

Keeper's Resource Book

by Simon Carryer

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Keeper's Resource Book

INTRODUCTION

Trail of Cthulhu rewards Keeper preparation. In laying out a series of clues ahead of time and guiding the players through those clues to their terrifying culmination, the Keeper will find the game rules suit careful forward planning. However, the game also supports a more improvisational style of Keeper. Clues need not always be placed ahead of time and a Keeper who enjoys such play can easily run *Trail of Cthulhu* with only minimal setup

This Keeper's screen is designed to support both styles of play. If you prefer to plan everything in advance and meticulously plot the various pathways the players could take to the conclusion, you'll find this document provides substantial inspiration for clues, special benefits, and plot twists. Read over the prospective Investigators' abilities and occupations alongside this book during your prep and look for ways to incorporate interesting facets, potential scenes, and historical details. In particular,

this book will help you to build your mystery around less obvious uses of player abilities, with plot hooks tailored to the players' occupations.

If you favor a more improvisational style of game, the Keeper's screen can still help. When a player uses an investigative ability in a scene, you can glance over that ability's entry for ideas to spice the scene up. The entries can also supply off-the-cuff inspiration for future scenes, give openings for new NPC interactions, or even provide the seeds of unconsidered alternative outcomes to the story.

We've also provided sample special benefits for each ability. These allows the Keeper to reward the creative use of the less obviously beneficial abilities, as well as ensuring that each player gets a fair measure of 'spotlight time'. These benefits have been written to fit as many different situations as possible, so it's easy to throw them into your game. With the knowledge provided by the Occupation and Ability entries, you should feel comfortable coming

up with your own special benefits or approving benefits suggested by players.

Above all, you should be able to add flavor, variety and plenty of immersion. Do, however, please remember that this is a source book, not a textbook. A little historical accuracy can add a sense of authenticity and some curious details, but don't feel like you need to master every detail of how the ability or occupation functioned in the 1930s. Slavish devotion to accuracy bogs down the game in mere pedantry and nitpicking on the Keeper's part may stymie otherwise excellent player plans.

A lot of fascinating material has had to be left out of the Keeper's screen in the interests of space. Feel free to use the entries here as starting points for your own historical research. You'll find that story ideas constantly arise as a result. Reality can provide ideas as strange and terrifying as anything Lovecraft wrote.

CREDITS

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TRAIL OF CTHULHU

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Abilities



INVESTIGATIVE ABILITIES

Introduction

Below are entries for most of the abilities found in the *Trail of Cthulhu* rulebook. We have left some out, either because they cover a very broad field and providing useful information is impossible, or because they are covered in detail in the rulebook already.

Each entry lists a few important aspects of the ability as it was used in the 1930s and a few different ways for the ability to be used in your game. (Historical subjects of particular concern have been designated as an Ability Focus.) Some entries also include characteristic equipment associated with the ability. Sample special benefits have been provided either for a busy Keeper to use unmodified, or to provide inspiration for your own.

Accounting

A great many people laid the blame for the financial woes that led to the Great Depression at the feet of accountants, or rather at a lack of honest accountancy among major American companies. The Thirties saw sweeping changes in accountancy practices, with greater government oversight, more financial transparency, and of course, more accountants.

Far from being a gray and boring ability, Accounting can bring down crime lords and sink unsinkable companies. It's also not just the investigators who might have skills in

Investigative Abilities

accountancy. Competent cult leaders, self-made tycoons, savvy crime lords and even private asylums may all have a man in their employ to do the books. Such people can be potential allies, if they are ignorant of their employers' true natures – or they can be utterly devoted henchmen.

Ability Focus: Corrupt Practices

Separate Legal Entities: A common practice for legal tax avoidance is the creation of a separate legal entity, such as a trust, company or foundation, to which assets are donated. The separate entity can then make capital gains on the assets without the individual paying personal tax. The separate entity is often incorporated in an offshore jurisdiction with lenient tax laws. People or groups (such as cults) who had amassed vast wealth might use this practice to keep their income to themselves.

Money Laundering: USTax law requires all income to be declared, even if it is earned from an illegal source. For obvious reasons, most criminals are reluctant to do this! This makes them vulnerable to charges of tax evasion when there is insufficient evidence for other crimes, as was the case with Al Capone.

Money laundering, the process of declaring illegal income as coming from a legal source, is a way to circumvent this. A shell company is set up to bank money on behalf of the criminal organization. Companies established for this purpose are usually in service industries, deal face-to-face with the public, and deal mainly in cash. These kinds of businesses are preferred because of the difficulty of tracing the source of incoming cash.

Evasion of Customs: Short of actual smuggling, Custom Duties (tax on goods brought into a country) can be avoided by under-invoicing (declaring the value of the goods to

be less than it is). Goods with specific duties, such as alcohol or tobacco, are more commonly 'misdeclared' – the description of the quantity or nature of the goods is falsified. How many of those who bring strange, ancient artifacts into the country are *really* declaring their true worth?

Structuring Deposits: Large financial transactions draw attention from law enforcement agencies, unless the money can be shown to come from a legitimate source. *Structuring deposits* refers to the practice of splitting up a large amount of money into multiple small amounts, often deposited in different banks, to avoid such attention.

Such a lump sum might come from the sale of some rare and exotic item on the black market, or perhaps from the sale of a human being of just the right kind for a ritual. On the other hand, someone might have been paid a lot of money for a special service, such as having an annoying investigator rubbed out, agreeing to give false testimony in court, or even attempting to raise a loved one from the dead...

Sample Special Benefits

- You turn up some crooked accounting details that would be very interesting to the authorities, and could land someone a lot of jail time. You gain a two point dedicated pool for Intimidate when used on the accountant responsible, or on the person they were working for.
- You recognise the person you're trying to deal with isn't as rich as he appears to be. That name belongs to an undischarged bankrupt – you've seen it on some papers somewhere. There are some creditors out there who wouldn't mind being tipped off. You can earn yourself a favor from some shady people.

- The Tax Department is especially grateful for your recent work on their behalf. Gain a two point dedicated pool for Bureaucracy when dealing with matters related to accounts.

Sample Clues

- A cleaning business's records show a large cash payment every week at the same time. It could just be a regular client, or it could be someone using the business to launder money. Anyone watching the business at the right time will see the gangster's henchman depositing the money.
- A corporation is technically registered out of a small offshore island, outside of United States jurisdiction. They must own property out there; perhaps that's where the CEO is building his cult headquarters.
- Some customs declarations all show the same shipment of 'coffee' arriving every month, at the same times witnesses have reported potential cultists hanging around the dock. Whatever it is they're smuggling, it comes from Boston by ship. That's bound to be where the cult headquarters are located.

Anthropology

Anthropology of the 1930s was, in most colleges, understood as a hard science, similar to psychology or geography. Fieldwork consisted of rigorous measurements of living spaces, accounting of food intake, and surveys of subject populations. Early ideas about 'civilization' and 'savagery' were being replaced with a more complex understanding of culture as a reaction to environmental situations.

Ability Focus: Academia

The Golden Bough: First published in 1890, but considerably expanded in later editions, *The Golden*

Bough was an exhaustive study in comparative mythology. Attempting to establish the underlying themes and commonalities behind mythologies and religious practices, *The Golden Bough* was an authoritative text for many anthropologists, even as many of its tenets were coming into question in the 1930s.

At the same time, it was a valued text among occultists. Aleister Crowley placed it on the reading list for his organization. Any anthropologist will find *The Golden Bough* works well as a conversational topic where those of a mystical bent are concerned.

Culture: The concept of culture as we understand it today was still being formed in the 1930s. 'Cultural Relativism', the idea that an action or event can only be understood with reference to its cultural context, was a very new idea. 'Functionalism' – the attempt to understand all cultural phenomena as having an adaptive or economic function – was a popular school of thought at the time.

Ethnography: This is the name given to the published results of fieldwork within a culture. In the 1930s, ethnography was emerging as the primary product of anthropology. Several famous ethnographies, such as Malinowski's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* or Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa*, were published in the 1920s and 30s. These ethnographies had an enormous effect upon society and upon anthropology.

Ethnographies contain detailed and comprehensive information and analysis of a given culture. They are thus highly valuable texts for anthropologists to take with them when venturing into little-known foreign lands. Feel free to invent ethnographies of your own that relate to cultures invented by Mythos authors, such as the Tcho-Tcho people

of Burma.

Sample Special Benefits

- You have read an ethnography of a given people, giving you some insight into the rules of polite behavior in their culture. You gain a two point dedicated pool for Reassurance, Flattery and the like, among these people.
- You encountered similar glyphs during your fieldwork among a Yanamamo tribe in the Amazon. You may call for a flashback scene, in which you learn more useful information.
- Following an encounter with cultists during which you were able to observe a ritual, you are able to publish a paper on the subject that will draw significant attention from within the field. You either gain a two-point dedicated pool for Bureaucracy at your local University, or gain a bursary to fund future field trips, expeditions or similar research.

Sample Clues

- The body was decapitated, a practice common to Guinean head-hunters. If it was head-hunters, they'll inevitably hold a feast within the next three days. There can only be so many places where a group could do that. Find the feast, and you'll find the killers.
- The idol is festooned with Melanesian trade-beads, meaning it has been traded across hundreds of islands and thousands of miles of ocean to get to its current location. By the colours and designs of the beads you can tell exactly where it started.
- The house-servant seems innocuous, but he's wearing an amulet that identifies him as a shaman of a remote tribe. Perhaps

there's more to him than meets the eye.

Archaeology

Archaeological digs were happening all over the world during the 1930s, many of them uncovering unprecedented finds and revolutionizing human understanding of our own past.

Ability Focus: Techniques

Metal Detectors: Developed from radio technology, itself a fledgling industry in the 1930s, metal detectors of the era were bulky, consumed enormous numbers of batteries, and were highly experimental. Nonetheless, a well-funded archaeological dig might have such a device.

As well as detecting metal, an investigator might pick up on certain other subtle signals. Perhaps the detector starts emitting strange noises, like the metallic chiming of some far-off alien instrument. Or perhaps there are voices among the static, oddly muffled, as if they themselves were buried beneath the soil.

Aerial Photography: Photographs from observation balloons in WWI revealed the outlines of old Roman fortifications that were not noticed from the ground. This opened up a new realm of archaeological survey, utilizing aircraft, tethered balloons, and anything else that could bear a camera aloft to survey an area from the air.

Some moments of pure Lovecraftian horror can be had from achieving a *perspective* that suddenly places baffling elements in their true configuration. One is reminded of the five-headed horror in *Imprisoned with the Pharaohs*, or the gelatinous folded cylinder in *The Shunned House*. Similarly, a group of investigators might not realize the shape of the land formations around them, or the design traced into the

hillside by an ancient people, or what the curious deformed hill actually *is*, until the site is viewed from the air.

Electrical Resistivity

Tomography: By measuring the electrical resistivity of sections of earth, and applying sophisticated and newly developed mathematical equations, a rough picture of subterranean structures can be developed. In the 1930s this was a cutting-edge technique.

A good way to employ scientific advances in the context of a *Trail of Cthulhu* story is to have the new technology baffled by some eldritch manifestation. The more reliable a device is supposed to be, the more disturbing it is when its results do not make sense. How would electrical tomography cope with weird sunken masonry whose angles do not behave as they should?

Sample Special Benefits

- You discover artifacts of a hitherto unknown culture or artistic style. Your discovery of them, accompanied by an article describing them, will create quite a stir. Other experts may seek you out in order to examine the objects, increasing your academic credibility and opening the doors to certain highly inaccessible collections.
- Fortunately, the complex in which the investigators are lost (or trapped) was constructed by an ancient group whom you have studied extensively. Gain a two point dedicated pool for deciphering scripts or avoiding hazards found in the complex.
- You identify a weapon that was used by an ancient culture's warrior priests, using a specific technique with which you happen to be familiar from its depiction in the



scrolls. Gain a two point dedicated pool for using this weapon.

Sample Clues

- The ruins that a newspaper article reported on seem to be just random piles of rocks, but seen from the air, a pattern emerges. Comparing it to reconstructions of other similar structures, you can find the entrance to a group of underground chambers.
- When a group is examining the wounds on a body, you can identify

that they were inflicted by a rare, ancient item. You can even tell the group where there's a museum that has one on display.

- A babbling cultist (or an asylum inmate thought to be incurably insane) is actually speaking a dialect of Egyptian that died out millennia ago. It's known only from hieroglyphs. You can trace his language to an exact period of Egyptian history. Perhaps there will be more clues in the history books.

Ancient Languages

Akkadian: An ancient language of the Middle East. The language of diplomacy and culture from the 3rd Millennium BC to the early 1st Millennium AD.

Ancient Zapotec: The language of possibly the earliest Mesoamerican script, though the Olmec script may be earlier. Since texts are few and relatively short, and difficult to interpret, the script is essentially undeciphered. 300 BC - 700 AD.

Celtiberian: An ancient Celtic language of the northern Iberian Peninsular. 1st century BC.

Epigraphic Mayan: The language or languages of the Mayan glyphs, including Ch'olti' and **Yucatec**. This writing system was not deciphered until the 1960s, but in a Pulp game the Keeper might allow some rudimentary understanding. 3rd Century BC.

Khitan: The extinct language of the Khitan dynasty, which at one time ruled much of Mongolia, Manchuria and northern China. 916 - 1125 AD.

Minoan: The language or languages that underlie the undeciphered Linear A texts, found written on clay tablets on Crete and neighboring islands. Circa 1800 and 1450 BC.

Maharastri Prakrit: A language of Maharastra, India, it is also used in the dialog and songs of low-class characters in Sanskrit plays. From the 5th Century BC.

Old Aramaic: The oldest version of the Aramaic language. Inscriptions found in Syria. 10-8th cent. BC.

Punic: An ancient language of Northern Africa. An offshoot of Phoenician, this was the language of Carthage and its empire. 1st Millennium BC - 600 AD.

Puyo: An extinct language once spoken in Manchuria.

Sumerian: An ancient language of Southern Iraq. Thought to be the first written language. Before 1st Millennium BC.

Zhang-zhung. An ancient language of Western Tibet & Central Asia. 7th - 10th century AD.

Architecture

1930s housing was characterized by cheap, kit set homes built to house migrant workers with government pensions, and yet some of North America's most impressive buildings were also built in the 1930s.

Sample Special Benefits:

- While breaking in to a house, you observe that houses from this

era have metal-framed windows, which are susceptible to rust. Rather than break the glass, you may silently remove the window from its frame.

- While exploring, you encounter floorboards that are old and creaky, but your familiarity with the architecture means you know where to walk to avoid them. You gain a two-point dedicated pool for

Stealth in that building.

- The floorboards in these old buildings aren't very strong, especially in large rooms. If you can lure the thing into the ballroom, its bulk will send it crashing several floors down into the basement.
- On discovering a room partly constructed according to a weird geometrical plan (either unfinished or dilapidated) you find your architectural knowledge gives you unique insights. You are able to reconstruct how the room would have looked, allowing you to construct a similar room; this gives special defence against certain supernatural threats, or enables you to summon arcane assistance, according to the whim of the Keeper.

Sample Clues

- There's a spatial anomaly in the design of the building. There seems to be 'missing' space, perhaps a sign of a hidden room.
- The building is a burnt-out ruin, but from what's left of the structure you can make some guesses about the original layout, leading you to uncover the entrance to the cellar.
- The plasterwork on one wall is subtly different from the rest. It looks like someone had it redone recently. Maybe there's something entombed behind it.

Art

Ability Focus: Popular Art Forms of the 1930s

Theater: Musical Theater remained popular through the thirties, despite relatively high-ticket prices compared to new entertainments such as movies and radio. Stage actors could still

Investigative Abilities

Timeline of North American Architectural Styles

1600-1780: Colonial: An American style inspired by architecture from colonizing countries, this style varies immensely according to the country of origin of the colonists.

1720-1800: Georgian: Stately, large, and symmetrical, Georgian houses imitated English manor homes. Brick buildings, they often had plaster facades.

1750-1880: Neoclassical/Federalist/Idealist: Highly ornamental, including oddities like oval rooms, arched 'Palladian' windows, and garlands.

1790-1850: Greek revival. Features inspired by classical Greek architecture, such as columns, pediments and the like.

1840-1900: Victorian. An eclectic style, including Gothic arches and pointed windows, 'gingerbread' trim, asymmetry, 'Italianate' low roofs and wide eaves, 'Stick Architecture' which imitated medieval styles, and 'Queen Anne' style, which included towers, turrets, wrap around porches and other fanciful details.

1860-1900: Arts and Crafts: Characteristic features include: Elaborate woodwork, exposed beams and integration with surroundings,

1890-1914: Art Nouveau. Also known as 'New Style' architecture, Art Nouveau buildings were inspired by nature. They were asymmetrical, featuring arches and curves, mosaics, plant-like embellishments and Japanese motifs.

1895-1930: Foursquare. An extremely popular style all over the United States due to the cheap kitset houses manufactured in this style, Foursquare was typified by boxlike houses, four-room floor plans, two stories with a central staircase and attic, and a wide porch.

1925-1935: Art Deco. Very 'modern' looking, Art Deco featured cubic forms, zigzag patterns, clean lines, and Egyptian motifs inspired by the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb.

1900-Present: Modern. A distinctive style used especially for large public buildings, Modernist architecture features functional design, square and rectangular shapes, minimal ornamentation, metal and concrete construction, and factory-made parts.

command fame similar to some movie stars, though they were never as well paid. Struggling actors would find work in the theater much as they do today.

Radio Drama: A form of audio storytelling performed over the radio, radio drama took off in the 1920s and remained popular in the 1930s. Spanning almost any genre, from soap opera to detective fiction, and

ranging widely in quality, radio drama provided employment to many actors, and gave a lot of aspiring playwrights and novelists their start.

In 1938, Orson Welles terrified America with the infamous *War of the Worlds* radio broadcast. Many households, unaware that what they were listening to was a radio drama, listened in horror to the descriptions of alien, tentacular monsters emerging

from their craft. Some even went so far as to pack their belongings and flee for the hills. Perhaps some people really did encounter alien entities back then?

Photography: Photography as an art form was only just receiving recognition. Most art photographers of the time imitated painting styles. This movement, called 'Pictorialism', often used soft focus for a dreamy, romantic look. In the 1930s, another movement, 'Straight Photography', advocated for the aesthetic qualities of photography as an art in of itself.

A pictorialist photographer might try to reproduce a classic painted image that contains elements of horror, such as Fuseli's *The Nightmare*. This immediately gives rise to a *Pickman's Model* style of scenario; what grinning, dwarfish thing was the real-life model for the piece?

Movies: The 1930s was a decade of burgeoning growth for the film industry. Record profits, growing audiences, and developing technology made the film industry an exciting art form for those who were involved. American film of the decade began and ended with Hollywood, and American films produced outside LA were almost unheard of. Film stars commanded unprecedented fame and young people flocked to Hollywood to become part of the new fad.

Music: The 1930s saw the growth of popular music as an art form and a diversification of musical styles. 'Big Bands' with dozens of members played swing music in clubs and bars, while classical composers enjoyed some Federal funding. Folk music, epitomized by the performer Woody Guthrie, voiced the hardships of displaced and starving workers.

Painting: Art styles of the decade included 'Regionalism', realistic

paintings of rural scenes, 'Abstract', which depicted abstract shapes and colors, 'Social Realism' which depicted lives of workers and homeless during the Depression, and 'Surrealism' which juxtaposed incongruous and bizarre images with elements of normality. Surrealism is a perfect style for Mythos concepts to creep in. Alien vistas and impossible geometries wouldn't be out of place on a surrealist canvas.

Sample Special Benefits

- You encounter a group of people who happen to have heard of you and admire your work. They'll go out of their way to be helpful to you, at the cost of some amount of your personal time: perhaps you could sign this, give your opinion on that, or sing one of your numbers with a member of the family? Gain a two point dedicated pool for interpersonal skills used among these people.
- Your art is a comfort to you. Producing a particularly impressive work of art, a well-received recital or exhibition, or a daring new composition allows you to refresh your Stability with a Confidence die.
- You produce a work of art that affects you deeply, taking you back to a time earlier in your life. Perhaps a song reminds you of a traumatic event years ago, or an image was inspired by a lost love. You can relate a flashback scene.
- Certain *things* communicate with organs other than human lips and tongues. Nobody could speak their language naturally – but perhaps you could replicate it with a musical instrument? You have a chance to communicate with them.

Sample Clues

- You've encountered a strangely familiar woman several times now.

A Brief Timeline of Artistic Styles

Middle Ages (750-900): Garish, highly symbolic art, which reflected religious or warlike themes.

Gothic (1100-1300): Stained glass, darker works, 'flat' appearance.

The Renaissance (1300-1600): The 'new birth' of art saw many technical innovations: balanced composition, perspective, chiaroscuro, and the beginnings of realism.

Baroque Art (1600-1750): Flamboyant, distorted pictures, often portraits of nobility.

Rococo Art (1700-1789): Decorative, colorful pictures, descended from the Baroque style. Portraiture makes up the majority of this style.

Realism (1850-1940): A predominantly American style, concerned with depicting daily life. Often overtly political.

It finally dawns on you where you've seen the woman's face before – in the background of a well-known painting. The only problem is the painting is almost a hundred years old.

- You've discovered some scratchy recordings in an abandoned attic. The weird, pulsing music has a time signature that makes no sense as a musical piece. It must be some kind of signal. It would take a scientist to decode it, however.

Art History

For English speaking people, formal Art History as an academic pursuit was almost entirely new and the growth of the study of art history in American and British colleges can be traced to the influx of German art historians in the 1930s. Academic art history of the 1930s did not consider Modern art, but rather studied the art of ancient and Renaissance artists.

There were two main schools of art history:

Formalism: This school analyzed the form and execution of the piece of art, attempting to understand the aesthetic use of line, color, shape,

composition, and so on. Formalist art historians determine if a work of art is realist or abstract, representational or expressionist, and so on.

Contextualism: This school attempts to place artistic works in their historical context: the effect of historical events on the work of art, and the effect of the work of art on history. Contextualists analyzed the themes of a piece of art and compared them to other works of the same period.

Sample Special Benefits

- One of the paintings in a collection you're examining appears to be a hitherto unknown work by an Impressionist master. It will fetch a tidy sum if sold at auction, or donated to a museum it will gain you considerable prestige.
- Looking at the works of an artist, you get an insight into her personality. Gain a two point dedicated pool for using interpersonal skills against the artist, or for attempting to calm her troubled mind.

Investigative Abilities

- While at a social function, you discover a piece of art on whose particular style you once wrote a treatise. You can lecture about it at length, and provide some fascinating insights. Although some might be bored by your lecture, others will be impressed, seeing you as an expert. They'll trust your opinions on other subjects as well.

Sample Clues

- The frame of a strange painting doesn't match with the age of the piece, leading you to investigate further. Sure enough, the frame is a recent addition, and conceals a hidden compartment.
- You encounter a piece that seems abstract – just a collection of lines and colours, but that runs strongly against all you know of the artist's chosen style. You suspect that this is an actual representation of something the artist saw, however unlikely that seems.
- An apartment gives the impression of poverty and there's no sign of the stolen money your group expected to find. However, you recognize an unremarkable paperweight that is actually a prized work by a well-known sculptor, worth thousands.

Assess Honesty

Ability Focus: 'Tells', things people do when they lie

Tells are great fun to incorporate into role playing. Rather than simply telling the player that she suspects a person isn't telling the truth, use a description of the 'tell' that she noticed.

A person who is lying may give it away when they do any of these: lick their lips, touch their face, look up and to the left, rub their hands together or on their clothes, cover their mouth,

look away, smile, laugh incongruously, blink rapidly, flinch, look quickly at the listener to judge their reaction, or clear their throat frequently.

Often, people have a distinctive 'tic' that they perform whenever they're nervous – playing with jewelry, twitching, repeating a certain phrase, drumming their fingers, twisting their hair, and so on.

Sample Special Benefits:

- You notice that a suspect has a particular tell, that she performs unconsciously whenever she lies. She'll never get one past you again.
- Confronted with his lies, a suspect is thrown off-guard. He babbles out his involvement in the plot straight away, saving the group valuable interrogation time.
- When waiting to talk to a receptionist or secretary, you overhear a conversation she has in which she lies through her teeth about what she's up to this weekend. Exposing the woman's lie could get her in a lot of trouble. Gain a two-point Bureaucracy pool for this organization.

Sample Clues

- You follow the woman's eyes as you question her. Though she claims not to know the location of the hidden documents, her eyes constantly dart to a painting on the wall. Could it conceal a hidden safe?
- The man's lying. He obviously knows more about the cult than he lets on. Now that you've shaken him up, perhaps following him covertly will lead you to the other members.
- You can read the woman like a book. She feigns disinterest, but you know she's pumping you for

information. Investigating this woman may lead to further clues.

Astronomy

Astronomy is one of the few sciences where dedicated amateurs are still able to contribute useful data. In the 1930s, several significant advances were made in astronomy, both technological, and in terms of discoveries of new celestial bodies. The most significant of these was the confirmation of the location of Pluto - or Yuggoth - in 1930.

Ability Focus: Techniques and Equipment

Star Hopping: Star hopping is a technique employed by amateur astronomers for finding celestial objects with a telescope. After locating a well-known star that is visible to the naked eye, the astronomer uses star-maps or memory to 'hop' between landmark stars. A star-hopping astronomer would be able to remember exactly where he was looking when he saw a celestial anomaly.

Setting Circles: Setting circles are manual measurement devices that can be placed on the horizontal and vertical rotational axis of a telescope. When calibrated (by pointing the telescope at a known star, and then adjusting the setting circles to match) any celestial phenomena marked on the setting circles can be located, by rotating the telescope to the indicated settings on the circles. A cult could possess something similar, in order to align their apparatus precisely to the rays of some baleful cosmic orb.

Radio Astronomy: Professional, or extremely well funded amateur astronomers might have used a radio telescope. Developed in 1937, radio telescopes detect radio waves emitted from celestial bodies. In the 1930s, the science of radio astronomy was

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Keeper's Resource Book

extremely limited. Radio waves from the center of the galaxy were discovered by accident in 1933, but further mapping of the sky did not happen until late in the decade, and the sun's radio emissions were not identified until the 1940s.

Almanacs: Almanacs, such as the *Farmer's Almanac* (the most well-known American almanac), are published books of information, featuring daily weather predictions, astronomical events (including eclipses, meteor swarms, and comets), tides, and housekeeping and farming advice. Enthusiastic amateur astronomers would consult an almanac for predictions of interesting celestial events.

Sample Special Benefits

- In the course of your stargazing, you discover or reconfirm a hitherto unknown or dubious celestial object, such as a comet, asteroid, or nebula. Gain a two point dedicated pool for interpersonal skills with other astronomers.
- Your detailed knowledge of the stars lets you identify a star map instantly, and you know exactly the date and latitude at which the map was drawn. You don't have to do any observations to confirm your hypothesis.
- You remember that an impressive celestial event, perhaps an eclipse or a meteor swarm, is predicted very shortly. Gain a two point dedicated pool for intimidating impressionable folk; alternatively, gain the same bonus for outdoor stealth during the event.

Sample Clues

- Calculating from the times and strengths of the radio interference, you train your telescope on area of sky most likely to be the source.



Expecting to see some kind of comet, you see something much more disturbing.

- The tiny hole in the roof of the temple is exactly positioned to admit the light of only a single star, once a year. According to your calculations, that night is three nights hence!
- The killings all took place while the star Fomalhaut was in the same place in the sky. It's too unlikely to be coincidence, but the police will

never treat it as a serious clue.

Bargain

In the time of the Great Depression, haggling is a valuable skill. Those who can get what they need and pay the least — or sell to those reluctant to part with their money — are the most likely to cope. Bargaining isn't just about commerce, however. It's all about striking deals.

Sample Special Benefits

- The shop owner is left feeling as if you've done him a favor, rather

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than the other way around. He's actually quite intimidated by you and feels he has to make it up to you somehow. Do you need supplies? Could he take you somewhere in the delivery van?

- Nothing brings down prices like a sob story. You may call for a flashback scene.
- A retired insurance salesman likes your hard bargaining style, and suggests you go for a drink. He has some creepy tales to tell of a town he visited once.
- You spot a valuable antique among the trash in a second-hand shop. You can sell it to a collector, or maybe trade it for a favor.
- Just as you're about to leave the pawn shop, a down-on-his-luck businessman brings in suitcases full of belongings. The shopkeeper liked you, so you'll get first dibs on anything in there. It's an ideal time to stock up on essentials at a knockdown rate.

Sample Clues

- A tribesman is reluctant to show you to the spot where the gigantic corpse of some unknown creature was found, but you can read his body language — he likes your new, sharp machete very much, and you'll be able to do a trade.
- A cultist keeping you captive is greedy and stupid, but you don't have anything on you to bribe him with. Fortunately, you're a good enough bargainer that the mere *promise* of a reward is enough to entice him to look the other way.
- A police officer is willing to let you look at certain sensitive case files, but only in exchange for keeping the murders out of the press until the investigation is finished. You might

not be able to do that, but you can certainly convince him that you will.

Biology

Evolutionary biology as it is known today emerged as a synthesis of several academic fields in the 1930s. However, in most universities it would not be studied in this form for many decades.

Analyzing Organic Substances:

Without sophisticated microscopy, and before the invention of the modern mass spectrometer, identifying or analyzing substances meant close observation under a microscope, and perhaps chemical tests. Substances or species new to science could only be identified by analogy; that is, by what known thing they most resembled. A biologist of the 1930s therefore relied on both a great working knowledge of species and an extensive library of data.

Venomous and Poisonous Animals

We've included this list of nasty critters as ideal shock fodder for investigators with the Biology ability. We're all familiar with the moment when the trained biologist tells you to keep very still indeed, not to make any sudden moves, and look slightly to your left...

Yellow Lipped Sea Krait (*Laticauda colubrina*): A black and grey striped sea snake found in tropical waters, it possesses neurotoxic venom which causes numbness and death.

Box Jellyfish (*Cubozoa*): Not true jellyfish but rather 'cubozoa'; Box Jellyfish come in several species. Some species of Box Jellyfish are extremely lethal, killing in minutes, while others are rarely fatal but induce incredible full-body pain, nausea and hypertension for several days.

Blue Ringed Octopus (*Hapalochlaena*): A tiny octopus, about the size of a golf ball. Its potent tetrotoxin induces paralysis and respiratory failure. Artificial respiration may save a victim.

Reef Stonefish (*Synanceia verrucosa*): The most venomous fish in the world, its sting is incredibly painful, causing paralysis, necrosis of surrounding tissue, and death.

Cone Snail: One species of aquatic cone snail, *Conus geographus*, is considered the most toxic creature on earth. Its venom, a tetrotoxin similar to that of the Blue Ringed Octopus, kills within minutes.

Golden Poison Frog (*Phyllobates terribilis*): A tiny yellow frog from Columbia, it produces a poison (batrachotoxin) that, introduced to the blood stream or ingested, causes paralysis and heart failure, sometimes within minutes. Frogs bred in captivity do not produce this poison.

Sample Special Benefits

- When dramatically appropriate, you announce that you know a certain animal's behavior and anatomy well, having studied it extensively during your training. You gain a two point dedicated pool for riding and taming, hunting and killing, or helping to treat the wounds caused by this species of animal.
- The creature you've just discovered crawling out of your slipper is of a hitherto unknown species. The discovery will bring you international fame, and you will be able to give a Latin name to the species. The notoriety will give you a two-point dedicated pool for Bureaucracy when dealing with scientific institutions.
- The investigating team's discovered the partial paw print (or bone,

or tooth, or other fragmentary trace as appropriate) of some large animal. Identifying it could potentially take a day of comparisons to various charts and photographs in a dozen different texts and guidebooks. Luckily you made a study of such creatures in college. You know exactly the species of creature you're facing, and moreover, you know where such a specimen is likely to be making its lair.

Sample Clues

- You find a bloodstain, undoubtedly shed by the entity you're chasing down. You can conclude that the thing's blood is copper-based, like some modern-day cephalopods and molluscs, and primitive earth-life. Blue-green blood like this carries less oxygen than iron-based red blood. The thing should have little endurance for a long chase.
- A dead man's autopsy shows he died of an apparent heart-attack, but the puddle of sea-water found at the scene contained octopus larvae. The death could be a very exotic poisoning. Such venomous octopi could only be found in a very few places.
- The pollen on a dead man's shirt is from a rare plant found in only a few locations. With your knowledge of flora, you may be able to pin down the exact scene of the crime: a local exotic garden, a scientific research establishment, or maybe even the hothouse of an orchid-collecting millionaire.

Bureaucracy

The flowering of bureaucracy that had begun in the 1920s continued into the 1930s, with increasing industrialization bringing its characteristic pyramidal management schemes. Knowledge of bureaucracy and how to find one's way around in it was a key differentiator

between the emerging educated white-collar sector and the less educated blue-collar workforce.

In previous, more agrarian schema, organizations had been smaller and less centralized, with less need for middlemen and managers. Now, the corporate model was becoming entrenched.

Sample Special Benefits

- This permit you've had printed off is good for the entire year. There should be a lot of use left in it even after the current investigation ends.
- You seem to give off an aura of privilege and confidence. No one knows exactly what your position is at your putative company, just that the bosses seem to want you to have whatever you want. The people at other companies you visit are likely to treat you well.
- When dealing with an official you've met before, you can remind him of a time in which your hasty bureaucratic juggling saved him from being fired for idleness on the job. You may call for a flashback scene, and he owes you a favor.
- A bureaucracy spend might let you legitimately obtain documents you'd otherwise have to steal or forge, such as the ground plans for a building, a copy of a will, or a private company's accounts.
- There's nothing like going straight to the top. Rather than fool around with underlings all day, you can put in a call to the man in charge. He can get you what you want right away.
- This badge says you're with Internal Affairs, which is enough to send even the most belligerent officer running for cover. Gain a two point dedicated pool for getting

what you want from the Police Department.

- A secretary believes your story about being an overworked intern and lets you look over the files unsupervised – long enough to take extensive photographs.
- It's impossible to get a meeting with a company's head scientist. However, you know where he likes to play golf, and a few bribes in the right hands gets you onto the fairway at the same time.
- The equipment is meant to be used only by grad students, but as an alumnus of the establishment you're granted certain privileges.

Sample Clues:

- From what you've gleaned while talking to the staff at a company, there's something very strange going on. There is no absenteeism, nobody ever takes a sick day and there isn't even any record of accidents at work. Why is everyone working so hard? What are they afraid of? Or are they all just somehow immune to disease?
- All of the company's key managerial decisions are ratified by 'Mr. Black', but you're able to piece together an interesting fact: nobody in the company has ever met Mr. Black, but they all seem to know someone else who has. Mr. Black's office is supposedly on the eighth floor. What's really up there?
- There are an awful lot of janitorial staff registered here, about three times the number you'd expect to find in a company this size. There always seems to be someone slopping a mop about. What exactly are they having to clean up so constantly? Could it have something to do with this sticky

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residue under your shoe?

Chemistry

The 1930s were a decade of great progress for chemistry. Almost all the missing elements on the periodic table were discovered over the course of the decade and the use of radiation to transform chemicals was producing more and more interesting results.

Ability Focus: Techniques

Below are some techniques used in analytic chemistry in the 1930s.

Titration: Titration is the process of gradually adding a reagent to a solution until an equilibrium point is reached. Properties of the original solution can be determined by the amount of reagent required. For example, adding a known alkaline to an acidic solution until the solution tests as pH neutral can determine the acidity of the original solution.

Gravimetry: An analytic process used to determine the amount of a substance in a solution by weighing it before and after a transformation. For example, weighing a solution, heating it to remove water, and then weighing it again, can determine the amount of water in a solution.

Inorganic Qualitative Analysis:

A systematic analysis in which a series of reactions are performed on the solution in order to determine its composition. Some reactions may eliminate possibilities – i.e. the reaction or lack thereof may show a chemical is not present, or it may confirm the presence of a chemical. Before the invention of sophisticated analytical equipment, this was a common technique.

Paper Chromatography: This is a process of separating chemical compounds by applying the solution to a strip of paper, and then dipping the strip of paper into a solvent. Capillary

action draws the solvent up the strip, and into the solution, separating it into its various components. This technique is used for identifying and distinguishing inks, fabric dyes and plant pigments.

Sample Special Benefits

- The ‘correct’ way to test a substance you’ve discovered is by slowly filtering the solution through charcoal for a number of days. However, you know that a few drops of Molybdenum Blue will show you what you need to know right away, saving valuable lab time.
- In the course of analyzing the slime left behind in a creature’s wake, you find a solution that seems to act on it like a strong acid, dissolving it completely. That will be useful next time you find one of your colleagues imprisoned in a sticky mass of the stuff.
- When confronted with an unknown substance, you can announce you’ve encountered a substance like this before. You may call for a flashback scene, in which you learn the substance’s properties and likely origin.

Sample Clues

- A bluish-green residue found coating the timbers of a burned-out apartment contains high levels of several chemicals which are very rare on Earth. More importantly, it’s highly toxic. Whatever left this stuff behind is undoubtedly also the cause of the recent killings.
- Historians have decried a certain document as a fake, as it alludes to technological innovations well in advance of its purported date. However, your analysis of the chemicals in the ink and paper mark it as authentic. It’s either an incredibly sophisticated hoax,

or the claims in the document warrant further investigation.

- A soapstone-like box found in some cultists’ possession seems impervious to harm. It’s not even clear what it’s made of, since you can’t chip off a piece to test. However, after days of experimentation, you find an acid that will dissolve the strange mineral, allowing you to open the box, and discover its contents.

Cop Talk

A list of specialist phrases and definitions used by police officers can be found under the Law ability.

Sample Special Benefits

- You can tell a given cop is ‘on the take’ – taking bribes from organized crime. You can use this information against the cop, or even attempt to bribe him yourself. You gain a two point dedicated pool for interactions with this police officer.
- When you interact with the police, the officers accept you as one of their own, clapping you on the back and laughing at your jokes. Anyone who sees this is likely to treat you with the same respect they would a police officer.
- The cops know your father, or maybe they knew you from when you were a cop. You may call for a flashback scene that explains the connection.
- When you’re in a desperate hurry to get somewhere, you find the cops agree to take you where you need to go, sirens blazing and no questions asked. You can get across town without worrying about traffic.

Sample Clues

- When investigating a murder, a

few beers with your old buddies down at the precinct will get you all the information you need. You learn the names of the victims, the locations of the murders, and even some of the suspects.

- You flash your old badge and get access to the crime scene, no questions asked. There's a wealth of clues here awaiting discovery.
- A cop you're talking to is clearly uncomfortable. He opens up to you, explaining how he doesn't know how he's going to tell his senior officer what he saw the other night when he was making that arrest down at the docks. He left some details out of the report, like the not-quite-human face that surfaced from the water. He seems to feel he can trust you, though.
- The retired police officer guarding a museum exhibit seems shaken, scared. An ex-cop would hardly admit to being frightened, but he's seen something which has affected him deeply.

Cryptography

Before the electronic age and the great leaps of encryption and decryption technology precipitated by WWII, a single person, with the application of patience and mathematical skill, could successfully decrypt and encrypt almost any message. Encryption used by the US military was surprisingly weak during the 1930s, while criminal organizations used startlingly complex encryption methods.

Cults with cells in disparate locations will almost always use ciphers for important communications, especially when these are sent by telegram. This is, after all, the modern age. Busting up a cult's headquarters, if done quickly enough before equipment has a chance to be destroyed, may lead to the discovery of cipher wheels (see



below) or even more sophisticated machinery, thus allowing previously discovered communications to be decoded. This is an excellent way to introduce cryptic clues earlier in a story and provide players with the means to decipher them later on.

Ability Focus: Techniques and Devices

Below are some techniques and devices employed by cryptographic experts of the 1930s.

Polyalphabetic Cipher: The

simplest form of encryption is a 'letter substitution' cipher, where each letter is replaced with a different letter, in a regular pattern. Polyalphabetic ciphers are a step more complex than this, changing the pattern of letter substitution throughout the message, either in a regular pattern or signaling the change in some way, such as by capitalizing the first letter of the new pattern. Polyalphabetic substitution was developed in the thirteenth century AD.

Frequency Analysis: In any language, certain letters and

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combinations of letters are used with greater frequency than others. For example, in English, 'E' is the most frequently used letter, and 'the' is the most common combination of three letters. By counting the frequency of occurrence of letters in a message encoded with a simple letter substitution cipher, a cryptanalyst can determine the likely substitution of a number of letters, making breaking such codes trivial. Polyalphabetic substitution makes the process much more time consuming, but it is still vulnerable to the technique. Frequency analysis was known from the fourth century AD.

Wheel Ciphers: Developed in the 15th Century, and used as late as WWII, wheel ciphers used a device with a stack of revolving disks printed with letters on their outside edge to encode messages. The device was assembled in a predetermined order, and the disks rotated until the letters formed the desired message. Then any line of letters on the disk could be sent as the encoded message. Decoding the message required having an identical device, and knowing the order in which it was assembled. A third party could decrypt wheel ciphers using a mathematical attack, provided they intercepted enough material.

Encoding machines: Prototypes of the famous 'Enigma Machine' of WWII were first invented in the late 1920s, but the machine was not a commercial success. Other encryption machines saw popular use in the 1930s. These machines used a number of spoked rotors to encrypt a message mechanically. Those receiving the message would need to possess the same type of machine, and know the exact setting of the rotors, to decode the message. These machines were of varying effectiveness; one of the most popular models of the day was decrypted within a mere three hours by a team of experts.

Cribs: Frequent use of an identifiable phrase can be a weakness in an encrypted message. For example, if communications are known to always begin with the same phrase, then this phrase can be used as the basis for decrypting the rest of the message. Such identifiable phrases are called 'cribs'.

Sample Special Benefits

- You correctly guess a 'crib' in an encrypted message, vastly increasing the speed of decryption. It should only take half the night now, and the 'crib' itself may be useful information, especially if it has cultish overtones. (Why *did* that gang of cultists always say 'Deep sleeps the green and creeping sleeper' to each other as a greeting?)
- You can identify the 'fist' of the person encrypting certain information. Idiosyncrasies in the way the information is encrypted or transmitted give you insight into the person on the other end. Even if you can't decode the message, you've learnt something.
- You're able to reconstruct the method of encryption, a hitherto unknown technique or device. The discovery will gain you some fame and respect in the field, but also possibly the attention of authorities.

Sample Clues

- The scroll found in a would-be sorcerer's study appears to be a ritual invocation of some sort, with unrecognizable polysyllabic phrases and occult diagrams. In actuality, it's not a spell at all. It's a very simple code mocked up to look like a spell, and you can piece together the sorcerer's plan. He may not even *be* a sorcerer.
- A letter you have received from an

old friend in the asylum speaks of trivialities, and all appears well. However, the unusual capitalisation of some words is odd from a normally strict grammarian. Joining together the capitalised words, you're able to decipher your friend's plea for help.

- Some books of accounts you found didn't make any sense as accounts. As you suspected, they were a substitution cipher. Hours of sweating over your calculations pay off, and you're able to decode a paranoid mob boss's message to his underlings. Now you know the exact place and time of the meeting.

Evidence Collection

As a direct result of the St. Valentine's day massacre and the forensic work done following it, the Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory was founded on the campus of Northwestern University in 1929 in Evanston, Illinois. The FBI crime laboratory went on to be founded in 1932.

Those major institutions aside, sophisticated forensic science labs did not exist in the 1930s, and a lot of what is now considered essential evidence would have been useless to investigators of the era. Nonetheless, specialized detectives or especially inquisitive folk would use the following techniques for collecting evidence.

Ability Focus: Techniques

Fingerprints: 'Dusting for Prints', as it is known, is the process of applying a darkly pigmented powder to a non-porous surface to detect fingerprints. The powder used is usually specially designed for this purpose, though any dark, fine powder will do the job.

Document Analysis: Document analysis is the process of discovering if two documents are the product of

a single person. A known sample is compared to a questioned sample by identifying distinctive characteristics of the handwriting. The more handwritten material is found, the more conclusive a match can be made.

Blood Stains: Wet bloodstains should be picked up on a gauze pad and then dried. Unless the sample is refrigerated or frozen, it must be tested within 48 hours. Dried stains should be left in place, and if possible the whole object should be removed to be tested; otherwise, they can be scraped into a container.

Fibers and Threads: Found where fabrics rub against each other, or on rough edges and corners, fragments of cloth and fiber can be collected with tweezers and stored in envelopes. These can then be compared to other substances under the microscope.

Glass: Patterns of glass breaking can reveal details of an entry through a window, or of an impact between vehicles.

Paint: Paint is frequently found on vehicles in hit and run cases, or on tools used for forced entries. Tools should be wrapped in clean paper and tied shut to prevent the loss of these samples.

Tool Marks: Found where a tool has been used to force a lock, or to open a door, tool marks can be compared to a tool to establish a connection. The mark should be photographed and swabbed to pick up any traces of paint.

Sample Special Benefits

- After you roleplay out an exhaustive evidence collection session, the Keeper rules that your evidence is perfectly stored and you've collected just the right materials. You gain a two point dedicated pool for future investigations based upon this

evidence.

- Your sharp eyes pick out the essential evidence without needing to perform a detailed search. You can collect all the evidence in just a few minutes.
- You find something even the police failed to detect. They're impressed (if a little jealous) and you might be called to assist in future cases. Gain a two point dedicated pool for Cop Talk or Bureaucracy with this department.

Sample Clues

- A crime scene has been thoroughly cleaned, but you remember an old cop trick. Pouring a little water onto the tiled floor, you watch it trickle into a crack. Prying up that tile, you find a pool of blood and water – evidence the killer couldn't wash away.
- To get into the building unseen, the culprit would have to have come in through a window. Dusting the ground floor windows for prints, you find a perfect set, along with something else – claw marks.
- Some financial documents were completely shredded, but that only slows you down. Hours of painstaking work with glue and tape, and you've pieced them back together again. Now the details of the embezzlement are made clear.

Flattery

Sample Special Benefits

- The debutante doesn't just acquiesce to your requests, she seems to be interested in you! This character may become a recurring NPC.
- You've obviously made an impression, as you're invited to attend a private soiree, where

you may meet several important dignitaries.

- Your winning smile is all it's ever taken to turn a man to jelly. You don't even need to waste time chatting him up.
- Your compliments get the hostess talking on her favorite subject. Normally this is the boring part, but you actually learn a thing or two! Gain a two point dedicated pool for an unrelated topic, perhaps physics, horse riding, or car maintenance.
- You catch more flies with honey. Rather than use Interrogation or Intimidation on a delicate source, you may use Flattery or Bargain instead.

Sample Clues

- While the minister goes to 'freshen up', you're granted unrestricted access to his office. You've got five minutes to search for clues.
- By encouraging the muscular, rough dockworker to boast of his triumphs in the bare knuckle fighting circuit, you trick him into admitting to other violent deeds, like the fatal beating he gave the travelling salesman he caught with his girl.
- The woman is starved for attention, and a few drinks gets her talking like you're old friends. Soon you have all the details on her husband's late-night meetings with a mysterious gravel-voiced 'friend'.
- They say this guy has some very interesting tattoos under his shirt – tattoos that depict ancient, potent warding signs against evil. Now, how are you going to get him to take his shirt off in the chill of a New York winter?

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- The office boy isn't supposed to let people make copies of the files, but a suggestive smile gets him to copy the files for you, and promise to keep it a secret. Now you can peruse the files at your leisure.

Forensics

The following are some forensic procedures that were known and used by pathologists in the 1930s. All were considered cutting-edge science during the decade, and would not be commonly practiced by police.

Detecting Blood: The Castle-Meyer Color Test uses phenolphthalein to detect the presence of blood. A test kit contains a positive control (a swatch with animal blood), alcohol, phenolphthalein, hydrogen peroxide, and water.

Detecting Poison: The Reinsch test can detect the presence of heavy metals (including arsenic) in organs or bodily fluids. The material is chemically treated, and then heated. If the gas released forms a black sheen on a plate, then arsenic is present.

Analyzing Fingerprints: The Henry classification system is used to analyze and categorize fingerprints. From the mid 1930s, the local Bureau of Identification and Records holds records of fingerprints found at crime scenes.

Analyzing Blood: A Precipitin test determines if a blood sample is from a human or animal source. The sample is treated with a chemical, and then combined on a slide with a control of animal blood. If a line (caused by a reaction to precipitin) forms between the two samples, the blood is human. Blood splashes are classified into six types, as categorized by the Scottish pathologist John Glaister. These include 'splashes, from blood flying through the air and hitting a surface at an angle', 'spurts from an artery or

vein', 'pools around a body' and so on.

Sample Special Benefits

- Your work impresses local law enforcement, and you may be called in as an expert witness in future cases. Gain a two point dedicated pool for Cop Talk or Bureaucracy with this department.
- You're able to determine cause of death on a body just by visual examination and a hunch, without performing an autopsy. As well as avoiding violation of the religious beliefs of some groups, notably some Orthodox Jews and Muslims, you can stay well away from the body itself...
- You develop a quick chemical test for the gelatinous blood-like substance you've found. You gain two dedicated pool points to spend on finding and identifying this substance in future scenes.

Sample Clues

- The wounds on a body are consistent with a sharp, curved weapon. The organs were expertly removed. This is definitely a ritual killing. Whoever is doing the killing has a medical background.
- Some blood drops are highly dispersed, as if they came from a great height. However, there's nothing above the crime scene but empty air!
- The Castle-Meyer test shows fresh blood on an ancient ritual weapon. The only problem is, it's been in the museum the whole time.

Geology

Encompassing paleontology, physics, philosophy and commercial exploration, Geography was a vast subject with many applications. The physical age of the Earth was still a contentious subject in the 1930s,

though most scientists accepted that it was at least several hundred million years old. New technologies and new theories were revolutionizing the way people perceived the Earth.

Radiometric Dating: First developed in 1911, radiometric dating of rocks by bombarding them with radiation was pioneering science in the 1930s. Uranium-Lead Radiometric dating was the first scientific method of determining the age of rocks and sediments.

Continental Drift: Still a controversial theory in the 1930s, and not readily accepted until the 1960s, Continental Drift is the theory (now supported by evidence) that Earth's continents are in constant motion, and that they were once joined into a single 'super continent'.

Seismometer: A device for measuring the movement of the Earth, such as in an earthquake, seismometers of the 1930s used a heavy pendulum that inscribed a line on a pane of smoked glass. Analyzing the line, a trained geologist could determine the direction of origin of the tremor, and with two seismometers, could triangulate an exact position. By creating artificial vibrations in the earth with explosives, and analyzing distortions of the seismic waves, Geologists can create a map of underground topography.

Sample Special Benefits

- The fossil is part of an incompletely known or completely unknown prehistoric species. The discovery will bring notoriety in your field, and you may be able to name the new species.
- Testing soil samples could take all day. Luckily, that's what undergrads are for. You use your contacts at the University to get the work done in under an hour.

- You learnt how to identify rock samples long ago, in college. You may call for a flashback scene that reveals the details of the clue.

Sample Clues

- The rock from which an idol is carved is several million years old and should be miles below the surface. How it came to be carved by highly advanced tools is a mystery.
- The crystals which have formed on a human skull require a very specific mix of chemicals and conditions. Given time and geological survey maps, you should be able to pinpoint where the skull came from.
- The tremors felt like earthquakes, but your equipment shows them to be something else. Some kind of tunnelling is happening beneath the ground near this site, and your equipment has pinpointed exactly where.

History

In the 1930s, the formal study of history for the most part meant the study of Western history and often focused more on military history and the lives of great rulers. The scope of the subject was nonetheless vast. While we can't hope to provide a complete categorization here, we have provided some key schools of thought of 1930s history below.

Ability Focus: Schools of Thought

Great Men: A historical theory most popular in the 19th century but still holding sway among some historians of the 1930s, 'Great Men' is the belief best espoused by Thomas Carlyle in the 1840s, that 'The history of the world is but the biography of great men'. Followers of this theory believe that heroes shape history through personal attributes and divine inspiration, and that the study of such men is beneficial

to one's own 'heroic' nature.

Social History: A theory of history that was still in its infancy in the 1930s, Social History is the analysis of history with reference to the societal trends that underlie that history. It is a study of the beliefs that underlie events, rather than just the events themselves. In the 1930s, this was a very new way of studying history.

Periodization: Periodization is the categorization of periods of history into discrete, named blocks, for the purpose of easy generalization and useful handling. In archaeology and anthropology, the 'Three Age' model was popular in the 1930s, dividing history by the kinds of tools used. The 'Stone Age', the 'Bronze Age' and the 'Iron Age' thus characterize broad stages in technological development.

In historical studies, a more complex system of periodization is used. These vary widely, and are disputed by historians, but broadly align with 'Ancient History', 'Classical Antiquity' (from 1000 BC), 'Middle Ages' (from the 5th Century), 'Early Modern' (from the 14th Century) and 'Modern' (18th Century-Present). Within this, many different classifications are used.

Sample Special Benefits

- By chance, you find the area where you now stand is an old battlefield that you studied some time ago. You're intimately familiar with the terrain and the old earthworks here. Gain a two point dedicated pool for using the terrain for strategic advantage or for escape.
- This situation is no more dire than that faced by the British at Agincourt, or the Union faced at Potter's Field. You give a rallying speech cribbed from some of the best speeches of history, and it seems to work. You can refresh Stability with a Confidence die.

- This code is the same one used by the Templars (or a similar historical secret society) in their clandestine communications. You can decode it with ease, saving hours of work.

Sample Clues

- All the recent mysterious occurrences, the comet, the disappearances, the strange red algae, are all reported in several historical accounts ranging over the last thousand years. It seems like reports of similar events can be found every hundred years for as long as the region has been inhabited. If the reports are to be believed, what comes next is far, far worse.
- There's no doubt about it: the object is an Egyptian sarcophagus, built to the exact same specifications and using the same materials and techniques. One would have to be either an expert or a bona fide ancient Egyptian to have built such a thing. This one, however, looks like it is brand new.
- A painting shows a man in attire more fashionable a hundred years ago, and his hunting equipment is likewise appropriate for that age. Yet his face is identical to your own. Who is this mysterious ancestor?
- The description you have found in an obscure historical text sounds hauntingly familiar. What could the growling, smoking chariot be but a modern motor car? For that matter, what was it doing in ancient Sumeria, occupied by 'four burning skeletons that howled like the north wind'?

Interrogation

Sample Special Benefits

- You extract just the information a jury would want to hear. A

Investigative Abilities

conviction in this case is a virtual certainty.

- During an interrogation, you play the 'good cop' to a partner's 'bad cop'. The suspect begins to feel they owe you for your kindness, and will act as an informant in the future.
- To unsettle a suspect, you recount a personal story filled with blood-curdling detail. You may call for a flashback scene. Make it a gruesome one.
- The woman's guilty, but she doesn't deserve prison for what was a crime of passion. You convince her to give up the other members of the cult in exchange for going free.
- The chump you just helped to arrest doesn't know he's got a right to a lawyer, and you 'forget' to inform him. He'll stay in prison without bail as long as you need him.

Sample Clues

- A young, frightened woman caves in the face of your investigation and spills everything on the cult she's involved with, including the names of several prominent members of the cult who hold high positions in society. Unfortunately, one of them is engaged to a close friend of yours.
- Two hardened criminals refuse to say a word, until you convince them each that the other has implicated him. In their anger, they rush to incriminate each other.
- During interrogation, a henchman had agreed to give up the name of his employer, an otherwise respectable businessman, in exchange for a lenient sentence. However, once the name was out,

a flood of other information came with it: the businessman's secret perversions, the Tijuana Bibles, the prostitutes smuggled up the rear stairs, the screams, the clean-up operations at 3 AM. Seems the henchman felt the need to purge his conscience.

Intimidation

Sample Special Benefits

- Your intimidation has lasting effects: the politician you faced down doesn't care to be humiliated like that again. He'll back down from any future confrontations, but he may also seek revenge one day.
- You remember that eyes have a special place in this cult's lore. Some nonsense about a burning eye with three lobes, you think it was. Anyway, one long, hard stare, and the cultist starts babbling secrets.
- You bend down and begin to whisper in the woman's ear, telling her just what happened the last time someone stood in your way like this. You may call for a flashback scene.
- You know exactly which buttons to press. Just the threat of prison for her poor misunderstood son gets his mother to talk. You don't have to threaten her, and you're not really going to call the cops.
- The bouncer at the underground casino lets you in without a fuss when he sees the quiet menace in your eyes. You don't have to stop to talk; just walk on through.
- The thug flees, and he spends the evening drunkenly telling his comrades about you in wildly exaggerated terms, so he won't look bad. Gain a two point dedicated pool to intimidating

other members of the same organization.

Sample Clues

- The club has a pair of tough bouncers who won't let in anyone who is not on the guest list. Your unwavering gaze convinces them to let you through; not only that, but you'll be able to pass as a member while inside.
- This doesn't make sense. You've intimidated this guy so hard he's practically a jellyfish now, and he knows you meant every word of it, but he's still scared of something else more than he's scared of you. What could have a hold on him like that?
- Showing up after hours with a baseball bat scares the bartender into talking. Soon you've learnt the names of every member of the gang.

Languages

A list of mutually intelligible languages:

German, Dutch, Afrikaans and Flemish

Yiddish and German (Spoken only – the writing systems are different.)

Danish, Norwegian and Swedish (These are considered by some scholars to be dialects of the same language, and have high degree of mutual intelligibility.)

Belarusian, Russian, Ukrainian, and Rusyn (Other Russian dialects have some degree of mutual intelligibility.)

Portuguese and Spanish (Portuguese speakers understand Spanish more than Spanish speakers understand Portuguese.)

Irish and Scottish Gaelic

Hebrew, Aramaic and Biblical Hebrew

Icelandic and Old Norse (Reading Old Norse is like reading Shakespeare for English speakers.)

Modern Greek and Classical Greek (Educated native Greek speakers are most likely to have learned the unusual vocabulary used in Ancient Greek.)

Mandarin and Cantonese (Written only. To some extent, Japanese and Chinese share a writing system, and some mutual intelligibility is possible.)

Maori, Cook Islands Maori, Samoan (Most Pacific languages share a common root, meaning they have many words in common. The three listed have the most in common.)

Sample Special Benefits

- Speaking in your native tongue is a rare opportunity, and it brings you comfort. You may refresh your Stability with a Confidence die.
- You've got the language skills to pass as a native of this area, making the locals trust you a lot more. Gain a two point dedicated pool for using Interpersonal skills against people from this area.
- The writing's not in code at all! It's just in an obscure dialect of a language you happen to have studied. You can read it with a little difficulty, but it beats wasting hours in frustrating code breaking.

Sample Clues

- The murdered scientist's journals are written in his obscure German dialect. Luckily you spent a few months in that part of the country, and picked up the idiosyncrasies.
- The cultist's chant is in Latin, but like any good academic, you're fluent. You understand exactly what they're trying to accomplish.

- The man hisses an order to his allies in his native tongue. You overhear him, and you happen to speak the language.

Law

Criminal law of the 1930s was in many ways similar to the law of today, with a few startling differences. Legal oversight of police activity was much more relaxed, and police frequently went outside the rules to secure an arrest.

Below are the guidelines for procedural law in the US, though these varied from state to state.

Procuring a warrant: Unless an officer of the law or citizen apprehends a person in the pursuit of a crime, a warrant must be procured in order for that person to be arrested.

Any person who believes a crime has been committed can go to a branch of the municipal court (this may vary by State), located at various police stations. The Warrant Clerk hears the person's story. The clerk writes the nature of the complaint, the name of the accused (if known, otherwise a full description is taken) and the accuser, and the grounds for complaint. This 'complaint' is then taken to a judge, along with the complainant, who swears to the complaint. The judge decides whether to issue a warrant. The warrant is then given to a police officer to be served.

Making an arrest: The police officer must have the warrant in hand when making the arrest, and if in plain clothes, should show the warrant to the suspect if asked. If in uniform, simply describing the warrant is enough. Of course, if a police officer personally sees a person committing a crime, or has reasonable grounds for believing they did (such as the sworn statement of a reputable witness who is willing to accompany the police

officer) no warrant is required. Note that there are *no* Miranda Rights in the 1930s. Police are *not* obligated to read suspects their rights.

Use of Force: If arresting a person accused of a felony (a very serious crime) a police officer may use any force, up to and including shooting to kill, in order to secure the arrest or to prevent the suspect fleeing.

If arresting a person accused of a misdemeanor (a less serious crime), a police officer may not use deadly force to secure an arrest, unless the officer both has a warrant for the arrest and the suspect assaults the police officer.

In any case an officer may use deadly force in self-defense, as may any citizen.

After an arrest: If the arrest was made with a warrant, the prisoner should be taken before the judge who issued the warrant as soon as possible. If the arrest was made without a warrant, the Police officer acts as complainant, and a warrant is issued after the fact. The act of taking a suspect to court to return a warrant is called 'booking'. Sometimes suspects are held overnight before booking, if they are taken into custody late at night. After booking, a suspect may post bail. Otherwise, they remain in police custody.

Search Warrants: Obtaining a search warrant is in many ways similar to obtaining a warrant for arrest. A complainant (usually a police officer) takes their grounds for making the search to a judge, who decides if the grounds are reasonable. The warrant must say exactly what place is to be searched and exactly what is being searched for. The warrant must then be executed as soon as is practical, and the officer may break in to the named place if necessary. Only property named in the warrant may be taken.

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Crimes and their definitions in the 1930s

Murder: Killing with ‘malice’, i.e. intention to kill somebody; killing in the process of a very dangerous criminal act; killing in the process of *any* felony.

Manslaughter: Killing with provocation (which is more loosely defined in the 1930s than today); killing by carelessness; accidental killing in the process of a minor crime.

Assault and Battery: Assault (the attempt) and Battery (success) is the act of hitting another, neither with provocation nor in self-defense. Assault and Battery are considered more serious crimes if done for the purpose of extracting information.

Mayhem: Causing grievous and irreversible harm to a person’s body, such as cutting off a nose or ear.

False Imprisonment: Keeping someone in a place against their will. False imprisonment becomes kidnapping (a more serious crime) when the person is transported against their will. Wearing a mask or hood in the pursuit of kidnapping aggravates the offence, as does kidnapping a child.

Disturbing the Peace: Shooting or brandishing weapons, loud argument, picking fights, and making loud or unusual noises in public places are all punishable by fine. Wearing a mask or hood aggravates the offence. Disturbing a private meeting such as a funeral or religious service is also disturbing the peace.

Vagrancy: ‘Vagabonds’ are people without legal employment, including ‘bums’, beggars, drunks, persons sleeping in parks and sheds, persons with a history of crime, and persons loitering in public places. They are subject to fines and imprisonment.

Treason: Joining with enemies of the United States, or speech in favor of its overthrow. Membership of an organization that advocates such is also a crime, as is displaying an anarchist flag.

Larceny: Taking another’s property without permission.

Robbery: The more serious offence of taking another’s possessions by force.

Burglary: Entering a building (or vehicle) for the purpose of committing a larceny. No larceny need occur for a person to be convicted of burglary, only proof of intent.

Sample Special Benefits

- You’re able to fast track a warrant for arrest, procuring the document inside an hour.
- You’re now owed a favor – a ‘get out of jail free’ on a single misdemeanor offence.
- You not only understand the document, you can tell by its legal

language exactly when and where it was written.

Sample Clues

- A bit of fast-talking with the judge gets you appointed as the accused man’s lawyer. Now you’ll be able to talk to him as much as you need in order to find the real culprit.
- Chatting with the judge over

brandy at the club, you’re appraised of several details of the case. There were several bodies found that never made it to the press, and there was a secret basement found in the accused’s house.

- Looking over the warrant to search your office, you can see that the whole process has been fast-tracked. Someone high up doesn’t want you investigating the case.

Library Use

Without computers or digital storage, the vast amount of printed material produced during the 1930s was all stored in paper files. Accessing this treasure trove of information required skill and patience. Without electronic searches or sophisticated cross-referencing, finding the desired file or clipping could be incredibly time consuming. Familiarity with a number of different filing systems, and having contacts within records departments, could expedite this process.

Hall of Records: A Hall of Records can be found in most cities and county seats in the United States. These buildings house the local government records, including not only minutes of meetings and bylaws, but also records of all births, deaths, marriages, census information, trade licenses, property deeds, and so on. All information is cataloged chronologically, making finding information about a specific person or property extremely time consuming.

Clipping Rooms: All major newspapers and even most small local papers keep records of every issue printed. These are archived in what is usually called a ‘clipping room’. Though most clipping rooms are closed to the general public, an interested person could usually gain permission to peruse the archives.

Libraries: Public Libraries were

not as common in the 1930s as they are today. Many people kept private libraries that contained rare and obscure works not found anywhere else. University libraries would contain a large number of academic texts, but an expert in a particular field might keep an even more exhaustive library of works. Access to these libraries would vary according to who owned them. Some people were eager to show off their collection, while others guarded their books jealously.

Sample Special Benefits

- Peaceful hours spent among the shelves restore your shattered nerves. You may refresh your Stability with a Confidence die.
- Eliciting the help of a library assistant, you're able to find the files within half an hour, rather than searching all day.
- Browsing through books on the subject, you gain a broad overview of the topic. Gain a two point dedicated pool to Academic abilities related to the topic at hand.

Sample Clues

- The Hall of Records shows that the building, though purportedly a soup kitchen, is owned by the Celestial Inspiration Choir – doubtless a front for the Church of the Starry Wisdom.
- Newspaper clippings from the last twenty years show a disturbing pattern. The child abductions seem to coincide with severe storms in the area.
- Looking through the extensive library in the old mansion, you find a family Bible that contains a family tree stretching back generations. However, all the unions seem to have been incestuous ones; amid

the many children produced in each generation, two have always been a brother and a sister who have bred the next generation between them.

Locksmith

In the 1930s, most mechanical locks more or less resembled the ones we have today. 'Pin tumbler' locks use a modern looking key and contain five or six 'pin stacks' which must be in the right alignment for the lock to rotate. Older 'warded' locks have the classic keyhole shape. They contain a lever which must be flipped to open the lock and several obstructions which ensure only the key can reach the lever.

Ability Focus: Lock Picking Techniques

Key Impressioning: A brass blank key is inserted into the lock, gently twisted, and then retracted. The key pins leave a small impression on the soft brass, which is then minutely filed down. After many repetitions, the blank can be made to fit the lock. A similar technique can be used on warded locks, using a coating of wax on a blank key to discover the shape of the wards. This technique can take up to an hour.

Raking: This is the technique most often shown in depictions of lock picking. The locksmith keeps torsion on the lock, while 'raking' the pins back and forth with an implement. This technique relies mainly on luck – hoping the pins are jogged into the correct alignment – and can be time consuming, taking anything up to half an hour. It has the advantage, however, of not requiring sophisticated tools. A screwdriver (for the torsion) and a length of wire (for the raking) will suffice.

Picking: Often used in combination with raking, this involves using a pick to manually raise the pins of a tumbler

lock while applying torsion. The torsion holds the pins in place once they've been raised to the correct height. A similar technique can be used on warded locks, using a bent wire to reach around obstructions to the lever. For skilled locksmiths, this is the fastest technique, but is still much slower than is depicted in the movies. An expert with a familiar lock can open it in seconds, but this is a rare situation. More often, five or ten minutes are required.

Tools of the Job

Blank keys: For key impressioning, or for making replacement or duplicate keys.

Files: For alterations to keys, key impressioning, and lock cleaning.

Tension wrench: An 'L' shaped bar for holding open tumbler pins during picking.

Warded Pick: A pick which resembles a key for a classic warded lock, but simpler. This is for opening warded locks.

Hook Pick: A slender implement with a hooked end, this is used for exploring a lock in preparation to picking.

Rake: As the name suggests, a device for 'raking' a tumbler lock.

Diamond Pick: A pick for manually lifting the pins of a tumbler lock.

Sample Special Benefits

- For a two-point spend, your deft touch allows you to open the lock in half the normal amount of time.
- You fashion a 'master' key for all locks of this type, enabling you to open any door in this building.
- You leave the lock in pristine condition. No one will be able to

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tell this lock was picked.

Sample Clues

- The desk drawer is locked, but a few twists of a hairpin open it up. You find a disturbing collection of newspaper clippings. The man seems to be collecting reports of drownings in the area.
- The cultists are careful to lock the door to the warehouse in which they hold their meetings. With someone to keep watch, you spend a good hour working at the sophisticated lock before you're able to get it open, and investigate what lies within. Once you're gone, only an expert would be able to tell the lock was picked.
- There's no time to waste. You rake the lock on the closet door, get it open, and hide, just as the two women enter the room. The conversation you overhear is hair-raising, but now you know what the cult is planning.

Medicine

Significant advances in medical technology and practice were made in the 1930s, as the Depression brought about sweeping changes in the way doctors operated. Many techniques pioneered in the thirties are still in use today. Other techniques have long become outmoded.

Ability Focus: Techniques and Technologies

Below are some popular medical techniques and technologies of the 1930s.

Sulfa: Sulfa, or Sulpha in British English, was the first antibacterial medicine. Hailed as a miracle cure in the 1930s, every doctor carried it. Though not as effective as true antibiotics, Sulfa has a deleterious effect on microbial growth, useful

for treating wounds and internal infections. The first sulfa drug, Prontosil, was manufactured from a dye. The liquid was a deep burgundy color. By 1937, a host of other sulfa drugs hit the market, as a 'Sulfa Craze' swept America.

Blood Transfusion: By the 1930's, medicine had identified four basic blood types, making blood transfusions immeasurably safer. They had not, however, identified the Rhesus factor (the plus or minus after the letter), meaning that often people still received incompatible blood. The effects of this are frequently deadly. Nonetheless, blood transfusion was a popular technique. The first blood bank was established in America in 1937; Russia had them from the 1920s. Blood could be stored for a short time in glass bottles. In most cases, a relative of the patient was found to donate blood directly from vein to vein.

Electroconvulsive Therapy:

Although Electroconvulsive Therapy (or Electroshock Therapy) did not see widespread use until the 1940s, experiments with convulsive agents, including drugs and electricity, were carried out in the 1930s. Used to 'treat' severe depression and other mental illnesses, such treatments could result in amnesia, confusion and in the case of chemical treatments, hallucinations.

X-Ray: A relatively new technology, and only recently applied to medicine, X-Ray devices were becoming more common by the 1930s. The use of such a machine would be available to most doctors, through a hospital in any major center.

Sample Special Benefits

- In the course of treating the poisoned patient, you produce an effective antidote against the toxins of the creature that injured him.

While you're treating the patient, his delusional babbling gives you insight into the being that caused the injury. Gain a two point dedicated pool for understanding the motives of the entity.

- You apply a dose of amyl nitrate to the unconscious patient. He regains consciousness immediately, rather than sleeping through the night.

Sample Clues

- The symptoms are of no ordinary disease. Perhaps a tumour could produce the delusions and raving, but the strange scaly appearance of the skin, and the craving for salt water are something else entirely. Only one other report exists of the same disease, from the same village twenty years ago. The doctor who wrote the report is in an asylum now.
- The victim describes a strange sweet aroma emanating from his attacker. It could be a symptom of untreated diabetes. Searching medical records could uncover likely culprits.
- Everyone in the village has the same froglike, bug-eyed look. You recognise the symptoms of a congenital defect, though for it to affect the whole town, they'd have to be remarkably inbred.

Occult

The Thirties teemed with a wide variety of unusual spiritual beliefs, some mainstream and others more obscure. Many of these were based on the 'Spiritualism' of the Victorian era, which included such well-known phenomena as séances, telekinesis, hypnotism and divination. Often these societies blended allegedly Eastern practices with traditional spiritualism. Below are some of the more popular or influential movements.

Rosicrucianism: A semi-legendary hermetic order, the 'Brethren of the Rosie Cross' is considered by some scholars to have been a major influence on Christian practice during the 13th and 14th centuries, though no documented evidence of the order exists before 1607. Manifestos published by a German Protestant group at this time claimed to document the journey of 'Christian Rosenkreuz', a Christian scholar, who studied under occult masters in the East. Rosicrucianism is a major influence on the Western occult tradition, and references to the Order could be found in almost any occult group of the 1930s.

The Golden Dawn: Founded in 1887 and splintering into many smaller groups by the beginning of the twentieth century, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn retained a profound influence on western occultism through the thirties. The Order was patterned on the Kabbalistic Tree of Life, and involved ten Grades, one for each of the ten spheres. The inner order, the 'Ruby Rose and Cross of Gold', taught magic, alchemy, and astral travel. A third tier of 'Secret Chiefs' was said to have transcended the physical realm and supposedly directed the operations of the Order through spirit communication.

Thelema: A philosophy espoused by legendary occultist Aleister Crowley, but based on an older occult tradition, Thelema posits the primacy of human will in the universe, as characterized by the expression 'There is no law beyond Do what thou wilt'. Crowley practiced a wide range of occult rituals, including sex magic, alchemy, and astrology. His practices (which he termed 'Magick') and beliefs were imitated by many throughout the twenties and thirties.

Theosophy: Founded by Helena

Blavatsky in 1875, and continuing to this day, the Theosophical Society subscribes to a syncretic philosophy of religion that attempts to blend aspects of many major religions (notably Buddhism and Spiritualism) into a cohesive theory. Strongest in the 1920s, the Theosophical movement included many celebrities and important figures, and it was considered a respectable society.

Ariosophy: Growing out of the Germanic religious revivalism of Guido von List, Ariosophy (also known as Wotanism, Armanism, Theozology and Ario-Christianity in various incarnations) was a collection of racist beliefs about the spiritual origins of a supposed Aryan race. Von List published works on the magical properties of Germanic runic writings. The Viennese inventor and Bible scholar Jörg Lanz von Leibenfels published a paper in 1905 claiming that 'Aryan' peoples were descended from extra-terrestrial deities, while other races resulted from crossbreeding with sub-human ape ancestors. Under the Nazis, some Ariosophists were persecuted for diversions in belief, while others were recognized and became members of the Thule Society.

Special Benefits:

- You remember a scene from your wilder past, when you performed a ritual similar to the one you are now observing. You may call for a flashback scene.
- You know the signs and passwords of the inner members of this cult. You get a two point dedicated pool for posing as such a member, or intimidating and ingratiating yourself with lower members.
- The man is credulous and afraid. Your improvised 'truth spell' convinces him you will detect all his lies, making him conceal the

truth even more poorly. Gain a two-point dedicated pool for Intimidation or Assess Honesty with this man.

Sample Clues

- The ritual paraphernalia strewn around the scene don't conform to any practice you're aware of, and the painted symbols aren't like anything you've seen before. The police are predictably calling this a Satanic cult, but you think something else is at work. The symbols looked more like technical schematics than occult symbols.
- The amulet is a simple ward against harm. Whoever wore this was scared of something. Perhaps the victim had some clue of her impending fate. Searching her house might reveal more clues.
- The cult figure is a kind of fertility god mentioned in several grimoires. The worship has shown up in several cultures, including ancient Rome, and is linked to a similar figure in Aztec myth. The worship always precedes the fall of the civilisation.

Oral History

Sample Special Benefits

- The old man's story is a version of a terrifying urban legend you heard as a child. You may call for a flashback scene.
- This old woman sure loves to talk about the town. Gain a two point dedicated pool for finding your way around, identifying locations and local people, and finding short cuts and hidden routes.
- The guy seems happy to have a chance to tell the story. You've made a friend who will help you as best he can in the future.

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- The woman seems inclined to chatter, but knowing just the right things to say, you speed her along without offending her. She tells you what you need to know right away.
- It's a long story, and the man invites you back to his house to hear the rest of it. This show of trust will go down well with the locals and you may be able to glean some more information.

Sample Clues

- Legends say that folk who go up on Burnt Hill during lightning storms are never heard from again. Last year a farmer went up there after a lost sheep, and he never came back.
- There are rumors about the Penwick family. They say they're from old pirate stock, and they've got a stash of Spanish gold in their cellar. How else could they stay so wealthy when everyone else in town goes hungry?

- The hunter knows the legend of the Black Beast. His grandfather saw it, he says, and was never the same again. He can take you to the valley where it lives, but he won't venture within.

Outdoorsman

Ability Focus: Tracking Animals

Landscape Tracking: Landscape tracking is reading the landscape for likely locations of game. Features such as water sources, cover, prey animals such as vole rabbits and deer (if hunting a predator), the presence of forage species of vegetation, and so on, can be read to indicate the likelihood of finding game in the area.

Signs: These are indicators of an animal's presence. A collection of signs might indicate a trail, a bed, or a den. Signs include 'rubs' where animals repeatedly rub against a protrusion in a trail by chance, or rub intentionally for scent marking and the like. 'Chews' are marks of an animal feeding. The type of bite marks can indicate the animal responsible. Deer tear up foliage, while rabbits cut it cleanly. Predators may chew on grass, but not swallow it, leaving distinctive chews. 'Scat' is the feces of animals. Animals have distinctive scat, which can determine the type of animal and what they are feeding on.

Sideheading: Sideheading is a technique for detecting the compressions of dust particles and grit on a trail which indicate the passage of an animal. The tracker, looking along the trail towards a light source (such as the sun), presses their ear to the ground. Looking across the trail with the lower eye can reveal shiny or dull spots where animals have disturbed dust and grit.

Tracks: A wealth of information can be determined from animal tracks, beyond just the species of animal that

Field Dressing a Deer

These procedures can be followed with any large herbivore. Immediately after the kill, the animal should be bled by cutting open veins in the neck, and lifting the hindquarters.

Some hunters recommend removing the scent glands of a deer as soon as possible. These are located behind the knees on the hind legs. Some hunters keep these scent glands as lures or to disguise their own scent.

With the animal hung by its head, or lying on its back with its rump downhill, a cut should be made down the belly of the animal. All internal organs are removed, including the heart, liver and tongue, which are edible and are often saved. The pelvis is split, which sometimes requires a hatchet, and the genitals and intestines removed.

In warm weather, the carcass should be skinned to help it cool faster, but otherwise the skin should be left on to protect the meat.

Finding Water

Condensation: In areas with extreme temperature variation between night and day, condensation can form on metal and glass. An absorbent cloth can collect this moisture in the mornings and the evenings.

Dew: Heavy dews are a good source of water. Tying rags or fine grass to your ankles and walking through dewy grass can collect dew on the cloth, which should be wrung out into a container.

Trees: Many trees, including banana trees, palms, and baobabs, collect water. If the tree is small, cutting it down and scooping a hollow in the stump will cause water from the roots to collect in the hole. Some trees can produce water for up to four days in this way.

Seawater: Seawater can be boiled with a cloth held in the steam. The moisture accumulating in the cloth will be fresh.

Ground: In most terrain, a hole dug at a low point in the area will accumulate water. In a desert, the water may accumulate very slowly, or it may be difficult to find a good location. The water should be boiled before use.

left the track. The sex of the animal can often be determined by the size of the print or by the relative positions of the hind and front prints. Males often have front legs wider than back, and females the opposite. The disposition and activity of the animal can be determined by the gait it uses. Stalking, for example, produces a different pattern from fleeing.

Sample Special Benefits

- Tracking the subject, you get some insight into his state of mind and his demeanor. You might observe that he is moving hesitantly, recklessly or with the stagger of a drunkard. Gain a two point dedicated pool for using interpersonal skills against the subject.

- You know a short cut through the woods, getting you there in half the time.
- The fresh meal and blazing fire you prepare in the wilderness restores everyone's spirits. You may refresh your Stability with a Confidence die.

Sample Clues

- The prints weren't made by any kind of animal that belongs in this part of the world. What's even stranger is the way they lead right off the edge of this cliff. Whatever carried the man away in last night's storm was no ordinary creature.
- This trail of hoof marks wasn't made by animals. There are no chew marks, no rubs or caught hairs. Come to mention it, there seem to be very few animals at all in these woods. Maybe somebody faked it, or maybe it was something else.
- The dogs won't follow the scent, but you can catch the trail anyway. You follow the trail through several miles of bush to a cave in a cliff side.

Pharmacy

Below are several effects that can be achieved with pharmaceuticals, and common drugs for that effect in the 1930s.

Analgesic: Aspirin was sold in various forms and was a household name in the 1930s. Various other analgesics were also used.

Anesthetic: Ether and Chloroform were the two most common anesthetics, both administered as a gas.

Sedative: Barbitol was the first 'sleeping pill' and it was used to treat anxiety. Phenytoin and Trimethadone were two common sedatives with

Investigative Abilities

A Selection of Common Poisons

Arsenic: Nicknamed 'Inheritance Powder' because of its frequent use as a poison, arsenic is colorless and flavorless. Symptoms of arsenic poisoning include stomach pain, vomiting, diarrhea, convulsions and delirium. In the 1930s there was no viable treatment for acute arsenic poisoning, though its presence could be detected by a Reinsch test (See Forensics)

Strychnine: One of the most bitter substances known, strychnine is easily detectable even in small doses. Symptoms include convulsions (including a characteristic arched back) followed rapidly by asphyxiation. Tannic acid can flush strychnine from the system, if taken promptly. Doctors in the 1930s would follow this with chloroform to prevent convulsions from injuring the patient.

Curare: The poison used on the darts of some South American tribes, curare kills within an hour by paralysis and asphyxiation. Prepared from certain plants native to that region, it is also effective in the treatment of strychnine poisoning.

Cyanide: Inhaled or ingested, cyanide is a deadly poison, killing within minutes. Amyl Nitrate, inhaled and followed by an injection of Sodium Nitrate (both common substances) is an effective antidote.

reduced side effects of drowsiness.

Stimulant: Benzedrine was one of the first non-coca derived stimulants, introduced to the United States in 1932. It was advertised as a treatment for hay fever and melancholy.

Sample Special Benefits

- The drug makes the subject confused and pliable. Gain a two point dedicated pool for intimidating or interrogating them.
- Having identified the chemical some cultists were using to keep the half-human thing in the cellar dormant, you believe you can produce more of it yourself.
- Recovering from the poison would normally take days of bedrest, but your effective antidote, plus a healthy dose of stimulants, gets your fellow investigator back on his feet within minutes.

Sample Clues

- The pills in the drug cabinet indicate the man was taking several kinds of sedative, often prescribed for severe psychosis. The man seems normal on the surface – boring, even - but he could be concealing a dark past.
- The smell of bitter almonds alerts you to the poison seconds before you take a sip. Someone is trying to kill you!
- The sedative you administer to the man calms him immediately, and he begins talking. He tells you everything that took place on the island, even recounting his own descent into cannibalism with complete calm and detachment.

Photography

Photography technology was well-developed by the 1930s, and cameras became more and more of an everyday item. Simple cameras were used in households all over the world, while

experts had access to some more sophisticated equipment:

View Cameras: The vast majority of cameras in the 1930s were 'view' cameras. These cameras have two lenses that can move independently of each other, altering the focus of the camera as their angles change. These allow a remarkable degree of control over the focus and framing of a picture, but require some expertise to operate. Simply 'snapping' a shot was not possible with such cameras.

The Folding Camera: Amateur photographers of the 1930s would have used a folding camera. Compact when folded away, the folding camera could unpack when in use, with a leather bellows containing the light-sensitive parts. Good for snapshots and portraits, they were less effective at capturing detail or movement.

Flash Bulb: Photography in dark conditions in the 1930s was achieved through the use of a flash bulb – a glass bulb containing magnesium filaments that was automatically ignited by the opening of the shutter. Such bulbs could only be used once, and were extremely hot after use. Flawed bulbs could cause accidental explosions.

Xenon Flash Bulb: Capable of producing an extremely bright burst of diffuse light, Xenon bulbs were first produced in the 1930s, making them extremely specialized equipment for the time. The precise timing and intense light of Xenon bulbs made them ideal for photographing high-speed images.

Telephoto Lens: Telephoto lenses were first produced commercially in 1932 for movie cameras but specialists would have had lenses of varying effectiveness for still cameras before this date. A Telephoto lens can reduce the apparent distance between the photographer and the subject by as

much as three quarters.

Subminiature Camera: First commercially produced in 1937, the Minox camera was half the size of a carton of cigarettes. The small size made it poor for photography inside three or four feet without adjustments, but outside that range it produced good images.

Darkrooms: Professional photographers and even many enthusiastic amateurs would have had their own darkroom. For those who did not, professional studios (and even some hotels) offered darkroom space for clients to develop their own photographs.

Sample Special Benefits:

- You have created photographs of considerable artistic merit. If they were ever exhibited, they would garner some amount of notoriety. Gain a two-point dedicated pool for interpersonal skills among art aficionados.
- You discover that in the background of one of your photographs, you have caught a state official in a compromising act. This image could net you money or favors in the future. Gain a two-point pool for Bureaucracy.
- Your dedication to professional photography allows you to remain detached even in the face of extreme horror. No matter how mind-wrangling the scene before you is, it is your job to document it. Refresh your Stability with a Confidence die even as you try to hold the camera still.
- You put your hard-earned experience to good use, developing the photographs within half an hour, rather than the usual hour or more.

Sample Clues

- A special filter on your camera lens allows you to detect markings not visible to the naked eye. You can pick up the trail of the creature that broke off the branches fifteen feet up in the forest, but only after the photographs are developed.
- Your flash bulb startles the hunched thing. It goes scampering off down a side exit, with a queer half-lope, half-limp. While it's gone, you're able to get a glimpse of its lair, and maybe learn some of its secrets.
- Your miniature camera allows you to capture images of the faces of the cultists while you infiltrate their secret meeting. Analysing the photographs later, you recognise several faces.

Physics

The 1930s were a time of great leaps of understanding in physics. The properties of radiation and the atom were beginning to be understood, and there was a sense that the mysteries of the universe were unraveling before the march of science. Below are some of the devices that powered this scientific revolution:

The Cyclotron: An early particle accelerator, the cyclotron opened up new realms of inquiry to scientists of the decade. Invented in 1929, the cyclotron became an essential part of many physics labs, and led to advances in chemistry, nuclear medicine, and the development of nuclear weapons.

Electron Microscope: First produced in 1931, the technology for electron microscopy was unreliable and experimental for most of the decade. Early attempts could magnify objects up to four hundred times, a fraction of the capability of modern microscopes but still a staggering amount for the time.

Geiger Counter: The first Geiger counter was invented in 1908 and the design was substantially improved upon twenty years later. Able to detect many (but not all) kinds of radiation, they were an essential tool not only of physicists, but also geologists and archaeologists.

Spectrograph: This was an optical instrument used to measure properties of light. Analysis of the polarization, intensity, and wavelength of light can determine information about the source of the light, or properties of the substance from which the light is reflected.

Sample Special Benefits

- By analysing the creature's faintly luminous trail in the spectrograph, you begin to comprehend something of the thing's physical make-up. Gain a two point dedicated pool for finding a way to injure or kill the thing.
- Contact with intelligences from beyond our reality may be twisting your mind, but it's also opening up startling revelations for physics. You can turn this experience into a paper that, while it may be scorned by the scientific establishment, earns you a certain measure of respect from a minority of experts. Gain a two-point pool for bureaucracy among scientists.
- You've still got some contacts at your old college. You can get access to the physics lab, and some pretty serious equipment, for the night. Just make sure you leave it how you found it.

Sample Clues

- Your readings show a high rate of radioactive decay coming off the severed talon you found. Whatever the thing is, its makeup is fundamentally unstable. It looks like it will disintegrate within the week.

Investigative Abilities

- As you examine the artefact under the electron microscope, you can hardly believe what you find. The rough texture of the surface is made up of thousands of lines of engraved text, too tiny for the eye to see. You're not sure of the language, but it looks like a version of the Enochian script discovered by John Dee, more than eighteen centuries after this object was buried.
- The machinery in the ancient temple is like nothing you've seen before, and yet you can grasp something of its purpose. Ideas hinted at in the most obscure physics texts seem confirmed by the design of the alien machine. You think you can get it working, though you're not sure what the effect will be.

Reassurance

Sample Special Benefits

- You remind the subject of her beloved, long-dead father. You're able to calm her down easily, and she'll treat you as an authority from now on. However, she'll also develop a dependency on you, calling you up and asking for advice, and even calling round unexpectedly in the middle of the night.
- Your well-chosen words don't just calm the person you're talking to, but everyone nearby. Without meaning to, you've found yourself elected leader of the group.
- What this group needs is a rousing moral anecdote. You recount a scene from your childhood, when you faced a similarly difficult situation.
- Your tough but firm reassurance not only calms your subject down, it reaffirms his faith in his religion.

He has something to believe in again, despite having lost so much. Maybe that faith will help in the ongoing battle against supernatural evil.

- This guy is hysterical. The only way to calm him down is to punch him squarely on the jaw. Not only does this bring him out of his tailspin, it earns you the respect of everyone at the bar.
- Talking with the terrified islander, you learn something of her culture's legends. Now you can draw upon inspiring local myth to assist you. Gain two dedicated pool points to reassuring other members of the same tribal group.
- Your quiet reassuring words become a rousing speech. Everyone stops to listen, and you find the stirring words are affecting even yourself. You may refresh Sanity with a Confidence die.

Sample Clues

- The traumatised woman is a babbling wreck, but under your calm care, she regains her composure. To your surprise, she believes *she* is the one responsible for the midnight dismbowellings. You know she cannot be, as she's been in the hospital all night – but why does she think she is?
- Although the young architect in the asylum isn't yet capable of forming a coherent sentence, you reassure him sufficiently for him to reach for his pencils. Sweating, he begins to draw a sketch of a monument or pedestal of some kind, then screws it up and begins again. After five such attempts, you realize what's troubling him. He cannot get the *angles* to match up to what he sees in his mind.
- As the ship begins to capsize,

the crew panic. Several dive overboard, and are quickly swept up by the monstrous thing's tentacles. At the helm, your booming voice keeps the crew together, and the engines fire and restart. You'll escape the thing's clutches, having seen its island lair.

Streetwise

Ability Focus: A Selection of 1930s Slang

Prison: Hoosegow, the Big House

Whiskey: Booze, Hooch, Mule

Hired Gunman: Bruno, Goon, Hatchet Man, Torpedo, Trigger Man

Money: Cabbage, Folding Green, Long Green, Dough, Bread, Suds

Packet of Heroin or Cocaine: Cadillac

Coffin: Chicago Overcoat

Spiked Drink: Mickey Finn

Carrying a Gun: Packing Heat, Wearing Iron

Police Informant: Stool Pigeon

Car: Tin Can

Speakeasies: During Prohibition (which ended in 1933), criminal operations offered illegal alcohol to paying patrons. Ranging from surreptitious back-alley stalls to fancy private clubs; speakeasies could provide alcohol, at a price, to those in the know.

Casinos: Gambling in most forms was illegal in most states in America. Gambling occurred in secret underground casinos and bookies, some of which were very elaborate and catered to wealthy clientele.

Dance Halls: For poor Mexican and African American kids, dance halls, with their loud swing music and exuberant atmospheres provided a welcome release from the hardships of the 1930s. Swing music grew out of Jazz, and usually involved a big band with a driving rhythmic beat, interspersed with improvised solos. Swing music developed its own dance styles and slang, a whole culture of swing. Jitterbugging, a flashy dance style, which incorporated wild 'breakouts' and aerial moves, became as much a part of the show as the music.

Later in the decade, 'zoot suits' became popular. Zoot suits were described in the slang of the decade as: 'A killer-diller coat with a drape shape, real-pleats and shoulders padded like a lunatic's cell.' They had wide padded shoulders, long tails, and sharply tapered pants, and often came in bright colors.

Sample Special Benefits

- Your jive-talk makes you seem like one of the locals. You'll be welcome back in this establishment.
- You sense something's wrong as soon as the goons pile out of the truck. They're not dressed right for this part of town. You make a break for it before the bullets start flying. Gain a two point dedicated pool for Fleeing.
- A night on the town, hitting some of the best gin joints around, is just what you need to get you feeling right. You may refresh your stability with a confidence die.

Sample Clues

- Word on the street is that there's a new disease spreading from the dockside whorehouses. You catch a dose of that and your water turns black. After three days, your

tongue kind of swells, so's you can't talk right. And you get these scaly patches all over your legs that itch like crazy.

- This place has a bad reputation. Even the dope fiends and the bums avoid this row of warehouses. They say some of the doors here don't open onto what you expect. People have got lost in the buildings and never come out. Sometimes you can still hear them calling for help.
- There's several thousand dollars worth of drugs hidden aboard this boat. For whoever was smuggling it to just get up and leave, without putting up a fight, is incredibly unusual. Something strange must have happened out at sea.

Theology

Theology, the study of religion from the stance of a believer, and religious studies, the study of religions from an outsider perspective, were more closely intertwined in the 1930s. Most of the oldest Universities began as theological schools, teaching Bible scholarship and skills suitable to prospective priests. The more modern study of comparative religion was a much more recent development.

Below are the major categorizations of world religions used by religious scholars of the 1930s.

Abrahamic Religions: Including Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, these three religions share a number of similarities. All three are Monotheistic, refer to some of the same historical prophets, and sanctify very similar religious texts.

Dharmic Religions: Including Hinduism and Buddhism, these religions originated in the Indian subcontinent. These religions draw on a similar base of cultural

understanding, and in some cases refer to the same mythological or historical figures, such as the Buddha.

Taoic Religions: Including a wide range of religions such as Taoism, Confucianism, and Shinto, these religions originate from Asia, and focus on the concept of 'Tao'. Tao can be interpreted in many ways, including as the 'flow' of the universe, or cosmic balance.

Animist Religions: A category which covers the widely disparate religious practices of many indigenous groups worldwide, Animist religions posit that personhood, or 'spirithood', resides in a wide variety of non-human things, such as in all living animals, in all objects, or in all natural phenomena.

Sample Special Benefits

- Your apt choice of scriptural quotation convinces the locals that you're trustworthy and moral. They weren't sure about you at first, being as you're from out of town and all, but they'll accept you into the fold.
- Thanks to your hard study of the core texts, you can pass as a member of the clergy of this religion. Gain a two point dedicated pool for interpersonal abilities used among the faithful.
- The seemingly insignificant scrap of papyrus you found is in fact a fragment from a holy text. The find will bring you fame and gratitude among that religion's adherents. Gain a two-point dedicated pool for Bureaucracy with that religious group.

Sample Clues

- This may have once been an orthodox church, but from the symbols hanging on the walls, and the strange idols sitting on the

altar, you can tell something has gone terribly astray. Minor aspects of the original religion seem to have been elevated to a divine status, while the core tenets have been marginalized. An obsession with antediluvian monsters dominates everything.

- Your short sermon impresses on the townsfolk the virtue of honesty. Several of them approach you after the service, telling you dark tales about their neighbours meeting secretly at night.
- Strange as this ritual seems, it's a fairly common practice among Haitian natives. That the governor was so anxious for you to investigate it, and to keep you away from his own activities, makes you more than a little suspicious.



GENERAL ABILITIES

Disguise

Identification: Prior to the introduction of Social Security numbers in 1936, as part of the 'New Deal' economic reforms, there was no national system of identification in the United States. Soldiers had a Service Number by which they were identified, and many people had passports, birth certificates, or driver's licenses, but just as many people had no kind of identification at all. This could make passing yourself off as a different person very easy indeed.

Driving

The Depression didn't hit the automobile industry as hard as it did others, and even in the leanest years of the 1930s, Americans still drove cars. Driving was a symbol of middle class status and car ownership was an important signifier of wealth. For others, however, driving was a way to evade authorities, impress crowds, and get places very quickly.

Below is a selection of driving stunts, many of which were first developed in the 1930s.

Bootleg Turn: Also known as a 'smuggler's turn' or just a 'bootlegger', this is a 180 degree turn at speed in an automobile. It gained its name from its popularity with alcohol smugglers during prohibition. The driver drops the car into a low gear, and turns sharply in the desired direction. The vehicle loses traction, but turns rapidly.

J-Turn: Also called a 'moonshiner's turn', this is a rapid change of direction from a stationary start. The vehicle reverses hard, and then the driver steers hard to the right or left and applies the brakes. Before the vehicle stops moving, the driver shifts into first gear and accelerates hard. This achieves a quick 180-degree turn.

Handbrake turn: Used to negotiate tight corners at speed, a handbrake turn involves applying the handbrake as the driver goes into a corner, causing the vehicle to lose traction and slide around the corner. This allows the driver to pick up speed out of the turn much faster than is otherwise possible.

Left-Foot Braking: Similar to a handbrake turn, left-foot braking involves using the left foot (usually controlling the clutch) to apply the brakes, while simultaneously applying the accelerator and turning. The result is a tight steer, with some loss of traction. Left-foot braking is very hard on the engine of a car.

Heel-and-toe: Heel-and-toe is used to smoothly downshift gears prior to a turn. The brake and accelerator are operated simultaneously with the heel and toe of the right foot, while the left foot engages the clutch. Heel-and-toe gearshifts allow a driver to decelerate much closer to a corner, and to accelerate much faster after it.

Electrical Repair

Increasingly throughout the 1930s, electricity replaced coal and gas as a source of power. Electric lighting was ubiquitous, and electrical appliances became more and more common. Electric engineering meant understanding a wide range of different parts and their interactions.

Below are some common electrical components and devices of the 1930s.

Vacuum Tubes: Also known as 'electron tubes', 'valves' or just 'tubes', vacuum tubes were an early form of diode. They allowed for complex applications of electrical current, such as in amplifiers, which were found in radios and some speakers. Specially made tubes can have specific effects, but require the tube to be filled with particular inert

gases. Vacuum tubes were frequently unreliable, both because they required a standing current to operate, and because, being made of glass, they were often fragile. Vacuum tubes also tended to corrode or lose vacuum over time, eventually causing them to fail. Old vacuum tubes corrupted with air or other gases were known to explode.

Batteries: Batteries of the 1930s came in several types. Small batteries for handheld devices such as flashlights used zinc-carbon 'dry cell' batteries, which produce little power but are reliable and have no liquid contents to leak or spill. For devices requiring more power, a lead-acid battery was used. Similar to a modern car battery, these had a liquid acid reservoir and could be recharged. They provided more power at the cost of having to be kept upright lest they spill. Various other battery formulations were known, and could be encountered in older electric devices.

Radio: Radio, especially broadcast radio, was a relatively recent technology in the 1930s. Reception of minute variations of current – a necessity for radio – was made possible by a 'Cat's Whisker Detector', a combination of a natural semi-conducting crystal and a hair-thin metal wire. By the 1930s such detectors were being replaced with vacuum tube receivers, but Cat's Whisker versions were still being produced.

Explosives

Ability Focus: Common explosive equipment of the 1930s

Dynamite: Used in construction, warfare, mining and demolitions, dynamite was the most common explosive of the decade. Relatively stable, dynamite could still be dangerous in freezing or extremely hot temperatures. Dynamite is a mixture of nitroglycerine and diatomaceous earth.

TNT: A relatively weak explosive, TNT (Trinitrotoluene) was popular because of its stability, able to be melted and poured at well below its detonation temperature, TNT was also shock resistant, and does not dissolve in or absorb water, making it suitable for use in wet conditions. A skin irritant, it dyes skin bright yellow.

Oxyliquid: Made by exploiting the explosive properties of liquid oxygen under certain situations, Oxyliquid is a powerful explosive. A mixture of liquid oxygen, lampblack, and some kind of absorbent material is prepared just prior to detonation and can then be ignited either by an electric spark or by a strong impact. Oxyliquid can be improvised by anyone with access to suitable materials.

Blasting Caps: Used to detonate most kinds of explosives, Blasting caps transform an electric current into a small explosion of material contained in the cap, usually black powder or mercury fulminate.

Filch

Successful pocket picking usually relies on distraction; the mark's attention is drawn to something else while the theft is executed. Without distraction, the thief must use practiced dexterity and a few tricks to cover their theft.

Ability Focus: Common Tricks

Drawing attention: A staged fight, trying to sell or show something to the target, or an obvious come-on all draw the target's attention while an accomplice executes the theft. This is a popular pickpocket trick and for this reason experienced thieves often work in pairs.

Distraction: Theft is much easier if the target can be made to divert their attention from their belongings. Dropped coins or books can elicit the help of strangers, who put down their

bags to pick up the dropped items. Asking a stranger to help take your photograph may allow an accomplice access to their bags.

Locating Cash: A common problem with pick pocketing is finding where the target keeps their wallet. Thieves will brush against a target to feel for the telltale bulge. Failing this, some thieves have been known to call 'Someone stole my wallet!' or the like. The natural reaction of bystanders is to check their own wallet is intact.

Cutpurse: Handbags and backpacks are vulnerable to being slashed open, and their contents removed while being carried. A gang of Russian cutpurses in the 1930s were known for carrying curved razor blades in their mouths for this purpose.

Firearms

The *Trail of Cthulhu* rulebook has detailed information on 1930s firearms and their use. Below is some information for Keepers about the legal status of firearms (at the federal level) in America in the 1930s.

National Firearms Act (1934): This act restricted ownership of automatic weapons, short-barreled shotguns and rifles, silencers, and 'gadget' weapons, such as gun-canes. It created an annual tax of \$200 per gun (over \$2,500 today).

Federal Firearms Act (1938): This act restricted the sale and transport of weapons and required licenses for such. The names of any persons who bought a weapon were required to be recorded at the point of sale.

Concealed Carry: Permits to carry a concealed weapon were granted on a case-by-case basis by county or municipal authorities. They were awarded very rarely and only to citizens 'of good standing'.

General Abilities

State Controls: Individual state laws varied wildly. Commonly, sale of handguns was proscribed or restricted and licenses were expensive or difficult to obtain.

First Aid

A typical first aid kit of the decade could contain:

- Several sterile gauze pads for covering wounds
- Antiseptic lotion for burns and rashes
- A roll of waterproof adhesive plaster (five or ten yards)
- Band-Aid sticking plasters
- A bar of soap
- Sterile absorbent cotton
- Bandages of various widths and lengths (usually about 1.5" x 10 yards)
- Mercurochrome (nicknamed 'monkey blood' for its strong red color, Mercurochrome is a topical antiseptic)
- Tincture of Iodine (another topical antiseptic)
- Aromatic Spirit of Ammonia ('smelling salts' in a liquid solution, used for reviving the unconscious)
- Cotton applicators or 'Cue-tips'
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- A handbook of first aid instructions

Hypnosis

Stage Hypnotism: Hypnotism as a form of entertainment was popular

in the 1930s and several hypnotists became world-famous celebrities.

A stage hypnotist must make their audience want to be hypnotized. To do this, they present hypnotism as a flattering proposition, using phrases such as 'only intelligent people can be hypnotized successfully'. They select audience members who appear extroverted and eager. There is debate about whether stage hypnotism is a true hypnotic trance, or just people 'playing along'. All parties agree a person cannot be made to do something they don't already want to do.

The following are typical symptoms of a hypnotic state.

- Fluttering eyelids
- Watering eyes
- Relaxation of muscles
- Sensations of warmth or coolness
- Difficulty swallowing
- Changes in breathing rate and depth
- Twitching of fingers, arms, or legs

Milton Erickson: A pioneer in hypnotherapy, just starting his career in the 1930s, Milton Erickson was a remarkable man with an unconventional approach to therapy. Uninterested in the lengthy interviews and introspection common to psychoanalysis, his therapy was often extremely brief and often the patient was unaware it was taking place.

Erickson developed what was known as the 'hypnotizing handshake', a much hyped technique at the time. He would use reverse psychology, ordeals, and confusing questions as a

regular part of his therapy.

Mechanical Repair:

Piston Steam Engine: In the 1930s, piston steam engines were used for powering many essential machines, including locomotives, boats, factories, and even automobiles. A piston steam engine uses the expansion of steam to power a piston, which may then drive a wheel or turn a crank. Steam engines require fuel, either wood, coal, or as was becoming more common in the 1930s, oil. They also require a regular supply of fresh water (salt water will not do) though more modern engines employed a condenser to minimize water requirements.

Turbine Steam Engine: A steam turbine engine employs a series of rotors that are driven by expanding steam. The rotors turn a drive shaft. Used mainly for powering large ships or for electricity generation, steam turbines are a highly efficient but expensive way to produce power from steam.

Internal Combustion Engine: By the 1930s, internal combustion technology was well developed. Both diesel and petrol engines were common for driving automobiles, aircraft, and machinery.

Automobiles: Automobiles were increasingly common in the 1930s, especially in cities. Cars for the first time began to resemble modern cars, with integrated fenders and a rear trunk. Older cars started with a crank at the front but most modern cars had a key ignition. Most of the mechanical technology found in modern cars had been invented by the 1930s.

Piloting

The 1930s saw the development of much more sophisticated navigation

equipment for boats and aircraft.

Ability Focus: Navigation Equipment

Radiobeacons: First introduced to the US in the 1930s, radiobeacons aid coastal navigation by emitting a regular and reliable radio signal that can be received by instrumentation aboard a ship. A radiobeacon receiver receives a stronger signal when placed at 90 degrees to the source of the signal, allowing the pilot to determine the direction of the source. In an emergency, a cheap radio set and a commercial radio station can be homed in on in exactly the same way.

Depth Sounding: With detailed topographic maps of the sea floor, a naval pilot can determine location by depth sounding. Traveling in a straight line and taking depth measurements at regular intervals, the pilot can draw a series of contour lines of the local sea floor. Overlaying these on topographic maps of the area and looking for matches can determine location very precisely, depending on the accuracy of the charts.

Altimeter: Aircraft altimeters were in common use in the 1930s, though they were not as sensitive as the ones used today. Most used a simple aneroid barometer to measure air pressure and could not be adjusted for local variations in air pressure.

Attitude Indicator: The 'artificial horizon' that shows an aircraft's relative angle to the ground was first invented in the late 1920s. Utilizing gyroscope technology, the invention significantly improved the ability of pilots to fly in poor visibility.

Control Towers: Aircraft control towers were not common on airfields of the 1930s. Only a couple of dozen airfields in the USA had them, and

they were mostly advisory in their role.

Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysis is a therapeutic technique that was developed by Sigmund Freud in the late nineteenth century. Freud's theories were immensely influential upon European therapeutic practice and by the 1930s they were familiar to most American practitioners as well.

The underlying principles of Freud's theories and of Psychoanalysis in general were of the 'Id' or instinctive unconscious mind, the 'Superego' or moralizing critical mind, and the 'Ego' or conscious mind. The Ego acts as a mediator between the id and the super-ego and endeavors to ensure that the Id and the Superego alike have their needs satisfied. Psychoanalysis is the practice of discovering repressed feelings and memories (usually childhood memories), which have an effect on the Ego, even when they are hidden from the conscious mind.

Ability Focus: Techniques of Psychoanalysis

Free Association: The patient is encouraged to talk freely and openly, revealing all thoughts and feelings. The psychoanalyst asks pointed questions directed at enabling the patient to relate or rediscover childhood memories, especially sexual memories, which were seen as an important cause of adult neurosis.

Dream Analysis: Freud saw dreams as disguised wish fulfillment, times when the Ego and Id were unfettered by the Superego. Psychoanalysts often diagnosed the underlying causes of neurosis and depression from the contents of a patient's dreams.

Hypnosis: In a game where the Keeper feels that use of the Hypnosis ability is inappropriate to the theme,

therapeutic hypnosis may still be allowed under the Psychoanalysis ability. In this capacity, hypnosis is the practice of putting the patient into an extremely relaxed, suggestible state, prior to another psychoanalytic technique such as free association.

Riding

Ability Focus: Horse Behavior

Horses signal much of their mood with their ears. They can swivel independently; a horse paying attention to its rider will keep one ear pointed backwards. Ears flattened back indicate anger and a potential to kick, while ears perked forwards show friendliness and curiosity. A wary horse swivels its ears constantly. Horses also express with their tails, tucking their tails between their legs just like a dog when scared.

Horse riders should be wary of the following three things when approaching or riding a horse.

Kicking: Horses have a powerful kick and riders are warned never to approach a horse from behind for this reason. Horses can kick playfully in passing, or in excitement when first released into a new field. Horses also kick out of fear, much like a dog biting. They'll usually cock a leg first in warning.

Bucking: Bucking, where the horse flicks out its back legs, can often dislodge a rider. It's frequently the result of excitement or tension in the horse, or sometimes a deliberate attempt to unseat the rider. Letting the horse blow off some steam before riding it can prevent bucking. While riding, keeping a horse moving at speed can prevent bucking, since the horse must slow down to buck.

Bolting: Horses can take off without control when startled or excited, cantering or even galloping without

General Abilities

responding to the rider's signals. Smart horses may bolt to try to unseat a rider. Inexperienced riders will often panic when a horse bolts. More experienced riders can stay on the horse and eventually bring it under control.

Scuffling

No formal training is required to become proficient at scuffling. However, in the 1930s there were several martial arts popular in the United States, some of which are unfamiliar today.

Savate: 'French Boxing', as it is sometimes known, was a popular (if not widely known) martial art in the 1930s. Incorporating kicking and open handed slaps as well as stick-fighting, savate was developed from French street-fighting techniques and is quite dangerous.

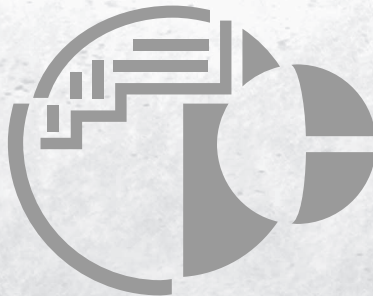
Bartitsu: Obscure even in its own time, Bartitsu was a martial art adapted and devised by the Englishman Edward Barton-Wright after a visit to Japan. Incorporating traditional boxing as well as more exotic judo techniques, a major feature of the style was the use of a walking stick or umbrella for self-defense. By the 1930s, formal training in the art had died out, but older British gentlemen might be trained. Sherlock Holmes was supposedly a master of this art.

Boxing: 'Queensbury Rules' were the formal rules of boxing adopted in 1867 and current in the 1930s, so named because they were endorsed by the Marquess of Queensbury. These rules of boxing influenced 'civilized' fighting to the extent that blows below the belt, striking a fallen opponent, and grappling were considered bad sport even outside the ring.

Stealth

As well as the physical skill of moving without making noise, there are many techniques and tricks to successful stealthy movement. Career criminals, experienced hunters, or people with military training would be well familiar with the following tricks.

- Binding together metal equipment to prevent rattling.
- Blacking (with boot polish) shiny metal equipment
- Wearing fitting clothes to prevent rustling
- Using cover and concealment
- Walking near walls to prevent floorboards creaking



Occupations

Alienist

The Alienist is still in a pioneering field in the 1930s, when mental illness was poorly understood and frequently stigmatized. Below are some of the techniques and practices available to a psychological ‘expert’ of the time.

Involuntary Commitment: In the 1930s, the laws for involuntary commitment were startlingly lax. Though there were some legal requirements for committing a patient to a mental institution against their will, for the most part the word of an expert in the field would be enough, especially if the patient was of low social standing or unable to speak for themselves. Any kind of ‘aberrant’ social behavior – which included homosexuality, radical political views, or for women, failing to perform housework duties – could be grounds for involuntary commitment.

Lobotomy: Pioneered in 1935, lobotomy (carried out either by the injection of alcohol into the frontal lobe or by the cutting of neural connections) was a popular treatment among a minority of medical professionals. Though the practice didn’t really see mainstream acceptance until the 1940s, it was considered cutting-edge science for the 1930s.

Forensic Psychology: Still almost unheard of in the 1930s, Forensic Psychology would not see mainstream acceptance until after the war. Psychologists were sometimes called as expert witnesses in trials to attest to the suspect’s mental state, or to assess the reliability of a witness’s

recall of events. In a Pulp game, the Keeper might allow more advanced forensic psychology techniques such as ‘criminal profiling’, though the large body of prior cases that such work relies upon would not be available in the 1930s.

Antiquarian

No one was getting rich from antiquities in the 1930s. A very few spectacular finds may have grabbed headlines but for the most part the antiquarian business was conducted for the love of old things.

Antiquarian Societies: Antiquarian societies have existed almost as long as antiquarians themselves. These societies often keep their own collections, as well as connecting antiquarians with each other. Antiquarians frequently have an area of special expertise or interest and knowing the right person in the society can be an important source of information. In America, the American Antiquarian Society keeps an extensive library of old texts published in the United States.

Crooked Practices: As much as the antiquarian business was built on enthusiasm and shared knowledge, there were a host of corrupt practices common to the industry. These only became more common with the financial hardships of the Depression. Fakes, misrepresentations, and overpricing abounded. Many antiquarians prided themselves on buying rare items for low prices from people who didn’t know their worth. Often, if the exact pedigree of an item were unknown, it would be labeled with a speculative description – a

possible truth.

Old and Rare Books: Books are often purchased in lots, from libraries culling excess tomes or from estate sales. Value depends heavily on condition for all but the most rare books. First editions, signed copies, and misprints are the most sought-after books, as well as anything particularly old and hard to find.

Very rare books

- **Gutenberg Bible:** The first book ever printed. Even single pages are incredibly valuable.
- **Shakespeare’s *Complete Works*:** First edition published in 1623, worth hundreds of thousands (millions today).
- **Poe’s *Tamerlane*:** Due to the ambiguous by-line, ‘By a Bostonian’, the first edition of this poem is rare and hard to find. It’s worth thousands (tens of thousands today).
- ***Birds of America*:** This book of illustrations by John James Audubon is worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. It was published in 1840.

Archaeologist

New technology, increasingly accessible transport, and heightened interest in ancient cultures meant that the 1930s had more archaeological dig sites than any previous decade. Below are some techniques and theories popular at the time.

Sequence Dating: Developed by Egyptologist Flinders Petrie, ‘Sequence

Occupations

Dating' was a system of comparative dating for establishing the chronology of a site. By comparing trends in artistic styles, such as the development of pottery jug handles, the relative ages of areas and layers of a site could be determined.

Grammatology: Inspired by the discovery of the Rosetta Stone in 1822, archaeologists had, by the 1930s, a long list of techniques for deciphering ancient scripts. Many of the most ancient writing systems, including cuneiform, Egyptian hieroglyphs, Etruscan, and Ancient Greek, were at least partially understood.

Diffusionism: A popular historical theory in the 1930s, diffusionism was the belief that all culture originated from one or a very small number of geographic locations, or 'centers of culture'. Radical diffusionists believed that all 'civilized' culture could be traced to a single source, probably somewhere in ancient Mesopotamia.

Artist

Art in the 1930s was increasingly politicized and artworks of the period are often overtly political expositions of the hardships and poverty caused by the Great Depression. Artists of the decade struggled with poverty as much as everyone else and even well known artists found buyers hard to come by.

Federal Music Project: Providing funding for musicians hit hard by the Depression, the Federal Music Project was a part of the 'New Deal' economic reforms of the decade. Thousands of concerts, hundreds of music classes, thirty-four orchestras and large amounts of research were funded by the project. Classical and Folk music were the main beneficiaries of this funding, but popular and 'ethnic' music was also promoted.

Federal Art Project: The Fine Arts companion to the Federal Music

Program, the Federal Art Project funded struggling artists to create posters, murals and paintings, mostly for public buildings. Exhibitions, research, and teaching were also funded by the project, and some of the country's most significant works of public art were produced.

Author

Authors of the 1930s produced some historic works of fiction, and also some eminently forgettable trash. They spanned a range from respected international figures, such as Ernest Hemingway and John Steinbeck, to lowly and often reviled pulp writers.

The Pulp: Pulp magazines were a common source of income for 1930s authors, both successful and otherwise. Titles such as 'Adventure', 'Amazing Stories', 'Oriental Stories', 'Unknown', and perhaps the best known, 'Weird Tales', promised their readers lurid stories and exotic thrills. Cover art was an important facet of the business, so much so that often authors were commissioned to write material to match a cover, rather than the other way around. Pulp magazines often paid far below the rates of traditional publishers but were willing to accept large amounts of material, sometimes even publishing the same author under several different names in a single magazine.

Correspondence: Even before the Internet, many authors maintained regular and voluminous correspondence with one another. Like-minded authors, even those who had never met in person, often exchanged ideas and criticism by mail. Authors of the 1930s would likely have a circle of friends with whom they correspond regularly, and on whom they could draw for advice and expertise. Such contacts might be more understanding of bizarre and unbelievable tales told in letters.

Clergy

The roles, responsibilities, and methods of clergy vary enormously depending on faith. A Christian priest has an entirely different job from a voodoo practitioner and different again from a Muslim cleric. Below are descriptions of the role of clergy in three major faiths of the United States.

Catholic: Catholic Priests are categorized as 'diocesan' or 'religious'. Diocesan priests serve a diocese, a church administration region. They often work in parishes, religious schools, or other institutions. Diocesan priests take a vow of celibacy and obedience.

'Religious' priests, usually members of religious orders, such as Jesuits, Dominicans, or Franciscans, take a vow of poverty in addition to their vows of celibacy and obedience. They donate all their income to their religious order. These priests often serve as missionaries and teachers, while others live secluded in monasteries.

Jewish: Jewish clergy, Rabbis, serve a wide variety of Jewish congregations. Rabbis are responsible for preserving the substance of Jewish worship, though that can vary greatly between congregations. Some Rabbis are required to speak and perform ceremonies in Hebrew. Rabbis have much greater independence in religious expression than clergy from other faiths, due to the absence of a formal religious hierarchy. They are responsible to the board of trustees of the congregation they serve. Rabbis from large congregations often have assistant Rabbis for help with administrative duties.

Protestant: 'Protestant' covers a huge variety of religious denominations, including Anglicanism, Baptism, Calvinism, Puritanism,

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Keeper's Resource Book

Presbyterianism, Lutheranism, and a host of others. Protestant ministers lead their congregation in worship and administer to the needs of their church. Most services include Bible readings, testimonials, and sermons. In addition, Protestant clergy serve at weddings, funerals, and other ceremonies.

The exact duties of the minister vary depending on the denomination. Some are moved between pastorates every few years. Some protestant ministers have a high degree of autonomy, while others are responsible to church hierarchy.

Criminal

The 1930s have been described as a 'lawless' decade. Prohibition had led to the substantial growth of organized crime. Even after its end, criminal gangs maintained a hold on the nation. Such gangs, often with colorful names, continued to deal in black market goods such as heroin and cocaine. Some members of immigrant communities, short of work during the Great Depression, turned to crime to get by. Gangs were often affiliated along ethnic lines. Irish, Polish, and Mexican gangs operated in places where those populations existed and of course the notorious Mafia was ever present.

Gambling: Gambling in almost every form was illegal in nearly every state at the start of the 1930s but economic pressure from the Depression forced many states to legalize some forms of gambling, such as lotteries and bingo, as fund raisers for charitable organizations. Criminal gangs operated secret casinos in many major cities, often in private locations or in offshore boats. Horse race betting was legalized in 1933, with strict oversight. Illegal bookies and betting agents sprung up simultaneously.

Trafficking: The sophisticated



smuggling networks built during the prohibition era were quickly turned to the trafficking of other illegal goods once prohibition ended in 1933. Marijuana was swiftly becoming illegal in every state and organized crime was quick to transport it from those few places where it remained legal. Heroin, produced mostly in China, was smuggled only by the largest and most well established gangs.

Organized criminals smuggled people as well as drugs. 'White Slavery', as it was known, involved the procurement

of impoverished European (often Jewish) women for enforced prostitution overseas. Buenos Aires was the international capital of this practice, but it reached all over the world.

Labor Racketeering: The 1930s saw large scale industrial disputes between Unions, whose members were feeling the pinch of unemployment, poor wages, and dangerous working conditions, and employers, hit hard by failing world markets. Organized crime worked

Occupations

both sides of these disputes, acting as strikebreakers for the companies, as well as extorting and intimidating corporate officials. In all cases the price was continued involvement with the criminal gang. Many companies and Unions found themselves operating as a front for criminal organizations.

Dilettante

Free time and money makes Dilettantes the premiere connoisseurs of the decade's entertainment. Below are some popular and expensive entertainments of the 1930s.

Horse Racing: Ever popular, the predictability of baseball and the seedy side of boxing made for a surge in horse racing as the entertainment of the upper classes in America. The legalization of race betting in many states – a response to the Depression – only increased its popularity.

Boxing: The Depression hit boxing hard, with many boxers declining the lower purses offered in the decade. Gambling was a major part of boxing and with gambling came corruption. Professional fights were usually fair but smaller amateur fights were dominated by organized crime.

Yachting: The 1930s saw some of the largest racing yachts of all time. 'J-Class' Yachts up to 87 feet long competed in the America's Cup, the premiere yachting event. Pleasure boating was a relatively recent development. Until the twentieth century, almost all boats were used for work or racing. Luxury yachts were rare and were usually modified racing or shipping boats.

Parties: Lavish parties, whether in dance halls, private homes, or aboard a luxury steamer, were as popular as ever among the wealthy classes. Popular drinks after prohibition ended were the 'Gin Fizz' (a frothy mix of

egg whites and gin) and the Daiquiri (popularized by Earnest Hemingway). Before the end of prohibition, popular drinks included anything you could get.

Doctor

Doctors in the 1930s have unique relationships to draw upon and access to some unusual equipment. They might have any of the following contacts.

War Buddies: Many doctors from the 1930s learned their trade as Army medics in the Great War. As such, they would be able to draw upon many of the same military contacts as a veteran.

Students and Mentors: Even those doctors who didn't go to the war would have a wealth of contacts. Most doctors during the decade didn't attend a medical school but rather learned from a single mentor, a 'master and apprentice' relationship. These mentors and students would often stay in contact for their entire careers.

Patients: Most doctors had a close relationship with the communities in which they worked, charging their patients by their ability to pay. An experienced doctor would have a large number of people in his or her debt.

Doctor's Bag

A typical doctor's bag of the decade would contain a cornucopia of implements and drugs. Things a doctor could reasonably be assumed to be carrying in his or her bag include the following.

Implements: Chrome mouth gag, red rubber bulb syringe, a headlamp with a battery-operated power-pack, spare bulbs, needle probes, marking pencil, dental mirrors, glass magnifying lens, tongue depressors, ear specula, eyelid speculum, chrome diagnostic handle, instruction manuals

for various pieces of equipment, razor shavers, tweezer-type uterine dilator, rolls of bandage material, small trocar, ear spoon, scissors, hemostats curved and straight, binaural stethoscope, steel safety pins, circumcision sutures, gauze and medicine droppers.

Medicine: Ampoules of evipal (a short-term sedative) and water, bottles of thypitol (for worms), hypodermic ampoule of metacaine (an aesthetic), Cascara compound (laxative), epragen capsules (analgesic), sulfanilamide and sulfathiazole (weak anti-bacterial agents).

Hobo

The 1930s were a hobo's decade. The Depression forced itinerant laborers across the country in search of work. Traveling by foot or hitching a ride on rail cars, a culture of hobos – those who took to the itinerant life full time – soon arose.

Hobo Slang

- Banjo – a portable frying pan.
- Barnacle – a person who sticks to a single job and location.
- Bone Polisher – a mean dog.
- California Blanket – newspapers.
- Catch the Westbound – to die.
- Flop – a place to sleep.
- Jungle – a place where hobos gather.
- Jungle Buzzard – a hobo that preys on other hobos.
- Stemming – begging.
- Tokay blanket – drinking alcohol to stay warm.

Riding the Rails: 'Riding the Rails', the term for catching a free lift on

a freight train, was a dangerous but economical way for hobos to travel throughout America. The common practice was to hide near the tracks outside the rail yard and to run alongside the train as it gathered speed outside the station. Besides the danger of injury from falling under trains, which was common, the railroad companies hired 'Bulls' (private security) to keep off freeloaders. The Railroad Bulls were known for their violence with those they caught.

Journalist

Journalists were hit as hard as everyone else by the Depression, which saw a wave of newspaper closures and mergers across America. Radio also hit the newspapers hard, though it gave work to a lot of otherwise itinerant journalists.

Documentary Photography:

Photography played a major role in journalism covering the effects of the Depression in America. The term 'documentary' was coined in the 1920s and referred to a new kind of journalism, imbuing facts with feelings. Two famous collections of documentary photographs and text of the time were *Let us Now Praise Famous Men* and *You Have Seen Their Faces*. These two works defined documentary for the decade.

Radio Journalism: Radio picked up where newspapers faltered. The growth of small radio stations meant a demand for journalists to produce stories for them. Audiences of the 1930s came to trust radio journalism over newspapers; the presence of a human voice lent verisimilitude to a story.

Stenography: Stenography or 'shorthand' is an abbreviated writing style employed by journalists and secretaries, who must record spoken words very quickly. 'Pitman' shorthand was the style most

commonly used in America, but experienced stenographers frequently developed their own idiosyncrasies of style. A highly personalized style might be completely impenetrable to those unfamiliar with it.

Military

In a purist game of *Trail of Cthulhu*, a military character may be inappropriate to the genre. However, there are many kinds of military service. Below are some forms of service that might be more easily included in a purist game:

National Guard: In the 1930s, the majority of the United States Army was comprised of National Guard units. National Guardsmen in peacetime have normal civilian lives (except for training) but during war or in times of emergency, units (never individuals) may be mobilized for disaster relief or combat duty.

Strike Breakers: The USA was the only developed country in the world to allow corporations to employ military force in the disruption of strike activities. Some corporations, notably mines and railroad companies, employed private armies numbering in the thousands for the purpose of discouraging union activities. These armies were comprised of war veterans (who often took leadership positions), college students, unemployed laborers, and anyone else the companies could drag off the streets.

Army Reserve: After WWI, the United States Army reorganized to include a substantial reserve section. Army Reserves work regular jobs for the majority of the time but have minimal training or duties through the year. They may be called upon individually or in units to replace losses or to provide specialist skills.

Military Life

Military life was in many ways much the same as it is today. Below are a few elements of color to add verisimilitude to a military character or game.

Rations: Following WWI, the American military developed a standardized ration for soldiers, following a letter system. 'A' rations were fresh food and varied depending on what was available. 'B' rations were canned food provided as available. 'C' rations were the most common ration, a packaged meal ready to eat from cans with no preparation. They included crackers, cheese, a dessert, tinned food, cigarettes, toilet paper and a tin opener.

From the late thirties, experimental 'Logan Bars' were provided as emergency 'D' rations. These were specially made heat resistant chocolate bars, high in calories and 'tasting little better than a boiled potato' to prevent them being eaten before they were needed.

Officer Ranks in the United States Army and British Army (in order):

- Second Lieutenant
- Lieutenant (Pronounced 'leftenant' in British English)
- Captain
- Major
- Lieutenant Colonel
- Colonel
- Brigadier General (British Brigadier)
- Major General
- Lieutenant General
- General (British Field Marshall)

Occupations

Nurse

Nurses were often responsible for providing primary health care, which is to say community health care, nutrition, and preventative medicine.

Nurses would do all of the following:

- Provide first aid
- Visit poor and isolated communities
- Educate on health, hygiene and nutrition
- Provide care to convalescents in their homes

All of these roles give nurses a wide range of contacts and skills to draw on.

Nurse Training: The vast majority of nurses trained and worked in nurse training schools. These were facilities attached to hospitals, which housed and fed the nurses as well as providing on-the-job training. The facilities operated in a similar manner to boarding schools, with shared meals, strict hierarchy, and a rigidly enforced curfew. The schools taught the appropriate conduct for a nurse as well as the techniques of nursing.

Academic Training: A very few nurses in the 1930s attended an academic nursing school, though these grew in availability through the decade. These nursing colleges required a completed undergraduate degree for admission but offered advanced nursing training as well as higher education in the science of their discipline.

Parapsychologist

In the 1930s there was much more credulity regarding paranormal events. Even so, the era had its own share of skeptics. Below are some paranormal phenomena and popular theories about them from the time.

Teleportation: The word ‘teleportation’ was probably coined by the author and paranormal chronicler Charles Fort sometime in the 1930s. Various historical accounts describe alleged instances of human teleportation, from the 1593 story of Gil Perez, a Spanish soldier in the Philippines who found himself mysteriously transported to Mexico, to the Mary Celeste, a ship found drifting without crew or signs of struggle in 1872.

Poltergeists: From the German for ‘rumbling ghosts’, poltergeists are one explanation for mysterious sounds or movements of objects. Other explanations for the phenomena include static electricity, some form of magnetism, unconscious telekinesis, embodied curses, or alien beings.

Rains of Frogs, Fishes, and the like: Stories of strange things raining from the sky, such as fish, frogs, jellyfish, worms and a surprising range of other things, are alarmingly common. Along with the conventional explanation of strong winds or tornadoes at sea drawing these animals into the atmosphere before depositing them, other, more fanciful explanations have been forwarded.

Star Jelly: This is a foul-smelling gelatinous substance purported to be left by meteorites or ‘atmospheric beasts’. Reports of star jelly have existed for centuries. An assortment of scientific explanations has been forwarded for the reports of large blobs of goo found in diverse locations.

Out of Place Artifacts: A term coined by the American zoologist Ivan Sanderson in the late thirties, it refers to the phenomenon of anomalous artifacts found in places (or dated to times) that are impossible according to our current understanding of history. Viking constructions in North America, Mexican skulls carved from

crystal, Inca pyramids in Australia, and hundreds of stone spheres in Costa Rica were all out-of-place artifacts that attracted public attention in the 1930s.

Pilot

Aviation technology in the 1930s was constantly developing. New routes, new craft, and new techniques were discovered every year. Below are some of the notable roles for aviators in the 1930s.

Air Races: Contests of aviation technology and pilot skill were extremely popular in the 1930s. The National Air races, which ran from 1920 to 1949 (with a hiatus for WWII), had a variety of events, including cross-country races, ‘round the pylon’ sprints, parachute jumping, and novelty demonstrations such as gliders and airships. The Bendix Trophy race had a course that crossed most of North America and a winning prize of \$15,000 in 1931. The Thompson Trophy race had a ten-mile long course, with multiple turns between 50-foot high pylons. It attracted thousands of spectators.

Passenger Flights: The 1930s saw the expansion of commercial passenger flights to all parts of the globe. Air routes to many remote locations were explored during the decade. These flights were usually made by flying boats, which could stop to refuel without a landing strip. Trans-Atlantic and Trans-Pacific flights often required refueling stops at remote islands. Services into the interior of Africa and South America were often carried out by solo operations, involving a single plane and pilot.

Barnstorming: The 1920s were the heyday of barnstormers, but there were still some holdouts in the 1930s. Barnstormers, who were often WWI veterans, made a living flying their plane between small towns, giving paying customers demonstrations

of trick flying and rides. Safety regulations and a dwindling supply of military surplus craft spelled the end of the industry, but a few remained, often in more lucrative 'flying circuses'. Many aviators of the 1930s got their start in barnstorming outfits.

Police Detective

Police officers who have served for at least one year are eligible for promotion to Detective. In the 1930s this was achieved by appointment as frequently as it was achieved by passing a written test. Only a few major cities had subdivided their detectives into separate departments for homicide, organized crime, and the like. Most detectives of the decade would have worked any kind of case. Below are some techniques common to detectives of the era.

Footwork: The vast majority of cases, especially in the 1930s, are solved by interrogation of suspects and interviewing of witnesses. Experienced detectives will also have a network of informants, friendly experts, and helpful locals. Without Miranda rights and with much less legal oversight of police procedures, detectives of the 1930s have a lot of leeway for creative or coercive techniques to obtain information or confessions.

Forensic Evidence: For the most part, forensic evidence beyond the most basic, obvious clues did not enter into police investigations. Many detectives would have no knowledge whatsoever of forensic evidence gathering techniques. That said, knowledge and use of these techniques was growing through the decade, and some enlightened detectives, especially in major centers, would have access to sophisticated equipment and expert advice.

Records Investigation: Detectives often access records of fingerprints and

biometric data to identify criminals, as well as more common civilian records. Records of fingerprints were kept in many major police departments by the end of the 1930s.

Court Testimony: The word of a police detective carried a lot of weight with jurors of the 1930s. Police detectives are required to give a full account of their investigation and testify in court against the accused.

Private Investigator

Glamorized even in their own time, private investigators were the heroes of countless books, films, and radio dramas of the 1930s. The reality was often much more prosaic. The private investigator as a self-employed individual working freelance cases was a relatively recent development in the 1930s, marking a change from the larger detective agencies such as the infamous Pinkerton Detective Agency of earlier decades.

Private investigators, operating with less strict legal oversight and often with bigger budgets, had access to some specialized and often illegal equipment.

Truth Serum: Scopolamine, an extract of deadly nightshade or the Datura plant, was used in medicine to fight nausea and intestinal cramping. Combined with morphine it was called 'Twilight Sleep' and could leave a subject without memory or pain for several hours. Scopolamine was also used in slightly higher doses as a truth serum, where it could produce delirium and delusions as well as death. Sodium thiopental, an experimental anesthetic in the 1930s, was also used as a truth serum, though it wouldn't be available to most characters.

Portable Polygraph: Using very basic technology to measure pulse rate, blood pressure, and respiration,

polygraph machines of the 1930s could be built small enough to transport. Data from these machines was dubious at best but belief in their effectiveness was a powerful tool in the arsenal of police and private detectives.

Surveillance: Several covert listening devices were available in the 1930s. The need for vacuum tubes in any kind of radio transmitter meant that the kind of tiny wireless devices we see today were not possible, but nonetheless some very small 'bugs' were produced.

The 'Detective Dictograph', first produced in 1910, had a listening disk the size of a coaster and was connected to headphones by a wire. It was still current technology in the 1930s. For covert recording, the 'Walkie Recordall' was the size of a briefcase and could record for about an hour. Developed as a dictation machine for businessmen, it was very popular with police and private investigators.

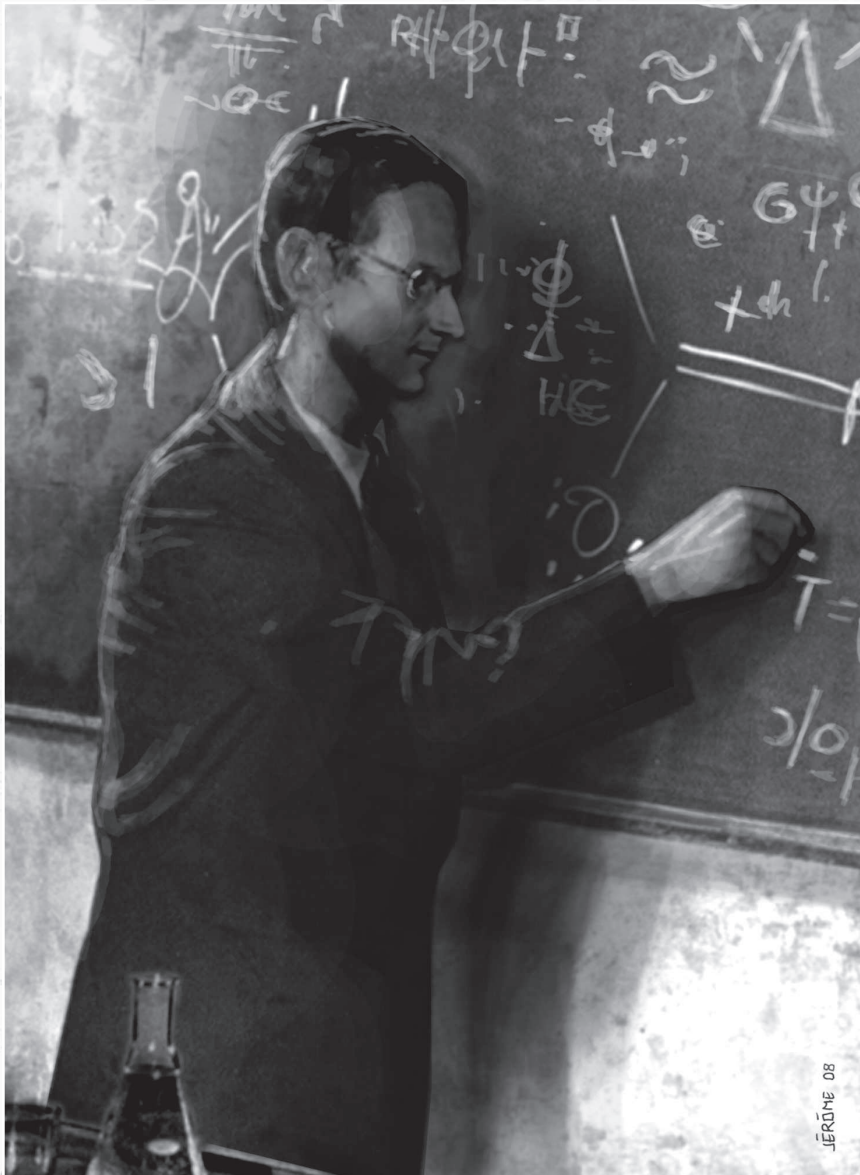
Professor

College Professors were held in high esteem in the 1930s, as an elite educated class in a country that largely did not attend tertiary education. With esteem came suspicion, however, as political upheavals and changing policies in government led to growing radicalism on campuses. Below are some of the important factors influencing campus culture in the 1930s.

Tenure: Tenure is the system held in most American and European university by which professors are protected from dismissal in order to promote academic freedom. Most North American universities operated under a system of *de facto* tenure. This meant that while many professors did not have formally recognized tenure as we understand it today, for the most part they assumed that they held their position for life. This assumption was

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very rarely challenged.

Politics: As always, campuses of the 1930s were politically charged. Supposed Bolshevik sympathies among professors, student anti-war movements, liberal support, and conservative condemnation of the 'New Deal' economic reforms were all touchstone issues. Civil rights groups and feminist organizations were also often based in universities and in the 1930s these were considered much more radical than they are today.

'Old Boy' Networks: School

spirit was strong in the 1930s and many businessmen, politicians and professionals owed their success to a network of alumni from their university days. Campus secret societies, clubs, and organizations continued to influence people's lives long after the end of their education. Alumni often donated extensively to their university and expected to be treated well in return.

Scientist

Science in the 1930s was breaking new ground daily, with radical new theories being tested with constantly

developing technology. Below are some of the theories that were cutting edge science in the 1930s.

Radioactivity: Research into the properties of radioactivity consumed much of 1930s physics. It was still a poorly understood phenomenon. The neutron was discovered in 1932. In 1934, scientists successfully synthesized a radioactive substance, hitherto found only in nature.

Wave Mechanics: The hypothesis that any moving object or particle had an associated wave, and thus that matter exhibits properties of both waves and particles, was first proposed in 1922 and was explored through the 1930s, in concert with increased research into the properties and makeup of atoms.

Big Bang: The currently accepted scientific model of the beginning of the universe, the Big Bang theory, was a controversial and widely debated topic in the 1930s. Several competing theories existed which also fit the available evidence.

The 'oscillatory universe' model proposed that the universe is constantly cycling through a sequence of expansions and contractions. The Milne model proposed a model of an empty, flat, infinite universe, in which matter but not space was expanding constantly. Other more obscure explanations for the apparent movement of celestial phenomena included the tired light' theory that light lost energy as it traveled across the universe.



INTRODUCTION

Below are fifty NPCs designed to fit into a *Trail of Cthulhu* game set in the United States of America, or with little difficulty, anywhere else in the world. The entries describe the character, give a short list of relevant stats, and then describe Three Things about the character's mannerisms, habits, or speech that can help the Keeper portray that character in a memorable fashion. Stats are only given for notably high or low categories.

The first twenty NPCs, as well as having more full descriptions, also come with a list of 'hooks' – ways to incorporate the character into your game. The three hooks escalate the importance of the character in the investigation, from a chance encounter to a central role. For the best effect, employ these hooks in the order given, so that the acquaintance from last week's session becomes a central character next week. Recurring characters add verisimilitude to the setting.

Following these twenty characters are several lists of NPCs with smaller entries. These are designed to be bit-players in your investigations, occasional helpers or one-time foes. Nonetheless, many of these characters have links to each other, family ties and romances. These links help make the characters feel more like real people, giving them life and personality. Even the 'bad guys' have stories to tell. Of course, in a more pulp oriented game, you might find it more appropriate to have faceless and replaceable foes.

Nurse Parker Unstable asylum nurse

In a decade where treatment of the mentally ill was misguided at best and barbaric at worst, Lucy Parker is an oddity – a mental health nurse who actually listens to her patients. Unfortunately for Miss Parker, that's sometimes a dangerous undertaking. Nurse Parker works at a large local mental asylum, where she has a reputation for kindness and caring. She frequently finds her patients' ramblings disturbing, though she can't bring herself to ignore them. The worst of it is when they all seem to be saying the same thing. If she actually believed any of it, she'd go mad.

"The poor dears are so confused. Why, just the other day a patient swore the doctors were all *lizard* people, walking around in stolen human skins!"

First Aid 5, Psychoanalysis 2, Reassurance 8, Assess Honesty 5, Medicine 2

Stability 6, Sanity 4, Health 4

Three Things

Sweats profusely, so that she has to keep dabbing at her brow with a handkerchief; broad wet spots appear under her arms. Calls people 'Pumpkin'. Keeps a little blue book where she writes down memorable things patients have told her.

Hooks

Nurse Parker, a relative or friend of one of the investigators, calls them after the seemingly delusional predictions of one of her patients are

borne out by events in the news.

One of the patients at the asylum (with a sickening tendency to catch birds and eat them raw) is in fact a shaman, and Nurse Parker has been duped or coerced into carrying out his orders.

After reading the diary of one of her more disturbed patients, Nurse Parker has realized the sanity-shattering truth behind our complacent reality. Now she's started her own cult at the asylum, dedicated to making the patients' most crazed delusions come true.

Mahmud Al Hammachi Enigmatic tramp-steamer captain

Tramp steamers travel all over the world, carrying all kinds of cargo and drawing their crew from exotic ports. Mahmud is the captain of one such steamer, The Star of Luxor. Operating in a gray area where the law seldom reaches, Mahmud's steamer often carries cargo of dubious legality and his crewmen are the worst kind of villains from all over the world. Traveling in such circles, Mahmud hears many tales and rumors, though he knows better than to ask questions. Mahmud can usually be found in some seedy seaside bar, or aboard his ship bellowing orders in his native tongue. Mahmud's ship runs on the very edge of profitability, and so Mahmud is eager for any opportunity for a little extra cash. He's also anxious to avoid the attention of customs officials.

"Sir, Madame, please, come aboard! You wish to charter my boat? Of course! I

can give you a very good price.”

Occult 2, Bargain 8, Flattery 3,
Conceal 5, Firearms 3, Piloting
8, Stealth 4, Scuffling 4

Stability 4, Sanity 6, Health 5

Three Things

Chews liquorice root constantly, which turns his tongue and teeth black. Sings snatches of Italian opera in a surprisingly good tenor voice. Looks to the sky when asked difficult questions.

Hooks

Clues indicate that the cultists are illegal immigrants, smuggled into the country. The only ship that’s been in port every time new cultists arrived is the *Star of Luxor*.

The map says the ruined temple is on Gull Island, but none of the local captains will go near the place because of the hidden rocks, or legends of owl-faced women who eat human flesh, or both. Only one ship, the *Star of Luxor*, has a captain brave enough to navigate those dark waters; or maybe he’s just desperate for money.

The sailor is quite insane, and has been ever since the shipwreck. The poor wretch was marooned for several weeks until he was rescued by a tramp steamer. Mahmud, who was responsible for the rescue, might be able to lead the Investigators to the desolate (and oddly rectilinear) hump of rock in the ocean where the sailor was found.

Rufino De Luca Eccentric purveyor of antiquities

An Italian immigrant, Rufino still struggles to speak English well, though he speaks German, French, Latin, and his native Italian dialect flawlessly. Rufino is an antiquities dealer,

specializing in old and rare books. His shop, urbanely titled *De Luca Books*, is a tiny second-floor apartment in an out-of-the-way part of town. The space is piled with teetering towers of hardbacks and the shelves literally overflow with rare first editions. His back room contains his very rarest items – crumbling, blasphemous tomes. The shelves of this room seem to mutter and groan with the accumulated evil they contain.

Rufino deals mainly with a few trusted clients, collectors and other dealers. He’s suspicious of the general public and may turn away customers who seem unlikely to treat his wares with respect. He’s especially jealous of his rare books, and will let almost no one see them. Rufino has a weakness for vintage liquors, however, and is much more friendly to clients who bring him exotic or hard-to-find samples.

“*Imbecille!* Get out! These books are not for you! These old books, they are *périlleux!*”

Art History 6, History 8, Languages 5,
Assess Honesty 5

Stability 7, Sanity 4, Health 3

Three Things

Takes pinches of medicated snuff from a black coffin-shaped tin box, and occasionally spits bright scarlet phlegm into a handkerchief. Impales dead insects with pins on the windowsills and surfaces ‘as a warning to the others’. Includes foreign words in his speech.

Hooks

Clues indicate that the leader of the Starry Wisdom Church visited Rufino’s bookshop several months ago, just before the murders started. Perhaps whatever they purchased will reveal something of their plan.

After successfully bidding on an

auction of a deceased dilettante’s property, Rufino, a friend of one of the investigators, disappears. His purchases were delivered and seem unremarkable, save for an old and curiously engraved mirror of beaten silver.

An ancient urn obtained by Rufino actually contained the spores of a long-extinct alien race. Now mind-controlling the old man, they’re bent on assembling a device to return to their own time. Rufino attracts the Investigators’ attention when he begins purchasing rare artifacts and electrical equipment all over town.

Lady Corinthia Broughton Amateur Egyptologist

Seen by most as an anachronism, Lady Broughton is an Englishwoman living abroad. Her late second husband, an American business tycoon, left her enough of a fortune for her to become a wealthy amateur Egyptologist and enthusiastic (if undiscerning) collector of Egyptian artifacts.

In a throwback to fashions now direly out of date, she wears heavy kohl eye makeup and a black wig cut in a severe bob. Lady Broughton enjoys the company of those similarly interested in antiquities. She often attends auctions (or holds them herself) and is seen as a combination of aging mascot and honorary daffy aunt by a certain set of young socialites.

Somewhat vain, Lady Broughton thrives on attention, especially that of the young. She loves to expound upon her collection, and likes to be thought of as very learned. She especially values the opinion of historians and Egyptologists, with whom she will share her half-baked theories about ancient Egypt.

“Wonderful! I would love to hear more

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Keeper's Resource Book

of your adventures! Perhaps later, over dinner?"

Art History 6, History 4,
Bargain 6.

Stability 4, Sanity 3, Health 3

Three Things

Holds and strokes people's hands when talking to them. Has her cats mummified 'in the Ancient Egyptian fashion'. Throws her head back when she laughs.

Hooks

Lady Broughton is hosting an auction of antiquities, in which some curiosities might be of interest to the Investigators.

At a dinner party, Lady Broughton swears that a man she met the day before was the spitting image of an ancient statue in her collection. The statue is of an ancient Egyptian cult leader.

After deciphering the inscription on an ancient tablet, Lady Broughton has reinstated the worship of Hermes Trismegistus, an incarnation of Nyarlathotep. Gathering cultists around her, she is bent on resurrecting her long-dead husband – whom she has mummified and keeps in a sarcophagus.

Detective Coffin Overzealous Detective

A cop of the old school, Coffin is a well-respected member of the community. He has a long and distinguished history with the police department, which he will gladly recount to anyone he meets. He has a sharp and orderly mind, obstructed only by his high opinion of himself. He is never without his hat and his cane. Detective Coffin likes to think of himself as a man of acute reason, much



smarter than those around him. He's very conscious of how he is perceived by others, and may be willing to admit bafflement in private when he never would in public.

"That's a magnificent story. Only a drunkard or a cretin would believe it, and I, sir, am neither. Officer, be so good as to take them away."

Assess Honesty 4,
Interrogation 8, Intimidation
6, Evidence Collection 6,
Firearms 4

Stability 6, Sanity 6, Health 8

Three Things

Strokes his mustache when thinking. Taps people on the chest with his finger. Fills out crossword puzzles obsessively, asking people to guess at complex answers he doubts they will ever get.

Hooks

The Investigators meet Coffin at a party, regaling guests with stories of old, seemingly solved cases. One case, the Fingernail Thief, bears unpleasant

parallels to the current investigation.

Suspicious of their continued involvement in unusual events, Coffin has begun to shadow the Investigators. He'll intervene in anything remotely suspect.

A friend of one of the Investigators is arrested in a shocking murder case, which made the front page. Coffin was the officer who made the arrest, and he considers it a feather in his cap. Now the Investigators must convince Coffin of the real, supernatural culprit.

'Mistress' Diana Fraudulent Mystic

'Mistress Diana's Parlor of Mysteries' is as notorious as the local speakeasy. No one will admit to going there himself, but everyone has heard a story about it. Mistress Diana is a fortuneteller, a mystic, and (strictly speaking) a fraud. Her shop contains an abundance of exotic bric-a-brac along with many implicitly antique 'artifacts' which, upon investigation, prove to be fakes mocked up to look ancient. Her séances, attended covertly by wealthy patrons from all parts of town, are a confabulation of trickery; but such is her reputation that nobody is willing to denounce her, and the comfort she brings to the bereaved is genuine enough.

Charging money for fortune telling or séances is considered fraud in the 1930s, and is illegal. Mistress Diana is eager to avoid the attention of the police. While she is aware that much of her practice is 'harmless' trickery, Mistress Diana is nonetheless very superstitious. She is very afraid of supernatural threats, and while she knows she has no influence over the spirit realm, she believes others may.

"It is wise to pay heed to the spirits, for they have much... wisdom."

Occult 1, Flattery 6,
Reassurance 6, Disguise 8,
Hypnosis 6, Assess Honesty 9.

Stability 4, Sanity 6, Health 4.

Three Things

Strangely cold hands (a result of atrocious circulation) with which she touches people 'comfortingly' on the cheek or wrist. Chain smokes, lighting a new cigarette from the glowing stub of the old one. Pauses before the last word in her... sentences.

Hooks

A false clue leads the Investigators to think Mistress Diana is involved in a mystery. She sees this as a chance to accentuate her own mysteriousness, and strings the Investigators along as much as she can.

A genuine cult is using Mistress Diana's parlor as a recruiting ground. Members of the cult often attend the séances, looking for people desperate enough to join. Mistress Diana herself knows nothing of the cult, though when grotesque accidents befall the enemies of some of her clients, she is quick to explain it away as 'the wrath of the Invisible World'.

A tarnished old bronze figurine Mistress Diana purchased because she liked its whimsical obscenity turns out to be a genuinely potent artifact — a fetish of Nodens. Now, not only are cultists hunting for the artifact, but real supernatural forces are being summoned to her nightly séances. However, it is a covey of nightgaunts (rather than the spirits of the dear departed) who carry out the secret desires of the attendees, whispered in the séances.

Otis Jones

Jazz musician with a secret

A Jazz musician at the Peacock Club,

Otis always knows where the party is. Music is both his livelihood and his passion, and the band is his family. To make ends meet, he moonlights at several other bars around town and works private functions. If the management of the Peacock club found out, they'd fire him for sure. When he's not working, he's usually practicing at home.

"Cool it, cat, and let's talk about this after closing. I got a job to do."

Streetwise 4, Art 9

Stability 6, Sanity 5, Health 8

Three Things

Calls people 'cat'. Sings 'scat' style loudly to himself, often when on his own, which can make the uninformed think he's chanting. Cracks his knuckles.

Hooks

Otis witnessed the event the Investigators are looking into, but if he comes forward, his boss will know he's moonlighting.

Otis recognizes some of the men the Investigators are asking about from a private function he played a week ago. It was a weird crowd, mostly old guys in some sort of Freemason robes, and they requested he play a lot of funny sounding music he'd never heard before.

Strange things have been following Otis around, ever since he started using that weird old trumpet he found at a yard sale. The trumpet has an extra stop, which allows it to play some spooky-dooky sounding extra notes. Otis hasn't noticed the ghouls following him, though he has noticed that people who get in his way have a habit of disappearing. When he does realize, he may not want to give it up.

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Keeper's Resource Book

Betty Pedrick Observant bag lady

The Great Depression has made thousands of people homeless, all over the world. Betty is one such. Carrying all her possessions in a sack on her back, she wanders from place to place, eking out a living from charity, occasional cleaning work, and from her roadside palm-reading stall. She's usually wearing a long gray coat and a battered hat.

Betty knows a lot of people, and not all of them from the street. She wasn't always homeless and remembers many people from her days as a maid to one of the wealthier families. She's usually grateful for an opportunity to talk about the old days.

"Oh, the stories I could tell you, young man. There's plenty of respectable folk these days as got their start in some bad business."

Streetwise 4, Oral History 8

Stability 2, Sanity 8, Health 4

Three Things

Picks bits of (imaginary) lint off the clothes of people she's talking to. Scatters Biblical references throughout her speech, sometimes stopping to ask if the listener knows 'where that's from'. Relays unimportant information in a conspiratorial whisper.

Hooks

The cult meets at the same place every week: an abandoned factory opposite which Betty operates her stall. She must have seen something.

Betty reads one of the Investigator's palms, and amidst the usual vague rambling, she mentions some very specific facts relevant to the investigation. Perhaps she got lucky, or maybe there's something more at work.



The Investigators find Betty wandering the streets, blinded, her corneas completely white and opaque. She claims she lost her sight after trying to read the palm of a strange, Egyptian-looking man. All she remembers about the man's hand is that he had 'no life line' at all.

Kensuke Nakayama Sullen fisherman

A Japanese immigrant, Kensuke operates a small fishing trawler in order to support his wife and children.

The work is hard and Kensuke often enjoys a quiet drink at his local bar after hauling in the catch. A quiet man, he's always ready to lend a hand to a friend, but he rarely asks for help himself. The other fishermen whisper that Kensuke has his grandfather's sword hidden in his attic at home.

"I know the place you speak of. I can take you there. After dark."

Piloting 6

Stability 6, Sanity 6, Health 10

Three Things

Always pours out a little of each drink on the floor 'for the sea'. Doesn't make eye contact. Laughs rarely but loudly.

Hooks

Kensuke is the only fisherman who sets his nets near Crow Rock. If there's been any funny business there at night, he's the only one who'd have seen it.

Everyone's talking about the weird idol Kensuke hauled up in his net. He's showing it off down at the bar. The thing looks like a cross between an elephant and a squid, and it's made of some glassy-green stone. People who touch it have some very strange dreams, and a longing for the sea.

Kensuke hasn't been the same since his wife died. The other fishermen say they see him mooring his boat near Crow Rock, and going ashore. Sometimes he gets angry when he drinks and threatens everyone around him, claiming they'll all drown 'when the sea comes to claim its own'. Crow Rock is usually avoided, because its sea caves offer no easy mooring, and strange sounds come from deep within on stormy nights.

Walter Palsgrave Struggling artist

Five years ago Walter exhibited his work at a major gallery in the city. It was a popular show and Walter sold many pieces. The event marked the high point of his career.

Since then, Walter has failed to capitalize on his limited fame. His paintings have grown increasingly abstract, dark, and chaotic. Now Walter lives in a tiny, run-down apartment, living off a government pension for painting murals. He's pathetically attentive to anyone who admires his work, but other artists,

especially successful ones, make him mad with jealousy.

"You know, many of the great masters weren't appreciated in their time. They called Gauguin an idiot, a primitive. You'll see. All of these will be worth millions one day."

Art 6, Art History 5

Stability 3, Sanity 2, Health 5

Three Things

Pants for breath after long sentences. Picks flakes of paint off his hands, sometimes picking healthy skin and drawing blood, apparently without noticing. Flinches at sudden noises.

Hooks

An old painting of Walter's shows the building before the fire. If he painted the outside of the building, it's possible he also went inside it and can reveal something about the group that used it.

Several of Walter's newer paintings depict the same curious, Egyptian-looking figure, the same person the Investigators are following. Has the man been posing for Walter, or is it just coincidence?

Some of Walter's paintings match the police photographs taken at the scene of the new spate of 'ripper' crimes. There's no way he could have seen the photographs because they were never released to the public, so either he saw the murder scenes, or he somehow foresaw what would happen.

Doctor Pitman Alcoholic Doctor

Doctor Raymond Pitman isn't the usual 1930s doctor. His practice is in one of the poorest parts of town, and he's frequently away from it on house calls to the hobo jungles,

worker's camps, and ghettos. He cares deeply about people; the poverty and desperation he sees around him drives him to drink and to the edge of sanity. He can usually be found either in his office, drinking and working, or walking the streets to meet his homeless clients.

"I see kids starving in the richest cities on Earth. Flies drinkin' their tears. You gonna tell me I can't have a drink now and then?"

Medicine 8, Pharmacy 8,
Reassurance 6

Stability 2, Sanity 8

Three Things

Calls men 'bunty-boy' and women 'princess'. Includes references to pretend diseases in his speech: 'The guy had a terrible case of Fatso's Inertia.' Waves a finger in the air when trying to make a point, as if dialing an invisible telephone.

Hooks

That wino doctor guy was making his rounds in the slum the same night the murder occurred. Perhaps he saw something?

The doctor's been called on to treat the same mysterious illness in many different parts of town. Patients experience delirium and a progressive desiccation of the flesh. He's ruled out a common source of the disease, and is at a loss. He calls on the Investigators for help.

Beset by the horrors of the Depression, Doctor Pitman has descended deeper into the clutches of drink. In his delirium, he sees shadowy figures seething around the room, whispering to him. They tell him to administer a physician's mercy to his most pitiful cases; mercy in the form of a quiet stifling, or better still, a discreet lethal injection. The

shadows will help ensure he is never caught, so long as he mutters the correct words when he dispatches the victims.

Esme Hauptmann Mad scientist

A researcher at the local college, Esme Hauptmann is studying for her doctorate in physics. The hours are long, and the work is difficult, especially when her colleagues don't believe in her hypothesis and ridicule her experiments. One day she'll prove them all wrong. Her thick glasses and messy hair make her easy to overlook, but Esme is a vastly intelligent woman, and dangerously dedicated to her work. More than anything else, Esme craves recognition. She'll pay particular attention to anyone with standing as a scientist.

"Reconfigure the flux capacitor! Set the dial to 370 degrees! It'll work this time for sure!"

Physics 9

Stability 4, Sanity 4, Health 6

Three Things

Pushes her glasses up her nose frequently. Chews on the end of a pencil (or the ends of her hair) while thinking. Draws circle-and-arrow diagrams on scrap paper to illustrate even the most simple ideas, such as where to go for lunch, or which movies are playing where.

Hooks

The tangled knot-like silvery object found buried under the cellar floor seems to be emitting some kind of subtle radiation. It so happens that Esme is an expert on radiation of all kinds, and may be able to give some insight.

Esme calls the Investigators after

some of the equipment she's been using at the lab goes missing. It could be some scientifically minded cult bent on calling down an alien intelligence, or just a prank by jealous colleagues.

It finally worked. The cyclotron array brought to bear on the oscillating crystal reverses the flow of space-time. It seems like a source of near-limitless energy. Or at least it did, until Professor Pomeroy tried to take a reading and was sucked into a rotating trapezoidal rift. Now iridescent globular forms are emerging, hovering in the air like vast amoebas and singing like tongueless angels. Esme can't seem to close it down. She's not even sure if she wants to. It seems hungry.

Michel Novak Dark poet

A Czech poet of some fame in his home country, Michel is relatively unknown elsewhere. He has emigrated to work on translations of his poems, and pays the bills by doing bar work in the evenings, to his quiet humiliation. Critics consider his poetry overly morbid and abstract, focusing on ennui and despair. Nonetheless, he has a devoted following among a tight circle of aficionados.

Michel himself is something of a misanthrope. Moody and distant, he often goes days without talking to anyone and holes himself away in his apartment. When he goes out, he wears a long coat with the collar turned up and smokes a pipe. Beneath his brusque exterior, Michel is something of a coward, caving under a small amount of pressure.

"Oh, get out of the way, you miserable, pointless excrescence on the backside of God."

Art 8, History 7

Stability 6, Sanity 3, Health 6

Three Things

Closes his eyes, as if utterly exhausted, when he needs to think about anything. Goes out of his way to be inventively rude to people. Sleeps with his eyes open; he has a habit of falling asleep in this manner in coffee houses, so that more than one waitress has believed he has died of a heart attack.

Hooks

A book of Michel's works is found in a cultist's home, on a shelf next to several mythos-related tomes. It seems the bleakness of Michel's work pushed the man over the edge into insanity; rather than commit suicide, however, he chose to celebrate the pointlessness of existence, finally 'understanding' that people are mere bags of blood to be spilled.

Several of Michel's poems seem to describe phenomena and entities similar to those encountered by the Investigators. Is Michel just a sensitive soul perceiving too much, or is something darker at work?

A cabal of Michel's devoted admirers have dedicated themselves to public theatrical 'interpretations' of his work, which are essentially rituals in all but name. Their source text is a rare limited edition collection called *Fragments of my Father's Skull*. What's worse, anyone reading the poems aloud, especially the final epic poem *A Deep and Coiling Dread It Was I Knew*, seems to come under the power of a malevolent alien force — a manifestation of Hastur. Only two hundred signed and numbered copies of the book were printed, but they could be anywhere.

Augusta Sprague Strict orphanage owner

The owner and mistress of a local orphanage, Miss Sprague runs her business with a firm hand. She is only twenty-seven, but could easily be mistaken for thirty-nine.

To her, the children are simply units: something which she must provide with the minimum necessary amount of nutrition and care, for a fee. Neither cruel nor especially empathic, Miss Sprague prides herself on a clean, efficient facility. She wears her hair in a tight bun, and has stiffly starched clothes. Beneath her prim exterior, Miss Sprague is lonely, and, though she puts up a stiff façade, she is vulnerable to romantic attention.

"Well now! That's a fine mess! Who, may I ask, is going to clean it up?"

Assess Honesty 6, Intimidation 4

Stability 8, Sanity 6, Health 6

Three Things

When angry, gives emphasis to her words by whacking a handy object (such as a book) on a nearby surface, such as an infant's head. Peers over her glasses in an accusatory manner. Insists that fresh air is necessary for health, and thus opens windows constantly, meaning rooms tend to be icy cold in her presence.

Hooks

The child of some long-deceased cultists the Investigators are tracking was placed in Miss Sprague's care some years ago. Perhaps the child would remember something, if the Investigators were able to talk with him.

A fire at the orphanage attracts the attention of the Investigators. In the wreckage, the entrance to a system

of underground tunnels is found: the meeting place of a cult that must have gathered here long before many of the town's buildings were erected.

When children start going missing at the orphanage, Augusta Sprague is the first suspect. Desperate, she calls the investigators to prove that it was not her, but a cult-like circle of the children themselves, who were responsible.

Everett Sharpe Fake Adventurer

Sharpe's name adorns the cover of nearly a dozen adventure books. The author and hero of such tales as *Into the Amazon* and *Tombs of the Pharaohs*, Sharpe also claims a doctorate in Archeology. Experts in the field universally revile him and claims of plagiarism, exaggeration, and outright lying have dogged his career.

With his trim little mustache and crow-black hair, sometimes offset by a day or two's growth of manly stubble, he cuts a rakish figure. Between his forays into dark continents, Everett is the life and soul of the social circuit. He plays his role unflinchingly, even in the face of incontrovertible evidence of his lying. The only thing that can break his cover is physical danger, of which he is deathly afraid.

"I was in the upper reaches of the Orinoco, hunting for Dawkins' Orchid – you wouldn't have heard of it, Stephanie – when I encountered the White Crocodile. It was easily the size of this dining table of yours, nose to tip. I dare say I'm the only white man to have seen it and lived!"

Archeology 3, Athletics 3,
Fleeing 9, Flattery 7

Stability 4, Sanity 6, Health 7

Three Things

Acts as if he has met people before, referring to events they were not at, and occasionally calling them by the wrong name. Squeezes too hard when he shakes hands. Effects an English accent which cracks when he is under extreme stress, revealing his native Bostonian origin.

Hooks

An artifact recently come into the Investigator's possession seems to come from an obscure Pacific island. Sharpe wrote a book about a visit to that very island.

Sharpe hears of the Investigators' activities, and offers his help in an advisory capacity. He seems knowledgeable and competent, at least at first. Soon he's trying to accompany the investigators wherever they go.

Bizarre animal mutilations seem to follow Sharpe around the country on his book signing tour. His tour involves several speaking engagements, where ancient artifacts loaned from a museum are used as set dressing. The most impressive piece is a human-sized statue from Tibet of a pot-bellied creature with an elephant-like head, a humanoid body, and oddly insectile eyes.

'Mama' Bette Washington Expert Fence

As she is a fence for half the city, not much of any importance gets bought or sold on the black market without Mama Bette hearing about it. Her specialty is old or unusual items that might be hard to place otherwise. She has a knack for finding the right buyer for stolen artifacts or heirlooms, which makes her the darling of cat burglars and other enterprising thieves.

Bette's heyday was the 'Roaring' Twenties and she's tiring of the

criminal life now. She's looking for a way to turn her considerable acumen into a legitimate business. It's almost impossible to get one over on Mama Bette, but she can't say no to an interesting proposition. She is always willing to cut a deal.

"Look, why don't you save us both a lot of time, drop all the mystic-schmystic stuff, and either show me the green or get off the goddamn pot. Then we can all go home. You got a home, right? Forget it. I don't want to know."

Streetwise 9, Archeology 5,
History 7, Bargain 9

Stability 8, Sanity 4, Health 6

Three Things

Prefers to stay seated most of the time, moving her hands under her desk where they can't be seen. Smokes cigars in preference to cigarettes. Flicks through a large book of names and addresses; she's doodled an animated stick-figure sequence in the corner, and as she riffles the pages, the stick figures copulate jerkily.

Hooks

An Investigator with the Streetwise ability traces several of a cultist's ceremonial weapons back to Mama Bette. She may be able to reveal who else is in the cult, and what other artifacts they might possess.

A string of high-profile robberies of museums and private collections eventually leads the Investigators to Mama Bette's door. She doesn't have the items themselves, but they were stolen to order for a client. Medieval torture implements, slave branding irons, cups for surgical bleeding: someone is putting together quite a sinister collection.

Mama Bette has finally 'gone straight' and opened her own antiques shop,

buying and selling across the country. A local crime boss insists she continue her work for him, and the ensuing conflict turns ugly when Bette cuts a deal with the local hoodoo man for aid.

Professor Dempsey Bumbling Academic

Professor Ronald Dempsey is the dean of Archeology at the local University. In his day he was considered quite the expert, but he's now something of a crackpot, with long out-of-date theories, odious personal habits, and an eccentric collection of artifacts, many of which are considered junk or fakes by modern scholars.

Dempsey spends most of his time shuffling around the halls of the University, wearing a moth-eaten woolen sweater, his hair unkempt. His colleagues deride him for a history of bungling that has seen several digs shut down, including some that had promised the most thrilling and controversial revelations about human history.

"A mummified nest of ancient Squamata? Well, that'll be right up my alley, because, you see, I've made an intimate study of reptiles. I practically speak their language."

Archeology 9, History 8,
Cthulhu Mythos 4

Stability 4, Sanity 2, Health 3

Three Things

Pulls compulsively at loose threads on his sweater. Includes the words 'because, you see' with maddening frequency in conversation. Patronizes all women, without exception.

Hooks

A jar of perfectly preserved Ancient Egyptian honey, a vital component of

a particular spell to bind the Hounds of Tindalos, is rumored to be part of Dempsey's collection. Naturally he's unwilling to part with it. He says that he doesn't trust that it won't get broken or lost. There seems to be another level to his reluctance, however; it seems almost like he's trying to save the Investigators from themselves.

An administrative error, for which Professor Dempsey is to blame, results in a University-based investigator being transferred away from an important dig in Scotland on the eve of a great discovery. Dempsey doesn't seem to understand that that the dig can no longer go ahead.

A newly elected board of trustees for the University seeks to have Professor Dempsey fired for incompetence. He comes to the Investigators for help, convinced that a secret cult among the staff is responsible. They want him out, because, you see, he's been foiling their plans for years.

Halima Egyptian Priestess

A witch, a teacher, a prophet, Halima's name is revered among clandestine cults across the country. She always seems to turn up where she's most needed: suggesting a formula to an eccentric mathematician, acting as a muse to a debauched poet, or transcribing fulminant spells to a power-hungry businessman.

Halima is striking to look at, with Egyptian features and a hooked nose; her age is impossible to guess. Her motives are equally inscrutable, though there are many rumors. Some say she seeks to resurrect her long-dead son, who she had groomed to rule alongside her as her incestuous cohort; others speculate that she wishes to travel somehow to Egypt in the time

of the Pharaohs, where she senses she truly belongs.

The most insidious rumors of all say she works to summon a being outside the known dimensions of reality (but given a figurative form and name by awed ancient Egyptian priests) and to rule as its devoted thrall. Her exact powers are unknown, but the stories all agree that there is a power in her gaze that saps the will. Seasoned investigators believe that she has made a compact with the half-human half-scarab things that crawl beneath the sands of Egypt, and that they scuttle to serve her through unknown passageways in space wherever she may be in the world..

“See, I bring the knotted string, my little jumping jack. Oh, do not fear death so. Your face shall smile wide, so wide. Your tongue shall stick out, like a naughty schoolboy. Your arms and legs shall do a little dance. There. There! How happy I have made you.”

Assess Honesty 8, History
10, Cthulhu Mythos 8,
Intimidation 8, Bargain 8, Art
5

Stability 10, Sanity 1, Health 5

Three Things

Fingers anything long and flexible that she can get her hands on: the sash of a dressing-gown, a telephone cable, a length of curtain cord. Rears up suddenly from a sitting position, like a striking cobra. When men are sitting down in her presence, she will cross the room and knead their shoulders as if to soothe them, without warning or explanation, and without breaking the flow of her conversation.

Hooks

A cultist, when questioned, says he received his ibis-headed ceremonial knife from an Egyptian woman. She showed up out of nowhere to give

them the knife and no one knows where she is now.

Halima is tangentially involved in the investigation — the acquaintance of one of the cultists, a client of the deranged painter, or the new owner of the house where the murders took place. No tangible connection can be made between her and the case, yet she seems remarkably knowledgeable.

Something of Halima’s has been stolen, and posing as an amateur Egyptologist, she asks the Investigators to recover it. As the investigation unfolds, the item’s true purpose is revealed. The object, a bone rattle, summons queer half-scarab entities, like hunched-over human beings with gleaming carapaces and wizened little legs. They will follow the rattle wielder’s commands, but are quick to turn on a summoner who shows signs of weakness.

Loretta Potts Sinister Housewife

Loretta styles herself as the perfect housewife. Dinner is on the table when her husband comes home, and the house is always scrupulously clean. They don’t have any children yet, but even though she’s nearing thirty, there’s plenty of time. As for hobbies, she’s an active member of the quilting circle, the householder’s association, and the local church. Though there’s nothing really strange about Mrs. Potts, people don’t warm to her. She’s always a little reserved, a little artificial.

“Coffee? Of course! Here you are! Sugar? Cream? What’s that? It tastes funny? I’m sure that’s just the pine fragrance you can smell. Are you feeling tired? Why not have a lie-down?”

Reassurance 6, Craft 6,
Bargain 5

Stability 3, Sanity 6, Health 5

Three Things

Sings along to the radio, which is always on, just on the wrong side of uncomfortably loud. Washes her hands compulsively every hour. Constantly asks people if they need the bathroom, if they know where it is, and if they need anything to take up there.

Hooks

Yes, she did happen to see the car that stopped in the neighbor’s driveway last night. She remembers it was at 10:12 PM, and they stayed for half an hour. Those folk across the street are a bad sort, always coming and going at strange hours, and playing some very strange music. A lot of immigrants always hang around there too, and you *know* they’re nothing but trouble. They’re just not *like* us, are they?

Loretta can tell the Investigators all about Mr. Winthrop, the man they’re hunting. He lives down the street, and she’s interviewed him several times for the householder’s association. He’s a queer sort and never keeps the lawn in any kind of fit state. She tried to come into his house, once, when he let the mail pile up in his letterbox, and he got very angry. She’s sure there’s something *not quite right* about that one.

No, she hasn’t heard from her husband in days. He’s on a business trip, overseas somewhere. She never thought to ask where. Of course, the Investigators should stay for a cup of coffee and some home-baked pie. That tapping noise from the basement? That’s just the plumbing. Jerry always says he’s fix it, but he never does. That whining sound is just the neighbor’s dog; it always makes such a ruckus when he goes out.

Benedict Deane Devoted Pastor

The pastor of a small local church, Benedict is fiercely loyal to his congregation. He knows intimate details of everyone's lives, and he makes sure to tend to their personal needs, as well as the spiritual. Handsome and polite to a fault, he comes across as friendly, if a little stiff. He has a great respect for tradition, and prefers to do things the way they've always been done.

Still a bachelor, he's caught the eye of a number of the women in his congregation, though he spends most of his free time caring for his aging mother. Romantic attention makes Benedict extremely uncomfortable and he'll do almost anything to escape it. On the other hand, he warms immediately to anyone who will discuss theology with him, even if they don't share his views.

"No, I insist you stay the night. It's the very least I can do, after you've come so far. I'm sure Mother would love to meet you."

Assess Honesty 6, Reassurance 7, Oral History 7, Theology 9

Stability 6, Sanity 4, Health 6

Three Things

Continually fiddles with his tie, which he never seems to be able to get straight. Likes to quote from Shakespeare on the subject of women and superficiality, especially Hamlet's 'Let her paint an inch thick, to this favor she must come' and 'Frailty, thy name is woman'. Is fascinated by motor cars though he does not own one, and asks excited questions of anyone who drives: 'So, tell me, what exactly does the *magneto* do? And how fast can one go, downhill?'

Hooks

Benedict intervenes when the Investigators interview several of his parishioners. He politely but firmly demands to know what they want and why they're bothering his flock. He may reveal some important clue in the course of the discussion.

When several members of the parish go missing, Benedict is sure that there is an explanation for it beyond what the police have discovered. If asked, he has a wealth of information, theories, and leads for the Investigators to follow.

Benedict's mother is on the edge of succumbing to old age. Though he prays nightly, his faith is slipping; is there *truly* any evidence for the soul's survival? In his desperation, he's turned to some of the musty old books kept in the basement beneath the church. Now an unholy life burns in his mother, revealing itself after darkness has fallen. By day, she is a sweet, frail old lady; by night she commands him to do all manner of unspeakable acts in the name of Mordiggian. There must be tribute, continual tribute, or the old woman's bones will be racked from within.



CULTISTS

Kenneth Blackwell Frat-Boy Sorcerer

A college senior majoring in Anthropology, Kenneth is secretly obsessed with the promise of inhuman powers and dark rites hinted at in some of his more obscure textbooks. He's originally from a wealthy family, but his father has stipulated that none of the wealth will go to Kenneth unless he 'makes something of himself' first, a condition which Kenneth finds sickening and thwarting. Rather than pander to his father's wishes, Kenneth wants to take a short cut to power.

On the surface, he's charming, polite and evidently well-bred. An Investigator would have to be extraordinarily perceptive to notice how Kenneth's whole body seethes with frustration and pent-up anger. Only in his private rituals can he express the bestial rage he truly feels.

"*Thalassa, thalassa.* The sea, the sea. Don't you love the way the words sound? The Ancient Greeks sure knew how to write... evocatively."

Anthropology 6, Scuffling 5, Stealth 4, Cthulhu Mythos 2

Stability: 8, Sanity 2, Health 8

Three Things

Scratches his Ivy League haircut; punches people 'playfully' on the shoulder to show camaraderie; makes subtle insults while appearing polite, such as 'You got style, sir. Not everyone could wear an old suit like he just bought it yesterday. I admire that.'

Michael Pool Jock Lackey

Kenneth's roommate and closest confidant, Michael is often forced to

do the dirty work for Kenneth's latest project. He doesn't share Kenneth's obsessions, but he'd do anything to stay close to his friend and he's seen too much to turn back now.

"We got to dig deeper. If we put him in now, some hobo's dog's just gonna dig him right back up. Gotta be at least six feet. Oh God."

History 5, Scuffling 7,
Athletics 7

Stability 2, Sanity 2, Health 10

Three Things

Bites his knuckles; flips a baseball bat in the air and catches it; wipes sweat from his face with his sleeve.

Lilith Hawthorne Sorcerous Protégé

Lilith comes from a family of 'mountain witches', isolated folk who've dwelled in the same desrick (a simple cabin made from strong logs, with a door that can be barred) for generations. Decent folks shun them, and nobody ever sees them except when they come down to the town once a week for supplies. Everybody knows they hold commerce with the Old Ones, up on the mountain peak where the high stones are.

Lilith's the first of her kin to go to the city. She still has a thick accent, though she manages to pass in polite society. Her dark-eyed beauty makes up for any lack of social sophistication. More than one gentleman has found her charms irresistible, only for his body to wash up on the shore weeks later with a ragged cavity in his left breast. Meanwhile, Lilith's mother Amelia is unwrapping the latest soggy parcel to arrive, with a broad smile for her clever daughter.

"Oh my. You keep puttin' these drinks



into me, there's no tellin' *what* I may do."

Occult 8, Intimidation 6,
Weapons 4

Stability 10, Sanity 3, Health 8

Three Things

Looks through her long lashes; eats with her fingers and licks the grease off with great relish; spits on the floor (as discreetly as possible) whenever anyone mentions God, Christ, Jesus, or any similar religious term.

Amelia Hawthorne Feral Mountain Witch

Lilith's mother Amelia stays at home to care for Old Grandpappy, who's pretty much grown into the bed now; those old warts of his have sprouted out all snakey-like, coilin' around the timbers and frame. He ain't comin' out, not unless they take a hatchet to him.

Amelia lives on the very fringe of society, carrying on a tradition of depraved rituals. Her daughter may

be grown up and gone to the big city, but she's still a Hawthorne, and she knows to come when her kin call. Amelia's magic isn't the high-minded ritual sort; she's all poppets, herbs, and talismans made of snake skin and knuckle bones.

"Whittlin' down this little branch, I speak my enemy's name. Whittlin' the flesh off of his bones, I speak my enemy's name. So may the flesh fall. Peel and fall. Peel and fall."

Occult 6, Stealth 8, Shadowing 6, Weapons 4, Firearms 6

Stability 2, Sanity 2, Health 10

Three Things

Strops knives while talking to visitors; responds to bird song in the background by replying with a perfect whistled imitation; glances over her shoulder periodically, as if reassuring herself that someone unseen was still there.

Miriam Weber

Dying Widow

A middle-aged widow, Miriam recently found that she's dying of intestinal cancer. Miriam is furious at the poor hand fate has dealt her, and she's vowed to use any means to prolong her life, even if that means throwing in her lot with the local quack doctor and his circle of cult-like followers.

Miriam has a collection of colored liquids in bottles in her handbag at all times. These are worthless placebos; it's the ritual chanting that rejuvenates her. Even that isn't keeping her on her feet for long, though, so she's looking forward to her acceptance into the Inner Circle. There's something they can do that'll cure you forever, or so they say. She's been told it's like shedding your skin, to be born anew...

"I can't abide a skeptic. You hold your views, and you're welcome to them. I'll go with what works for me."

Assess Honesty 5, Medicine 5

Health 3

Three Things

Talks quietly and calmly about death; takes little sips from her collection of bottles; wears dark glasses all the time, refusing to remove them even indoors.

Ekon Luthuli

Devoted Cultist

A deck hand from North Africa, Ekon frequents ports all over the world. As he speaks a smattering of many different languages, he's able to find a niche and a source of illicit employment wherever his ship is berthed. He's also seen the very worst of humanity in the distant ports he's visited, but rather than repelling him, the violence and vice has enticed him to embrace it fully.

He's seen naked, enormously fat women smeared with cheese and fighting rats off with their bare hands and teeth in Paris; in Istanbul, he watched men blind themselves before a statue of something finned and ogrimish; in Hong Kong, he sucked the meat from a human toe while a harpist played Christian sacramental music. None of this is enough. He burns to know more.

"The sea has many tongues. If you let them caress you for long enough, they will whisper to you in dreams."

Athletics 8, Scuffling 6, Weapons 6, Languages 9

Health 9

Three Things

Smokes hand-rolled cigarettes; swears

in French; flirts boldly, but only with young men.

Tuia Wolcott

Vengeful Tribeswoman

Born into a tribe living deep in the Amazon, Tuia lived with her people until the age of 16, when a white anthropologist came to study the tribe. In an exchange of gifts, Tuia was married to the anthropologist, Earnest Wolcott. She accompanied him upon his departure. Now, far from her home, she misses her life in the forests. She has left her husband, and taken up with a new group who seem hungry for knowledge of the secret religion of her people.

"Please, have a bowl of stew. There is plenty for everyone. What is it? Monkey brains, of course. Ha! I am joking. It is only beef. Oh mister, you should see your face."

Athletics 5, Cthulhu Mythos 2

Three Things

Rarely betrays any expression, talking in a flat monotone; mocks those who attempt to patronize her, by playing the part of the 'dumb savage'; walks barefoot in city streets, heedless of broken glass and dirt.

Nancy Wright

Bored Housewife

The wife of a career police officer, Gabriel Wright, Nancy's ambition for her husband has been thwarted by his simple, selfless goals: petty things like fairness, justice and streets that are safe to walk at night. Infuriated with his plodding Boy Scout approach to life, she's taken her future into her own hands. If Gabe isn't going to bring her what's best in the world, then she will damn well get it for herself.

Thugs and Henchmen

She's experimented with entertaining 'gentleman visitors' behind her husband's back during the day, but the money isn't good enough and the thrill faded quickly. Now she's determined to forge connections with the real movers and shakers; gangsters, perhaps, or smugglers, if she can find any. She's bored, ambitious, and intelligent — a dangerous combination.

"You going to talk all day, honey, or are we going to do it? Yeah, I'm serious. Here. Right here, on the kitchen table. Right on his goddamn morning paper."

Bureaucracy 8, Assess Honesty 6, Flattery 8

Three Things

Constantly touches up her makeup; scuffs her toe in the dust like a coy schoolgirl when talking to men she likes; offers to show off her 'trick' of touching her nose with her tongue.



THUGS AND HENCHMEN

Estevan Rodriguez Desperate Henchman

A migrant worker hit hard by the Depression, Estevan has found work for a shadowy employer. The money is good provided he doesn't ask too many questions. He's had to do some things he's not proud of, but he's got a family to support.

"I'll bring the car around. You get the shovel. And listen. This never happened, 'kay? *Never.*"

Driving 6, Mechanical Repair 8, Scuffling 6, Stability 4

Sanity 8, Health 8

Three Things

Looks at the ground and mumbles when addressed by a figure of authority; whispers prayers under his breath; wipes his hands on his overalls, even when they're clean.

Anthony 'Bullet Proof' O'Reilly Indestructible Thug

Coming as he did from a huge Irish Catholic family in the famous 'Irish Channel' of New Orleans, Anthony had to fight for everything he ever got. Growing up poor made petty crime easy to justify; petty crime led into hard crime, and that led to his first killing, beating a man to death in full view of his friends.

Anthony also grew up big; his girlfriends call him 'the Ox', and his favorite employer calls him 'Finn MacCool' after the legendary Irish giant. He got his nickname after a shootout left him with sixteen bullets in his body but miraculously failed to kill him. One of them shattered his jaw, which set crooked; he drools a little and can't speak entirely clearly, which often makes people think he's drunk, a mistake he exploits to his advantage. Now he earns his green as a freelance enforcer.

"Now are yeh fighting me yet, shonny, or are yeh jush trying to tickle me under the chin?"

Driving 4, Scuffling 6,

Intimidation 6, Firearms 8, Athletics 6, Health 12

Three Things

has trouble with sibilants ('s' sounds) owing to his smashed jaw, spraying spittle on those he addresses; smooths hair self-consciously over his bald patch; smiles with half his mouth.

Thomas O'Reilly Criminal Entrepreneur

Anthony's younger brother Thomas was always the smartest in the family, but somehow that translated into getting into the most trouble. Never satisfied with working at the bottom rung of an organization, he is always scheming for more power.

With his brother as his hatchet man, he's succeeded in making people in his local area terrified of him, but he's not yet swimming with the big fish. However, he's recently found a group that seems to offer him that power. Funny crowd, but by God they've got the money, right enough.

"Sure I'd like to know what you think is so funny. I'm not in the mood for laughin' meself. If I thought you was showin' disrespect to me family I'd have yeh plugged where yeh stand."

Occult 2, Scuffling 4, Bargain 8, Athletics 5, Health 6

Three Things

Pares his nails with a pocket knife; smiles all the time, especially when he's threatening people with violence; puts his arm around people, patting them on the back and speaking in low confidential tones.

Penny Potter Gang Moll

Lured by the promise of money and glamor, Penny moved to the city from a small country town. With nothing to draw on but her wits and her looks, she's gone from living on the streets to living in luxury, afforded by a string of powerful boyfriends.

So far, Penny's not been fully exposed to the gruesome reality of mob life. She's still living a dream of mink stoles and pearls. She hears of beatings and of people being shot, but it's not become real to her yet; she's never so much as seen a dead body. It's possible that confronting the truth of the gangster life would cause a change of heart. She's not a bad woman, just an exceptionally shallow one.

"You better not be hangin' around here when my boyfriend gets back!"

Flattery 7, Firearms 4

Health 4

Three Things

Smokes a cigarette in a long amber holder; takes swigs of raw gin from a hip flask; asks people what 'sign' they are, and takes that as her cue to talk enthusiastically about astrology.

Ruth Peasecod Tomboy Thug

Growing up motherless in a family with four brothers wasn't easy and Ruth has the scars to prove it. She's never had much money and she's done a lot of dirty jobs to get by; she'd thought about prostitution, but the johns aren't so willing to pay top dollar for a freckle-faced tow-haired girl, who could pass for a boy easily if she wore men's clothes. She met Penny Potter soon after she came to the city,

and she's done her best to look out for her ever since.

Privately, Ruth craves that Penny would notice she existed. She has a crush on the girl, but she'd sooner die than admit it.

"You think 'cos I'm a broad I won't blow your dumb brains out? I'm gonna give you till the count of five to think that over."

Firearms 7, Mechanical Repair 6, Scuffling 6, Athletics 5

Health 10

Three Things

Chews tobacco and spits out the juice; pushes up her sleeves; comes up behind men she likes and raps them on the head with her knuckles.

Udo Shultz Remorseless Killer

Udo's English is still patchy; he's a German immigrant, who worked as a butcher back home. There was very nearly a scandal back there — some ugly nonsense about improper relations with the animals in the abattoir, which nobody was ever able to prove — but all that's behind him now. He still remembers how he was very nearly caught, half-naked and covered with blood like the primal Nordic warrior he secretly dreams he is.

Udo is obsessed with enlarging his own ego. He sees himself as a true German, the inheritor of the world-dominating seed of his ancestors, and entitled to take what he wants from the weak. His willingness to kill without restraint or compassion has won him a niche in criminal society doing jobs that no one else can stomach.

In reality, Udo is a greyhound-thin misfit with irregular teeth. In his fantasy, he is a son of the Fatherland, his hands steaming with foemen's blood, slaking his lusts wherever and whenever he wills.

"You put up good fight, American. I take your skin and wear it with honor."

Firearms 4, Weapons 5,
Scuffling 6, Intimidation 8,
Athletics 8

Health 6

Three Things

Chews on little pieces of raw steak (which people assume must be gum), clenches his fists while talking to people, mutters to himself in German when he thinks nobody is listening.

Liz Crane Evil Hobo

An itinerant worker, or hobo, Liz never had a permanent home. Unlike many hobos, she has no qualms about engaging in criminal activity in whatever town she's visiting. She's picked up a lot of odd skills over the years, and is undiscerning about how she puts them to use.

She also knows a secret or two, hobo legends of the road that get whispered around campfires. She knows all about the guitar-pickin' boy who went down to the crossroads to make a deal with Old Scratch; she can tell you about the Railroad Man with hammers for hands and steam for breath who hides in railway tunnels waiting for children or hobos to come exploring; and she's seen the Loup-Garou with her own two eyes, down in Louisiana. It never did her no harm, though, 'cause the Devil knows his own.

"Get yer darned hands offa me 'fore I shiv you, boy!"

Authorities

Scuffling 4, Mechanical Repair 4, Intimidation 5, Cthulhu Mythos 1

Three Things

Scratches herself shamelessly in front of people; repeats what she's just been told back to the speaker in a sing-song voice; smiles showing her gums.

Ricky 'The Goat'

Kazanowski

Smuggling Dockworker

A dockworker like his father before him, Ricky the Goat is heavily involved in smuggling illegal goods through the port. A trusted member of the gang, Ricky's the one who keeps the new boys in line. Everyone wants a piece of the action, but not everyone's got the guts or the smarts to keep it together. You keep your mouth shut and do as you're told, you'll get what you've been promised.

If there's one thing Ricky can't stand, it's a grass. 'Sellin' out your own boys, who looked out for you, watched your back, helped you through hard times — there ain't nothin' worse, ain't nothin' lower.' Everyone knows what Ricky does to people like that. He calls it 'cuttin' the grass'. He makes sure there's nothing left of the face, just to make identification difficult.

"You been singin', little birdie? You been singin' out your pretty little song? You thought Ricky wouldn't get to hear of it? Hold him down, boys. It's grass cuttin' time."

Firearms 6, Scuffling 8, Intimidation 6, Pilot 4, Athletics 6, Health 8

Three Things

High-pitched laugh like a nannygoat's bleat; keeps his hands in his pockets; calls all older men 'Pops' and all

younger men 'Bud'.



AUTHORITIES

Officer Wright

Good Cop

A simple beat cop, Wright has been walking the same streets for twenty years. He knows everyone who lives in his neighborhood, and most of what goes on there. He's well liked by the neighborhood, in large part due to his habit of overlooking the occasional 'victimless crimes' perpetrated on his beat, and also because his rock-solid twenty-one-year marriage to his wife, Maggie, is an example to everyone. He's less forgiving of outsiders who come into the neighborhood, and will run off suspicious folk.

Ever since he was stabbed in the stomach by a thug with a kitchen knife, Wright has suffered from nightmares. Lately, they've been getting worse. His cornerstone of sanity in this (as in so much else) is Maggie; she's always there to keep the demons at bay. He has no idea what he'd do if he ever lost her, and sometimes that very thought keeps him awake at night.

"Okay, kid, I believe you. You don't have no liquor down there. And next time I stop you, you better not have. Do we have us an understanding?"

Firearms 3, Scuffling 4,

Reassurance 4, Oral History 6, Health 6

Three Things

Eats his corn beef sandwiches while talking to people; whistles *I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen* while walking the beat; blushes in the presence of pretty women.

Ed McDermott

Tough-guy Editor

Ed McDermott is the editor of one of the city's largest, most influential papers. He worked his way up from a delivery boy to his current position, and he's not shy of letting people know it. He runs his empire with a firm hand. He demands good, reliable stories that tell people exactly what they want to hear. He doesn't hold with scandal, rumor or controversy. It's not about facts, it's about headlines.

"Joe Shmoe doesn't wanna be told he's wrong. Joe Shmoe wants ta be told he's right, and American, and right *because* he's American. And we gotta keep tellin' all the Joe Shmoes how right they all are, or we go out of business."

Assess Honesty 7, Library Use 4, Intimidation 6, Oral History 6, Health 5

Three Things

Hisses through his teeth in appreciation after sipping his coffee; offers cigars to all present, but doesn't ever smoke any himself; asks questions of people then answers them himself. 'You wanna sit down? Of course you wanna sit down. You like your coffee with cream and sugar? No, you ain't the type.'

Father Paul McCrea Curmudgeonly Cleric

A Catholic priest serving in an urban parish, Father McCrea has seen his share of poverty, hopelessness, and despair, but has kept going despite it all. Though he's getting on in years, he retains an insouciant zest for life and a wicked sense of humor beneath a craggy exterior.

Tirelessly working for the destitute of his parish, he has drawn some criticism from wealthier members of the church, who feel a younger, more outwardly zealous priest would be better suited to his position.

"You want to look at the library, now? Well, I want to be twenty again, but it's not going to happen."

Reassurance 6, Assess Honesty 8, Theology 6

Three Things

Says extremely rude things to younger people than himself in a patient, calm tone of voice; flirts with young women, knowing full well that nothing will come of it; glares at people with a steely expression, then winks.

Ernest Wolcott Esteemed Anthropologist

A University-trained and experienced anthropologist, Ernest has conducted fieldwork in some of the most inaccessible regions in the world. His wife, Tuia, is from the Amazon tribe with whom he conducted his first research.

Fascinated since his early teens by the religions and customs of remote tribes, he has a collection of artifacts from around the globe and a wealth of knowledge of minor cults. He specializes in creation myth research,

comparing the various different tales of the origin of the world in the hope of one day finding a common 'seed myth' from which they all might have sprung.

"That? It's fashioned, as you can see, from a human shin bone. It's a sort of trumpet. One is meant to blow down it. No, please don't! It's supposed to call down the Eater of Entrails, and we wouldn't want that in our living room, would we, dear? A ha ha ha. Ha."

Anthropology 8,
Outdoorsman 5, Occult 3,
Cthulhu Mythos 1

Three Things

Talks enthusiastically about his collection; gestures wildly with his hands; laughs in a strange, hollow, humorless fashion.



CITIZENS

Mary O'Reilly Nosy Neighbor

The neighborhood busybody, Mary O'Reilly, knows more about everyone else's family than she does about her own wayward grandsons, upon whom she dotes. She's often seen peering out her window, or on the corner chatting to whomever will stop to talk. She's the unelected head of the local *kaffeeklatsch* circle.

Although the rumors she enthusiastically spreads are often malicious - 'it wasn't *no bad back* that Sukie Jones went to get treated, oh no, it was a little *unwelcome visitor*, if you catch my meaning' - she's a vital cog in the suburban machine, ensuring that everyone eventually finds out about anything worth knowing.

"That James McKinnery, now didn't I always tell you he was a bad one? Well, you'll *never* guess what they caught him doing. Up on Crow Hill it was. With a Bible, and a black hen. In nothing but his *socks*, would you credit it."

Oral History 8, Flattery 5,
Assess Honesty 9

Health 4

Three Things

Melts into a giddy puddle in the presence of little children; dabs at her lips with a handkerchief; keeps an array of candles burning in front of a small army of statues of the Saints.

Wei Ling McDermott Superstitious Society-Wife

The wife of the city's most powerful newspaper editor, Wei Ling should be the hub of the city's social scene.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Citizens

Her Filipino background significantly affects her popularity, however. At first, she found this frustrating; after seven years, she's grown used to it.

A strong believer in the supernatural, Wei Ling covertly attends séances and Theosophist meetings. She's convinced she has untapped psychic abilities and more than once has felt the touch of 'a great destiny' upon her. Much of this comes from the nonsense she eagerly laps up at the séances, where self-appointed mediums are only too happy to tell her she is destined for greatness. However, she may be intended for a genuinely significant fate — as a victim, rather than a heroine.

"I knew you were sensitive to the vibrations. You're like me. Our kind can always recognize each other. It's like two lights in a darkened room.."

Occult 4, Flattery 6

Health 4

Three Things

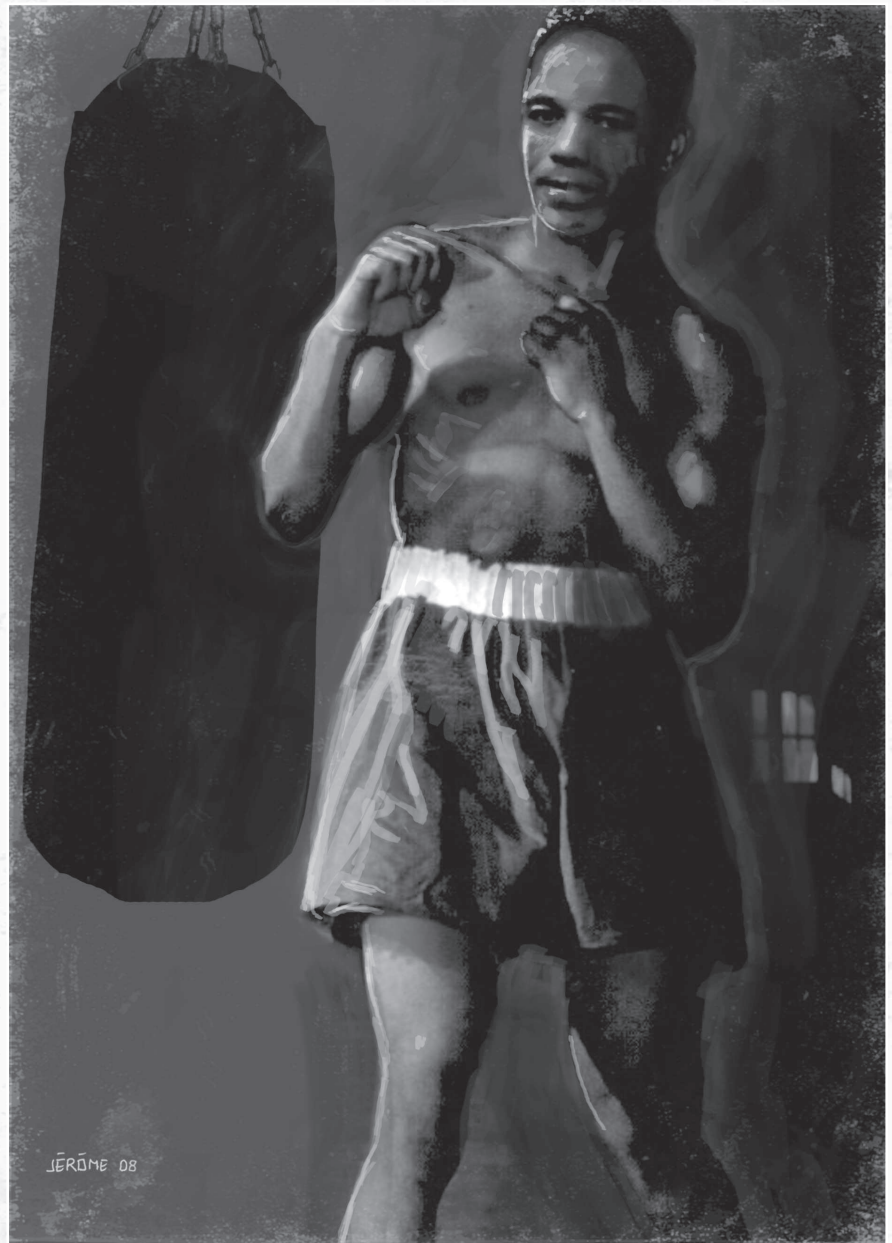
Occasionally breaks off from conversation to ask if other people can feel 'a presence'; smokes miniature cigars; talks baby-talk to her two cats.

Clarence Brown

Amateur Boxer

A boxer in the local amateur circuit, Clarence is a powerful athlete, though he's beginning to accept that he'll never make it big. Always hard up for cash to support his elderly grandmother, he takes freelance work as a bouncer or bodyguard, so long as everything is clean and above board. He's turned down a lot of jobs from unsavory characters because of his scrupulous honesty.

Clarence's white-knight approach is beginning to make him some enemies. He's recently declined an offer to 'take



a dive' for money, and word's getting around that he's the kind of guy to rock the boat. His fists won't help him when someone puts a bullet in his brain.

"I reckon you'd better leave now, Ma'am. I don't want any trouble."

Scuffling 10, Athletics 8

Health 12

Three Things

Talks softly, never allowing himself to become angry; calls people 'Sir' or 'Ma'am'; when nervous, fingers a set of rosary beads in his coat pocket.

Lucy Brown

Junior Mechanic

Clarence's little sister Lucy is something of a tomboy. Precocious and energetic, she's especially

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Keeper's Resource Book

fascinated by engines and electrics. At thirteen years old, she's a better mechanic than a lot of professionals, with a solid scientific understanding of the principles behind the machines she works on. She jumps at the chance to work on any new and interesting machine, and any car parked on her street is fair game.

"Is that a '28 Jaguar? Mind if I take a look?"

Mechanical Repair 7,
Electrical Repair 5

Three Things

Looks wide-eyed and innocent; blows bubblegum bubbles continually; invents her own swear words to avoid using real ones.

Sister Elizabeth Jones Frustrated Nun

An orphan, Sister Elizabeth has lived and worked with the Church since a very young age. She's known father McCrea her whole life, and he treats her like a daughter.

She works with the homeless and destitute among the parish, spending the most time with the hordes of children left to their own devices in the city. Though she comes across as every inch the obedient sister, a long-repressed part of her has begun to crave life outside the confines of the church. She's also caught herself itching to give one of those ungrateful sticky-mouthed brats a good slap across the face. These uncharitable thoughts horrify her, and she's careful to recount them all in the confessional booth, but they're becoming more and more frequent.

"Paris sounds wonderful! I hear they... that the cathedral is beautiful."

Reassurance 8, Theology 6,

Oral History 6

Three Things

Whistles out of tune; rides a disintegrating old bicycle through the city streets; sobs bitterly to herself when she thinks she's not being watched.



COLLEAGUES

Dae-Ho Lee Antiquities Dealer

A Korean immigrant, Lee has built a successful antiquities business. The Depression has forced many families to sell long-treasured possessions and Lee has a good eye for quality. An even-tempered man, he has to deal with angry, resentful sellers on a daily basis, and never loses his cool. If a customer has to be persuaded to leave, there's a shotgun within easy reach.

Lee is a businessman with pure motives and only researches his purchases enough to set a good value for them. He offers fair prices for what he buys, but he never lets something go for less than its worth.

"Eibon? Yes, I have a copy. I'm afraid it's not cheap, sir. And no, I'm not willing to go any lower. No, not even for cash. Yes, I appreciate that, but these are hard times for all of us. I see.

Good day to you."

Bargain 9, Assess Honesty 6

Health 5

Three Things

Keeps a pencil behind his ear; always dresses impeccably, without a hair out of place; never allows himself to become angry with a customer, though he bellows at his daughter sometimes.

Amy Lee Antiquarian Shop-Girl

Growing up in an antiques shop instilled in Amy a deep love of old things. Having worked for her father from an early age, she always enjoyed researching the stock, discovering the little pieces of history come to life. For Amy the store is more of a passion than a business. She'd much rather see pieces go to a good home than to the highest bidder.

"Father wants to sell this to a collector, but I know you'll appreciate it much more. Just don't mention where you got it."

History 8, Art History 6,
Archeology 4

Health 5

Three Things

Pushes her hair behind her ears; always carries a book; talks to the items in the shop, carrying on pretend conversations with them and speaking their lines for them.

Tom Harper Thwarted Reporter

A junior reporter for one of the city's major papers, Tom's ambitions for serious journalism are constantly thwarted by the succession of cat

shows, coming out parties, and weddings he's ordered to cover. This frustration means he's always eager to lend an ear to a strange story. It might turn out to be bunk, but then again, it just might make his name.

Sometimes Tom gets wind of stories just too wacky to print in a serious paper: tales of lights hovering over desolate hills, ghosts haunting basements in Salem, three-headed alligators fished out of bayou swamps. He's a good man to go to for those out-there clippings that can provide unexpected leads.

"Family dogs disappearing in Hayville? Say, that reminds me of something that happened two years ago, up in Boston I think it was..."

Assess Honesty 6, Disguise 4, Bureaucracy 6

Health 5

Three Things

Takes repeated sips of water while talking; nods vigorously and makes encouraging noises while people are talking to him; takes copious notes.

Anna Kazanowski Pilot-for Hire

Escaping from a life of cooking sauerkraut for her laboring father and brother, Anna took up with a flying circus. First working as a cook and then as a mechanic before she learned to fly, Anna now - at last - owns her own plane. It's an old and rickety thing and the circus has long since disbanded, but it's still her passion. She makes money as a private courier, or by servicing other, wealthier pilots' planes, to keep her own beloved craft in the air.

"The old Jenny is mostly spare parts now, but she flies. Where do you want to go?"

Pilot 8, Mechanical Repair 6

Three Things

Rubs her forehead with her sleeve; wears overalls; stumbles over her words when talking to men.

Doctor Montgomery Discreet Doctor

Working in an urban hospital, Doctor Sara Montgomery has seen her fair share of poverty, crime, and desperation. She's made it a point of practice not to ask too many personal questions of the patients that come through her doors. She wants to know exactly how you were stabbed, and with what, and whether you've been drinking, and how many fingers you can see her holding up; she doesn't care who did it, or why, or what you plan to do in retaliation.

Word has got around that in most cases, she will fix up an injury without going to the police. Nobody's sure how broad her tolerance is, but there's an understanding that you don't test it. Doctor Montgomery is an asset to everyone. If you gave her no option than to go to the police, then people might want to have a quiet word with you.

"You've lost a lot of blood. Now be quiet and let me work."

Medicine 7, Reassurance 6

Health 6

Three Things

Always seems busy without being flustered; asks direct questions and looks people right in the eye when she does it; chain smokes, sending underlings running for fresh packs once or twice a day.

Karl Grossman Enthusiastic Physicist

A German national fleeing growing anti-Semitism in his home country, Karl emigrated to the US with his family. A physicist by training, he finds his nationality makes it hard for him to track down long-term work in his field. He would be eager for any chance to work on a truly challenging problem. For now, he has to content himself with temporary lecturing posts, tempered with frequent correspondence with his academic peers in other cities. Although far from a laboratory most days, he still yearns to offer his insight.

"It's a mild magnetic field all right, but the shape isn't what we should be expecting to see. *Unheimlich*, indeed. Do you have a pencil?"

Physics 10, Chemistry 8

Three Things

Bows gravely to new acquaintances on first meeting; invites people to join him for huge slices of sticky cake and Viennese pastries; sucks the ear piece of his glasses when deep in thought.

Sanity and Stability Rules Summary

Stability Pool Loss

- **Mythos Encounters and Other Stability Tests:** Most failed Stability tests (see p. 69-70) have a Difficulty of 4 (3 if injured, 5 if susceptible). Stability tests involving a Mythos encounter have a modifier to that Difficulty number of +1 or more (see the individual creature's entry, or the Mythos entity table on p. 86). Failed Stability tests result in a Stability Pool loss (p. 71) adjusted up by modifiers for encountering a Mythos entity (p. 86) or Mythos creature. If multiple things at a given incident would cause a Stability pool loss, the character takes only the biggest single loss for failed Stability tests at that incident site.

- **The Big Reveal:** If a Mythos encounter is a "Big Reveal" (p. 76) the Stability Pool loss is triple the normal level, with a minimum of an 8 point Stability Pool loss.

Hard Drivers: Intentionally resisting a hard driver (ie, your character's Drive that the Keeper intends to force you into plot action) causes you to lose one-third of your current Stability Pool or 4 Stability Pool points, whichever is greater.

- **Soft Drivers:** Resisting a soft driver (ie, a Drive tangential to the main plot) costs your character 2 Stability Pool Points. (p. 73)
- **Casting Spells:** This can result in a variety of Pool losses, though usually it involves some Stability

Pool loss as detailed in the appropriate spell listing.

- **Shaken and Blasted Stability:** Whenever your character's Sanity Pool is reduced to between 0 and -11 you suffer from being shaken. This means you cannot spend points from your Investigative Ability Pools and Difficulty Numbers for all General abilities increase by 1 for you (p. 74). If your Stability Pool falls between -6 and -11 then you are also blasted (see Stability Rating Losses below).

Stability Pool Refresh

- **Hard Drivers:** Obeying a hard driver (your character's primary Drive related to the current investigation) lets you Refresh your Stability Pool by 2 points (see p. 73).
- **Soft Drivers:** Obeying a soft driver (a character's Drive that is tangentially related to the current investigation) lets you Refresh your Stability Pool by 1 point.
- **Confidence:** A player can gain 1d6 Stability Pool points by making an especially impressive spend (p. 79) and role-playing accordingly. A player can only make a confidence roll for his character once per session.
- **Psychological Triage:** a character may make a Psychoanalysis test at Difficulty 4 (Difficulty 3 for Clergy in Pulp games and Alienists in all games). Failure means the Psychoanalyst

can't attempt a re-roll until his patient loses further Stability Points. Success means that the patient gains 2 Stability Pool points for every point spent making the Psychoanalysis test so long as the patient is not the Psychoanalyst. Alienists can attempt Psychological Triage on themselves, but in the event of success they gain only 1 Stability Pool point for every Psychoanalysis point Spent. (p. 10)

- **Between Adventures:** A character's Stability Pool fully refreshes up to a maximum of his Stability rating in between investigations. In Pulp campaigns using Sources of Stability, the Investigator must spend calm, undisturbed quality time with his Sources in order to Refresh his Stability Pool.

Stability Rating Loss

- **Blasted Stability:** There is only one thing in Trail of Cthulhu that drop a character's Stability Rating. If a character's Stability Pool is shaken (falls between -6 and -11) during a given investigation, the investigator's Stability Rating is permanently reduced by 1. Whenever you are blasted you also suffer the effects of being shaken.



The Investigators

Sanity Pool Loss

- **Cthulhu Mythos Ability:** Use of the Cthulhu Mythos Investigative Ability (p. 76) can often cause Sanity Pool loss.
- **Mythos Entities:** Encountering a major Mythos Entity (p. 86). If that encounter is a “Big Reveal” (see, p. 76) then the Sanity Pool loss from the encounter is doubled.
- **Fainting:** Fainting dead away (pp. 75-76) can reduce the Sanity Pool loss from a “Mythos experience” down to 1 point total. The rules do not clearly state whether Fainting can offset a Mythos-oriented Sanity Pool loss from an attack. You cannot Faint to avoid Sanity Pool loss from casting a spell, but if you summon a creature, you can Faint to avoid the full effects of seeing whatever Mythos entity you’ve summoned.

Sanity Pool Gains

- **Defeating the Mythos:** In a Pulp game, if Investigators successfully “Defeat the Mythos” (p. 81) then at the end of the Investigation the Keeper may let characters refresh a number of Sanity Pool points up to the highest potential Sanity loss for the adventure (or alternately up to 2 Sanity Points).

Sanity Rating Loss

The following four things can reduce a character’s Sanity Rating.

- **Cthulhu Mythos Rating and the Sanity Rating Cap:** If a character has any Rating in the “Cthulhu Mythos” Investigative Ability (CMR), the character’s Sanity Rating is capped at (10-

CMR) where. If this cap is lower than the character’s current Sanity Rating, the Sanity Rating is permanently lowered to meet the cap.

- **Mythos Encounters by Those Who Are Shaken/Blasted:** Whenever a character’s Stability Pool is shaken (i.e., reduced to the range from -0 to -5), and the last thing to cause a reduction was a Mythos encounter or attack, then reduce the character’s Sanity Rating by 1 permanently. If the character’s Stability Pool is blasted (i.e., reduced to the range from -6 to -11) by a Mythos encounter or attack, his Sanity Rating drops by 2 points permanently. A given investigator can only lose a maximum of 2 Sanity Rating points in this fashion per investigation, and he suffers only the single most severe Sanity Rating loss in an investigation (i.e., being shaken twice in one investigation reduces your Sanity Rating by just 1 point). Sanity Rating points are not lost from shaken or blasted Stability if the reduction occurred from a non-Mythos source.
- **Failure to Deny the Mythos:** If a character’s Denial of the Mythos (p. 75) is undone (e.g., he acts on Mythos knowledge he is supposedly denying), the character’s Sanity Rating is reduced by 1 point.
- **False Sanity:** If a character loses 2 or more points of Sanity (Pool and/or Rating) from a single incident, any “False Sanity” (see Sanity Rating Gains below) negates all False Sanity. Use of Cthulhu Mythos during the 3 scenarios required to create False Sanity also negates the False Sanity (p. 81)

Sanity Rating Gains

- **Denial:** if there’s no proof at all of your encounters with a Mythos entity your Sanity Rating recovers by 1 point. (p. 75). You cannot deny away a Sanity loss of any kind resulting from your direct use of the “Cthulhu Mythos” Investigative Ability.
- **False Sanity:** A Psychoanalyst can treat a patient using three consecutive successful Psychoanalysis tests. The difficulty number is 4 (or, in a Purist game, up to twice the patient’s Cthulhu Mythos rating if that is greater). The patient’s Stability Pool rating must remain about 0 at all times. Any acquired Mental Illness is treated in this fashion, and the patient gains a bonus to his Sanity Rating (called a “False Sanity” bonus) equal to half the Patient’s lost Sanity, or up to the Sanity Cap of (10 – his Cthulhu Mythos), whichever is lower. (p. 81)



Pillars of Sanity

If you take a Mythos shock that shatters one of your Pillars (see p. 75) - by narrative intent - you lose 6 and 2 Stability and Sanity. If, instead, you have had enough Sanity erode before taking such a shock that you’ve lost 3 Sanity points, you can have a Pillar crumble from within, which means that it can’t be shattered.

Let’s say that our P.I., Martin, has 10 Sanity. He encounters

proof that Chicago is built on the living shell of Zhar, whose corrupt energies have given his beloved city (and the Zhar-cultists who run it) its power. This would shatter his Pillar of Sanity (Loves Chicago), so in addition to any other Sanity loss from the adventure, he will take a hit of 6 Stability and 2 Sanity when he has this awful realization. Over the course of his investigations, his Sanity dwindles further, to 5. He has now lost enough Sanity that he can simply decide his second Pillar (Sense of human worth) has “crumbled from within.” (As a roleplaying matter, he decides to express contempt for people following Assess Honesty tests.) Even if the Keeper’s next adventure was targeted at his sense of human worth, that Pillar has gone, and Martin can’t be hit with the shock of its shattering. As I should have clarified in the rules,

what Martin’s player can’t do is wait for the Keeper to unveil the shattering shock, and then decide at the last minute to “crumble from within” instead. The down side to crumbling early is, of course, that you’re down one Pillar, and if your last one goes, you take the Stability test hit.

Mental Illness

- **Mental Illnesses:** a variety of Mental Illnesses are listed on p. 77-78. You develop a Mental Illness each time your Stability is blasted (i.e., reduced to a range from -6 to -11). If you are rendered Mentally Ill from a non-Mythos occurrence, you suffer instead from Shell Shock.
- **Shell Shock:** If you suffer from Shell Shock (see Mental Illnesses

above), then whenever “your senses register any input reminding you of the incident, you must make a Stability test (difficulty 4).” Failure results in no Stability Pool loss, but does make you freeze up, making you unable to take action for 15 minutes, and leaving you with penalties as if you had been shaken (p. 74) for the next 24 hours.

- **Psychological Triage:** A character acting erratically due to mental illness can be snapped back to temporary lucidity if another Investigator spends Psychoanalysis Pool points (1 for an Alienist, or 2 otherwise). Psychological Triage can also help to Refresh a Stability Pool (see the rules above and on p. 79).

