extinct the *Book of Eibon* does not say.

Tsathoggua speaks his own language, which is also known to his Formless Spawn. He is capable of reading the minds of any lesser beings who approach him, and thus of responding to them in their own language. He can also comprehend any written language simply by devoting a tiny fraction of his mind to deciphering it, should he deem it worth the trouble. He enjoys using polite, formal modes of address; long experience has taught him that others find this disconcerting from a creature of such uncouth exterior.

WORSHIP

In *Call of Cthulhu,* Tsathoggua was honored on distant Cykranosh (Saturn) and in ancient Hyperborea, but his cult fell into decline in recent millennia. Small sects sacrificed to him as recently as Roman and medieval times under such names as Sadaqua and Zhothaqquah. He automatically receives the unwavering devotion of those strange, amorphous beings known as the Formless Spawn, whom he created and can uncreate with a thought (the same principles apply to his fellow demigod, Nyogtha). Some occultists believe the shoggoths were created by the Great Race from Formless Spawn or some by-product therefrom; if so, Tsathoggua could probably command shoggoths as well.

His present cult is tiny, due to his relative inactivity of late, consisting of a few isolated sorcerers who have divined his existence (through sources such as the *Book of Eibon*) and sought his favor. During those eras when he bestirs himself, his worshipers grow in number accordingly, often rivaling even those of Great Cthulhu and Hastur the Unspeakable.

COMBAT

Tsathoggua sometimes amuses himself by striking dead those who approach him with insufficient respect, then reviving them over and over until he feels they have learned their lesson. If seriously annoyed, he simply smites the offender with his squamous blast; if threatened, he removes himself via *alter reality,* rearranging events so that the annoyance never occurred. It is not known what offense could drive him into actual combat. He has, when hungry or annoyed, suddenly seized an offender with his wicked prehensile claws and devoured it (see below). He is much stronger than he looks, especially for one so old and slothful, and the disrespectful may find themselves counting the god's teeth from inside.

***Alter Reality* (Sp):** Tsathoggua can reshape himself or his surroundings and events to please himself. This is a move action.

Gift of Life (Ex): With this power, Tsathoggua can restore a dead creature to life, no matter how long she has been dead or what condition the body (if any) is currently in. This power cannot restore a creature against its will, but it can resurrect outsiders, elementals, and other creatures not usually eligible for such resurrection. It can reincarnate someone whose soul is trapped (for example, in a *magic jar*). It can even restore characters slain by *hand of death*, as long as they were not slain by a being more powerful than Tsathoggua.

Hand of Death (Su): Tsathoggua can slay any single mortal who has displeased him who is within four miles of a shrine specially devoted to him, as long as there is a line of sight. The mortal is allowed a Fortitude save (DC 32) to survive the effect. If the mortal fails, she is completely destroyed, agonizingly consumed in a nimbus of divine flame that doesn't even leave ashes behind. If the mortal succeeds, she still takes 10d6 points of damage. Only Tsathoggua himself, or a being more powerful, can return life to a mortal slain in this manner.

Improved Grab/Swallow Whole (Ex): Rather than attacking to deal damage, Tsathoggua can snatch at an offender when provoked. If he succeeds, the target must win an opposed grapple check or be swallowed the next round. Tsathoggua can swallow creatures much larger than he is, thanks to his *alter reality* power. His jaws seem for an instant to gape impossibly wide; then the target is gone and the Great Old One sits back, licking his furry lips. A character thus swallowed must make a Fortitude save (DC 42) each round or gain 1d10 negative levels. When the swallowed character is completely drained of levels, she is transformed into a Formless Spawn and belched forth. This transformation is permanent and can only be undone by Tsathoggua himself (a very unlikely event). The newborn spawn has no personality or memory of its former life and is wholly under Tsathoggua's control.

Squamous Blast (Su): Eighteen times per day, Tsathoggua can release part of his personal energy as a ray that can strike any target in his line of sight (up to four miles away), inflicting 16d12 points of damage. There is no saving throw, but the Great Old One must make a successful ranged touch attack for the blast to hit its designated target. The bolt itself is invisible: a target struck by it appears to collapse into a heap of putrescence, rotting to foulness in a split second. A divine shield offers complete protection from such a blast.

Spells: As a patron of sorcerers, Tsathoggua can cast any spell at will, one per round, as a free action. He can also teach any spell to a worshiper who brings him a tempting morsel or otherwise pleases or amuses him.

YIG, THE FATHER OF SERPENTS

Huge Great Old One (Demigod)
Domains: Animals, Death, Protection, Trickery
Hit Dice: 30d12+450 (650 hp)
Initiative: +25 (+21 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 100 ft. (bipedal), slither 140 ft., swim 140 ft.
AC: 52 (+30 base, +3 divine, –2 size, +21 Dex)
Attacks: 1 bite +42 melee, 2 claws +24 melee
Damage: Bite 3d8+15 plus poison, claw 2d6+8
Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 5 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks: Poison, spells
Special Qualities: Divine qualities (see above), damage reduction 40/+4, SR 35, divine fast healing 23/round, summon snakes, summon Sacred Snake of Yig, darkvision 60 ft.
Saves: Fort +30, Ref +36, Will +24
Abilities: Str 27, Dex 53, Con 41, Int 25, Wis 29, Cha 31
Skills: Animal Empathy +36, Balance +47, Climb +30, Escape Artist +47, Hide +49, Jump +36, Listen +35, Move Silently +49, Spot +35, Swim +42, Tumble +49, Wilderness Lore +35



Feats: Acrobatic, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse (bite)
Climate/Terrain: Any non-arctic
Organization: Unique
Challenge Rating: 27
Treasure: Double standard or none
Alignment: Neutral Evil
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 0/1d8

The half-human father of serpents . . . the snake-god of the central plains tribes—presumably the primal source of the more southerly Quetzalcoatl or Kukulcan—was an odd, half-anthropomorphic devil.

—H. P. Lovecraft and Zealia Bishop, "The Curse of Yig"

Yig can appear as a great serpent, always poisonous and always bearing the Sign of Yig—a white crescent—on top of its head. He sometimes prefers a form like an oversized yuan-ti abomination, or a huge bipedal form resembling one of the serpent people. When in the latter form, he typically has powerful clawed hands, but he can transform both arms into Snakes of Yig. The god speaks through the trances and dreams of shamans and medicine men. Yig sometimes sends omens, and almost always works through snakes.

WORSHIP

Yig is a very old god whose cult is currently in decline, along with the reptiles who formed his closest worshipers. He once had close ties to the serpent people, and some attribute their near-extinction to the withdrawing of Yig's favor. Hence, degenerate serpent people tribes are often led by an atavistic priest of Yig. The few surviving serpent people sorcerers who preserve the full knowledge and cunning of that race embrace a cynical atheism, but still find it politic to maintain the forms of worship.

In *Call of Cthulhu,* Yig has dominated many Native American tribes, acting through a smattering of cults among them. Some venerable shamans of these and other tribes still maintain his worship. It is widely believed that Yig can greatly extend the life span of those who please him greatly, but the mechanism whereby he does so is not known. Speculation has it that he either grants them the slower metabolism (and thus longer life span) of his beloved reptiles, or that he injects them with a modified form of his venom that enhances their Constitution rather than draining it.

All serpents instinctively worship Yig whenever he appears, obeying his every command. Wise investigators and insane cultists alike sometimes find it prudent to take steps to appease Yig, or at least avoid calling down his anger.

Rumor has it that Yig can command birds as well as snakes. The theory that his old feathered-serpent form was worshiped as Kukulcan or Quetzalcoatl supports this idea, but no proof is known at this time.

COMBAT

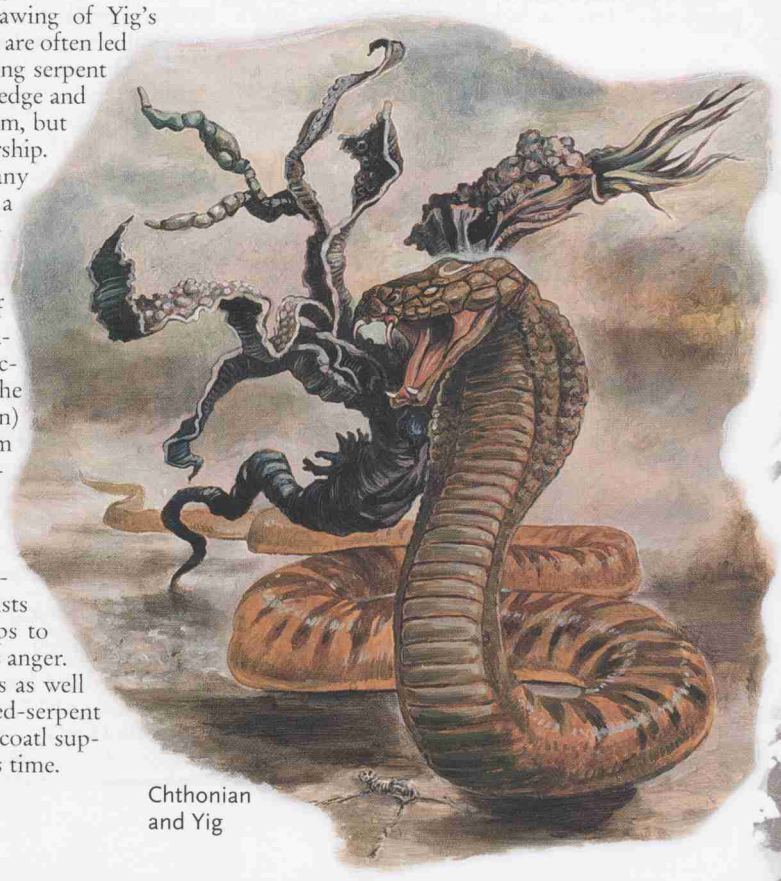
Yig rarely attacks in person, although he is highly capable in combat. Usually he settles scores with those who have offended him by dispatching either a single Snake of Yig or a horde of ordinary poisonous snakes to slay the transgressor. When grossly offended (say, by someone who has just killed the last of some species of snake), he appears in person and slays the transgressor.

Poison (Ex): Any bite from Yig, whether delivered by his evilly fanged head or one of his serpent-arms, automatically injects a highly lethal poison into the victim. Yig's poison is so potent that it causes 5d10+5 points of Constitution drain (Fort save DC 40) and then the same amount 1 minute later. Even a successful save results in 1d6 points of temporary Constitution damage. A character killed by Yig's poison swells up almost to the point of bursting and turns a sickly green-black from the venom beneath the skin. Anyone who somehow survives finds that the wounds never heal, nor can the lost Constitution ever be regained (except through the intervention of a god more powerful than Yig).

Sacred Snakes of Yig (Su): Typically, Yig warns those embarking on courses that displease him by sending omens and prophetic dreams. Those who ignore these warnings and actually commit an act offensive to the Great Old One draw the god's disfavor.

Yig's anger does not manifest immediately. Instead, Yig dispatches several hundred snakes of types native to the area to attack the character the next time he is alone or asleep. If the local snake population is sparse, or Yig does not want to diminish its numbers, he infuses a small portion of his godly essence into a particularly fine specimen, temporarily transforming it into a Sacred Snake of Yig. The snake is always a paragon of its species, appearing normal except for a small white crescent that appears on the back of its head. The snake gains a lesser form of Yig's poison, inflicting 1d6 points of Constitution drain on a successful bite (Fort save DC 30, to resist), followed by another 2d6 points 1 minute later. A Sacred Snake of Yig will have maximum hit points while on a mission from the god.

Spells: Yig can cast any spell in the Magic chapter as an attack action, in addition to any spells he can cast as a divine ability. He also bestows knowledge of spells on those who placate him with devoted worship, pleasing sacrifices, and due respect. *Hands of Colubra* is a favorite spell for him to grant.



Chthonian and Yig

A BRIEF CONVERSION SYSTEM

A vast array of *Call of Cthulhu* adventures and sourcebooks have been published over the past two decades. More than seventy of them come from Chaosium, publishers of the original game, but there have also been a dozen or so from Pagan Publishing. Other *CofC* publishers include Theatre of the Mind (five sourcebooks), Games Workshop (three), Triad (five), Fantasy Flight (three), and Grenadier (one).

Gamemasters wanting to use some of those scenarios with the new rules presented in this book should use these rough notes as an aid to converting original *Call of Cthulhu* characters and monsters to the d20 System rules.

CHARACTERS

Call of Cthulhu characteristics convert from "Classic Cthulhu" to "Cthulhu d20" as follows:

STR = Strength
CON = Constitution
POW = Wisdom
DEX = Dexterity
INT = Intelligence
APP = Charisma

SIZ and EDU lose their value as game statistics, but they're still useful in determining details about the character.

With the GM's approval, a player may translate POW into Charisma rather than Wisdom (since POW and Charisma both represent strength of character). If so, APP should then be used only as a basis for the character's physical description, and a new Wisdom score would have to be generated for such a character.

SAN becomes Sanity, retaining its value and purpose.

DETERMINING LEVEL

The Gamemaster can choose one of two methods for determining character level.

The Skill Method: Take the highest rating the character has in a given skill. Divide this number by 10 and subtract 3. The result is the character's level.

The Attack Method: Take the character's highest rating in a combat skill (such as Handgun, Fist/Punch, Rifle, Shotgun, or Machine Gun), subtract the base skill rating (for instance, 25% for Handgun), and divide the result by 5. This is the character's base attack bonus; use Table 1–8 or Table 1–9 (page 10) to determine the character's starting level.

Use the newly determined level to derive the character's saving throw bonuses, hit points, skill points (but see Translating Skill Modifiers, below), and number of feats.

The skill method produces lower-level characters than the attack method does. Depending on the type of campaign he wants to run, the GM may direct players to use one method or the other. In either case, all the characters in a campaign (including NPCs) should be converted using the same method.

TRANSLATING SKILL MODIFIERS

As an alternative to purchasing skill ranks with skill points, it's possible to change classic Cthulhu skill ratings into d20 Cthulhu skill modifiers, although doing this is not recommended. The resulting character will not necessarily resemble one created with the rules given in this book. If you prefer this option, however, take the original character's skill rating and divide by 10 to get the number of ranks the d20 character has in the equivalent skill. Apply ability score modifiers as appropriate to determine the character's skill modifiers.

SKILL CONVERSION

The following skills from "classic Cthulhu" do not correspond to skills in the d20 System: Credit Rating, Grapple, Handgun, Head Butt, Kick, Machine Gun, Martial Arts, Own Language, Rifle, Shotgun, Submachine Gun, Throw.

After eliminating those skills from the original character's list of skills, declare the d20 character's twelve highest skills as core skills.

For skills that do convert from "Classic Cthulhu" to "Cthulhu d20," make the following substitutions:

Accounting, Anthropology, Archaeology, Art, Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Geology, History, Law, Medicine, Natural History, Occult, Pharmacy, Physics, Psychology = appropriate Knowledge skill

Bargain = Sense Motive
Climb = Climb
Computer Use = Computer Use
Conceal = Sleight of Hand
Craft = Craft
Cthulhu Mythos = Cthulhu Mythos
Disguise = Disguise
Dodge = Tumble
Drive Auto = Drive
Electrical Repair = Repair
Electronics = Craft (electronics) or Knowledge (electronics)
Fast Talk = Bluff
First Aid = Heal
Hide = Hide
Jump = Jump
Library Use = Research
Listen = Listen
Locksmith = Open Lock
Mechanical Repair = Repair or Disable Device
Navigate = Intuit Direction
Operate Heavy Machine = Operate Heavy Machinery
Other Language = Speak Other Language
Persuade = Diplomacy or Intimidate
Photography = Craft (photography)
Pilot = Pilot
Psychoanalysis = Psychoanalysis
Ride = Ride
Sneak = Move Silently
Spot Hidden = Spot or Search
Swim = Swim
Track = Wilderness Lore

GODS AND MONSTERS

When converting monsters or deities from classic *CoC* rules into d20, do the same as you would for a character for determining ability scores and skill conversions, then proceed as follows.

Move: Multiply this number by 4 to determine speed.

Hit Points: Divide hit points by 5 to determine number of Hit Dice. The HD size (d6, d8, d10, etc.) is determined by creature type (see page 153).

Damage Bonus: Substitute the appropriate value from the following list for damage based on the creature's size. Don't forget to add its Strength modifier to the final result.

Bite/Bash Damage: Fine 1, Diminutive 1d2, Tiny 1d3, Small 1d4, Medium-size 1d6, Large 1d8, Huge 2d6, Gargantuan 2d8, Colossal 4d6.

Claw/Tentacle Damage: Fine —, Diminutive 1, Tiny 1d2, Small 1d3, Medium-size 1d4, Large 1d6, Huge 1d8, Gargantuan 2d6, Colossal 2d8.

Weapon: Divide this number by 10 and add appropriate ability score modifier (usually Strength, sometimes Dexterity) to determine base attack bonus.

Armor: Give appropriate natural armor bonus (ranging from +1 to +10) based on the creature's skin, scales, and so on. Give damage reduction equal to 3–5 points per point of armor listed.

Sanity Loss: Remains the same under both sets of rules.

Determine other needed characteristics, such as creature type, size, and special abilities, as needed.

RECOMMENDED READING LIST

If you want to do further research into the Cthulhu Mythos, go straight to the source. The following list includes dozens of stories, anthologies, and novels to inspire your games.

MYTHOS STORIES

H. P. LOVECRAFT

The Dunwich Horror and Others (esp. "The Call of Cthulhu," "The Haunter of the Dark," "The Dunwich Horror," "The Whisperer in Darkness," "The Thing at the Doorstep," "Shadow over Innsmouth," "Pickman's Model," "The Colour Out of Space," "The Rats in the Walls," "Cool Air," "The Terrible Old Man," and "The Shadow Out of Time")

Dagon & Other Macabre Tales (esp. "Herbert West, Re-animator," "The Temple," "The Hound," "The Festival," "Under the Pyramids," "The Horror at Red Hook," "The Cats of Ulthar," and "The Strange High House in the Mist")

At the Mountains of Madness (esp. "The Statement of Randolph Carter," "The Case of Charles Dexter Ward," "The Shunned House," "The Dreams in the Witch-House") and *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath*

The Horror in the Museum and Other Revisions (esp. "The Curse of Yig," "The Loved Dead," and "The Diary of Alonzo Typer")

The Fungi from Yuggoth (sonnet cycle, ideal for use as excerpts of poems by Justin Geoffrey or Edward Pickman Derby); "Nyarlathotep" (prose poem)

The H. P. Lovecraft Dream Book (transcriptions of actual dreams Lovecraft had, some of which he later turned into stories)

Supernatural Horror in Literature (essentially Lovecraft's own recommended reading list of weird horror)

H. P. Lovecraft's Book of Horror It not only contains Lovecraft's treatise, "Supernatural Horror in Literature," but also contains twenty-one of the stories he mentions in that essay, by authors including Poe ("The Fall of the House of Usher"), Bierce ("The Damned Thing"), Chambers ("The Yellow Sign"), Smith ("The Double Shadow"), Hodgson "(The Hog"), Machen ("The Great God Pan"), and James ("Count Magnus")

The Dream Cycle of H.P. Lovecraft: Dreams of Terror and Death, The Transition of H. P. Lovecraft: The Road to Madness, Tales of the Cthulhu Mythos. These titles, available from Del Rey in both hardcover and trade paperback, are easier to find than the collections listed above, and contain most of the same stories.

CLARK ASHTON SMITH

Complete short stories (esp. "Genius Loci," "The Devotee of Evil," "The Double Shadow," "The Return of the Sorcerer," "The Tale of Satampra Zeiros," "The Door to Saturn," "The Vaults of Yoh-Vombis," "The Plutonian Drug," "The Empire of the Necromancers," "The Charnal God," "The Maze of Maal Dweb," "The Nemesis of the Unfinished," "The Holiness of Azedarac," "The Beast of Averoigne," "The Enchantress of Sylaire," "The Mandrakes," "The Maker of Gargoyles," "The Colossus of Ylourgne," "The Disinterment of Venus," "The Enchantress of Averoigne," and "Morthylla") and *The Dead Will Cuckold You* (play)

The Book of Eibon

ROBERT E. HOWARD

Nameless Cults

FRANK BELKNAP LONG

"The Hounds of Tindalos" and "The Horror from the Hills"

ROBERT BLOCH

Mysteries of the Worm (esp. "The Shambler from the Stars" and "The Shadow from the Steeple" [the first and final stories in a triptych to which Lovecraft's "The Haunter of the Dark" is the centerpiece], "Fane of the Black Pharaoh," and "Notebook Found in a Deserted House")

RAMSEY CAMPBELL

Complete short stories (esp. "Cold Print," "The Insects of Shaggai," "The Faces at Pine Dunes," "The Franklyn Paragraphs," "The Plain of Sound," "The Moon-Lens," "The Room in the Castle," and "The Inhabitant of the Lake")

FRITZ LEIBER

"To Arkham and the Stars" and "Terror from the Depths"

HENRY KUTTNER

The Book of Iod (esp. "The Salem Horror," "Hydra," and "The Eater of Souls")

JOSEPH S. PULVER, SR.

Nightmare's Disciple

ROGER ZELAZNY

A Night in Lonesome October

JOHN TYNES

Rules of Engagement, "The Nullity of Choice," and "The Second Effort"

THOMAS LIGOTTI

Songs of a Dead Dreamer, "The Sect of the Idiot," "The Last Feast of Harlequin," and "The Dark Beauty of Unheard Horrors"

ROBERT PRICE

Scrolls of Thoth Unusual historical fiction featuring Simon Magus as the central character. Mythology and Roman history blend with the Hyborian and Cthulhu Mythos cycles.

LIN CARTER

The Xothic Legend Cycle

AUGUST DERLETH

The Trail of Cthulhu, "The Thing That Walked on Wind," "The Snow-Thing," "Beyond the Threshhold," "The Shuttered Room," "The Sandwin Compact," and "The Lair of the Star-Spawn"

ANTHOLOGIES, ETC.

Alien Intelligence, Bob Kruger, ed. An anthology of short stories showing many different aspects of Delta Green (one of the settings featured in the Settings chapter of this book).

A Cthulhu Mythos Bibliography and Concordance, by Chris Jarocha-Ernst. A terrific resource that lists over 2,600 works by title and author with bibliographical data and a listing of which Mythos terms appear in which stories.

Cthulhu 2000, Jim Turner, ed. This collection of modern Mythos fiction includes stories by eighteen authors, including T.E.D. Klein ("Black Man with a Horn"), Poppy Z. Brite ("His Mouth Will Taste of Wormwood"), Michael Shea ("Fat Face"), Gahan Wilson ("H.P.L."), and Harlan Ellison ("On The Slab").

—*Encyclopedia Cthulhuiana,* by Daniel Harms

—*Tales of the Lovecraft Mythos,* Robert Price, ed. This volume contains tales from Howard ("The Thing on the Roof," "The Fire of Asshurbanipal"), Bloch ("Fane of the Black Pharaoh"), Smith ("The Seven Geases"), Kuttner ("The Invaders," "Bells of Horror"), Derleth ("The Thing That Walked on the Wind," "Ithaqua"), and others.

NON-MYTHOS STORIES

M. R. JAMES

Universally recognized as the greatest writer of ghost stories ever.

Complete ghost stories (esp. "Casting the Runes," "The Tractate Middoth," "The Mezzotint," "A View from a Hill," "A Neighbor's Landmark," "Mr. Humphries and His Inheritance," "Oh, Whistle and I'll Come to You, My Lad," "The Stalls of Barchester Cathedral," "Count Magnus," "The Treasure of Abbot Thomas," "Martin's Close," "A Warning to the Curious," "Canon Alberic's Scrape-book," "Count Magnus," and "Rats")

R. W. CHAMBERS

The King in Yellow (esp. "The Yellow Sign" and "The Repairer of Reputations")

AMBROSE BIERCE

Ghost and Horror Stories (esp. "The Damned Thing," "Strange Disappearances," "The Suitable Surroundings," "The Moonlit Road," "Haita the Sheperd," and "An Inhabitant of Carcasonne")

EDGAR ALLAN POE

"The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar," "The System of Dr. Tarr & Professor Fether," "A Tale of the Ragged Mountains," "Ligeia," *The Narrative of A. Gordon Pym* (referenced in Lovecraft's *At the Mountains of Madness*), "Silence," "William Wilson," "Never Bet the Devil Your Head: A Tale with a Moral," "The Fall of the House of Usher," and the unfinished "The Lighthouse"

ALGERNON BLACKWOOD

"The Willows," "The Wendigo," "Ancient Lights," and "Entrance & Exit"

John Silence

ARTHUR MACHEN

The Three Imposters (esp. "The Novel of the White Powder" and "The Novel of the Black Seal")

"The White People," "The Inmost Light," "The Shining Pyramid," and "The Great God Pan"

WM. HOPE HODGSON

Carnacki the Ghost-Finder (esp. "The Whistling Room")

Deep Waters (esp. "The Derelict" and "The Voice in the Night")

The Ghost Pirates, The House on the Borderlands, The Night Land, and *The Boats of the 'Glen Carrig'*

LORD DUNSANY

The Gods of Pegana (esp. "The Deeds of Mung," "A Shop in Go-by Street," and "Alhireth-Hotep the Prophet")

Time and the Gods (esp. "The King That Was Not")

The Sword of Welleran (esp. "The Highwayman," "The Ghosts," and "The Fortress Unvanquishable, Save for Sacnoth")

A Dreamer's Tales (esp. "Where the Tides Ebb and Flow," "Bethmora," "The Hashish Man," "Poor Old Bill," and "The Field")

The Book of Wonder (esp. "The Hoard of the Gibbelins," "How Nuth Would Have Practised His Art Upon the Gnoles," and "Chu-bu and Sheemish")

The Last Book of Wonder (esp. "The City on Mallington Moor," "The Bureau d'Echange de Maux," and "A Narrow Escape")

Fifty-One Tales (esp. "Taking Up Piccadilly," "The Sphinx in Thebes [Massachusetts]," "The Trouble in Leafy Green Street," and "Lobster Salad")

Tales of Three Hemispheres (esp. "How the Office of Postman Fell Vacant in Otford-under-the-Wold" and "The Sack of Emeralds"); also "The Return"

A Night at an Inn (play).

W. B. YEATS

"Rosa Alchemica," "The Tables of the Law," and "The Adoration of the Magi"

ROBERT ARTHUR

"Footsteps Invisible," "Mr. Dexter's Dragon,"and "Do You Believe in Ghosts?"

HENRY JAMES

"The Jolly Corner"

A. (ABRAHAM) MERRITT

Dwellers in the Mirage and *The Moon Pool*

MODERN HORROR STORIES

JOHN BELLAIRS

The Face in the Frost, The House with a Clock in its Walls, "The Spell of the Sorcerer's Skull," "The Doom of the Haunted Opera"†, "The Spectre from the Magician's Museum"†, and "The Beast Under the Wizard's Bridge"† [†: with Brad Strickland]

JONATHAN CARROLL

The Land of Laughs

SHIRLEY JACKSON

The Haunting of Hill House (the ultimate haunted house novel)

STEPHEN KING

Salem's Lot (The model of how a horror classic, in this case, *Dracula,* can be updated to the modern day without losing any of its impact.)

JORGE LUIS BORGES

"The Book of Sand," "The Zahir," "The Circular Ruins," "The House of Asterion," "The Aleph," and "Tlon, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius"

BRIAN LUMLEY

The Burrowers Beneath and "Cement Surroundings"

SAMPLE CHARACTERS

MARIE

Defense Option, 1st level
Profession: Journalist

Ability	Modifier
Str 8	–1
Dex 15	+2
Con 10	+0
Int 14	+2
Wis 12	+1
Cha 13	+1

Initiative: +6; *Hit Points:* 6;
–1 melee attack; +2 ranged attack;
60 Sanity

Skills

Bluff	+5
Computer Use	+6
Craft (photography)	+6
Craft (writing)	+6
Diplomacy	+3
Gather Information	+5
Hide	+6
Innuendo	+3
Knowledge (occult)	+6
Research	+6
Sense Motive	+3
Spot	+3

Saving Throws
Fortitude +0
Reflex +2
Will +2

Feats
Weapon Proficiency (pistol)
Improved Initiative

Equipment: Camera, palm pilot, cell phone
Weapons: .38 revolver (+2 attack, 1d10 damage); Knife (–5 attack, 1d4 damage)

CLAIRE

Offense Option, 1st level
Profession: Athlete

Ability	Modifier
Str 15	+2
Dex 13	+1
Con 14	+2
Int 10	+0
Wis 12	+1
Cha 8	–1

Initiative: +1; *Hit Points:* 8;
+3 melee attack; –3 ranged attack;
60 Sanity

Skills

Balance	+5
Climb	+6
Heal	+3
Intimidate	+2
Jump	+6
Listen	+3
Move Silently	+2
Performance (acting)	+2
Search	+0
Spot	+3
Swim	+2
Tumble	+5

Saving Throws
Fortitude +4
Reflex +1
Will +1

Feats
Martial Artist
Run (base speed 40 ft.)

Equipment: Flashlight, running shoes, cell phone
Weapon: Unarmed strike (+3 attack, 1d3+2 damage)

SAM

Offense Option, 1st level
Profession: Customs agent (police)

Ability	Modifier
Str 14	+2
Dex 13	+1
Con 15	+2
Int 8	–1
Wis 12	+1
Cha 10	–1

Initiative: +1; *Hit Points:* 11;
+3 melee attack; +2 ranged attack;
60 Sanity

Skills

Climb	+4
Drive	+3
Gather Information	+2
Hide	+1
Intimidate	+2
Listen	+5
Move Silently	+5
Open Lock	+3
Research	–1
Search	+3
Sense Motive	+3
Spot	+5

Saving throws
Fortitude +4
Reflex +1
Will +1

Feats
Weapon Proficiency (melee)
Toughness

Equipment: Government identification, cell phone, shovel (in trunk of car)
Weapons: Glock 9mm (–2 attack, 1d10 damage); anything he can improvise (e.g. shovel: +3 melee, 1d6+2 damage)

KRISTOF

Defense Option, 1st level
Profession: Asst. history professor

Ability	Modifier
Str 10	+0
Dex 8	–1
Con 12	+1
Int 15	+2
Wis 14	+2
Cha 13	+1

Initiative: –1; *Hit Points:* 7;
+0 melee attack; –1 ranged attack;
70 Sanity

Skills

Concentration (Con)	+3
Diplomacy (Cha)	+3
Gather Information (Cha)	+5
Spot	+4
Knowledge (archaeology) (Int)	+6
Knowledge (history) (Int)	+6
Knowledge (occult) (Int)	+6
Research (Int)	+9
Search (Int)	+6
Speak Other Language (Int)	
—Egyptian	+5
—Classical Greek	+4
Heal	+3
Wilderness Lore	+6

Saving Throws
Fortitude +1
Reflex +1
Will +4

Feats
Skill Emphasis (Research)
Weapon Proficiency (shotgun)

Equipment: Notebook, laptop computer, cell modem, cell phone
Weapon: Shotgun (–1 attack, 3d6/2d6/1d6 damage)

INDEX

ability checks 22, 23
ability damage 9, 62, 128
ability drain 9, 62, 128
ability modifiers 7
ability scores 6
  changing 9, 11
acid 89
Acrobatic 39
action types 21, 65
actions in combat 65
addictions 56
age (of a character) 13
agent (profession) 12
aging effects 13
aiming a spell 126
air, lack of 90
Alertness 39
Ambidexterity 39
ammunition 109
Animal Affinity 39
Animal Empathy 24
animals 199
animated corpse 158
antiquarian (profession) 12
Appraise 24
archaeologist (profession) 12
area (of a spell) 126
armor 94
armor check penalty 94
Armor Class 61, 63
  of objects 76
artifacts and tomes 119, 123
artist/musician (profession) 12
Athletic 39
attack action 21, 65
attack bonus 62
attack an object 76
attack roll 60, 66
  modifiers 72
attacks 61
  multiple 66
  opportunity 88
attitude (of NPCs) 225
autofire 79, 80
automatic misses and hits 66
avatars 207
awarding experience 226
Azathoth 205, 290
background (of a character) 15
Balance 24
base attack bonus 9, 10
base save bonus 9, 10
Biofeedback Trance 43
Blind-Fight 39
blinded 91
blue-collar worker (profession) 12
Bluff 24
bonus types 22
books 209
books of the Cthulhu Mythos 119
breaking items 77
bum's rush 78
byakhee 159
carafe of space mead 123
cars and other vehicles 29
caster level 128
caster level checks 22
casting spells 73, 125
casting on the defensive 74
casting time 74, 126
catching fire 86
Cautious 40
character condition summary 91
character creation 6
characters, fleshing out 12
  and levels 9
charge 61, 67
Charisma 8
Chaugnar Faugn 206, 300
checked 87
Chosen of Hastur template 190
Cleave 40
Climb 25
clothing 114
cold dangers 86
Colour Out of Space 159
  larva 160
combat 58
  actions 65
  basics 61
  example 58
  sequence 60
  statistics 60
Combat Casting 40
combat modifiers 71
combat round 65
combining magical effects 128
communications 114
components 74, 127
Computer Use 26
concealment 73
Concentration 26, 61, 128
Constitution 8
conversion system 314
core skills 10, 11
coup de grace 73
cover 72
cowering 91
Craft 26
Crawling Ones 188
creature advancement 157
creature size and scale 71, 153
creatures 152
criminal (profession) 12
critical hits 66
chthonian 161
Cthugha 206, 302
Cthulhu 206, 292
Cthulhu Mythos, the 202
Cthulhu Mythos (skill) 27, 50
cult sorcerer template 191
cultists 189
cults 208
current Sanity 47, 51
damage 61, 62
  massive 70
  to objects 76
  subdual 75
damage reduction 82
damage roll 66
Dark Young of Shub-Niggurath 162
dead 61, 69
deafened 91
deep one 163, 207
deep one breather 123
defense bonus 15
Defense Option 9, 10, 15
delay 75
Demolitions 27
desperate situations 89
detective (profession) 12
Dexterity 7
dhole 164
dice 5
Difficulty Class 17, 19
dilettante (profession) 12
dimensional shambler 165
Diplomacy 27
Disable Device 28
disabled 61, 69, 91
disarm 78
disease 82
Disguise 28
divine qualities 289
doctor/nurse (profession) 13
Dodge 40
double move 67
Dowsing 43
Drive 29
Drive-By Attack 40
drowning 85
duration (of a spell) 127
dying 61, 69
dynamite 112
education (of a character) 15
effect (of a spell) 126
Eihort 206, 304
elder thing 165, 207
elder thing crystal 123
Endurance 40
entangled 91
entertainment 115
Escape Artist 30
exhausted 91
experience, awarding 226
experience points 10, 11
Expertise 40
explosives 112
extraordinary abilities 129
extraordinary success 23
falling objects 90
Far Shot 40
Father Dagon and Mother Hydra 303
fatigued 91
favorable and unfavorable conditions 20, 72
feats 11, 38
  psychic 43
fight defensively 66
fire 86
fire vampire 166
firearms 80, 93
  accessories 109
  and the law 111
  expanded rules 95
  variant rules 81
flanking 70
flat-footed 91
Flyby Attack 156
flying polyp 166
Forgery 30
Formless Spawn 168
free action 21, 65
full attack 61, 66
full-round action 21, 65
ganging up 70
Gather Information 30
gear, investigative 113
Gearhead 40
ghost template 192
ghoul 169
Glaaki 206, 305
  Servitors of 158
glass from Leng 123
gnoph-keh 170
gods and monsters 210
grapple 78
grappled 91
Great Cleave 156
Great Fortitude 40
Great Old Ones 289
Great Race of Yith 171, 207
grenadelike weapons 80
gug 172
Handle Animal 30
hardness 77
Hastur the Unspeakable 206, 293
Heal 31
healing 61, 69
heat dangers 85
height and weight (of a character) 14
helpless 91
helpless defenders 73
heroism and horror 215
Hide 31
high altitude 90
hit points 11, 61, 63, 68
holding the charge 127
Hound of Tindalos 173
hunting horror 173
ice 89
Improved Critical 40
Improved Initiative 40
incapacitated 91
incorporeality 83
indefinite insanity 49
initiative 61, 64
injury and death 68
Innuendo 32
insane insight 49
insanity 46, 48
Insect from Shaggai 175
Intelligence 8
Intimidate 32
investigative gear 113
invisibility 83
Iron Will 40
Ithaqua 206, 306

jar of powder of Ibn-Gazi 123
jar of the baneful dust of Hermes Trismegistus 123
Jump 32
King in Yellow, the 293
knocked down 87
Knowledge 32
lack of air 90
lamp of Alhazred 123
landslides and avalanches 85
learning spells 129
level advancement 227
lightning gun 124
Lightning Reflexes 41
line of effect (of a spell) 126
Listen 33
lloigor 175
lodging and dining 115
loup-garou template 195
Lovecraftian D&D campaigns 284
magic 73, 118, 210
Martese Kin 179
Martial Artist 41
massive damage 70
maximum Sanity 47
medical equipment 115
medications and treatments 57
melee attacks 65
melee weapons 92
melee, shooting or throwing into 66
mental disorders 52
mi-go 176, 207
mi-go brain cylinder 124
mi-go electric weapon 124
mi-go living armor 124
mi-go mist projector 124
Mind Probe 44
Mind Reading 44
miscellaneous gear 117
miss chance 73
Mobility 41
Mordiggian 206, 307
move action 21, 65
Move Silently 33
movement 61, 63, 67, 70
multifire 79, 81
multiple attacks 66, 79, 81
multiple casters 128
multiplying damage 62
Multishot 41
mummy template 197
natural armor 63
nauseated 91
nightgaunt 178
Nimble 41
Nodens the Hunter 206, 308
noncore skills 10, 11
nonplayer characters 241, 242
NPC attitude 225
Nyarlathotep 205, 208, 295
objects 76
Offense Option 9, 10, 15
off-hand weapon 62
Open Lock 33
Operate Heavy Machinery 33
opportunity attacks 88
opposed checks 17, 19
outdoor and travel gear 116
paralyzed 91
parapsychologist (profession) 13
Performance 33
permanent insanity 50
personality (of a character) 14
Persuasive 41
phobias 53
Pilot 34
pinned 79
pistols 99
plot hooks 251
Plutonian drug pellets 124
Point Blank Shot 41
poison 84
Power Attack 41
practically impossible 23
Precise Shot 41
priest/clergyman (profession) 13
profession templates 12
profession and income 15
professor (profession) 13
prone 82, 91
psychic feats 43
Psychic Focus 34
Psychoanalysis 34, 51
Psychokinesis 44
psychologist (profession) 13
Psychometry 45
Quick Draw 41
range (of a spell) 126
range increment 93
ranged attacks 65
Rapid Shot 41
rat-thing 179
reaction 21
Read Lips 34
reading list 315
ready 75
recovering hit points 69
refereeing the game 224
refocus 75
Remote Viewing 45
Repair 35
Research 35
rewards (for PCs) 227
Ride 35
rifles 103
Rolling Shot 41
Run (feat) 41
run (action) 67
Sanity check 47
Sanity loss 48
Sanity points 46, 47
recovering 50
Sanity rewards 227
save or check? 63
saving throws 63
against spells 127
Search 35
Second Sight 45
Sense Motive 36
Sensitive 45
serpent people 179
Servitor of the Outer Gods 180
Shaggai nerve whip 125
Sharp-Eyed 41
shining trapezohedron 125
shoggoth 181
shoggoth lord 182
shooting or throwing into melee 66
Shot on the Run 41
shotguns 107
Shub-Niggurath 205, 297
Shudde M'ell 206, 309
size modifier 63
size and scale (of creatures) 71
skill checks 17, 19
opposed 17, 19
time and 20
trying again 19
untrained 18, 20
Skill Emphasis 42
skill points 16, 18
skill ranks 16
skills 16
combining 22
core 10, 11
noncore 10, 11
synergy 22
Sleight of Hand 36
smoke 90
soldier (profession) 13
Speak Other Language 36
special abilities 129
spectral hunter 183
speed 61, 63
spell components 74, 127
Spellcraft 36
spell-like abilities 129
spells, designing 210
spells, learning 129
spells, casting 73, 125
spider of Leng 183
Spot 37
spread (of a spell) 126
Spring Attack 42
spy tech 117
stable 69
stacking bonuses 22
staggered 76, 91
star vampire 184
starting money 15
starting Sanity 47
starvation and thirst 85
Stealthy 42
storytelling 217
strange events 119, 120
strange places 213
Strength 7
Strength bonus 61, 62
striking a weapon 77
stunned 91
subdual damage 75
submachine guns 108
suffocation 90
supernatural, the 222
supernatural abilities 129
surprise 59, 64
Swim 37
synergy bonuses 22
tactical movement 70
taking 10 21
taking 20 21
target (of a spell) 126
Tcho-Tcho 185
technician (profession) 13
Telepathy 45
templates 190
temporary insanity 48, 49
Terror from Beyond 187
thirst 85
threatened area 68
time periods 246
tools 117
total defense 68
touch attacks 63
touch spells 74, 127
Toughness 42
Track 42
trip 81
Trustworthy 42
Tsathoggua 206, 311
Tumble 37
Two-Weapon Fighting 42
two weapons, attacking with 67
ultraviolet projector 125
unarmed attacks 82
unconscious 61, 76, 91
unmastered magic 151
untrained skill checks 18, 20
Use Rope 37
use special ability 74
vehicles 29
vital statistics 12
water dangers 85
Wealth 42
Weapon Finesse 42
Weapon Focus 43
Weapon Proficiency 43, 61
weapon qualities 93
weather 90
weather hazards 87
Whirlwind Attack 156
white-collar worker/businessman (profession) 13
Wilderness Lore 37
wind effects 87
Wisdom 8
Worm That Walks, the 188
writer/reporter (profession) 13
Y'Golonac 206
Yig, the Father of Serpents 206, 312
Yithian stasis cube 125
Yithian tabula rasa device 125
Yithian temporal communicator 125
Yog-Sothoth 205, 299

CHARACTER NAME | PLAYER

PROFESSION | LEVEL | EXPERIENCE POINTS

AGE | GENDER | HEIGHT | WEIGHT | EYES | HAIR | SKIN

CALL OF CTHULHU
CHARACTER RECORD SHEET

ABILITY NAME	ABILITY SCORE	ABILITY MODIFIER	TEMPORARY SCORE	TEMPORARY MODIFIER
STR STRENGTH				
DEX DEXTERITY				
CON CONSTITUTION				
INT INTELLIGENCE				
WIS WISDOM				
CHA CHARISMA				

HP HIT POINTS — TOTAL | CURRENT HP | SUBDUAL DAMAGE | SPEED

AC ARMOR CLASS — TOTAL = 10 + ARMOR BONUS + DEX MODIFIER + MISC MODIFIER + MISC MODIFIER | ARMOR CHECK PENALTY

INITIATIVE MODIFIER — TOTAL = DEX MODIFIER + MISC MODIFIER

BASE ATTACK BONUS

CURRENT SANITY

MAX. SANITY

20% SANITY

SAVING THROWS	TOTAL	BASE SAVE	ABILITY MODIFIER	MAGIC MODIFIER	MISC. MODIFIER	TEMPORARY MODIFIER
FORTITUDE (CONSTITUTION)						
REFLEX (DEXTERITY)						
WILL (WISDOM)						

CONDITIONAL MODIFIERS

	TOTAL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	STR MODIFIER	MISC MODIFIER	TEMPORARY MODIFIER
MELEE ATTACK BONUS					
RANGED ATTACK BONUS		BASE ATTACK BONUS	DEX MODIFIER	MISC MODIFIER	TEMPORARY MODIFIER

WEAPON	TOTAL ATTACK BONUS	DAMAGE	CRITICAL

RANGE	WEIGHT	TYPE	SIZE	SPECIAL PROPERTIES

WEAPON	TOTAL ATTACK BONUS	DAMAGE	CRITICAL

RANGE	WEIGHT	TYPE	SIZE	SPECIAL PROPERTIES

AMMUNITION

FEATS

SPELLS

GEAR

SKILLS

MAX RANKS /

CORE SKILLS	SKILL NAME	KEY ABILITY	SKILL MODIFIER =	ABILITY MODIFIER +	RANKS +	MISC MODIFIER
☐	Animal Empathy	CHA				
☐	Appraise ■	INT				
☐	Balance ■	DEX†				
☐	Bluff ■	CHA				
☐	Climb ■	STR†				
☐	Computer Use ■	INT				
☐	Concentration ■	CON				
☐	Craft* ( )	INT				
☐	Cthulhu Mythos††	—		N/A		
☐	Demolitions	INT				
☐	Diplomacy ■	CHA				
☐	Disable Device	INT				
☐	Disguise ■	CHA				
☐	Drive ■	DEX				
☐	Escape Artist ■	DEX†				
☐	Forgery ■	INT				
☐	Gather Information ■	CHA				
☐	Handle Animal	CHA				
☐	Heal ■	WIS				
☐	Hide ■	DEX†				
☐	Innuendo ■	WIS				
☐	Intimidate ■	CHA				
☐	Jump ■	STR†				
☐	Knowledge* ( )	INT				
☐	( )	INT				
☐	( )	INT				
☐	( )	INT				
☐	Listen ■	WIS				
☐	Move Silently ■	DEX†				
☐	Open Lock	DEX				
☐	Operate Heavy Machinery	DEX				
☐	Performance* ( )	CHA				
	( )					
☐	Pilot	DEX				
☐	Psychic Focus	WIS				
☐	Psychoanalysis	WIS				
☐	Read Lips	INT				
☐	Repair	DEX				
☐	Research ■	INT				
☐	Ride ■	DEX				
☐	Search ■	INT				
☐	Sense Motive ■	WIS				
☐	Sleight of Hand	DEX				
☐	Speak Other Language* ( )	INT				
	( )	INT				
☐	Spellcraft	INT				
☐	Spot ■	WIS				
☐	Swim ■	STR†				
☐	Tumble	DEX†				
☐	Use Rope ■	DEX				
☐	Wilderness Lore ■	WIS				

Skills marked with ■ can be used normally even if the character has zero (0) skill ranks.
Skills marked with ☒ are core skills. † Armor check penalty, if any, applies.
** This skill requires a specialization; see the skill's listing for details.*
†† This skill cannot be taken during character creation.

©2002 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Made in the U.S.A. Permission granted to photocopy for personal use only.

CALL OF CTHULHU
CHARACTER RECORD SHEET

CHARACTER NAME _____ PLAYER _____

PROFESSION _____ LEVEL _____ EXPERIENCE POINTS _____

AGE _____ GENDER _____ HEIGHT _____ WEIGHT _____ EYES _____ HAIR _____ SKIN _____

ABILITY NAME	ABILITY SCORE	ABILITY MODIFIER	TEMPORARY SCORE	TEMPORARY MODIFIER
STR STRENGTH				
DEX DEXTERITY				
CON CONSTITUTION				
INT INTELLIGENCE				
WIS WISDOM				
CHA CHARISMA				

HP HIT POINTS — TOTAL _____ CURRENT HP _____ SUBDUAL DAMAGE _____ SPEED _____

AC ARMOR CLASS — TOTAL _____ = 10 + ARMOR BONUS _____ + DEX MODIFIER _____ + MISC MODIFIER _____ + MISC MODIFIER _____ ARMOR CHECK PENALTY _____

INITIATIVE MODIFIER — TOTAL _____ = DEX MODIFIER _____ + MISC MODIFIER _____

BASE ATTACK BONUS _____

CURRENT SANITY _____

MAX. SANITY _____ **20% SANITY** _____

SAVING THROWS

	TOTAL	BASE SAVE	ABILITY MODIFIER	MAGIC MODIFIER	MISC. MODIFIER	TEMPORARY MODIFIER
FORTITUDE (CONSTITUTION)	=	+	+	+	+	+
REFLEX (DEXTERITY)	=	+	+	+	+	+
WILL (WISDOM)	=	+	+	+	+	+

CONDITIONAL MODIFIERS

	TOTAL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	STR MODIFIER	MISC MODIFIER	TEMPORARY MODIFIER
MELEE ATTACK BONUS	=	+	+	+	+
RANGED ATTACK BONUS	=	+	+	+	+
	TOTAL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	DEX MODIFIER	MISC MODIFIER	TEMPORARY MODIFIER

WEAPON	TOTAL ATTACK BONUS	DAMAGE	CRITICAL

RANGE	WEIGHT	TYPE	SIZE	SPECIAL PROPERTIES

WEAPON	TOTAL ATTACK BONUS	DAMAGE	CRITICAL

RANGE	WEIGHT	TYPE	SIZE	SPECIAL PROPERTIES

AMMUNITION

_____ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ _____ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐

_____ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ _____ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐

FEATS

SPELLS

GEAR

SKILLS

MAX RANKS /

CORE SKILLS	SKILL NAME	KEY ABILITY	SKILL MODIFIER	ABILITY MODIFIER	RANKS	MISC MODIFIER
☐	Animal Empathy	CHA	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Appraise ■	INT	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Balance ■	DEX†	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Bluff ■	CHA	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Climb ■	STR†	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Computer Use ■	INT	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Concentration ■	CON	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Craft* (_____)	INT	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Cthulhu Mythos††	—	_____ =	N/A +	_____ +	_____
☐	Demolitions	INT	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Diplomacy ■	CHA	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Disable Device	INT	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Disguise ■	CHA	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Drive ■	DEX	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Escape Artist ■	DEX†	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Forgery ■	INT	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Gather Information ■	CHA	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Handle Animal	CHA	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Heal ■	WIS	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Hide ■	DEX†	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Innuendo ■	WIS	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Intimidate ■	CHA	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Jump ■	STR†	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Knowledge* (_____)	INT	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	(_____)	INT	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	(_____)	INT	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	(_____)	INT	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Listen ■	WIS	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Move Silently ■	DEX†	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Open Lock	DEX	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Operate Heavy Machinery	DEX	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Performance* (_____)	CHA	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
	(_____)		_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Pilot	DEX	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Psychic Focus	WIS	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Psychoanalysis	WIS	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Read Lips	INT	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Repair	DEX	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Research ■	INT	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Ride ■ _____	DEX	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Search ■	INT	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Sense Motive ■	WIS	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Sleight of Hand	DEX	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Speak Other Language* (_____)	INT	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
	(_____)	INT	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Spellcraft	INT	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Spot ■	WIS	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Swim ■	STR†	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Tumble	DEX†	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Use Rope ■	DEX	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____
☐	Wilderness Lore ■	WIS	_____ =	_____ +	_____ +	_____

Skills marked with ■ can be used normally even if the character has zero (0) skill ranks.
Skills marked with ☒ are core skills. † ARMOR CHECK PENALTY, if any, applies.
** This skill requires a specialization; see the skill's listing for details.*
†† This skill cannot be taken during character creation.

©2002 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Made in the U.S.A. Permission granted to photocopy for personal use only.

JENKIN LIVES!

A Call of Cthulhu d20 Roleplaying Game *web enhancement*
— By Brian "Chainsaw" Campbell

H. P. Lovecraft's "Dreams in the Witch House" describes a disturbing series of encounters between a theoretical mathematician, a furtive ratlike creature named "Brown Jenkin," and what very well might be the spirit of a 17th-century sorceress. Jenkin served as the familiar of Keziah Mason, a cunning old woman who escaped Arkham's witch trials by opening a gate to another dimension. Centuries later, Walter Gilman used mathematical acumen and lucid dreaming to access this forgotten realm. By his reckless investigation, he released an ancient horror into his moldering garret apartment inside the now infamous "Witch House."

In May of 1931, most of the Witch House was destroyed by a terrible storm, but the fate of Keziah Mason remains a point of some conjecture. Workers sorting through the rubble found the gnawed bodies of several children who had disappeared from Arkham over the years, along with the corpse of a twisted, ratlike *thing*, and the bent and desiccated remains of an elderly woman.

Many occultists and investigators perusing reports on the Witch House have concluded that the withered old body was indeed the remains of Keziah Mason. Yet a few harbor doubts. What if the corpse wasn't the old witch, but one of her victims? Or even worse, what if the corpse had been preserved in that state for centuries… even after the spirit of Keziah Mason passed into an otherworldly dimension bordering on our own? Was her familiar, Brown Jenkin, a unique anomaly, or is it possible that the beldame has since instructed other hyperintelligent creatures in her dark arts?

For enthusiasts of the macabre, this web enhancement presents an "adventure fragment" based on these possibilities. Like similar fragments for the original *Call of Cthulhu Roleplaying Game*, it contains the outline of a brief story, a handful of encounters, and guidelines for the various "crunchy bits" of the rules. This fragment, however, adapts the game mechanics for the d20 system. With a minimal amount of preparation and a copy of the *Call of Cthulhu d20 Roleplaying Game*, a Gamemaster can use this fragment to prepare anything from a short introductory adventure playable in one evening to the foundation for a tireless crusade against an ancient and insidious evil. This bonus material is an exclusive feature of the Wizards of the Coast website: <www.wizards.com/callofcthulhu>.

The first half of this story, intended for four or five 1st-level investigators, should be playable in a single evening. It's a simple, straightforward investigation in which most of the characters (this time, at least) should survive without much difficulty. The body count is minimal, but the implications are horrendous. The second half not only details the consequences of that investigation, but also offers a possible foundation for an ongoing campaign. Some of the particulars concerning rat-things could be used in other adventures as well.

A LOSS OF INNOCENCE

Scholars of the occult may know that in the neighborhoods surrounding Arkham's "Witch House," infant mortality was advanced by the depredations and infestations of a horde of skulking rodents. That gruesome series of incidents took place in the early 1930s; this tale can be set in any modern city. The location can be any apartment complex, as long as its rent is cheap, its upkeep has been neglected, and its tenants are desperate enough to endure suffering. The GM should decide how many units the apartment complex contains—the investigators likely will want to question at least some of the tenants, later.

At the start of this adventure, one of the characters' usual informants (a concerned citizen, a local scholar reading the

CREDITS

Design: BRIAN CAMPBELL
Editing and Typesetting: SUE W. COOK
Web Production: JULIA MARTIN
Web Development: MARK JINDRA
Creative Director: CHRISTOPHER PERKINS
Art Director: DAWN MURIN
Graphic Design: ROBERT CAMPBELL
Call of Cthulhu d20 RPG Design: MONTE COOK and JOHN TYNES, based on the work of LYNN WILLIS and SANDY PETERSON
Inspired by: H. P. LOVECRAFT

Visit our website at www.wizards.com/callofcthulhu

This WIZARDS OF THE COAST® game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without written permission. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 System License, please visit <www.wizards.com/d20>.

This d20 System game utilizes mechanics developed for the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, the d20 system logo, and the WIZARDS OF THE COAST logo are registered trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc., a subsidiary of Hasbro, Inc. All Wizards characters, character names, and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks owned by WIZARDS OF THE COAST, INC.
CALL OF CTHULHU is a registered trademark of Chaosium Inc.
Chaosium Game Mechanic ©2002 Chaosium Inc.
This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of WIZARDS OF THE COAST, Inc.
This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental.
©2002 WIZARDS OF THE COAST, Inc. All rights reserved. Made in the U.S.A.

U.S., CANADA, ASIA, PACIFIC, & LATIN AMERICA
Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
P.O. Box 707
Renton WA 98057-0707
(Questions?) 1-800-324-6496

EUROPEAN HEADQUARTERS
Wizards of the Coast, Belgium
P.B. 2031
2600 Berchem
Belgium
+32-70-23-32-77

SUPPLEMENT and SCENARIO INQUIRIES:
Chaosium Inc.
900 Murmansk Street, Suite 5
Oakland CA 94607

morning paper, a writer's publisher, or perhaps someone at the police department) contacts the investigators. Knowing of their penchant for the fabulous, he asks them to follow up on a hunch he has concerning the disappearance of a young child in a decrepit apartment complex the previous evening: April 30, an auspicious date also known as May Eve (see below). Local news reports have related only minimal details, but the informant believes there's more here than meets the eye.

A typical investigation might start out with the following strategies.

- **The investigators need** a plausible cover story to explain why they're asking questions. Reporters can make a Diplomacy check (DC 20) to gather facts from the reticent inhabitants. Anyone in law enforcement might attempt an Intimidate check (DC 15) to threaten a tenant wanted for an unrelated crime to disclose what he's seen. Anyone else might need to make a Bluff check (DC 15) to fabricate a plausible reason for involvement.

- **A successful Gather Information check** (DC 15) and a suitable application of cash brings out a score of minor stories of the negligence of the missing baby's parents. There's always "suspicious activity" around the old, rumor-ridden apartment complex, but no one recalls sounds of breaking glass or trespassers pounding down doors in the middle of the night. The tenants seem hesitant to reluctant to report suspicious events, however. They endure squalid conditions because they know that, if they are evicted or if the building is condemned, they'll have a hard time finding another place to live.

- **Researching into past newspaper articles** confirms, with a successful Research check (DC 15), that there is nothing remarkable or suspicious about the low-class tenants who reported the missing baby boy. Even with only minimal searching (DC 10), the investigators can find one or two stories in the papers or on TV/radio newscasts the morning after the alleged "incident." The child disappeared around midnight last night from his room. So far, it seems as though the police have had enough time for only a cursory investigation, but it's clear that such a young child could never have left the apartment unaided. Accounts hint that the father is the primary suspect.

- **A successful Sense Motive check** (DC 15) reveals the tenants' apprehension about discussing health or safety issues within the complex, as much out of fear of eviction as the possibility that the building will be condemned.

- **Several tenants seem** to be in various states of illness from an as-yet-unidentified disease that's going around (Spot, DC 15, or Knowledge [medicine], DC 10). Anyone specifically looking for health violations eventually finds out about a large infestation of rats in the basement.

- **Anyone attempting to stake out** the area can try a Listen check (DC 20) or Spot check (DC 15) to notice signs that the building is infested with these vermin.

- **An investigator with** a minimal background in Knowledge (occult) can "take 10" to realize the significance of April 30: the date the child went missing. That date is also known as May Eve, a time of some occult significance. The only blatantly obvious supernatural possibility is abduction for the purpose of sacrifice, and it's just as likely that the case has a mundane origin. If the adventure is set in Arkham, on the other hand, the investigator has heard numerous stories of children disappearing at this time of year.

The parents of the missing child live in Apartment B-13, and they're obviously at their wits' end. The father acts defensive and rude, not only because of his poor treatment by the police, but because he blames himself for his son's disappearance. For purposes of the Diplomacy skill, treat him as Unfriendly (see "Attitude Adjustment" in Chapter 10: The Gamemaster). There's a very real possibility he'll take a baseball bat to anyone who harasses him, accuses him, threatens him, or actually breaks into his home looking for clues. Wise investigators may try to avoid him and speak to the mother, but she is inconsolable, overcome with grief.

Ted Roberts, Grieving Father: Male 1st level Offense option; hp 6; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11; Atk +1 melee (grapple, 1d3) or –3 melee (baseball bat, 1d6) or –2 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Craft (woodwork) +2, Disable Device +1, Drive +4, Gather Information +2, Listen +4, Operate Heavy Machinery (forklift) +4, Repair +0, Search +3, Spot +4, Use Rope +4.

Feats: Endurance, Run.

Possessions: Aluminum baseball bat.

THE SCENE OF THE CRIME

To examine the bedroom where the child disappeared, investigators could fast-talk their way in, diplomatically offer to detail the incident favorably in a newspaper article, or even secure a warrant to check it out as part of an official investigation. Dealing with the apartment manager offers other options. Sometime in the early evening, the parents leave to stay with relatives for a few days; if all else fails, less reputable characters have a chance to break in after they've left. This last option requires a successful Open Lock check (DC 10; the skill is not usable untrained). Anyone breaking and entering should also try to Move Silently (DC 12) within the apartment.

Whether the investigators are invited, break in, or mislead the manager, they can't find out the truth without getting into the apartment. The sight of the child's room is heartbreaking. Everything has been left exactly where it was last night. Searching the area (Search, DC 10) confirms that there are no signs of forced entry, either to the nursery or the apartment (unless, of course, the investigators have created new ones). A casual glance at the wall and floorboards (Spot, DC 10) shows evidence of numerous rat holes. In fact, several of them have been boarded over repeatedly. The vermin gnaw through each new layer of wood laid down. Even the child's room has telltale scratches and rat feces throughout.

The decrepit apartment complex is a relic of a bygone age, complete with faulty wiring, a coal-burning

furnace in the basement, and several laundry chutes. As disturbing as it may seem, signs indicate that the rats have been scampering down the closest chute. Meticulous examination (Search, DC 15) reveals bloody little paw prints from two rats leading through the hallway and into the nursery closet chute. Of course, it would be impossible for ordinary vermin to lift a baby that far off the ground. The police are pursuing more rational—or at least, more stereotypical—avenues of investigation.

The detectives who examined the scene didn't notice the signs of infestation. Because the crime is so recent, they've made only a cursory perusal. Their obvious initial avenue of investigation was to blame the mother, the father, or a relative. Pursuing these leads has wasted valuable time. Having dealt with many seedy apartments in their crusades against domestic violence, they're too jaded to care about outbreaks of disease or signs of infestation. However, anyone in the building can relate that the basement has an unusually active rodent population. The rat tracks, the illnesses possibly borne by vermin, the laundry chute, and the whispered rumors all add up to the same obvious conclusion: Check the basement.

LURKERS BENEATH

The dank, dimly illuminated basement has all the usual accoutrements, including a washer and dryer, a furnace, stacks of newspapers, and piles of coal and cordwood. The whole building is poorly maintained, including the rickety stairs that lead to the nonfunctional washer and dryer. Anyone descending the stairs should make a successful Balance check (DC 15) to avoid taking 1d6 points of damage from a nasty fall. If one investigator falls, the difficulty for the next character's Balance check on the stairs drops to DC 5.

At the base of the stairs, casual perusal reveals behind the stack of newspapers the savaged and rotting body of a dead cat, complete with little teeth marks about its body and a pool of dried blood around its remains. Careful examination confirms that the rats who feasted on it not only left bloody little paw prints when they climbed down the laundry chute, but in a precocious display of agility, left the same tracks when they were climbing *up* it.

The chute's exit point hangs near the wall opposite the pile of newspapers. A successful Spot check (DC 12) uncovers tiny tracks nearby. The Track feat used with a successful Wilderness Lore check (DC 15) reveals that the rats climbed up *and* down the chute. Carefully scrutiny (DC 20 on that Wilderness Lore check) allows an investigator to see that the paw prints are oddly smudged—something about them is not quite right.

Sated with the blood of their most recent kill, the rat creatures down here are unusually aggressive. If anyone disturbs the woodpile, knocks over the stack of newspapers, removes the feline carcass, or takes direct action to flush out vermin, the precocious rodents respond with their teeth and claws. As soon as three of the little beasties appear, it's dead obvious how they got up and down the laundry chute, *for each one of them can latch onto a victim with its tiny little hands* (Sanity check, 0/1d6).

RAT-THING

Tiny Magical Beast (Lesser Servitor Race)
Hit Dice: 1/2d10 (2 hp)
Initiative: +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 40 ft., climb 40 ft.
Defense: 16 (+2 size, +4 Dex)
Attacks: 1 bite +6 melee
Damage: Bite 1
Face/Reach: 2 1/2 ft. by 2 1/2 ft./0 ft.
Special Attacks: Swarm, jaw lock, spells
Special Qualities: Scent (can detect foes within 30 ft by smell alone), low-light vision, darkvision 60 ft.
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +1
Abilities: Str 2, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 5
Skills: Balance +16, Climb +12, Escape Artist +16, Hide +20, Listen +7, Move Silently +12, Spellcraft +5, Spot +3. (Rat-things receive a +4 racial bonus to Hide and Move Silently checks and a +8 racial bonus to Balance and Escape Artist checks. They use their Dexterity modifier for Climb checks.)
Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (bite) (Rat-things gain Weapon Finesse (bite) as a bonus feat, even though they do not qualify for it.)
Climate: The ruins of old, long-abandoned mansions; the homes where witches or powerful cultists once lived.
Advancement: up to 1 HD (Small)
CR: 1/2 (two rat-things are CR 1)
Sanity Loss: 0/1d6, 0/1d8 if knew in life

Background: Similar creatures may have lurked in the background of Lovecraft's excellent short story "The Rats in the Walls." After all, the rats of Exham Priory were known for their skillful organization and unnatural cunning. With a bit of extrapolation, one might even imagine them to be the less intelligent relations of Brown Jenkin, Keziah Mason's rodent familiar. The *curse of the rat-thing* spell can transform recently deceased humans into one of these furtive little minions. Closer examination of a rat-thing's body reveals that it has not only tiny hands, *but also a fur-covered face with a disturbing resemblance to one of these human victims.*

Combat: Stage the confrontation with the rat-things as a simple encounter. The creatures attack only to drive away intruders. They'd rather act as a nuisance than try to kill anything as large as an investigator. Instead of swarming, each one swiftly assaults a different investigator. Feel free to scatter various bludgeoning instruments around the room, since incautious use of gunfire can summon the police in about 10 minutes.

If you're feeling particularly vicious, the critters can swarm a fallen investigator after she's tumbled down the stairs. (Until the victim takes a move action to stand up, her melee attacks suffer a –4 penalty, while the rats get a +4 circumstance bonus on their melee attacks against her. Throw in a –4 penalty to ranged attacks for anyone who foolishly tries to fire into the fracas without the Precise Shot feat.) After a few rounds of combat or the death of one of the rat-things, the creatures scatter back into the woodpile, the stack of papers, and various holes in the walls.

Once the group has driven away the rat-things, relentless investigators may continue to search for the child. Moving the stack of newspapers reveals an opening large enough for a cat—or something as large as a cat—to crawl inside. A flashlight and a suitable application of courage reveals a tunnel extending into a crawl space

RAT-THING GRIMOIRE

Rat-Thing Grimoire, in English, 2001. Rat-thing familiars learn spells from their masters, but they're also intelligent enough to document the methods by which they were taught. This type of grimoire is a diary detailing magical procedures, the author's triumphs and failures at learning them, and rambling tirades about the master it has served. Rat-things often scatter the pages about the places where they live. Finding a complete tome may take several Search checks, along with a lengthy period of careful reconstruction.

Examination Period: 1 week (study check, DC 20). Contains two spells. *Sanity Loss:* 1d3 initial and 1d3 upon completion. *Cthulhu Mythos:* +1 rank.

nearby. Listening at the opening (Listen, DC 15), a cautious character can hear the pitter-patter of little feet. Caution is a wise option, since there's only enough room for one investigator to wriggle down into the crawl space.

By the flashlight's dim illumination, anyone looking inside the hole can see where the vermin dragged the baby. The poor child's flesh has been shredded, the face is gone, and the body now resembles an anthropomorphic chunk of meat. The infant is dead (Sanity check 0/1d3). This isn't as gruesome, however, as the bloated rodent perched over its corpse. The greasy, feral creature is about the size of a cat. It hisses through its bloodstained jaws at anyone who disturbs it.

Even after this veritable feast, the beastie's ribs are still visible through its jet-black fur—it is clearly starving. Yet even more disturbing is that this seemingly intelligent hunter, who's clever enough to enlist the aid of the several rat-things to help it hunt, has the *tiny, wizened face of an elderly man.* With a dexterous gesture, it raises a withered hand and mutters an incantation *in fluent Latin, feebly attempting a magical gesture before it scurries into the darkness* (Sanity check 0/1d6).

JENKIN (RAT-THING CULTIST)

"The bones of the tiny paws . . . imply prehensile characteristics more typical of a diminutive monkey than of a rat: While the small skull with its savage yellow fangs is of the utmost anomalousness, appearing from certain angles like a miniature, monstrously degraded parody of a human skull."

—H. P. Lovecraft, "The Dreams in the Witch House"

Tiny Magical Beast
(4th-Level Cultist)
Hit Dice: 1/2d10 + 4d6 (18 hp)
Initiative: +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 40 ft., climb 40 ft.
AC: 16 (+2 size, +4 Dex)
Attacks: +9 melee (bite) or +9 ranged
Damage: Bite 1
Face/Reach: 2 1/2 ft. by 2 1/2 ft./0 ft.
Special Attacks: Swarm, jaw lock, spells
Special Qualities: Scent (can detect foes within 30 feet by smell alone), low-light vision, darkvision
Saves: Fortitude +3, Reflex +7, Will +5
Abilities: Str 4, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 8
Skills: Balance +16, Climb +16, Concentration +8, Escape Artist +16, Hide +20, Knowledge (occult) +9, Listen +11, Move Silently +13, Spot +10, Spellcraft +11, Wilderness Lore +9 (Rat-things receive a +4 racial bonus to Hide and Move Silently checks and a +8 racial bonus to Balance and Escape Artist checks. They use their Dexterity modifier for Climb checks.)
Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Weapon Finesse (bite). Rat-things gain Weapon Finesse (bite) as a bonus feat, even though they do not qualify for it.
Climate: Usually near the master or mentor who nurses it and instructs it in occult lore
Organization: Sometimes leads a cult of other, lesser rats and rat-things
Sanity Loss: 0/1d6

Background: This creature exists based on the assumption that Brown Jenkin, Keziah Mason's familiar, was not a unique creature. Because rat-things are intelligent, they are capable of learning and growing, particularly under the tutelage of a powerful witch or sorcerer. This quality makes them ideal, if hungry, little familiars. The creature in this adventure, Black Jenkin, served its master for many years, but was recently abandoned because of its indiscreet feeding habits.

Tactics: This "Jenkin" isn't interested in fighting to the death. On the first round it's seen, it casts a single spell as an attack action and scurries away with its first move action. The poor fool who peered down into the crawl space can make a Reflex save (DC 20) to reduce the spell's damage by half. If the investigators have a plan to lure it out, or just chuck some flaming refuse down after it, they might enrage it enough to attack. For now, its *shriveling* spell (4d4 points of damage) should be debilitating enough. Here's how it works.

Shriveling
Components: V, S
Cost: 3 Str and 1d6 Sanity
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One living creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex half

You can channel into a target dark energy that blasts and blackens the flesh. The subject suffers 1d4 points of damage per caster level (maximum 10d4).

If the creature survives at least 1 round of confrontation, it leaves the baby's corpse behind and scurries off into the darkness farther underground. A valiant investigator might fire off a single gunshot—no doubt summoning the police within 10 minutes—but because of the dim illumination of the tunnel, the Jenkin gets a +4 circumstance bonus to its AC as it runs away. It knows it might die from a lucky shot, so discretion is the better part of its valor. If the investigators dispatch the beast swiftly, scholars of comparative anatomy at the local university will find themselves baffled by its remains.

The infant's body can be recovered, but its savaged corpse offers little solace to the grieving parents. If there is consolation here, it is that the investigators have uncovered the culprit behind this foul crime—even though it's unlikely anyone will believe them. If the investigators were careless, they may have attracted police attention. Even if they were model citizens, they are consequences for meddling in the affairs of wizards—even tiny rodent ones.

CONSEQUENCES

The investigation of the missing child is over, but a mystery remains: the true nature of this sinister beast. As the Gamemaster, you can either award experience immediately (using the story goals listed at the end of this article) and wrap up the story here or play out the consequences of the investigation, changing the pace a bit. Instead of tracking events from hour to hour, you can "flash forward" a week or two at a time to show the reactions of the investigators, the police, and Black Jenkin himself.

Alternately, you could easily segue from this story into another unrelated one. Perhaps one of the investigators has terrible dreams about the child, leading to his admission to the Torgerson Sleep Clinic in "Little Slices of Death" (an adventure in the *Call of Cthulhu d20 Roleplaying Game*). Or maybe the characters notice a newspaper article about a mysterious accident at a movie theater, prompting the events of "An End to Paradise" (the second adventure in that book). Both are examples are investigations that take several days to resolve, giving the characters time to get caught on one of the story hooks listed below.

SCRAPS OF KNOWLEDGE

Immediately after the investigators find the child's body, they may decide to search the tunnel or (if they're reckless enough) crawl down farther to try to find Black Jenkin. Shining a flashlight down into the narrow crawl space reveals the glint of several metal objects. Like any ambitious rodent, the rat-thing has dragged a few shiny items into its nest. Anyone bold enough to try to recover the dead body, the rat-thing cultist, or the shiny objects can find additional clues.

Rooting around in the creature's nest (Search, DC 12), reveals various bits of detritus: several small children's toys (gnawed by rodent teeth), a candle, some matches, and the gutted spine of a bound book. The shiny metal objects are actually bits of cutlery stolen from the parents' kitchen. On a failed Dexterity check (DC 15), anyone crawling down here might cut himself on one of the kitchen knives hidden in the rubbish. A cut inflicts 1 point of damage. Inspecting the knives reveals signs that they were used to mutilate or remove pieces of the dead body.

As for the pages of the book, they've been scattered about to line the tunnel and make more bedding for the creature's nest. They're soiled with rat feces, stained in urine, and in some places, spattered in wax. Only someone looking for the macabre or unusual would notice that each page is also mostly *intact*. Each one is covered with barely legible writing.

If the investigators recklessly set fire to the contents of the tunnel, they've not only destroyed all this evidence, but cremated the body of the child as well—a rather gruesome scene to leave for the authorities. Since the characters no doubt asked questions of various people around the apartment complex, starting a small fire at a crime scene attracts the interest of the police. (Proceed directly to Detective Callahan's section, "Incautious Investigation.")

If, on the other hand, they're curious enough to scurry about looking for more pages, they can turn up about 30 of them in 10 minutes. A diligent character can piece them together to form a rather grim narrative. In *Call of Cthulhu* terms, these pages can be treated as a *tome*. Anyone with knowledge of magic (Knowledge [occult], DC 15, or Spellcraft, DC 10) recognizes that the narrative includes the sorts of biographical passages one would find in a Book of Shadows—in this case, a journal of sorts relating to the practice of witchcraft. (See the "Rat-Thing Grimoire" sidebar for more details.)

While the tome is literally a handful of pages, the paper's poor condition makes reconstructing it an elaborate operation. (This is the primary reason for such a high difficulty on the tome's study check; see sidebar) The handwriting is a barely legible scrawl, and the writing itself is meticulously small. Furthermore, the text is written in an archaic form of English, rather like what one would expect in a document from the 17th century. Closer examination (Speak Other Language [English], DC 20) reveals that the dialect seems to have evolved since that time, as though it is actually a parallel form of English. By the end of the week, there should be no doubt that the author is not human—the contents of the journal were scribbled by the paws of a particularly clever rat-thing.

The nonhuman author details various efforts, through trial and error, to reconstruct and replicate spells known by its "Master." The writing rambles considerably, with numerous references to "spaces out of time" and "banishment from the shining place." As the writing progresses, the author becomes increasingly frustrated with its "Master." Long tirades condemn her for abandoning the author and casting him out. The Gamemaster may choose to reveal these facts all at once after a successful study check (see sidebar). If a character studies the journal over time as part of an ongoing campaign, it may be more dramatic to give periodic updates.

The journal is particularly useful to dedicated investigators because it contains two spells. Anyone can learn them by successfully navigating the "Artifact Flowchart" (in Chapter 7: Magic of the *Call of Cthulhu d20 Roleplaying Game*). Each spell requires 1d3 weeks to learn (in addition to the Examination Periods required for deciphering the book). One of the spells is *shriveling* (see above); the other is left to the discretion of the Gamemaster. According to the *Call of Cthulhu d20 Roleplaying Game*, likely choices for rat-thing spells include: *bring pestilence, consume likeness, curse of the putrid husk, flesh ward, nightmare*, *power drain,* and *soul singing*. It may be a little early in your campaign to give out a spell like *flesh ward*, so *healing touch* could make for a massively useful (and particularly popular) substitute.

Detective Callahan: Male, 1st-level Offense option; hp 5; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +2 melee or +1 ranged (revolver, 1d10); SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will –1; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 9, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 11.

Skills: Bluff +4, Gather Information +4, Hide +4, Intimidate +4, Listen +5, Move Silently +4, Search +5, Sense Motive +3, Spot +5.

Feats: Alertness, Weapon Proficiency (pistol).

Possessions: Smith & Wesson Model 29 Revolver.

INCAUTIOUS INVESTIGATION

Some of the most annoying and persistent consequences of a Mythos investigation result from police involvement. In this adventure, if someone fired shots, started a brawl with the grieving father, or set a fire in the laundry room, the police arrive within 10 minutes. Depending on the severity of the crime, between two and eight officers arrive. If they find the investigators, they take names and addresses, ask for identification, and seal off the area. Fast-talking heroes may manage to walk away after giving contact information (Bluff or Diplomacy, DC 15); on a failed roll, someone's taken in for "questioning." If anyone's holding a drawn weapon, the police draw theirs as well, and any chances of walking away from the crime scene unescorted decrease considerably (increase the DC for either check by 10). If anyone's stupid enough to start a shoot-out with the police, play out the firefight and give the heroes a chance to make their getaway—the adventure is over.

Hopefully, the characters haven't acted like complete maniacs (at least, not yet). Within a few hours, Detective Callahan of the local police department is assigned to take over this unusual case. His boss has assigned him because Callahan has handled a few "occult" cases during his brief and undistinguished career. The first was a completely bogus case of "ritual satanic abuse," while the second concerned a "coven" of college kids breaking into steam tunnels under the local university. He's expected to turn up a few leads concerning the perpetrator of this foul deed, but not much more. Since his reputation is on the line, his procedure is methodical. He interviews the parents, questions their friends and relatives, and tracks down the people who found the body—the investigators.

If none of the characters entered the tunnel where the body was found and the evidence remained intact, the detective uncovers the clues they missed. As one would expect, he's stymied by the unusual nature of the crime, but he's reluctant to jump to another foolish conclusion involving the occult. Desperate to figure out what he's found, and not sure what to make of the evidence, he brings it in a box to the most reputable investigator detained at the scene of the crime (if any). A clever investigator might successfully recommend someone locally who could decipher the unusual text (Diplomacy, DC 15). Convincing him to leave the papers with the investigators, on the other hand, is a little more difficult (Bluff or Diplomacy, DC 20).

The detective confirms the rather straightforward approach of his colleagues, placing the father as his primary suspect. This buys the investigators some time (if they did anything wrong). If the police stop them at any time in the near future, Callahan hears about it, and the incident raises his suspicions towards the characters yet again. If there's a lull in your *Cthulhu* campaign, it's easy enough to have another child disappear. Just to be thorough, the detective then shows up again, asking what the investigators have been doing over the last few days. They may decide to resume the hunt for Black Jenkin, if only to clear their own names.

TYPICAL STORY GOALS

- Avoid a fall on the stairs.
- Survive the rat-thing attack.
- Find the child's body.
- Find the tome.
- Avoid or survive Black Jenkin.

STUDYING THE TOME

Because of the high difficulty in deciphering the *Rat-Thing Grimoire*, the reader likely may encounter one or more Strange Events during the course of her studies. While it's entertaining to roll randomly for these occurrences (using the "Strange Events Table" in Chapter 7: Magic), Gamemasters have the option of tailoring the events to that particular tome. Here are two distinctive possibilities.

RATS IN THE WALLS

If an Examination Period passes when the characters aren't actively investigating anything else, the Strange Events surrounding the tome begin subtly. A day or two into a scholar's studies, he may notice that a few small items are missing from his home (Wisdom check, DC 12). He might lose a pen, misplace a letter, or even find a few dollars missing. At the end of the week, the investigator notices his keys are missing. If he's perceptive (Spot, DC 15), he catches a brief glimpse of a rat carrying them away. Should studying take an additional week, the character hears rats scurrying in the walls of his room every time he sleeps (Listen, DC 15).

If studying the tome takes more than two weeks, progressively larger and more important items disappear. Ammunition is an excellent choice, or a trusty combat knife. If the character is clever enough to transcribe the text into a computer file, rats burrow into the machine's casing and chew the wires. Wise investigators may surround the character's home with mousetraps, post a guard, or even buy a dog or cat. If you like, you can stage a quick altercation in the character's home against a few ordinary generic rats (see "Animals" in Chapter 8: Creatures). This does nothing to forestall further Strange Events.

Eventually, the character can automatically succeed at a study check (since the roll has a +1 bonus for each failed check). By that point, however, the rats have stolen several pages of the tome. The character can learn the spells he's studied, but enough of the tome is missing that the pages for one spell are gone.

DREAMS OF THE WITCH HOUSE

If the characters immediately launch into another adventure, they might decide to spend only a few hours each day studying the tome. They may even choose to lock it up before traveling to the scene of their next inves-

tigation. As long as they have the book, however, the Jenkin's master takes an interest in the character reading it. Her spirit lives on, if only in dreams.

Deciphering the text is frustrating, but unusual events place the journal's cryptic phrases in a new light. After the first failed study check, the character has a recurring dream that someone whispers in her ear as she sleeps—someone very tiny. Over time, the incomprehensible ramblings begin to resemble the patterns of speech used in the tome. If clever investigators keep watch over the scholar as she sleeps, they see no sign of rat-things or other creatures in her bed. The conversations take place entirely in dreams.

After a week or two of failed study checks, the character bolts upright in bed around one in the morning. Her breathing comes fast and shallow, and she has a subtle sense that something is wrong. A perceptive or educated character (Spot, DC 15, or Knowledge [mathematics], DC 20) realizes that this sensation *must* be part of a dream: The angles where walls, ceilings, and floors meet aren't quite right.

After the character makes a successful study check, she has her most powerful dream yet. When she "bolts awake," the shadowy outline of a large dark man appears at the foot of her bed. He speaks very clearly in the strange dialect of the tome. As he does so, the corners of the room seem to swell at obtuse angles. The following morning, the character can't remember a single word of the message, but she can decipher the tome perfectly. Although a player fluent in Lovecraft's stories may realize what has happened, the character must demonstrate a strong affinity for the occult (Cthulhu Mythos, DC 20) to remember this being as an avatar of Nyarlathotep.

THINGS TO COME

This adventure fragment could easily become the basis for further *Call of Cthulhu d20* adventures. For a start, if Black Jenkin survives, investigators who were disgusted by its savage abduction of a helpless innocent may want a chance for revenge or justice. Their brief encounter with the beast could serve as foreshadowing for a later confrontation, perhaps after the heroes have advanced a level or two.

As for their tiny nemesis, it's eager to find someone who can instruct it further in the occult arts. The pitiful, starving creature has been cast aside by Keziah Mason, whose remains, it turns out, were not those found in the Witch House back in 1931. When the prodigal beast returns, the witch takes it to her bosom again and nurses it back to health. A later adventure could involve not only revenge against Black Jenkin, but possibly an encounter with the old crone herself. If you already have sinister schemes in mind for Keziah in your *Call of Cthulhu d20* campaign, then here's a glimpse of things to come.

Keziah Mason: 8th-Level Human Cultist: Init +6, AC 12 (+2 Dex); Spd 40 ft.; hp 51; Atk +4/–1 melee (butcher knife, 1d6) or +4/–1 ranged; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +11; SZ M; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 20, Cha 8.

Skill Modifiers: Bluff +9, Concentrate +13, Diplomacy +5, Hide +8, Innuendo +8, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (astronomy) +6, Knowledge (Cthulhu) +14, Knowledge (history [New England]) +6, Knowledge (occult) +12, Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Research +10, Search +10, Sense Motive +16, Speak Language (Latin), Spot +6, Wilderness Lore +6.

Feats: Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Run.

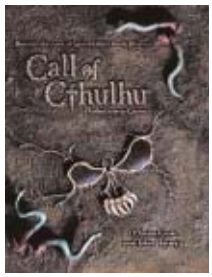
Spells: contact Nyarlathotep, create gate, chant of Thoth, curse of the rat-thing, deflect harm, shriveling, summon/bind servitor.

Note: For a deadlier version of this villain, add the ghost template from Chapter 8: Creatures.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Brian Campbell has been involved in the roleplaying game industry for nine years as an editor and freelance writer. You may have seen his work for the ***Vampire***, ***Werewolf***, ***Mage***, and ***Changeling*** roleplaying games.

Now a Seattle resident, Brian currently serves as an editor with the *Star Wars* and *Call of Cthulhu d20* Roleplaying R&D group at Wizards of the Coast.



ENHANCE YOUR GAMES!

This free miniadventure is meant to enhance your play with the *Call of Cthulhu d20 Roleplaying Game*. If you do not already have a copy of the game, look for it at your local game, hobby, or bookstore. It's also available from the Wizards of the Coast Online Store—just visit <store.wizards.com/product.asp?ProductID=7613>.

For more free web enhancements of other Wizards of the Coast products, please visit <www.wizards.com/dnd/article1.asp?x=dnd/we/welcome,3> and <www.wizards.com/starwars/article.asp?x=web_enhanced&c=rpg>.

SHANTAK AND Y'GOLONAC

A Call of Cthulhu d20 Roleplaying Game *web enhancement*
— By John D. Rateliff and Bruce R. Cordell

Here's a surprise for fans of the Mythos… a bonus web enhancement from "the cutting room floor" of the *Call of Cthulhu d20 Roleplaying Game*. The shantak monster and the Great Old One Y'golonac both were cut from the book late in the production process due to lack of space. Now they live again online in this exclusive web enhancement from the official *Call of Cthulhu* d20 website: www.wizards.com/callofcthulhu.

SHANTAK

Huge Magical Beast (Lesser Servitor Race)
Hit Dice: 8d10+40 (84 hp)
Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 30 ft., fly 180 ft. (average)
Armor Class: 16 (+1 Dex, –2 size, +7 natural)
Attacks: Bite +14 melee, 2 wing buffets +9 melee, tail slap +9 melee
Damage: Bite 2d6+8, wing buffet 1d6+4, tail slap 1d6+12
Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 15 ft./15 ft.
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 20/+1, dimensional travel, immune to vacuum, low-light vision, darkvision 60 ft.
Saves: Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +2
Abilities: Str 26, Dex 13, Con 20, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 10
Skills: Listen +5, Spot +2, Wilderness Lore +5
Feats: Improved Initiative, Power Attack
Climate/Terrain: Any
Advancement: 9–16 HD (Huge); 17–32 HD (Gargantuan)
CR: 5
Sanity Loss: 0/1d6



Not any birds or bats known elsewhere on earth . . . for they were larger than elephants and had heads like a horse's . . . . The Shantak-bird has scales instead of feathers and those scales are very slippery.
—H.P. Lovecraft, The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath

Shantaks are massive, elephantine beasts that serve as aerial mounts for the Great Old Ones. A shantak's horselike head is attached by a sinuous neck to a grotesque body that shares equal shrift with bird and bat. Shantaks brood in cavernous holes, and their wings are encrusted with rime.

Shantaks hold an extreme if unreasonable fear of nightgaunts and always retreat from them. Shantaks can fly through space, and have been known to carry an unwary rider straight to the throne of Azathoth. Shantaks do not speak, though they understand the commands of their riders no matter what the language.

ADDITIONAL CREDITS

Editing and Typesetting: SUE W. COOK
Editorial Assistance: PENNY WILLIAMS
Web Production: JULIA MARTIN
Web Development: MARK JINDRA
Creative Director: CHRISTOPHER PERKINS
Art Director: DAWN MURIN
Graphic Design: ROBERT CAMPBELL
Call of Cthulhu d20 RPG Design: MONTE COOK and JOHN TYNES, based on the work of LYNN WILLIS and SANDY PETERSON
Inspired by: H. P. LOVECRAFT

Visit our website at www.wizards.com/callofcthulhu

This WIZARDS OF THE COAST® game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without written permission. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 System License, please visit <www.wizards.com/d20>.

This d20 System game utilizes mechanics developed for the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, Forgotten Realms, the d20 system logo, and the WIZARDS OF THE COAST logo are registered trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc., a subsidiary of Hasbro, Inc. All Wizards characters, character names, and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks owned by WIZARDS OF THE COAST, INC.
CALL OF CTHULHU is a registered trademark of Chaosium Inc.
Chaosium Game Mechanic ©2002 Chaosium Inc.
This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of WIZARDS OF THE COAST, Inc.
This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental.
©2002 WIZARDS OF THE COAST, Inc. All rights reserved. Made in the U.S.A.

U.S., CANADA, ASIA, PACIFIC, & LATIN AMERICA
Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
P.O. Box 707
Renton WA 98057-0707
(Questions?) 1-800-324-6496

EUROPEAN HEADQUARTERS
Wizards of the Coast, Belgium
P.B. 2031
2600 Berchem
Belgium
+32-70-23-32-77

SUPPLEMENT and SCENARIO INQUIRIES:
Chaosium Inc.
900 Murmansk Street, Suite 5
Oakland CA 94607

COMBAT

A shantak attacks with a bite, a pair of wing buffets, and a tail slap when commanded by a rider—otherwise, the creature generally avoids conflict. A shantak's tail can only strike targets in a 15-foot-diameter semicircle centered on the creature's rear.

Dimensional Travel (Su): A shantak moves at its normal speed in atmosphere. In the vacuum of space, a shantak can use a form of dimensional travel to transport itself and its rider(s) up to 5 light-years as a single move action.

Immune to Vacuum (Ex): Shantaks suffer no ill effects in the vacuum of space. They do not confer this immunity upon their riders, however.

"He saw why the shadow on the frosted pane yesterday had been headless, and he screamed. As the desk was thrust aside by the towering naked figure, on whose surface still hung rags of the tweed suit, [his] last thought was an unbelieving conviction that this was happening because he had read the Revelations . . . but before he could scream out his protest his breath was cut off, as the hands descended on his face and the wet red mouths opened in their palms."

—Ramsey Campbell, "Cold Print"

Y'GOLONAC

Gargantuan Great Old One (Demigod)
Domain: Destruction
Hit Dice: 20d12+147 (277 hp)
Initiative: +4 (Improved Initiative)
Speed: 80 ft.
AC: 20 (+20 base, +1 god, –1 size, +0 Dex)
Attacks: 2 hand-mouths +31 melee, 1 groin-bite +31 melee
Damage: Hand-mouth 2d6+11, groin-bite 3d6+11
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Blood drain
Special Qualities: Divine qualities, damage resistance 36/+4, SR 33, possess mortal, blindsight
Saves: Fort +20, Ref +13, Will +21
Abilities: Str 32, Dex 10, Con 25, Int 20, Wis 26, Cha 30
Skills: Balance +24, Climb +35, Cthulhu Mythos +29, Hide +23, Jump +35, Listen +32, Move Silently +24, Search +20, Spot +32, Swim +35
Feats: Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Cleave
Climate: Any
Organization: Unique
Challenge Rating: 19
Treasure: None
Alignment: Chaotic Evil
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 1/1d10+1 to see Y'golonac's avatar, 1/1d20 to witness transformation, 1d10/1d100 to experience possession.

Y'golonac's shape is known only through the vile distortions undergone by those he possesses. A character possessed by Y'golonac swells into a headless horror (increasing by one size category), a monster whose pallid, flabby flesh glows with a sickly luminescence. Even worse, a gaping sharp-toothed mouth opens in the palm of each hand of the naked figure, whereby the ravening monster may feed. Sometimes a third mouth appears in its groin, huge and drooling and lined with improbably sharp teeth. The possessed character reverts to normal when the Great Old One withdraws. The victim should find new clothing, since the god's expanding bulk shreds everything the victim wears. The victim regains consciousness naked and drenched in blood—Y'golonac is a messy eater.

Y'golonac's true form is said to be that of a gargantuan headless giant imprisoned in a vast underground ruin behind a wall of bricks. It is possible that this is mere myth, and that he has no tangible existence outside those bodies he possesses. He can manifest at any time he likes through one he has suborned to his will. Many investigators have been disconcerted to see a maniac or cannibalistic serial killer they have cornered transforming into something even more inhuman and dangerous.

Y'golonac's mouths are clearly designed to rip flesh and drink blood, not exchange niceties. Therefore, he does not speak, although he stands and receives worship if sated with sacrifice—that is, if he is provided with someone to kill and mangle to his heart's satisfaction.



WORSHIP

Y'golonac desires a large cult, but has thus far been unable to attract one. Those few misguided souls who do worship him either learned how to evoke him by reading the blasphemous *Revelations of Glaaki* or were inspired by dreams and visions.

COMBAT

Y'golonac always attacks foes on sight (or his worshipers, if they have failed to provide him with a sufficient sacrifice), never breaking off until either he has slain and drained his foe or the body he possesses is dead. He never uses weapons.

Possess Mortal (Su): Y'golonac can possess any mortal who worships him. If the mortal resists, she must make a successful Will save (DC 30) to keep from being possessed—only a sane character can resist, however.

Blood Drain (Ex): Y'golonac's mouths inflict the damage listed above when they first bite. Thereafter, each round they automatically drain 1d3 points of Intelligence and 1d3 points of Wisdom. This is permanent ability drain, not temporary ability damage. A character whose Intelligence or Wisdom score reaches 0 becomes a vegetable. Thereafter, the Great Old One can possess that character at any time, using the body to satisfy his lust in whatever manner he sees fit.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Born in Watertown, S.D., **Bruce R. Cordell** earned a degree in Environmental, Population, and Organismic Biology from the University of Colorado. While working as a Research Associate in process chemistry he learned to synthesize DNA, but he could not resist the call of game design.

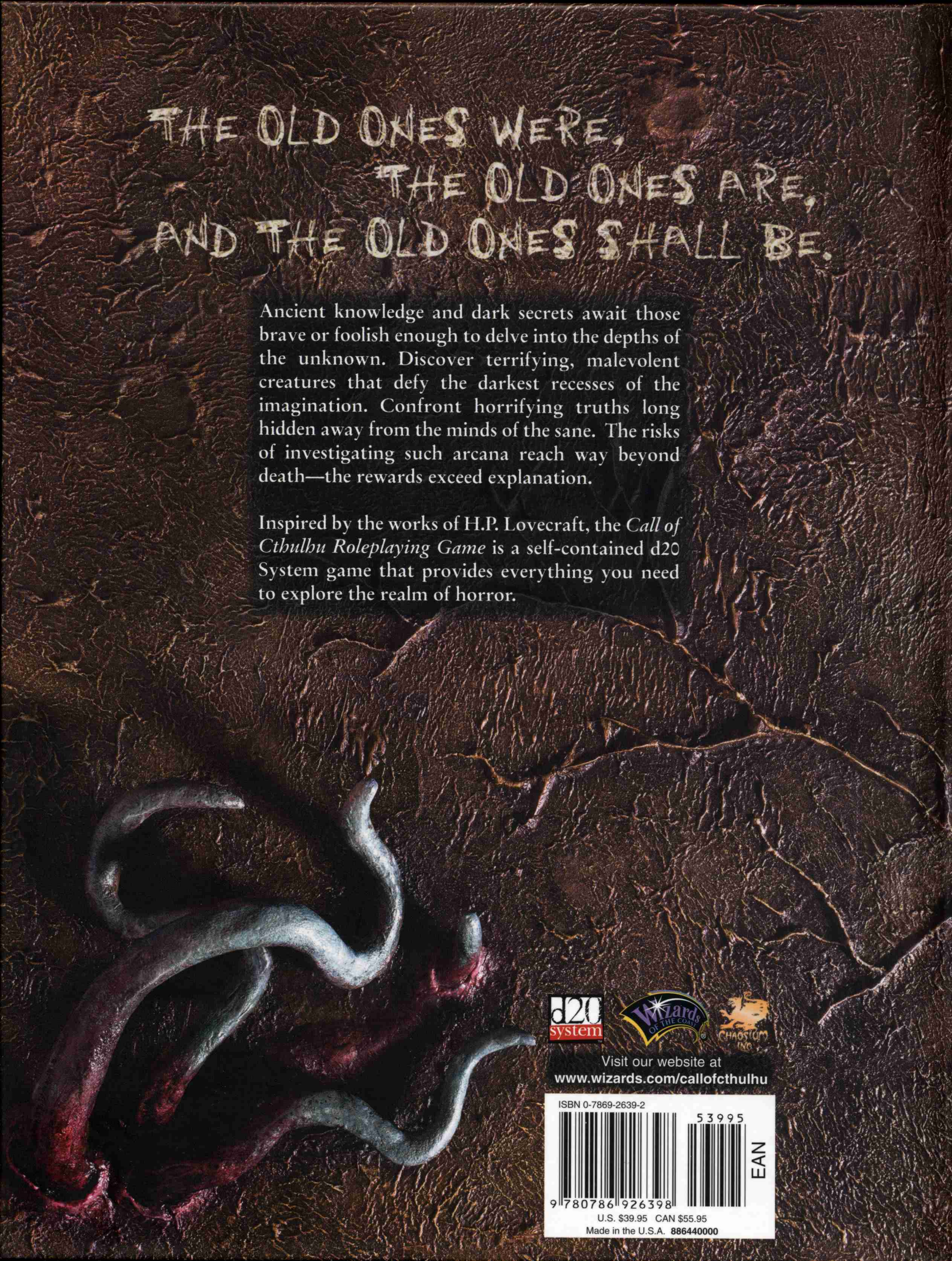
In 1995, after a few years as a freelancer and designer of online text-generated virtual worlds (specifically, the Tolkien-inspired Elendor MUSH), he abandoned science for a designer position at TSR (now Wizards of the Coast). His many design credits include the *Psionics Handbook, The Sunless Citadel, Heart of Nightfang Spire*, the Origins Award-winning *Return to the Tomb of Horrors.* He also codesigned the *Call of Cthulhu d20 Roleplaying Game.*

Bruce lives in Seattle, Wash., with his wife Dee and their five cats and has just completed his first novel. Visit his website at <www.brucecordell.com>.

A noted Tolkien scholar with a Ph.D. in fantasy, **John D. Rateliff** has been gaming for 20 years. He has worked professionally in the industry since 1991, mostly at TSR and Wizards of the Coast.

Editor of *Night Below* and *Return to the Tomb of Horrors*, and co-editor of the new D&D *Player's Handbook* and *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, he also designed *Return to the Keep on the Borderlands, Reverse Dungeon, The Standing Stone,* and *Song and Silence*. You can see his recent editing work in the *FORGOTTEN REALMS® Campaign Setting*, and he served as an editor and codesigner of the *Call of Cthulhu d20 Roleplaying Game.*

Don't ask him about the "catbite incident."



Ancient knowledge and dark secrets await those brave or foolish enough to delve into the depths of the unknown. Discover terrifying, malevolent creatures that defy the darkest recesses of the imagination. Confront horrifying truths long hidden away from the minds of the sane. The risks of investigating such arcana reach way beyond death—the rewards exceed explanation.

Inspired by the works of H.P. Lovecraft, the *Call of Cthulhu Roleplaying Game* is a self-contained d20 System game that provides everything you need to explore the realm of horror.

d20 system

Wizards of the Coast®

Chaosium Inc.

Visit our website at
www.wizards.com/callofcthulhu

ISBN 0-7869-2639-2

53995

9 780786 926398 EAN

U.S. $39.95 CAN $55.95

Made in the U.S.A. **886440000**