

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Black Drop

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The Black Drop

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TRAIL OF CTHULHU

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THE BLACK DROP

"FOR SOME THINGS, THIRTY YEARS IS BUT A HEARTBEAT."

FRONT MATTER

Introduction

Something slowly gathers strength beneath the frozen basalt of the remote Kerguelen archipelago - a monstrous thing once worshipped and then betrayed, a terrible god from the antediluvian past. It's time has come again, and mysterious forces gather. Will they usher in its rebirth - or put an end to it forever?

The Black Drop is an adventure for Trail of Cthulhu. It takes place in the Kerguelen Islands. Although it could swing toward the Pulp end of things, there's plenty of windswept nihilism and reliably cosmic horror for any Purist. Adjusted by the Keeper to taste, it will work well for either style.

Abilities necessary for the revelation of various clues should be played flexibly - multiple approaches will work, depending on the situation. Consider those offered as suggestions and adapt as necessary.

Disclaimer

Much of the information presented in this adventure is true. The history is factual as far as fact will carry in such a remote place. The names of real people, Kerguelen notables, are used extensively. As far as I know, the mid-century colonists and explorers who left their mark on the archipelago were good people, not evil thralls to a soul-blasting dead God.

The Hook

The adventure begins with the French freighter Austral steaming into Port Couvreux, the only inhabited point in the remote Kerguelen archipelago. It's a somber occasion - the only settlement in the Kerguelens, a sheep station, is being abandoned.

Three families are packing up and returning to France, their commercial enterprise an utter failure. Meanwhile, further down the coast, a German expedition of unknown means and purpose has arrived. The Investigators may have their own reasons for visiting this far corner of the world...

The Horrible Truth

Sated with blood by the ancient Lemurians, the God of the Black Stone was a force of terror and evil in the distant past. It took the sinking of an entire continent to silence it, and even that has proven only temporary. In a remote corner of the most inaccessible islands on Earth, in the bergschrund of a massive glacier amid inky monoliths of volcanic rock, the ruins of the last Lemurian temple still reach skyward. And beneath it, the weakened God stirs.

The Kerguelen archipelago is all that remains above the surface of the ancient continent of Lemuria. A once-mighty civilization, adept at the strange and potent manipulation of resonant crystal, was destroyed in prehistoric times, and the foul thing they worshipped was beaten into a deep torpor. In the Kerguelens, few traces remain - bits of worked crystal and a black basalt temple tucked away

in a remote and mountainous corner. The Keeper is, of course, free to revise ancient history to suit her own interests and the campaign's needs.

The arrival of men, its former slaves, awoke it. Something about the death energy released in slaughter - the rapacious killing of hundreds of thousands of fur and elephant seals over the last hundred years - has aroused and sustained it. The power of the God of the Black Stone grows. It is still feeble, but every thirty years it reaches out to the weak-minded and ambitious and makes them terrible promises. And every thirty years it is stopped by means of a repellent sacrifice that good men make in the name of humanity.

The last time was in 1903, and the rising of the God of the Black Stone is overdue.

The Black Drop Society is a group of German academics and adventurers who, generation after generation, return to the hideous temple on the slope of Mt. Lyall to keep the God of the Black Stone quiescent. To do so requires a dreadful sacrifice - death and madness for all but one of their number. The sole survivor returns to organize the next expedition, thirty years hence. The Black Drop Society's most recent incarnation is already in the Kerguelens, at anchor in their vessel, the Tenerife, off Betsy Cove.

The God of the Black Stone has not been idle - although weakened, it has spent the last thirty years slowly gaining strength and reaching out to receptive proxies. Mssr. and Mlle. De la Rue, noted geologists and

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explorers of the archipelago, became worshippers many years ago. Two of the three families that live in the Kerguelens have also become cultists, and they are eager to free their god and usher in a terrible new age.

These two forces - the Germans on one hand and the cultists on the other - have diametrically opposed goals that, to the Investigators, will not be immediately clear. For the God of the Black Stone to be stopped, they will need to help the Black Drop Society - but can they be trusted? And when asked to lay down their own lives for the sake of humanity, do they have the courage to follow through?

The Spine

The characters must:

- Discover the cult and the God of the Black Stone and escape or destroy them. The De La Rue's and their allies in the Kerguelens have nothing to lose, and will destroy anything that stands between them and the release of the God of the Black Stone at the appointed hour.
- Learn about the German expedition and its purpose, and either help them or stop them. The Germans are not a friendly or appealing group, consisting of an SS officer and men who know they are marked for certain, horrific death.
- Put the God of the Black Stone down for another 30 years, or die trying. The crux of the adventure is the implicit moral choice - the Germans cannot succeed in containing the God of the Black Stone alone, but aiding them (or taking their place entirely) guarantees madness and death.

The Black Drop as a One-Shot

The Black Drop can be run as a stand-alone adventure. In this mode, use the pre-generated characters to fill out the ranks of Investigators. They will be stumbling blindly into a very dangerous situation. As an alternative in pulp mode, the Keeper might choose to make a two-fisted band of passengers who are explicitly tracking down the fabled Black Drop Society, with a goal of punching some Nazi teeth in. Regardless, as Keeper you will have to ruthlessly edit and compress events if you are playing from start to finish in four hours. Keep things tight, skip the flashbacks, move clues where necessary, and fast-track the action as much as is practical and fun. For example, having the Germans arrive in Port Couvreux during the Investigator's first day there works well.

The Black Drop as Part of a Campaign

Characters from an ongoing campaign can easily be inserted into this adventure. They may be filling any of the roles detailed below, or they may be arriving as passengers with some vague idea that something foul is going on. In either case, the Keeper is encouraged to plant the seeds in earlier investigations.

Perhaps they are sent by a mentor or well-placed friend who is concerned about what the Germans are up to (See "Keeping Tabs on the Nazis" below).

Maybe their own esoteric research has hinted at strange things suppressed in Yves-Joseph de Kerguelen-Trémarec's official accounts.

Perhaps a curious Tamil artifact has turned up that clearly demonstrates a connection to Kumari Kandam, a mythical land "far to the south" ruled long ago by the Pandiyan kings before being drowned beneath the ocean, complete with an ancient prophecy that "The Dark God of Elumunpalai Natu"

would return soon after the 1874 transit of Venus. Could it be Lemuria? Could it be dread Cthulhu? Who could resist finding out?

Anyone with reasons to be concerned about German intentions - Investigators with ties to government, actual spies, people who have tangled with the Ahnenerbe in the past - should be making the journey at least in part to keep an eye on the Tenerife and her mysterious crew. Anyone on the Austral's passenger roster could be a French agent, and any Investigator could be asked to tag along with this goal in mind by interested parties. The Tenerife's destination is perfectly well known, but her true purpose is definitely not. She was chartered by a sinister Teutonic organization known as die Schwarzen Tropfen Gesellschaft - the Black Drop Society.

Whatever their motivation, this adventure has a good chance of being the Investigator's last. This is not hyperbole, so understand the implications before sending Investigators from a pre-existing campaign.

Reasons to be Aboard the Austral

The pre-generated characters provided all have reasons to visit the Kerguelens; here are suggestions for others.

Archaeologist, Scientist, Occultist

A sketch, in the mad diaries of French Sanskrit scholar Louis Jacolliot, of the lost right half of Admiral Piri Reis' map of the world. You saw it for less than a minute, but it clearly showed a continent in the Indian ocean - Terra Australis Incognita. The southern-most lobe was shaped exactly like the Kerguelen Islands, and showed Mount Ross as an active volcano. The last eruption of Mount Ross occurred 26,000 years

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Reasons to be Aboard the Austral

ago. Could the Kerguelens be the last vestige of the fabled Lemuria? There's only one way to find out.

Police Detective, Private Investigator

Hundreds of whale- and seal-hunters perished on or near the Kerguelens, and many are buried on her untamed shores. For people who lost an ancestor, sending a respectable man into the southern ocean to find the grave, to note its location, and to repair its marker is a matter of family pride and, in some cases, closure. The gorgeous lady with the steamer ticket for Cape Town standing in your office thinks you are that respectable man for her grandfather's grave, in a place called Betsy Cove.

Alienist, Doctor, Nurse

The French government needs a medical professional on short notice, and apparently you are it. They are concerned about public health in the colonies, even those with a population you can count on one hand. A thorough inspection (and possibly disinfection) of those departing the Kerguelens is required, and their health needs attended to after years in isolation. The magistrate who hires you smiles ruefully. «Bring a dental kit,» he says.

Archaeologist, Author

Rumor has it the Austral will be the last boat to visit the Kerguelens for years. You've got one chance to explore the interior of Le Grande Terre, the Kerguelen's largest island. The notion of testing yourself in one of the harshest and most isolated environments on the planet, as well as advancing scientific understanding of this remote land, is very attractive - and the check from New Horizons magazine seals the deal. The chance to discover new features and fill in blank spots on the map - possibly named after yourself - is irresistible.

Hobo

What you know about ships could fit on the end of a marlin spike, but what you know about steady meals could fill the hull of this dodgy old scow. When they came looking for someone who could do heavy work in bad weather a million miles from home, you raised your inebriated hand. Now you've learned that they'll be dumping you on some God-forsaken shore so you can spend two weeks boarding up houses and draining the oil from machinery. At least the food will be steady and the company interesting.

Military

«International Liaison», they said, and you knew it was punishment for what you'd done. Remanded to the French. The pompous official overseeing the evacuation of the Port Couvreux colonists felt the need for an armed escort - perhaps he is afraid of penguins. Being detached for a tedious job like this may not be plum duty, but the service did promise that you'd see new places, didn't it? Time to «extend a firm hand of friendship to your Gallic brothers-in-arms» and assess Kerguelen anchorages for commerce raiders during the coming war. Two were pointed out to you for specific reconnaissance - Port Couvreux and Betsy Cove.

Journalist

It's sort of a sad story, really - the dying gasp of France's colonial ambition in the southern ocean - but there's definitely a strong human interest angle. What brought these people to the Kerguelens? And what forced them out - the isolation, the weather, each other? What will they do next? What is it that they are leaving behind on the Island of Desolation, and what secrets have they buried here among the skuas and elephant seals? That's the story you told, anyway, and it earned you a ticket and a per diem. Better dig up *something* interesting...

Antiquarian, Dilettante

Everyone who visited the Kerguelens, starting in 1772, left evidence of their passing. Sealed bottles with signed documents and charts, territorial claims and personal keepsakes will all fetch a good price at auction. A single copy of Captain James Cook's signature alone will pay for this junket. And more .. curious ... items rumored to litter the old camps might fetch considerably more from motivated buyers with discrete tastes. A particularly repellent Tamil gentleman is bankrolling your little junket, and he wants, of all things, geological specimens. «Bits of crystal», he told you, «nothing but crystal.»

Scientist, Professor

For astronomers, the opportunity to examine the sites of the 1874 transit of Venus observations to correct for geodetic errors is impossible to resist, and the rare occultation of Regulus by the planet Venus will be clear in the southern sky - an added bonus. For biologists, an environment almost untouched by the hand of man may offer insights into everything from wind-borne pollination to the origins of life. For geologists and chemists, the Kerguelens are a laboratory of geophysical and organic processes rarely seen elsewhere in the world. For you, a dabbler in all these disciplines and more, this trip is a chance for a few weeks peace, as previous indiscretions die down at home.



The Black Drop

AT SEA

The Austral may be steaming from Ile de Reunion, Cape Town, or even Australia - wherever the Investigators are likely to join her. The Kerguelens are close to nothing and surrounded by endless miles of dangerous ocean. There's plenty of time to get to know everyone on board, and perhaps to get a bad feeling about the de la Rues. The voyage to Port Couvreux will take eight days. If the Keeper can work up a suitable sense of dread, so much the better, but there's no reason to drag the trip out.

The Austral

The Austral is a well-appointed French-flagged motor-sailer. With a crew of six and plentiful space for cargo and passengers, her current task is to load the Port Couvreux colonists' possessions and bring them home. Any of her passengers or crew, save the de la Rues, can be player characters. This is the last regular voyage to the Kerguelens. Once the Austral departs, the islands will be devoid of human inhabitants. Whaling and seal-hunting have long since become unprofitable, and the place is so remote that no one will visit by chance. If you have business in the Kerguelens, this is your final opportunity.

French geologist Edgar de la Rue and his wife and assistant Andrée are passengers aboard the Austral, the only ones other than prospective Investigators. They plan to explore the interior of the main island, fossil-hunting for 14 million year old *Araucariaceae* amid the lignite strata of ancient volcanic flows. They also plan to unleash the God of the Black Stone from his temple-prison, dying in ecstasy beneath his unknowable visage as he blots out the southern sky. He made himself known to them many years ago, on a previous expedition, and they have been his servants in

the greater world ever since. They have allies waiting for them in Port Couvreux.

On the Bridge

Deutsch Funkverkehr

Somewhere in the Indian Ocean, the Austral begins picking up very strong German shortwave radio traffic. The Austral's Master, Louis Radalle, will pick up the first signals, and remark on them at breakfast. Radalle will ask for help, having no German himself and being a curious man.

[Core Clue] There is a German vessel heading for the Kerguelens.

Any German speaker, or anyone spending a Languages point to reveal that they speak German, or in a pinch a crewman can easily determine that the transmissions are coming from a vessel called the Tenerife, bound for the Kerguelen Islands.

A one-point Languages spend will further reveal that the Tenerife is sending messages to loved ones back in Germany via shortwave - farewell messages. If the Investigators are not already acquainted through their own backstories, there is also fleeting mention of a «Black Drop Society».

A further one-point Occult spend can trigger a flashback (See flashback #1: «The Black Drop Society») for an appropriate character - someone who has been to Berlin.

A Keeper interested in Ahnenerbe complications down the road can also add some curious coded transmissions, which a one-point Cryptography spend will reveal to be impenetrable but intriguing *Funkschlüssel M* military code machine traffic - curious for what claims to be a small, privately-owned fishing boat in the southern Indian ocean.

In the Salon

The Curious de la Rues

Edgar and Andrée de la Rue are charming and outspoken companions, eager to argue passionately about subjects ranging from Russian politics to the Burgess shale. They are en route to conclude their decade-long geological survey of the Kerguelens. They appear brilliant and cheerful. Play Edgar as a sort of rough Gallic boffin, equal parts wooly explorer and bespectacled bookworm. Andrée should be played as ferociously outgoing and flirtatious, and a capable match to her husband in intelligence and enthusiasm.

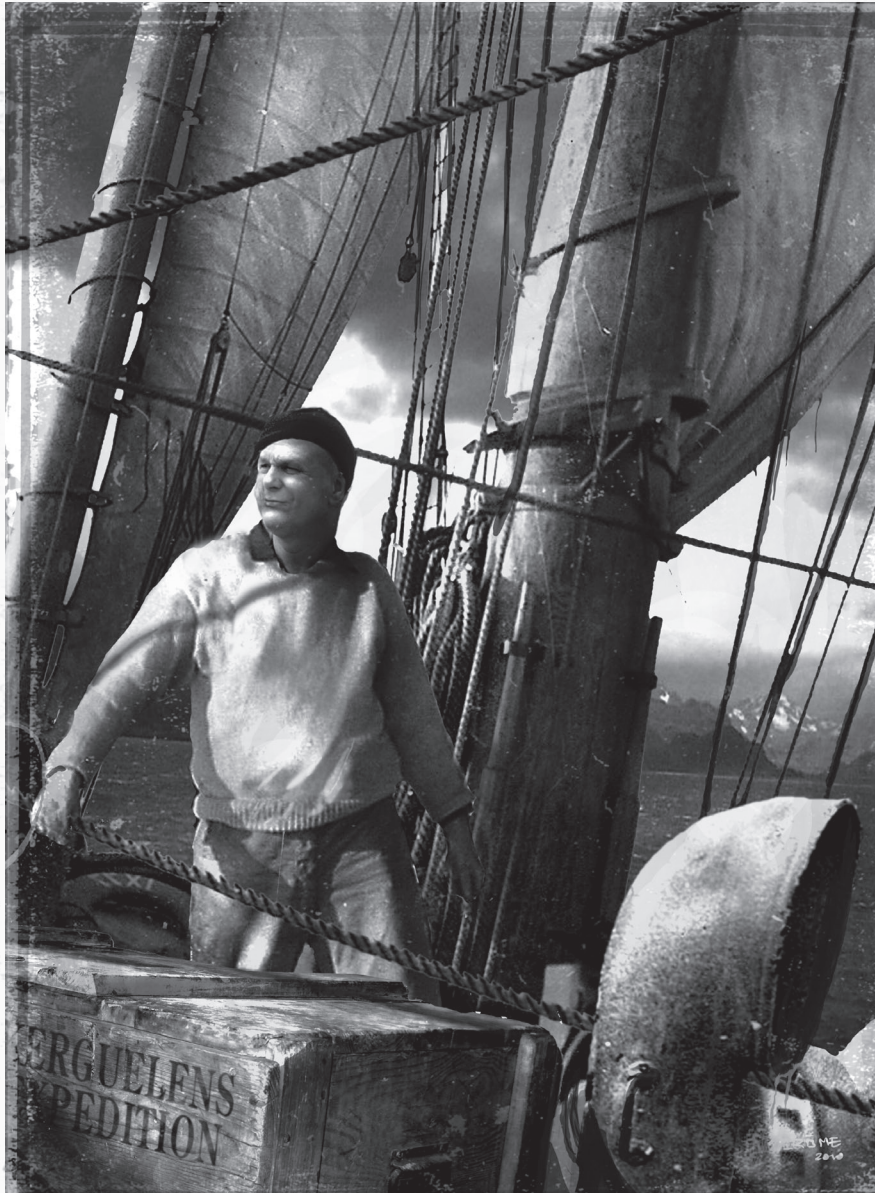
Anyone interested in the de la Rue's plans will get a complete overview from Edgar.

Geology or Assess Honesty will reveal flaws in his logic. If de la Rue were «fossil-hunting for 14 million year old *Araucariaceae* amid the lignite strata of ancient volcanic flows around Mt. Lyall» as he claims, surely he would have equipped his expedition with the tools for fine work - brushes, trowels, and the like. The fact that he didn't is telling. Outdoorsman will indicate that they are woefully under-equipped. The de la Rue expedition is a complete sham.

Andrée seems to have a fairly liberal conception of marriage vows and will playfully try to seduce an Investigator. Choose the least likely candidate and make Andrée very attractive and persistent. To the target of her extra-marital affections, Andrée de la Rue has an unsettling, frank gaze, a sort of fervor about her work one rarely sees outside a monastery. An Investigator using the Occult ability will make it clear that Andrée is a fanatic, probably a cultist. Psychoanalysis will reveal that she is clearly demented, with a sexual mania and some underlying sociopathic disorder. Her erstwhile lover will get the impression that she's

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At Sea



straining at an invisible leash, eager to be set free in the Kerguelens. A one-point Flattery or Reassurance spend will coax a bit more out of her - Andrée is about to embark on «a new chapter in her life» and the upcoming expedition will allow her to leave an indelible mark on the world. This spend will inevitably lead to a sexual opportunity as well, in her love nest in the hold.

Anyone poking around too deeply into the de la Rue's scientific affairs will be angrily dismissed

as an ignorant troublemaker, but the couple will maintain their pleasant demeanor in public. The de la Rue's are intended as cultists, but there's nothing wrong with making them a red herring if that seems more natural, based on their early interactions with the Investigators. They can show up as innocent dupes, or be ritually slaughtered and left as a message, or simply vanish forever.

The Library

The Austral has a well-used one-shelf

library equally divided between lurid French dime novels and academic books on the southern ocean. Library Use nets the Investigators some information on their destination. Give the Investigators handout #1 (Kidder's Natural History).

A one-point Library Use or History spend will trigger a flashback (See flashback #2: «The Curious History of the Kerguelen Archipelago») as well as the document of the same name (handout #2). A further one-point History spend will reveal additional notes of particular interest, to be discovered during the flashback. Give the Investigators handout #3 («Some Notes on maritime Oddities in the Kerguelens»)

The library also has a heavily-annotated collection of Louis Jacolliot's books - *La Genèse de l'Humanité. Fétichisme, polythéisme, monothéisme; Histoire des Vierges. Les Peuples et les continents disparus; and Le Spiritisme dans le monde, L'initiation et les sciences occultes dans l'Inde et chez tous les peuples de l'antiquité*. Poring over this last («Occult science in India and among the ancients, with an account of their mystic initiations, and the history of spiritism»), combined with feverish annotations by an unknown hand in French, is worth 1 point in Cthulhu Mythos. It contains Jacolliot's ramblings about the lost continent of Lemuria, its terrifying occupants, and the apocalyptic fate that befell them.

In the Hold

The hold contains crate after unlabeled crate of explosives and detonator cord. While this is not entirely out of place for a geological expedition, the sheer quantity is unnerving. The de la Rue's could knock down the Empire State building with the quantity of ordnance they have brought along. Anyone who wants to steal some of these explosives can easily do so - in fact, the Keeper should encourage it.

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Andrée has fashioned a cramped love nest amid the explosives, adding a frisson of danger to her amorous conquests [One point Stability test at Difficulty four, for anyone who joins her].

In Dreams

The more sensitive Investigators (choose the two most eager to learn about the archipelago) will be troubled by bad dreams, which ratchet up in intensity the closer the Austral gets to the Kerguelens. These nightmares should revolve around sources of Stability, gradually mixed with horrific landscapes of genocide and desolation. When land is finally sighted, the Kerguelen's uncompromising black basalt maps one to one with the dreams [One point Stability test at Difficulty 4]. The bad dreams should continue once ashore.

IN PORT COUVREUX

Port Couvreux is the worst port in the Kerguelens. It is also the *only* port in the Kerguelens.

The «port» consists of a protected anchorage and a squat quadrangle of dull grey buildings, all fashioned, incongruously, in French rural style. Three of these are family homes, complete with porches that are useless in the relentless, howling winds. The fourth is a sheep-shearing shed. There are no sheep in sight. There are no sheep, period. The beach is littered with the rusting hulks of queer machinery, the remnants of the seal-oil industry. It is the most bleak and oppressive settlement imaginable.

The frigid wind, which rises to gale force at times, is a constant. The temperature hovers just above freezing. The sky, when not obscured by stinging rain, is an alarming, vibrant blue. To the south and west of Port Couvreux lie

an imposing range of snowy hills, with the glaciated Mount Ross beyond them. To the north and east lie a complicated series of islands and bays and beyond them, the rough seas of the Antarctic ocean. The feeling of utter isolation is palpable - in sheer distance, this place is as far from civilization as it is possible to be and still find people living.

The Drop-Off

The last few colonists of the Compagnie Générale des Îles Kerguelen - the Le Galloudec, Petit, and Ménager families - are packing up their worn belongings to load aboard the Austral. Four women, one nursing a baby, stand in melancholy tableau on the shore as the Austral weighs anchor.

The Austral lingers just long enough to send ashore those bound for Port Couvreux and their supplies. The Austral heads back to sea for a check-in visit to the Crozet islands - she'll be back in two weeks. This should be enough time to pack up the colony, weatherproof and prepare the buildings for a long absence, and give the de la Rue's time for one last geological trip into the mountains.

Once everyone is ashore, the Austral sounds her fog-horn once and is gone. She and her crew will be back in two weeks, long after the events of the adventure have played out.

Pamela Ménager, clearly in charge, will supervise moving the supplies into the shearing shed and happily regale the Investigators with the background of the colony, if they are interested, perhaps over tea:

The archipelago was «discovered» in 1772. For the next hundred and twenty years, her abundant colonies of seals and ample harbors made the Kerguelens a choice destination for seal hunters (first fur, then elephant) as well as whalers seeking safe harbors for establishing

stations. The rapacious destruction of these species brought extinction within the realm of possibility, and the sealing and whaling industries collapsed by the 1910's. The Kerguelens are a long-neglected possession of France. In 1908, the French government granted two brothers license to exploit the Kerguelen archipelago. Henri and René Bossier founded the Compagnie Générale des Îles Kerguelen, which established a small colony at Port Couvreux with the aim of raising sheep as well as granting concessions to optimistic Norwegian and English whaling and sealing companies. The Antarctic waters, brutally depleted in the 19th century, could not sustain the whalers, and the ruins of their operations now dot Observatory Bay. Sheep failed to thrive in the harsh and barren environs, and the colony has finally given up. The last few colonists - the Le Galloudec, Petit, and Ménager families - are packing up their worn belongings and returning to France. When they have gone, the Kerguelens will again be completely, resolutely uninhabited.

The de la Rue's Depart

The de la Rues, with only two weeks, are eager to begin their expedition. After affectionate hugs and an exchange of gifts with the colonists they know well, they immediately set off in the direction of Lake Bontemps with heavy packs, leaving several crates of explosives behind for a planned swing back through Port Couvreux. There will be time for catching up, Andrée says laughingly, on the return voyage.

The Women

There are no men in Port Couvreux when the Austral arrives - they are all out on the slopes, herding sheep. Their wives and daughters will greet the sudden influx of humanity with a mix of trepidation and delight.

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In Port Couvreux

Pamela Ménager is a confident woman and the obvious leader among them. Her daughter, Léone, is seventeen and quite striking. Both are cultists who serve the God of the Black Stone. Pamela knows she will never leave the Kerguelens, and that everyone in Port Couvreux is going to be killed to slake the God of the Black Stone's growing thirst as he awakens. Young Léone is more naive, but is very loyal to her mother and quite mad in her own right.

Play Pamela as a somewhat intense and powerful woman, self-assured and proud of her little colony. She's also, of course, barking mad, completely insane but highly stable (something Psychoanalysis and a prolonged conversation will reveal) - when the time comes, she won't hesitate to gut a man like a fish, stripped to the waist and covered in filth. Léone takes after her, and might take a liking to the youngest or most dashing of the Investigators. Alone among the cultists, Léone is likely to hesitate when it comes time to be beastly things - she will, at a minimum, be less direct in her treachery. The Ménager family attitude toward Adèle is one of concern - they fear that she's lost her mind, poor thing. Such stories. Conspiracies, evil, and the devil. Such a pity.

Claudette Petit is a mousy older woman with the buttoned-down appearance of a librarian. She is not a cultist. Claudette is the most respectable and responsible-looking among the women. Reassurance and some time over tea will get Claudette to confess that she heartily disapproves of Adèle Le Galloudec, declaring her either insane or a hopeless layabout. Claudette is an excellent cook and has absolutely no idea there is an evil cult in her midst.

Play Claudette as a friendly, matronly woman. She's eager to please, very competent, quiet, and something of a scold. Investigators billeted to her home

will find fresh-baked bread and clean sheets. When the cult strikes, she will be an early victim. Investigators who are kind to her and take her seriously may find they have a useful ally. When the cult springs into action, they should vent their wrath on Claudette in a particularly horrifying way.

Adèle Le Galloudec appears haggard and unkempt. Her hair is unwashed and her infant daughter Georgette cries constantly. Like the Ménagers, Claudette wears crystal jewelry fashioned from shards of Lemurian technology scavenged in the Kerguelens. She's quite obviously stressed and possibly unstable.

Play Adèle as an exhausted, nearly broken woman. She is unhinged and afraid, which Psychoanalysis will reveal. Her weird connection to the God of the Black Stone has not been kind to her, and Adèle's mind is a web of pseudo-religious conspiracy. She fears the devil. She dreams of Satan and, in her mind, has had congress with him on the black stone. In the end Adèle is a victim, but she will obey Mrs. Ménager's commands, even killing for her. Here's some typical Adèle dialogue:

«The Prince of Lies, the Prince of Lies, these are his islands, these are his mountains, Oh, I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is, that is Revelation 2:13 and I know your works, I do, I do. You can't fool me. You speak to me, don't you, I stood on a lofty mountain and saw a gigantic man, and another, a dwarf; and I heard as it were a voice of thunder, and drew nigh for to hear; and He spake unto me and said: I am thou, and thou art I; and wheresoever thou mayest be I am there.»

(History or Theology will recognize this as an adulteration of the only remaining text of the lost *Gospel of Eve*, as quoted

by Epiphanius. Adèle is well read and trying to describe the experience of wearing the Lemurian shard.)

«Oh, the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him, weren't they? Weren't they? And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, (whisper) Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him? Well, who? You? Me? No, sir. No, sir.»

«Oh, they are beautiful are they not? Such fine jewelry, such a thing of wonder. Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; that's Revelation 21:11. Léon made them for us, so lovely.»

[Core Clue] The women run Port Couvreux, and Pamela runs the women.

Credit Rating or Anthropology will clearly illustrate the social pecking order - Adèle Le Galloudec is at the bottom, and Pamela Ménager is at the top. They are all poor women; the shepherding has been a dismal failure and they are a step above wards of the state with Credit Ratings of one. Despite their poverty, there is some fine jewelry on display around the necks and earlobes of the women. Alone among the women, Claudette does not wear some remarkable ornament.

Theology or Reassurance will suggest that Adèle's religious mania is not consistent with a mentally ill and deeply Catholic person. A one-point spend reveals that she is transferring or

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sublimating some other experience that is too terrifying for her to articulate consciously, and that whatever horror she has encountered has driven her completely mad.

Dinner in Port Couvreux

After some initial pleasantries, the moving of supplies and the distribution of mail, the women will focus on preparing a large dinner in the Ménager home. Social opportunities will be abundant. The women will be delighted by gossip of the world, recent newspapers, and particularly fresh fruit and vegetables. All three homes will be opened to Investigators, and the women will divide them for sleeping purposes among their cramped dwellings. The shepherds - Georges Le Galloudec, Pierre Petit and Léon Ménager - are not expected back for another day at least.

They each wear crystal pendants fashioned from Lemurian shards by her husband Léon. Any Investigator talking to Pamela, Léone, or Adèle will be drawn to the pendants - they are beautiful and quite out of place amid the hardcrabble colony. Léon Ménager, an amateur jeweler, has assembled simple ornaments for each of the cultists - simple rings for himself and Georges, a substantial pendant for his wife Pamela, and bracelets for Adèle Le Galloudec and his daughter Léone. The crystal is beautiful and impossible to miss. They are all worn as jewelry, so a close examination will require either theft or social finesse.

Geology, Flattery or Reassurance will reveal that the crystals are local. The shepherds occasionally find them on the ground all over the islands. Geology or Physics (core), and a chance to examine a necklace, will indicate details of their structure and provenance (see «The Shards», below).

For Investigators who get a chance

to handle some jewelry, see «Leon's Workshop» below.

Sleeping arrangements are flexible, but there's no space for more than three Investigators in any one home, and it would be impolitic to choose favorites. The barn is not a practical choice in the cold, wet Kerguelen night, but a more paranoid Investigator might prefer it to the alternatives.

Preparations for Departure

The families are all in the process of packing, and their various possessions are in crates for the most part. A picture of difficult life in isolation rapidly emerges - worn tools, tattered and much-mended clothing, dog-eared books curled with salt spray. Everything smells vaguely off, a combination of elephant seal oil, rotting kelp, and all things sheep. Despite this, the Petit and Ménager houses are well kept and as clean as it is possible to keep them. The Le Galloudec house is a wreck - peeling paint, filthy floor boards, and a general sense of chaos and distress. The colony is to be mothballed - doors and windows covered with plywood, oil drained from machinery, and everything tidied up for some future attempt.

Investigators may enter any of these homes, and the shearing barn, under the pretext of weather-proofing, packing and preparing materials for the Austral's return. An observant Keeper might require a Reassurance spend, or perhaps a related interpersonal ability, if there is to be less packing and more snooping into boxes and under mattresses.

Adèle's Bedroom

Adèle Le Galloudec keeps a leather-bound journal, which is prominently displayed on her night stand. An Investigator could use Filch to steal it,

or persuade Adèle to give them a look with Flattery. It's no secret, and she is weirdly proud of it.

It appears to be written in gibberish, interspersed with strange angular drawings. Languages will identify the text as a bastardized form of Dravidian, perhaps Old Tamil. Tucked in the pages is an odd page torn from an old scientific journal (handout #4), a red herring.

A one point Cthulhu Mythos spend will indicate that it is actually Lemurian, a suppressed language that requires paired right or left hands to write properly [Two point Stability test at Difficulty five].

If it is stolen, Adèle Le Galloudec will assume her «dream journal» was lost in the packing and comment on it idly - which Mrs. Ménager will carefully note. If confronted, Adèle will reclaim her dream journal and rave about the devil, keeping her daughter away from the Investigators with whom he is no doubt in league.

The Shards

Léon Ménager has a small workshop attached to his house. Originally intended for storing seal-rendering equipment, the place retains the repellent, fishy odor of burnt seal oil. There is a crude workbench and a trio of kerosene lanterns to illuminate it. A small chest contains fine tools for jewelry-making, and a locked metal box contains his silver findings and the handful of Lemurian shards to which they would be fitted.

Handling an individual shard has no immediate effect. Handling all the shards - Léon has enough to fill a drinking glass - definitely will.

[Core clue] The crystal shards are not naturally occurring.

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German Visitors

Geology or Physics will indicate that they are machined, and that the technology to mill crystals so finely does not exist [One point Stability test at Difficulty four].

A one-point spend in History, Geology, or Library Use in conjunction with handling any Lemurian shards can trigger Flashback #3: «Southern Ocean Glass».

The shards are tuned to some ineffable Lemurian resonance. The God of the Black Stone forms connections with those who handle and keep the shards. It communicates with them - at first in vague unease, then in dreams, and then, terribly, in powerful daytime visions. All of these merely tease at the full effect of an intact artifact (See «The Diadem», below). For Investigators who keep a shard in their pocket, spend even a few minutes sorting or handling Leon's collection, or deliberately keep these objects close to them, contact occurs in stages:

- Stage one: Vague unease. General paranoia. Anyone keeping a shard close to their person for more than a few minutes will experience this. This is the intensity experienced by dream-wracked Investigators on the inbound journey.
- Stage two: Stage one, plus burial dreams. Nightmares of suffocation, entrapment, and panic. Anyone sleeping with a shard in their pocket, or having brief contact with a large mass of them, will be wracked by horrific nightmares upon their next sleep. [Two point Stability test at Difficulty four each night].
- Stage three: Stages one and two, plus synaesthetic visions. Anyone in heavy, regular contact with the shards (such as wearing one of the large pendants or sleeping in Léon's workshop) will begin to



hear tinnitus-like ringing when he looks at certain colors, a piercing noise that modulates into a kind of scream with sustained viewing. The only soothing color is black, particularly the black of the Kerguelen's native basalt. There is a voice behind all the screaming but it cannot be understood [Three point Stability test at Difficulty four per day].

German Visitors

This scene can begin whenever the Keeper finds the pace lagging, or

when the Investigators have had ample opportunity to poke around Port Couvreux and its surroundings. It's very appropriate after short trips out to the Black Stone and Cape Kersaint, but can occur right away if play time is short. A ship's horn sounds - the Austral has returned! But it hasn't - a weather-beaten fishing boat called the Tenerife is dropping anchor off the settlement, and three Germans are coming ashore. One of them wears an SS uniform. They are Schneider, Faber, and Müller.

Dr. Walter Schneider is an old man, the only one who has been to the Kerguelens

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before. He came with Drygalski in 1903 and was present when the God of the Black Stone was put down. Schneider's entire life has hinged around the upcoming occultation of Regulus. He's Captain of the Tenerife, and if all goes according to plan he will serve as the Lemurian high priest and slaughter his colleagues, go raving mad in the process, and save the world. He knows the most about the Mythos, and has spent a lifetime learning about the Kerguelens.

Ludwig Müller is barely twenty, and the designated survivor. In thirty years, he'll assume Schneider's role. For the present, he's the Ahnenerbe's representative charged with documenting everything. He also serves as boatswain and cook aboard the Tenerife.

Thomas Faber is an old-line Nazi with a low Party membership number. An Unterstumbannfuher in the SS, Faber is the equivalent of a Lieutenant. He sees the ultimate outcome of the expedition as his duty, and he approaches it with a creepy zeal. He serves as First Mate and Engineer aboard the Tenerife. When Schneider occasionally wavers, Faber keeps them on task and in line.

The German expedition feels the weight of history. They - like Drygalski's expedition before them, and Baron von Schleinitz' before *them* - intend to repeat a ritual that has saved the world at thirty year intervals, ever since the God of the Black Stone was awoken in 1772. It is not a jovial affair, and the buzz of activity at Port Couvreux does nothing to ease their spirits. A death-slaked God can be drawn to the surface using the sacrificial diadem - at the expense of permanent madness for the noble volunteer and the regrettable deaths of his sacrifices. If the Black God appears while Venus is disturbed in the southern sky, in this case by the occultation of the star Regulus, it can be driven back into torpor for another

three decades.

If all goes exactly right one of the German team, the young Ludwig Müller will live to organize the expedition in the 1960's. But things are *not* going exactly right, they are missing a man, they are missing critical equipment with him, and a sudden influx of visitors has not eased their minds.

The Shearing Shed

The Germans, commanded by Dr. Schneider, make it clear that theirs is not a social call. Their expedition meteorologist, Ulrich Buschner, is missing, and they are very concerned about him. Has he been seen? They are tense, formal, and seem on the edge of losing their tempers.

Since none of the three homes is large enough to host three additional guests, the women will insist on an informal gathering and meal in the sheep shearing shed. This building is not convivial - rusty chains are draped over delapidated pens and the tools of husbandry hang from pegs. Tablecloths and kerosene lanterns do little cheer the place up, and the entire meeting will have a vaguely surreal quality. The Germans are obviously torn between their desire to continue their search and the need for decorum in the French-owned archipelago.

Schneider, Faber, and Müller will sound out the colonists and recent arrivals - the principal questions will be asked again and again. Have you seen Buschner? Have you seen *anyone*? When are you leaving? There is an urgency to their inquiries, and they are clearly desperate to find their lost man.

[Core clue] The Germans are under great strain, barely keeping their emotions in check.

The Assess Honesty ability will indicate

that the Germans, despite their courtesy and forced good cheer, and are hiding something.

A further Assess Honesty spend is entirely appropriate; one point will reveal that the Germans are completely sincere, if dreadfully stressed. They desperately want to find their man, Buschner, and they want to know why the Investigators have come. The social call is a great opportunity for the Investigators to meet and learn more about the Germans. The Keeper should give everyone a chance to mingle and sound out the newcomers. The players will surely have questions. Some likely ones, with answers, are below. Note that anyone speaking German will find gaining the visitor's confidence much easier.

Who Are you? What is the Black Drop Society?

«Schwarzen Tropfen Gesellschaft, a scientific society based in Munich. We have an interest in the Antarctic islands and have been coming to the Kerguelens for many years.»

With a one-point Physics spend:

«We're named after the astronomical phenomena observed during the Transit of Venus. Venus seems to soften at the edges and forms, literally, a «black drop»; it's charming really that a simple limitation of lens technology in previous centuries created such a mystery. Orbital bodies are often strangely perturbed by one another.»

With a one-point Occult spend, this would be a good time to trigger a flashback for an appropriate Investigator as well, if it hasn't already appeared during the session (see flashback #1, «The Black Drop Society»). It should be someone who could plausibly have

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The Aftermath

been to Berlin in the last five years.

Why would Buschner disappear?

«We don't know. He has a problem with alcohol, so that may be a contributing factor. When he left he took camping gear and a lot of schnapps, so we're confident he'll turn up. Probably just a bender, although a dangerous one. We simply must find him before he is injured or worse.»

Assess Honesty indicates this is a suspiciously prosaic read on what is a highly unusual situation.

A one-point Reassurance (Müller), Flattery (Faber) or Bureaucracy (Schneider) spend will get a German to open up. Buschner left because he had «certain disagreements» with how the expedition was being handled. He took along some sensitive equipment and is behaving like a spoiled child, unwilling to live up to his responsibilities. His absence puts the entire expedition in jeopardy. They are confident he'll be found or return on his own. Faber, if asked, will detail the beating he'll give his comrade when they next meet.

What are you doing here?

«We come to Betsy Cove regularly to do geophysical measurements, astronomical observations, a variety of scientific tasks that benefit from regular but slow data collection. The Society last sponsored an expedition in 1903. Before that, we were involved with the Transit of Venus expedition of 1874, and first visited in 1844.»

The Physics ability will cause an Investigator to realize that each of these dates corresponds to a minor occultation of Venus (Eta Virginis in 1844, Acrab in 1903, and Regulus ... oh dear ... this week) or a Transit (1874 or, oddly,

1772, the year the archipelago was discovered.) The Germans will laugh about this remarkable coincidence. Perhaps it was planned as an elaborate joke in their grandfather's day.

Reassurance or Flattery, combined with some alcohol, could get any of the Germans to slip about their interest in «the geology of Mount Lyall.»

Any Mythos-related question

«I'm afraid I've no idea what you are talking about.»

Assess Honesty will certainly indicate this is a lie. A two-point Reassurance spend will get the German to admit this himself, with a strained warning not to go too far in that line of inquiry, because dreadful things are afoot but are, thankfully, well in hand. This sort of questioning will cause the Germans to depart from Port Couvreur more rapidly.

The Germans should stay for a while and then make their apologies - they've left a man tending camp, and need to get back to him. Anyone who has approached them earnestly, who has treated them with respect, will get a sincere and somewhat melancholy warning to leave the Kergeuelens as soon as possible. If anyone proposes a visit to Betsy Cove, the Germans will say there is no point - they will be very focused on finding Buschner.

Another German, Bodo Herberger, was left behind in Betsy Cove, and if there is food, they will make sure to take a plate for him.

The Frenzy

Pamela Ménager and Adèle Le Galloudec know that the time of the God of the Black Stone's rising is nigh, and that he thirsts for blood. They know they will never leave the archipelago. They will slit Claudette Petit's throat and try to murder the Investigators

while they sleep, setting fire to all the buildings with kerosene and attacking them with a revolver and carving knives - perhaps using the Investigator's own weapons against them. This can happen at any time after the German visit - even the same night - ideally after the Investigators have exhausted the clues in and around Port Couvreur and before they meet Buschner (see below).

Rules for dunplay are on page 65, and fire rules on page 68 of the Trail of Cthulhu rulebook.

If this goes poorly, they will attempt to flee into the fog, but a ruthless Keeper should be able to create terror, injury, and peril first. Ideally Port Couvreur should be burned to the ground during a dramatic and chaotic fight to the death, but any outcome will be interesting. Having the colonists explode into murderous rage and burn down their own settlement is both terrifying and disconcerting [Four point Stability test at Difficulty four].

The Aftermath

Young Léone Ménager will bide her time and play the victim in the aftermath of the frenzy, begging for protection and aid. If she is trusted, she will viciously strike the moment she can do great harm.

Assess Honesty or Occult will see through her murderous deception. A further two-point spend in Interrogation will cause Léone to reveal the cult's plans - to murder everyone in the Kerguelens, and then themselves, to appease their God.

If captured, any of the adult cultists will be more candid. A one-point spend in Interrogation or Flattery will encourage them to spill out the simple but deadly plan. Their goal is to kill, because the God of the Black Stone demands sacrifice. Elephant seals and sheep are not enough; he wants to be free and

demands human blood. He is coming. He is impatient. Thirty years is for him a heartbeat, but his pulse quickens.

With enemies lurking in the fog and no means of escaping the archipelago, the Investigators will have some difficult choices to make. Whatever choice they make is fine. Here are some likely possibilities:

[Head for Mount Lyall] Outstanding! Let them arrive shortly after the Germans. (See «The Unholy Lambeth of the Antipodes» below)

[Head for Betsy Cove] Fantastic! Let them arrive as the Germans are preparing to depart for the Lemurian temple on the slope of Mount Lyall. (See «The Old Station at Betsy Cove» below)

Either of these options gives the Keeper plenty of opportunities to challenge the players with environmental hazards and murderous cultists. The journey should be as convoluted or straightforward as player excitement dictates. One final option could possibly remain:

[Wait for the return of the Austral] This option might crop up if they have prisoners or serious doubts about how to proceed. It is less likely if the entire settlement is in ashes. Have Buschner arrive and beg them to leave the islands by any means necessary. Have the Germans return to plead for assistance. If they wish to wait it out, the German ritual will fail and the God of the Black Stone will come for them in this case. The end will be very grim indeed!



AROUND PORT COUVREUX

Anyone wanting to get a feel for the Kerguelens has three choices. They can walk up the beach to the west and find the altar, they can walk around the point to Cape Kersaint and find the cache, or they can head inland and find Mr. Petit. Any beach walkers can run into elephant seals, preferably on their return voyage, as the sun sets. Investigators heading inland may become involved in some deadly environmental hazard or they may stumble across a field of Kerguelen cabbage. Beyond the core scenes, the sequencing is up to the Keeper's discretion. Due to the peculiarities of local geography, anyone traveling *anywhere* on foot can't miss the altar or Mr. Petit, unless they are in a tearing hurry.

Cape Kersaint

Cape Kersaint looks out on the vast field of islets that pepper the north side of the Kerguelens. It is the easternmost point on the Couvreur peninsula, noteworthy for the large pyramid of stones supporting a weathered flagstaff left by the military vessel *Eure*, which visited to assert French sovereignty in 1893. A sealed metal box containing legal documents and another containing foodstuffs intended for shipwreck survivors are buried beneath it. The History ability reveals the purpose and past of the curious monument.

The Altar

Five miles down the beach from Port Couvreur, near a rusting pile of seal-oil rendering tubs, the black stone beach is abruptly interrupted by a huge slab of shaped basalt. Scattered over the beach for hundreds of yards in either direction are the bleached bones of elephant seals. From the beach, across Beau Temp harbor and facing inland, a tiny canvas tent can clearly be seen pitched on the

opposite beach. It's a twenty mile hike away, and inside it is Ulrich Buschner (see «The Meteorologist's Tent» below).

[Core clue] The stone has been used as a butchering block, and recently. The site is resonant with mythic implications.

Geology or Archaeology will indicate that the rectangular chunk must weigh a ton, and it was obviously dragged down from a nearby bluff to the high tide line, and is oriented according to some astronomical pattern.

Forensics will reveal fresh grooves and desiccated bits of tissue on the block.

A one point Astronomy spend pegs the block's orientation as not lunar or solar, but tied to the orbit of Venus in conjunction with the sun.

If Reassurance or Intimidation is employed, any of the women will matter-of-factly say that it is the black stone, and that it was dragged down in 1929. No one knows why, but the men occasionally use it as a chopping block for butchering seals and sheep.

Anyone Investigator of a paranoid bent and willing to spend a point of Occult will recall references to the God of the Black Stone: Several mentions of the God of the Black Stone can be easily recalled, if indeed it is the same entity. Golgoroð, Gol-Goroth, The Black God, The Forgotten One, The God of the Black Stone. Mentioned as either a companion or alternate form of Groðgolka, Bird-God of Balsagoð.

As History will reveal, Balsagoð was apparently an island in the Atlantic to the southwest of present-day Spain, possibly a reference to Madiera. It's «Temple of Darkness» is mentioned with particular dread by several sources including the curious Norse fragment the *Saga of Tostig the Mad*.

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Around Port Couvreur

The Norse connection runs deeper, if more obscure, as the Anthropology ability will reveal - A Baltic cult, mentioned in *The Saga of Porkell the Fair*, worshipped a God called Golgoroð. Porkell and his companion Æðelstan broke the cult 'after two stars joined in the heavens' by employing the witchery of an Icelandic Völva, who they later drowned in a lake

A further one-point Reassurance spend can persuade Adèle to voice her extreme misgivings, having seen sacrificial rites carried out on the slab more than once. She has, in fact, lain with the Devil upon the black stone - at least in her own mind. If closely questioned, the Keeper should elaborate on Adèle's religious mania at whatever length the players find interesting, transforming the very real rituals she has witnessed and participated in into symbolic couplings with Satan, gatherings of whip-tongued demons, a congress of anti-popes and Roman emperors, and esoteric symbols pulled from the Book of Revelation. Assess Honesty will indicate that, while confused in the particulars, her experience is on some level quite genuine.

It's worth noting that the cultists, when outed and pressed, will endlessly talk about their master, the God of the Black Stone, and this utilitarian slab is indeed the black stone where they slaughter elephant seals as sacrifices to him. It is not a sacred site, as anyone with the Archaeology ability will find obvious. It appears to be a feeble stand-in for what must be a more elaborate sacrificial complex somewhere more remote.

[Core clue] The altar has been used as a cache by Pierre Petit who is, or was, headed toward Mt. Lyall.

Sense Trouble, Conceal, or Archaeology will indicate that the base of the stone has recently been tampered with.



Jammed in a crack on the south side of the altar is a note, penned in hurried French and signed PP.

PP can be none other than Pierre Petit. It is on the back of an astronomical table (See handout #5, «Past Occultations and Perturbations of Venus»). Note that the entry for «this week» on the table is a convenient fiction - it means whatever week it happens to be in-game. In other words, in a few days it will happen again.

The History or Geology abilities will indicate that a trip to the base of Lyall would take three hard days overland.

It would take a day if a skiff were available.

Traveling to Mt. Lyall would begin with passing the altar on the beach, and later the discovery of Pierre Petit's corpse (see below).

Pierre Petit's cliff

A well-worn track bisects the Couvreur peninsula and leads inland, heading west then south into rough, hilly terrain. Anyone traveling anywhere in the Kerguelens on foot will start on this track, so it is possible that this scene

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will happen later in the adventure.

There is a shepherd's camp a few hours walk from the settlement, empty but only just. Outdoorsman will reveal that the camp's former occupants - certainly the Shepherds - have been gone less than 12 hours.

Outdoorsman or Sense Trouble will cause an Investigator to note a curious, wheeling congregation of skuas perhaps two miles further inland. Skuas are sea birds and out of place in the interior.

At the base of a vertical cliff lies the body of Pierre Petit. He is on his back, facing the sky, and his eyes have been pecked out by skuas.

Forensics or Medicine will indicate that he fell - or was tossed - from the cliff and snapped his C4 vertebrae on impact, resulting in complete paralysis below the neck. He was alive when the skuas found him. Near his body is a pack and a fowling piece.

Petit's disfigured body tells a horrific story of his last helpless hours [Three point Stability test at Difficulty four].

The Clifftop

At the top of the cliff, where the skuas are still ominously active, a further horrific sight awaits. The settlement's sheep - perhaps two hundred animals, have been slaughtered. Their bloody carcasses form a massive ring some fifty feet in circumference [Three point Stability test at Difficulty four if closely examined, one point if observed from afar]. In the distance on the beach, Buschner's tent can be seen.

The Anthropology ability will establish the etiology of death - their throats were slashed in a ritual manner and the animals were bled out one after the other. A one-point Forensics or Biology spend will indicate that whatever happened was heavy work

among panicked animals, and must have taken days. The ground is black with their blood. There are no signs of the perpetrators, but the undulating hills and moss-covered cliffs stretch out in every direction.

The Meteorologist's Tent

Somewhere along the rocky shore of Beau Temps harbor, opposite the black altar, past the cliffs and the skuas and poor Petit, a two-man canvas tent has been hastily erected.

Ulrich Buschner, the Black Drop Society meteorologist, is huddled in the tent. He is drunk and exhausted. Outdoorsman clearly indicates that he has been traveling hard, on foot. Empty bottles of schnapps are scattered across the floor of his tent and he has fouled himself. Distraught and pathetic, he is not fit to travel, or even to carry on a conversation.

Buschner's brought along the absurd «ceremonial headdress» that Dr. Schneider plans on wearing, to throw a further spanner in the works (see «The Diadem» below). It is carelessly stuffed in the bottom of his pack. A cursory inspection (or Evidence Collection) will find it. Buschner will not only reveal it, but gladly give it to any Investigator who expresses an interest in it. The thing is like a millstone around his neck and it torments him with nightmares.

The application of Medicine or First Aid can sober Buschner up, given time. Until he's lucid, all that can be gathered is that Buschner's run away; he's headed for Port Couvreux and, he hopes, safety and refuge. He's terrified that Faber is after him to drag him back to Betsy Cove. He'll insist on being taken to Port Couvreux to await the return of the Austral - not knowing the local situation there. He swears he had nothing to do with the slaughter or the killing of Petit. Forensics or Assess Honesty will confirm his protestations.

Play Buschner as a man with a guilty conscience, eager to reveal what he knows - which is everything. For Investigators, meeting Buschner should be a turning point. There's no need to hold anything back.

[Core clue] The Black Drop Society are planning a mass suicide occult ritual on the slopes of Mt. Lyall. It's a blasphemous tradition spanning generations and, after careful consideration, Buschner wants no part in it. The Lemurian diadem is essential for the final ceremony.

Interrogation or Reassurance will get him talking. So will more alcohol.

Buschner has the Tenerife's dory, a capable little boat with an outboard motor and a sail, well concealed along the shore nearby. He's banged her up pretty bad, and Mechanical Repair will be necessary to make her seaworthy again. Piloting - a skill Buschner does not possess - could get her to the northern terminus of the Studer valley, or Betsy cove, in six hours or less. The dory can hold a dozen people but can't stray far from shore.

Buschner will tag along with the Investigators as far as they will let him, out of self-preservation. He will beg them not to go to Betsy Cove or Mt. Lyall, but if they go, he will follow, confident in their protection. If they want no part of the poor meteorologist, he will wander off in the direction of Port Couvreux. Buschner can simply vanish, or he can return later as the Keeper wishes - perhaps as a prisoner of the cult, dropped screaming from a high peak into the temple, or as a reluctant hero, appearing at the precise moment an ally is needed. Finally, Buschner could return as a replacement for a dead player character at any point.

The Diadem

The diadem that Buschner has stolen is an artifact from the unthinkable past. It fell into the hands of a German seal-hunter in the 1810's. Wrought from silver and a breathtaking array of gorgeous, unearthly crystalline forms, the diadem is a Lemurian crystal headpiece intended to be worn by the high priest supervising blood sacrifices. It is attuned to the slumbering mind of the God of the Black Stone. Wearing it draws the thing forth. Buschner stole the diadem when he ran off, and the Germans will be eager to recover it. It will, most likely, be a strong point of contention.

Although there is no direct communication, the wearer of the Lemurian diadem becomes aware of the God of the Black Stone's unfathomable thoughts and desires [Two point Stability test at Difficulty four]. The wearer will experience a sort of malignant synaesthesia as the Forgotten one makes contact - a series of crippling synaesthetic episodes invariably follow, where all colors save black become shrieking, hellish voices and the smells of salt air and seal meat are blinding, brutal light of a color that cannot be classified or even described. Behind this mental noise, a malevolent intelligence squats like a great toad, trapped and unmoving, helpless and filled with rage. Close contact from extended wearing of the diadem is devastating [Five point Stability test at Difficulty five once per day].

As Buschner or Schneider will gamely explain, the God is implacably attracted by the wearer, and Lemurian technology is the only thing that can cause it to become sessile. Wearing the diadem invariably (and perhaps mercifully) causes insanity before the God arrives to claim its offering. They need it for the ritual to have any chance of success.

FURTHER AFIELD

Backcountry Ambush

Antagonist Reaction

Georges Le Galloudec and Léon Ménager are cultists, and they are busy waking their God. The sheep's blood they have spilled is just the beginning, and there will be more. They know that the Black Drop Society has come to drive the Forgotten One back - the god has told them as much. At the time of the Austral's arrival, they are on their way overland to Betsy Cove to murder the Germans. The Keeper should feel free to split Georges and Léon up, have them snipe at Investigators or cause murderous trouble, and otherwise serve as a menace. The de la Rue's are also cultists, and can appear as a couple or individually at any point in the adventure, up to and including the final confrontation at the Lemurian temple. There are four of them in total; use their appearance to help inject a sense of danger and urgency and to pace the game. In other words, when things begin to drag, have a cultist attack.

One way to structure the cultist's actions is to "schedule" four appearances. Assume each is individual, but if a solo antagonist survives, he will join his comrade for the next. This way, even if the Investigators kill or apprehend a cultist after each encounter, there will always be another around the corner. A wise Keeper will hold one (perhaps the alluring Andrée) in reserve, at the temple, with dynamite.

Good opportunities for cultist attacks: In the backcountry anywhere, in the cave, during the frenzy at Port Couvreux, en route to Mt. Lyall, and at the temple itself. Cultists are all armed and can assume the role of sniper, taking pot-shots from some hidden position. They can trigger rockfalls in the mountains, either through careful preparation or with explosives. They

can try to sneak into camp and cut Investigator's throats in the night. They can try to kidnap someone, douse them with kerosene, and burn them alive on a nearby peak. Be fiendish, and incur Stability tests.

A Normal Day in the Kerguelens

The tall peaks that rise both east and west in the archipelago mean that darkness falls suddenly, like a curtain being drawn. A judicious Keeper will use this to good effect at a moment when the investigators desperately need light and landmarks.

A cold, wet fog is ubiquitous on the rare occasions when the wind calms. Certain protected valleys will be routinely choked with fog as well. There is always precipitation - vary it between driving horizontal rain, sleet, and light snow. In these conditions disorientation is a real concern. People who are lost, confused, and without points of reference tend to fall into rivers and off cliffs. Use a sudden break in the weather - a startling moment of utter calm, with sunshine beneath mare's-tail clouds - to offer an unsettling contrast. The weather can change in minutes.

The various challenges and events outlined here are appropriate for any part of this adventure, and are thus floating scenes. If the Investigators are more than fifty feet from Port Couvreux or Betsy Cove, anything listed below is fair game. Ideally, these should all be confronted at some time during the game. Elephant seals can pose a problem any time the Investigators are on the beach or near the coast.

These scenes can be inserted any time the Investigators stray from Port Couvreux or Betsy Cove. They all add a huge amount of Kerguelen-specific color, so don't neglect them!

The Black Drop

Drowning and Falling

Use these separately or together:

The uneven and unpredictable terrain includes sheer basalt cliffs that seem to appear out of nowhere, their edges blending in with the lichen in the distance. A Sense Trouble roll at difficulty 6 or two-point Outdoorsman spend will to notice a cliff. If an Investigator fails, make an Athletics test, at difficulty 5, to avoid walking into space. An Investigator takes 1d6 damage to his Health after a nasty fall and will be slowed by his injuries.

A Sense Trouble test or one-point Outdoorsman spend to avoid slipping on the moss-covered bank of a partially concealed and ice cold stream. If an Investigator fails, make an Athletics check, at difficulty 5, to avoid falling in. Falling in will result in a 1d3 hour delay as well as lost or ruined equipment (A successful Preparedness roll against difficulty 6 means the Investigator packed well). In addition, a soaked Investigator takes 1d6 damage to his Health and will have a deep chill in his bones for the remainder of the adventure.

The rules for drowning and falling are on page 68.

A terrifying separation

It's easy to get separated from the group and thoroughly lost. A disoriented Investigator is in real trouble. Being lost and isolated in such a harsh environment can be terrifying - particularly if cultists remain on the prowl. It requires a one-point spend of Outdoorsman to avoid losing 1d3 hours per day due to confusion and disorientation. The sheer terror of utter isolation is dangerous [Two point Stability test at Difficulty four]. The de la Rues are probably tracking the Investigators. Have them move in for the kill on an isolated and terrified victim. Alternately, have the

Elephant Seal Statistics

Abilities: Athletics 14, Health 10, Scuffling 12. Subtract four from all these statistics for females.

Hit Threshold: 3 (Big)

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: Not applicable.

Weapon: +2 (Bite), +4 (crush).

An elephant seal will always try to chase away a threat. If this fails, it will overrun a target as its initial attack, immobilizing a human-sized foe beneath it. If this fails, or if there are multiple attackers, it can bite once per round. Females can only bite, at +1, and will arrive to enter the fray gradually.

Armor: -1 vs. guns and spears, -3 vs. everything else (tough hide)

Germans find him and play it for subtle menace, although their intentions are purely good.

Elephant Seals

The only remotely dangerous inhabitant of the Kerguelens (other than human beings and Great Old Ones) is the southern elephant seal, *Mirounga leonina*. These enormous and strange-looking animals are common on some Kerguelen beaches, and they are not to be trifled with.

A bull elephant seal is seven thousand pounds and sixteen feet of ferociously possessive marine mammal. An investigator wandering into a bull's harem of females, or even crossing a beach in his territory, is going to be chased, mauled, and crushed. A bull in danger will be assisted by females in his harem. An Investigator can avoid triggering an elephant seal's territorial

instincts with a one-point Biology spend.

Keepers should note that elephant seals may well appear terrifying and unearthly to investigators unfamiliar with them. A description like this isn't out of place:

«First you smell it - a rotting smell, like fish carcasses and seaweed baking in the sun. Then, through the icy fog, illuminated by a weak blue pall of moonlight, you see ... something. It seems to be struggling forward on tiny appendages, its massive, slug-like body undulating hideously as it grinds the black stones beneath it. The thing has a head, or what passes for a head - a lolling, black-eyed plug that ends in a horrible tuberos mass that seems to writhe up and down of its own accord as though filled with blasphemous erectile tissue. Viscous fluid drips down from this protuberant obscenity onto eager, canine teeth. It roars as it sees you and charges with terrifying, astonishing speed, even as its horrific bellow echoes off the nearby cliffs.»

For fun, a Keeper can lay on the purple prose and ask the player what his character thinks he is witnessing. If the result is «an elephant seal, silly», make all plain and move on. If the result is «something unnatural», you are doing something right [One point Stability test at Difficulty four].

The Cabbage Patch

In a sheltered valley beneath brooding hills, the Investigators walk into a vast field of strange plants. They are green, but unlike anything one might expect to find in such a place. It is a vaguely unnerving dinosaur, something disturbingly alien.

A one-point Botany spend will resolve any apprehension - they are Kerguelen cabbage (*Pringlea antiscorbutica*), a deeply weird plant, slow-growing, self-pollinating, and found only on the remote southern islands. It contains a pale yellow oil which is rich in vitamin C but smells terrible - one commentator described it as smelling «like the odor of the lowest sort of woman in the Algeirs casbah». Kerguelen cabbage has ward off scurvy in the Antarctic latitudes for years. Thanks to rabbits introduced in the 1870's, it is now quite rare. A trained botanist will also know the life-saving properties of the plant, and indicate the curious and singular nature of the species, hinting at a million years of isolation.

Sables Mouvants

The Kerguelens rarely dip below freezing (or reach 50F), and nearly every non-vertical surface in the interior is composed of a sucking, sandy, lichen-covered mud. In places - a practiced eye can spot them on the rare clear day - this mud forms a quicksand-like mush that can swallow a man whole, and has.

Make a Sense Trouble roll at difficulty 5 to notice a patch of quicksand. If an Investigator fails, make an Athletics check at difficulty 6 to to extricate himself. This check is easier by one point if the player describes his character remaining calm and attempting to lie flat, and by one additional point if other Investigators are on hand to assist with ropes.

Have one of the shepherd-cultists waiting near a likely quicksand patch, to start sniping the moment someone is stuck. A failed roll means that the Investigator is sucked under for long enough to experience hypoxia-induced hallucinations before struggling free [Two point Stability test at Difficulty four].

The Cave

This location is en route from Port Couvreux to Betsy Cove. It could be used in conjunction with a dire need for shelter - a raging sudden storm, powerful pursuers, or simply a safe place to rest. Exploring the cave is a wonderful time for murderous cultists to find them.

Outdoorsman or Geology will reveal that the basalt cliffs of the interior are dotted with caves. Enterprising Investigators (or ambushing cultists) will use them for shelter. One in particular is already occupied.

Just inside the entrance to an attractive, dry cave are the remains of a fire and a crude driftwood sledge. Nearby is the well-preserved corpse of an American whaler from the 1840's, still wrapped in elephant seal hides.

In his mummified hands, he clutches a diary. The whaler never gives his name, but he served aboard the *Shaw Perkins*, which was lost with all hands on Kerguelen's lee shore. By his account he was the only survivor. The unknown mariner's dairy details his increasingly futile struggle to survive, and his discovery of the Temple of the Black Stone. See handout #6 («Shaw Perkins Diary»)



THE OLD STATION AT BETSY COVE

The History ability will allow an Investigator to recall that Betsy Cove, after Port Couvreux, is the best anchorage on the northern side of the Kerguelens. The German Transit of Venus expedition of 1874 was based here, as was the shore party from Drygalski's German South Polar expedition of 1903, commanded by Emil Worth.

Remains of both expeditions dot the landscape. The hut built by the 1903 team sits immediately adjacent to a weather-worn cemetery filled with bleached wooden grave markers - Norwegian and American whalers as well as members of the '03 expedition. Two of the graves, curiously, are Chinese. Nearby, the foundation of the meteorological and geomagnetic observatory built in 1874 is still visible, the structure itself long since destroyed. Rusted debris - a whaling try-pot, seal-hunting apparatus, oil drums - litter the landscape. All this evidence of human tampering is in stark contrast the the powerful natural beauty of the place. Mt. Crozier looms over it all to the south, dusted in snow.

The Tenerife is anchored in the cove. She is a battered, metal-hulled seine-net fishing boat, barely adequate for the harsh seas of the fiftieth southern parallel. The Black Drop Society expedition serves as her crew. When the terrible work is finished, Ludwig Müller intends to sail her back to Cape Town alone. In a pinch she could carry eight passengers, but it would be a very unpleasant voyage.

The German expedition has spread out on shore and re-occupied the remaining hut. Pungent elephant seal meat hangs from spits, giving the entire place a barbaric, disorderly, and positively un-German atmosphere.

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When the Investigators arrive, a funeral is underway.

If your game takes place in the early thirties, the Germans are self-funded and at wits end. The political situation at home is chaotic and there's no money for science, so the expedition will have a ratty and haphazard character.

If your game takes place after 1935, the expedition is government-sponsored, well funded but highly covert, and Unterstumbannfuher Thomas Faber will be carefully documenting everything for the Ahnenerbe.

Bodo's Funeral

Bodo Herberger was a morose Bohemian, the fifth and final member of the crew, and the one who remained behind in Betsy Cove. The cult showed up and murdered him, and Dr. Walter Schneider is officiating a very informal service at his grave. When the Germans become aware of the Investigators (Thomas Faber is on watch with a rifle), they will exchange meaningful looks and welcome them to Betsy Cove, explaining that one of their own has been murdered. It has put a rather ominous kink in their plans, and the arrival of the outsiders presents a slender reed of hope.

If Buschner is with them, he will look to the Investigators to protect him from Faber and Schneider. He is convinced that they will kill him, and in a way he's right.

The Investigators will be invited to rest and share a meal, and questioned about their knowledge, intentions, and the location of the diadem. With nothing to lose, the Germans will explain the purpose of the Black Drop Society to them and hope they can work together.

The Plan

The plan is simple. With Ludwig Müller trailing behind to collect the diadem and

then embark on a solo voyage back to civilization, the rest of the expedition will proceed to the temple on the slope of Mt. Lyall. As the occultation of Regulus approaches, the designated sacrifices will say their final goodbyes and drink sedatives. Dr. Schneider will then don the Lemurian diadem and summon the God of the Black Stone. When the foul thing surfaces, Schneider will hold it in place with the blood of his friends. It will be held transfixed beneath the baleful occultation long enough to break its will and drive it back into the basalt. Dr. Schneider will either be taken as a final sacrifice or be driven raving mad and die in the mountains.

It's not a great plan, but it has worked before. This time, however, there are two problems - the cult, and Buschner's defection.

Bodo Herberger was well versed in Mythos lore and fully cognizant of what he had to do. Herberger viewed it as a huge cosmic joke - he had terminal cancer and was a lifelong bachelor with no offspring. He was to be a designated sacrifice, but the cult (the de la Rue's, the shepherds, both, it is up to the Keeper) showed up and murdered him.

Herberger's death means the Germans are one man short of their goal, and Buschner makes two. They can't occupy the God of the Black Stone long enough to keep it from being unleashed upon the twentieth century. Several options present themselves:

They can seek two volunteers from among the Investigators, coming clean about their true purpose. This should always be the Keeper's first line of reasoning. The Germans will, if necessary, seek the Investigators out, aid them against the cultists, and bring them to Betsy Cove if necessary. Investigator's Drives may make volunteering for suicide easier or more difficult.

They can enlist Ludwig Müller ,

entrusting the mission of the Black Drop Society to the Investigators. This is not going to be a popular choice, and some of them (Faber in particular) will fight against it quite vigorously. They will still be a man short in this case. Faber might, in fact, find an alternate means of acquiring some unwilling sacrifices if no volunteer is found. There is no force on Earth that will persuade Buschner to lay down his life voluntarily.

They can abandon their mission and leave the Kerguelens. This is obviously a terrible idea (See «Ramming the God» below).

At some point, the Investigators should find themselves on the run from the cultists and in the company of the Germans. Whatever choice they make is fine, and the occultation of Regulus is the ticking clock that all the interested parties must abide by.

Note that if the Lemurian diadem is destroyed, missing, or concealed, Schneider can assemble a weak substitute out of crystal fragments.

Leaving for the Temple

The Germans have little time, and will be preparing for the expedition to Mt. Lyall the same evening that the Investigators arrive.

The Hunting Party

All the cultists know the Kerguelen interior very well. They know how to travel efficiently and they know the best places to wait, watch, and ambush. The terrain channels travel into certain valleys, and there are weak rocks embedded in the cliffs. If an ambush is in the offing, a freak patch of good weather can be deadly.

Cultists can trigger rock slides, even coaxing multi-ton trap-rock basalt columns to come crashing down, blocking exits and crushing the unwary

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The Unholy Lambeth of the Antipodes



or unlucky. This is much more exciting than random pot-shots from the clifftops! Another nice touch would be to visually tie the chaotic spires of basalt falling on the Investigator's heads to the unholy temple when that finally comes into view.

A Sense Trouble test at difficulty 5 will always spot an ambush in advance. Any German volunteers the cultists manage to kill will need to be replaced for the ritual to be effective.

Falling rocks present a deadly danger. An Athletics test at difficulty 4 will allow an Investigator to evade the tumbling stones. Failure results in a crushing whirlwind of (+2) damage.

THE UNHOLY LAMBETH OF THE ANTIPODES

This is the finale of the adventure - the God of the Black Stone will rise or be banished for another thirty years. In terms of timing, take dramatic liberties to introduce the occultation immediately after their arrival at the temple. Create a sense of urgency, and allow the cultists to try and slow them down. Arriving too late, however, would be absolutely no fun.

The Valley

A protected valley deep in the interior wends its way beneath tall and unforgiving peaks. Hot springs bubble and steam, but no rivers

flow - the ground consists of marshy pools of glacial swamp and difficult bergschrund. Unlike everywhere else in the kerguelens, no moss or lichen seems to grow, and no wind blows. High above, the temple clings to the side of Mt. Lyall like a deep ocean crab.

The Temple of the Forgotten One

The temple is tucked into a natural amphitheater on the north face of Mt. Lyall. It is very inaccessible. Tall crags block the horizon in all directions, and the entire area is blanketed in near-perpetual shadow. The towering pinnacles of trap-rock basalt, very much like the ones that cultists have probably tipped onto them earlier, jut from the

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mountainside at unwholesome angles.

Built on a wide ledge, the temple itself consists of level ground. Shards of Lemurian crystal litter the whole area, and the desiccated, scattered debris of previous Black Drop Society expeditions is in evidence everywhere. The air seems heavier, thicker, more oppressive.

Six eccentrically-aligned and ornately carved pillars ring the temple complex. At the center is a black stone - not a crude sacrificial slab like the one on the beach by Port Couvreux, but a true altar, built for something outside human scale. Before it is a steaming crack in the basalt that smells like death. It is abundantly clear that this structure does not belong here, that it is an aberration unaccounted for in the established history of the world [Two point Stability test at Difficulty four].

Overhead, Venus crawls its way across the night sky toward Regulus.

At this point the Black Drop Society, the Investigators and any remaining cultists will have their own agendas.

The Cultists

Surviving cultists, if any, will be on hand to disrupt the ritual. They will do this by any means at their disposal, including dynamiting the temple complex and dropping pillars on top of Investigators. Anything they can do to stop the Black Drop Society is fair game - they will resolutely avoid sacrificing themselves during the occultation, though. As Keeper, you should use surviving cultists (including any women who may have been «captured») to intensify the adventure's climax. If it is already intense enough, you don't need to throw them into the mix.

The Germans

If he gets the chance, Schneider will say

a final awkward goodbye to his team (including, potentially, an Investigator-volunteer) and inject each of them with a sedative before putting on the Lemurian diadem.

Volunteering to be a victim of ritual suicide is momentous [Eight point Stability test at Difficulty four]. If Shaken, an Investigator will still undertake the ritual at the player's discretion, but it will be plain that the Investigator doesn't want to go through with it.

When the stars align, he will begin cutting the volunteer's throats. If the God of the Black Stone can be held in the temple for the minute or so until the occultation has passed, it will be trapped for another thirty years. The only thing that will hold it is murderous sacrifice in its name, and even that is but a nuisance - it senses Africa, India, a choking mass of people merely steps away. Witnessing this ritual carnage - particularly if complicit - is searing [Four point Difficulty four Stability test].

The players may not trust the Germans. If they want to stop the German ritual, that's definitely a fun choice. It won't end well, of course, but that's part of the game. If the ritual isn't performed, or fails outright, the God of the Black Stone will rise. The only way to put it down at this point will be to lure it into the ocean and ram it with the Tenerife, which is heartily encouraged.

The Arrival

The Emergence of the God of the Black Stone will vary depending on your mode of play.

[Pulp] Something tangible

A cold fog rolls in, thick as molasses. The pit belches forth a miasma of feculence, and the earth trembles. One of the six pillars grinds, buckles with an explosive pop, and falls.

Something is working its way loose, a thing buried deep beneath the ground.

At first it appears to be made of earth - a huge, roiling mound of debris made animate by some unpardonable magic. But the scree sloughs off as it moves, and what appeared to be a mound merely describes the contours of the thing's misshapen head. It shakes - once, twice - and its true form appears. It is a mockery of a living thing, something that eschews symmetry and purpose in favor of violence and chaos. Blackened by years underground, sweet-smelling like rotting fruit. The terrible head turns and fixes on Schneider.

If the ritual is disrupted or fails, it's a fight! The God of the Black Stone will slaughter everyone if it can, drinking in their death energies.

The God of the Black Stone

Abilities: Athletics 10, Health N/A, Scuffling 20, Hit Threshold: 3 (large)

Alertness Modifier: +2, Stealth

Modifier: -1

Weapon: +3 (cruel, lichen-covered limbs)

Upon witnessing the surfacing of the God of the Black Stone, the Investigators will be mentally vulnerable [Ten point Stability test at Difficulty five - If they are Shaken by this loss, they will lose 3 points of Sanity, too].

The God of the Black Stone will target whoever wears the diadem first, then anyone carrying Lemurian crystal, then the person with the highest Health. After any slaying in its presence it will pause - the briefest moment for an elephant seal, one combat round for a human being, two combat rounds for a willing human being, or four combat rounds for the «priest» wearing the diadem (this last will occur only once). If it remains within the confines of the temple - distracted by bloodletting or

The Arrival

other violence - for ten combat rounds, the occultation will be over and it will be forced to return to its underground prison.

[Purist]Something Ineffable

The atmospheric pressure drops and ozone stings the Investigator's nostrils. There is a sensation of terrible disconnected-ness, of time racing by as if in a fever dream. The temple itself warps at hard, incalculable angles, bringing with it a screeching tinnitus, then springs back into a comfortably normal configuration, then snaps again in a vomit-inducing whiplash of spacetime. A hard, wind-lashed rain begins to fall in sheets. Overhead, Regulus and Venus seem to collide, bright even through the downpour.

The God of the Black Stone forces its way through some terrible energetic fold released by the occultation. The high-pitched keening that accompanies it hovers at the threshold of hearing, seemingly composed of impossible chords; notes that don't correspond to frequency so much as some unspeakable wavelength of unalloyed emptiness. The God - if it is a God - is something huge and invisible - fat droplets of rain smash against an irregular surface and paint its upper half in a weird iridescence - a jagged sessile monolith, like a pile of glass in a demolished building, something so fundamentally inimical to life and reason that it is impossible to look upon without turning away. It radiates a rapacious hunger that is as obscene as it is terrifying, like a void that must be filled, a death-craving force as implacable as gravity.

If the ritual is disrupted or fails:

Then the rain stops, and there is nothing to fix the God of the Black Stone in space. The terrible sound continues for a moment and then fades. The thing is gone, unleashed upon the world and free.

When the Investigators return to civilization, their port of arrival should be utterly destroyed - an «Indian ocean cyclone» plowed through eight days

earlier, killing a million people on two continents. And weather patterns have been changing all over the world...

Remember if you are playing in Purist mode and using the optional Big Reveal rules, the God may very well destroy an Investigator's Drive at some point.

Putting the monster down for another 30 years at the trap-rock tower of black basalt

If the ritual succeeds, the thing is driven back into its hell-hole. Schneider is irretrievably insane or dead, as are his sacrificial victims. Nothing remains but a hard journey back to Betsy Cove, where Ludwig Müller perhaps waits impatiently.

Ramming the God

Fleeing by sea guarantees an encounter with the Forgotten One deep in the southern ocean. Use the statistics provided above. If the Investigators want to ram the thing, the plucky Tenerife is up to the challenge. It is not, however, up to the aftermath. Use the deckplans of the Austral if positioning becomes important.

The God of the Black Stone, drawn toward human life and in urgent need of sustenance, will give chase. It isn't being especially stealthy, but between rough seas and thick fog, it may arrive unannounced. Spotting it early off the stern (Sense Trouble, restricted top those with Outdoorsman or Piloting and not manning the helm) will definitely afford an advantage.

If it is missed, the first sign of its presence will be the all-too-familiar stench of rotting fruit, followed by a vicious attack on an Investigator on deck. If no one is on deck, it will smash a hole in the pilothouse and strike at whoever is at the helm. It will need to be driven away from the Tenerife by some means before the captain can maneuver to ram

it. A successful Piloting test can offer the Investigators some breathing room - a minute's worth, perhaps.

If spotted early, the ship's master can swing her around to meet the thing square across the bow.

Ramming will require another Piloting test. A decisive strike will send the thing deep into the abyss, stunned and perhaps (in pulp mode) dead. Anyone on deck at the time will be thrown into the ocean unless they can succeed in an Athletics test at difficulty 5. The shuddering blow will also snap the Tenerife's keel, breaking her effectively in two. A hasty S.O.S, Lifeboats and a return to the dark shores of the Kerguelens are the survivor's only hope. Any surviving cultists will be waiting.

The God of the Black Stone cannot be outsailed.



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NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

All cultists can be run with the same general stats. Here are male and female versions, which a Keeper can adjust to taste:

Male Cultist

Athletics 8, Outdoorsman 6, Filch 2, Firearms 8, First Aid 2, Fleeing 8, Health 10, Sanity 5, Scuffling 8, Sense Trouble 2, Stability 0, Weapons 8

Alertness Modifier: +1
Stealth Modifier: +1

Weapons: Hunting rifle (+TK)
Shotgun (+TK)
Knife (-1)
Ice axe (de la Rue) (+0)

Female Cultist

Athletics 6, Outdoorsman 2, Filch 4, Firearms 4, Fleeing 8, Health 8, Scuffling 4, Sanity 6, Weapons 4, Sense Trouble 2, Stability 0

Alertness Modifier: +1
Stealth Modifier: +1

Weapons: .38 revolver (+1)
Kerosene lantern (TK), fire
Cleaver (+0)
Knife (-1)

Similarly, the Germans are all built of the same stuff - raise these scores for Faber and lower them for Schneider:

German Expedition Member

Athletics 4, Conceal 4, Piloting 2, Filch 4, Firearms 8, First Aid 2, Fleeing 6, Health 10, Sanity 8, Scuffling 8, Sense Trouble 6, Stability 8, Weapons 8, Personal Specialty 8

Weapons: Military rifle (Schneider) (+TK)
Sub-machinegun (Faber) (+TK)
Ice axe (+0)
knife (-1)

Edgar de la Rue

Edgar de la Rue is a geologist and explorer who has devoted most of his professional life to the Kerguelens - and the God of the Black Stone.

To portray Edgar de la Rue:

- Affix a tolerant smile to your face -an expert talking to laymen.
- Speak easily but with certainty.
- Cross your arms.

Andrée de la Rue

Andrée de la Rue, Edgar's wife and fellow cultist, is as ready for the first ascent of some unnamed sub-antarctic peak as she is for the first ascent of a surprised Investigator.

To portray Andrée de la Rue:

- Assume your conversation partner is trying to play a mild joke on you.
- Laugh easily and flirtatiously.
- Lean in toward the person you are speaking to.

Georges Le Galloudec

Georges le Galloudec is a complete thrall of the God of the Black Stone. What remains of his rapidly disintegrating personality is violent and sociopathic in the extreme.

To portray Georges La Galloudec:

- Maintain an emotionless flat affect.
- Speak quietly when you speak at all.
- Don't make eye contact.

Léon Ménager

Not to be confused with his daughter Léone, Léon Ménager is the a bluff outdoorsman who is completely insane

but, like his wife, remains quite stable. He wears an enormous sheepskin jacket and is prone to histrionic fits.

To portray Léon Ménager:

- Move your tongue around in your closed mouth as if searching for wedged bits of food.
- Speak in short, angry, barking phrases.
- Stab your finger at the person you are talking to.

Pamela Ménager

Pamela Ménager is the leader of the cult in the Kerguelens. Completely insane but highly stable, Pamela looks forward to adding her own blood to that spilled in the service of the divine. In the mean time she delights in cowing others and asserting her dominance.

To portray Pamela Ménager:

- Sit up straight and radiate confidence, intensity and power.
- Speak as though addressing an audience.
- Talk with your hands and illustrate your points physically.

Léone Ménager

Léone Ménager is young and lovely, having grown up among cultists and been subject to the unspeakable whims of the God of the Black Stone for many years, she is completely insane - but unlike her mother, she retains some finesse and deceptive charm.

To portray Léone Ménager:

- Touch your face occasionally.
- Think carefully before you speak.
- When you do speak, speak with quiet self-assurance that belies your young age.

Claudette Petit

Claudette petit is a friendly, matronly woman. She's eager to please, very competent, quiet, and something of a

scold. When the cult strikes, she will be an early victim.

To portray Claudette Petit:

- Be good-natured and accommodating.
- Listen to every word with great care and concentration.
- Smooth your clothing compulsively.

Adèle Le Galloudec

Adèle Le Galloudec is a physical and mental wreck. The activities of the cult have broken her and she is adrift in her own sea of delusions. Adèle is unflinchingly obedient to Pamela.

To portray Adèle Le Galloudec:

- Be unsettled and birdlike in your gestures and movement.
- Breathe through your nose.
- Maintain intense eye contact.

Dr. Walter Schneider

Dr. Schneider is deeply sad about what is happening - both the ultimate goal of the Black Drop Society, but also that his carefully-wrought plans are unravelling before his eyes.

To portray Dr. Schneider:

- Speak in a melancholy German accent.
- Slouch in your chair.
- Occasionally rub your eyes or massage your temples.

Ludwig Müller

Ludwig Müller is the «kid», destined to survive and return in Schneider's role, and he finds the entire experience overwhelming. With the defection of Buschner, he's deeply terrified that he will be called upon to himself - something he won't do.

To portray Ludwig Müller :

- Speak in a very thick German accent and apologize for it.

- Glance around nervously for approval.
- Absently toy with a pencil.

Thomas Faber

Thomas Faber an old-line Nazi with a low Party membership number. An Unterstumbannfuher in the SS, Faber is the equivalent of a Lieutenant. He sees the ultimate outcome of the expedition as his duty, and he approaches it with a creepy zeal.

To portray Thomas Faber:

- Pointedly speak excellent Oxford English.
- Assume that your interlocutor is uncouth, unintelligent, or both.
- Adjust your uniform.

Ulrich Buschner

Ulrich Buschner is the the Black Drop Society expedition meteorologist, is huddled in the tent. When first encountered, he will be thunderously drunk and generally despondent. When sober, he will merely be despondent.

To Portray Ulrich Buschner:

- Itch.
- Speak in a broad, drawling German accent.
- Occasionally pause, look down, sigh heavily, and proceed.



FLASHBACKS

Play these as short vignettes that interrupt the action and provide some backstory. The Keeper can set them up like smash cuts in a film, moving the action suddenly to another time and place and then returning to the Kerguelen archipelago.

#1: The Black Drop

Society

The grim staff of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin are not thrilled to assist a foreigner wandering in off the Opernplatz, where the scorch marks from SA book burnings are still visible. In the end their professionalism and curiosity (and the application of Bureaucracy or Flattery) overcome their reluctance, and they are able to track down several intriguing references to a Black Drop Society (schwarzen Tropfen Gesellschaft) dating back at least to 1874.

Library Use, Flattery, or Reassurance will allow an Investigator to discover that as secret societies go, the Black Drop is not very secret - its members seem largely unconcerned with revealing their affiliation - Baron von Schleinitz, who observed the transit of Venus from Betsy Cove in 1874, referred to it in his memoirs as a «somewhat melancholy gentleman's club of southern adventurers». The current President is Dr. Walter Schneider, who is probably the same W. Schneider who journeyed to the Kerguelens as part of the Drygalski expedition in 1903. The true purpose, scope and membership of the Black Drop Society remains a mystery.

A one-point spend in Library Use, Flattery, or Reassurance gains an Investigator a letter of introduction to the Prior of the Franziskaner Klosterkirche, where certain special collections have been hidden away,

The Black Drop

among them the library's entire occult collection. This is a treasure trove - the Black Drop Society shows up in occult circles prior to 1874. The master of a Prussian seal-hunting vessel, the Clementina, is mentioned as a founding member, which dates the Society's interest in the Kerguelens back to at least the 1840s. The Society is strictly German.

A one-point Credit Rating spend will put the Investigator in touch with Erich von Drygalski, still spry in his seventies and teaching in Munich, commanded a large German expedition at the turn of the century and was persuaded to speak to the Investigator. He swears he has no connection, but that his man in the Kerguelens, Emil Worth, was definitely a member, as was Walter Schneider. Drygalski somewhat huffily calls it «a death cult» and hangs up.



#2: The Curious History of the Kerguelen Archipelago

In preparation for the long journey to the southern ocean, the Investigator has asked someone (a graduate student, a reporter, a bookish friend, a spouse) to look into that out-of-the-way corner of the world. The result is a neatly typed document (Handout #2: «A Precis on the Kerguelen Archipelago»), which the compiler will deliver with a tight smile.

Depending on the relationship, Reassurance, Intimidation, or Flattery

will persuade them to hand over a second sheet (Handout #3: «Some Notes on Maritime Oddities in the Kerguelens»), with the sheepish admission that they knew what sort of things would interest the Investigator but didn't really want to admit it.



#3: Southern Ocean Glass

The curio shop in Mattapoisett, Massachusetts is stuffed with dusty relics from the heyday of commercial whaling. Just down the orad, the New Bedford whalers monopolized the south ocean trade and returned with all manner of treasures and curiosities. Many of the less obviously valuable wound up on shelves like these, between cracked daguerrotype negative plates and bound issues of St. Nicholas' magazine for children.

History or Art History reveal that when Kerguelen visited his eponymous archipelago in 1772, there was a fair amount of strange wreckage, in the form of crystal works of unknown function, still extant. His Lieutenant, Charles-Marc de Boisguchennuec, allegedly collected large amounts of elaborate crystal-work which has since been lost; de Boisguchennuec himself vanished during the Revolution. Whatever remained was collected as trinkets by the crews of New England whalers - Miskatonic University has the world's largest collection of «southern ocean glass» in their special collections. By 1820 the Kerguelens had been largely picked clean of artifacts and remnants.

Only occasional tiny shards - like the ones found in New England curio shops - remain. Finding a shard would be a feather in the Investigator's cap.

The store owner is a taciturn old Yankee, who will rebuff any inquiries. Credit Rating or Reassurance will earn his attention, and he'll admit to having seen «a few queer bits of glass here and there» in his back room. A one-point Bargain, Flattery, or Reassurance spend will persuade him to produce a piece. It's a broken bit of a cylinder no bigger than a thumbnail, translucent and alternately blue or green in the light, quite beautiful. The old man will confide that «Plenty of people come looking for southern ocean glass, queer sorts of people from all over, and I'm very choosy about who I bring it out for. The people who collect southern ocean glass are not nice people. There was a French couple, for example, a very handsome couple, and they said they had found their own down in the islands, a pair of geologists, but they were looking for more that wasn't locked up in museums. Something about them was not very Christian and that's typical of those who come looking.»

He'll sell his shard for the right price, which he rightly senses ought to be high (See «Léon's Workshop above for the effects, should an Investigator have a shard with him).

COMPAGNIE GÉNÉRALE DES ÎLES KERGUELEN

Kerguelen's Island is a region of almost constant precipitation; only twenty-seven days out of four months being recorded as without snow or rain, and a still smaller number of nights. The thermometer ranged not far from the freezing-point; the daily average being a little below it in September and October, and a little above it in November and December. Whalers say that in midwinter there is no marked increase in the severity of the weather. The lowest thermometer recorded was 18° F., and the highest 64°. The island is also deservedly notorious for the violence of the gales, which almost constantly prevail, and which often arise with a suddenness that makes it very dangerous to go about in small boats.

These climatic conditions have their natural effect upon the flora and fauna of the island; there being neither tree nor shrub —no plant, indeed, taller than the Kerguelen cabbage, while the very few species of phaenogamous plants which do survive are such only as can thrive exposed to sudden and violent alternations of dryness and moisture and to fierce gales of wind. As a natural consequence of these facts, there are no land-birds or mammals, strictly speaking, indigenous to Kerguelen's Island, and but a single shore-bird, *Chionis minor*.

The island is of considerable size, about 90 miles long by 50 in width, and is composed, as to its southern part at least, wholly of volcanic rock, showing no signs of stratification. The northern portion contains stratified rocks, deposits of coal of little value, and very ancient remains of silicified wood, indicating the former existence of considerable trees, and the submergence and subsequent upheaval of the land upon which they grew. The whalers say that a large glacier runs across the island, in a generally east and west direction, at about its center. In the interior, the land is mountainous; peaks with sharp volcanic outlines alternating with table-topped hills. Mount Ross, the highest peak (about 5,000 feet), is always snow-covered and quite inaccessible. Near the sea, in December, the snow-line was found on Mount Crozier at about 2,600 feet above the sea-level.

No flying insects were observed excepting minute gnats, and a Tineid moth (which was perhaps imported), nor were the remains of any ever found in the stomach of any bird. *Chionis* and a teal were the only partial vegetable-feeders observed; all the other birds feeding exclusively on flesh, fish, or marine invertebrates.

- J. H. Kidder, The Natural History of Kerguelen Island, The American Naturalist, August 1876

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Black Drop

Thanks for giving me the opportunity to research this! What a strange place. Here are my initial notes.

-BR

1772

Yves-Joseph de Kerguelen-Trémarec discovers the islands that will later bear his name. He makes landfall, accompanied by the French naturalist Jean Guillaume Bruguière and Lieutenant Charles-Marc de Boisguehennuec. All three later destroy their journals, and Kerguelen himself spends time in prison upon his return to France for unspecified crimes during the voyage.

1874

Expeditions from the United States, Great Britain, and Germany establish bases from which to observe the transit of Venus. The Germans choose the best location, Betsy Cove, and built next to the old cemetery. The Americans choose Molloy Point. The HMS Challenger, scouting locations for a British base camp, sends men inland from Betsy Cove. The British base camp is eventually established at Observatory Bay. Additional observers are landed at Thumb Cove, Supply Bay, Palliser Point, and Christmas Harbor. Various expeditions - botanical, zoological, meteorological, geological - into Kurguelen's interior are made.

Now

After twenty years trying to build a profitable business on Kerguelen, the first and last settlers prepare to abandon the islands. The Compagnie Générale des Îles Kerguelen, founded by the brothers Henri and René Boissière, tried to raise sheep commercially. The harsh climate defeated their plans at Port Couvreux, only a few miles from Betsy Cove. Edgar de la Rue, a geologist, and his wife Andrée arrive aboard the MV Austral for an expedition to the interior, looking for exploitable minerals. They are sponsored by the French Ministry of Colonies.

The Austral will be loading what remains of the Compagnie Générale des Îles Kerguelen on board. You're very lucky to be aboard!

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Handouts

You specifically asked for "oddities" and, well, I am nothing if not thorough! Your wish is my commend. These Kerguelens certainly seem like a forbidding place.

1810

The American whaler Mary and Sally lands a seal-hunting party at the future site of Port Couvreux. James Kelly, her master, departs for the calving grounds. Upon his return, he finds no trace of the seal-hunting party and assumes that they were picked up by a friendly passing vessel. The men are never accounted for.

1844

A Prussian seal-hunting vessel, the Clementina, puts men ashore in Betsy Cove to set up a seal-hunting base. She is joined by a pair of American vessels out of Sag harbor and New London, the Oscar and the Garland. By the end of the seal-hunting season, the Oscar's crew has mutinied and the Garland is broken on the rocks. The seal camp will be used intermittently for many years. A cemetery is begun on the site of the Clementina's camp.

1903

The German Antarctic Expedition, led by Erich Dagobert von Drygalski, sets up a scientific camp at Betsy Cove, the old sealing site, before continuing to explore the Antarctic continent. The five-man Kurguelen team, under the command of Emil Worth, spends a year on the island. When Drygalski returns, the meteorologist Dr. Joseph Enzensperger - along with an unspecified number of Chinese laborers - are dead. The location of the graves is subsequently lost. Norwegians will later build a modern seal processing plant on the site.

That's what I dug up. Have a safe trip. Brr!

-BR

The Black Drop

"A very interesting incident, although not directly related to its natural history, occurred in connection with one of these birds on December 17. On that day I scored one on the back of the head with a revolver-bullet so as to open the brain-cavity. It turned back-somersaults for twenty minutes without cessation, until I killed it, in fact. No matter what position it was put in, it immediately stretched out its legs and wings, and pushed itself over backward. Placed in the water, it endeavored to execute the same manoeuvre, and was near working itself out of reach from the shore. The specimen was injected with carbolic acid and preserved. The corresponding reflect, that resulting from a wound of the cerebrum only, was at another time illustrated in a gull (see Larux), and both incidents recalled strikingly Dr. Weir Mitchell's interesting experiments, performed some ten years ago upon pig..."

PERTURBATIONS OF THE PLANET VENUS PAST & FUTURE

June 3 1772 Transit of Venus
December 22, 1810 Venus occulted Xi-2 Sagittarii
January 3, 1818 Venus occulted Jupiter
July 11, 1825 Venus occulted Delta-1 Tauri
May 9, 1841 Venus occulted 17 Tauri
September 27, 1844 Venus occulted Eta Virginis
May 22, 1855 Venus occulted Epsilon Geminorum
December 9, 1874 Transit of Venus
December 6, 1882 Transit of Venus
December 9, 1903 Venus occulted Acrab
July 27, 1910 Venus occulted Eta Geminorum
- This week, - Venus occults Regulus
October 25, 1910 Venus occults Zuben-el-genubi
July 7, 1959, Venus occults Regulus
November 17, 1981 Venus occults Ninki
November 19, 1984 Venus occults Lambda Sagittarii

*Go on to 2000 Transit of Venus
God help me*

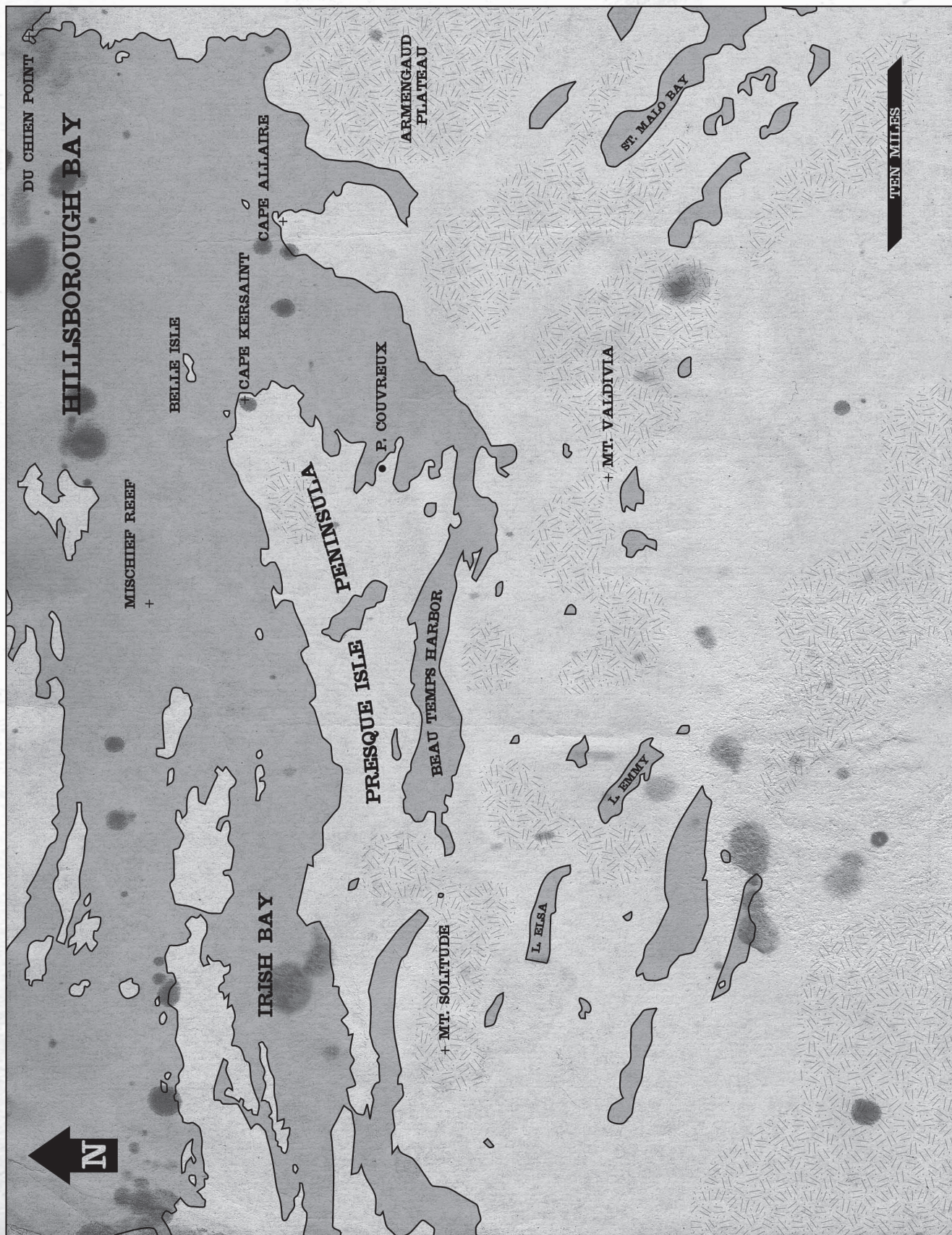
TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Handouts



TRAIL OF CTHULHU

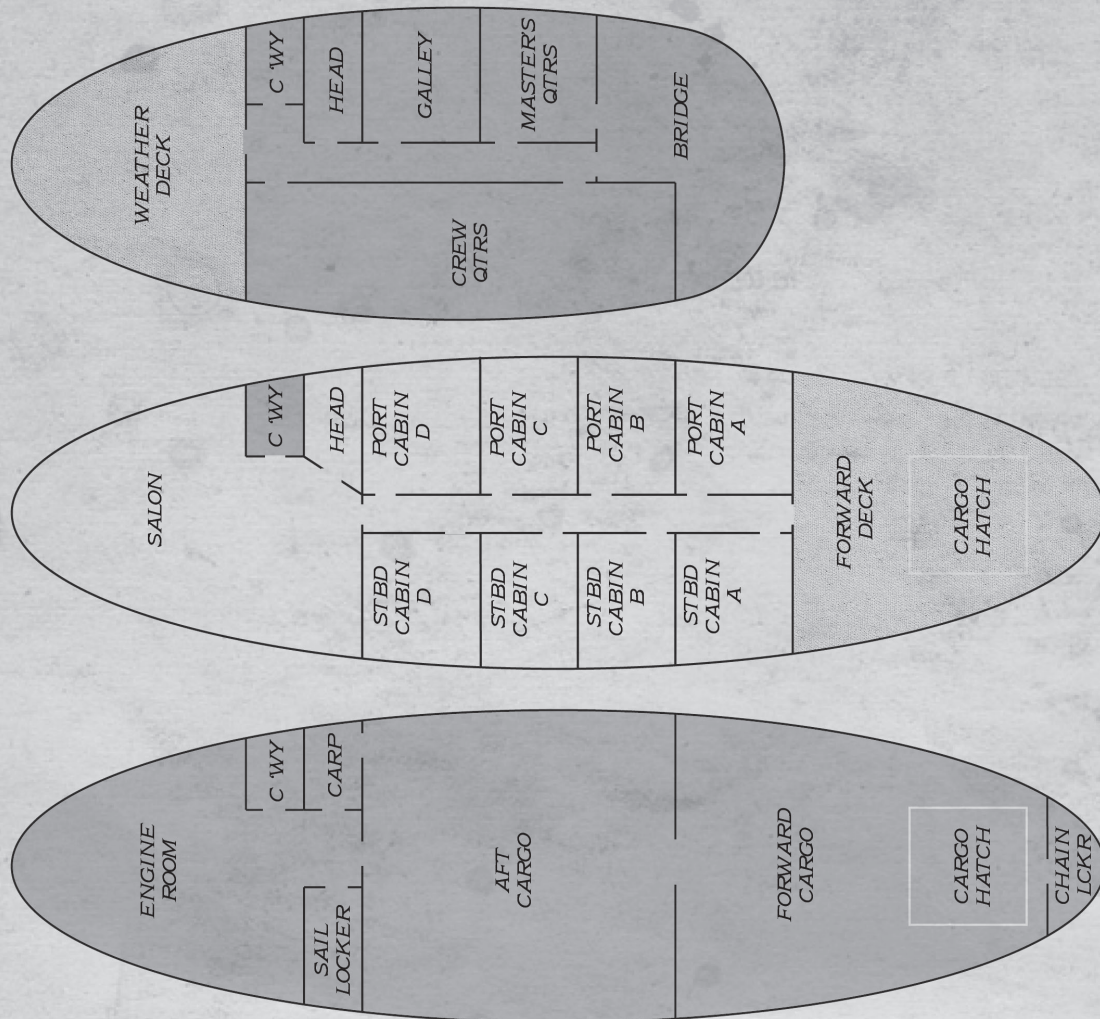
The Black Drop



TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Handouts

MV AUSTRAL



Capacity: 16 passengers and 6 crew
Accommodation: 8 double cabins with shared head and shower
Length: 78 feet
Beam: 18 feet
Draft: 9 feet 6 inches
Speed: 8 knots
Range: 6000 nautical miles
Sails: Fore-and-aft rigging

Crew: Master, first mate, engineer, cook, and 2 sailors
Power: Twin triple-expansion steam engine, generator of 21 KW
Communication: Siemens and Halske VHF omnidirectional radio
Ship-to-shore: Tender with outboard motor
Emergency: 3 life boats accessible from weather deck
Water: 1,500 gallons and water maker

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Black Drop

I have by the grace of a merciful God survived this calamity. Carr and his crew aboard the Shear Perkins, save me, were dashed on the rocks of Point Farman in the first week of May 1841. I thank God for my good fortune.

Shot some seals for food and dressed them. Feeling fine. Traveling east.

Traveling east over difficult country. Found a piece of quartz, very lovely. I shall give it to my Jeannette as a keepsake God willing.

Mountains. Today I have found shelter in a cave against a howling gale. Foot bad.

In searching for some of the cabbage headboats I came upon a great building in the Hindoo mode beneath I believe Mt. Lyall and a great many scattered crystals of quartz etc. Before it is a terrible stone and I felt the presence of the very devil. May God protect me I felt such fear. I am no longer certain of my wits but I am resolved to press on to the whaling camps of M. Bay. Foot is worse.

Green again and miserable heather swamp. Hurt my foot on a jagged rock, may such rocks be cursed in the reeking bowels of hell. Would that my ordeal were quickly ended.

Pressing on, achieved north coast. Evidence of sealing parties. Resolved to cross the low peaks west of Mt. Crozier to reach Morbihan Bay.

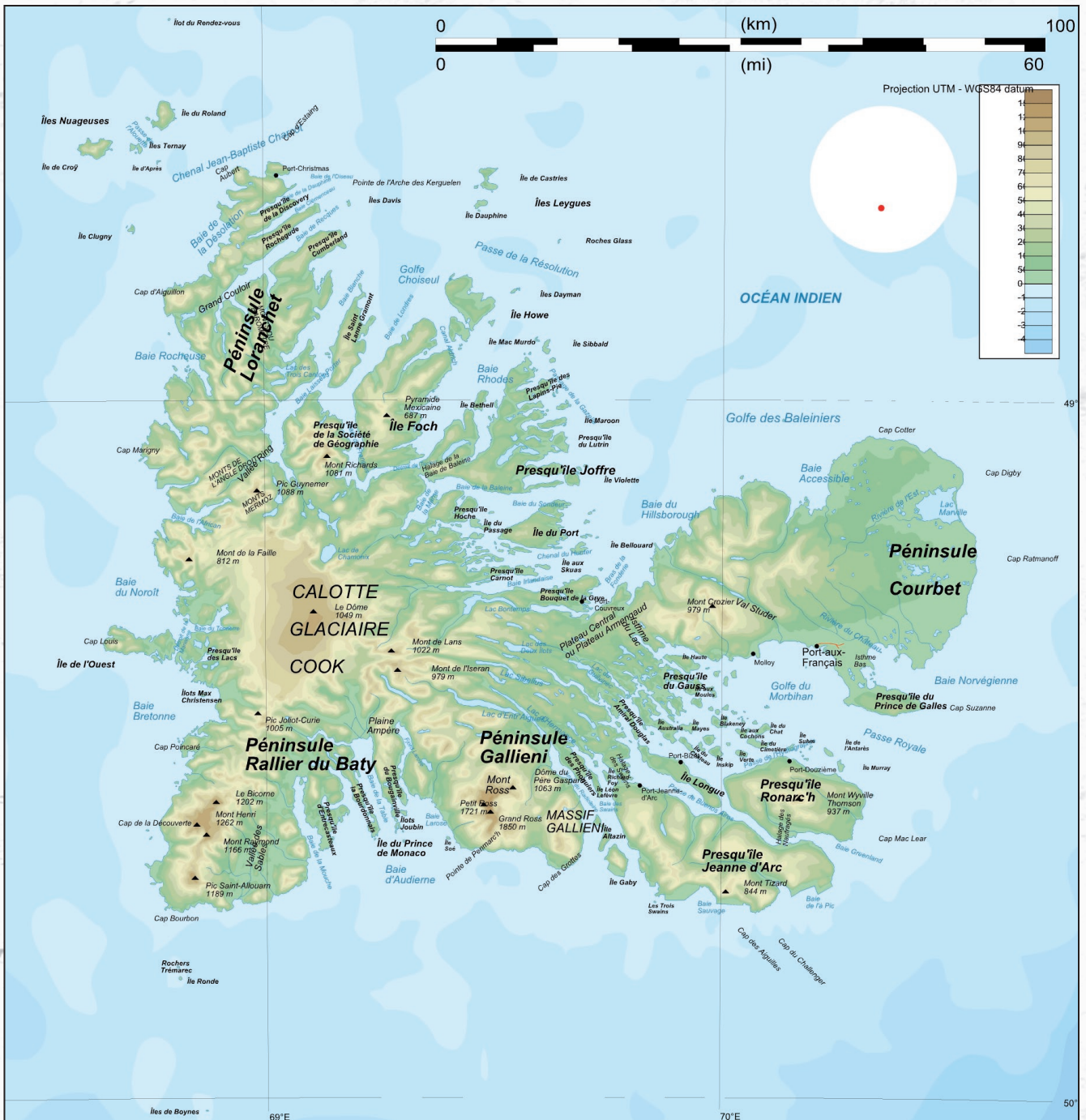
Clear night. Venus is high over a bright star passing strange.

I cannot leave this place. Foot very bad and a fever. Such dreams.

O there is a hell May my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ meet me in heaven. I have led a dissolute life.

Jeannette I

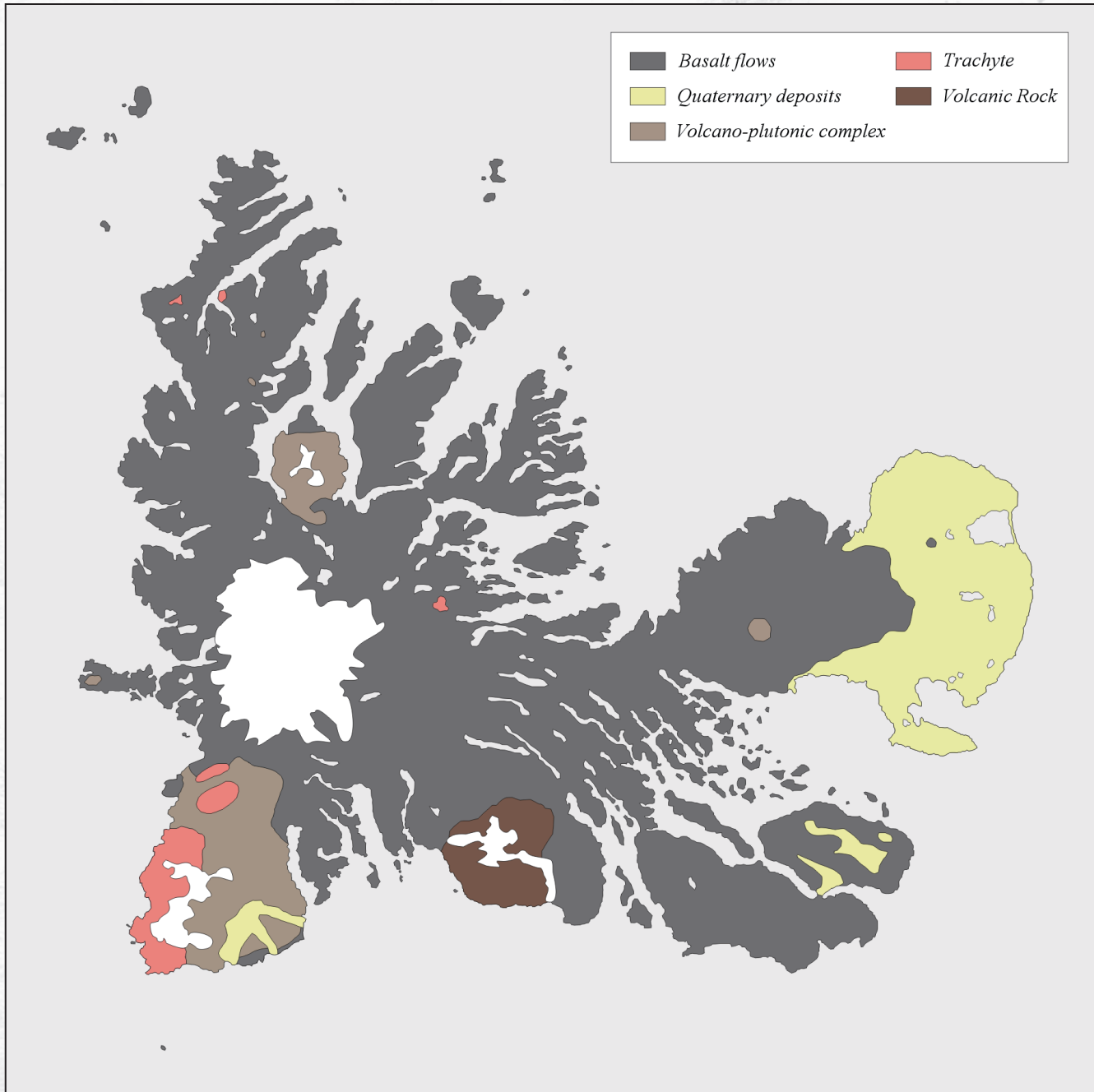
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Map created by Rémi Kaupp

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Black Drop



Map created by Rémi Kaupp

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

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TRAIL OF CTHULHU

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PRE-GENERATED INVESTIGATORS

You are ANITA.

Your drive is CURIOSITY.

Choose which character you are married to.

You met in school - in fact, you dropped out of University to marry him. Not a bad move, considering the path both your careers have taken. He's a good man, although you aren't the perfect match you once were. The marriage is fraying.

You are a writer. Your first (and only) published book, *Curse of the Taino*, was a modest success and fueled your nascent interest in the occult. Recently you've been devouring what little information you can find about the mysterious Kerguelen archipelago, and smell another novel in it.

Occupation: Author

Sources of Stability:

- Yuisa, Taino medicine woman.
- Heinrich Schiffer, your on-again off-again friend and lover.

Pillars of sanity:

- Life should be lived to the fullest.
- We can understand anything if we try hard enough.

Investigative skills:

Anthropology 1, Architecture 1, History 4, Languages 2, Library Use 2, Assess Honesty 4, Credit Rating 2, Oral History 2, Reassurance 1, Streetwise 1, Art 2, Evidence Collection 1, Outdoorsman 2

General skills:

Athletics 8, Health 9, Sense Trouble 6, Preparedness 4, Stability 8, Conceal 4, Disguise 4,

Riding 4, Sanity 8, Shadowing 8, Stealth 6, Weapons 2,

You are MARC-DAVID DESMARAIS.

Your drive is THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE.

You are the French magistrate overseeing the evacuation of Port Couvreux, and you couldn't be happier. A very wealthy man is allowed an all-consuming passion, and yours is astronomy. You've been fascinated with the 1874 transit of Venus your whole life, and have visited all the observation stations - Tehran, Tasmania, Kyoto - except one. The German observatory in the Kerguelen archipelago at Betsy Cove is pretty damn remote, but it'll be a real feather in your cap. While you're there you'll make certain measurements that confirm (surely not deny) a thesis of yours concerning the misalignment of the 1876 telescope, and maybe climb Mt. Crozier. Just, you know, to say you've done it.

Maurice Lavalley is your deputy.

This Lederman character - nose in a book, always thinking - isn't your cup of tea at all. The fact that he's Jewish has *nothing* to do with it, not at all.

Sources of Stability:

- Dorothy Desmarais, your beautiful little girl
- Professor Heddington, Emeritus Professor of Astronomy at King's College, London

Pillars of Sanity:

- Some people are bred better than others.
- One day, humanity will conquer the stars.
- People are, at their core, good and moral beings.

Investigative skills:

Languages 1, Bureaucracy 2,

Credit Rating 4, Flattery 6, Intimidation 1, Reassurance 2, Accounting 1, Astronomy 6, Evidence Collection 1

General skills:

Athletics 8, Fleeing 8, Health 8, Sense Trouble 6, Scuffling 4, Stability 8, Conceal 4, Firearms 4, First Aid 2, Riding 6, Sanity 10, Stealth 2, Weapons 4

You are DR. JEAN WAECHTER.

Your drive is ARROGANCE.

You are the contract physician hired to oversee the welfare of the Port Couvreux evacuees. Work is a little thin on the ground, especially for an Alsace doctor with a German surname. Your French board certification is «pending review» after the incident with the Jewish protesters and *Le Faisceau*, of which you are a proud supporter, and if that goes the wrong way (it won't; you didn't do anything wrong) no hospital wants you on their staff. So it's a waiting game, but you've got mouths to feed, so you signed on as «expédition médecin» with the French South Atlantic something-or-other, to go render aid to a collapsing colony in the southern ocean. Interesting job, and a perfect way to wait for things to cool down at home. What will you see down there? What manner of scrofulous diseases have afflicted the sheep farmers? Fascinating stuff.

The American soldier, Carlisle Bullard, strikes you as a dangerous half-wit.

Sources of Stability:

- Maude Weachter, your wife.
- Georges Valois, leader of the *Le Faisceau* movement
- Thomas Faber, an SS-man you met through *Le Faisceau*, who intimated he was also «heading for the southern islands».

Pillars of Sanity:

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

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- First do no harm.
- The Teutonic destiny is to rule.

Investigative skills:

Biology 4, Languages 4, Medicine 10, Intimidation 1, Reassurance 2, Accounting 4, Forensics 4, Pharmacy 2

General skills:

Athletics 9, Fleeing 2, Health 10, Sense Trouble 3, Preparedness 4, Scuffling 6, Stability 8, Disguise 2, First Aid 10, Piloting 4, Sanity 8, Stealth 4, Weapons 6

You are LIEUTENANT CARLISLE BULLARD.

Your Drive is DUTY.

You're on vacation.

The United States Army Signal Corps realized you had been working way too hard and gave you some leave and a free steamship ticket. Kerguelen archipelago, exotic, pretty nice of them. Thoughtful even. They told you to pack a few things - some geodetic survey instruments for sounding the big harbors, a large format camera, a German phrasebook. Could a deep draft warship anchor on the north side of the Kerguelens? Use it as a base to harass Atlantic shipping in the coming war? Hitler seems to think so - he's sent a little expedition down to sniff around, anyway. Maybe he sent a French doctor and sympathizer along on the very same boat you're taking. Might pay to keep an eye on that guy, Waechter.

But then again what do you care, right?
You're on vacation.

Sources of Stability:

- Florence Bullard, your mother.
- Colonel Donovan, your superior officer.
- Will Moxley, your illegitimate son.

Pillars of Sanity:

- I can rely on my moral compass to guide me.
- In the end you can always rely on nature to sort things out.

Investigative skills:

Geology 2, History 2, Languages 1, Flattery 1, Intimidation 6, Evidence Collection 2, Interrogation 1, Outdoorsman 6

General skills:

Athletics 16, Driving 2, Fleeing 8, Health 12, Sense Trouble 8, Preparedness 2, Scuffling 6, Stability 9, Explosives 6, Firearms 8, Mechanical Repair 4, Sanity 8, Weapons 6

You are PROFESSOR IRVING LEDERMAN

Your drive is SCHOLARSHIP.

You were a German academic and a modest authority on the exploration of the Atlantic before the Nazis came to power.

Now you are a British academic and most of your family is still trapped in Hitler's Germany. Some of them are toughing it out, convinced it will get better. Some of them are not so naïve.

When the chance came to visit the Kerguelens, site of so much important maritime history during the last century, you jumped at it. You've corresponded with the colonists and feel like you know them. In truth, getting away from Europe - even for a few months - was also welcome respite. But your true goal is pure research - you need to see the place, feel it, touch the artifacts of the whalers, confirm certain hypotheses about the seal-rendering trade.

You actively dislike Dr. Waechter, who is a Nazi sympathizer of the worst sort.

Sources of Stability:

- Rivka Lederman, your sister.

- Dr. James Munsie, your department chair at King's College, London.
- Léon Ménager, a colonist you've corresponded with and befriended.

Pillars of Sanity:

- Human beings have inherent dignity and worth.
- Only rationality can advance our knowledge.

Investigative skills:

Anthropology 2, Archaeology 2, History 3, Languages 4, Library Use 4, Occult Studies 2, Bureaucracy 2, Reassurance 2

General skills:

Athletics 4, Fleeing 8, Health 8, Sense Trouble 8, Preparedness 5, Scuffling 4, Stability 10, Conceal 4, Firearms 2, Piloting 2, Sanity 6, Shadowing 2, Stealth 6, Weapons 4

You are MAURICE LAVALLE

Your drive is IN THE BLOOD.

Your aunt Claudette lives in Port Couvreur, and you'll see her safely home, but you have other reasons for making this wretched journey. You are Provost to the Magistrate, Marc-David Desmarais, and like him you have ulterior motives for volunteering for the mission. Your father was a collector, and rich. You are merely a collector. The money is all gone, pissed away, and instead of working for yourself and your legacy, you work for others. Plutocrats too busy or too fat to travel the world in search of the unusual, the singular, the blasphemous. Now you are en route to the most remote corner of the much-diminished French empire, a gravy stain on the map of the southern ocean, to collect - what? Hopefully half-rotten documents claiming sovereignty from Captain Cook, from Kerguelen himself. Other things? Who knows. You need to find enough interesting

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garbage to finance the whole wretched trip, possibly pull your family out of debt with one spectacular discovery.

Marc-David Desmarais is your boss.

Dr. Lederman reminds you of your wealthy patrons, and you hate him for it.

Sources of Stability:

- Marie Laval, your wife.
- Claudette Petit, your cousin, one of the colonists.

Pillars of Sanity:

- My family is the root of my strength.
- I trust in the benevolent Christian God.

Investigative skills:

Architecture 2, Art History 6,
History 6, Languages 4, Law 4,
Library Use 2, Bargain 2, Flattery
1, Evidence Collection 1

General skills:

Athletics 10, Fleeing 10, Health
8, Sense Trouble 4, Scuffling 2,
Stability 8, Conceal 2, Disguise 2,
First Aid 4, Mechanical Repair 2,
Piloting 2, Sanity 8, Shadowing 2,
Stealth 6, Weapons 1