

The Colour and the Shape

The investigation takes place in Arizona, on a barren stretch of ground in the northeastern quarter of the state near (insert a name here). The investigators are called in because of an incident involving mysterious deaths of cattle and the strange actions of the USDA inspector on the scene.

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Scenario

The area in question is known for its limestone formations, caverns and also for the sinkholes and cysts that form beneath the surface. In one such sinkhole, long ago, a Colour Out of Space deposited an egg, thinking that the life nearby would be sufficient to feed it. It turned out that the scrub grass and few hardy bushes that were there exhausted from the drain a few days later, not enough to allow the egg to develop into a larva. It went into a dormant state, much like terrestrial plant seeds, until a suitable source of life approached.

A few months ago, Gregory Polk set up a cattle ranch on this land to take advantage of high beef prices. He found the opening to the sinkhole, and tests showed the water in the bottom to be too alkaline to be useful. He instructed his assistant Hector to plant crabgrass and briarthorns to both prevent erosion around the sinkhole and to prevent the herd from going near it, possibly causing a collapse. When Hector planted the crabgrass and briars, they grew like mad and turned different colors. Hector showed this to Mr. Polk, who reported it to the USGS so they could test the ground water for contamination. The tests proved negative for chemical contamination, and it was chalked up as just 'one of those things'.

Things have become steadily worse for Polk since that time. His cattle began to sicken and die one by one and some disappeared entirely, despite the fact there was no break in the fence and the sinkhole was undisturbed. On top of that, the deaths and the contamination complaint have attracted the attention of a Dept. of Agriculture investigator. The investigator has been here for five days already and keeps taking soil and plant matter samples, and has taken to living out of his van on the property. Hector has given his notice because of the cattle deaths, for fear he will catch some rare disease working on this pasture. Polk has also recently found a group of weirdoes camped out on a ridge overlooking the pasture. He has complained to his local FBI office and his congressman in hopes of getting all of these problems to go away. The complaint was flagged by a DG friendly and has landed on the investigators' collective desk.

The scenario begins for the investigators in the afternoon on a Monday. At 7 a.m. on that same day the Agriculture agent, Rick Ferio, has had a violent confrontation with Mr. Polk. Sheriff MacKay's disdain for federal authority combined with Mr. Ferio's lack of composure resulted in Ferio being jailed for public nuisance and assaulting an officer.

Polk will welcome the presence of the Delta Green agents at first, but will turn on them if they demonstrate interest in the sinkhole or the cattle deaths rather than chasing all of these strangers away from his land.

As a read of the Colour entry in the bestiary might suggest all of these principals involved have, to one extent or another, suffered from the lure of the Colour described under the Mental Attack section. Each one of them has rationalized why they want to stay and be involved with the land, and specifically the sinkhole.

Polk cites the clean report of the USGS on groundwater contamination and the growth of the vegetation, stating that the cattle deaths were the result of a disease that swept through the herd and went with them. He believes that if everyone leaves him alone, he can raise a herd of cattle in peace.

Agent Ferio claims that there is something responsible still present that accounts for the cattle deaths, he points to the lack of vegetation around the area of the sinkhole and the now declining briarthorns. He also has lab reports on the dead cattle found and photographs. The cattle are nearly desiccated and a ghastly shade of dark gray, indicating massive malnutrition. He thinks there is a toxic waste site there, but was barred at gunpoint by Polk from going near the opening. When the local sheriff responded to the disturbance, Ferio demanded Polk's arrest. When the sheriff refused, Ferio grabbed his handcuffs and attempted to do it himself. The sheriff subdued Ferio and jailed him for assault. The paperwork for him to be examined by a court appointed psychiatrist is still pending.

The four 'weirdoes' camped out to the north of the land are UFOlogists who have heard about the cattle deaths and have linked them to cattle mutilations of earlier cases that involve extraterrestrials. They include a couple who are from Saucerwatch and two students from Texas A&M on summer vacation. They think that the site is one visited recently, and that there might be something going on in the sinkhole. They occupy two '2-man' tents and a Chevy Astro van. They are on public land, and they know it. Jeff Monroe, the husband from Saucerwatch has his ACLU-trained lawyer on speedial.

Boxes 1

Boxed Text

"Hail, Hail, the gang's all here!" The MJ-12/Phenomenon-X Option.

One of the two Texas A&M students is a plant for MJ-12. Rondric Parnell is a bright engineering student romanced by offers of working in Area 51. He has been recruited by operatives from Project GARNET to keep tabs on the academic community in and around the southwest. If he actually sees any evidence of the Colour, he will call his professor, Dr. Willard Gates. Dr. Gates in turn will email his Project GARNET contact. Depending on what has transpired before the call, GARNET could ignore the incident or dispatch a BLUE TEAM to deal with a possible encounter.

The most plausible option is for Charles Bostick to drop an anonymous hint to Phenomenon-X via phone about the sinkhole and the cattle deaths. Two days later, a crew will arrive consisting of Sonja Dewey and Allen Eddington (Countdown pg. 136-138). Their presence will enrage Polk, and it is possible for there to be a shooting if Polk catches them on his land. On the other hand, they will also provide suitable victims to demonstrate the power of the Colour.

End Boxed Text

New Boxed Text

The Colour Out of Space

Cattle Fed and Almost Mature, Age ???

STR 15 CON — SIZ 25 INT 15

POW 25 DEX 19 HP 25

Dmamage Bonus: +0

Attacks:

Feed 85% (grapple), damage 1D6 + Drain

Mental Attack 100%, damage 1D6 magic points + 1D6 SAN

Disintegrate 100%, damage physical disintegration

Grasp 85%, damage nil

Armor: none. Invulnerable to physical attack, except by strong magnetic fields, which can imprison it.

Vulnerable to magic.

SAN Loss: 0/1D4 Sanity Points to see it, 1/1D8 to see a victim of its Feed attack dying. Physical Description: The Colour, of course, has no description as such, other than a slight luminescence at night as it exits the sinkhole. On nightvision goggles, it will look like a bright amorphous mass writhing through the air, and it does create intermittent readings on a Geiger counter, growing in intensity if it is feeding or using its Grasp attack at the time. When it attacks, the victim of the attack glows with an eerie green luminescence, as if surrounded by chemlights. The victim feels a sensation of pressure as the Colour moves in, then a sudden feeling of claustrophobia as it surrounds the victim. There is also the sensation of static charge on the skin and a slight feeling of suction as well.

The Mental Attack manifests as an obsession with the sinkhole and the land surrounding it, which has most strongly affected Polk and Ferio. Hector has resisted the effect, but has decided to avoid the area if at all possible. The voyeurs from Saucerwatch are not seriously affected, but see Matt's entry below.

End Boxed Text

New Boxed Text

Gregory Polk

Rancher, Victim and Tough Customer, age 46

Race: Caucasian

STR 14 CON 15 SIZ 16 INT 12 POW 10

DEX 11 APP 10 EDU 14 SAN 37 HP 16

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Skills: Animal Husbandry 65%, Track 45%, Spot Hidden 40%, Listen 40%, Rifle 50%, Mechanical Repair 60%, Operate Heavy Machinery 40%, Navigate/Land 40%, Ride 50%, Bargain 50%.

Languages: English 70%, Spanish 40%.

Attacks:

Winchester 30-06 50%, damage 2D6

Fist/Punch 55%, damage 1D3+1D4

Knife 25%, damage 2D4+2

Physical Description: Always a hard-luck man, Greg grew up in a cattle family. He idolized his father, who sold his herd in 1965 to retire on the proceeds. Greg dreamed of being a ranch boss, a modern-day cowboy and a businessman. He ended up as a mechanic and worked as a tractor repairman and an assembler in a John Deere plant. His big break came in the form of a profit sharing bonus and a drop in cattle prices. He bought a herd and put in his notice so that he could graze cattle and sell them for beef. Now, his herd is dead (it was insured...but the insurer is dragging their feet in payment), he has federal officers prowling around his land and his hired help has quit on him. Even his regular vet won't

show up anymore, as if he was any help with the cattle deaths anyway. He and Hector parted on good terms, but that may change now that Polk's SAN is lower, or if he thinks Hector has been talking to federal agents. He is found most times patrolling his pasture on horseback, looking for tracks of trespassers.

His hold on sanity is shaky. He is showing evidence of paranoid schizophrenia, and sees people lurking around on his ranch everywhere. He still recognizes authority, however, and will be coldly civil to any agents that approach him. If he is pushed much harder, he will seek out the Colour by descending into the sinkhole. This move will inevitably end in tragedy.

Note: As noted above, Polk is in the grip of a mild form of Paranoid Schizophrenia that evidences itself in sudden bursts of uncontrollable rage. Other behaviors include surreptitiously watching others from hiding.

End Boxed Text

New Boxed Text

Richard Ferio

U.S. Agriculture Agent and Victim of the Colour, age 35

Race: Caucasian

STR 12 CON 12 SIZ 13 INT 13 POW 9

DEX 13 APP 12 EDU 18 SAN 31 HP 13

Damage Bonus: +0

Skills: Accounting 15%, Mathematics 40%, Biology 45%, Botany 50%, Chemistry 30%, Geology 30%, Law 30%, Library Use 30%, Zoology 40%, Spot Hidden 40%, First Aid 40%, Persuade 50%.

Languages: English 90%, Italian 30%.

Attacks:

Flashlight/Small Club 25%, damage 1D6

Pepper Spray 65%, damage special

Physical Description: At 5'8" and 165 lbs., Rick Ferio is a stocky Italian-American who normally sports a Van Dyke to go with his thick curly black hair. He has a dark complexion and small, serious looking eyes. Before last week, Rick was a model government employee, hired since the beginning of the Bush administration began a policy of hiring inspectors more "friendly" to businessmen. When he was called in to follow up on a cattle epidemic, he expected to find a rampant case of hoof-in-mouth disease or something similarly mundane. His tests on the soil, the plants and the carcasses he found proved negative for biotoxins or pathogens. The carcasses did present a puzzle, the blood and tissue were all present, but the melanin was missing from their skin, and the blood was almost devoid of nutrients. The cows decayed at a slower rate than usual, as the bacteria were not propagating at a normal rate. It was as if all of the "Life" had been leached from them, a fair description of what a Colour does to its prey. Ferio has also collected some of the USGS survey reports. In particular, he has underlined sections showing intermittent moderate to strong Geiger readings. He USGS report considers this to possibly be radioactive decay of anomalous deposits in the limestone, a fairly common occurrence. It flatly states that the levels detected could not be a possible candidate for the cause of the cattle deaths.

For now, Ferio is languishing in a jail cell in , awaiting a hearing to determine if it is necessary to have him committed for psychiatric evaluation. He sees this as part of a conspiracy to cover up the cattle deaths. He will always welcome fellow federal agents, and will be relieved that there is now someone willing to listen to his evidence. He is obsessed with the idea of a "vampire" organism hiding in the sinkhole, and thinks (correctly) that it has an aversion to light.

Note: Ferio is currently in the grip of a short-term insanity, which has him cleaning himself compulsively and checking for "feeding-marks" with his hand mirror. This episode of Obsessive Compulsive disorder will only abate if he is kept away from the Polk ranch.

End Boxed Text

New Boxed Text

Hector Gutierrez

Ex-employee, wisely avoiding the area, age 41

Race: Hispanic

STR 13 SIZ 12 CON 14 DEX 11 POW 11

INT 14 EDU 12 APP 12 SAN 52 HP 13

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Skills: Spot Hidden 55%, Ride 40%, Veterinary Medicine 30%, Work Hard 95%, Complain 5%.

Languages: Spanish 60%, English 40%.

Attacks:

Knife 40%, damage 2D4

Physical Description: Hector saw the first few signs of the awakening of the Colour, including the strange growth of the brush planted around the sinkhole and the disappearances and deaths of the cattle. Hector has had the good sense to give notice to Mr. Polk of his resignation. In reality, the change in Mr. Polk and the confrontation with Mr. Ferio has more to do with his quitting than the cattle deaths. Hector grew up in Mexico City, picking through the enormous trash pile just outside the city for salvage. He has seen what happens when people become agitated. He has also seen his share of death and abuse, and what toxic substances can do to people. Hector has a family now, a green card, and wants to work; but he fears that something unnatural or poisonous is sleeping in the sinkhole. He is very grateful to Mr. Polk for giving him a good wage and not abusing him as a worker (Polk even took out health insurance for Hector and his family), but he fears Polk is losing his mind, and wants the agents to help Mr. Polk by getting medical help.

End Boxed Text

New Boxed Text

Victor MacKay

Sheriff and peacekeeper, age 35

Race: Caucasian

STR 15 CON 16 SIZ 13 INT 12 POW 13

DEX 12 APP 18 EDU 16 SAN 62 HP 15

Damage Bonus: +1D6

Skills: Bargain 20%, Boating 40%, Conceal 50%, Credit Rating 40%, Drive Auto 35%, First Aid 50%, Forensics 30%, Law 35%, Listen 55%, Military Science 20%, Navigate/Land 30%, Psychology 25%, Ride 30%, Spot Hidden 35%, Track 20%.

Languages: English 80%, Spanish 45%, Arabic 20%.

Attacks:

Colt Python Pistol 55%, damage 1D8+1D4

Baton 50%, damage 2D6

Pepper Spray 60%, damage special

Physical Description: Victor is a lanky man, 6'1" and 150 lbs. He still looks like the 20-year old volunteer that returned from Operation Desert Storm fifteen years ago. As an MP during Desert Shield and Desert Storm, he saw how people act under stress, and when normally law-abiding folks become dangerous. He knows that Mr. Ferio needs help to prevent the man from becoming a danger to himself and others. He thinks of Polk as a troublemaker and understands the potential for violence that Polk's

armed patrolling represents. He will caution agents against a heavy-handed approach with Polk. He also insists (correctly) that any further exposure of Ferio to the sinkhole area would result in a violent incident with one or more individuals. His Gulf War background has him secretly wondering about toxic waste or neurological agents present, especially with the cattle deaths.

End Boxed Text

New Boxed Text

Jeffrey Monroe

UFOlogist, Member of Saucerwatch and minor victim of the Colour, age 46

Race: Caucasian

STR 12 SIZ 10 CON 14 DEX 15 POW 14

INT 15 EDU 19 APP 9 SAN 61 HP 12

Damage Bonus: +0

Skills: Archaeology 25%, Astronomy 30%, Chemistry 25%, Computer Use 50%, Electrical Repair 45%, Geology 35%, History 30%, Law 50%, Library Use 60%, Natural History 40%, Occult 40%, Photography 45%, Videography 55%, Physics 25%, Spot Hidden 45%.

Languages: English 95%, Afrikaans 25%, Bantu 25%.

Physical Description: A tall gawky guy, Jeff stands 6'4" and weighs only 115 lbs. His dry, bushy hair is carefully braided down to between his shoulder blades, and his wire-rimmed blue eyes pierce deep into those he does not trust. He is the picture of a early '70s Berkeley hippie, but actually is a 'trust fund baby' from New England. He has done volunteer work around Africa and been a professional student for most of his life. He has done everything from Primal Scream Therapy to Veganism, to Tantric Yoga. His 'life mate' Rosa travels with him now around the country, seeking out subjects of interest for Saucerwatch. They invite others to come along with them for two reasons: they genuinely enjoy the company of others, and they know it is harder to 'disappear' four people than two. Despite his hippie looks and dilettante leanings, on the subject of UFO phenomena Jeff is a serious scholar. He is tired of mainstream society dismissing claims of UFO sightings as 'fringe' science. Any sighting must pass a stringent test before he will bring it to the attention of Saucerwatch. He is also well acquainted with the law, especially that part concerning search and seizure and arrest powers. He is a dues paying member of the ACLU, and keeps a college friend there on speed dial on his phone. Note: Jeffrey has not been seriously affected by the powers of the Colour. He has seen the Colour briefly through the only nightvision-capable lens that he has. It looked like a cloud of phosphorescent gas escaping the sinkhole, and he thinks it may be a geological phenomena. He has also purchased some radiation badges on the open market that show levels reached by color change. One of them is missing (see Matt's entry).

End Boxed Text

New Boxed Text

Matthew Bolaris

Student and explorer, age 22

Race: Caucasian/Greek

STR 14 (13) SIZ 12 CON 15 DEX 15 POW 10(11)

INT 13 EDU 16 APP 12 (13) SAN 47 HP 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Skills: Archaeology 35%, Art(Architecture) 40%, Chemistry 35%, Geology 50%, Mechanical Repair 30%, Spot Hidden 40%, Climb 60%, Jump 45%, Listen 45%.

Languages: English 80%.

Attacks:

Flashlight/Small Club 35%, damage 2D4

Physical Description: Matt is a normal kid, standing about 5'10" tall and weighing 145 lbs. He and his friend Rondric (also his roommate at Texas A&M) have taken a semester off to travel with Mr. Monroe and see the wonder of the southwest. Matt (and Rondric) recently signed up with Saucerwatch and were very excited to get their first newsletter and the chance to go to a sighting here in Arizona. Matt is a Civil Engineering Major with a concentration in materials technology and architectural forms (concrete and resin).

He and Rondric did a very foolish thing two nights ago. They gathered some rope, flashlights, and a sampling kit and went to the sinkhole. Rondric anchored the rope above and Matt climbed down inside just after dusk, when Polk was busy talking with the sheriff and Jeff and Rosa were enjoying a 'nature hike' somewhere private. When Matt climbed down the hole, he found the carcasses of two of the cattle. He noted that none of their bones were broken from the fall, as would be usual. He decided (correctly) that they had been carried down somehow. It was at this point he felt something 'pass through' him, a presence like those who have experienced ghosts have expressed. He became nauseous and jerked on the rope to be pulled up. On the surface, he noted that his radiation badge that he was wearing registered an extremely high exposure. Since then, he has felt sick (like the flu), and he has hidden the badge, telling Jeff he lost it in the van somewhere. He is now obsessed with the sinkhole, and will sneak out to explore by himself if given the chance to slip away at night. Notes: Matt is suffering from temporary insanity in the form of "geomania". He wants to take soil samples from everywhere in the cave, to see what is causing the sensation he felt. He believes there is a radioactive deposit in the sinkhole, and if he can sneak away, will try to climb to the bottom of the hole with a sample kit. The danger of encountering the entity will not be in his consideration. He will recover in time, unless he suffers more psychological (and physical) damage from the Colour.

End Boxed Text

New Boxed Text

Rondric Parnell

Enthusiastic Volunteer and Unwitting Pawn of The Man, age 23

Race: Black

STR 14 SIZ 15 CON 14 DEX 10 POW 10

INT 15 EDU 20 APP 11 SAN 48 HP 15

Damage Bonus: +1D6

Skills: Botany 15%, Chemistry 25%, Biology 40%, Genetics 65%, Mathematics 40%, Geology 30%, Library Use 45%, Medicine 30%, Pharmacy 65%, Zoology 20%.

Languages: English 100%, French 35%.

Attacks:

Flashlight/small club 40%, damage 1D4+1D6

Physical Description: Rondric is a chubby young man who is the son of Marcus Parnell. Marcus won a scholarship to Harvard from his hometown, and never looked back. Becoming moderately wealthy, he embraced a Conservative and Republican lifestyle, raising his son to identify with intellectuals rather than the black community. He taught his son early on that math and science were universal languages, and that if he excelled at either, his talent would supersede his skin color. Rondric has embodied the dreams for his parents so far, his only act of rebellion being his choice of a southern school. He aspires to be a chemical engineer with a strong background in genetic engineering and agriculture, and so he enrolled at Texas A&M. He has placed highly in several national science competitions and has exhibited an IQ in excess of 160. All of these make Rondric a good candidate for recruitment into MJ-12 to work with the Cookbook. The men at Project GARNET were ecstatic when his roommate decided to tag along with Saucerwatch. It became an easy task to convince the patriotic Rondric that keeping tabs on these hippies and their UFO watching was a valuable service to his government. The only struggle now is between GARNET and DELPHI over the uses of the future Dr. Parnell.

Notes: Rondric is very much in the grip of MJ-12, and will not hesitate to report any unusual activity from the sinkhole or the agents involved to his contact and mentor Dr. Graham Davies (Biology) at Texas A&M. If he finds the chance and thinks it important enough, he will steal the radiation badge worn by Matt into the sinkhole. This will certainly bring MJ-12 into the picture quickly. On the other hand, he really is friends with Matt, and wouldn't want any harm to come to him.

End Boxed Text

General notes

One thing that it is important to note is that the psychological profiles of the people given above represent the exposure to the Colour so far. They may get better or worse, depending on whether they remain near the Colour and future rolls on their behalf. As a cursory examination of the Colour entry in the rulebook will show, confronting the Colour is a lethal and sanity-shattering proposition. The adventure is intended to be more about the way each of these people deals with the situation, and how the agents deal with them. The main thrust could be the effect of the cattle deaths on Polk, the confrontation between Ferio (and his theories) and everyone else, or it could be about rescuing Parnell from a future as a lackey for Dr. Justin Kroft (Delta Green pg. 88) and Project PLUTO. What is emphasized depends more on your preferences, the play style of your group, or the actions of the agents.

The best tactic for dealing with the Colour is to wait until it departs for deep space in about nine days after the arrival of the agents. It may depart sooner if fed well (i.e. the casualty rate is getting too high). The departure will be evidenced by a giant, softly luminescent blossom of light mushrooming into the sky, much like a deep sea jellyfish propelling itself slowly through the night sky. This will be faint but large, and so will require $\frac{1}{4}$ normal photography or videography rolls (unless using nightvision) to catch anything other than a blur on film. If the footage goes to Saucerwatch, a phone call will have Dr. Hong (Delta Green, pg. 123) denounce it as a 'lens glare'. If it goes to Phenomenon-X, then the footage will accompany an entire episode dedicated to the 'Arizona Sinkhole' incident. This could result in a race to destroy compromising interviews or other featurettes by the DG agents before their faces are splashed across the nation to the smiling voice of David Carmichael (Countdown pg. 137) announcing them as the government conspiracy to cover up alien landings.

Boxes 2

New Boxed Text

Apocalypse Now, The Hardcore Majestic Option

For those of us who don't feel comfortable without some heavy gunplay in our Delta Green games, there is the possibility of MJ-12 dispatching a response team of 3 agents to investigate the events around the Sinkhole. The agents are outlined below. They are low-key, dressing in suits or windbreakers as the situation warrants, and armed with nothing heavier than semiautomatic pistols. These men will be using fake identities that pass scrutiny unless a $\frac{1}{2}$ Library Roll is made using NCIC or another government database, which will show that each one of them is nine years old....

If Rondric is compromised and starts to blab about his contact, and MJ-12 becomes aware of the leak, a Section Delta NRO team will be scrambled to capture or disappear nosy investigators. They will not hesitate to erase anyone involved or airmail them to the OUTLOOK Maryland facility (Countdown pg. 110) for re-education. Use the stats provided in Delta Green (pg. 194), complete with Adolph Lepus on the chopper. This should result in the bloodbath that so many roleplayers request as a part of their usual gaming experience.

End Boxed Text

New Boxed Text

John Flakes, Morris Landers, and Joel Reinhart

Not their Real Names, age 25-28

STR 14 SIZ 13 CON 15 DEX 16 POW 12

INT 11 EDU 15 APP 11 SAN 55 HP 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Languages: English 75%

Skills: Climb 50%, Conceal 45%, Dodge 45%, Drive Auto 50%, Fast Talk 25%, Hide 40%, Jump 50%, Law 35%, Listen 35%, Locksmith 40%, Martial Arts 40%, Sneak 40%, Spot Hidden 50%, Throw 40%.

Attacks:

Glock 22 Pistol 45%, damage 1D10

Tactical Baton/small club 50%, damage 2D4

Contact Taser 50%, damage special

Physical Description: These three are relatively subtle agents for NRO Section Delta. They give off an air of military authority, and if casually asked, they will state that they are INS enforcement. Of course, if the INS is called, they will have no record of any agents in the area. If these three are pressed, they will find one person alone and give them a ride in the trunk out to the middle of nowhere, still bound and blindfolded with duct tape. Their final admonishment to the agent is to leave their identities a mystery before driving away.

End Boxed Text