# REALMS OF CTHULHU

# MYTHOS TALES

NUMBER ONE



BELLY OF THE BEAST

SEAN PRESTON





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# BELLY OF THE BEAST

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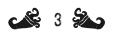
# THE OVERVIEW

**Belly of the Beast** is an adventure for *Realms of Cthulhu* that takes place in the 1890s. The adventure is suitable for four to six investigators. It is ideally suited for the Heroic Horror play style, but adjustments can be made by the Keeper to suit their play style of choice.

# A BRIEF SYNOPSIS

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Professor Alexandria Locke is looking for her lost love, who journeyed into the heart of Africa in the pursuit of cultural studies. The missing man, one Doctor Maxwell Hamilton, was corrupted by his contact with the Great Tribe, a shunned people comprised mainly of Zande warriors and other misfits. The adventure is a mixture of high action and intrigue, as our heroes attempt to prevent an ancient evil from being loosed upon the land.









































# THE RUMOR

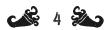
The investigators are going about their normal business when they read in the paper or hear from their colleagues that the Low Country Emeritus Society is funding an exploration into Africa in search of the Lost Tablet of Creation. While exploration into this enigmatic land is not unheard of, what has everyone abuzz is the news that Professor Alexandria Locke plans to personally lead the expedition. She invites the boldest adventurers and brightest scholars to accompany her on this historic journey into the unknown.

#### THE SEVEN TABLETS OF CREATION

The known tablets date back to the 7th century BC and are well documented as Assyrian in origin. They detail the creation myth of the Babylonians and are recognized as the earliest examples of their kind. In short, the story details how Marduk battles Tiamat and her evil minions. Tiamet shifts into the form of a gigantic snake, and Marduk must rely upon his wits and an arsenal of powerful weapons to defeat her. After she is slain, he is made the leader of the gods, and he splits her body in two – one half becomes the heavens, the other, the earth. He then fashions mankind from his own blood and bone.

### THE LOST TABLET OF CREATION

Also known as the Missing Eighth, the Lost Tablet of Creation is purported to be an Assyrian stone tablet also dating back to the 7th century BC. Legends range wildly about what information is contained in the missing tablet, if it even exists at all. However, the most recent source, An Homage to the Good Captain: A Biography of James Cook by Cowell and Hancock, 1804, suggests the cursed Missing Eighth found its way into the hands of Captain Cook, who acquired a "strange stone tablet of curious aspect" in the East Indies in October of 1770. Soon thereafter, his men fell sick, and he lost



thirty of them to disease and dysentery. The captain was forced to take on new crew in South Africa to have enough hands for the return voyage home.

While there, Cook, not a superstitious man by nature, disposed of the stone tablet, charging five locals to take the tablet and throw it into the belly of the beast. By this, one can only conclude he meant the darkest part of the continent's interior.

#### THE LOCKE LEGACY

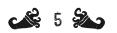
Professor Alexandria Locke comes from a long line of fine scholars and academicians. She only recently retired from teaching Art History at Miskatonic University to return home to Charleston. She typically cites her father's failing health as the principle reason for retirement, though he is in good humor. The truth is, she came south eighteen months ago to aid her fiancé in researching the Lost Tablet and has now exhausted all local leads. Charleston turned up nothing, but she hit upon a few items in Dark Harbor that seemed to excite Hamilton. For the past six months, however, he has severed all contact. She has sent numerous missives and they have all come back unopened. She doesn't know if he is in a fevered state, devoured by jackals, or worse. She knows she can no longer abide quietly, awaiting his triumphant return. She must find out what has happened at any cost!

### DARK HARBOR AWAITS

The investigators can easily find out Locke has been spending a great deal of time in Dark Harbor, a small fishing community about a day's travel by carriage to the northeast of Charleston. She spends her days in the Repositorium and her evenings in her room at the Yellow Sign.

# HISTORY OF DARK HARBOR

Dark Harbor began in 1680 as a simple pirate's cove, a place where smugglers would meet, trade wares, and have a rollicking good time away from the watchful eyes of the Crown's agents in Charleston. Over the years, it continued to grow and prosper despite the

















































































disaffection displayed to it by the Colony. However, just as Colonial unrest grew with Britain, Lord Arthur Manning, a retired merchant marine, sailed with a group of his men from Dark Harbor aboard The Watchful Eye and destroyed a ship sent there to unload tea from the East Indian Trading Company. In retaliation, the British sent three ships into Dark Harbor, but a great storm rose up and dashed them to bits before they could reach the shoreline.

Charleston, in turn, opted to leave its eccentric little neighbor to the north alone. In the late 1860s, local plantation owners sold lots to encourage new blood and growth, and to allow those in the decimated Charleston area a place to start over and rebuild after the Civil War. With this new influx, Dark Harbor became a legitimate township in 1884. Its key industries were chiefly fishing and shrimping, supplemented by the growth of rice and cotton.

Despite its modest size, Dark Harbor maintains a library dating back to the 1700's, a small university, and several taverns.

# DARK HARBOR PLACES OF INTEREST

#### THE YELLOW SIGN

The first permanent structure in Dark Harbor, The Yellow Sign is a gloomy, gable-roofed inn of solid construction. The establishment is nestled just within the Nook, a natural barrier of sandy-white cliff rocks that protects it from the coastal winds. The inn was built in 1688.

#### THE LEFT HAND

Constructed in 1784, The Left Hand is a sprawling tavern that also serves as a gambling hall, offering many games of chance typically found in larger cities. Since the Civil War, it has become the home of many displaced Charlestonians who fought for the South.

#### **ESSEX ACADEMY**

This small university is highly regarded as one of the premier finishing schools in the south. It was established in 1840, but its profile increased greatly after the Civil War. However, the original curriculum is but a part of their growing offerings, which now focus on science and liberal arts.













































































### THE SMYTH-MAJESTIC REPOSITORIUM

Once serving as a warehouse for contraband goods, The Repositorium, a solid stone building designed in classical Greek tradition, now serves as one of the finest, though little known, libraries on the eastern seaboard. The story goes that in 1690, one Artemis Smyth, an English printer, offered to teach the often poorly educated crews that came through the area how to read and write in exchange for the donation of books to the warehouse.

His progressiveness went highly ignored until Captain Harold Majestic, a bloodthirsty pirate who hailed from Singapore, took up his cause in 1708. Afterward, those ships that did not donate books suffered a cruel fate at the hands of the good captain and his crew. After a decade of the harsh lessons from Majestic, donating books became a matter of pride and honor among crews, granting bragging rights – the more exotic the better.

The Repositorium was given its proper name in 1720, when the library had over 5,000 volumes of books from around the world, including diaries, ship logs, and other singular or rare materials. A plaque mounted just inside the main entrance dedicates the structure to the two individuals who helped shape Dark Harbor's unique history.



# THE CAST

# **CAPTAIN LOTHAR VON TROTHA**

Of regal bearing and obvious German descent, Lothar is nononsense in his demeanor. He typically wears his neatly pressed officer's uniform at dinner and other functions. When in the field, he dresses appropriately with pith helmet, an immaculately clean cotton weave shirt, khakis, and hiking boots.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smartsd8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6 Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Military History) d8, Knowledge

(Tactics) d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Survival d6 Charisma:+2; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 5

**Sanity:** 5; **Corruption:** 0 **Hindrances:** Code of Honor

Edges: Charismatic, Connections (Service Branch)

Gear & Equipment: 0.38 Service revolver (Damage: 2d6; Range:

12/24/48; RoF: 1; Shots: 6; AP 1; Revolver)

#### CAPTAIN PRAETORIUS

The good captain is a gnarled old man whose weathered skin is covered in scars and tattoos. He walks with a swagger despite his years and has a glint in his eye. His graying hair is pulled back in a ponytail. His demeanor is gruff, but he is an able man with an abiding affection for rum.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Boating d10, Fighting d8, Guts d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Shooting d8, Streetwise d6, Swimming d8

Charisma: 0; Pace: 4; Parry: 6; Toughness: 7

Sanity: 6; Corruption: 0

Hindrances: Lame **Edges:** Scrapper

Gear & Equipment: Cane, .32 Revolver (Damage: 2d6; Range: 12/24/48; RoF: 1; Shots: 6; AP 1; Revolver)













































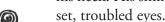




# 🌌 ISICABUCABU (ISAAC), BINZE OF ZANDE VILLAGE



In his mid forties, Isaac is fit and remarkably robust. He dresses in loose robes, wears sandals, and has many talismans hanging about his neck. His smile is broad and open, though at odds with his deep-



Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor



d12



**Skills:** Fighting d10, Guts d8, Healing d8, Intimidation d10, Knowledge (Mythos) d10\*, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Stealth d10, Survival d8, Swimming d8, Tracking d8, Throwing d8



Charisma: +2; Pace: 6; Parry: 9 (1); Toughness: 9



Sanity: 3; Corruption: 4





Edges: Block, Brawny, Charismatic, Command, Doctor (tribal medicine), Woodsman

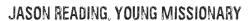


Gear & Equipment: Spear (Damage: Str+d6; Parry +1), various healing herbs and salves



\*He knows d6 spells chosen by the Keeper.







In his early twenties, Jason is of a lean and wiry build. His skin is tanned a deep brown, and he's gone somewhat native, rarely wearing shoes or a shirt. A hand carved wooden cross dangles about his neck, and his battered, weatherworn bible is always close at hand.



Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6 Skills: Knowledge (Theology) d10, Notice d4, Persuasion d10



Charisma: +2; Pace: 6; Parry: 2; Toughness: 5



**Sanity:** 6; **Corruption:** 0

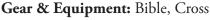


Hindrances: Pacifist (Major), Poverty



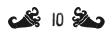
Edges: Charismatic, Connections (Religious Order), Resilient











# PROFESSOR ALEXANDRIA LOCKE

A prim and proper lady in her mid-twenties, the Professor typically wears her brunette hair pulled back loosely in a pony tail and wears reading glasses. Her most notable feature is her piercing slate-grey eyes. Her smile is wistful at best.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Guts d8, Knowledge (Art) d10, Knowledge (History) d10, Notice d8.

Persuasion d8

Charisma: +2; Pace: 6; Parry: 2; Toughness: 5

Sanity: 6; Corruption: 0

Hindrances: Curious, Small, Vow (Major: Find Dr. Hamilton)

Edges: Attractive, Rich, Savvy, Scholar

Gear & Equipment: As purchased during adventure













































# CREATURE FEATURE







In her human form, Chinue is a beautiful woman with dark flowing locks and almond eyes. When in the Dream Lands, her nails are the length of daggers, and her grin is a glimpse into the abyss.



Abilities: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8



**Skills:** Fighting d6



Pace: 6; Parry: 7; Toughness: 6



Terror: -2; Mental Anguish: Spirit+d6



**Special Abilities** Claws: Str+d6.



Tendrils: Each "wound" inflicted cuts through a number of







#### CORPSE DANCER



Held aloft like a puppet on a string, the corpse dancer is a tribesman danced about on numerous tendrils with dead lifeless eyes, with its bones extending sharply from its rotting flesh.



Abilities: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8



**Skills:** Fighting d8



Pace: 6; Parry: 7; Toughness: 8 Terror: -2; Mental Anguish: Spirit+d6



**Special Abilities** Claws: Str+d6.

damage.



Undead: +2 Toughness. +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage (except to the head).



Weakness (Head): Shots to the head of Corpse Dancers are +2













# CROCODILE, GIANT

A huge specimen, it is dark and mottled green with many scars across its body of past battles. Its eyes are cloudy and bloodshot.

Abilities: Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d12

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Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d8, Notice d8, Swim d8

**Pace:** 3; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness**: 10 (2)

**Special Abilities** 

**Armor +2:** Thick skin.

**Aquatic:** Pace 5. **Bite:** Str+d6.

**Rollover:** Both gators and crocs are notorious for grasping their prey in their vice-like jaws and rolling over and over with their flailing victims in their mouth. If one of these large amphibians hits with a raise, it causes an extra 2d4 damage to its prey in addition to its regular Strength damage.

#### DEEP ONES

Twisted, amphibious humanoids, Deep Ones look like they may have intermingled with some of the local tribesman once upon a time. Bone necklaces dangle about their necks.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d8, Stealth d10 Pace: 6; Parry: 6 (5); Toughness: 8 (2) Terror: -1; Mental Anguish: Spirit+d4

Special Abilities

**Armor +2:** Rubbery hide and scales.

Claws: Str+d4.

**Spear:** Str+d6. Provides +1 Parry, but requires two hands.







# DR. MAXWELL HAMILTON (ISAHAMBI)



Once a handsome, strapping man, that man is gone, replaced by a transformed and twisted parody of union between man and snake. His eyes are slitted, his head is hooded like a cobra, and he has blackish-green scales covering his body completely. The tentacles



protruding from his back seem to have a strange independence, and weave back and forth protectively.



Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d10, Vigor



Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Knowledge (Mythos) d12, Notice d8



**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10 (2) Terror: -2; Mental Anguish: Spirit+d6



**Special Abilities** 



**Armor +2:** Thick, scaly hide.



Spells: He knows 2d6 spells chosen by the Keeper, in addition to dark evolution\*.



Tainted: He does not suffer Fear or Terror, nor can he be Intimidated.



**Tentacles** (4): Str +d6. These tentacles have a reach of 2" and suffer no multi-action, nor off-hand penalty, and each may take independent, sustained actions.



Hamilton learned the power of dark evolution from his master, Dala. He used it on several creatures in the jungle, one being his pet monkey, and the other, the wild gorilla that just recently rediscovered its troop.















#### DARK EVOLUTION

Casting Modifier: -4

Range: Spirit

**Duration:** Permanent **Trappings:** Special

This incantation allows the caster to twist and corrupt the natural evolution of any animal. If properly performed, the target transforms within 2d6 hours into an abomination. It retains all of its attributes, but it Smarts increases a die type and it loses its animal intelligence and gains the traits of Terror: 0 and Mental Anguish: Spirit + d4. Additionally, it gains two monstrous abilities, two monstrous edges, and one minor gift. (See Realms of Cthulhu Creature Generator for additional details.) Its basic form stays the same unless modified by these rolls.

#### DUST HUNTER

The Dust Hunter can be summoned in any dry or barren area. It appears roughly as a lion from a distance, but up close it has a twisted, humanlike face, splotchy fur, and its mane is a mass of brownish-black writhing tentacles. Black ichor continuously drips from its fangs. It is a twisted creature created by ancient mages in the Savannah and often used in battle with the Serpent People. Tribal lore masters sometimes evoke the Dust Hunter to avenge some wrong done to them.

Abilities: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9 (7) Terror: -1; Mental Anguish: Spirit+d4

**Special Abilities** 

**Armor +2:** Thick, leathery hides.

Bite: Str+d8. Claws: Str+d4.

Flawless Tracker: A Dust Hunter has the unerring ability to find its designated target(s).

Hardy: The Dust Hunter ignores subsequent Shaken results.

**Ichor:** On a raise to hit with a bite, the Dust Hunter injects a paralytic poison into the victim, who must make a successful Vigor roll or be paralyzed for a d6 rounds.















































# GOR, EVOLVED GORILLA



This gorilla was bathed in dark energies by Hamilton as he learned to master his abilities. The creature now possesses human intellect and can speak in short, guttural bursts. Gor is hyper-aggressive and attacks any that he gauges a threat. He is about a third bigger than a normal gorilla, his fur splotchy, and his eyes blood red. He is



cannibalistic in nature and has a great bloodlust. Abilities: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12+2, Vigor



d12



**Skills:** Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d8 Pace: 6; Parry: 7; Toughness: 13 (11)



Terror: -1; Mental Anguish: Spirit+d4



Special Abilities



**Armor +2:** Thick, leathery hide.



Berserk: When wounded, Gor goes berserk on a failed Spirit roll.



Claws: Str+d6.



**Size +3:** This unique creature is a size greater than a typical gorilla. **Tainted:** Gor is immune to Fear, Taunt, Terror, and Intimidation.



# KOLEO, THE FAVORED ONE



A large, cobra headed man of sinister aspect, Koleo is swift and nimble. His fangs drip with blackish-ichor when he is about to attack.



Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d12, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d6



Skills: Fighting d10, Healing d12, Knowledge (Mythos) d12



Pace: 6; Parry: 7; Toughness: 5



Terror: -2; Mental Anguish: Spirit+d6



**Special Abilities** 



**Bite/Claws:** Str+d4.



Poison: Anyone bitten must make a Vigor roll at -2. Success indicates the area is numb and the victim becomes Exhausted until healed. With a failure, the victim becomes Incapacitated and dies in 2d6 minutes.



**Spells:** Koleo knows 2d6 spells chosen by the Keeper, in addition to dark embrace.







# THE ADVENTURE PROPER

# MEETING PROFESSOR LOCKE

Quite prim and proper in her dress and appearance, Professor Locke is a lady in her late twenties, with emerald green eyes, blondish-brown hair, and good color. She wears reading spectacles and comports herself as a genteel lady. She does her best to restrain her excitement when she first meets the investigators.

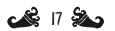
"I am so happy to finally have some company in my pursuits. Tell me about yourselves, will you? Not that I can be overly cautious in my decisions, as time is as valuable a commodity as any and, frankly, not many folks have been willing to join me in my pursuits. I assure you, I can compensate you for any impositions I may cause."

Only a dozen or so folks have met with Locke, and most of them have been colleagues and family friends insistent on talking her out of her expedition. They have only made her all the more resolute. She is charming and friendly, and encouraging of the investigators. She will offer them a year's wages for their troubles, though she expects the journey to take less than six months. In return, she asks that they see things through with her to the end.

Though smart and educated, she is inexperienced about adventuring and willing to rely upon any strong investigators in the party to lead the expedition. As Keeper, you should gradually transition the lead over to the party, save for a few crises moments when Locke will assert her intentions upon the party. These are revealed throughout the course of the adventure. Please remember, Locke should serve as a helpful ally, not the heroine of the tale.

If the investigators do not pursue Professor Locke, she will send letters of inquiry to them, requesting an immediate meeting and a need for their talents. Otherwise, the meeting proceeds as suggested.

After the meeting has taken place, she'll ask them to meet with Captain Praetorius at his ship, The Winsome Grin.













































If the investigators agree that certain additional expeditionary forces are needed, Professor Locke can cover a total of eight (including herself and the investigators). She does not offer this up, because while intelligent, she is ignorant of such arrangements. So, if there are five players, she is able to afford two supporting cast members, such as a doctor of medicine (pg. 114 in *Realms of Cthulhu*) and a mercenary (use the Soldier template on pg. 117 in *Realms of Cthulhu*). Determine the personalities for each extra normally.

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### THE DOCK

Captain Praetorius tells the party that it will take him three days to get the stores in, round up his crew, and get the ship ready to set sail. They are free to stay aboard *The Winsome Grin* if it suits them, though he recommends the tavern in town if they prefer more creature comforts.

### THE TRANS-ATLANTIC JOURNEY

The ocean voyage takes two months. The first half is uneventful, with strong winds, fair weather, and calm waters. Give the investigators the opportunity to catch up or read any of the books they may have acquired along their journey. In the second month, the waters are choppy and storms are the rule rather than the exception. Non-essential crew members are relegated below deck, and the cramped quarters cause tempers to flare and several fights break out in the commons area.

The investigator with the highest Corruption (or greatest Knowledge (Mythos) in the event of a tie) has haunting dreams each night during this time. Should the group be pure, then the cook goes off the deep end, slaughtering several crew members with his cleaver before the investigators are alerted to the issue.



#### FIRST PORT OF CALL

The ship is damaged by the storms and in need of repair, so the captain takes the ship into Landana, a bustling port town under French control. There is a cosmopolitan mix of travelers and a feeling of life and vitality in the air. The professor wants the party to sleep one night in a proper bed before they begin their adventure in earnest. They find space in the Ivory Tower, an inn favored by big-game hunters. An Englishman, Arthur Kincaid, is talking about his latest conquests, a lion and two elephants. He would love to accompany the party inland, but matters require his attentions back home. He does recommend Schaffer, a Dutchman, who makes regular runs between Landana and Boma. For a few dollars more, he will guide them up to Ngoma, which is where they want to be if they don't want to have to pay the locals to cross the Congo to the east. No amount of coercing can persuade Mr. Kincaid to join forces with them, though he wishes them much success on their journey.

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#### THE LAST TOUCHES OF CIVILIZATION: BOMA AND NGOMA

Small African villages greatly influenced by colonial rule, Boma and Ngoma are situated on opposite sides of the Congo River, but are virtually identical. For a small fee, the villagers ferry hunters and explorers from one side of the river to the other. Both offer porters, but only those in Ngoma dare venture into the Congo past Sankuru. In any case, the group can easily gather up a dozen or so porters to carry goods and supplies for the party, set up camp, and so on. The party can choose overland travel up to Sankuru, following the river, or they can opt to take boats upstream.

# SMALL GRASS HUTS

Located where the waters of the Congo and Sankuru meet, Three Grasses is a pygmy village accustomed to having regular travelers. The investigators are invited to meet Uru, the chief, and join in the feast with the other visitors who have set up their own camp. Uru is in the company of a young missionary, Jason Reading, who has been with them for the better part of a year. He serves as the chief's spiritual counselor and translator.

#### THE ENCAMPMENT

Captain Lothar von Trotha is a German military officer who has been sent to Africa to survey and assay both the land and its people. He is a master tactician of the strictest discipline. His official station is in Zanzibar, but he and his small contingent have decided to poke about inland. He is well educated, well bred, and well mannered to those he considers his equals or betters, who number very few in his estimation. He treats those beneath his station with aloofness and an unmistakable air of superiority.

#### THE FEAST AND THE WARNING

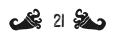
The feast is one of bananas and hippo flesh cooked in coconut milk. Drinks are fermented honey that is mixed with the coconut milk and are very potent.

As they feast, Uru tells the tale of a sleeping spider that is awakened in its lair and eats its children, the villagers. The moral, he relates, is to let the spider sleep. For those Keepers with the time and inclination for embellishment, the actual story follows.

Once upon a time, Spider found itself sad and alone, so it made dolls out of clay and squeezed life into them using silk and dream stuff. It watched them play for a time, but then grew sleepy and curled up in its web, where it spun as it slept. The children grew into men who crept into the cave where Spider dwelt, wanting its help. Spider was angered at being so rudely awakened, but kept its calm. But it had slept for too long, and the hunger in its belly was too much, so it devoured the men, and, thus sated, returned to sleep.

After the dinner, there is a great dance about the fire, complete with drums and loud ululations. Uru rises as if to dance, but instead falls to the ground convulsing. A few moments later, baby spiders come rushing out of his dead mouth. The celebrations end abruptly as Uru's body is covered with the milky white honey drink and dragged into the fire, where it crackles and burns. His wife, Chinue (Cheenweh), takes up the mantle of leader and orders all the strangers out of the village immediately, including the young missionary, Jason Reading. She speaks a bit of English that she picked up from travelers over the years.

"We should not have eaten the sacred flesh with the outsiders. Too complacent, we have become. We must be more like the Uhlobokhulu, the Great Tribe."















































Drums begin to beat again, and the pygmies pull out knives and spears.

If the investigators decide to hang about, they witness the sight of Uru's burnt corpse being pulled out of the fire and laid in giant banana leaves. Warning glances will be directed their way as his flesh is cut open and served to Chinue.

"Do not come back to our village, strangers. There is no room for you."

Captain von Trotha suggests they leave at first light, as it is more dangerous facing the jungle in the dark than a handful of angry pygmies. During the night, the chanting continues in low monotones, and the drums beat in a regular, pulsing rhythm that soaks into the subconscious and, with the mixture of exotic food and drink, opens the portal to strange dreams.

#### THE DREAM FIELDS

The investigator with the least Corruption is transported in his sleep to the Dream Fields. While there, he is visited by Uru, and his companions come to aid him.

### Uru speaks:

"You must strike down the silk webs that threaten my village and my dear Chinue before you complete your own quest. In doing this favor for me, you are doing a favor for yourself and for my people. Please take these to fight the darkness."

KO SO SO

He hands the investigator a dozen daggers and disappears. The daggers are marked with exotic glyphs. A Knowledge (Mythos) roll ascertains the innate power and magic contained within. Each magical dagger adds +4 to damage when striking a Mythos creature, whereupon it erupts in silver flame and cannot be used again.

The other party members appear within seconds of each other in their normal travel attire. All wounds are healed. The camp and the foliage look the same, save the sky glows with a sickly green putrescence, and a thick, ropy black tendril extends from the jungle forest into the village. The investigators can follow it to its source, where it grows as thick as a forearm before disappearing into a cave. If they pursue it further, a dark voice within the cavern issues a warning.

"Are you here to be a hero, a martyr, or a savior?" The voice is thin and raspy. "Decide. The fate of one is the fate of all." Once they answer, or if they don't, the voice speaks once more. "A martyr is the first to fall, the hero is the last to fall, and the savior seeks salvation of others above all. Step one foot further into this cave and I will own your soul."

Should the investigators advance into the cave, then they witness Nyogtha, and must make a Terror roll at-4 or suffer d12+d10 Mental Anguish. Should they fail their Terror roll, they are cast back into their sleeping bodies and out of the Dream Fields. If they

































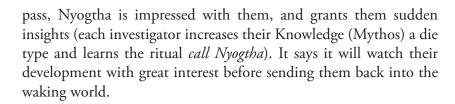












"Madness? Illumination? All the same to me. All the same."

#### PUPPETS AND THEIR MASTER

Shadowy dark figures dance in a horrible parody of human dancers. The tendril here breaks into many tendrils and the corpse dancers look like puppets on strings. Encased in the central tendril is the comatose form of Chinue. There are two corpse dancers per investigator. The central tendril cannot be damaged until the corpse dancers (2 per investigator) are eliminated.

#### COMBAT IN THE DREAM FIELDS

The only change that occurs in the Dream Fields regarding combat is how melee damage is done. Rather than Strength + weapon damage, it is Spirit + weapon damage.

Once the corpse dancers are slain, Chinue's eyes burst open with a radiant, sickly yellow light, and the tentacle releases her to fight, holding her up like it did the corpse dancers.

When three wounds are inflicted, Chinue falls to the ground, and the investigators wake to the sound of thunder, safely in their own beds at the encampment. Sunlight is breaking through the clouds as an early morning storm welcomes them to a new day. To underscore that the dream was not just a nightmare, any remaining daggers are found beneath their pillows.

Chinue comes to their camp with an armed escort in the morning.

"My people have long walked the dreams. It is passing rare that outsiders have travelled our path. Take care. The spirit world knows you now and will not forget you. Nor will I."



#### SUCCESS

If the investigators successfully freed Chinue, her men offer up baskets of fruit and provisions in thanks, and all who participated in the Dream Field's battle gain a benny.

#### **FAILURE**

If the investigators failed to free her, Chinue begins chanting in a strange tongue, obviously not tribal. A successful Knowledge (Occult) roll recognizes the gestures as a curse. A successful Knowledge (Mythos) roll marks it as a summoning of some sort. If the party moves to interrupt her, the tribe engages them in battle. If they do not somehow interrupt the ritual, she summons a Dust Hunter that appears in a d6 hours and will catch up with the party a d4 hours after arriving.

#### BREAKING CAMP

Captain Lothar von Trotha offers his services to accompany the party into the jungle, as that is the general direction he is travelling, and he would enjoy the company. If he meets any objections, he is insistent.

"What could it hurt," he asks, "for your group to be accompanied by trained soldiers?"

In truth, von Trotha seeks companionship with those he considers equals, or at least not serving under him. As dangerous as it may be, it is assumed von Trotha is with them until he parts ways.

















































































# THE RUINS

The first two days of travel through the jungle are unremarkable (unless the party encounters the Dust Hunter). On the third day, they note a general stillness has overtaken the jungle, and there is a distinct decrease in the wildlife noticed or heard as they break trail. As the investigators make their way deeper into the jungle, on the fourth day they come across some abandoned ruins. The porters are fearful of the rubble and must be intimidated or persuaded to continue through the site.

If examined, the ruins are determined to be some sort of a temple, but to what it is hard to say. Vines and undergrowth have overrun most of the stonework, but with further exploration, a great seal is spotted relatively intact. Cleaning away the grime of ages reveals a large glyph comprised of lesser glyphs. A successful Knowledge (Mythos) roll identifies it as an Elder Sign. The seal is slightly cracked and crazed.

One section of the temple shows signs of recent excavation. There is a narrow tunnel leading down into an underground burial chamber. A dozen skeletons, most likely servants, lie around the floor near golden goblets. The main stone coffin is open, and in it lays an old, dead Zande warrior marked with symbols, whose cause of death was a blow to the back of the head. The walls are marked in blood with strange symbols. A successful Knowledge (Occult) roll reveals the symbols for life and death amongst other stranger ones. A successful Knowledge (Mythos) roll notes the symbols for the plea of immortality to Quachil Uttaus.

On the floor is a journal written by Doctor Maxwell Hamilton. Professor Locke is both delighted and confused by the find. The journal recounts the doctor's introduction to the Zande people, his delight with them, and his dismissal of Uru's warnings. As the work progresses, Hamilton's paranoia is revealed, as well as his growing fascination for the history and mystical workings of the tribe and how heavily they believe in magic and their Spider-God. A handful of pages are torn out in the middle, but the final section indicates something changed Hamilton's mind. He no longer wrote as a skeptic, but as a believer, relating that he exhausted all their knowledge and sought out the deeper understanding believed to be found in the Lost Tablet of Creation.

The *plea for immortality* (*resurrection* spell) can be learned by studying this book carefully (Arcane Lore: -2). Since there is such a large gap in the work, there is little Mythos knowledge to be gained from skimming it, only tantalizing glimpses. Reading the book closely, however, increases Knowledge (Mythos) by +1.

### RUN THROUGH THE JUNGLE

KO SO SO

The next day as they travel through the canopied jungle, the party hears a sudden rustling to their right, and birds and bats suddenly fly and flap past them. Then they hear a horrible, terrible sound, as though men are being massacred – great, hoarse screams rip through the air. Suddenly, the jungle tears apart as a band of gorillas, their faces masks of rage, come charging at the party! Everyone must make Guts checks. With success, they are okay. Failure indicates they are swept up in the hysteria.

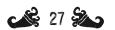
It seems an entire troop of gorillas are running away from something. Mothers are clinging to their young as they run past. The males are angry in their shame as they also escape in haste.

The entire party must make Agility rolls. Failure indicates they are an unfortunate victim of the encounter and suffer a level of Fatigue (as per bumps and bruises). A group Agility roll is made for the porters. Failure indicates that a third of them are lost for good, dead or too injured to go on.

### **AFTERMATH**

In the aftermath of the stampede, the party finds one large male gorilla just off the path. His arms have been plucked off, and it appears something took a large bite out of him. The chunk of flesh lies nearby as well. This was obviously a sadistic act of intentional violence by something preternaturally powerful.

With a successful Notice roll, a set of oversized gorilla tracks can be found, leading further off into the jungle. Should the party opt to follow the trail of broken branches, they soon discover a clearing by a





























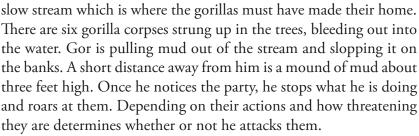












After the encounter with Gor, the party likely continues on its way. The thick jungle soon gives way to lush, hilly grassland, and tribesmen are spotted in the distance from time to time. If no one is familiar with Africa, then someone, most likely von Trotha or one of the porters, points out that the tribesmen they see belong to the Great Tribe of the Zande, the next stop on their journey.

# HILLTOP DEPARTURE

The next week of travel is relatively easy. Game is more plentiful in this area, and a degree of normalcy has returned - until they see a black painted skull tied to the top of a spear on a hilltop.

Von Trotha says his good-byes and wishes them good fortune. He tells them he and his men had best not tempt fate and that while his contingent has needed to travel east for several days, he thought he'd accompany them just a bit farther. As a parting gift, he gives the party member he deems most worthy (Keeper's call) a brass telescope to serve them in good stead, directing them to look off to the northeast toward a small tendril of smoke in the distance. Through the telescope, they can make out a small village preparing a big meal.

"They've been waiting for your arrival," he explains. "But do not be quick to trust. You are a long way from home and will survive better by erring on the side of caution." He makes a quick gesture across his throat. "Keep your own company and your own counsel. Be as civil as discretion allows, but remember this is not our world. Not civilization. Not yet. I hope to one day help change that."

If asked about the skull, he answers. "The black skull is used to mark the Zande territory. Once upon their land, they consider your life a gift given to you that they can snatch back at a moment's notice. They are fierce warriors, and backward in their ways and beliefs. We are not afraid, but we don't wish to provoke them for no good purpose, hence our departure from you."

He looks to the porters who are grumbling and hanging back. "Your porters won't go any further without proper incentive. Allow me to give them one." He turns to them and announces, "If I see any of you wandering back this way or hanging back right now without these good people, my men and I will slaughter each and every one of you. Mark my words."

He unslings his rifle, points it skyward, and drops a bird from the sky. Without further words, he reloads his rifle, stows it, nods, and turns away, barking out orders in German for his men to make haste.

### ZANDE VILLAGE

The village of the Great Tribe is simple and primitive. All the men are warriors save for the binze, and the women all serve at his pleasure. The binze functions as the village leader, though there is also the kostelik, who is the war commander.

When the party arrives, the investigators are guided to a large guest hut and directed to have their people make camp near the stream. There they are offered many libations and hot steaming baths for them to refresh themselves, as well as ceremonial robes that they must wear when being presented to the binze. Several women, attractive and muscular, attend the investigators as they prepare for their reception. Attempting to conceal a weapon requires an opposed Stealth versus Notice (Notice d6) roll. Failure could be considered a serious breach of etiquette.

The elders of the village are all twisted and malformed and wear simple wooden masks upon their face at all times. Those under twenty appear handsome and strong, and do not wear such masks.

### RECEPTION WITH THE BINZE

After the group has changed, they are received by the binze in his great hut. He is somber and dour, dressed in simple robes, with many necklaces and charms about his person. His staff drips with various bits of the occult. After the formal reception, he dismisses



















































his men, even his kostelik who is reluctant to go, and speaks to them in English.



"I am Isicabucabu, spider in my tongue, but you may call me Isaac. You are welcome to our home."



After proper introductions, he explains that he learned both English and French from Isahambi, who came from the outside world to learn their ways. But the stranger learned them too well, and became caught up in the web of the gods. As binze, he knows of the hidden world, which means knowing the dark as well as the light. He has paid a price for the knowledge, for the ability to protect his people, and also knows that ignorance is foolishness. But it is also foolish for everyone to suffer the same pain, when only one truly must. He tells them that he shared with Isahambi all the knowledge that he dared, even those things which he feared to reveal, but Isahambi was such a kind soul that surely he could resist the dark temptations. Isaac fears he did not. After a year, Isahambi traveled to Swart Groot, the dark temple, with Dala, the crazy old man who lives on Barren Hill, who often whispers to himself in the night. They never came back.



If the investigators ask why people fear the Great Tribe, Isaac tells them it is because of the dark power they are born with in their belly. It is a power that they can call out. He knows it is sharper than spears and deadlier than a tiger, but it can be tamed, and it is used only when spears and tigers won't do the trick. He tells them they are welcome to stay and enjoy the village's prosperity, but he will not teach them what he taught Isahambi, not for his life.



The next day, the investigators arise to find their porters missing, each and every one. All their belongings are intact, but it is as though they vanished into thin air. In truth, the porters feared the Great Tribe and fled of their own accord. Such was their terror that attempting to steal anything was the furthest thought from their minds. Members of the Great Tribe will only laugh and giggle if asked about what happened to the porters.



#### THE BARREN HILL

On the hilltop is the old hut of Dala, a disgraced binze who educated Hamilton in sorceries when Isaac would not. Dala guided Hamilton to Swart Groot, the ruined temple, where the doctor slew him in a ritual to resurrect the body of the entombed serpent king. Dala's body lies in the open sarcophagus there.

Scattered about his hut are an old pendant, a bag of grayish-brown powder (the powder of Ibn-Gazi, pg. 68 in Realms of Cthulhu), and a small ivory scrimshaw box depicting a whaling vessel. There is also a pallet on the floor next to a steam trunk. Within the trunk are the possessions abandoned by Hamilton: a gold pocket watch (given to him by his fiancée, Professor Locke), a number of letters she had sent him, and a small note addressed to her.

#### Dearest Miss Locker

If you are reading this, then you are no less the stubborn lady that I met seven years a go. The stream of time, however, has put us apart far greater than any mere seo graphical distances ever could and what I have seen is not for your eyes, my dear. Not yet. I understand these people now. I know what I must do. The tablet holds the final piece, but I implore you to turn back. The river is too difficult for you to cross and the mountain's shadow too steep to climb. I have eaten the fruit and now seek out the serpent's wisdom to sneak into the Garden. I release you from our enjagement, and hope to meet you again one day when I have achieved my own deity.

Sincerely,

Isahambi

















































































Locke relates that Hamilton often couched his real meaning in allusions, but she is certain he has discovered the tablet's location. If the investigators come up short, the tribe or the missionary offers up the following information: Garden is the tribal nickname for the mangrove swamp that lies near Sea River. It is considered taboo for any to enter it without a blessing from the binze.

When asked about the mountain, no one is familiar with any in the region, but they suggest the investigators speak with the binze, for he is all-knowing.

The binze laughs when he hears the mountain mentioned, for it refers to a journey of spiritual enlightenment that is traditionally taken by an apprentice, but then his expression sobers. The shadow concerns him, though. Mountain's Shadow is how his master referred to the dead city buried beneath the earth.

#### LET ME TELL YOU A STORY

At this point, Isaac sighs and works his hands together.

"Gather round me close," he begins. "I tell a tale I have never told which burns to get out."

"Our lands are magical and old, and hide terrible secrets that should lie buried. I did not tell Isahambi of this place, but foolish Dala may well have done so. Our tribe once came into possession of a strange tablet, perhaps the one of which you speak. It was a gift from a neighboring tribe, back when we exchanged gifts and not death, and it was an item of power that our binze wore. It was passed down from one generation to the next until such time as Kabila became our binze. Kabila proclaimed the tablet a dark and dangerous thing that caused the evil to burn within us and our children to be born twisted and malformed, even as I am.

At that time I was his apprentice, and I accompanied him to Tuin to dispose of it. We went to the monolith and prayed and made sacrifice until the shadows fell long across the earth, and the rains came upon us in shards of blinding light. When the rains cleared we stood within

the gates of a huge city smothered by clouds. I have never been beyond the village and haven't seen the marvels of man, but certainly this was among them. I was fearful and begged to wait for him, so he kissed my cheeks, laid down his vestments, and disappeared into the mists. I heard snarling and my master scream, but I could not follow. I grabbed up my master's things and fled through the gates, through the lightning rain, and wandered delirious for three days, until I found my way back into the village where I was named the new binze. Despite Kabila's death – and my cowardice – things felt better, they have felt right, and our children have been blessed with good features.

KO SO SO SO

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Then an old man appeared among us three years ago. He claimed he was Kabila, but he could not be. But he knew things about our village, our people, about me. We revere our old ones, so we named him Dala, and gave him a small hut to call his own, and enough mampoer (peach brandy) to keep him quiet and content. Since his arrival, I have been restless and worried. Now, I feel the shadows moving again. I must make amends to the gods for my cowardice. I will guide you to the monolith."

# SETTING OUT AND FORDING A RIVER

When the party sets out, they must sort out their provisions. Isaac explains it is the way of the Great Tribe for each to carry their own, and it is a great dishonor to carry for another. He tells them the two day journey is just north of Sankuru, beyond the next forest. The rains are heavy and fierce for the first day, and it takes an extra day to reach the river which is swelling from the recent torrents. A successful Survival roll is needed to find a good place to ford. Once the investigators begin to cross, a great crocodile rises up out of the water and attacks the second person entering the water. A successful Notice roll by the victim is needed or the croc gets the Drop on them. On the other side of the crossing point is an immense mangrove swamp. Anyone with Knowledge (Africa) will know mangroves normally thrive only in coastal or other high salinity areas; therefore salt must be getting into the water from somewhere. The Sankuru is a freshwater river, but here the salt can be tasted, making it undrinkable - hence the Great Tribe's nickname of Sea River.









































#### THE BLACK MANGROVE SWAMP

The tangled trees look half-dead and cast a gloomy pall. Again, Isaac speaks. "The Sea River is a strange thing, but it has always been. This area is known as the den of the Snake God. It eats up all of the salt. Be wary of what we find here."

The monolith can be seen in the distance, on a small patch of ground that rises just above the water's surface, but there are no signs of life there. He points off to a small opening in the roots about a hundred yards distant and tells them that it leads to an underground passage that will take them up near the monolith. Should the investigators opt to travel overland, Isaac tries to persuade them otherwise, and says he will meet them on the other side. Travel is treacherous and takes two hours. After each hour, each investigator must make a successful Vigor roll or suffer a level of Fatigue.

The mangrove swamp is infested with a small clutch of Deep Ones as well as some agitated crocodiles. Movement is treacherous through the tangle of mud, roots, vines, and swampland. All movement is halved, and running requires an Agility roll to keep from falling into the muck.



#### CROCODILE ATTACK

As the group works its way through the complex root system, a crocodile rushes past them, then another. A third, much larger than the first two, a giant crocodile attacks. After dealing with the threat, they arrive at the cave entrance.

# THE CAVE SYSTEM

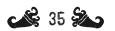
The cave is sweaty and humid. The air is very still and smells of brine. Roots dangle from the low ceiling, brushing against one's face as one follows the passage down. It opens into a large, high chamber with a pool of water and another passage continuing on the other side. The walls are marked with tribal symbols. The stone floor of the cave is rough, uneven, and slippery, making travel difficult. There are scuff marks here, perhaps made by the crocodiles, or more likely something else. A boot print can be discerned along with some other marks that look a great deal more amphibious.

A leathery skinned corpse lies on the floor, rigid and twitching in pain. Is it still alive? What is it? It looks a great deal less than human. Great fang marks are seen in its shoulder, penetrating its thick skin. Black ooze mixes with a greenish ichor and pools on the floor. A finely crafted spear made from one great bone (whale) lies nearby.

Six Deep Ones made this hole their home. They had traveled to find the monolith. Instead, their leader, a Deep One sorcerer, met its doom at the hands of the Favored One. The battle just took place a short time ago, and the remaining five Deep Ones are hiding in the pool, biding their time. They silently watch the investigators as they pass through. If the pool is studied or disturbed, the investigators get an opposed Notice roll against the Deep Ones' Stealth. If spotted, they dive deeper into the murky waters, out of sight.

### INITIAL ENCOUNTER

Just as the investigators exit the cave and return into the murky sunlight, they hear chanting which suddenly ceases. A hooded figure rises up, and behind him Hamilton can be spotted rushing toward the monolith just as fiery beams shoot out of it in every direction. He disappears. The remaining figure turns to face the investigators,



































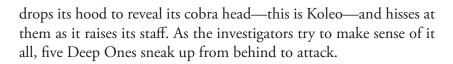














### KOLEO, THE FAVORED ONE



This serpent man was an ancient sorcerer stricken down a thousand years ago and subsequently buried reverently by his people. Hamilton raised him from the dead to serve him, and Koleo is torn between joy and rage. He is glad to be alive, but does not take kindly to serving any other than Yig. His initial strategy is as simple as it is singleminded, to capture Professor Locke and escape. To that end, he casts dark embrace at the first opportunity and grabs up the professor.



Dark embrace creates a Large Burst Template of utter darkness (-6) centered on the caster for three rounds and may be maintained after that. The caster is able to see in the affected area with no difficulty.



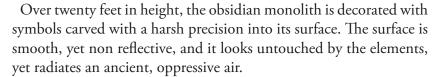
If Koleo successfully grabs the professor, he runs through the still shimmering portal, and it closes behind him. The investigators still have to deal with the Deep Ones. If he cannot grab the professor, he will fight with the Deep Ones until the battle turns against him and then flee.



Should the investigators seek to leap through the Gate in pursuit, they must make a successful Vigor roll or suffer a level of Fatigue, and a successful Guts check at -1 or suffer 2d6 Mental Anguish as they shift through space to arrive in the Shadow City. However, Koleo is nowhere in sight.



### THE MONOLITH



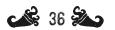


#### **OPENING THE GATE**



The Gate can be opened only through the proper ritual and by blood sacrifice. Opening the Ggate requires a successful Knowledge (Mythos) roll at -4. Failure causes 2d6 Mental Anguish. Time can be





spent to reduce the casting time as usual. If anyone attempts to open the Gate without blood sacrifice, they automatically fail. One of the investigators may either suffer a wound to fulfill the requirements, or offer up one of the Deep Ones, if any are alive. Each traveler must make a Vigor roll or suffer a level of Fatigue that is regained after an hour's rest.

# THE SHADOW CITY

KOSO SON

An ancient, crumbling city looms before the investigators. They are just within its limits. Behind them is a wall of unworked stone and the Gate they just entered. It is still open, and from this side it appears as a silver nimbus. It shimmers slightly, and they can hazily make out the mangroves and sunshine just beyond. Here, however, the air is damp and cold. They can see their breath before them. With the precious light spilling through, they can see recent tracks in the damp clay beneath their feet, and a trail of blood disappearing into the darkness.

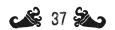
#### FIRST IMPRESSIONS

It is important to convey the sense of immensity to the investigators and a feeling of impending dread. Once illuminated, they can see but they cannot tell where they are, but if any have a background in archaeology, spelunking, or the like, they feel that they are very far below ground, farther than they have ever been before. In the distance, they can hear an echoing sound – the sound of footsteps hurriedly receding.

### DESCRIBING THE CITY AND DIRECTING PLAY

The city spreads out in all directions before the investigators, so how best to move them in the direction they need to go without excessive diversions? Let's face it, diversions and unpredictability spice up any game, so here is the short answer, followed by a longer one.

Cheat. Just a little. Describe the overwhelming immensity of the buildings, the towers, and the strange angles and open archways. Emphasize the alien feel of it all. Let them hear strange scuffling and grunts. Let a weird, three-legged hyena cross their path and drop













































dead at their feet. That sort of thing.

Then as they move forward into the darkness in pursuit of Hamilton and the tablet – for the quest is one and the same at this point - you can move them through the next optional scenes as you desire, depending upon how broken they may be physically and mentally at this point. No matter which direction they go or what they do, unless they flee back through the Gate, they eventually have their confrontation with Hamilton on the rooftop of the Wizard's Tower.

#### THE ARMORY

The investigators hear a curious thrumming sound coming from within a spindly building to their left. Upon entering, soft glows bubble up on the surface of the walls, and several tables are the focus of these lights. Each table is laden with exotic-looking weapons. Most seem impossible to wield with two hands or require enormous strength to even budge. There are two weapons that seem to be within the bounds of humanity – one resembles most closely a mace and the other a sword.

The mace emits an energy charge that does an additional d10 damage upon a successful hit. The sword is crafted of thrice-blessed iron and engraved with the Elder Sign. It offers its wielder Parry +2 against Mythos beasts and may damage those only affected by magic.

There is nothing else of worth in this chamber.

### THE PRISON

As you pass one open archway after another, you notice a door. The door is of the same metals as the weapons and is engraved with numerous bizarre symbols. Anyone examining the symbols closely notices a spider symbol figures prominently in the pattern. To open the door requires a Knowledge (Mythos) or Knowledge (Occult) roll at -2 to press the proper symbols. This building has no windows, and it stands apart from any others. A successful Notice roll at -2 detects something faintly shuffling about within.

If the door is opened, a black wind swirls out and past the investigators, invoking a Fear check. The room within is nearly empty. There are claw marks on the walls and skeletal remains that fall to dust if touched lie on the floor. Cobwebs dominate half the room, and there is a live cockroach struggling in sticky, black tar on the floor. What the investigators have just freed is best left to the Keeper's imagination, but should definitely resurface in future tales. Perhaps they should have heeded Uru's warning?

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#### THE LIBRARY

Candlelight spills out of an open archway. Peering in, it can be seen that the walls are lined from ceiling to floor with numerous books. A lone, hooded figure sits at a table reading a large tome. He is gloved, and not one single piece of flesh is exposed. Only the glint of light off his eyes pierces the darkness beneath his cowl.

Should the investigators enter the room, the illusion falls, and they behold a moldering space filled with long-rotted books that look as though they have been recently thrown off the shelves and trampled. If the investigators opt to search through the debris, they find one small book that does not fall to pieces in their hands. The tome is written in alchemical script and is entitled *The Sorcerer of Tuin*. It contains one combat spell of the Keeper's choosing.

### THE LOST TABLET OF CREATION

The Lost Tablet of Creation grants any tainted individual Armor +4 while spellcasting and enables them to cast any ritual spell. Anyone else with Corruption gains Armor +2 while invoking Powers and +2 to Knowledge (Mythos) rolls for casting spells. Each use of a spell increases their Corruption by 1 point until they are tainted. The Lost Tablet of Creation has Arcane Lore: +2 and contains six spells of the Keeper's choosing. The inscriptions upon it are in Assyrian.







































#### THE WIZARD'S TOWER

The investigators suddenly hear the ululations of chanting nearby. A successful Notice roll at -2 determines its origin – a spindly tower. Within the tower, the cobra-wizard is holding a tablet over his head in both hands while he chants. He is enveloped in a black energy that is flowing from the tablet. Professor Locke is tied up on the altar before him, blood dripping from a gash across her wrist onto the floor (she has one wound). (If Locke was not captured, then a bowl of blood is set on the altar, and the cobra-wizard has one wound.) Hamilton is nowhere to be seen. He is, in fact, atop the tower of the building, awaiting godhood.

Koleo, the Favored One, continues his chanting undeterred, until wounded or his magic is disrupted.



Should the investigators go to the rooftop, they see Hamilton, his skin rippling with arcane energies. He turns towards them even as snake-like tentacles rip through his shirt. He laughs hysterically, foam flying from his mouth.

"You are too late! You are too late! Bow before your new god!"

In truth, the investigators still have a chance. The transformation is not complete. If they destroy him, the cobra-wizard dies as well. If they disrupt the cobra wizard's magic, Hamilton's tentacles disappear in the following round. However, they are then faced with fighting both of them.

The investigators' fate will be determined, for good or ill, long before the spell is completed.

If the investigators all fall, then Hamilton's transformation into Isahambi is completed and he becomes an aspect of Yig.

If this is the start of a continuing campaign, this does not have to be the end of the investigators' tale. Their tragic failure, the missing Professor Locke, and the mysterious words of Isaac can lead to an entire possibility of adventure and a fitting introduction to the potential lethality of *Realms of Cthulhu*.

#### **FAILURE**

The investigators wake up some time later in the mangrove swamp where the monolith once stood, though it is now gone with no trace remaining. Any items they found in the city are gone. Their physical wounds are healed, but their psychic wounds remain. Locke is no longer with them. Isaac nods to them grimly.

"The Snake God has marked us. I pray for your souls."

As the players are probably reeling from this turn of events, you should smirk wisely, narrate their uneventful return voyage home, and call the game while you plan what happens next time.































































































#### SUCCESS

As the investigators strike the finishing blow against their adversary, they hear a sudden whoosh as the body erupts in flame. Any who see the enemy cobra-wizard observes it silently scream and disintegrate as well.

The professor can still be saved. She has been bleeding out slowly (one wound). If the investigators cannot heal her, Isaac (if he is still about) should be able to apply some of his herbal remedies. She is unconscious and must be carried out.

# **EPILOGUE**

#### **BACK INTO SUNLIGHT**

After the Gate is opened, the investigators find themselves back once more in the mangrove swamp. Each traveler must make a Vigor roll or suffer a level of Fatigue that is regained after an hour's rest. Failure causes 2d6 Mental Anguish. When the weapons come through the Gate, they become inert, though they still function as a normal mace and broadsword. In the daylight, they seem to be made of simple iron. Professor Locke revives and asks after Hamilton's fate. If the investigators have taken pains to hide the tablet, she asks after that as well.

### WHAT TO DO WITH THE TABLET?

The tablet is roughly 8.5 inches wide by 11 inches high and about 2 inches thick. It is made of obsidian. Professor Locke wants to take it to the Repositorium for further study and safekeeping. She doesn't mind anyone studying it in the meantime. Anyone who thinks to make a rubbing of it needs to be commended for their inventiveness and then asked if they have a brush and some appropriate papers. If they can scrounge up those materials, they manage to create a rubbing of the Lost Tablet that has Arcane Lore: -2 and retains a d4 spells of the Keepers choosing.

# THE RETURN TRIP

The investigators have gone through a lot. Isaac offers them an opportunity to rest and heal in the village before completing the last leg of their journey back to the coast. As they are in Isaac's care, don't forget to make Healing rolls at +2.

Once they are recovered, Isaac thanks them, gives them a jar of healing salve (2 uses, Healing rolls at +2), and wishes them safe travels.

# THE VOYAGE HOME

The trip home is haunted by strange dreams for all investigators, but two singular dreams stand out the most. These two should be given to the most and least corrupt of the investigators. In the case of a tie, the Keeper decides who did the most good in the adventure and rewards accordingly.

Most Pure: Uru visits the investigator in his dream and thanks him for what he has done for his people. All madness levels are eliminated.

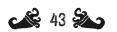
Most Corrupt: As the investigator dreams, he dreams of spiders and tendrils coming out of the Lost Tablet of Creation and boring into his brain. He must make a Guts check or suffer 2d4 Mental Anguish.

Two months pass with only mild storms and middling weather. As Dark Harbor is reached, the skies are clear and the sun is shining brightly. The investigators have finally returned home!

If the party manages to survive and prevent Hamilton from successfully completing his ritual, they each garner four experience points. If they manage to complete the adventure, but don't overcome the great evil (or all "die" in the process), they earn three.

Generous Keepers can bump the experience points by one.

Traditional Keepers can decrease the experience points by one.

















































# PLAYER HANDOUT

Dearest Miss Locke,

If you are reading this, then you are no less the stubborn lady that I met seven years ago. The stream of time, however, has put us apart far greater than any mere seographical distances ever could and what I have seen is not for your eyes, my dear. Not yet. I understand these people now. I know what I must do. The tablet holds the final piece, but I implore you to turn back. The river is too difficult for you to cross and the mountain's shadow too steep to climb. I have eaten the fruit and now seek out the serpent's wisdom to sneak into the Garden. I release you from our engagement, and hope to meet you again one day when I have achieved my own deity.

Sincerely,

Isahambi