HEUNSPEAKABLE OATH FOR CALL OF CTHULHU · ISSUE TWELVE · FOUR DOLLARS

The Unspeakable Oath

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Issue Twelve Spring, 1995

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This issue was assembled by the staff of Pagan Publishing: Brian Appleton, John H. Crowe, III, Dennis Detwiller, Christian Klepac, and John Tynes. Artists in this issue include Toren Atkinson, Dennis Detwiller, Daniel Gelon, Heather Hudson, Jesper Myrfors, and Jason Voss. Writers in this issue include Roman J. Andron, Scott David Aniolowski, John H. Crowe, III, Kim Eastland, Philip Garland, Allan T. Grohe, Jr, Daniel Harms, Jonas Hedkvist, Bob Kindel, J. Todd Kingrea, Christian Klepac, Mark Morrison, Anders Olausson, Kevin A. Ross, Matthew J. Ruane, Glen Taylor, Michael Tice, Jeff Tidball, Stephen Trow, John Tynes, and Michael Varhola.

About the Cover

This issue's cover, by Jason Voss, depicts the infamous Dark Young of Shub-Niggurath.

About the Column Illos

This issue's column illos are by artist Toren Atkinson, and they depict the myriad of Great Old Ones and Outer Gods of the Cthulhu Mythos.

The Annotated TUO Project

Selected articles from TUO1-4 are now available for downloading (see below). Or, send a 3.5" Mac or IBM diskette with a SASE for the files on disk. If you don't have a computer, send a 9"x12" SASE and \$2 in cash, check, or money order per issue you need for a printed copy of that issue. Note that this is just the text—no illustrations, layout, etc.

America Online Notes

We're on the computer service America Online, where our email name is **Pagan Pub**. Our discussion folder can be found at keyword **GCS** (Gaming Company Support). We hold occasional live conferences and run live CoC games as well. In addition, the **GCS File Library** has stuff to download, including graphic files we created (GIF & PICT), the sound effects from TUO7, our catalog and submission & playtesting guidelines, and *The Annotated TUO*. To join, call 1–800–827–6364.

Internet Notes

You can send email to us at PAGANPUB@AOL.COM. We regularly participate in the alt.horror.cthulhu usenet group. *The Annotated TUO*, our catalog, and various other items are also available by anonymous FTP. The address is FTP.CSUA.BERKELEY.EDU. and the files are in PUB/CHAOSIUM/PAGANPUB. Also, check out the H.P. Lovecraft Image Gallery available through the World Wide Web system at HTTP://CROW.ACNS.NWU.EDU:8082/HPL/.

In Memoriam

Recently, the world suffered the loss of veteran actor Donald Pleasence. Roles in films like *The Great Escape* and *You Only Live Twice* gained him worldwide acclaim. His work in horror was extremely prolific. Don't mourn him; instead use the time to check out some of his many films. We recommend *Dracula* (1979), *Prince of Darkness*, and of course *Halloween*.

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The Dread Page Of Azathoth

WE'VE MOVED! (again)

"Restless" is our middle name, it seems. We've pulled up stakes and moved across town to the University District of Seattle, across the street from the U. of W. campus and right in the heart of Fratemity Row. Formalities aside, here's our new address:

Pagan Publishing 4542 18th Ave. NE #4 Seattle, WA 98105-4232 USA (206) 528-7665 PAGANPUB@AOL.COM

The Dread Page Of Azathoth is a regular column of notes, anecdotes & observations by the editor. Sometimes it even has something to do with gaming.

s has been so often said, H.P. Lovecraft lived and died in obscurity. His life and work (for the two are almost one in the same) show a consistent motivation: the drive of a singular vision. He didn't compromise the stories he wrote for the sake of getting them sold, preferring to do what he wanted to do even though this meant not achieving the kind of success that the world tends to judge creators by. The result was an amazing and enduring body of work that has grown in popularity ever since. Even all the work done in Call of Cthulhu and in publications for the game has essentially been a continuous (if occasionally meandering) furthering of his personal vision, and it is this vision that has made the game what it is.

In the marketplace of today, the creative work of individuals with a personal vision gets more lip service than dollars. The individuals that people look up to and respect are almost always cogs in a larger wheel: actors, directors, and the like. They achieve their success not through a personal vision but through their participation in other, larger works. The result is a downplaying of personal vision, and an emphasis on mass entertainment that is produced in the most efficient and cost-effective way possible. About the only medium today through which a single creator can reach a wide audience is through novels, and examples of such creators finding tremendous and ongoing success and recognition are few.

At Pagan Publishing, we're trying to pursue the path of personal vision. The writers and artists who produce the work we publish are generally doing what they do because they love it, and because they have some talent or some idea that they wish to express to the audience. TUO may be a group effort, but within its pages are lots of individuals doing individual things. We've come to believe that this is a good way to go, and that the results of such efforts are generally superior to those of other companies in our industry. To support this goal, everything we publish is owned by the creators: writers own what they write, and artists own what they draw. If a movie studio wants to adapt a scenario we've published into a film, they would deal with the author; we wouldn't be involved at all, and that's fine by us. The personal vision of creators has made our company successful (albeit on a small scale), and it's right that these creators should reap whatever benefits they might accrue from their work.

As some of you may know, I work fulltime at Wizards of the Coast, the company that produces the **Magic: The Gathering™** trading card game. At WotC, I've gotten a good look at the way in which a company can produce products that are not driven by any one individual's vision, but rather that support the vision of the company as a whole. The result is that many, many people are involved in the creation of every single product. I think some good things have come out of this system, but it's also made me more aware of how much I value the efforts of individual creators who write or draw the things they do because they simply cannot do otherwise: they must create, and their works must be published without being substantially altered by others.

Given that at Pagan Publishing we have chosen to pursue the path of personal vision, we face a tremendous challenge. How do you build a business whose publications consist of lots of disparate visions, each one designed to be complete unto itself. rather than ones that are all part of a common whole? FASA, for instance, can have a television show made of their Battletech™ game (and indeed, they are) because they own the rights to all of the material created for the game. As a result, they can freely do novels, movies, or whatever and reap the benefits thereby. (This is not unique to FASA; every major game company operates the same way.) If we were publishing a game and had a line of sourcebooks and the like, a studio who wanted to make a movie based on all this stuff would have to negotiate with all the different people who created these publications, and we wouldn't gain anything from such an effort. As I said, this is fine by us. So how do we build our company without such customary avenues of profit available?

We're doing it slowly but surely, by deriving our success from the combined efforts of many creators who will likewise share in the profits and who own what they have made. We won't be taking in money from licensed novels or comics or air fresheners or whatever: we'll make it one dollar at a time, one project at a time. This can be very difficult, but it's also a welcome challenge.

I hope the parallels between Lovecraft's ethic and ours are clear. We're doing projects based on their individual merits, not on what sells best or what will make a greater contribution to our image. Whether this means doing a scenario book about a legendary and sinister deity (like *Walker in the Wastes*) or a t-shirt featuring cryptic and disturbing artwork (like the *Clockwork Child* t-shirt), each project must stand on its own as the result of a personal vision or visions.

It's not easy, but it's fun and rewarding. As we continue to pursue this goal, I hope that you'll stay with us, and that you'll find the things we publish to be worth the effort our creators put into them. \overrightarrow{P}_{3}

Spring, 1995 • The Unspeakable Oath

Lunatic Letters



Scream And Scream Again

Letters to The Unspeakable Oathmay be edited for clarity and brevity. All letters remain the property of the original writers. To send us a maniacal missive, write to:

Scream And Scream Again Pagan Publishing 4542 18th Ave. NE #4 Seattle, WA 98105-4232 USA Once again. Pagan Publishing proves its quality. TUO11 was another great issue. Guys, we don't care about the schedule, as long as the issues keep up the quality. This one was again worth the wait.

Nice cover. "Cyanotic" was the word that came to mind for the Pallid Mask.

Dread Page: I have to admit, few authors I know of have the ability to change one's outlook like HPL does. In a time of complacency, Lovecraft dared to challenge the status quo. In a time when Science was conquering the world, Humans couldn't deal with the Great Old Ones. Heck, even *Americans* couldn't deal with the Outer Cosmic Horrors. Lovecraft shook us up, and he still does it a hundred years after his birth.

Letters page: Boy, it appears to me that a number of our letter writers need to unclench. You've gotten flak over the Randolph Pierce Foundation, and I knew you were going to get some over Cross and Crucible. I did not expect it from Scott Aniolowski. Come on, Scott, relax a bit. There's room in this game for everyone. Even though I never intend to use Cross and Crucible stuff in my campaign. I think it provoked some thought on my part, and that is a very valuable thing in itself.

The only suggestion I would make for future writers of Mysterious Manuscripts is to remember that you're dealing with a Lovecraft-literate audience. You really needn't spell out every connection for us. Simple mentioning that something is related to the Black Man, or any other fairly well-known form, such as Ahtu, is quite enough to tell us We-Know-Who is involved. You don't have to pin it down for us, innuendo goes a lot further. See what I mean?

The dual film articles complemented each other nicely. I heartily feel for Kevin Ross who had to sit through all those *awful* films just because they claim to have something to do with HPL. But at least now we all know which ones to avoid. I wonder if it would be possible to compile a list of effective horror films that, although not Mythos-related, inspire thought and Mythos-style horror. James Holloway has come up with a truly new concept: the hard-boiled detective Mythos novel. What a great idea. And the attached Tale of Terror was very effective. Way cool, Holloway.

And, of course, two scenarios. Scott, where the hell do you come up with the money to find all these out-of-print Mythos stories? Or do you just take quick trips to the Library in Celaeno? "Cold War" is really interesting, and looks like it would be a pretty cool one-night play. It's scenarios like these that can serve to break down the resistance of players to playing "that game where everyone goes mad or ends up dead." Unfortunately, this one seemed to be for experienced players only. "Two Minutes on High" was a thoroughly enjoyable read-although it's odd to see the creatures who can assist the investigators so... benevolent. Just one question: what does the title "mean"? Is it a reference I iust missed?

Your art remains some of the best in the business. Not only are they well drawn, but they just capture the atmosphere of the game so well. Especially the Gelon pic on page 15, and Detwiller's Y'golonac attack on page 56. The Wendigo by Hand on page 35 was suitably ghastly. Congratulations on having the most menacing art team in the gaming world.

All in all, another information-stuffed issue, worth at least half again what I paid for it. The Unspeakable Oath continues to show that Call of Cthulhu is a game for adults, not just another slash 'em up game of 'good' versus 'evil.' John Goodrich via America Online (What does "Two Minutes on High" mean? I first assumed it was some sort of poetic reference to the bank robberies: for the cultists, each robberv was two minutes on a pulse-quickening high of danger and deadly purpose. Then it occurred to me that it probably referred to the state of the corpse blasted by the energy weapon: as in "two minutes on high" in a microwave...]

3

I've just received TUO11 and as usual I must say that you've done an excellent job.

The movie articles were, in my opinion, the highlight of the issue (I'm somewhat biased, though, being a movie buff myself). I've seen most of these films, the noteworthy exception being "Cthulhu Mansion," which I avoid like the plague.

In the letters page, Scott Aniolowski makes a very valid point about Christianity in the Mythos but I'd like to point out the roleplaying game *Kult*'s take on the subject, which is ripe for integration into a horror setting. Their take on the Messiah is almost as disturbing as his own version. Regarding Scott's love of monsters, perhaps he could do a writeup of the Space-Eaters?

I'd like to ask you people about one other thing. In TUO8/9 and TUO10 you mentioned something called "END TIME." The idea sounded absolutely fascinating and I was wondering if we could have some more information about it.

Paul HysonAlloway, NJIEND TIME is our long-delayed new
roleplaying game, set after the fall of
humanity and the rise of the Great Old
Ones. It's still in development and will be
for quite a while; we don't currently have
a release date for it.

E

In regards to Kim Eastland's letter in TUO11: The cultural differences between time periods needs a delicate touch. On one hand you can strive for strict accuracy and make things unplayable. Or you can go too far the other way and end up with something like a bad historical TV show: where Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman saves the Indians and the Environment, hangs out with guys who look like beach bums, and never messes up her hair. The reality was much, much different.

I think the best experience I had in regards to women's roles was talking with my mother's mother. I asked her if she had ever wanted to be anything other than a farmer's wife. In her day that Great Depression we've heard so much about — she felt she had three choices: she could be an unmarried nurse or school teacher or get married. To do otherwise would have been to break every code she had ever learned as a girl growing up on the Canadian Prairies.

But some women did: the exceptional ones, as Inez pointed out. Such as one of our great Canadian painters, Emily Carr, a wealthy, middle-class beauty who chucked it all to live in poverty in the wilderness of Vancouver Island so that she could paint. So, there is the norm and there are the exceptions to the norm. Keepers need to be aware which they are representing.

E

G.W. Thomas

Mackenzie, B.C.

To comment on TUO11: very good! I personally take exception to page 7 wherein Mark Morrison claims "gun battles are dull, dull, dull." Maybe to Keepers whose wits are better used in keeping investigators' guts churning in anticipation, but not in real life. Gunfights are terror. Plain and simple. But I guess it's tricky, if you can't roleplay someone whose pulse and blood pressure just went out the roof with an adrenaline overdose. However, being a GM/Keeper with lots of firefights under my belt, I believe a gun fight can be terrifying to an investigator whose life and limb are at imminent risk of being punctured or severed or maimed.

"Cold War," pages 30–31: Where's the den in the apartment? There's no circular fireplace in the <u>centre</u> of the living room. If the living room overlooks the rooftop garden, I'm an aardvark. If the bedroom shares that same view, I'm a Yithian in an aardvark. Or is all this misdirection a plot, eh? Regarding the plot, it's quite good: especially the planted evidence.

I close with a quote from Alfred Hitchcock: "There is no terror in a bang, only the anticipation of it."

Allen Mixson Anaheim, CA Regarding the "Cold War" map, I'll close with a quote from Homer Simpson: "D'oh!"]

B

A New TUO (Sort Of)

We're making some changes with this magazine, changes that you'll see a bit of in this issue but much more in the next issue. Long-time readers will know that TUO has never been a static entity. We've always tinkered here and there, adding new things and dropping old ones. This is typical in most periodicals, as the tastes and talents of the publishers—and the readers—always change over time.

This issue sees the end of two regular columns: Philip Garland's "The Paranoia Files," and Mark Morrison's (and occasionally Penelope Love's) "The Case of Mark Edward Morrison." In their place you'll find a new opinion column in TUO13 that is open to any writer. "Esoterica" is also coming to an end; it's become a sort of umbrella under which most any in-depth article could appear, so we decided to just print such articles as articles, without any window dressing. The layout of TUO will also be changed dramatically, and we hope to make more room for the excellent work of our artists as a result.

The final change you'll notice is a change in the cover price. TUO has sold for \$4 (U.S.) since TUO1, and after four years we've realized that we need to raise the price. Unlike most magazines, TUO is not supported by advertising revenues: it's paid for almost exclusively through sales and subscriptions. This means you get more stuff than in any magazine of similar size, but it also means that TUO has been a break-even operation at best and a financial loss at worst. Raising the price to \$5 will ease this difficulty considerably, and we hope that you won't find the added cost to be a burden. Subscription prices will also increase accordingly, but current subscriptions will not be affected in any way.

We think you'll like the new TUO. Most of the changes are cosmetic and organizational, because we do believe that we're doing a pretty good job with the content and with the kinds of material we print. As TUO comes to look more and more professional. I hope that it won't dissuade unpublished creators from approaching us. We print lots of material from people who don't write professionally, or even as a hobby, and we've never required that creators have established credits on their resumé or any such thing. That isn't changing. The spirit of enlightened amateurism and encouragement of effort that H.P. Lovecraft embodied drives this magazine, too.

Philip Garland



The Paranoia Files

The Paranoia Files has been a regular column devoted to reexamining history and mining it for Mythos-related or simply unsettling nuggets of information. This is its final installment.

eflecting on the nature, on the very substance, of history the other day I came to the conclusion that not only is it possible to envision alternate histories, it might be possible to create them by thought alone, at least for beings of immense strength of mind (such as the Great Old Ones themselves). History appears to be malleable. Otherwise, how does one explain certain recent events and developments? Germany should not have been reunified overnight. Worse (better?) yet, the Soviet Union should not have fallen apart peacefully. Someone has been fooling around with time! It looks as if, from the point of view of cause and effect, events occurred of which we, the majority of the people at least, have been kept in ignorance. I estimate that at least twenty-five years have passed in one or two "time-skips" as they might be called. If you envision time as a straight line, it seems that the line has been folded in ways to create shortcuts, with the time that is missing lost from our collective consciousness.

I sense a conspiracy. Not perhaps a conspiracy consciously aimed at humanity. The Old Ones are so far above us that they seldom acknowledge our existence. Yet if the Gaia hypothesis is true, and the earth is one gigantic organism, then our activities do affect it. Our mistakes and disasters might cause ripples in the minds of the greater powers, and the Old Ones might try to prevent our activities as we would swat gnats that hovered before our faces without recognizing them.

Is it possible, then, that we *did* pass through a world war before Germany reunified and the Soviet Union collapsed? Again and again a rebirth of fascism was predicted. Maybe it happened. We see elements of it in Nazi skinheads, in the Aryan Nation, to give only two examples. Is it possible that those groups grew more and more powerful in the 1970s and the 1980s so that sometime around 1988 Neo-Nazis came to power in both Germanies? What then? A buildup of Russian power, nuclear exchanges, then the collapse of both the Neo-Nazis and the Soviet Communists? If it happened that way, then it has been hidden from us, and certain powers created this timeshift not for our benefit, but for their own.

One might expect the deities of the Mythos to be involved. Why create a more stable world rather than letting the war go on? There could be many reasons. Perhaps the Old Ones need a world in which most of the population is ignorant, complacent, content, and alive (for the moment at least). Do humans taste better that way? Are the Old Ones manipulating our history and emotions in the same manner that a master cook utilizes various spices and ingredients? Are the wars that have occurred been those which were allowed to occur? Sort of "turning up the heat." Recipe for a world ready to have the stars come right: Bake at intense conflict for four years (1914-1918), simmer twenty-one years, then intensify heat again for six years (1939-1945). Curiouser and curiouser, as Alice might say.

And perhaps nuclear destruction would be a failure for the Old Ones. Most of their sustenance lost, would they be doomed on earth? Maybe the theoretical WW3 was an experiment that failed, thus resulting in the manipulation of time that followed. If the Great Old Ones are as powerful as they apparently are, would erasing bits of time be that difficult for them?

Can it be that the current problems in the former Yugoslavia are a result of Mythos activity? No matter what actions the major (earthly) powers take, peace seems always just over the horizon. Constant death and constant tension build hatreds and prejudices to such a fever pitch that "ordinary" men and women in the region seem as demented as cultists. And exactly how much difference is there between cultists and such individuals? Between cultists and the militaristic fanatics who welcomed the two world wars? Is it always necessary that cultists actually know that they are part of a cult? It has been argued

that there is no true "worldwide conspiracy" of Cthulhu cultists, but simply thousands or millions of dupes whose inability to understand their dreams from R1yeh cause them to act in similar manners, thus appearing from the outside of the "cult" that they act together, directed by one central intelligence.

If history is so malleable, it may be impossible to ever recover the true history of humanity. And "true" itself may be an inoperative term. The stories of the Mythos posit various origins for human beings. All may be equally true. There may have been no one evolution, but dozens, hundreds even. Our history may be so twisted that full understanding would destroy us as surely as confronting Azathoth himself. Is human history itself a Great Old One? What indeed is the true nature of Yog-Sothoth? The potential variations of history are endless.

This is the last of the Paranoia Files-

the powers that be have decided that my voice must be suppressed. Perhaps I am getting too close to the truth, if such a thing exists. Whatever the case, I shall always be out here, gathering information and weaving my webs to discover whatever the truth is, and slowly wearing my sanity thin as I find connections between events that should not be connected. How long I can survive this, I cannot tell, but I must go on, as must you, o enlightened reader.



Penelope Love



The Last Case Of Mark Edward Morrison

The Case Of Mark Edward Morrison has been a regular column looking at Call of Cthulhu and how to run or play or simply understand it better. The 'case' of the title is a strange old suitcase Mark discovered on a trip to the U.S. Its curious and ever-changing contents have haunted his dreams ever since. This is its final installment. ark Morrison is unable to close his case. He toils, wreathed in strips of celluloid, upon one of those new-fangled motion pictures. We may not have Morrison, but rummaging in his portmanteau I found some handscrawled notes.

These motion pictures are an enterprise of staggering expense. According to my trusty guide, ("The Forum" magazine, January 1920), a director and assistant may charge almost \$4,000 a picture, and the raw stock may cost a similar amount; the sets cost upward of \$5,000, with the rental of autos just as much. The total bill for the entire cast of "regular" actors, I am told, can be as much as \$15,000!

Upwards of \$25,000 can be spent upon a single big budget "Special," as it is known in the trade, which backers fondly hope will run for weeks in the "nickelodeons."

Yet even for the inhabitants of this dizzying realm of Movieland, there must be a last Exit, a final bow, a curtain, which never to be raised again, descends in a creaking shower of dust and dead spiders, and a final, somewhat sickening, thump, upon even the most faithful of investigators. So it is with this column.

The end! Death! This is a topic to which this column returns again and again. and none more fitting than this, its own end. Yet it is not the death of investigators over which we mourn, poor, fragile bags of flesh, blood, pus and teeth that they too often prove they are, but the death of all things: the end of the campaign.

Circles are complete. Stars become right. Games terminate. And the secret of running *Call of Cthulhu* is knowing how to finish. And when.

Players must feel they have reached the finish of their story by their own achievement. Do not panic if in Scenario One they decide to stay at home, despite all plot-hooks pointing to Sweden. Be ingenious yet resolute. Let them talk among themselves. You may be surprised at the degree to which they will cooperate with you, each other, and the plot, if they feel they are in control of the situation (even if they are not). Only as the last resort bring in the streamers and banners that read "Campaign This Way!", and the nuns with tranquilizer darts who burst through the office door and whisk the investigators off to Belgium (with a through ticket to Stockholm).

The above does not mean subtle hints cannot be inserted at any point. This is also known as "Show them how the Monster Works." It does not merely have to work with monsters. It can work with plots. Keepers must think ahead of the players. If they have no weapons, and need to fight something, stage the scene in a place with plenty of loose drainpipes. If they need to leave by the chimney, show them the fireplace.

End each gaming session at an appropriate point. Preferably a cliffhanger: "As you open the door, you hear from the darkness within an amused and malevolent chuckle." Sure, next session they find themselves talking to the senile, mean-minded care-taker, but it was a nasty moment.

Do not end a gaming session at a point of sustained horror. This may be hard to pick up again. If the last session ended at 2 am. in the morning with May Trengrove halfway up a tree. screaming herself silly, while Tsathoggua slowly devoured Bertie O'Malley upwards from the navel, the players may well find it difficult to return to the full terror of the moment at 7 pm. the following Friday, surrounded by full bottles of Coke and fresh pizza.

In the light of this, keepers should try only to run games that they can finish. If all the half-finished scenarios in the world were laid end to end, the Fungi from Yuggoth could visit without needing to fly. Chaosium's book *Blood Brothers* and TUO scenarios are ideal. They can be finished over one or two nights, with several small climaxes and one big one.

Similarly, keepers must pace things to avoid burnout over long campaigns, for both players and themselves. Interesting small climaxes need to be inserted amid dry investigation, and big climaxes need



to be well sign-posted, so that players can compare findings and lay plans (artfully aided if necessary by their alert keeper). The well-prepared player feels involved, and will remember their actions with fondness and clarity for years to come.

The investigator's motto in the face of the inexplicable should always be (a) investigate, (b) run away, (z) violence. Good research should supply the clues to solve the mystery, not fire-power. A scenario which is successfully concluded due to guns is ipso facto a scenario that is successfully concluded due to dice. You want your players to say "That was the scenario where we assembled all seventeen components of the ritual and banished that weird thing that looked like an inside-out iguana." as opposed to "That was the scenario we finished because Benny rolled a O1."

Just before the final credits roll is a good time to die. Cheating the dice to save an investigator from so mundane a death as falling down a staircase is permissible. Cheating the dice to save the investigators from Azathoth is not. Nevertheless, if keepers can see a Big Climax, and a satisfying and grisly death Saving the World coming up, let the wounded limp on, even with two broken legs and a busted appendix. Of course, if the scenario is adequately plotted, and you have run the damn thing with the grace and style for which keepers of CoC are justly famous, the investigators should not be facing off with the Big "A" unless they knew what to do with It.

Once the Final Climax begins, do not slow the pace for anything. No, not even if players need time out for lavatory stops. It'll add to the excitement. Take exclamations of tension and bodily agony as a compliment and keep running.

Campaigns need to end with a bang. Long-running campaigns more so. This leads to satisfaction in the minds of players. They will look back on your campaign with fondness, even if they "fail." e.g. "Remember that time we banished Nyarlathotep into the void, but then Norman went mad and followed him in?"

If you want your players to save the world, make the world worth saving. A fair proportion of non-player characters must be genuinely likeable, even if they don't believe the investigators' mad ravings about glutinous fish-eyed men from beyond the stars. Nothing is more depressing than a world where **nobody** believes your story, where no one likes you, and no one is grateful that the Earth has been saved from becoming a cosmic billiard ball for the Elder Gods.

Sometimes the end can be unexpected,

Do not spend too long in denouement. Denouement is French for "the bit after the exciting bit."

and blacker than Nyarlathotep's eyeballs. Everyone goes mad. Everyone gets killed. If you want to pick the story up again, leave threads that survivors, relatives, random strangers or intelligent dogs can follow. Sometimes the world can only be saved at the investigators' expense. Ordinary folk live on, unaware that four martyrs armed with shotguns and copies of "Let's Speak Swedish" have fended off the unspeakable at the cost of themselves. This kind of ending is most appropriate for games whose heroes are considered outcasts. Their defeats are many, their victories unknown, and alone.

Do not spend too long in denouement. Denouement is French for "the bit after the exciting bit." The story is over. Pan away from the smoking ruin, into the sunset. Do not, under any circumstances, enter into discussion with the players about what they should or could have done. Any discussion of What Might Have Been intrinsically lessens the dramatic power of What Was, and tips the players off that there was really only one plot under that veneer of choice. Lastly, no one enjoys other people raking over their mistakes. Dice can be mighty painful projectiles if hurled with enough force.

May your players say of your finished campaign, as a famous producer of Movieland once said of his favorite actress. "That's quality—with two e's."

The popcorn grows stale in the aisles. The mighty Wurlitzer has fallen silent. We who have met in darkness must now part. We will not say farewell. We will not say au revoir. We will not meet again. 2

– Illo: Toren Atkinson —



The Eye Of Light And Darkness

The Eye Of Light And Darkness is a review column featuring items of interest to fans of Call of Cthulhu as well as H.P. Lovecraft fans in general. Items are rated on a scale of one to ten phobias, with ten being the highest. Note that this is not an absolute scale; rather, the scale only reflects how a particular item succeeds in its goals. A card game given a rating of 8 phobias is not inherently better than a scenario book rated 6 phobias - it just means it's a very good card game. Ratings of 3 phobias or less indicate the item isn't worth purchasing; 4-6 phobias indicate an average it em with notable flaws; 7-10 phobias indicate degrees of excellence

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Nephilim: Occult Roleplaying Occult Horror RPG written by Frederic Weil, Fabrice Lamidey, Sam Shirley, and Greg Stafford. Chaosium, \$2195. reviewed by Allan T. Grohe, Jr.

Nephilim is Chaosium's first completely new roleplaying game since their release of Prince Valiant in 1989, and is published in corroboration with MultiSim, the original French creators of Nephilim. Similar to Mage and Kult, Nephilim postulates hidden forces at work in the world since the Saurian rule of the dinosaurs, long before the foundation of Atlantis: "Science is an illusion, history is a lie." Players portray the Nephilim, immortal spirits who possess humans for brief lifetimes and then sleep for hundreds or even thousands of years until they awake once more to foray into the human world. Their host, or simulacrum, manifests both the Nephilim's spiritual traits, or ka elements, and metamorphosis, her true physical form into which she gradually evolves while residing in the simulacrum, as physical changes. Ka elements are based on the classic Grecian elements of earth, air, fire, and water, with the addition of the moon as the element of illusion and uncertainty, madness and dreams. The Nephilim's primary Ka element, in conjunction with her metamorphosis, influences her personality toward the behavior that each aspect, element and form, represents; thus, fire Nephilim are passionate, impatient, and tend to have short tempers, while the satyr metamorphosis revels in the capricious, and is unpredictably, though deeply, emotional. Each ka element also has associated magic available. During their incarnations, Nephilim pursue Agartha (spiritual and occult illumination), as well as more earthy actions such as countering each other's schemes for world domination, seeking ancient lore, setting themselves up as gods to human yokels, and running from secret societies dedicated to their destruction. The Nephilim character itself is the

game's strongest feature (the game system remains the same as Call of Cthulhu: skill-driven, percentage-based). The player decides how often her character has incarnated through history, and selects from among eleven periods that range from pre-dynastic Egypt of 5000 BC to the Victorian world of 1900. with the modern day a default current setting not specifically described (the playtest version included thirteen periods, and Chaosium plans to release a supplement containing additional past eras. metamorphosis, and simulacra at a later date). In each period, the character learns skills and magic, knowledge that carries over into each new awakening. The player must incarnate in history chronologically, and may not appear in an era more than once. The Nephilim, in addition to its own vast resources, can tap into its simulacrum's knowledge and skills, and may even steal them over time (the character sheet has two skill columns, to represent both the Nephilim and her simulacrum). She can also make contacts, friendly or not, among the Major Arcana, the shadowy groups of Nephilim after whom the Tarot trumps are named, who may act as sponsors to the character, granting her additional knowledge, aid when in need, or may prove to be implacable enemies who seek the character through time, forever.

As the incarnations accumulate, and the character gains in power and skill, she also loses a fraction of her ka with each incorporation. Ka is perhaps the character's most important characteristic. and it forms the pentacle around which the character's personality and magic revolve: she has a dominant ka element, which helps shape her personality, two neutral elements (one favorable, one opposed), and her two opposed elements (one opposed minor, the other major). Like past lives, the player chooses what element dominates, as well as which are more and less favorable among the pair of neural and opposed elements. The more incarnations the character enters, the lower her dominant ka becomes, with corresponding losses in each of her four other ka, until, when she has nearly exhausted her ka, she will be almost unable to employ successfully any of the magical arts she has learned over the millennia.

The magic system of Nephilim is point-based, and powered through Ch'awe, which fuels both spells and ka vision (similar to seeing auras). Spells cost from one to three points of Ch'awe to cast, and it is recoverable at the rate of one point per hour. The three types of magic are Sorcery, Summoning, and Alchemy, each divided into three circles, with the spells of greatest power in the third circle, those of least power in the first. Sorcery existed before humankind, and allows direct physical manipulation of the characters environment, especially the base elements. Summoning is thinly-veiled khabbalistic invocation of spirits, based on the Tree of Life. Alchemy, the most recent magic developed, doesn't have a defined third circle because it remains essentially unknown: it follows classical alchemical beliefs, though it also ties in golems as well. To cast any spell, the character must succeed in two rolls: a check against her skill in the circle of the spell, followed by the ka element of the spell. For example, to cast Visage of Terror, a second circle Sorcery, a Nephilim must expend two points of Ch'awe, roll under her Higher Magic skill (the title of second circle sorceries), then roll under twice her moon ka element, in order to frighten away her victim. Obviously by tying magic to the ka element, Chaosium has limited what could otherwise become an abusive magic system: the characters will retain mastery of the spells of their dominant ka element and be far less accomplished with those of their opposing elements. In addition, spells are scarce and must be located in occult tomes, then deciphered and learned.

Nephilim professes to ground itself in real world occult systems of belief, as seen in the semi-hermetic/khabbalistic magic system, the bibliography which cites authorities such as Aleister Crowley and Israel Rigardie, and the endorsement on the back cover from a Wiccan high priest. However, unlike Mage or Kult, in which players explore the illusion of science and history in order to learn how to shape the world. Nephilim reduces the occult world to the level of mere background material. It's good background material, but it's not integrated within the concepts that form the basis of the game. In other words, in Mage and Kult. philosophical and metaphysical explanations for the existence of the illusion/lie we know and live in provide reason for the characters to interact with the occult world lurking behind the shadows. Nephilim, however, lacks these underpinnings that serve as the motivation for the existence of an illusion, and loses that additional level of coherence and motivation, which reduces the believability of the game's subtitle, "Occult Roleplaying." Perhaps in future supplements, such as Templars, or Looking Inward (a supplement on magic), Chaosium will explore the relationship between the occult and real worlds further, making the necessary connections between the two. But until then Nephilim rates six phobias: it has some excellent material (especially in character generation) but it fails to deliver on the promises it makes.

The Whispering Vault horror RPG written by Mike Nystul Pariah Press, \$22.50 reviewed by Stephen Trow

I am a lousy cook who has enough trouble following someone else's recipe. As for creating my own, forget it. But just for grins, let's say I decide to mix four parts horror game with one part superhero game, and set the microwave to extra crispy. What would I get? A superhero game with the weirdest, nastiest, most unsettling characters you have ever seen, or smelled. It would be a great game, but it wouldn't be a horror game. Something in those superhero parts just won't dilute. And so it is with The Whispering Vault, a recent addition to the growing circle of horror roleplaying games.

The presentation of The Whispering *Vault* is first-rate; this is a polished piece of work that obviously saw great attention and many revisions. Even considering the few typos and the absence of an index, the 142-page game is incredibly well-done. I read the book from cover to cover, something I never before have done with a roleplaying game. Seamlessly, the rich background blends into the explanations of how the game works. Or perhaps it is the other way around. This might cause a little discomfort for those of you who like to jump right into the bones of the rules or the meat of the background. But frankly, the entire book is the background.

Though you wouldn't know it by the dull cover, the artwork in the game is excellent, in that it does what art should do in a game like this—it lights the fire of imagination, and inspires ideas in the reader that she may not be aware she possesses. While reading through the game and looking at the artwork. I was flooded with visions of characters most strange and adventures most foul, even before fully understanding what the game was about.

What is the game about, anyway? The Whispering Vault places an interesting spin on the idea that the universe in not what we think it is. You see, the world you and I experience is a Dream. (Whispering Vault is heavy on jargon and capitalizes the first letter of words to denote the jargon, as will this review) But it is not a dream from which we will awaken. Rather, as mortals, everything we do, all that we are, and all that we will ever be, is part of the Dream. The Dreaming is the unfolding of the Realm of Flesh, which is the physical world and the realm of mortals. Immortal beings, on the other hand, exist in a separate realm known as the Realm of Essence. Between the two Realms is the Rift, also known as Neitherspace, in which other beings, neither Flesh nor Essence, reside.

The Dream unfolds according to the imaginations of the Aesthetics, which are beings of Essence whose imaginations result in the Creation of Flesh. As their

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minds wander with their whims, they create, manipulate, age, and destroy the physical world and everything in it. However, if one of these Aesthetics focuses too much on his Vision, on his Creation, he develops a lust for the Flesh he has created. If this lust is strong enough, he will abandon his post and enter the Realm of Flesh to satisfy his desires. Unfortunately for him, such interaction between the Realms is forbidden.

A renegade Aesthetic who enters the Realm of Flesh is known as an Unbidden. His entrance rips a wound in the Dream, warping the "reality" of a portion of the physical world, creating a metaphysical nightmare. He is a being whose very thoughts alter and bring about Creation, and he is running around loose inside that very Creation. To make matters worse, his thoughts are not pleasant thoughts. No sir. They are sick, twisted, seriously fucked-up thoughts. Warping his surroundings to satisfy his foul desires, the Unbidden causes the wound in the Dream to fester, resulting in vile distortions of the Realm of Flesh. The Unbidden must be removed, and the wound must be healed. Enter the player characters.

Stalkers, as the player characters are known, are the immortal guardians of the Realm of Flesh. Their "job" is to enter the Realm of Flesh, hunt down and capture the Unbidden, heal the wound it created, and then return to the Realm of Essence to deposit the lusty Aesthetic in the Vault (from which the game gets its name). Once in the Vault, the Aesthetic will have an eternity to harmlessly ponder the error of his ways.

The game presents a wonderfully simple set of rules and leaves the rest to the vivid and boundless imaginations of the players, in the form of special effects. As an example, consider that a ranged attack is a Discipline (read "power" or "supernatural skill") called Rend. While designing your character, you might decide her Rend attack is a fireball—a little mundane, but it gets the point across. Perhaps instead you want her Rend attack to be a pair of rusty, hooked chains that burst forth from her eyeswhich happen to be in the palms of her hands—wrap around her target, and rip in opposite directions, reeling in chunks of flesh, which get deposited in the gaping hole at the base of the stump where her head should be. Either case is handled identically by the mechanics, but the roleplaying and characterization differences are huge.

The game is designed to allow for this kind of conceptual freedom, and wild imagination is strongly encouraged. When it comes to character creation and interpreting the dice, there are virtually no restraints placed on a player's (or GM's) imagination. Despite the fact that Stalkers are "good guys," a character might look like the weirdest, nastiest humanoid thing your imagination can conjure forth. This aspect of the game makes for great fun.

Playing Whispering Vault is a process of wrapping the fruit of your unbridled imagination around the skeleton of a simple, effective set of rules. Those rules are covered in a mere 11 pages, including examples. What do you get for your 11 pages? A quick, elegant system based on six-siders, that functions quite well.

All is not perfect, however. During the first session of playing the game, my group discovered that it has a bit of an identity problem. The Whispering Vault calls itself a horror game, and it looks like a horror game, but it doesn't play like a horror game. Why do I say that? First of all, the characters are undisputed "good guys." They may look unsettling or disgusting, but their purpose is to protect the mortals by defeating the Unbidden and cleaning things up, all nice and tidy. Essentially, they exist to restore order, and that order is benevolent.

Secondly, the characters know the secrets of the universe. Mortals haven't a clue about what Reality really is. But the player characters do. Given that the characters are "in the know," the game leaves no room for experiencing terrifying revelations about the dark reality of a hostile, alien universe. But considering that the game's universe is not terrifying to begin with, this wouldn't matter anyway.

Thirdly, it has the feel of a superhero

game. Though the subject matter can be quite dark, the characters use superpowers to wage battle against superpowered villains (and some Enlightened mortal cults) to protect the helpless mortals. Rather than leaping around in colorful tights, however, these superheroes look like they were yanked out of *Hellraiser*. But ugly superheroes are still superheroes. By no means does this identity crisis make Whispering Vault a bad game. In fact, I think it is a great game. But I wouldn't call it a horror game.

You may have noticed that I have been silent about the game's usefulness as material for Call of Cthulhu. There is a good reason for that. In The Whispering Vault. as in Call of Cthulhu, the background is everything. And their backgrounds are very different. In fact, I would say their backgrounds are completely incompatible. But an industrious Keeper in search of unique ideas for an avatar of one Great Old One or another, could get some mileage out of the art and background material. And there is much to be said for this game's incredible ability to generate sick and twisted ideas and images, which are always useful to a Keeper on the prowl.

Overall, *The Whispering Vault* rates seven phobias on its own merit. As a sourcebook for *Call of Cthulhu*, however, it rates two phobias—four if you need avatars of the Great Old Ones.

Lurking Fear

starring Jon Finch, Blake Bailey, Ashley Lauren, Jeffrey Combs, Paul Mantee, and Vincent Schiavelli

produced by Vlad and Oana Paunescu written & directed by C. Courtney Joyner reviewed by J. Todd Kingrea

I have always thought that "The Lurking Fear" would be a good Lovecraft story to adapt to film. It overflows with atmosphere, mystery, and claustrophobia, and a movie could easily be woven from it without sacrificing its gripping horror or degenerate tone. Surely this story could make the graceful transition from printed page to silver screen.

Wrong.

From the beginning, Paramount/Full

Moon's *Lurking Fear* is bad. The plot revolves around John Martense returning to his hometown of Leffert's Corners after a stint in the local prison. He arrives in time to discover two young women and genre favorite Jeffrey (*Re-Animator*) Combs ready to dynamite the monster-infested cemetery. It seems everyone knows about the Martense family living below the cemetery, but it has taken twenty years for anyone to do anything about it.

John arrives looking for the family treasure, as does a group of thugs with their own claim to the fortune. Everyone holes up in a church where half the cast want to destroy the Martense creatures, and the other half - predictably enough - want to recover the treasure. They're picked off slowly, either by the creatures or by one another. The middle third of the picture is a tedious and wretchedly overdrawn series of threats, swearing, posturing, inane dialogue, bullying, and a complete lack of atmosphere, mystery, or respect for the source material. The climax arrives with the viewer still clueless about as to how all this began, as the cast dukes it out in the rainsoaked cemetery and roams around the subterranean tunnels. There's plenty of explosions, a Martense family reunion (gak!), and geography that can't decide if it's eastern Europe, the Midwest cornbelt, or Small Town, USA.

All the characters are stock cardboard, uninteresting and two-dimensional. Only Jeffrey Combs' manic style brings any life to the grocery list of idiots: Schiavelli is fun, but less than inspired in his brief role as a greasy low-life mortician. The Martense creatures owe more to Sam Raimi's *The Evil Dead* and George Pal's *The Time Machine* than they do to HPL, and these goggle-eyed bozos haven't near the life and menace they should have.

Don't be hoodwinked by the box copy either. It lists the setting inaccurately as an "isolated desert town," misspells the main character's name (Martens), and continually refers to the creatures as "undead." It also boasts "a terrifying, bone-chilling clash... with ghouls in a blood-soaked finale." Yeah, it sounds tempting but the only bone-chilling clash you're likely to encounter is with your video store owner when you try to demand your rental fee back!

What hurts most about *Lurking Fear* is that isn't a horror movie, or even a suspense movie. It's an action film, pure and simple, with a speck or two of allegedly horrifying elements tossed in. More time is spent waving guns and spewing foul threats than is spent building tension or weaving a credible story.

Take the time you would've spent watching this film and read the original story again. You'll only be wasting your time by plopping down in front of this insipid trash-bin liner. Rating: 1.5 phobias out of ten.

Cthulhuriffomania! album by The Darkest of the Hillside Thickets Veritable Shrine, \$6 reviewed by Christian Klepac

There are some who would say that punk rock is dead, but even without conceding this, it is obvious that due to the explosive popularity of grunge, musicians who wish to remain underground have had to go farther and farther into left field for their sources of inspiration. It seems that it was only a matter of time before the punk ideology joined forces with the similarly nihilistic outlook of H.P. Lovecraft and company. Yes, there are some who would say that punk is dead, but if you told that to The Darkest of the Hillside Thickets, they might respond by quoting the verse of a certain mad Arab who had something to say on the subject of longevity.

Cthulhuriffomania! is the second cassette release from these tongue-in-cheek Canadian cultists. It is both diverse and catchy, ranging from dark and dissonant metal ("Colour Me Green") to lightningquick pop ("Everyone Calls Me Ted"). It even contains a few surprises, like the soothingly acoustic "Diggin' up the World." The music brings to mind a slew of punk influences, although it definitely has a flavor all its own, and singer Toren Atkinson's voice often jumps from a Kurt Cobain-like growl to a yodeling scream, then back to a melodic drawl in the space of one song.

By far the pervading strength of The Darkest of the Hillside Thickets is their ability to be consistently and inventively funny while pretty much staying above the level of "novelty music." The lyrics are mostly mad rantings to the Great Old Ones, but there is also a hymn of praise to mustard gas, and the story of a young boy's rampage in his robot dinosaur. All in all, *Cthulhuriffomania!* is entertaining fare, but it is definitely not for the squeamish, the politically correct, or the overly serious. Six and a half phobias.

(You can get on the mailing list for the free "People of Innsmouth" newsletter by writing to: Veritable Shrine, 622 Glengarry Dr., Sardis, BC V2R 2H9 Canada. Their new CD, *Cthulhu Strikes Back*, is available through *The Outsider* catalog from Pagan Publishing)

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Shadows over Innsmouth hardcover anthology of Mythos fiction Fedogan and Bremer, \$29 reviewed by Daniel Harms

Shadows over Innsmouth is an anthology by all-British authors who have taken Lovecraft's decaying port of Innsmouth and show it in more recent times. At first glance, I was sure that this was going to be a good volume: after all, how could it go wrong with contributors like Ramsey Campbell, Basil Copper, and Brian Lumley? Well, it did.

The first story in this collection is Lovecraft's "The Shadow over Innsmouth" (HPL wasn't a British author, but I guess we can forgive them). I have mixed feelings about its inclusion here; it does provide the central focus for the collection, but if you're willing to spend a good amount of money for a book with "Innsmouth" in the title, you probably already have the story anyway and shouldn't be paying for it again.

HPL's story is immediately followed by Copper's "Beyond the Reef." This story is filled with stock characters who say and do the most unlikely things (even if you had a revolver, would you walk blindly into a network of underground tunnels?). This is definitely at the low end of Copper's fiction. My other gripe involves Campbell's "The Church in High Street." This story has absolutely nothing to do with Innsmouth whatsoever.

"Dagon's Bell" by Lumley should be standard fare for most of his fans: there are few surprises in this tale of an old mansion and the caverns beneath. Personally, I would have substituted "The Return of the Deep Ones" by the same author, which has been cruelly denied to us Yanks for quite a while.

This doesn't mean the collection doesn't have its high points, though. "The Big Fish" by Jack Yeovil could be justifiably described as "the Mythos meets Sam Spade," and seems to capture the proper atmosphere without going overboard. Though I keep asking myself what it really had to do with Innsmouth, "The Homecoming" by Nicholas Royle presents a chilling tale of post-upheaval Rumania. In his own tales, HPL often left open the possibility of a natural explanation for his supernatural happenings, but Stableford's "The Innsmouth Heritage" presents a clever twist by logically explaining Innsmouth's mystery yet leaving the reader feeling that not even the most up-to-date science can fully eliminate its taint.

The interior art. despite being done in black-and-white, is still wonderfully stomach-wrenching. McKenna, Pitts, and Carson should be given some color to play with next time.

One notable weakness of this collection is that the editor did not provide a timeline from which the authors could take their inspiration. Thus, though the book claims to "depict the dreadful decline of the Massachusetts seaport since the 1920s," modern-day Innsmouth is deserted in one tale, while in another it has become the home of a thriving software company. I also fear that the modern situations depicted in the book's stories (the liberation of Eastern Europe and the Internet, for example) may blunt readers' appreciation for the volume after ten years or so. For all this, the book only gets 5 phobias.

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Fallen Angels: Adventures in New York scenarios for the Kult RPG by Gunilla Johnson and Michael Petersen Metropolis, Ltd., \$14.95 reviewed by Allan T. Grohe, Jr.

Fallen Angels is Metropolis, Ltd.'s first published adventure/campaign sourcebook for Kult. In Fallen Angels characters explore the confines of a New York City teeming with the horrors that lurk within the fringes of the illusion. The organization, history, and society of the Children of the Night (vampires, cannibals, and ritual murders) form the primary focus of the supplement, though additional material develops New York sufficiently for it to form the basis of further adventures if the GM is so inclined.

The setting of *Fallen Angels* ranges throughout a New York that includes sections of Metropolis, the Inferno, and the borderlands confined between the two. The three scenarios tie together to form a mini-campaign that centers around a theatre in the East Village and the characters' interactions with the owner.

The first scenario, "A Night in New York," begins with the characters waking up in a cheap hotel with no memory of the night before. They have wounds on their necks and a marked blood loss. The characters must investigate their own pasts to determine their actions from the previous night. This adventure sets the stage for the following two, and introduces the characters to the community of the Children of the Night. "The Daughter of the Jackals" is the next scenario. In this one, the characters' relationship with the theatre owner develops as they learn more about their past, the history of the theatre, and the ties of each to the Jackals. The final scenario brings Fallen Angels to its dramatic and infernal conclusion as the characters race to save themselves from the clutches of an Avenging Angel.

Fallen Angels presents credible char – acters that develop throughout the book, as well as intriguing plot twists that are certain to challenge the roleplaying skills of the players. The warning label on the

back cover summarizes the basic purpose of the campaign, as the players and the characters explore "the dark side of the human soul: some may find [it] disturbing." With its focus on murder and damnation. *Fallen Angels* delivers the dark side where the previous supplement, *Legions of Darkness*, merely catalogued it.

I give Fallen Angels eight phobias.

Mysteries of the Worm the early Mythos fiction of Robert Bloch Chaosium, Inc., \$9.95 reviewed by Scott David Aniolowski

Robert Bloch's collection of early Mythos tales, *Mysteries of the Worm*, has been one of the most coveted Mythos fiction anthologies of recent years. The first edition in paperback has been harder to find and more sought after that Berglund's legendary *The Disciples of Cthulhu* or even Campbell's relatively elusive *Cold Print.* In my ten or more years of diligent collecting, I myself have only ever seen three copies of this book—all cloistered away in private collections of friends and fellow collectors.

For all of those disheartened collectors like myself, or for those whose wallets cannot support an expensive rare book collecting habit, help has arrived. Chaosium, Inc. has recently released a new revised and expanded second edition of Mysteries of the Worm, edited by the famed Hierophant of the Horde, Robert M. Price. Price-the editor of Crypt of Cthulhu-has collected together here the contents of the first edition of this book along with three additional early Mythos tales by Bloch. Mr. Bloch has also revised three of his early tales for this collection. The afterword by Bloch is a sadly short yet colorful peek into the mind and Mythos of a great man, and is one of the best parts of the book! The book itself has a flashy, catchy look with red foil lettering on a black foil background. An odd, cryptic image by artist Dreyfus completes the cover.

I will caution readers not to approach *Mysteries of the Worm* expecting a book full of hands-down great stories. When I saw these are early tales by Robert

Bloch that is precisely what I mean. Some of these stories are among the first Bloch ever wrote, and as such have the feel of typical juvenilia and just aren't very good. Don't get me wrong-there are some amazing stories here, but there are also some real stinkers. This collection is certainly not among Robert Bloch's best work, but it is well worth having if for no other reason than the fact that many of these stories are otherwise impossible to find. If this is your first exposure to the genius of Robert Bloch and you like what you read, I strongly urge you to seek out any of the hundreds of other short stories and novels he has written: Robert Bloch was a master of horror, but his early Mythos work does little to show his tremendous talent.

I give *Mysteries of the Worm* five phobias for content, but as a collectible it deserves eight.

The Early Fears 39 vintage stories by Robert Bloch Fedogan & Bremer, \$29 reviewed by Scott David Aniolowski

Fedogan & Bremer is a small Minneapolis publishing house known for turning out gems, and The Early Fears by Robert Bloch is no exception. Collected here, under one impressive cover, are Robert Bloch's first two Arkham House fiction collections, The Opener of the Way and Pleasant Dreams, both long out of print. Among the thirty-nine stories assembled within this book's more than 500 pages are classics such as "Yours Truly, Jack the Ripper," "The Cloak," "Enoch," and the 1959 Hugo award-winning tale "That Hell-Bound Train." It should be noted to fans and collectors of the Cthulhu Mythos that many of Bloch's early Mythos tales are collected in this volume, although his non-Mythos work presented here is by far the better pick of the lot. As always, the introductory words by Mr. Bloch are gems and, as always, I find myself wishing it had been longer (Bloch's enormous capacity for warmth, humor, and humanity-his accessibility-was a real treat, especially in this day of "celebrity writers" who cloister themselves away behind hordes

of agents and publicists). It's unfortunate, however, that Fedogan & Bremer did not include Bloch's original introduction from *The Opener of the Way*, wherein he writes about how authors are Jekyll and Hyde personalities and where he gets his own literary ideas from. Those who have not had the chance to read that brilliant essay are sadly missing out.

In 1946 The Opener of the Way became the tenth book published by Arkham House, and Bloch's first. Pleasant Dreams followed some years later in 1960 as Arkham's sixtieth title. Today, both are long out of print and next to impossible to find. Although the cover price of *The Early Fears* is right up there with some of the newer and pricier Arkham House books, it is well worth the money. This is an enormous book of 514 pages and thirty-nine classic tales. This volume is also a collectible piece, as are many of the hardback limited printrun volumes by small specialty houses like Fedogan & Bremer.

I can only say that I highly recommend this book: it is horror literature history, it is a fine collection by the living master of the macabre, and it is a highly collectible volume. I give it eight phobias.

The Hastur Cycle a Cthulhu Mythos fiction anthology edited by Robert M. Price Chaosium, Inc., \$9.95 reviewed by Kevin A. Ross

Chaosium kicked off their brand-new Cthulhu Mythos fiction line with a pair of strangely familiar books. Robert Bloch's *Mysteries of the Worm* was published in a slightly different form by Zebra Books back in 1980. *The Hastur Cycle*, meanwhile, is largely a reshuffling of the even more archaic *Spawn of Cthulhu*, released by Ballantine Books back in 1971. The original forms of both books were edited by the late Lin Carter, and it is perhaps fitting that Carter's literary executor, Lovecraft scholar Robert M. Price, is responsible for putting together the present series for Chaosium.

But *The Hastur Cycle* is more than just a rehash of *Spawn of Cthulhu*. It is in fact a radical rethinking of that book.

Carter's purpose had been to examine a single Lovecraft tale and the stories that influenced it and which it in turn influenced. Price, on the other hand, follows the development of the Hastur "sub-mythos" from Ambrose Bierce, through Robert W. Chambers, into Arthur Machen and Lovecraft, and on toward such modern writers as Ramsey Campbell and Karl Edward Wagner. Price diverges at one point to study another line of development in the Mythos, following the Yuggoth lineage from references in Machen, through Lovecraft and into Richard A. Lupoff, Campbell, and James Wade. This is something of a jarring distraction from the Hastur Mythos, but one that needed to be examined given the cryptic references to Hastur and the cult of the Yellow Sign in HPL's "Whisperer in Darkness." Regardless, the book seems somehow more solid when covering the Hastur tales.

It is difficult and foolhardy to fault Price's introductions, as they almost invariably offer valuable insights: inspirations for the individual stories, snippets from letters dealing with various story elements, and important literary elements of some tales. We learn, for instance, that "Whisperer in Darkness" was inspired by HPL's visit to Vermont, and the Old Gent used many names of places and families he learned of while there. Price also points out a common factor in many stories dealing with the poisonous play The King in Yellow: that those who read the play often become unwitting characters reenacting events from it, and that as readers of these tales we are ourselves drawn to experience works of poisonous beauty.

Still, I find some of Price's conclusions a bit of a stretch, and somewhat factually inaccurate at times. He asks us to believe that a passage from Chambers describing a verdant garden in the city of Yian is textually similar to Lovecraft's "Fungi from Yuggoth" sonnet "The Gardens of Yin," but one could just as easily snatch a passage from Machen's *Hill of Dreams* and make a similar claim. Price's reading

Continued on page 38





Mysterious Manuscript: "A Zoologist's Addendum"

Mysterious Manuscripts is a regular feature that examines a staple of CoC gaming: tomes of eldritch lore.

he Addendum was written by a radical English zoologist in the early twentieth century, in an attempt to fill some glaring holes (in his opinion) in the modern taxonomic system. Garrett Carr began work on the encyclopedia-like book shortly after completing a long voyage throughout the less-travelled areas of the world. In his own words, the journey left him "exhausted, but further, outraged at the narrow scope with which modern naturalists view the world." As a side note, Carr began the trip as a search for his vanished mentor, Dr. John Valentine, whom he apparently never found.

The book includes hundreds of animal species, some living but most extinct, that are not recognized by modern science. Appendices in the back give fascinating details on a few little-known species of plants and fungus, as well as a rather dry treatise on geography and evolution (interestingly, Carr postulates that the age of the Earth is many times greater than commonly thought, though he does not give a numerical age nor a timeline).

The volume includes neither an index nor a comprehensive table of contents, and the order in which species are listed is at times nonsensical or even in error. Anyone looking for a specific listing must search the book from beginning to end, and may even then miss it in the cramped and badly-typed pages.

In the book's favor, it is bound very sturdily in a stout brown leather cover and most copies which have not been deliberately destroyed have survived very well, even into the 1990s. The book includes a number of very good illustrations, penned by Carr himself, copied from the sketchbook he kept during his voyage. He apologizes that he had to omit his most significant drawings, having been considered too sensationalistic by his silent business partner.

Examples of animal species which Carr presents in the Addendum are Piscesalientia anthropus (from a mummified body of a human-life marine creature discovered in Hong Kong), Ferroptera rex (an enormous beetle discovered dead near the Black Sea), and a huge species of vampire bat he termed *D. camazotz.* An excerpt from that entry follows:

"I first saw mention of the winged devil (as the local people call it) in the reliefs of a small Mayan temple in a valley in the Yucatán. There were chronicled, in graphic detail, the lengths to which the ancient savages went to appease their thirsty god and his servants, the winged devils. The bats were apparently domesticated in the temples and in great caves nearby, and were taught to respond when they heard the sounds of the bloodthirsty rituals practiced nearby. Some of the locals tell stories of cattle, and even men, discovered in those valleys, which had been completely drained of blood..."

Carr includes illustrations of the reliefs, from which the ritual of summoning the bats can be learned. The ritual, called *Summon the Winged Devils*, requires a sacrifice of animals totalling at least 10 SIZ points, and a few repetitive notes played on odd pipes. The spell will only have an effect if cast at night, and only in Mexico or Central America. Outside of the Yucatán, halve the chance of success. 1D10 winged devils will be summoned, and all will be thirsty. Note that there is no spell for Binding these creatures which has survived to the present day.

Carr's book was greeted with silence, and the occasional disparaging reference. Today, it is considered the fanciful work of a crank by those few aware of its existence. Few, if any, of Carr's claims have ever been investigated.

A Zoologist's Addendum or, Forgotten Species of the World By Garrett Carr Parazoology Stats: English. +4 Mythos, -1D6 Sanity, x2 Spell Multiplier, Study Time: 1 Month Printing: Private, Oxford, 1911 (101 copies)

Spells: Summon Winged Devils

Winged Devil

The Winged Devil is a huge albino species of blood-drinking bat, which is rare enough to have remained unknown to science even in the modern day. Once, they were domesticated by a bat-cult in Central America. Today, only a few small flocks remain, sleeping by day in the hidden caverns where they were originally bred, perhaps guarding priceless archaeological treasures. Averaging the size of a small calf, they have smooth, translucent white fur and wingspans up to fifteen feet. They feed solely on human and animal blood, and in the high days of the bat-cult they were fed only human blood. This is an example of just one of the odd and terrible creatures described in the Zoologist's Addendum.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
STR	2D6+8	15
CON	2D6+8	15
SIZ	2D6+8	15
INT	1D6	3-4
POW	2D8	7
DEX	2D6+4	13
Hit Points	15	
Move	2 on land,	12 flying

Weapons: Bite, 20%, 1D4+1D4; Blood Drain, Auto., 1D4 STR/round Note: the winged devil will attack solely with its bite unless its victim is unconscious or immobilized, in which case it will settle on the victim and begin to drink the victim's blood. In such a case, an attack roll is unnecessary.

Some of the
locals tell stories
of cattle, and even men,
discovered in those valleys,
which had been completely
drained of blood



Spring, 1995 • The Unspeakable Oath-

Daniel Harms



A Tale Of Terror: "The Seventh Gateway of the Mirage"

A Tale of Terror is a short plot idea with three different possibilities to use. Mixing & matching elements from different Tales is a good way to come up with a creative scenario on short notice; alternately, they make excellent diversions or subplots in a lengthy campaign. Mine them for ideas. Tonight, one of the investigators has invited his fellows over to his house for a social gathering. Their plans are rudely interrupted by a wildeyed man pounding frantically at the door. The investigator recognizes him as Mr. Wraxton, his next-door neighbor. He is a short, balding, middle-aged man who generally acts in a very respectful manner, and a Psychology roll shows that he has suffered a great shock.

Mr. Wraxton tells the investigators that a few hours ago a man broke into his house, tied him up, smashed windows and furniture, and shouted something about the "seventh gateway of the mirage." Ten minutes ago, the man left, and Mr. Wraxton has just now been able to escape and go for help.

Accompanying the hysterical neighbor back to his house, the investigators find that nothing has been damaged, and there is no sign of an intruder. Mr. Wraxton insists the person was here, though careful questioning reveals that he is somewhat confused on the details.

Possibilities:

1) Poor Mr. Wraxton has been working too hard lately, and has suffered a nervous breakdown. His daughter in New York was killed by a robber a few months ago, and his fear of unknown assailants has overcome him at last. He may become dangerous if confronted with the facts.

2) A vengeful cult enemy of the investigators has been tracking them down for months. He used an hallucinogenic gas called "The Seventh Gateway of the Mirage" on Mr. Wraxton, mistakenly thinking he was releasing the gas into the investigator's house. After administering the drug, he entered, realized his mistake, and exited. The investigators will be targeted shortly. 3) A wizard recently entered the Dreamlands upon his death. He is set upon revenge against his enemies in the waking world, but has no way to carry out his plans. Lately he has contacted various people (including Mr. Wraxton) while they were sleeping and terrorizing them unless they find a spell called "The Seventh Gateway of the Mirage," a spell contained within a mysterious book known as the Uzuldaroum Incunabulum. Using this incantation, he may pull a waking-worlder physically into the Dreamlands, where the wizard may torture and execute his prey at leisure.

The sorcerer is unclear on just where this spell is located, but he has already taken control of some sleepers, and hopes to find the "Seventh Gateway" very soon. The investigators must stop these agents, and possibly even hunt down the evil magician in the Dreamlands.



-The Unspeakable Oath • Spring, 1995

Roman J. Andron



A Tale Of Terror: "Ghosts in the Schoolyard"

A Tale of Terror is a short plot idea with three different possibilities to use. Mixing & matching elements from different Tales is a good way to come up with a creative scenario on short notice; alternately, they make excellent diversions or subplots in a lengthy campaign. Mine them for id eas. A telephone call to one of the investigators delivers the disturbing news of the recent suicide of her nephew. The teenager killed himself along with two others in a bizarre suicide pact with satanic overtones. The investigator's sister has begun to receive threatening messages from strangers stating that she should simply bury her son and not probe any deeper into the circumstances of his death, and unusual events have begun to manifest in her home.

Possibilities

1) The nephew was involved with a group of other teenagers who were participating in black magic rituals. Something went terribly wrong during a casting. One of the teenagers (a runaway from a nearby large city) was slain as a human sacrifice and hidden in the wilderness surrounding the town. The body will be discovered by hikers in two more months, horribly decomposed and partially eaten.

The other teenagers in the group were of two opinions. The first set (who actually performed the sacrifice) remain in the region, strutting about with the new-found feeling of power they have obtained from the murder of another person. The second set of teenagers in the group are all dead-they were the three who committed suicide. The first set is busy trying to cover everything up and are making intimidating phone calls to the investigator's sister and repeatedly breaking into her house to frighten her into abandoning her inquiries. Any investigators who get involved will also be targeted by the group for similar intimidation tactics.

Alternately, the nephew may have been on the fringes of a much larger network of cultists, several of whom have blended into the community as lawyers, teachers, police officers, and blue-collar workers. The nephew and his two companions accidentally witnessed the sacrifice and were intimidated and terrorized by the group into silence. Ultimately, the fear and intimidation were paralyzing, leaving suicide as the only apparent option they could grasp.

2) The investigator's sister is a survivor of ritual abuse at the hands of a stillliving aunt and uncle. She has submerged the memories underneath a series of multiple personalities. The shock of her son's suicide has reawakened old nightmares and horrid memories, and unveiled the other personalities a bit at a time. Though the suicide itself will be revealed to be due to the nephew's own overpowering sense of hopelessness about his life at school and at home, the strange telephone calls and manifestations are actually the product of the sister's reemerging memories of her abuse. Keepers may want to explore the possibility of similar memories reemerging in the investigator herself as the truth is gradually revealed through flashbacks and old documents and photographs. This possibility is recommended for a strong roleplaying break from the usual Cthulhuoid horror and is intended for use only by mature players.

3) The nephew and his two friends were a part of a ritual summoning drawn from the 1977 Schlangekraft paperback edition of the Necronomicon (edited by "Simon"). They were attempting one of the earlier spells, but were ill-prepared for the effects. Without fully realizing it, they were able to open the first of the thirteen gates described in that text, and attracted an alien entity from the other side. This entity was a Star Vampire, and the youths were driven mad by sighting the (recently-fed) creature as it came through the newly-opened gate. The Star Vampire has remained around the town and has chosen to wander the periphery and feed from the harmless food source it has chanced upon-the townspeople and livestock in the area.

The gate itself is in the sister's basement and is throwing off turbulence as it slowly collapses into chaos. Even-tually, the gate will decay and close, but not before creating psychokinetic havoc throughout the entire house.



Mitchell-Hedges and the Skull of Doom

Michael Tice

The art and civilizations of Pre-Columbian America have much to offer the world of *Call of Cthulhu*. The prevalence of human sacrifice, ritual blood letting, and precise astronomical measurement combined with timeworn cyclopean temples poking out of the jungle make it ideal for adapting it to the Mythos... ahem, I mean exposing the elements of the Mythos that are indubitably there.

One of the more interesting art-motifs is the skull. Apart from many other skull representations, numerous small stylized skulls carved from native rock crystal have been found in the New World. some of them socketed to form staff heads or other ceremonial objects. Two of them, however, stand out from the rest. They are both life size and considerably more refined and detailed than the smaller specimens. One was brought out of Mexico by a Spanish officer in the early 1860s and now rests with English dignity in the Museum of Man in London. The other is the Skull of Doom, and doesn't appear to be content to settle down as a stolid museum showpiece.

Like the British Museum skull, it is life-size. However, the crystal from which it is carved is much clearer and the attention to anatomical detail is far more developed than in the BM Skull. Most notable, the Skull of Doom has a

Each issue, Esoterica will feature various authors' insights into the Mythos and the themes of the game that do not deal directly with game stats, adventure ideas, etc. detachable lower jaw with carefully modelled teeth. Although some say it is surrounded by a visible aura, the Skull of Doom is certainly surrounded by an aura of mystery. Most of the supernatural claims concerning the skull emanate from F. A. "Mike" Mitchell-Hedges, the British explorer/archaeologist/big game fisherman/fabulist, and his adopted daughter, Anna.

In his 1954 autobiography, Danger My Ally, Mitchell-Hedges describes the "sinister Skull of Doom", which "was used by the High Priest of the Maya when performing esoteric rites. It is said that when he willed death with the help of the skull, death invariably followed." Even left to its own devices, the skull would still cause death to strike. Anna relates in an article in Fate magazine (March 1962) that Mitchell-Hedges believed that doom befell those who did not believe in the Skull and revere it. Mitchell-Hedges gave it its proper reverence and survived numerous injuries during his adventurous career, but there were others who didn't believe in the skull. Richard Garvin, author of The Crystal Skull, tells of a South African newspaper photographer who was developing pictures that he had taken of the skull when his enlarger exploded, scaring him to death if not killing him. Others in Africa were struck by lightning out of a clear blue sky.

The skull has numerous other arcane properties, attested to by Anna and Frank Dorland, a Bay Area art conservator who was given access to the skull in the Sixties, when Garvin was writing his book on the subject. It was Dorland who described the eighteen inch long glowing aura about the skull. represented in the book by a "simulated photograph." Another peculiar claim is that the skull remains at a constant temperature (70 degrees) even after being placed in a freezer at -28 degrees. Eerie sounds are reported in the vicinity of the skull. Frequently at night, Frank Dorland's home rang with various tinklings, bumps, and soft invisible choirs.

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Also, objects may be seen by staring carefully into the crystal skull. As Dorland told Garvin, "You can see the damnedest things you ever saw in your life: other skulls, high mountains, fingers, and faces. On three occasions, I saw a dark spot appear which grew to cover about one-half of the skull and appeared to be a clear black void surrounded by bands of deep purple. Images of temples appear and disappear. I have photographed these." Indeed, the book reproduces a picture taken of the right eyesocket with a tiny silhouette reminiscent of the Caracol at Chichen Itza.

Provenance of the Skull (I)

Mitchell-Hedges never revealed when or where he discovered the Crystal Skull. In fact, he tells us that he has "reason for not revealing" that information. Luckily, Anna had no such compunctions and has frequently stated that it was found during Mitchell-Hedges' excavations of the Mayan ruins at Lubantuun in what is now Belize. Indeed, she herself found the larger piece beneath an altar on her seventeenth birthday, in 1924. Three months later, the jaw was found a few yards away. Surely, though, her story is merely a minor embellishment of the facts, and the skull really was found at Lubantuun, or by Mitchell-Hedges on one of his other expeditions. After all, we have the word of F. A. "Mike" Mitchell-Hedges himself.

Baron Mitchell-Hedges

Even a cursory examination of Mitchell-Hedges autobiography reveals him to be one of the most courageous, adventurous, and fearless individuals of this century or any other. After setting his wife up with a house in England, he abandoned her in 1913 and was continually on the move. First, the penniless adventurer travelled to New York where he played poker with millionaires, gave and received advice on stocks, made a million dollars and blew it all in a fit of pique against his co-investors. Then, to Louisiana where he funded his travels by rooking extremely rich and extremely drunk gamblers. The management eventually frowned on his strategy and Mexico seemed to be a safe enough place.

Unfortunately, he was captured here by Pancho Villa, and joined his merry band, even taking part (reluctantly) in a raid on a town across the border. This raid was apparently so successful that everyone was so frightened they neglected to tell anybody about it. Sibley Morrill has written an interesting (if unpersuasive) book that ties all of those unsightly loose ends in Pancho Villa's camp together: Ambrose Bierce, F. A. Mitchell-Hedges, and the Crystal Skull.

Mitchell-Hedges adopted the tenyear old Anna in Canada in 1917, and thereafter she either accompanied him or was left unhappily in the care of boarding schools. In England a few years later, he met up with Lady Richmond Brown, who funded his expedition to Central America on the condition that she accompany him. She was suffering from a terminal illness and wanted to die "doing something worthwhile." Together they ran into a band of vicious natives that were reputed to kill any strangers they met. Luckily, they were able to impersonate gods and gained everything they needed. They brought medicine to many of the tribes they met and were given fetishes by some of the shamans in return for their work. One of the more potent of these was a malformed, sixmonth fetus on a stick.

Before going on to his excavations at Lubantuun, Mitchell-Hedges spent some months in the Caribbean and broke a number of sport-fishing records. Some pictures of his catches appear in the autobiography; some of them are very fishy photographs indeed. In any case, 1924 found Mitchell-Hedges, Lady Brown, and Dr. Thomas Gann in Lubantuun. Dr. Gann travelled widely in Central America and his many books describe quite well the air of excitement in the Twenties and Thirties as Mayan sites seemed to be sprouting from the jungle like wildfire. Strangely, he doesn't mention Anna being there, nor does she appear in any of the pictures, although the other principals do. Even more sinister, he doesn't mention the discovery of the Skull of Doom. Perhaps the same malignant force which caused MitchellHedges to remove all mention of the skull in later editions of his autobiography was responsible for silencing Dr. Gann as well.

In any event, Mitchell-Hedges continued to save photographers from crocodiles, avoid the dreaded and ferocious iguanas, and participate in some fashion in every governmental collapse, coup, or uprising in Central America. In the meantime, he expounded upon his theories of archaeology, which have a certain appeal to the followers of the Mythos.

Mitchell-Hedges was a strong believer in the existence of Atlantis and saw the great Pre-Columbian civilizations of the New World as evidence for this hypothesis. He believed Atlantis was the "Cradle of Civilization," tens of thousands of years before the present, and that the downfall of Atlantis resulted in the Flood of Noah around 6000 BC. He strongly asserted that the objects he found at a site on a Caribbean island were of that age and the island formed the western edge of now sunken



Atlantis. He also hypothesized that the demise of Atlantis gave rise to both the Pyramids of Egypt and those of the New World.

Incidentally, Frank Dorland is also a great believer in the Atlantis hypothesis, and has tied the Skull into the matter. Dorland claims to have "evidence" that the Skull of Doom was first manufactured in Atlantis (or possibly Egypt, or Babylon, or Tibet) It was then used for a time by the Babylonians, but then the Phoenicians took it to the New World (via Atlantis, of course) where the Mayas got their hands on it.

Provenance of the Skull (II)

The reason Mitchell-Hedges had reason not to reveal the circumstances surrounding the acquisition of the Skull of Doom is simply that he bought it in London in 1944. Joe Nickell's book, Secrets of the Supernatural, provides solid evidence that this is the case. It has long been known that Mitchell-Hedges bought it from Sydney Burney for 400 pounds, but it has always been maintained that Mitchell-Hedges first gave the skull to Burney to secure a loan to fund an expedition, and the 1944 "purchase" was merely a repayment of the loan. This excuse fails to hold water. Perhaps the most damaging evidence is that the first mention of the skull by Mitchell-Hedges (as far as I know) is in Danger, My Ally, published in 1954. Even in his lurid newspaper stories about Atlantis, published in the mid-Thirties, he doesn't use the skull as evidence, despite its obvious sensational value. However, Nickell managed to find mention of the skull in a 1933 letter from Burney to the American Museum of Natural History.

Still, since Mitchell-Hedges' apologists insist on the 1924 date for its discovery, it comes down to Burney's word against that of Mitchell- Hedges. I hope my brief discourse on the latter has dispelled any remaining doubts. Fortunately, this only makes the history of the skull more interesting. In Burney's letter, he says "the Rock-crystal Skull was for several years in the possession of the collector from whom I bought it and he in his turn had it from an Englishman in whose collection it had been also for several years, but beyond that I have not been able to go." Thus, one owner ago, it could have been anywhere in the hands of practically anyone. Two owners ago, in England. Three owners ago it could have come from Atlantis for all we know.

Tracing it the opposite direction is much easier. Anna inherited it from her father after his death from a cerebral embolism in 1959. It remained in her possession until she loaned it out to Frank Dorland in the mid-Sixties. When Dorland was not performing tests on it, it was kept in a vault at a Bank of America in Mill Valley, leading Garvin to entitle the first chapter of his book *The Thing in the Vault* in true Lovecraftian style. In 1970, apparently after being outraged at Dorland's twin abuses of scrying with the skull and his publicity of the skull in newspapers, Anna retrieved the skull and boarded a Greyhound bus for her home in Ontario. In 1972, she placed the skull in the Museum of the American Indian in New York. More recently, in 1987, she toured several cities with the skull, attempting to gather sufficient funds to build a permanent structure where visitors could come to see and even touch it. My informant Bruce Martin says that you could see the skull for five dollars, or see the additional slide lecture for ten. At present, I am unaware of the skull's whereabouts, but assuming Anna is still alive (in her late eighties) it is probably with her.

What Is It?

Both pieces of the skull seem to have been carved from the same raw piece of quartz, probably originating in the New World. The Skull of Doom is quite clear, clearer than the British Museum skull, but still filled with whitish streaks and veils. Overall, the skull has a very shiny, almost liquid appearance, enhanced by patterns of refracted light.

In the July, 1936 issue of *Man*, the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, a comparison between the two skulls is presented on the basis of morphological and anthropometric data. In the article, the Skull of Doom is referred to as the "Burney Skull," with no mention whatsoever of Mitchell-Hedges, further demolishing his claim to it. The Crystal Skull weighs in at 11 pounds, 7 ounces, making it quite a large piece of worked quartz. Since the skull

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- Martin, Bruce. Personal communication. Bruce quoted an article in the Charlottesville, Virginia Daily Progress (10/8/1987) describing the arrival of the skull in town. Anna seems to have mellowed the reputation of the skull. It was described as "a skull of love, of healing".
- Mitchell-Hedges, F. A. Danger, My Ally. London: Elek Books, 1954. Sadly, later editions of this book have all references to the skull removed. It does describe the fetus-on-a-stick, though no pictures. Blair?

Morant, G. M. "A Morphological Comparison of Two Crystal Skulls." In: Man (v. 36, July 1936) No psychic monkey business here, but a couple nice plates of the two skulls.

Morley, Sylvanus Griswold. An Introduction to the Study of the Maya Hieroglyphics. Washington: Govt. Print. Office, 1915. An excellent introduction to Mayan writing which covers the mathematical system and calendar of the Maya. A Dover reprint is inexpensive and widely available. This book is useful for *Call of Cthulhu* in that this book would reflect the current state of knowledge in the Twenties. Translation of Mayan texts in the Twenties was mostly supposition.

Nickell, Joe. Secrets of the Supernatural. Buffalo: Prometheus, 1988. The text of Burney's letter is the one piece of evidence that utterly destroys Mitchell-Hedges' claim of discovery. Furthermore, I'd like to give my recommendation of Prometheus Books in general and Joe Nickell in particular. The chapter on the Crystal Skull is reprinted from an article in the July and August, 1984 issues of Fate magazine.

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doesn't bear any suture marks, it's impossible to take some of the usual numerical skull measurements. Nevertheless, it appears that both skulls depict a female subject. Also, although this was a source of contention among the contributing experts, the similarity in the cranial measurements of the two skulls is so great that it is likely that one skull is a copy of the other. Unfortunately, since dating the carving is impossible, it cannot be said whether the British Museum skull is a crude knock-off of the original Skull of Doom, or the British skull served as a model for the later, improved skull.

No one seems to doubt the authenticity of the skull. There is some question about the extreme realism of the object, since most Pre- Columbian art is highly stylized. Still, the consensus seems to be that it was created by Mixtec or Aztec artisans, possibly in the time of the conquistadors, who brought artistic naturalism to the New World. However, it could easily have been created centuries before Columbus by Mayan artisans.

The skull as a symbol has obvious implications, but there are additional subtleties to the motif. In particular, the skull-headed god of death, Mictlantecutli (aka Metnal, Cizin, or Ah Puch), plays an important part in Mayan mathematics. First, a brief digression on Mayan arithmetic. The Maya, well before the equivalent discovery by the Old World Indians, utilized a place holding system of numbers including the zero. Unlike our base ten numeral system, the Mayas used twenty as their base, with an important exception. Using this system, a Mayan 'hundred' would be $20 \cdot 20 = 400$. However, the astronomical fact of a 365 day long year induced them to make only 18 divisions in the tens place, so that a Mayan 'hundred' is actually 18 $\cdot 20 = 360$. For those interested in the mathematics and calendar system of the Mayas, I highly recommend Morley's book in the Bibliography.

For writing their numerals, several different variants were used. One of these involved carving a glyph representing a god's head for each numeral. In particular, the skull-head of Mictlantecutli stood for ten. Then, for example, fifteen would be formed from simply affixing the fleshless jaw of the death god to the face of the god for five. In general, the teens were formed in this way, although eleven, twelve and thirteen often had their own unique form as well. Thus the Skull of Doom may have had not only martial or religious significance, but mathematical or scientific significance as well, especially since the jaw of the skull is removable, mimicking the construction of the numerals.

What Might It Be?

For our purposes, in the realm of *Call of Cthulhu*, the Crystal Skull offers many possible interpretations. The easy way out is to say that everything that the Mitchell-Hedges family and Frank Dorland have said is true. The Skull originated in Atlantis (or Hyborea, or the Plateau of Leng) and it can be used for

scrying and causing the deaths of others, all the while remaining at a constant and comfortable temperature.

Many more interesting possibilities present themselves, however. Personally, I offer the following scenario. Nyarlathotep, in his guise of the Fleshless Skull, Mictlantecutli, offered the skull to the Mayas. The scientist-priests used it to perform sacrifices and were rewarded by the secrets of astronomy and mathematics. Even now, one must imagine, if enough blood is spilt on its liquidly carved surfaces, the skull will grant knowledge to the celebrant, naturally with some detriment to sanity. My only reservation about this idea is that it utterly negates the amazing accomplishments of the Maya, whose astronomical measurements were by far the most accurate in the world until modern times and whose invention of the concept of zero is far more significant than it seems.

As far as placing the sinister object in your campaign, the options are limitless. During the decade of the Twenties, it appears that the Skull changed hands at least twice. One owner was English and we know nothing of the other. It could be in the possession of nearly anyone, or it could be resting, biding its time, waiting to be discovered by someone with a high POW in an isolated pile of masonry in the Yucatán jungles.



John H. Crowe, III

Any spells in the *Call of Cthulhu* rules are never really intended for investigators to make use of. But players will often get ahold of these spells in long-running campaigns, to the detriment of fair play. Two spells in particular are easilyabused and could stand to be toughened to prevent such abuse: Resurrection and Dread Curse of Azathoth.

Resurrection

Are you tired of the spell Resurrection? Of how it resembles spells in sword and sorcery type games? Of how it can be easily abused by players? Consider this...

As it reads in the fifth edition *Call of Cthulhu* rules, Resurrection is an in-

volved process requiring the caster to reduce the deceased down to his or her "essential salts and compounds" which appear as a fine, bluish-gray powder or ash. Assuming all of the salts are available and no portion is missing (whereupon the desired effect is lost and the result is something monstrous), the spell will work as long as a magic point versus magic point contest on the resistance table comes out in the favor of the caster. The reverse of the spell can reduce a person that has been resurrected back down to the aforementioned powder. Though involved, there is really no penalty for using this outside of SAN loss. Losing SAN, but saving the life of a valued friend or loved one seems to be a more than equitable trade.

Rather than bar this spell from the hands of investigators, I have found that

it pays to tinker with its mechanics. One nasty twist that really irritated and confounded players in my scenarios several years ago was to add an element of vampirism to the spell. When it came into their possession, all they learned was how to cast it, not what it ultimately did to the target. The description of the method of casting doesn't change. Instead, the subject who is resurrected becomes a vampire. No, he/she gains none of the benefits or powers of a vampire. Rather, anyone who was resurrected found that they had an unusual, insatiable appetite for human blood. This was more than psychological. It was a physical need. Without human blood, the individual would waste away and die. I tinkered around with the actual amounts of blood required over a typical week. One pint every few days is a good guideline, but it could get even more entertaining to force those who were resurrected to have to consume even larger amounts (a pint or more a day perhaps?). Those who were unable or unwilling to acquire the requisite amount of blood would waste away and ultimately die. Losing perhaps a point per day from CON and STR statistics is a general guideline, but the losses could be increased for dramatic effect. If either stat were to reach zero at any time, death would occur. Losses should be temporary, however. Consuming blood would gradually restore the lost points at a rate roughly equivalent to the rate of loss.

In practice, I found this to be an excellent twist. The investigators ran across a copy of the spell is a dusty tome and, of course, took advantage of it at first opportunity. That opportunity occurred at a time when two or three investigators died at once. Thus, these all fell into the trap. Over several gameyears in a long running campaign, several people were recipients of this spell. Others who knew about it specifically asked never to be resurrected for they did not want to live lives like their stricken comrades. All those affected were forced into extraordinary positions and situations. In 1920s New England, how would one collect sufficient amounts of blood to survive in the long term?



What impact would this have on personal lives, not to mention future scenarios? In short, it was delightful mayhem much of the time. Some turned to a life of crime, others entered a semiretirement, and still others managed to scrape by with some semblance of normalcy in their lives. Very few survived to see FDR elected.

Dread Curse of Azathoth

As one of the handful of spells that has long been in the *Call of Cthulhu* system, Dread Curse of Azathoth is relatively common in scenarios and can often be found in the clutches of player characters striving to become the next Merlin. As is stated in the fifth edition CoC rules, the spell is simply the secret final syllable of Azathoth's name. Spoken correctly, the target loses 1D3 POW unless he or she succeeds in a resistance roll.

Ever wonder how this must feel? Presumably, the loss of any POW, particular in a sudden, unexpected stroke is excruciating. This makes it ideal for those who enjoy punishing foes or inflicting torture that cannot be detected by physical means.

For some, this spell may be getting a

bit tired. Here's an option to liven things up a bit. Just add a step to it. If it is successful. the POW lost by the victim is transferred permanently to the caster, making him/her a vampire of sorts. Otherwise the SAN loss and magic point expenditure is the same. An option the Keeper may wish to use is to give this spell an "addiction factor." While the caster loses 1D6 SAN and four magic points when using this spell, 1D3 POW is gained from the victim. This causes some amount of pleasure, as well as guilt, while the victim suffers great discomfort. The Keeper may choose to have the caster make a Luck or INTx5 roll to avoid becoming addicted to the spell and thus being forced to use it on a regular basis (perhaps once per week), potentially on any convenient victim. The Keeper may also decide to increase the SAN loss to 1D8. Finally, the power drain effect of this spell is handy, but a person cannot have his or her POW increased beyond 21 in this manner unless there has been some sort of drastic physical/mystical alteration of the body. As usual, if the victim's POW reaches zero, death occurs and resurrection is impossible except maybe to bring the subject back as a

mindless and extremely violent zombie.

Obviously this variant makes the spell quite powerful, but its potential detrimental side effects should make most responsible investigators think twice before employing it. Over the past ten years, various Call of Cthulhu groups I have been involved with have used this variant in one form or another (but not with the addiction factor). To my knowledge, we initially used this variant simply because we skimmed the description and misread it. However, I have found that it works well and does not unbalance the game. Those who are concerned that use of this spell might generate great sorcerers should remember that a high POW doesn't make one a great sorcerer, knowledge of the occult and magic does. Furthermore, any such concerns can be alleviated by the limitations provided by an addiction factor and increased SAN loss.

Conclusion

Got a problem spell in your campaign? Look at the ideas in this article and see if you can apply them to your situation. In magic, nothing is as it seems: keep your players guessing.

Matthew J. Ruane



A Tale Of Terror: "Too Many Masks"

uring the Great War horrific injuries were caused by shrapnel and shell fragments, often severely mutilating soldiers struck by them. The war saw the birth of reconstructive "plastic" surgery, but this was a field faced with numerous "teething problems" and much of the surgery was highly experimental and the results were limited. Some of the participants in the Great War were too horribly scarred to be allowed in public and before plastic surgery was begun in 1916, disfigured servicemen in Britain were issued painted masks to cover their injuries. These thin tin masks were modeled to appear realistic when matched with the undamaged side of the face, or if the injuries were more extensive, they were modeled to appear as close to pre-war photographs of the injured soldier as the artist could achieve. Some of the men wore masks for years, updating them as reconstructive surgery repaired some of the damage. For many others, however, the "monster" within could not live with themselves and their gruesome visage and took their own lives rather than facing the looks of terror given them in the street by passersby.

It is a bright and sunny morning with a few wispy clouds in the sky. Describe the humidity in the air as a pair of clammy claws gripping at the throat of the investigator. The day promises to be extremely warm and perspiration drips down the neck of the investigator soaking their collar and underarms. As the investigator stands waiting for their bus, a sudden automobile backfiring should trigger a jarring memory of the war. Describe how the air seems to close in on the investigator in a shimmering of rainbow hues, and how the passersby seem to assume the images of lost comrades last seen rotting in the trenches of Flanders. Drag on the scene as long as necessary and kindle in the player a vision of the war's utter futility and horror. The arrival of the bus should snap the investigator back to the here and now. The lower level of the bus is filled with old ladies clutching paper bags and the air reeks of cheap perfume and the smells of "old age." The upper level of the bus is empty except for a man apparently the same age as the investigator. The man wears a battered military style trenchcoat and a crumpled blue suit. Describe how the man turns to stare at



A Tale of Terror is a short plot idea with three different possibilities to use. Mixing & matching elements from different Tales is a good way to come up with a creative scenario on short notice; alternately, they make excellent diversions or subplots in a lengthy campaign. Mine them for ideas.

-The Unspeakable Oath • Spring, 1995

the investigator, and how the man's face is well tanned and fixed with a cool smile. Describe how the man intently stares into the face of the investigator as if searching for something. The look is disturbing as only the eyes appear animate. After what appears to be an eternity, the man turns around and stares out the window.

As the bus arrives at the appropriate stop, the investigator should notice that they are sitting alone. In the aisle of the bus is a painted mask lying face down. If the investigator picks up the mask, they notice that it is covered in slippery, clear substance that can only be wiped off. If they ask the conductor where the man went to, the conductor will state that he saw no one else sitting upstairs. He offers to take the mask and turn it into the company's lost items depot at the end of the day. Who owned the mask and what it all means is a mystery.

Possibilities

1) When the investigator picks up the mask, describe a sudden and overwhelming urge to put the mask on. If the investigator chooses to do so, the mask will grip tightly to the wearer's face and they will feel an intense burning sensation as the mask seems to meld with their face. Eventually the mask can be removed but the wearer's face has been changed to resembled that of the previous wearer's. The investigator also has vague memories of being horribly mutilated by a bursting shell and of a life quite unlike their own.

2) After the investigator turns over the mask to the conductor, he is seized with panic and plunged into a waking nightmare. The bus seems to fade away to be replaced with a desolate section of trench. Describe how shells pass overhead and how the night sky is lit by several flares. A ladder lies within arm's reach and it is propped against the wall of the trench. The investigator should be led to understand that they are about to participate in a raid. Just as they are about to go over the top, as a whistle screeches in the background, a burst of white light suddenly appears above the investigator. "In that moment a burning sensation repeatedly rips through your face. As you begin to faint from the pain, you hope to God that you will be alright." When the investigator comes to, they are no longer on the bus, but lying on their back. The conductor can be seen standing off to one side retching. A policeman is looking down at the investigator and his face is slightly averted. In his hand is a thin tin mask. His only words are "Please sir, please put your mask back on. It must have come off when you slipped sir. Please, if only for the sake of the ladies present." How did the investigator become mutilated? Where did the man from the bus go? Perhaps he has the answers the investigator needs.

3) Other than the moment the investigator picked up the mask, their day is uneventful. As they prepare for the evening rush, a flashback to the incident on the bus occurs. Only now does the investigator remember that the man on the bus actually said something, and the only thing that they can remember is the phrase "Too many masks... Too many masks." While waiting for the bus home. the investigator should have the opportunity to notice that a man similar to the one on the morning bus is standing in the queue across the road. Before the investigator is able to act, their bus should arrive. Describe how at each subsequent stop, the investigator notices the man with the mask is in each one. If they try to catch up with the man, he isn't there. An uneasy feeling grips the investigator. Describe how more and more of the waiting passengers appear to be wearing masks. If the investigator panics, or tries to get off the bus, they notice everyone around them is wearing masks and pounding their mind is the phrase "Too many masks... Too many masks." What does it all mean? Where are all the masks coming from? Why is everyone wearing one? A hard hearted keeper should just call for sanity rolls, lots of them. A soft one can just have it be a dream and have the investigator wake up when the bus reaches their stop. 3



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Bob Kindel

ne problem with many *Call of Cthulhu* campaigns is that the Keeper does most of the work for players. Every utterance, every casual comment is a clue to be used in the solution of the problem presented. While this may be appropriate in a time-limited event played at a convention, a campaign requires more room for the mundane and more work on the players' parts.

I use three main tools in keeping my players on their toes and more select in their responses. In presenting these, I'll present an example of each.

Casual Comments

Not every comment by the Keeper should be a clue. Real life is full of

extraneous data: so I scatter such data in any description of people, places, and events.

In describing the attire of someone the party met at the library, I mentioned that he had an odd-looking tie clasp. When pressed for more detail, I stated that it was a thin brown rectangle (long sides horizontal) with two almost square white rectangles (long sides vertical) in the center. The group focused on this item, ignoring other (less blatant) clues. They indulged in a frenzy of speculation, had the private investigator tail the man who was only an insurance agent - on his daily rounds, and spent a great deal of library time until someone thought to look at a directory of clubs. They found that the symbol was that of the Brotherhood of Beavers, an organization less well-known but just as innocuously

fraternal as the Elks or Moose.

Random Events

In CoC, as in life, not every event is important or portentous. Things happen that are meaningless and/or benign. Putting random events in an investigation may keep the players unsure of when to react and make them more cautious.

My group's investigations caused them to drive to northern Maine. They stopped for the night in upstate New York, two days' drive from their goal. They were given rooms on the third floor of a small inn. Their windows faced a stand of silver maples in fall colors, a stand so close that some branches touched the windows. In response to their paranoiatinged questions, I assured them that the branches were about half an inch in diameter, much too small to support a person.

Nonetheless, when an investigator was awakened at 3AM by a gentle tapping on his window, his response was to grab the fully-loaded 12-gauge shotgun beside his bed and to fire both barrels at the window. He destroyed the window and the curtains, damaged the wall, but did little damage to the branch that the wind was blowing against the window. It took a great deal of imagination, some fast talking, and cash to keep the innkeeper from calling the constable. It also cost the investigators hours of time they could ill afford to lose.

Red Herrings

When confronted with a situation, players generally assume that there is a Cthulhuoid cause. After all, this is CoC. By always postulating a Mythos basis to the problem, the players may have difficulty dealing with problems caused by non-Mythos forces. This can have interesting results for the investigators.

Two months previously the group had rescued the noted archaeologist Professor Danton, who was the father of the one of the investigators. The professor had stumbled upon a hidden shrine and was about to be sacrificed to something hideous when the group finally saved him. Shaken by the experience, the



professor went back to the archaeological dig and the group went on to London.

They were surprised when his daughter got a cable in family code that led them to Jerusalem. After a quick investigation, they found the professor holed up in a warehouse and guarded by his bearers and diggers. He told the group that survivors of the cult were trying to complete the sacrifice ritual and were after him. He fled to Jerusalem, a city where he had many friends, but found that there were three shadowy arms of the cult in the city and that some of his friends were involved in them. All three groups were working toward his demise and only the investigators could stop them.

The investigators looked into these three groups and found a gang of gun runners, a cabal of Zionist terrorists, and a family of morphine refiners. None were cults, none were Cthulhuoid, but all three violently resisted investigation. The resultant gun battles, explosions, and legal complications led to the British authorities ejecting the investigators from Palestine. The professor was seeing cults where none existed due to paranoid delusions he developed after the neardeath experience cause a significant loss of sanity. He wound up in a very nice asylum in Arkham.

The group ignored the professor's change in behavior and his paranoid ramblings because they were expecting to find a cult and assumed there had to be one behind the events they were investigating.

Conclusion

By making the players unsure of the import of every supposed clue, every event, and every call for help, the Keeper can keep the players off-balance and encourage them to be less likely to rush in blindly. This can result in player behavior that is thoughtful, tentative, and less likely to jump at shadows. What more could a Keeper want?

Spring, 1995 • The Unspeakable Oath-

Glen Taylor



Mysterious Manuscript: "The Strangue Bible"

Mysterious Manuscripts is a regular feature that examines a staple of CoC gaming: tomes of eldritch lore.

The near-mythical Strangue Bible is one of the most horrid and elusive books of occult interest in existence. In fact, its very existence is considered by most serious occultists to be mere fantasy. Only a handful of the most knowledgeable pursuers of the bizarre know of the awful trail of horror and disaster that this book has left in its wake in its decades of existence. However, enough information has emerged from those it has touched to describe this mysterious book.

In form, the book is a medium-sized King James Version Bible bound in worn black leather. The bible itself was printed in England in 1821. The edges of the cover are tattered, and the last remnants of a gold-leaf cross on the face are visible. The book appears to have been subjected to minor damage from fire, cuts, and odd dark stains, but has survived relatively intact.

Inside the cover, the book bears the name "Evelyn Strangue," written in faded black ink, in a very neat handwriting. This name has perplexed many scholars studying the book, and much work has been done to find this Evelyn Strangue. It is from this inscription that the common name of the book arises. Research has not turned up any woman with the name of Evelyn Strangue who has any connection to the book, but a woman by that name was entered into a private asylum for the insane in 1830 (the Keeper may choose which institution this should be). Her admission statement mentions that she brought a book with her, which the asylum authorities could not persuade her to leave behind. No death report exists for this Evelyn Strangue, and she seems to disappear from history in 1831, along with her book. Asylum records never mention her departure or eventual fate.

The actual text of the book is of no interest to the occultists who seek it, as it is an ordinary King James Bible. However, the margins and blank spaces of the book are crowded with small notes and drawings, in both pencil and ink, which annotate the text of the bible and chronicle the studies of the enigmatic Evelyn Strangue. These rambling notes compare the Christian bible to a number of other historical, mythological, anthropological, and astronomic sources, and theorize some extremely heretical causes for the biblical events described. Also in the book are a large number (at least 50) of loose leaves of notes and drawings, many of which are incomplete, leading students of the book to believe that some of the pages have been lost, perhaps forever. A selection of the marginal notes follows:

Rev. 13: The manyhorned Dragon-rising from the sea; is it a coincidence? Kadulh of the Anu Text, also sea beast, face ringed with feelers, will rise again. There is no mistake, this is prophecy, we must make ready for his return.

The first confirmed sighting of the *Strangue Bible* was in 1854. An unnamed London clerk found the book sealed in a chest in his employer's office, while looking through a number of old ship's manifests. He sold the innocuous bible to a Dr. Stephan MacDonald, a curious theologist. By 1856, MacDonald had come into a considerable fortune, though a few acquaintances said that they suspected he had arrived at his wealth through unwholesome or unlaw-ful means. In 1857 MacDonald was killed by an unknown assailant, and the bible had disappeared.



The Strangue Bible by Evelyn Strangue (?) religious study

Stats Language: English

Cthulu Mythos: +4

Occult: +4

Sanity: -1D6

Spell Multiplier: x1

Study Time: 2 months

Printing Unique copy, circa 1821-1854

Spells Summon/Bind Servitor of the Outer Gods

Call/Dismiss Lesser Other God

Call Azathoth

Dread Curse of Azathoth

Elder Sign

Over the next several decades, the bible appeared in a number of places in England and America. Wherever it has left its mark, it has begun a cycle of prosperity, madness, and death by violence for its owner. This pattern has engendered a rumor that the book is cursed, though this has not dissuaded any of those who seek it.

The most probable cause of the curse is the danger inherent in the blasphemous rituals described in the rambling notes. While many of the rituals are either false or harmless, or are too incomplete for a reader to reproduce, a few very dangerous actual spells are recorded. Among these are *Summon* and *Bind Servitor of the Outer Gods* (called the "Chant of the Winds" in the notes, and not requiring the normal enchanted pipes, this spell always summons the same servitor, a cold and many-clawed being named Sessiress), *Call* and *Dismiss Lesser Other God* (this spell is called "Circle of the Dark," requires a blood sacrifice of at least 15 SIZ points of animals or humans, and calls forth the mindless godling Gereranth), *Call Azathoth* (this spell is called "Summoning of Oblivion" and neither describes its effect nor a dismissal spell), *Dread Curse of Azathoth* and *Elder Sign* (both of which are described in the CoC rulebook).

Spring, 1995 • The Unspeakable Oath-

Illo: Toren Atkinson -



John H. Crowe, III

n most any roleplaying system set in the real world, sooner or later players will have to deal with law enforcement in some way. Often this relationship is adversarial with Call of Cthulhu being no exception. In the United States in the period between the two world wars, law enforcement was only beginning to resemble the form it possesses today. As with many subjects, this suffers from stereotypes and misinformation and few people aside from scholars have any real or accurate notion as to what the state of policing was in the United States in the 1920s and 1930s. The purpose here is to provide detailed information on law enforcement that is useful to both Keepers and players.

The Late 1800s

A proper study of US. law enforcement of the inter-war period cannot begin until its roots are examined. Prior to the First World War, law enforcement was in a remarkably poor state, lacking even rudimentary professionalism. While there were many cases of good officers who exerted great efforts to change the state of policing, the norm was more depressing. Simply put, law enforcement was not considered a profession either by the public or by members of the occupation. Large city police departments were often so subordinate to corrupt city governments that there was no chance of independent action. Individual officers were provided little training and standards for hiring were virtually nonexistent. Rural areas often had no form of law enforcement at all and vigilantism at times took over. With this state of affairs, it should come as no surprise that corruption, both petty and gross, was so prevalent prior to the First World War.

Riot control and strikebreaking was a different matter altogether from routine policing. When civil disorders (including strikes) were more than local police could handle, forces of special deputies or constables were often employed. Riot duty was likely to be hazardous and even life threatening. Recruits were drawn from the pool of floating labor, from drunks and drifters who needed the cash to bullies seeking to abuse the position or pilfer the property they were supposed to protect. Sometimes a private agency such as the Pinkertons would, in addition to furnishing guards, provide strikebreakers.

An alternative was to use the state militia. Although millions of citizens were registered nationwide, only a few thousand were organized into units and training and equipment varied considerably. Militia troops often either failed to deal with the problem or used an unnecessary amount of force. Some fled from mobs, others fired on them without orders, and some even fraternized with them as was the case in some racial conflicts. If the militia failed and the case was extreme enough, regular Army units could be called out to restore order. Some cases showed that police departments were tougher than militia troops who were not well trained and not accustomed to dealing with unruly and extremely violent mobs.

Federal troops were generally better equipped and trained and did not experience such problems. They were quite successful in putting down riots they were called in to deal with. Some of the worst riots occurred in the years between the Civil War and the end of the nineteenth century.

The 1920s & 1930s

The first few decades of the twentieth century marked a revolution in US. law enforcement. New scientific techniques of

investigation pioneered in Europe were gradually adopted and new approaches were made in law enforcement itself. Professionalism began to seep into policing and was led by the development of state police organizations. Other key developments included the separation of police departments from city governments in large cities and the expansion of federal agencies such as the F.B.I.

State Police Organizations

Originally conceived as a force to put down various ethnic groups, rioters, strikers, etc. that often irritated and conflicted with local police organizations, troopers soon found a new role. A great change was needed due to shocking corruption in many big cities both in city government and city police, the virtual lack of law enforcement in many rural areas, and the introduction of the mass produced, affordable automobile giving the criminal element new mobility. State police agencies were this change. They became professional and reasonably incorruptible and disciplined forces that could fill in gaps in regional law enforcement. These organizations soon became responsible for traffic and crime control in the rural areas of many states.

The New Jersey State Police is one organization worthy of examination. In 1921, a West Point graduate, former cavalry officer, and former Army Provost Marshal named Herbert Norman Schwartzkopf (father of the general in charge of the Gulf War's coalition forces) became the superintendent of the State Police. At the time he led 120 troopers and immediately began to introduce military methods to the organization. Senior officers were required to have a minimum of two years of commissioned military service. Recruits were required to serve two years with it being a misdemeanor crime to leave before the tour was complete. They were trained under officers of the Pennsylvania State Police and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police at a National Guard training center. Those assigned to northern New Jersey received motorcycles while those sent to the less developed southern areas received horses. As roads and highways

improved, horses were withdrawn from service. Public relations were good despite some complaints. Within a decade of its creation, the New Jersey State Police was a strong and stable organization. Perhaps the most famous case in its jurisdiction during the inter-war period was the kidnapping of the twenty month old son of the famous aviator, Charles Lindbergh. This tragic case led to legislation that in 1933 made kidnapping a federal crime under the jurisdiction of the F.B.I.

Pennsvlvania underwent a similar process in developing a state police organization. In response to long term civil unrest often involving striking coal miners, Governor Pennypacker signed into being a state police that began operating in 1905, the first such agency in the United States. The first commander was a National Guard officer named John C. Groome. Like Schwartzkopf, he recruited National Guard and regular Army officers to serve as officers in his state police. Most of the rest of his 228 men had served in the Army for at least one tour. Military experience was not the only criteria Groome took into account. "Physical stamina, devotion to duty, reckless bravery, and contempt for foreigners" were other qualities he sought out. The last two of these criteria can be problems for a law enforcement officer, of course. "Reckless bravery" can lead to the officer's needless death and "contempt for foreigners" can lead to unnecessary confrontations and violations of civil rights.

Once selected, all went through rigor ous training and were then sent to western Pennsylvania where the worst unrest was occurring. These early troopers appeared more like cavalry soldiers than law officers. Each was equipped with a horse, rifle, revolver, and even a sabre. The result was surprising. The state for the first time was able to impose order in the region. Not only were rioting miners dealt with, but companies found they could no longer take the law into their own hands. Peaceful picketers could not be molested by strikebreakers nor could workers be abused as they had before. Although the track record of the

Pennsylvania State Police was good, inherent prejudice against immigrants resulted in all sorts of abuses of legal power. Troopers systematically swept through immigrant areas to punish "inappropriate" behavior. This resulted in illegal searches of homes and other violations and resistance was rewarded with beatings and arrests. Despite this, the Pennsylvania State Police was a marked advance over the previous state of affairs. From 1923 to 1937, the State Police worked alongside another state organization, the Pennsylvania State Highway Patrol. They were combined in 1937 into the Pennsylvania Motor Police with a strength of sixteen hundred men. During World War II, the State Police was reestablished.

The latter is one example of how "State Police" are not necessarily the same as "State Highway Patrols." Highway patrol organizations were initially charged with patrolling the expanding road infrastructure within given states though their powers and jurisdictions often expanded into areas more commonly associated with state police agencies.

Between 1908 and 1923, fourteen states, mostly in the industrial north. adopted state police organizations. Some copied the Pennsylvania model, but others, such as Nevada, took different routes. Unlike Pennsylvania, Nevada's state police was created with a probusiness bias and Colorado and Oregon followed Nevada's lead in 1918. By the 1920s, however, state police organizations dealt less with such cultural prejudices in order to address a greater problem, the introduction of the automobile. The automobile not only brought on the need for traffic regulation, but it allowed the criminal element greater freedom of movement. Traffic control brought troopers into contact with the middle class citizen, a part of society that brute force was not a viable tactic to use against. By the early 1920s, troopers had to modify their previous conduct where public contact was concerned. Moreover, they had to provide policing in otherwise unprotected areas. Small town banks could now be subjected to the depredations of violent bank robbers and often it was the state police that was the only real deterrent. By the 1930s, new tactics and methods were being adopted. More and more highway patrols, as opposed to state police agencies, were being created and some states began to offer vehicle inspections and traffic safety courses. By 1934, two dozen states had criminal identification bureaus and these were important in promoting the use of fingerprinting and photography. Two way radios began to affect police tactics and in 1933, Michigan became the first state to use the roadblock to cordon off areas.

By World War II, America's state police were less elite and innovative than they had been a couple decades before. Top posts no longer went to military officers, but to men who had worked their way up from the ranks. They continued to maintain a better appearance and tighter discipline than local police organizations.

County Sheriffs

Technically responsible for law enforcement within their respective counties, in many areas, sheriffs performed little in the way of crime fighting. Rather, they concentrated on running jails and serving as court officers. A survey conducted in New Jersey in 1916 showed that out of twenty one sheriffs, sixteen did nothing to combat crime. Citizens in many rural areas were often on their own when it came to self-defense and obtaining justice. It should come as no surprise that vigilantes could literally get away with murder. This sad state of affairs changed little in the 1920s, partly due to the lack of adequate funding and partly due to lack of innovation.

Local Law Enforcement

This refers to the smallest jurisdiction in law enforcement: departments in cities, towns, and villages. While some communities supported a local police department, many lacked a police force altogether and were forced to rely on county or state police agencies. Each community was different, but in general, a small town police department can probably be assumed to be much like a county sheriff's department in respect to training and resources. It is pretty much up to the individual Keeper as how effective or ineffective a police department is in a small or medium size town.

Big City Police

Many large cities suffered from rampant corruption in their city governments and law enforcement. Crime organizations spurred by the opportunities for profit brought on by Prohibition used both bribery and violence. Chicago was perhaps the worst, having a murder rate twice as high as that of New York City. Violence was commonplace with murder being a tactic used by city officials against snooping officers, gangsters and union gunmen against officers and detectives, and even one newspaper against a competing newspaper. One sad statistic is that between 1907 and 1910, 27 newsboys and sluggers were murdered. An even scarier fact is the low status of law enforcement in Illinois. The Illinois Supreme Court overturned the convictions of two Capone gangsters that killed a pair of police detectives stating that it could not be murder if a police officer was killed while attempting to make an arrest without legal grounds. Public officials were also the targets of violence and many employed guards armed with automatic weapons. Many police officers achieved high rank due to service as bodyguards. One result coming out of this situation was that Chicago officers relied on their firearms more than any other major police force in the US. In 1926 and 1927, twenty officers were killed and the police killed 89 citizens. Police in Chicago (and many other cities) had two major foes: vice and gangs. Both were spurred by a number of factors with Prohibition being at the top of the rather lengthy list.

Big city police was not completely without merit. By the 1920s, many departments gained autonomy from city governments and thus were much less prone to political influence. The result was less corruption though it certainly wasn't completely eliminated. Some departments were quite innovative at times. For example, the St. Louis Police Department was an early user of fingerprinting, having picked it up from Scotland Yard before World War I. More than a few police chiefs pushed for professionalism in the ranks and set, reasonably high standards sometimes comparable even to those of state police agencies. Also, while corruption was commonplace in many areas, many officers were honest or relatively so and strived to improve the situation. Chicago is a worst case situation and was not typical of most US. cities.

Vigilantism

Tragically, this was sometimes the only "justice" in rural areas. County deputies either were unwilling or unable to enforce the law and state police could not be everywhere at once. Thus, private citizens sometimes took the law into their own hands, perhaps out of a lack of confidence in the system or out of outrage at the person accused. Victims of vigilantes could suffer horribly at the hands of their accusers. While the "classic" perception is of a murderer or rapist being hanged from a lone tree in the middle of a pasture, the reality is that burning at the stake was also a common method of execution. Accused criminals were not the only targets or such tactics. Anyone not fitting into the local societal norms could be become the target of a racist attack. Perpetrators of such atrocities were often never apprehended or even effectively investigated.

Federal Law Enforcement

Throughout much of the inter-war period, federal law enforcement was not the elite, professional force some people may believe. Prior to 1908, Congress went out of its way to limit federal agencies, fearing the power they might ultimately wield if not kept in check. This tradition began to change with the creation of the Bureau of Investigation in 1908. This was the immediate predecessor to the Federal Bureau of Investigations (F.B.I) which was officially formed in 1924. In 1910, the bureau found its first opportunity to expand. Congress passed the Mann Act to oppose



prostitution and the interstate transportation of women for immoral purposes. As concerns in the medical community over growing drug use in the population increased, the government gradually reacted. Over the span of a decade, Congress enacted several pieces of legislation that made a number of substances illegal or unobtainable. The criminal element reacted by trafficking in various drugs and a division within the Internal Revenue Service was charged with enforcing the legislation.

Perhaps the greatest events that promoted the expansion of federal law enforcement were the onset of the First World War and the Red Scare that followed. The public was concerned about subversive behavior and acts of sabotage and the government reacted by passing legislation designed to combat this. First was the Espionage Act of 1917 which made it illegal for anyone to aid the enemy, obstruct recruitment, or mail seditious literature. The Sedition Act of 1918 made it illegal to write or say anything disloyal to or critical of the government. This greatly inhibited the rights of free speech and press. The act so poorly defined what was an illegal statement that interpretations varied wildly. The Secret Service, the Bureau of Investigation, and even the Post Office searched diligently for violators and inevitably, the law and its intent was grossly abused. While counterespionage efforts were quite successful due to the efforts of the Bureau of Investigation and the Secret Service, thousands of socalled draft evaders were arrested. The grounds for arrest were that suspects were citizens who lacked proper identification. Most were released, but this hardly made up for the extreme violations of their civil rights.

After the war, the Red Scare promoted further expansion of federal law enforcement agencies. The activities of anarchists and strikes by labor unions caused a knee jerk reaction by agencies

who often saw a subversive behind every tree. The General Intelligence Division of the Justice Department, headed by J. Edgar Hoover, collected information and assembled dossiers on 450,000 people suspected of left wing activity. This tremendous number is alarming in itself. Compounding this is the fact that little of the acquired information possessed even a modicum of validity. Federal agents made nationwide arrests of alleged radicals despite the utter lack of evidence. The result was not convictions, but violations of the rights of thousands of citizens. This was not the concern of federal agents. however, who found they could get away with all sorts of abuses of their authority. Eventually the public reacted and such activities were curbed by the early 1920s.

So what can account for these abuses? There are four major reasons. First, Congress permitted too fast of an expansion of various federal agencies, especially the F.B.I. Although there was



Federal Legislation of the 1920s & 1930s

A wide array offederal legislation existed or was passed in the period between the world wars that are of direct bearing on the play of *Call of Cthulhu*. The source of such legislation may be the Constitution, the United States Congress, or even the President (via executive order). What follows are specific pieces of legislation Keepers and players should be aware of when play occurs within the United States.

Constitutional Amendments

Amendment XVIII of the U.S. Constitution Better known as the Prohibition Amendment, this controversial amendment was the capstone to decades of anti-alcohol legislations that had been passed in many parts of the United States. The 18th Amendment banned the manufacture, sale, and transportation of intoxicating liquors within the United States. It also banned the importation and exportation of such products. The federal and state governments were authorized to enact legislation enforcing this amendment.

The 18th Amendment proved to be highly flawed. A large majority of the population opposed it. Furthermore, it failed to make illegal the consumption or ownership of intoxicating liquors. This amendment has been credited with spawning the creation of violent organized crime throughout the country. Precisely one year after its passage on January 16, 1919, this went into effect. Amendment XXI of the U.S. Constitution The 21st Amendment went into effect on December 5, 1933 and merely repealed the 18th Amendment. All federal prohibition legislation was null and void as of that date. However, prohibition legislation in varying forms stayed in place at the state, county, and local levels and some such legislation is still in place in many areas in the 1990s.

Federal Laws

Sedition Act

Actually an amendment to an earlier act dating from June 15, 1917, the Sedition Act turned out to be a very controversial and highly abused piece of legislation. It went into effect on May 18, 1918.

The Sedition Act made it illegal in time of war to "...willfully utter, write, print, or publish any disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language about the form of the government of the United States, or the Constitution of the United States, or the military or naval forces of the United States, or the flag of the United States, or the uniform of the Army or Navy of the United States ... " It also made it illegal to use any language intended to bring contempt, scorn, or disrepute on the government and outlawed any language intended to promote resistance to the United States or support for its enemies. It went so far as to ban the flying of the flags of any enemy countries. Anyone found in violation of the Sedition Act could, if convicted, be fined up to \$10,000 and/or imprisoned up to twenty years. The law further directed the Postmaster General to return seditious matter to the sender. Such letters were to be stamped "Mail to this address undeliverable under the Espionage Act."

The inadequate definitions provided in the text of the Sedition Act led to gross abuses of its intent by overzealous federal agents. In the relatively limited time that it was in effect, thousands were arrested on the flimsiest of grounds.

Volstead Act of 1919

The Volstead Act was passed prior to the official adoption of the 18th Amendment (Prohibition) on January 16, 1920. It provided specific definitions for intoxicating liquors.

Jones Law of 1929

Designed to beef up Prohibition legislation, the Jones Law increased punishments for offenses. Violators were subject to fines of up to \$10,000 and/or imprisonment for up to five years. Mailing Firearms

For the most part, mailing firearms was unrestricted prior to the Second World War. The greatest exception occurred when House Resolution No. 4502 became law on May 8, 1927. This made it illegal to mail handguns and other concealable firearms. The following were excepted from this, but still had to comply with rules set by the Postmaster General: military officers (in connection with their duties), federal law enforcement agents, Postal employees, those guarding federal installations and property, and bona fide firearms dealers and manufacturers. Violators weresubject to a fine of up to \$1,000 and/or up to two years imprisonment.

Federal Kidnapping Act of 1932

Also known as the Lindbergh Law, this act was passed mostly in reaction to the tragic kidnapping of the young son of aviator Charles Lindbergh. It established kidnapping as a federal crime provided that during the course of the kidnapping, the victim was transported across a state, territorial, or national boundary. This law went into effect on June 22, 1932.

On May 18, 1934, an amendment to the Federal Kidnapping Act went into effect. This established punishment for violation of the law. The maximum possible sentencefor being involved in kidnapping was now death.

Murdering, Assaulting, and Resisting Federal Officers

On May 18, 1934, the Criminal Code was amended to take into account actions taken by criminals against federal officers. This law made it a federal crime to murder or assault a federal officer in the performance of his duty. A "federal officer" was defined as including U.S. Marshals, agents of the F.B.I., customs agents, Coast Guard officers and enlisted personnel, post office inspectors, agents of the I.N.S. and I.R.S., and corrections and penal officers at federal prisons. In other words, any personnel listed under "Jurisdictions" on the next page fall into this definition. Furthermore, it became a federal crime to murder or assault a federal officer on account of the performance of his duty.

The law went on to make it a federal crime to forcibly resist, oppose, impede, intimidate, or interfere with a federal officer while he was engaged in the performance of his duties. The punishment for violation of this law could be a fine or no more than \$5,000 and/or a prison sentence of not more than three years. If a deadly weapon was used regardless of whether or not the officerwas harmed with it, the maximum fine increased to \$10,000 and the maximum prison sentence increased to ten years. The National Firearms Act of 1934 The National Firearms Act of 1934 was perhaps the first major piece of legislation controlling access to firearms to the civilian population of the United States. It was written to curb so-called "gangster weapons" that plagued the country at the time. One class of firearms it effectively banned were
automatic weapons. While it is possible even today to legally own an automatic weapon, the controls were (and are) so great and costly that the effort is not worth it for the average citizen. Thus, automatic weapons became strictly available to the government (law enforcement, military), some private security agencies, and a handful of private collectors and hobbyists.

This law went much further than to ban automatic weapons. It also banned so-called "sawed off" weapons. The concern at the time was the use by the criminal element of short barrel and sawed off rifles and shotguns. Despite a thriving industry selling such arms to law abiding citizens, the law effectively banned such weapons, making possession, manufacture, and sale of them illegal. The specific definition of a short barrel rifle or shotgun is any that has a barrel length less than eighteen inches.

Silencers (a.k.a. sound suppressors) were also effectively banned by the act. They were viewed as having no legitimate use in civilian hands and were added to the list of weapons and accessories affected by the legislation.

One final effect of the National Firearms Act was to make it illegal to remove or obliterate serial numbers and other identifying marks from firearms. It also made the possession of weapons lacking serial numbers illegal. Any firearm which lacks the appropriate serial number or other identifying mark is at the very least considered contraband and is subject to confiscation without compensation. Anyone convicted of removing a serial number or possessing a firearm that lacks a serial number is subject to a fine of up to \$2,000 and/or imprisonment for up to five years.

The National Firearms Act of 1934 went into effect in July of 1934. Up until then, all items banned by the act were completely legal. Automatic weapons could be purchased or ordered through gun stores and sawed off weapons were remarkably common. Silencers were still crude devices and were not common.

Executive Orders

Shotgun Plugs

The introduction of repeating shotguns brought concerns that the migratory bird

population could suffer devastating losses at the hands of hunters. The result was a Presidential Proclamation issued on August 3, 1937 that set strict guidelines on hunting of fowl. Only shotguns were permitted for hunting and none greater than 10-gauge. Repeating shotguns (pump-action, lever-action, semiautomatic) could not have a magazine capacity greater than three, including a round that is chambered. The use of metal or wood shotgun plugs was authorized. Rather that reducing the actual size of a magazine, a plug could be inserted, preventing the loading of more than the permitted number of cartridges. Shotguns produced after 1937 generally come with a plug though it may come packaged separately. Inserting and removing one is not particularly difficult. Note that this proclamation did not ban shotguns of calibers larger than 10gauge. It merely made their use in hunting birds illegal. Nevertheless, this order pretty much eliminated the already small market in 8-gauge and larger shotguns.

Jurisdictions of Federal Agencies

Each federal law enforcement agency has a different job and is given a different, though sometimes overlapping, jurisdiction.

United States Marshals Service: In its early years, the Marshals were sort of the common soldiers of federal law enforcement and filled in a lot of the routine work such as taking the census, administering federal prisons, and transporting prisoners. Their duties in the twentieth century include, but are not limited to, process serving, transportation of prisoners, protection of government witnesses, and providing security for federal judges and federal buildings.

Internal Revenue Service (I.R.S.): The main law enforcement duty of the I.R.S. is to curb tax fraud.

United States Secret Service: During the inter-war period, the SecretService was charged with certain specific duties. Among the most important was curbing counterfeit currency, a major problem in the early post-Civil War years. However, they were often called in to take on assignments originally given to other government agencies. Examples include the investigation of the Teapot Dome scandal, the investigation of the activities of the Ku Klux Klan, and counterespionage efforts during the Spanish-American War and World War I. After the assassination of President McKinley in 1901, the Secret Service was called in to provide security for the president and, later, many high government officials.

Immigration and Naturalization Service (I.N.S.): The I.N.S. controls entry of noncitizens to the United States and is responsible for apprehending and deporting illegal aliens. It is also charged with maintaining accurate records on foreigners who have attempted to gain access to the U.S., especially those with criminal records.

Border Patrol: This division of the I.N.S. controls entry through the borders and fights smuggling and illegal entries by foreigners. It is a monumental task considering the country's long border and coastline and vast number of ports and airfields.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (F.B.I.): This agency is charged with investigating violations of a plethora of federal laws ranging from bank robberies and kidnappings to foreign espionage activity within U.S. borders. The previous section on federal law enforcement agencies gives a general rundown on sample legislation and when it was enacted.

Bureau of Customs: While among its main duties are collecting customs revenues and other administrative measures, it is the Customs Bureau that combats smuggling and related fraud. It is not unusual for this agency to work in conjunction with other Justice Department agencies such as the I.N.S.

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (A.T.F.): During the inter-war period, this agency was part of the I.R.S. and it is the A.T.F. that earned the nickname "revenuers." This is because the A.T.F. enforced the various laws that supported Prohibition. Even after the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, the A.T.F., then known as the Alcohol Tax Unit, was charged exclusively with enforcing tax laws relating to intoxicants. Only after World War II did they begin to take on a greater role, first relating to tobacco taxes and later to firearms and explosives legislation.

QUICK REFERENCE FOR WHEN UNCLE SAM AND THE INVESTIGATORS DON'T SEE EYE-TO-EYE...



a need for expansion, there was no plan for the gradual growth of these important arms of government. Second, Congress passed a number of acts without providing proper definitions of terms or intent. Thus, legislation such as the Sedition Act could easily be abused by overzealous agents. Third, high ranking officials such as J. Edgar Hoover actively encouraged in depth investigations of private citizens without so much as the formality of probable cause or reasonable suspicion. This led to invasions of personal privacy, violations of civil rights, the smearing of reputations, and the ruining of lives. Fourth, federal agents were generally untrained or poorly trained and were poor examples of law enforcement agents. Standards were lacking and some agents were merely former private investigators. Politicians exerted undue influence on the affairs of agencies it wasn't until the mid-1930s that the situation began to turn around.

Despite drawbacks to the appointment

of J. Edgar Hoover as director of the F.B.I. in 1924, there was at least one advantage to this. He was a very vocal and public advocate of police professionalism. His efforts in the 1930s to make the F.B.I. a model of professionalism met with considerable success. College graduates were recruited, the first federal crime laboratory was established in 1932, and the National Police Academy was founded in 1935. Hoover's efforts changed the reputation of the F.B.I. and established it in the 1930s as the leading law enforcement agency in the U.S. This new reputation was one reason federal law enforcement began a second expansion about that time. However, Congress again did its part to help. The passage of the Lindbergh Law in 1932 in response to the kidnapping and murder of the young son of famed aviator Charles Lindbergh was important to the F.B.I. The new law made kidnapping a federal crime and the F.B.I. established a special unit responsible for investigating such

cases. The F.B.I. was also one of the leading agencies combating the notorious and extremely violent gangsters of the 1930s and President Roosevelt did his best to push expanded federal responsibility to fight crime. Despite opposition from many critics, Congress passed in 1934 a series of laws making the following federal offenses: robberies of national banks, fleeing across state lines to avoid prosecution, engaging in interstate racketeering, transporting stolen property across state lines, and resisting a federal officer. By the late 1930s, President Roosevelt had given the F.B.I. authority over domestic espionage, counterespionage, and sabotage, especially where Fascists and Communists were concerned. The bureau's expansion during the 1930s was dramatic. Between 1934 and the beginning of direct US. involvement in World War II, the F.B.I. increased from 772 agents to well over four thousand.

The table here is a listing of some of

Prominent Federal Agencies of the 1920s & 1930s

Agency Name		Department Located In
United States Marshals Service		Justice
Internal Revenue Service (I.R.S.)		Treasury
United States Secret Service		
Immigration and Naturalization Service (I.N.S.)		Justice
Border Patrol		
Federal Bureau of Investigations (F.B.I.)		Justice
Bureau of Customs		
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (A.T.F.)	1972	

* Its origins are in the Bureau of Investigation founded in 1908 as a part of the Department of Justice. It was a small group of special investigators that grew gradually until the onset of the First World War brought on new duties (counterespionage, anti-sabotage, etc.).

the most prominent federal agencies that existed between the world wars.

The Courts

While civil rights were not always foremost in the minds of law officers, the courts also suffered from prejudice. However, as with law enforcement, generalities here do injustice to the subject. When player characters are brought up on charges during a scenario. a number of factors in addition to the evidence may affect the case. Personal prejudices of the judge, jury, prosecutor, and even the defense attorney are important considerations. The prosecutor, for example, may be more interested in getting a conviction than in obtaining justice. In the event a case is not airtight, the bias of a judge or jury or the overzealous efforts of a prosecutor may still result in the conviction of innocent people. However, not all courts should be assumed to be this way. One notable example occurred in 1920 when federal authorities led by J. Edgar Hoover cracked down on so-called subversive and radical aliens in the United States. Several thousand people were brought in, six hundred from the Boston area alone. The prediction was made that the most dangerous would be deported within forty days. When one suspect claiming to be a U.S. citizen was brought before a federal judge named George Anderson, his release was quickly ordered. Anderson was outraged at the way immigrations officials made sweeping, unwarranted arrests of people claiming to be U.S. citizens. Perhaps men like Anderson were more of the exception than the rule, but Keepers should not assume that investigators will always be railroaded in the U.S. legal system of the 1920s and 1030c

General Assessment

Prior to the Second World War, there is no model of law enforcement that is true for all areas. Each jurisdiction possessed its own style of policing, often tailored by society, local economic and political conditions, and uncounted other variables. In addition to various police agencies, suspects had to deal with a flawed court system, the possibility of vigilante activity, and a press that was often more eager to get the sensational story than finding the truth. Society's priorities were not geared toward adherence to law. The great ideals outlined in the U.S. Constitution and in the law books are all fine and dandy, but the inter-war period was not generally an enlightened one from the perspective of the average American. Abuses by politicians, the courts, and police were often tolerated or even actively supported by the public, particularly if the subject of the abuse was judged guilty by the press and population. Only when flagrant violations continued and got out of hand did public outrage spawn corrective action.

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The Eye of Light & Darkness

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of Machen's "Novel of the Black Seal." in which he claims that the doomed Professor's personal effects are found after his death wrapped in a mysterious package made from his flesh, is utterly fantastic and certainly a unique reading of the tale. I am also dubious of his claim that Lovecraft's masked lama of Leng is in fact a version of Chambers' King in Yellow.

There are numerous annoying typographical errors throughout the book as well. In several cases there are as many as four, five, and six such mistakes in the space of a single sentence. Such ridiculous errors could easily be avoided by using a reliable proofreader.

These minor quibbles aside, this is a fine collection. The heart of the book is a powerful study of the effects of cosmic horror on the unwitting. Chambers' "The Yellow Sign" is perhaps the most successful tale ever written about *The King in Yellow*, a splendid tale of the decadent 1890s. This is followed by an enjoyable modern tale of the terrible play, Karl Edward Wagner's nightmarish "The River of Night's Dreaming."

From Wagner we turn to one of the more daring stories in the Hasturian canon: James Blish's rare "More Light," in which the author dares to try and reproduce the actual text of the play within the tale. While the story is enjoyable enough, if annoyingly ambiguous in its ending, the play as presented here is not the horrific, unsettling, and fearsome read we would assume it to be. While Price claims that he feels Blish's version is as good as the real thing to him, I don't think it can begin to live up to our darkest fears and expectations. This is echoed in the letter from Lovecraft to Blish quoted in the story's introduction, in which HPL tells his young correspondent that he won't write up the Necronomicon for just that reason. Personally, I find the snippets of poetry and passages from the play quoted throughout the book to be far more unsettling than having the whole thing regurgitated for the reader. If you don't believe it, compare Blish's version with the atmospheric verse that kicks off Chambers' "Repairer of Reputations" and the chilling closing lines of Wagner's tale.

After Blish, the book moves along the Yuggoth tangent, with Machen and Lovecraft represented by familiar but excellent tales. Richard A. Lupoff's rare and wonderful sequel to Lovecraft's "Whisperer in Darkness" follows. It's been long overdue for reprinting, and is one of the highlights of *The Hastur Cycle*. Ramsey Campbell follows with one of his early tales dealing with Yuggoth, then James Wade's disappointing "Planetfall on Yuggoth."

In fact, after Campbell the book begins a gradual qualitative descent, featuring Derleth's initial foray into the Mythos ("The Return of Hastur," which is arguably the blueprint for the rest of his Mythos tales) and a hodge-podge of Lin Carter fragments. These latter unfortunately show off Carter's shortcomings as a fiction writer. As Price points out in his introduction to these fragments, Carter was too concerned with tying up loose ends of the Mythos to tell a good story. No, Lin Carter should be remember for his achievements as an editor, particularly of the Ballantine Adult Fantasy line in the early 1970s where he brought to light such important books as Machen's Three Impostors, Hodgson's The Night Land-and The Spawn of Cthulhu.

All in all, *The Hastur Cycle* is a very worthy revision of Carter's *Spawn of Cthulhu*. On the strength of the better stories and Price's fascinating introductions. the book rates a strong eight phobias. For Mythos collectors and Hastur fans, however, this book defies a phobia rating, and causes a hard nine on the paranoiac Richter scale.

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Alone with the Horrors fiction anthology by Ramsey Campbell Arkham House Publishers, \$26.95 reviewed by Scott David Aniolowski

Alone with the Horrors is a collection of short fiction spanning the thirty-nine year career of Ramsey Campbell, from his early Lovecraft/Cthulhu Mythos pastiches to his current, sophisticated brand of horror. Collected here are tales from a number of Campbell's short story collections, including *The Inhabitant of the Lake and Less Welcome Tenants, Demons by Daylight, Dark Companions,* and *Scared Stiff.* Other stories here come from any number of magazines and anthologies. In all, the book has thirtynine tales by one of the modern masters of horror. Here are stories of monsters both human and not-so-human: terrors of the mind, the soul, and the body.

Ramsey Campbell's work can at times be obtuse and frustrating, yet it always manages to deliver a punch. He always manages to suspend the safe and comforting world of reality and dangle it just out of the reader's grasp-taunting the reader-teasing him before delivering that final fatal blow that sends him into the dark and deadly realm of the writer's imagination. And Ramsey Campbell is at his best when he turns his attention inward, when he looks into the souls of men, when he digs and pushes deeper than anyone has gone before. His is not a horror of the cosmos, but a horror of the human soul.

Alone with the Horrors celebrates Campbell's considerable talent. It takes the reader on a tour of the life and growth of Ramsey Campbell as an observer of the wretched and a spinner of tales macabre. For fans of the Cthulhu Mythos, here are "The Room in the Castle" and "Cold Print" (incidentally, the single most important story in Campbell's transition from Cthulhu Mythos pastiches to his own unique and urban style of horror). The other tales in this collection showcase Campbell's style and talent as a modern master of the macabre with offerings such as "Boiled Alive." "The Interloper," "Apples," and "The End of a Summer's Day."

Photo-artist J.K. Potter, whose unique work is undoubtedly familiar to fans of Campbell and Arkham House, supplies no less than fourteen amazing images and the cover for *Alone with the Horrors*. Potter's work—a combination of photomontage and airbrushing—depicts a world equally as disturbing as the one which Ramsey Campbell writes about. Campbell and Potter indeed have a marriage of styles and visions that can be called nothing if not brilliantly disturbing. The inclusion of Potter's photo-art is a welcome addition to any book.

Alone with the Horrors is a fat book of 515 pages with thirty-nine Ramsey Campbell stories and fourteen J.K. Potter plates. Not only is this a great collection, but it is also a desirable collectible sure to go up in value once it has gone out of print. I give it eight phobias.

3

What Jane Austen Ate and Charles Dickens Knew daily life in nineteenth-century England by Daniel Pool Simon & Schuster, \$13.95 reviewed by Kim Eastland

Good, solid, useful background information is difficult to find for most time eras. For those playing Cthulhu by Gaslight finding brief information on the essentials of 1800s English life can be a quest in itself. This wonderful book primarily attempts to answer the basic questions one runs into while reading literary works from this period, such as Wuthering Heights, Far from the Madding Crowd, Tess of the d'Urbevilles, and the volumes of Dickens' works. Of greater importance to us is not the ins and outs of the English school system, the major rituals at court, and the minutiae of society etiquette (Victorians were obsessed with layer upon layer of ludicrous etiquette), but the simple breakdown of English currency, usable facts an investigator needs (such as the sections of the Horse, the Coach, the Railroad, and the Mail), and the details about the times that makes CoC adventuring in the 1800s totally different from any other RPG, including 1920s CoC.

Since the book is intended for those deep in the throes of Victorian literature one might expect the book to be as insufferably boring as many of the works from that time period. Indeed, some sections do drag, but they are readily skipped and returned to later. But the sections on the common, everyday

people and facts of life are great. And complicated questions about the times often have a simple answer. Why was there so much alcoholism (children drinking gin, etc.)? Because the water was too dangerous to drink. So only if it was alcoholic or boiled (thus the love of tea) was it safe. Yes, the economics of the times were just as bad (for the poor) or obsessive (for the rich) or opportunistic (for the middle class) as the stories portray. Moreso! Religion, the church, crime, criminals, law enforcement, the military, death, doctors, money, clothing, and myriad other topics are dealt with, usually in a concise and understandable manner.

There is also a 136-page glossary at the end of the book to make enriching the language of your *Cthulhu by Gaslight* campaign even easier. If you are a Keeper for a Victorian campaign I rate this eight phobias for usefulness and even campaign ideas. English majors may find it even more useful!

The Timetables of History a horizontal linkage of people & events by Bernard Grun Touchstone, Simon & Schuster, \$19.95

3

reviewed by Kim Eastland

Speaking of good background information, it often amazes me how many people (even gaming intellectuals) know so little about the eras in which historybased RPGs are set. The anachronisms in a typical fantasy adventure can truly be ridiculous (especially basics like simple plumbing or the elaborate machinery used in many dungeons) but that is always explained away, ultimately, by magic. Alas, those of us adventuring in the modern era do not have this easy scapegoat. Gamers' knowledge of the technological basics in the 1920s is often lacking (telephones, cars, planes, railroads, etc), but their cross-knowledge of how the world connects in time is minuscule. One of the main reasons for this is the American educational system's habit of tunnel visioning on a set time period or place when teaching an individual class, like the American Revolution, the French Renaissance, World War II, and the like. We seldom if ever are taught multiple classes covering different topics but all from the same time period around the world and how they link to each other.

The Timetables of History takes each year from 5,000 B.C. to 1990 and divides it into seven categories: History/Politics, Literature/Theatre, Religion/Philosophy/ Learning, Visual Arts, Music, Science/ Technology/Growth, and Daily Life. The 700+ page book does not go into detail on its entries: it just shows you when people were born, when inventions came along, when nations where created, etc. For a Keeper trying to get a hand on a specific time period it is an essential reference work.

For instance, if you look up 1923 you can discover that the USS.R. opened its first polar station that year (did they find anything?), that Time magazine was founded that year (can your reporter get a free-lance position with them?), that Col. Schick patented his electric razor, that Hubble discovered a star in the Andromeda nebula (what winged thing might he see up there?), that Pancho Villa died, that martial law was declared in Oklahoma to protect people from the Ku Klux Klan (there has to be a scenario in that fact), that the basic principle of the autogiro was developed by a Spanish inventor, that Tokyo and Yokohama were destroyed by earthquakes, and that Hitler's beer hall putsch fails. There are thousands of facts you won't give a hoot about, but by reading the facts from at least a couple of relevant years you'll know what people in that time were talking and worrying about.

Of course, there is a huge index in the back of the book so you can look up what you want and see when it was around. I used this book extensively when I wrote the Last Dawn and Randolph Pierce Foundation articles (see TUO6-9). It can be of immense importance to a creative and thorough Keeper, so I recommend it as a ten-phobia reference work.

E



In which the Investigators run across something they wish they had not.

This adventure is for any number of investigators but is best for two to four players. It could be adapted to take place any time the investigators are travelling from one place to another by automobile, though it is intended to be used on the way to an acquaintance's home, one William Rogers, on Walker Lake in northern Minnesota. Players of any experience level will enjoy "Roadkill," but it is probably better suited to lowexperience players.

The date has nominally been set at July, 1925. This scenario could easily be adapted to the present day or another specific year in the 1920s. If this is done, other dates throughout the adventure should then be changed accordingly. It is also easy to change the location of the adventure, so long as William Rogers' home is in a heavily wooded area that is far from civilized parts.

Requiring insight and quick thinking on the part of the players, "Roadkill" is a dramatic kill-or-be-killed story. Fate delivers the investigators into the home of two lunatics, having already done something that the pair will probably try and kill them for if they learn of it. It's a question of who discovers what first: do the lunatics learn what the investigators have done before the investigators realize how much trouble they're in? Adding to the mix is the fact that the behavior of the two men is flat-out bizarre, and investigators will probably

By Jeff Tidball



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be very confused about who is who and which of the men is crazy and which isn't. They both are, of course, and they're both quite deadly. Events in the scenario will escalate to stalk-and-kill either almost immediately, or not quite immediately. Either way, "Roadkill" shouldn't take long to play and ought to provide a healthy dose of chills and tension before it's done. For a quick overview of the plot, see the "Plot Summary" sidebar at right.

Getting Started

Roadkill begins in the middle of another adventure or campaign. In their search for a manuscript or tome from their current adventure, the investigators come across a rare book dealer who remembers having a copy of what they are looking for. After consulting his records, he discovers that it was sold to a man named William Rogers from St. Paul about four years ago. After digging for a while, the investigators discover that Rogers now lives several hours north of the Twin Cities in a secluded area. If they contact Rogers by wire or letter, he invites them up to have a look.

In reality, William Rogers is window dressing, serving as a red herring more than anything (though the Keeper is invited to develop him into a major NPC or actually involve him in some heinous plot, if desired). The real plot only begins when the investigators are on the last leg of their journey to Rogers' home on Walker Lake.

The Journey Begins

The only method of travel from St. Paul to Walker Lake is via Highway 37 and a little-used dirt road known as the Maple Trail. If the investigators do not own an auto, then one will be available for rent, or Rogers will have a car waiting at the train station. Rogers apologizes, but he will be unable to come pick the investigators up himself as he will only be arriving from Duluth the same day.

While stopped in St. Paul, the investigators overhear two local men talking

Plot Summary

Dr. Albert Norris and his midget servant Hymes reside in a small house in the wilds of Minnesota. Both men are rather crazed, the result of Norris' pursuit of strange and unethical scientific experiments in biology. In the course of this work, the demented pair have learned of the Mi-Go and other unsavory elements of the Mythos.

As the investigators motor up the Maple Trail on the way to William Rogers' house late at night, it begins to rain. The driver is startled by an animal that darts across the road in front of the car. No amount of skill can prevent a collision, and the car comes to a halt in a rut in the muddy road. At first glance, the carseems to have hit a large dog. Its dead body has been vaulted into the engine compartment, damaging the engine enough to keep the car from moving without repair parts. What the investigators do not see is the other half of the dog, which was thrown into the woods by the collision. What they actually have hit is one of the experiments of a local resident: two dogs whose heads have been severed and the bodies joined at the necks by a mass of flesh. As the storm intensifies, one of the investigators spots a house set back from the road. It seems to be the only refuge from the storm

When the investigators arrive at the door, they are greeted by a thick-bodied midget

who introduces himself as Albert Norris (his name is actually Hymes, and he is the root of most of the evil in the house). He invites them to spend the night at his house, and to see what can be done about the car in the moming. In the meantime, they are shown to their guest rooms.

That night at the house, the investigators meet another man who claims to be Dr. Albert Norris (he is, in fact, the real Dr. Norris). Depending on their level of curiosity, they may learn other, more disturbing things about the house and its strange inhabitants.

When they awake in the morning, the investigators discover that their car has washed into a bog and is hopelessly mired. To make matters worse, the real Dr. Norris discovers the other half of the creature in the woods at the side of the road. His already feeble mind breaks entirely, and he begins to stalk the investigators, to make them pay for killing his beloved pet.

As Hymes realizes that the investigators know too much to be allowed to return to civilization, he too begins to stalk them, possibly even contacting the Mi-Go for help. The investigators are forced to attempt escape, possibly down the dangerously high Green River, or else must deal with Hymes and Dr. Norris, probably in a bloody fight to the death played out across the estate.

about the bad weather recently. For the past month, rains have been heavy all through the Midwest, and many rivers and low areas have been flooded. A successful Natural History roll will reveal that the area around Walker Lake could well be affected by such conditions.

Highway 37 ends and the Maple Trail begins at the small town of Billingsly, which is a four-hour drive from St. Paul. The trip there is uneventful, and the drive stretches lazily through the late afternoon and early evening. When they arrive in Billingsly, it is around 7:30, and since they probably have not eaten since they passed through St. Paul, the Bluewater Cafe looks inviting. If they enter, they are seated at a rickety table and served by Ernest Wyatte, owner and sole employee. His service is terrible, and the investigators' meal will stretch wearily until after darkness has fallen.

Driving up the Maple Trail in the dark is quite hazardous, as trees grow

close on both sides, and rickety bridges pass over rivers that seem dangerously high. A constant speed of about fifteen miles per hour is all that can be safely managed. The Keeper may call for occasional Spot Hidden rolls (revealing nothing) to heighten the suspense. Rain begins to fall, and occasional lightning illuminates the road ahead of the car. Once the investigators have traveled for about an hour in the oppressive blackness, the driver sees movement ahead of the car in a flash of lightning. Although he may try, he is unable to avoid hitting the large animal that has rushed out into the road. Call for a Drive Auto roll. Success keeps the car on the road while failure indicates the car slides off the road.

The driver has hit and killed the dog Borkie: his mate (and surgically-attached other half) Mooftus has been cleaved free of Borkie and thrown into the bushes at the side of the road. Borkie's corpse has

Borkie and Mooftus (pre-accident)

Borkie and Mooftus were originally black labs of above average size, the only survivors of their litter. Hymes has "joined" these two at the neck as per experiment #134 in Humans and Others. Their heads were removed, and in their places, a tentacle-like mass was attached to each of them at the neck. They now live symbiotically, tethered to one another by about three feet of mottled black-brown flesh. They take stock of their surrounding by slapping their tentacle into things to get their basic shape. Needless to say, when moving faster than a slow walk, they tend to run into things.

Normally, Hymes allows them to roam the grounds. Dr. Norris has grown quite attached to the both of them, and often

been wedged in the engine compartment under the car, causing the engine to seize up and the car to roll to a stop in a muddy rut. See the sidebar above for more information on Borkie and Mooftus.

Investigators stepping out of the car at this point will quickly become drenched to the bone as the storm increases in intensity. Looking under the hood costs 0/1 Sanity, as the grisly remains of a dog can be seen splattered about the engine compartment. If the mangled corpse is examined, a Spot Hidden roll will reveal that the dog's head seems to be missing. A Mechanical Repair roll will reveal that their automobile will need replacement parts in order to be drivable. Further examination of the neck region will reveal a long string of sinewy flesh that is not an ordinary part of a dog's anatomy.

If the investigators search through the brush on the north side of the road, a Spot Hidden roll at one half is required to discover the corpse of Mooftus. If this body is found, it is immediately noted that there is no head here, either.

A successful Spot Hidden from any investigator (or the lowest if all fail) will reveal the presence of a driveway about twenty meters up the road. A sign next to it bears the name "Norris."

Life is miserable for any investigator outside in the storm. Lightning becomes more frequent and the rain comes down harder with each passing moment. If the investigators do not move to the house spends his evenings scratching their tentacle and sitting before the fireplace.

These statistics are for each of them individually. If one is killed, the other will eventually die as well, but not immediately. Damage inflicted specifically to the tentacle affects neither of the dogs individually, and it can take eight HP of damage before it is severed. This also will cause both of the dogs to die, but not for 1D6 hours.

Borkie and Mooftus, Joined Dogs

 STR
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 CON
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 SIZ
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 DEX
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 INT
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 POW 4
 HP
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of Dr. Norris, encourage them by requiring DEXx5 rolls, and having those who fail fall into the boggy area to the south side of the road.

The Norris Estate

From the outside, the Norris Estate appears to be in good condition, though it could use a fresh coat of paint. There is a light on in one window on the main floor, and light can also be seen emanating from the covered basement windows. A car is parked in the driveway; it appears to be a relatively new model, in drivable condition. (It isn't. Hymes has removed several vital components of the engine and hidden them in the basement so Dr. Norris can't use the car to go into town without him. Hymes will tell any investigator that asks that the car is not currently in working condition).

The door to the Norris Estate is answered after several minutes of silence by Hymes, Dr. Norris' assistant. He introduces himself as Dr. Norris, however, and after the investigators explain their position, he informs them that they are welcome to spend the night and walk on to Rogers' house the next morning. He regrets that he has no phone, and he does not offer to give them a ride. As each investigator enters the house, he is given a candle, as Hymes explains that the house has no electricity.

If the investigators tell him that they

ran into a dog, he appears shocked if a Spot Hidden or Psychology roll is made. He denies owning such an animal, however, and quickly changes the subject. After settling the investigators in their rooms, he will secretly go out into the storm to have a look for himself. Finding the evidence, he will decide the investigators could reveal his experiments and will try to kill them.

If he does not learn of the dog, Hymes disappears into the basement laboratory, and the investigators have free run of the house, except for the basement which they find that Hymes has locked behind him.

Hymes and Dr. Norris

Unfortunately for the investigators, this odd pair are both insane. Hymes is unlikely to engage in violence except for (loosely-defined) self-preservation or in the higher service of his own ambitions, but Dr. Norris is quite a bit easier to set off (see below).

The real Dr. Albert Norris (who can be found in the study most of the time) was a normal young medical student when he came across a Mi-Go book of experiments. *Humans and Others*. He was driven temporarily insane when he translated the book into English (no easy feat), and determined that its authors were actually quite serious. He tried several of the experiments soon thereafter, with Hymes' assistance, in the family mansion that had been recently vacated due to Hymes' handiwork (see below).

Dr. Norris' mind was broken permanently by this course of study, and he became docile. He has taken to sitting in the study and staring into the fire, night after night. He has become quite attached to Borkie and Mooftus, and often scratches their tentacle as he sits there.

Investigators conversing with Dr. Norris and making a successful Psychology roll will note that all is not right with him. He has a sociable attitude, and it is obvious that his upbringing is good. He becomes quite touchy if asked about his schooling, however. His title of doctor is self-appointed, and any questions about it will be met with open hostility. Dr. Norris does not like to talk about Hymes, and will attempt to change the subject if questioned. If pressed, he confides in a whisper that he fears Hymes is plotting against him. He then glances around and shuffles off. This is also his only explanation of why Hymes claims to be him.

Hymes is an even more bizarre case. This thick-bodied midget comes from a long line of family servants to the Norris family, and he began at a very early age to develop a distaste for other people. He was abused severely as a young man by his father, and bonded with the only person in the family who showed him any respect at all, the then-young Albert Norris. When Albert went away to school, Hymes withdrew and ran away from the estate several times. When he received a letter that Albert was thinking about dropping out of school to investigate some matters of personal interest, he was overjoyed. When he discovered that all Norris needed was some money, he stalked through the Norris Manor and killed everyone in it with a Bowie knife. He was never caught and implicated in the murders, and Albert inherited the estate. Hymes assisted Dr. Norris with his early experiments, and when Dr. Norris lost his mind, Hymes took a look at the sinister book on his own. He now carries out the experiments himself, in the hopes that soon he will be able to contact the Mi-Go and make a deal with them to get formulae for more powerful experiments and rituals that will allow him to realize his megalomaniacal ambitions. He is not a very proficient scientist, however, and left to his own devices, will probably never succeed in doing anything particularly dangerous.

Hymes pretends that he is Dr. Norris most of the time. If asked about why the other man also claims to be Dr. Norris, he shakes his head sadly and explains that "AI" is not quite right in the head. He adds that it is best to humor him.

Hymes has learned the spell Contact Mi-Go, though he is afraid to use it until after he has harvested at least three

Humans and Others, Mythos Tome

This tome describes several hundred experiments that can be performed on or with the denizens of the planet Earth. The original is written in the language of the Mi-Go, though Hymes keeps the leather-bound translated versions of the experiments that he is currently working on handy, and his collection of these is perfectly readable.

Reading these translations will result in an increase of 3 points of Cthulhu Mythos, at a cost of 1D2/1D8 Sanity points. The tome also includes a special version of the spell Contact Mi-Go. The difference from the standard spell is the fact that the Mi-Go arrives immediately. Also, for each human brain used as a lure for the Mi-Go, the chance for

human brains to use to increase the success chance (see *Humans and Others* in the sidebar above). If it becomes necessary, he has no qualms about using Dr. Norris' brain.

Exploring

By the time the investigators have met the Doctor and Hymes, they will no doubt be feeling quite on edge. The Keeper should do his best to try to keep them that way. The investigators are in success is raised by 20%. The basic cost of the spell is 8 Magic Points.

The original book is not meant to be translated in this scenario but if it is later translated by some device of the keeper it will result in an additional increase of 5 points of Cthulhu Mythos, at a cost of 1D4/1D10 Sanity points and will contain the spell Create Gate as well as the special version of Contact Mi-Go.

The results of investigators who attempt to carry out any of the experiments mentioned are left to the devices of their Keeper, with the caveat that they will certainly be driven insane, and probably have to become NPCs.

a classic situation, and will no doubt be waiting for the doctor (either of them) to try to do something vile to them as they sleep. If the investigators attempt to spend the night outside or in their car, the Keeper should stress the dismal conditions and never-ending rain. Investigators outside should make Spot Hidden and Listen rolls often, until they feel as if there is a monster behind every tree and in every puddle.

Investigators who decide to spend the night in the house are free to wander around in it. They will probably meet the real Dr. Norris, who can be found in the study. Descriptions of the rooms of the house follow.

Entry: It is here that Hymes greets the characters when they first step in from the rain. The entry features oak paneling and two spacious cloakrooms that are currently empty, save shadows, cobwebs, and several bits of broken glass. A small table occupies the west wall. A dusty vase with withered flowers sits upon it, and a drawer in the front contains candles. The front door is usually kept locked from the inside.

Sitting Room: This little-used room sports a healthy layer of dust on all the finely-made couches and chairs. Rat droppings are evident on the floor, and if the investigators are quiet, they will see one of the vermin scuttle across the rug.



The room has two enormous bay windows that are closed off by thick crimson curtains.

Dining Room: A small table sits crowded into one end of this room. Dishes are piled on it haphazardly, with half –eaten bits of food scattered about at random. A gargantuan chandelier hangs from the middle of the ceiling. It is

covered with cobwebs, and any investigator who pokes at it or pushes it will cause the rotted ceiling at its base to give out, sending the entire thing crashing to the floor noisily. The rest of the room is conspicuously bare. The large dining table has been moved downstairs to the workshop, and any investigators looking for evidence that it was here once will notice scuff marks on the hardwood floor indicating that it did in fact sit here for a long time before it was moved. Hymes will clear a space for breakfast if the investigators are still around by then.

Kitchen: Flour, sugar, salt, and other common food staples can be found on shelves here, stored in small bins. A brown wide-mouthed bottle that is labeled "vinegar" contains not only vinegar, but a short knife as well. The ice box contains an astounding variety of meats that can only be identified



as squirrel, venison, and dog with a Biology or halved Knowledge roll. All manner of weapons can be found here by desperate investigators. Implements run the gamut from salad forks to butcher knives to a rusty bone saw left here after it was most recently cleaned.

Study: A huge fireplace dominates one wall of this well-kept room. Centered above it is a portrait depicting a statelylooking gentleman who resembles Dr. Norris. Brass candle holders and an expensive-looking rifle (.30-06) also grace the walls. The holders contain candles, though they are rarely lit. Three overstuffed chairs take up most of the space, and Dr. Norris can usually be found sitting in the largest one, staring into a blazing fire. He offers the other two to any investigators who enter.

Bedrooms: Each is obviously rarely used and quite dusty. There is a bureau in each room, as well as an uncomfortable chair. The beds have not

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been made, though Hymes says that there are linens in the bureaus. Each door has a keyhole, but no key. In the northwest bedroom, an investigator making a Spot Hidden roll will notice brown stains in the mattress, evidence of Hymes' killing spree six years ago.

Hymes' Bedroom: Hymes has locked the door to his room since the investigators' arrival. A successful Locksmith roll will suffice to jimmy it open. The room contains a large oak desk, a chest of drawers, and an immense canopied bed with thick black curtains. A closet door is slightly ajar. Clothes lay scattered about the floor, and an ax stands in one corner. A quick search of the room reveals several very interesting things. Successful Spot Hidden rolls can find the following. In a drawer of the desk, the investigators can find a newspaper article on the mass murder that took place here six years ago (see Handout *1). In a bag at the bottom of the closet, there is a mass of human fingers sewn together much like a spider's legs. This is a failed experiment which has been discarded here. Discovering it will cost the investigators present 1/1D4 Sanity. Also in the closet is a sawed-off 10 gauge that Hymes keeps secreted away along with a box of shotgun shells and a box of .30-06 ammunition. The remainder of the room suggests that Hymes is not very clean and does not have very many possessions of any worth, at least not to anyone but himself.

Dr. Norris' Room: The bed here is unmade, but Dr. Norris' clothes are kept neatly folded in stacks on the floor. The bureau is totally empty. A large (and probably valuable) oriental rug covers the floor. This room contains only one item of real interest. In the desk is Norris' journal, and although he has not made an entry in over five years, what is there is quite interesting (see Handout #2). The Doctor can be found here after three o'clock in the morning, sleeping.

The Basement: Here are the many fruits of Hymes' mad labor. The door is locked and barred from the inside while he is at work here. When he finishes for the night, he again locks the door (from the outside), though a properly equipped

Hymes' Experiments

Humans and Others, the Mi-Go tome on creatures native to Earth, has been the focus of Hymes' experiments. This is a listing of his notable experiments to date. Detailed dissertation on each of them can be found by reading through the translated version of Humans and Others, at the appropriate Sanity costs.

The Slime Being

This failed experiment roams the basement laboratory at will, oozing in and out of the darkest comers. Originally the distilled components of a young man, this boiled-down mixture developed a "mind" of its own when exposed to a radiation that Hymes experimented with. It appears as a soupy mass about the size of a cat, with a variable consistency that varies between smooth and slimy and thick and chunky. The Slime Being is not harmful, but will definitely tum the stomachs of any investigators that see it.

The Slime Being, failed experiment							
STR	2	CON	10	SIZ	3	DEX	3
INT	1	POW	2	HP	7		
Damage Bonus: -1D6							
Weapons: None							
Sanity Loss: 0/1D4							

investigator who makes a Locksmith roll can pick it.

basement, though all are within one large space. Nearest the stairs is the large oak dining table that once graced the dining room. It is now covered with bloodstains and bits of bone and gristle. Several surgical tools lie on it as well. A tool rack

investigators come near, it will bob its head around and stare bug-eyed, with a mouth that is open in an eerily silent scream. The flytraps open and shut, attempting to grasp

Plant Thing

Plant Thing, head on a stalk

nearby objects and digest them.

ST 9 CON 6 SIZ 5 DFX 6 INT 3 POW 4 HP 6 Damage Bonus: None Weapons: 20% Claw 1D4 Sanity Loss: 0/1D4

This monstrosity was created by the merger

of a human head with a gargantuan Venus

flytrap. It resides in a pot near the stairwell

in the basement. It doesn't speak, but if

"Reglum Juice"

Distilled from various compounds that Hymes has made, this greenish juice actually tastes quite good. It is stored in a jug in the laboratory that is unmarked, and Hymes has taken a liking to it. A Biology roll will reveal to investigators that it is alive, though quite harmless (if not ingested). It is actually a larvae form of an unintelligent parasitic fungus. Unfortunately for Hymes, it has begun breeding a colony in his stomach, as any overly-curious investigators who slice him open to check will be able to see.

There are three main areas in the



and table are both nearby to allow Hymes access to them while he operates and experiments. A large desk and many shelves of books are about ten feet away, clustered together with a book stand on wheels. The desk contains extensive files and notes compiled in his six years of work here, and one locked drawer contains the original version of Humans and Others (see page 43). On top of the desk is a file with several diagrams and notes on the construction of Borkie and Mooftus. Any investigator who connects these notes with the creature they hit will be forced to make a Sanity roll, for a loss of 1D2/1D6 points. The shelves contain an exhaustive collection of works on human anatomy and physiology as well as similar books on many types of animals. On the book stand sits the partially translated version of Humans and Others. The stand and many pages of the book are spattered with blood, since Hymes uses this as a reference as he operates. Several failed experiments occupy this space as well, see "Hymes' Experiments" in the sidebar on the previous page for more information.

That Night

If they don't mention hitting a dog, and don't go poking around the house, the investigators will spend the night undisturbed. But investigators being investigators, that may not be the case.

If Dr. Norris discovers that Borkie and Mooftus are dead and the investigators are responsible, he will appear concerned and excuse himself. With this, Dr. Norris proceeds to search for the bodies of Borkie and Mooftus. He will eventually encounter their corpses by the roadside, and this will send him into a murderous rage, attempting to kill all those responsible for the death of his beloved pets with whatever is at hand after he has confirmed their deaths. This will probably take the form of him striking the investigators from some ambush with a sledgehammer that he will take up from outside, or attacking them in their sleep if they have gone to bed.

If, as mentioned, Hymes is told of what caused the accident, he goes out to check on the situation. Finding the corpses, he returns to the house and tries to murder the investigators in their sleep so they don't reveal his experiments to the outside world.

Both men essentially have the same reactions to the situation, but for different reasons. Things may get messy if one learns of the death and attacks the investigators without telling the other what is up (which is very likely). Should Dr. Norris come about Hymes trying to kill the investigators, Hymes will hurriedly tell him that these people killed Borkie and Mooftus, and Dr. Norris will happily aid his demented associate. If Hymes finds Dr. Norris trying to kill the investigators and doesn't know why, he'll freak out himself (fearing that their deaths will get him in trouble) and try to stop Dr. Norris. Norris will respond by attacking Hymes, too.

One way or another, if the truth comes out about the deaths of Borkie and Mooftus, all hell breaks loose and a horrific free-for-all is the likely result. Try to play this out not as a simple stand-and-fight climax, but rather a running battle through the house and the stormy night outside on the grounds of the estate.

The Next Morning

By the next morning the storm has passed, and although the sky remains overcast, travel appears to be again possible. If he is not aware that the investigators are on to him, Hymes (still masquerading as Norris) will invite them to breakfast with him. If they accept, they find him in good cheer. He makes small talk, and tries to steer conversation away from himself and his estate. He encourages the investigators to go and see about their car at their earliest convenience, though will not get pushy about it. When they go, he will accompany them, as will the real Dr. Norris (who he refers to as "Al").

When the investigators go down to inspect their car, they discover that it has slid off the road and into a boggy area. It appears to be hopelessly mired, and investigators who venture out into the small lake can attest (with Idea rolls) that the car will need to be pulled out by a truck. In addition, any investigator who wades out must make a DEXx5 roll or fall into the muddy water, making a total mess of himself.

What they do next is, of course, up to them. If they press on to Walker Lake on foot, they discover after about ten minutes of walking that the bridge over the Green River has washed out, and it is far too swollen to attempt to ford it. Investigators who try anyway must make DEXx2 rolls or be washed over the rocky rapids for 1D8 damage.

If they try to walk back to town, they are free to do so; the trip takes the better part of the day. It will cost them two dollars to hire someone with a truck to pull the car out of the mud, and another two dollars to have it hauled back to town for repairs. Note that once the investigators return from town with the truck, Hymes will have had plenty of time to get ready...

If they become desperate to escape, the Green River does run within a quarter

mile of the house, and the Norris family did keep a boathouse. Two rotten boats sit tied to the dock, which itself is partially submerged due to the high river. Investigators who attempt the boat trip all the way back to Billingsly (a successful Idea roll allows an investigator to remember driving over the Green River just before entering Billingsly) must make three Pilot Boat rolls, one at each area of rapids on the river. Failure means that each investigator in the boat must make a successful DEXx3 roll or be thrown from the boat and dashed against the rocks for 1D4 points of damage; ask for Swim rolls and use the drowning rules as needed.

What Hymes Does

Hymes' first priority is to make absolutely sure that the outside world doesn't find out about what he really does out in the wilds of Minnesota. He is willing to kill all the investigators and Dr. Norris if necessary.

The actions of Hymes depend entirely on how early he finds out that the investigators have hit Borkie and Mooftus. If they mention what they hit when they first arrive, he denies owning a dog, and will secretly go out into the storm to have a look. He will find Borkie in the engine compartment (unless the investigators have hidden the corpse, and even then, the engine will still be covered in blood), and begin to search for Mooftus, whom he finds in the brush at the side of the road. He assumes the worst, that the investigators have seen the entire two-bodied horror and know something is amiss. He will then begin his plans to eliminate the investigators, possibly that very night as they sleep.

If he does not find out until the next day, then when he accompanies the investigators out to the car and sees the evidence for himself, he will deny having a dog. He interrogates the investigators about the experience, trying to determine exactly how much they know. If he is not convinced that they are totally ignorant, he will begin to eliminate them.

When Hymes finally reaches the conclusion that he needs to get rid of the

June 5, 1919

"...I have found an interesting book at Humboldt's today. It is written in a language that I cannot recognize, though some of the diagrams are of a medical nature. I will attempt to determine what language it is tomorrow."

June 6, 1919

"Showed the book to Dr. Bridges today. He does not recognize the language either, but some of the more disturbing diagrams got to him. He encouraged me to get rid of the book. I don't think that I will."

June 8, 1919

"Am beginning to translate the book. Have had little success so far, but have managed (I think) to make out the title, *Humans and Others*. It seems to be some sort of a dissection manual, or book of experiments."

June 15, 1919

"...have finally broken the code! Will try the experiments... I will be famous throughout the medical world... have written Hymes at home to gather some money, as I will need some place to work. Must keep this a secret, so that my place in history will not be stolen from me."

July 1, 1919

"Was suspended from school today, for "perversion." What do they know, anyway. I'll show them, when I'm a famous doctor. They'll see."

July 6, 1919

"Hymes has written me that he has sent the family away for a while, and I can work at the Estate. I can't wait to get there. Will leave tomorrow morning."

- Handout #2, Excerpts from the Journal of Dr. Albert Norris

investigators, the Keeper should play out the situation by ear, remembering that although Hymes is not a moron, he is not brilliant either. It will not occur to him that several missing travellers may be as dangerous to him as investigators that return with unbelievable tales of mutant horrors on the Maple Trail.

His first ploy will be to lure one of the investigators down into the basement to help him pull up his portable winch (which doesn't exist) to try to get the car out of the mud. He instead waylays the hapless investigator, and leaves him dead or unconscious under the operating table.

He then retrieves his shotgun and hides in one of the coatrooms, waiting for the investigators to come back to the house. As they look for him, he ambushes them if possible. If they remain in a large group, he sneaks down into the basement and sets the Slime Being loose to scare them into doing something stupid.

If he cannot ambush any of the investigators in the house, he grabs the rifle from the wall in the study and stalks off into the woods. There he prepares a sniping post in sight of the house and the car that will allow him to fire the large rifle.

If Hymes gets desperate, he will use the brains from previously waylaid investigators and/or Dr. Norris to contact the Mi-Go and (hopefully) convince them to stalk the remaining investigators. The best place for this would be either barricaded in the basement or out in the woods. Even if he does not successfully convince them to do his bidding, they will be loose in the area as a wild card for the Keeper to use. Panicky investigators who sight one of the beings are unlikely to assume they are neutral, after all.

Remember that if the investigators corner Hymes, there are potential weapons in almost every room of the house. Hymes is strong, and will use whatever is available to good use.

Dr. Norris Strikes

Dr. Norris, too, accompanies the investigators out to their car the next morning. He quickly gets bored with the entire situation, and wanders off into the woods, calling for Borkie and Mooftus, whom he has not seen since the night before (unless the investigators have already told him of their demise). He quickly trips over Mooftus' corpse, which causes him to cry out, as he falls face first into the undergrowth. Investigators who make a successful Spot Hidden roll will see him set his face in a malignant grimace before he leaves determinedly for the house.

Dr. Norris has decided to get revenge for the poor pet, and when he arrives at the house, he arms himself with a twohanded sledgehammer, and begins to stalk the investigators himself (especially the one who was driving). He will strike from a place of hiding if possible, but he is not quite patient enough to make this strategy work to its full effect unless the investigators are blaringly unlucky. Instead, it is likely that he will hide behind a chair in the study, and as soon as the front door opens, he will run charging and screaming to attack whoever enters.

If the investigators are doing well, instead allow him the patience to strike from an effective ambush. On the other hand, if things are going poorly, have the Doctor strike at Hymes just as he is about to ambush the investigators.

Finale

As the investigators enter into their final confrontations with Hymes and Dr. Norris, it begins to rain again. It becomes windy, and anyone outside suffers a -10% penalty on all actions. The Keeper should keep the intensity of the encounter up, forcing the investigators to think quickly, making players who are indecisive lose valuable rounds of action. Hymes and the Doctor do not act in unison, and could quite possibly acciden tally hurt each other. The Keeper should make their actions appropriate to the dramatic ends of the story. Eventually, as the investigators kill or subdue them, the weather lets up, but the sky does not really clear. Even with the present menace taken out of the way, the world is still dark and gloomy, harboring secrets that humankind was not meant to know.

Wrapping it Up

Killing Hymes and Dr. Norris yields no Sanity reward. If Hymes is brought to justice, then a reward of 1D3 points is appropriate. If Hymes is turned in to the proper authorities and Dr. Norris delivered to a mental institution, 1D3+2 can be awarded.

There is another road to Rogers' house (though it is a six-hour drive) and investigators who finally make it there will be able to examine the book they were looking for. Rogers is a good host, and any investigation of him only turns up roses. Especially cruel or ambitious Keepers may wish to add another dimension to William Rogers, and perhaps make him a sorcerer, cultist, or other vile personage. Such efforts are left to the Keeper's individual discretion. Rogers does have a rather large library, and any investigators who nose around there could probably find any number of interesting volumes, leading to any number of new adventures...

Stats

Dr. Albert Norris, Failed Mad Scientist Str 14 Con 14 Siz 10 Dex 12 App 15 San 13 Int 17 Pow 7 Edu 16 HP 12 Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons: Sledgehammer 25%, 1d8 Skills: Biology 45, Chemistry 50, Electrical Repair 30, Fast Talk 25, First Aid 35, Latin 40, Library Use 50, Listen 30, Medicine 70, Other Language (Mi-Go) 15, Spot Hidden 45, Handgun 25, Rifle 30

Hymes, Psychopathic Assistant Turned Scientist

Str 16 Con 15 Siz 6 Dex 9 App 7 San 25 Int 10 Pow 9 Edu 6 HP 11 Magic Points 9 Damage Bonus: none Weapons: Bowie Knife: 50%, 1d4+2 Sawed-off 10g Shotgun:

40% Slug: 1d10+7 (25 yards);

45% Buckshot: 4d6+2 (10 yards) 2d6+1 (20 yards) / 1d8 (50 yards) Rifle (.30–06): 40%: 2D6+4 Spells: Contact Mi-Go

Skills: Chemistry 20, Conceal 30, Drive Auto 25, Jump 50, Listen 75, Mechanical Repair 55, Persuade 25, Pharmacy 15, Pilot Boat 25, Sneak 75, Spot Hidden 45

Good luck with "Roadkill," and enjoy! 🂫

Playtesters

"Roadkill" marked the beginning of Pagan Publishing's new playtesting program. We're making an effort to playtest every scenario submission both in-house and with out-of-house groups. The groups listed here all put "Roadkill" through its paces and their comments were quite valuable. Scenarios in the future won't be quite as exhaustively playtested, but this experiment got us off to a great start. Thanks to all of the following...

Brian Appleton group: John Crowe, Christian Klepac, John Tynes

Chris Close group: Christian Clark, Fred Feibel, J. R. Haugen, Alex McConachie, Bill Trotter

Allan T. Grohe group: David Burgett, Robert Edwards, Aaron Harris

Dave Hipple group: Thom Baguley, Andrew Hedges, Ian Robertson

Shane Ivey group: Eric Minton, Nathan Myers, Colin Taber

Michael Kasubagroup: Geoff Ala, Fionna Cunningham, Robert Jones, Curtis Satterthwaite

Joshua Radis group: Peter Buck, Tony Jones, Noah Levey, Jon Weaver

Matthew Swensongroup: Andrew Coke, Noel Henneman, Kimberly & Lans Hinson Jeff Tidball group: Joe Donaghue, Dave Ehren, Kim Martineau, Link Martineau, Rob Purple.

Steve Trow group: Benjamin Canning, Topher Folsom, PatLuther, Micheal Smith, Andy Young



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A train rolls on grimly through the bleak Canadian wilderness.

The air is cold, and the ground is thick with snow.

Beneath the snow, an ancient secret awaits discovery.

On board the train, a killer claims the first of his prey.

> And in the skies above, a god awaits his due.

By Anders Olausson & Jonas Hedkvist

The Unspeakable Oath • Spring, 1995

revival

his scenario is set during the winter months of 192-, perhaps close to Christmas, and is suited best to be played by no more than four investigators. While mostly for beginners, even more experienced players can get enjoyment out of this. It can be played as a single adventure or be fitted in to any campaign when the investigators travel by train in Canada. The plot is fairly simple and the action level isn't very high, but there should be enough mysterious and scary events to keep the players on their toes. This is a murder mystery with lots of interaction, tension, and mood.

Background

Jan van Breukelen is the last of a wealthy upper-class family in Holland. The most unusual aspect of the family is the fact that they are secretly Serpent Men. They have for centuries tried to locate any of the many prehistoric basalt cities that the Serpent-people built and inhabited during the Permian era. Now Jan is sure he has finished the work. He has found signs that have made him convinced that one of these cities is located in Canada's Northwest Territories. He is planning to dig out the hidden city from under the snow and ice that now covers it with the help of Ithaqua.

Many years ago, one of Jan's ancestors created a hideous spell that is a powerful weapon against the Wendigo. Now Jan has figured out how this spell, known as Stone-Eye of Ithaqua (see description below), can be used to serve his evil purposes. He will, with the help of a couple of Gnoph-Kehs, halt a train that passes very close to the place where he now believes that the hidden city is located. This will be accomplished by creating a snowstorm. The Gnoph-Kehs will then build the mighty snow pile that is required to call Ithaqua. During this time, Jan will prepare the spell Stone-Eye of Ithaqua, something that will take 24 hours to do. When this is done, the real ceremony is ready to start. Jan will climb up on the snow pile and call Ithagua. To make sure that Ithaqua will help Jan, he will please him by sacrificing the

passengers on the train. After that, Jan hopes that Ithaqua will blow away the snow and ice and the lost city will be set free, and once again Yig will get a stronghold in the north.

Jan's Plans

Before the investigators run in to Jan and his doings, he has performed certain things in order to get his plan working. This is what he has done so far:

- He traced the prehistoric city to a place just about in-between Echo Bay and Coppermine in the Northwest Territories of Canada.
- He placed a small research camp in the village of Echo Bay, and managed to determine the location of the city.
- He has murdered one of the town drunks with the spell *Clutch of*

Stone-Eye of Ithaqua,

a new spell

This is indeed a truly horrible spell that only a 0-SAN madman would ever perform. The caster of this spell must take out one of his own eyes to be capable of performing the spell. He must then drain this eye of all liquid inside and replace it with a piece of metal. He'll then sacrifice twenty magic points in a day-long procedure, after which it then must be heated continually for at least 24 hours. The heat is not specified, but the heat from a regular open fire is not enough (but the heat from a furnace in a locomotive might well be quite adequate...).

This eye will then have something of a life of its own. It is insensitive to heat and cannot be melted. It will remain at a temperature of 25 degrees Celsius, regardless of the temperature of its surroundings. It is harder than diamond and practically indestructible.

This eye will give the wearer a + 90% bonus when using the spell Call Ithaqua, and it will have a placating effect on Ithaqua which will make him much more negotiable. Jan will also sacrifice the passengers of the train, just to be sure that Ithaqua will do as he asks. The stone eye cannot be used by anyone other than its original owner/creator; it will be powerless in anyone else's hands.

All of this, except the information within the parentheses, is to be found in Jan's diary (see page 62). One thing that isn't written there is the fact that it will shorten the learning time for other spells by 25%. *Nyogtha.* The heart of this poor man was used as a sacrifice in contacting the two Gnoph-Kehs outside the village. These beings were persuaded to create a snowstorm to stop the train near the location of the prehistoric city. The two Gnoph-Kehs will keep their promise and they will meet Jan every night up until the city is set free, to receive new sacrifices and possibly new orders. The Gnoph-Kehs will also act as guards around the train when it is halted.

Investigators' Information

The investigators are hired by Miskatonic University (or through some other contrivance suitable to your campaign) to go to the small town of Coppermine in northern Canada. There they will investigate if the recent sightings of an "abominable snowman" is accurate. Some of the miners there have apparently seen something running around in the woods outside of the small town, and the mining company there, JA. Industries, has contacted the university to get an objective report. If there is such a creature or something similar out there, the mining will have to stop while the proper authorities try to examine the creature (or whatever it is). The University will pay the train ticket to Coppermine and back.

Keeper's Information

This has nothing to do with Jan van Breukelen and his plans, but it will give the investigators a good reason to travel by train to Coppermine from Echo Bay. The hunt for the snowman can be used as a scenario in itself, if the Keeper so wishes. Otherwise, just assume that there is nothing mysterious outside Coppermine. The Keeper can also replace this opening hook with anything else that is appropriate to the campaign. All that matters is that the investigators be on the train when van Breukelen makes his move.

Coppermine

The only safe way to get to Coppermine is by train, and the easiest way is straight from Edmonton. Coppermine is a small mining community in the northern part



of Canada. Almost everyone who lives there is somehow involved with the mining industry. As the name of the town suggests, they are mining for copper and the town is run by a private company known as J.A. Industries. However, the profit hasn't been as good as they would have hoped for, and now the deposits seems to be drying up. The small town lacks phones, library, roads, hospitals, and the like. The only newspaper available here is *The Echo Bay News* which arrives with the train from Echo Bay.

The town was formed in 1907 and since there was no quick and good way of getting the copper to civilization, J.A. Industries and other investors paid for a train line between Coppermine and Echo Bay. But now, when the mining is slowing down, the train only goes as far as Coppermine once every two weeks. Otherwise it goes as far as Echo Bay and turns back from there. It is not possible for the investigators to try to go to Coppermine by airplane since the weather in these parts can change very quickly from clear skies to a full storm and no pilots in the area are willing to make the trip.

The journey passes without incident. When the investigators reach Echo Bay, they must stay one night in town before the train goes on to Coppermine in the morning.

Echo Bay is a small village consisting mostly of fishermen and hunters with small alleys, lots of dogs, wooden houses (small fishing and hunting cabins), and only one hotel. The total population of Echo Bay is estimated to be somewhere around 700 people. It is a quiet place with an occasional Saturday night fight as the only disturbance... or so it was until Jan killed for the first time. The people here are usually friendly and almost a bit slow. After the first murder, before the investigators arrive in town, they will be more alert and suspicious about strangers that behave in a strange or unusual way. The language here is mainly English, but French will also work.

There is a medical clinic here with a staff of only three. They are Dr. Finn Lysholm (for more information see "The Good Doctor," p. 57), nurse Jennifer LeGrasse, and nurse Mary Shipps. Dr. Lysholm also acts as a doctor for Coppermine and travels there every two weeks with medical supplies and to treat anyone who is in need.

The police department at Echo Bay consists of two men, Sheriff Lyle Hansen and Deputy Andy Norris. Up until now they have had a pretty easy life as policemen, locking up the occasional drunk and stopping fights from getting out of hand. They are well liked in the town, but they will never solve the mysterious murders, mainly because they aren't very bright.

The only newspaper that exists here is *The Echo Bay News*, a very small, one page daily paper that prints news, gossip, and such. If something extraordinary has occurred they will print a special issue with two (or more) pages. Editor John Tyrell (one of only three employees) runs the paper from an office in his basement. He has back issues of the paper in case the investigators want to read them.

There is very little movement on the streets after nine in the evening so the city has decided to save some money by not having any streetlights. There are some light posts, but they are never lit except when there is a storm outside: then they are lit to act as guiding-lights.

Night in Echo Bay

The hotel is a small two-story wooden building and has five rooms for rent located on the second floor. The owner lives in his office and sleeps there at night. He has one employee, a cook that makes excellent food. The rooms are comfortable and cozy. The front door is locked at 9:00 PM. When the investigators arrive, there is only one other guest staying at the hotel. This is Arthur Smith, salesman (for more info, see "The Passengers," p. 55). He will also travel with the train to Coppermine tomorrow.

While in town, the investigators can hear rumors about someone known as "the Blaster Killer." If they want to talk to a local about it, they must succeed in a Persuade to get them to talk. If they succeed, they will learn of a mysterious killer who murdered a man just two nights ago. It would seem that the killer took the heart from the body and then ate it. The Keeper can come up with some more bizarre and strange (and false) rumors if he wants to. If the investigators want to check this out, they can go to the newspaper (The Echo Bay News), the police, or the medical clinic. If they go to the police or the clinic, they will not get to talk to anyone or to see any evidence. If they go to the newspaper, they can find the article about the first murder (see "Investigations," at right).

During the night, the Keeper should request a Listen roll from each of the investigators. If anyone succeeds, they are awakened (or alerted, if awake) by something that sounds like a quiet conversation below their window. If an

investigator pulls the curtain away and looks out the window, he sees two figures in a small alley, slightly lit by the moon. One of the two figures is standing with his back to the window and directly opposite him, about five yards away, the other is standing, facing the first. It is not possible to make out his face. Another successful Listen roll and the investigator realizes that it is only the one with his back to the window who is speaking. After a short while the one facing the window starts to sink to his knees, clutching his chest. The other one doesn't move, except that he now slowly raises his right hand in the air in front of him. After a few seconds the figure who fell to his knees suddenly is thrust backwards and cries out, short and not very loud. Immediately after that, the first figure puts down his hand, looks at it and then takes off into the night.

Now, any sleeping investigators have a chance to be awakened by the scream (each may attempt a Listen roll). Only the investigators who were awake may have seen the first figure. All that is left now is the shape of a man, slumped against the opposite wall. If they go out to investigate, they will realize that the body is that of a town drunk. They can smell the intoxicants ten vards away, but there is also a different smell, that of fresh blood. If they get close enough to see the body in the light, they will lose SAN; 1/1D4, due to the burst chest. There is lots of blood around the body, but no sign of bullets or anything similar. If the investigators look more closely at the wound, they will find that the edges of the wound suggests that the chest has exploded from within. Also, the heart seems to be missing.

If the investigators who decided to go outside don't think about sneaking while on the bottom floor of the hotel or fail their Sneak rolls, they will be met by the hotel owner in his night robe with a candle. If they can provide a reasonable excuse he won't bother them anymore. If the investigators don't wake up, they will read about the murder as explained nearby in "Investigations." If somebody notices the investigators with the victim, they will be taken in for questioning the whole morning and will be released only to get on the train with no more than a few minutes to spare. The train will leave at 1:00 P.M. They will also be forced to provide their names, addresses, and so on.

What Really Happened

This is Jan's second murder in Echo Bay. He used *Clutch of Nyogtha* as he did with the first. He lured the victim into the alley by offering him some wine. Jan doesn't live in the town but owns a cabin nearby. The heart was used as a sacrifice to the Gnoph-Kehs.

Investigations

If the investigators buy a newspaper the next day, they will see that *The Echo Bay News* have a massive headline proclaiming "Killer's Second Victim." It appears on page 54.

After this there is a long piece of how the public is to protect themselves from the killer and that if they know of anything that could help the police they must report this at once.

If the investigators want to look any closer at this, they will find that the police (two very confused men at this stage) will not talk to them, the hospital will not give them any useful information, and so on. The only way they can learn more about this is by talking to the people of Echo Bay or by getting hold of the recent issue of The Echo Bay *News* that has the article about the first murder. The easiest way of getting that issue is by going to the paper's office, which is located at the home of editor John Tyrell. He will be glad to show them the issue and at the same time question them if he thinks that they might know anything. The article appears on page 54.

Later issues only reveal that the police are getting nowhere and that this is the first murder since Bruce Allen killed his wife and her lover eight years ago.

Nothing of substance can be learned in Echo Bay. Talking with the people of Echo Bay will only reveal that they are positive that no one from Echo Bay could have committed these horrible crimes. The train departs shortly, and unless the

Echo Bay Newspaper Articles

Brutal Murder In Echo Bay

Early this morning, Sheriff Lyle Hansen made a horrible discovery behind the train station. He found the dead body of Neil Lawrence, curled between some cargo boxes. Sheriff Hansen says the chest area of the late Lawrence was totally wide open, "as if it had been blown away." No arrests have yet been made, but Sheriff Hansen says that there is nothing to worry about, the police have secured some conclusive evidence already, and that they are counting on a quick end to the murderer's evil plans very soon.

However, the police are encouraging everyone that could have seen or heard anything to contact them as soon as possible.

Killer's Second Victim

The unknown murderer has struck again. Everything is pointing to the fact that the perpetrator who committed a murder last night is the same one that killed Neil Lawrence not more than two days ago.

The victim this time was 47-year old Robert David Johnson, Like the other victim, Johnson was found with his chest blown up, this time behind the Echo Bay Hotel. The police haven't put out an official statement concerning the latest murder, but they do claim that they have secured certain evidence. An official statement from the hospital concerning the first murder says that Neil Lawrence was missing his heart when he was brought in. For this reason, some townspeople are speculating that the murderer is killing in order to get hold of human hearts.

No one has been able to identify what kind of a weapon would be able to cause these wounds. Police investigations are continuing. investigators want to spend the next two weeks in Echo Bay until the next train to Coppermine comes along, their investigations into the murders will come to an end (or so they think). If they do opt to stay the two weeks, the Keeper needs to make a choice: either have van Breukalen wait for the next train to carry out his fiendish plan (perhaps because the sheriff held him for questioning past the point when the train was due to leave) so the adventure doesn't end here, or else have events on the train occur as planned in which case the adventure does, indeed, end here.

The Train

When the investigators board the train, the Keeper should demand a complete description of what they are taking with them.

The train to Coppermine consists of three ordinary Pullman Compartment Sleeping Cars, five boxcars, and the engine with a coal car. The travel time is estimated at eight to ten hours, depending on the weather. The order of the train from rear to front is as follows: 5 boxcars - 3 Pullman sleeper cars parlor car - coal car - locomotive.

The five boxcars contain everything the people of Coppermine might need, ordered from the big cities. Three contain food, one contains furniture and clothes, and the last contains toys, tools, lamps, household appliances, and perhaps a rifle or two.

The sleeping cars each consist of seven private compartments that are linked together with interior doors that can be locked or unlocked, depending upon the size of the party of travellers and their need for privacy. The beds can be folded up and serve as small settees during the daytime. At night, with the beds unfolded, there is barely enough room to open the interior doors. The coach can be entered by outside doors at either side of either coach end, as well as from adjoining cars. There is a toilet as well as a storage room and a heater room. These latter two rooms are locked and only accessible for the conductor who has the keys. At the far left are thirteen

chairs that serve as a parlor. The length of each car is about seventy feet. Interior hallways are slightly less than ten feet.

The crew on this train ride consists of three people: the engineer, the fireman who helps the engineer with the coal, and the conductor (Sandy Martin). The engineer and the fireman are to be brutally slain by Jan during the trip, leaving the conductor as a possible prime suspect for the murders.

For the conductor it is possible to pass right through the train, from the last boxcar to the locomotive. The boxcars are always locked and keys are possessed only by the conductor and the engineer. To pass the coal car, one has to walk on the exposed catwalks on the outside of the car.

The First Incident

The weather is pretty bad from the start and soon degrades as a snowstorm builds. After about six hours, the storm reaches its high point and the train is forced to a halt due to snow on the tracks (this occurs before the conductor has checked the tickets). At this point the conductor is in his compartment. When the train stops, he goes to the locomotive to check things out, but it will take both him and any investigators with the same idea a couple of minutes before they reach their destination. When they finally arrive, they see a terrible scene which will cost those who didn't lose any SAN at the death of Robert David Johnson in Echo Bay to lose 1/1D4 SAN. The fireman is lying with his head smashed in and the engineer has his chest blown away, just like Johnson.

Even if the investigators followed Martin, he will halt them and ask them to wait while he goes in alone. After a short while he'll come back, pale and upset. He will ask them if any of the investigators are doctors. If somebody is, he will ask him to come inside the locomotive at once. Otherwise Martin will get Dr. Finn Lysholm (compartment 7, Pullman Car 1) to the scene. The conductor will leave the door open to the locomotive while he runs off to get Dr. Lysholm, so the investigators can get in.

The Passengers

The investigators will be placed in car 2, compartments 4 through 6. If there are more than three investigators, the remaining ones will be placed in car 1, compartments 2 and 3. The passenger list that the conductor has and that the investigator can get hold of, if they ask nicely, reads as follows, listed from the front of the car to the back:

Car 1

- 1 Dean Johnson
- 2 Empty (possibly an investigator)
- 3 Empty (possibly an investigator)
- 4 Fred & Liza Thompson
- 5 Arthur O'Neal
- 6 Patric O'Neal
- 7 Finn Lysholm

Car 2

1 Arthur Smith 2 David Gordon 3 Gerald & Nancy Fitzpatrick 4 (Investigator) 5 (Investigator) 6 (Investigator) 7 The conductor (Sandy Martin)

Car 3

 Philip Gordon
 Empty
 Liz Ashley
 Laura Hopkins
 Jan van Kerkhof (van Breukelen's alias - not very good)
 (must be empty)
 Alice Hastings

The Keeper is encouraged to type or write this out as a player aid complete with the names of the investigators. What follows is a short description of each of the passengers.

Car 1

1. Dean Johnson: a miner who has been to Echo Bay and checked in on his mother; at the same time his broken arm was treated and is now in a sling. Big and friendly, with light brown hair and a lot of muscles.

2 & 3.: Empty (possibly for investigators)

4. Fred & Liza Thompson: brother and sister. Fred is 10 years old and his sister is 19. They have been to visit their aunt and uncle (uncle was Neil Lawrence, Jan's first victim) in Echo Bay. Liza is fed up with her little brother and is very concemed about her appearance. Fred is a curious little boy who likes to tell lies about what he has done before. He will discover Jan's hideout at the toilet and storage area. He will tell if anyone asks him, but will anyone believe him? Liza will surely make known Fred's tendency to exaggerate.

5. Arthur O'Neal: a 65 year grumpy old man, tall and fat. A former miner, he is travellingtheseareaswith his brother Patric (see below) to visit relatives and old friends both in Echo Bay and Coppermine.

6. Patric O'Neal: a 60 year old man, tall and well-built. A former miner, he is travelling these areas with his brother Arthur (see above). He is a gentle man with some hearing problems. During the trip, he'll notice that Jan (in the guise of the conductor) is behaving strange. He'll pass this information on to anyone but the conductor if it seems appropriate.

7. Finn Lysholm: a 40 year old doctor with a clinic in Echo Bay, but who travels every two weeks to Coppermine to help out with injuries and such. Has some medicine and equipment in one of the boxcars. For more information, look under "The Good Doctor" (p. 57).

Car 2

1. Arthur Smith: a 50 year old travelling salesman of cotton fabrics. He's always wet from perspiration, but is a happy and cheerful man. Will try to convince the investigators to buy some of his products. He might have met some of the investigators at the hotel in Echo Bay the night before.

2. David Gordon: a 25 year old miner on his way to Coppermine to visit his brother James and to hopefully get a job at one of the mines there. Has a nervous attitude toward people who seem educated and intellectual.

3. Gerald & Nancy Fitzpatrick: a married couple in their forties that are returning to their home in Coppermine after a visit with Gerald's family in Vancouver. Gerald is a miner and Nancy is working at a restaurant called Ma's Perfect Diner. There is some trouble in their relationship, but they try not to reveal it to outsiders.

4 & 5 & 6.: Investigators' compartments.

7. Conductor Sandy Martin: 35 years old. Hasn't worked very long on this particular tour, but likes the nature and wildlife up here. He is very content with his job. He is tall and has light brown hair, also quite strong and fairly intelligent. He'll obey superiors but doesn't tolerate too much complaining from others. A downto-earth and sensible man.

Car 3

1. Philip Gordon: 20 years old and on his way to Coppermine to look for work. He tries constantly to be friendly and helpful. In dire circumstances, he might try to be a hero if Liza Thompson is anywhere near.

2.: Empty.

3. Liz Ashley: a 50 year old lady that has been to Echo Bay and Edmonton to perform some shopping for her family back in Coppermine. She is a very determined woman who likes to boss other people around.

4. Laura Hopkins: a 50 year old lady who is a friend of Liz Ashley (see above) that has escorted heron the trip. She is a tiny woman that is constantly bullied by Liz, but she seems to enjoy obeying Liz's every wish.

5. Jan van Kerkhof: is really van Breukelen. Read more about him in the background information.

6.Empty. Don't assign this compartment to an investigator, because it will be needed during the adventure for other purposes.

7. Alice Hastings: a 70 year old woman, short and thin, but with a sharp mind and quick comments. Will probably be killed by Jan. Has a problem with her left leg, so she is using a wooden cane to support her when she walks.



If Martin had more presence of mind, he'd consider the investigators suspects and keep them out of the locomotive. But, he's now the only worker on the train and he's rather panicked.

Any doctor or any investigator who succeeds with a Knowledge roll can say that the engineer and fireman died only a few minutes ago. It looks as they were sitting by a small table and drinking coffee, because on the table there is a thermos with steaming hot coffee (anyone should figure out that the train was stopped before they sat down). Also, the chair between the engineer and the fireman is standing a bit from the table, like someone was sitting on it before the investigators came.

Furthermore, the radio transmitter is destroyed and filled with oil and the map of the area showing the train route is also missing (something Martin will notice fairly soon). Due to this, it is impossible to calculate exactly where the train has stopped, because Martin hasn't quite

learned the route by heart yet. A successful Spot Hidden roll made outside the locomotive door will reveal a small, red toy car. The engineer is also missing his keys which he usually carries on his belt, though only Martin would know this and will recall it within a couple of hours. Under the table the investigators can find a wrench, drenched in blood and with some dark hairs on it. If the investigators check the hair on the fireman with those found on the wrench, they will find that they match. The last clue to be found here is (with Spot Hidden) some bloody footprints leading from the chair between the engineer and the fireman to the radio and then to the door. Outside the door there is no trace of the blood.

One thing one can notice is that the engineer is rather small and skinny (SIZ 8, CON 6) while the fireman is of normal size. If the investigators ask about the furnace, Martin will say that he will keep it hot so it might melt some of the snow

on and around the locomotive, so they don't become totally snowed in.

What Really Happened

This is, of course, the work of Jan. He started his train-journey by locking himself in the bathroom in Pullman Car 1 when no one was taking notice of him. There, he used the spell Body Warping of Gorgoroth to create an acceptable copy of himself as Sandy Martin (which he had studied during earlier travels). He also changed his clothing to a duplicate conductor's uniform that he copied after several observation trips on other routes of the same rail company. Then he stayed in the bathroom for six hours until he had regained a few of his magic points. He knew that the conductor didn't check the tickets until the end of the journey, and that he mostly spent his time before that in his compartment. Outside of the bathroom he found a small toy car, dropped there by Fred Thompson (see "Clue One," p. 58). He picked it up to leave

as a false clue in the locomotive. Then he went to the locomotive and pretended to be Martin. He talked a bit and before the train was stopped, he put his Stone-Eye of Ithaqua in the locomotive's furnace. While the engineer looked out the window and the fireman was distracted, Jan took a wrench and smashed the skull of the poor fireman. The engineer was shocked and didn't manage to do anything before Jan had started his spell (Clutch of Nyogtha). After it had been completed, he took the heart with him in his pocket, destroyed the radio, placed the toy car there to confuse investigators and then hid in the storage compartment in car 1 (which he had previously lockpicked). When the people came rushing by, he locked the door from the inside. During the investigation of the locomotive, he dared to go out, still looking like Sandy Martin. Once in his own compartment, he sacrificed one point of POW in Call Power of Nyambe thus gaining 2D6 Magic Points. If he gains seven or more magic points, he will regain his usual appearance.

The Good Doctor

Right after this murder, the investigators will probably want to start an improvised investigation. This will lead to the clues in the previous section, but they can also speak to the other passengers and find out more.

Even if one of the investigators claims to be a doctor, Dr. Finn Lysholm will reach the scene fairly soon. The investigators can talk to him now or later.

Finn Lysholm

He is the only real doctor at the "hospital" in Echo Bay. Every two weeks he travels to Coppermine for a quick health check of the workers and to fill the supply of medicine, treat the ill, and so on. Due to the fact that he is the area's only doctor, he has studied the previous victims of Jan. He realizes that the Blaster-Killer is on board the train because the wounds are identical. As the doctor willingly admits in this situation, there is no weapon or instrument that can be used to cause these kinds of wounds. He is not surprised when he finds that there is no heart in the body of the engineer, but moreso when he inspects the body of the fireman, since he only has his head cracked open, just as if it was a common criminal who had done this. He believes that the Blaster didn't have the time to get the heart of the fireman before he was interrupted by Martin or the investigators.

Dr. Lysholm refuses to admit it, but he is starting to believe that there is magic involved. He is also, together with the investigators, the only one who understands the terrible seriousness in this horrible affair. Therefore, he will initiate a thorough investigation and gather all the passengers, unless the investigators do it first. This will take place one hour after the discovery of the murder, making the investigators aware of the crime, if they haven't already been alerted.

About Dr. Finn Lysholm

He has more suspicions than he will admit to. As a student in Asia he came in contact with worshippers of Nyogtha. A feverish priest of Nyogtha made comments about "The Thing That Should Not Be" and other occult phenomena. He also implied that in certain sacrifices, a whole human heart was needed as a part of spells. This intrigued the young Lysholm to make further inquiries on his own. He read enough occult books to gain his skill (40%), but eventually he entered the Cthulhu Mythos. What he learned frightened him so much, that he decided to stop reading any further and therefore didn't gain more than 5% Mythos. Four points of these comes from a book he had come across. Nameless Cults (Golden Goblin edition) and the spell Call Nyogtha. This book also mentions the spell Clutch of Nyogtha and its effect, but not how it is performed. The only way for the players to find out this is to reveal their own knowledge in the Mythos and then press the doctor with a Persuade.

If the investigators enters Lysholm's compartment, the only thing of importance that they will find there is the aforementioned book, *Nameless Cults* (Golden Goblin edition). Lysholm is rereading parts of the book on this trip to reacquaint himself with the discussions on ritual magick uses of human hearts.

The Meeting

If no one else does anything similar, the conductor and the doctor will walk through the train and call for a meeting in one hour. They will not reveal anything about what it is about. All that they will say is that all passengers should gather in the lounge car at 8:00 P.M.

Jan will use this time to perform *Call Power of Nyambe* to gain 2D6 MP and also to reform to his usual human shape. Then he awaits the gathering, laughing when he thinks about the stupid mortals soon to die. At the meeting, of course, he betrays none of these feelings,

The meeting is started by Finn Lysholm. He will explain that the train has stopped due to the horrible murders of the engineer and fireman, most likely done by the Blaster-Killer. He will explain that the murderer is probably on board the train and therefore everybody must be regarded as suspects. He cautions the passengers to be extremely careful and that he will be acting as official in this case unless anyone disagrees. Anyone who has information on anything that seems even the slightest bit unusual can talk to either Dr. Lysholm or conductor Martin. But he warns the passengers to be careful and not to tell everyone of what they know, since if the murderer finds out who knows what he might be forced to commit another murder. He then asks if anyone has any questions.

If the Keeper so wishes, he can have Jan ask a couple of questions. If so, make sure that they are questions of importance and that he will appear to be a intelligent and rational man who understands the danger they are in.

Lysholm and Martin will answer any questions except the ones concerning the specifics of the murders. A couple sample questions and answers appear on the next page: Q: Why did the train stop?

A: Probably because the snow made the tracks unapproachable.

Q: Where are we right now?

A: We don't know, exactly, except that we are six hours from Echo Bay, by train.

Q: How long will we be standing here? A: Until the weather allows a new push forward. We will keep the engine going in order to hopefully melt the snow. The coal was calculated to be enough both ways and should therefore not run out.

Q: If we will be here long will there be enough food for all of us?

A: The boxcars contain food for the people of Coppermine, so that should not cause any problems.

Initial Clues

These clues will be told to either Finn Lysholm or the conductor, as mentioned previously. If the investigators were the ones who took command of an investigation, it will be to them that these stories will be told. If they seem interested or competent to Sandy or Finn, they will be given the evidence by them and asked for their help. If they have been keeping a low profile and not revealed themselves, they will not learn of this information unless they ask the people for themselves and succeed with Persuade or Fast Talk rolls.

Clue One

Fred Thompson, a ten-year old boy in compartment 4, car 1, tells the conductor that around six o'clock he needed to go to the bathroom. When he got there, it was occupied, so he stayed outside the door and waited. With nothing to do, he walked around the aisle, trying the knobs on a couple of doors. Suddenly one of the doors opened and he was really surprised, since all these storage compartments are usually kept locked. Even though he wanted to sneak inside and check it out. he really needed to go to the bathroom. It was still occupied so he ran to a bathroom in another car. After that he forgot the whole thing until he heard the running in the corridor. Then he went back, but now the storage door was locked. He guessed that the conductor had locked the door so he went back to his own compartment. But when he realized that he had dropped his toy car, he returned once again and now the door was open again. His car was not around, however, so he went back once more.

Fred will answer any questions asked as well as he can, and will finish by asking if they will catch the killer now. He hopes that they will because he killed his uncle Neil in Echo Bay.

Clue One Notes

What Fred has noticed is Jan's trip from the bathroom to hiding in the storage compartment for a short while, and that he later left. If they examine what the boy has told them, they can search the storage compartment that is still open and find the following clues (one for every Spot Hidden):

- · An empty can of oil.
- A big white, bloody linen handkerchief with the initial "vB". It is a man's handkerchief.
- The pieces of a completely torn railroad map. There is absolutely no hope of ever putting it back together again.

Clue Two

Patric O'Neal in compartment 6, car 1, will approach Finn or the investigators and tell them about the mysterious conductor. He'll say that he usually takes a small nap around seven every evening and he was just about to do this when he was disturbed by running in the corridor back and forth. First the train stopped and then he saw the conductor come running (or walking very fast anyway) toward the locomotive (if any investigators followed Martin when he went to the locomotive the first time. they will be included in this description). Right after that he saw him come running back from the locomotive, pale and upset. Then, after that, it was off to

the locomotive again, this time with the doctor following in his footsteps. And just a few minutes later, he came back, walking casually. But now Patric noticed something that he at first thought was a mistake, but then he became sure of what he saw. He saw that the conductor's right cuff was red, as'if it were drenched in blood, although nothing dripped from it. And he also saw that there was a red stain on his uniform pocket. The pocket was full of something, the size of a small fist, maybe. Then he will say that the next thing he saw was probably some kind of trick with the light, because he almost thought that thing inside the pocket was moving. He will then warn them to not rely too much on the conductor, since he seems to be hiding something.

O'Neal is completely convinced that he has given the right time frame. He IS telling the truth, and if the investigators do not believe him, he'll become noticeably irritated. Despite this, any investigator that was in the locomotive with Martin knows that this can't be true, due to the fact that Sandy Martin stayed in the engine at least twenty minutes after he had returned with the doctor. If the investigators weren't at the scene, they will not know that particular fact. If the investigators succeed in a Psychology roll on O'Neal, they will find that he believes his story to be absolutely true.

Clue Two Notes

What Patric O'Neal has seen is Jan, who in the shape of Martin went to boxcar number 3 to hide his conductor's uniform. If the investigators search the boxcar at any other time than when Jan or a Gnoph-Keh is present (see "A Nightly Meeting"), they will find the following after a successful Spot Hidden:

• The conductor's uniform, with the rightside pocket drenched in blood. The rightside pocket is coated inside with dried blood. The clean pocket contains the wrapping of a mint chocolate candy. The paper is purple and yellow with traces of melted chocolate.

• If the investigators haven't found the uniform before, Sandy Martin will have a 40% chance of finding it when he comes to get some food to the passengers the next day (around 8:00 A.M.).

A Nightly Meeting

When the clock approaches 9:00 P.M., shortly after the all-passenger meeting, the storm will start to ease down. This is due to the fact that the Gnoph-Kehs have gone to boxcar three (the last one containing food) and are waiting to meet Jan.

During this time Jan will leave his compartment (as himself, not the conductor) and carefully go to the boxcar. The old lady in the compartment next door (Laura Hopkins) went to bed right after the meeting and hears nothing. The boxcar is locked, but the keys Jan stole from the engineer can unlock it. The conductor knows exactly which keys that the engineer had and if asked he will tell. The keys don't unlock any compartment doors, only the locomotive, storage compartments, and boxcars.

Jan is aware of the limitations of the keys. He is hoping that the conductor (and the investigators) will believe that the killer was out for the keys to the compartments, but got hold of the wrong ones. He does, however, realize that a suspicion may arise that the killer will perhaps poison the food in the boxcars and will therefore keep a close watch on all the people that pass by his compartment. The Keeper is urged to keep track of the time that the investigators placed out any guards (if they in fact do so). If this occurred between 7:10 P.M. and 9:00 P.M., Jan will know if anyone is watching the boxcars. If that is the case, he will not go to his meeting with the Gnoph-Kehs. He has told them of this possibility. Otherwise the action can go three ways (this is performed both nights).

1. If the investigators are inside the boxcar at 9 PM. and Jan is aware of this, then at 9:00 P.M., the investigators hear the locks to the boxcar door being removed and the door quickly opens

wide. One Gnoph-Keh gets inside while the other stands right behind him. This sight costs each investigator 1/1D10 SAN loss. The Gnoph-Kehs will realize within one round that something isn't as it should be (they are expecting Jan to be there). If no one attacks them during this time, they will disappear to return the next day at 9 PM. If Jan fails to bring them two hearts the day after a missed meeting, the Gnoph-Kehs will break their agreement with Jan and leave him alone and without a snowstorm. If the Gnoph-Kehs are attacked, the first one will retaliate by using two claws to attempt to kill any investigator in reach. If no investigator is easily accessible, they will return to the snowy wilderness outside. Their flee-before-fight attitude is both due to Jan's orders (he has said that they must not be seen by any of the passengers) and their own dislike of being seen by anyone.

2. If the investigators are inside the boxcar at 9 P.M. and Jan doesn't know, then when Jan steps inside he will be very surprised. If the door has been left unlocked, he will explain that he became hungry and decided to get something to eat. Even if he is caught unlocking the door, it doesn't automatically mean that he is recognized. The investigators will probably only see that it is a man, but will otherwise be blinded by Jan's lantern. Those standing closest to the door who succeed in 50% of a Luck roll will notice the intruder had light brown hair. After that Jan slams the door shut. Even if the investigators quickly get the door open and rush after Jan, he will reach his compartment before they see him. This quick escape doesn't leave any clues other than the ones mentioned. By checking, the investigators will find that these passengers have light brown hair: Jan van Kerkhof, Dean Johnson, Sandy Martin, and Arthur Smith (although it is actually his toupee, something he will not reveal unless asked directly)

3. If the investigators enter the boxcar sometime between 9:00 and 9:10 PM, they will catch Jan red-handed, so to speak. It is hard to know that it is Jan,

however, because he will change to his Serpent Man shape as soon as he enters the boxcar. The sight of the serpent man and the Gnoph-Keh will cost the investigators 1/1D10+4 SAN. Since none of the Mythos beings in the boxcar have many magic points left at this time, they will not use any spells. It will result in all out combat where Jan will first shout to the Gnoph-Kehs to kill the investigators and then fight for his life. The Gnoph-Kehs attack with two claws each and this time fight until the intruders are slain. Jan's goal with this fight is to get out of the boxcar, slam the door, and return unseen and unrecognized to his compartment.

The Next Incident

When Sandy Martin the next day goes through the cars to check things out, he will discover (around 9:00 A.M.) that no one answers in car number seven, compartment number three. He'll be careful and will contact Lysholm (and possibly the investigators) before he unlocks the door.

The sight inside will cost those who haven't seen any of Jan's killings before 1/1D4 SAN. On the floor, right next to the bed is the body of Alice Hastings, as dead as any of Jan's previous victims. She is dressed in a nightgown, but is holding her walking cane. Right next to her is a small bottle of perfume. The purse is lying open on the floor, but contains only money, a ticket, a box of peppermints (without paper) and a photograph of a grandchild. As Lysholm will state after an investigation, she has been dead for somewhere between one to two hours.

What Really Happened

Right about now Jan is starting to believe that his plan is really working. This time he didn't waste any magic points on Body Warping of Gorgoroth; he just went as himself, since he could travel from his room in compartment five through the empty compartment six and into the victim's compartment seven without being seen. He picked the lock and opened the interior door to compartment six, sneaked through the empty



compartment, and reverted to his Serpent Man appearance. He then picked the lock to compartment number seven and awakened the sleeping Alice Hastings. The poor old lady had a shock, but still managed to keep her mind clear. She saw the lizard thing and realized that this had to be the infamous Blaster-Killer. In a desperate attempt to survive, she reached for her walking cane and hit Jan over the head. She managed to give him a small scratch in the chin but was then killed.

The Murder Scene

On the basin is a soap-cup. On the floor is a perfume bottle. On the ledge to the basin there is more than enough room for a purse. With a successful Spot Hidden roll, the investigators find a small lizard-like scale on the cane together with some dark blood. A scale is also found on the floor, close to the door. These are scales that flew off when Jan was struck by the cane. The blood on the cane is also Jan's, but the only thing that

the investigators can learn from this is that it probably isn't human blood. Dr. Lysholm will come to this conclusion after inspecting it, but what kind it is he cannot say. Anyone who makes their EDUx3 will deduce that the scales are similar to those of reptiles. This isn't the only trace of Jan. In his eagerness to fulfill his plans, he forgot to lockpick the door back to the empty compartment adjacent to Alice Hastings (number six). These doors are normally kept locked. A successful Spot Hidden roll made in compartment six will reveal small stains of blood on the floor. He did remember to lock the door between compartment six and five (his own).

The Clutch Tightens

At this point it is time for breakfast (about 9:20 A.M.). This will be taken in Pullman car number two. Some will prefer to eat their meals in their own compartments. The ones who don't appear at breakfast are: Dean Johnson, Fred & Liza Thompson, Gerald & Nancy Fitzpatrick and Jan van Kerkhof.

After breakfast Finn will tell of the new murder and ask anyone who has any information to talk to him or Sandy Martin. No one has anything to say.

What Jan Does Now

Jan is now preparing the last steps in his plan. After the murder, he put the heart in a cooling-bag which he had brought and then hid in the last boxcar (which only contains furniture). There he will wait all day for his magic points to return. A quick meeting occurs at 9:00 PM. with the Gnoph-Kehs at which time he gives them the heart. At 10:00 PM. he is ready for the grand finale. He slips out the side door of the boxcar and into the storm, then runs crouched beneath the windows of the passenger cars to the locomotive. There, he retrieves his Stone-Eye of Ithaqua from the furnace of the engine using metal tongs

NPC Stats

Jan van	Breukelen,	serpent-n	nan sorcerer
STR 9	DEX 17	INT 18	CON 12
APP 11	POW 18	SIZ 15	HP 14
DB: +0			

Spells: Clutch of Nyogtha, Body Warping of Gorgoroth, Contact Gnoph-Keh, Summon/ Bind Byakhee, Call Ithaqua, Stone-Eye of Ithaqua*, Call Power of Nyambe, Contact Yig, Turn to Human

Skills: Hide 80%, Listen 80%, Locksmith 90%, Sneak 90%, Spot Hidden 90% Languages: Dutch 95%, English 85%, French 70%, Latin 67%, Serpent Person 99% Weapons: Bite 50 % 1D8+poison Pot 12 SAN-loss: 0/1D6 (only when in the shape of a Serpent Man)

* A new spell, described on page 51.

Jan in his human form is a big, athletic man in his mid-thirties. He has light-brown hair and a patch over his left eye. (He claims that he lost it in the war.) The one remaining eye is clear blue. He is a quiet man who often

taken from the fireman's tool locker. After this, he jumps out in the snow. At this time the storm will have started to subside, just as he has arranged with the Gnoph-Kehs. At one side of the train a huge pile of snow has now formed, and at 10.05 PM. he starts the ten-minute ceremony that uses the Stone-Eye of Ithaqua.

When the spell is completed after ten minutes, Ithaqua will come and collect his victims by looking in every compartment and other room (presumably by sucking them through windows or peeling the roofs from rail cars). After that Ithaqua will accommodate Jan and blow away the snow to reveal the old lost city.

If the investigators haven't been able to prevent this from happening before Ithaqua has appeared, the scenario probably ends here. The train and a few bodies will be found later, but most of the passengers are missing.

None of the procedures of the spell are noticeable within the train. If it has come to this, the only chance of stopping the tragedy is by stopping the ceremony from taking place. If anyone will look out the window they will find the tracks of Jan, leading up to the snow pile (between smiles and reveals a line of shiny white teeth. Anyone who talks with him for a while will find that he is most definitely a very intelligent person.

Sandy Martin, train conductor

 STR 12
 DEX 8
 INT 14
 CON 11

 APP 12
 POW 12
 SIZ 15
 EDU 11

 SAN 60
 HP 13
 DB: +1D4

 Skills:
 Accounting 30%, Electrical Repair 65%, Law 40%, Mechanical Repair 70%, Persuade

 55%, Sneak 75%

Languages: English 66%, French 45%

Dr. Finn Lysholm, medical doctor

 STR 10
 DEX 16
 INT 16
 CON 13

 APP 7
 POW 12
 SIZ 11
 EDU 17

 SAN 50
 HP 12
 Damage Bonus: +0

 Skills: Biology 50%, Credit Rating 80% (in Echo Bay and Coppermine), Cthulhu Mythos 5%, First Aid 65%, Medicine 85%, Occult 40%, Pharmacy 50%, Psychology 35%

 Languages:
 English
 80%, French
 40%, Latin 45%

Gnoph-Keh #1

 STR 34
 DEX 11
 INT 16
 CON 25

 POW 17
 SIZ 36
 HP 31
 DB +3D6

 Move 9
 Armor 9
 Weapons:

Horn Gore 65% 1D10+(5D6, 3D6, or 1D6); Claw 45% 1D6+(3D6, or 1D6) Spells: none

Gnoph-Keh #2

 STR 29
 DEX 11
 INT 18
 CON 27

 POW 24
 SIZ 35
 HP 31
 DB +3D6

 Move 9
 Armor 9

 Weapons:

 Horn Gore
 65%
 1D10+(5D6, 3D6, or 1D6);

 Claw 45%
 1D6+(3D6, or 1D6)

 Spells: Call Ithaqua

Foramorein-depth description of the Gnoph-Kehs and their fighting abilities, consult the *Call of Cthulhu* rulebook.

10:05 P.M. and 10:15 P.M.

The ceremony will be performed by Jan on top of the snow pile that has been building up next to the train. If he is discovered while casting the spell, he will be an easy target for any investigator. Even if he is hit, he won't give up, hoping that Ithaqua will come before he dies. If he manages to perform one minute or more of the ceremony but dies before Ithaqua appears, there will be a 90% chance that Ithaqua will appear. If he appears but Jan is dead, he will not know why he was called, so he will attack the one who he thinks is the one who killed Jan. After that he will disappear. The snowstorm will end, however, because the two Gnoph-Keh's have gone away together with Ithaqua, and after a couple of hours the rescue-team from Coppermine will show up (it started off at 9:00 PM).

Stopping the Plan

If the investigators enter Jan's compartment after the second killing, he will not be there. Instead, they can find the following things:

1. A series of African wooden statuettes.

Everyone who succeeds in their Cthulhu Mythos roll can say that they are involved in a ceremony that supplies extra magic points.

2. A book with green leather binding with the title Arctic City Theories in silver letters. This is a book written by one of Jan's ancestors. It is written in a languages of the Keeper's choice and requires the appropriate language roll. The book describe's the author's family (the van Breukelens) and their studies concerning possible Serpent People cities. It is a rather dull book with old legends about where Serpent People dwelled a long, long time ago, geographical calculations about where these cities might be located today, tributes to Yig, and other brief descriptions of certain Mythos beings. To show the style of the book, a quote is presented here. It has nothing to do with this particular scenario, but can be used to show investigators how it is written:

In The Old Book one can find stories for which there can be no other explanation than that they simply vanished, disappeared without any trace. Dust and forgotten sarcophagi is the only inhabitants of these old cities today, but with effort and intelligence we can get these cities to revive again, and the power of Yig, Father of Serpents, will rule the world.

It is not very thick (ID6 weeks per try to read) and will give +3% to Cthulhu Mythos to successful readers. It costs 1D4 SAN and has a Spell Multiplier x2. It contains the spell *Call Power of Nyambe*. To speed through the book so one can understand its general contents will take one hour.

3. A folder with a lot of maps, old as well as new. Sandy Martin can state that most of them show the area around Echo Bay and Coppermine.

4. A successful Spot Hidden will reveal a small brown diary which is, from its appearance, very old. A bookmark in it shows a special passage written in the same language as *Arctic City Theories*. This is the spell Stone-Eye of Ithaqua and the investigator should be given the same information as described in the spell description at the start of the scenario.

The diary is from the 16th century and will take about one month to read properly. It is written by another of Jan's ancestors and tells of his attempts to find a Serpent People city in the wilderness outside present day Quebec. Obviously, the writer was captured by some locals and was to be killed. While he waited for his doom, he wrote the last passages and got a trader to smuggle it out and send it to Holland, back to the van Breukelen family. It will give the reader +5% Cthulhu Mythos and a SAN loss of 1D8. It has a Spell Multiplier of x2 and contains the spells Clutch of Nyogtha and Contact Gnoph-Keh. The investigators should notice the spell Stone-Eye of Ithaqua right away. Further quick studies of the diary mentions the spell Body Warping_ but not how it is performed.

5. Yet another successful Spot Hidden will reveal Jan van Breukelen's true identity with his passport. His real name explains the initials on the handkerchief found in the storage compartment. Right next to the passport is a bag of mint chocolate candy, the same as the one in the duplicate conductor's uniform.

These last clues will probably give the investigators the following facts: 1. Jan is the killer.

2. Jan is some kind of sorcerer.

3. His family have for a long time been looking for lost Serpent People cities buried in snow.

4. Jan has been studying the area that the train now is halted in.

5. Jan has the power of a spell that demands an eye.

6. Jan only has one eye and has probably therefore already prepared the spell.

7. This spell is a powerful tool in getting the Wind God on his side.

(In the book *Arctic City Theories*, Ithaqua is mentioned as "the powerful God, ruler of the storms, the snow and the ice, who with no effort would be able to clear the layers of snow covering one of our cities in an instant." For every ten minutes the investigators study this book, there is a 20% chance that they will find these very lines)

8. This spell requires preparation in extreme heat.

(If none of the investigators comes to think of this, (maybe) Sandy Martin will come to think of it: "What about the locomotive's furnace?")

If this happens, the investigators could

go directly to the engine and remove the eye, thus spoiling Jan's plans.

Other ways to end this scenario can be that the investigators simply kill Jan without ever knowing of the Stone-Eye in the furnace. It will not have any effect unless the spell can be cast and then only by the owner of the eye. They can put out the fire in the locomotive and thus end the spell too soon. If this happens, Jan will call the Gnoph-Kehs to kill any person who is nearby the Stone-Eye, in order to get hold of it.

If Jan is put in any danger (with the risk of being killed), he will transform himself to human in order to not reveal the presence of his people.

If Jan is caught alive, he will try to escape at the first opportunity (with the risk of getting killed).

If the plan is stopped and Jan is stopped, the Keeper can give the investigators 1D10 SAN each.

Playtesters

Anders Olausson group: Johnie Nilsson, Fredrik Wiklund, Krister Wikgren, Jorgen Hartman, Magnus Johansson, Niklas Blomstedt

John H. Crowe, III group: Brian A. Appleton, Dennis P. Detwiller, Christian Klepac, John Tynes.



-The Unspeakable Oath • Spring, 1995



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We've moved again—see our new address and phone number at left—but we've got a lot of new stuff coming soon. *Golden Dawn* and *Coming Full Circle* are both on track for this summer, and the *Clockwork Child* t-shirt is available **right now**. If you aren't on the mailing list for our mail-order catalog, *The Outsider*, contact us and we'll send you one right away. Our catalog carries t-shirts, Cthulhu plush dolls, Mythos fiction, jewelry, and *Call of Cthulhu* books from Pagan Publishing and Triad Entertainments.

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A sourcebook with scenarios for *Cthulhu by Gaslight*. Join the most notorious occult order of Victorian England—the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn—and learn the horror behind the history. Includes rules for astral projection and Hermetic Magick in *Call of Cthulhu*.



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A Call of Cthulhu campaign by the author of Walker in the Wastes. Set in rural Massachusetts in the 1930s, this is a Non-Mythos campaign with elements drawn from New England folklore and occultism. Includes rules for creating psychics and mediums as investigators and using "the gift" in play.



The Clockwork Child T-Shirt

Available through The Outsider mail-order catalog.

The clockwork child had no expression on her chubby porcelain face, but as she rolled, her mouth clacked open and shut and her arms bobbed up and down.

CAVADATRICIE

TPks

Michael Varhola



Message In A Bottle

Each issue, Message In A Bottle presents a brief creative work by a writer, an artist, or both. The theme is communication and enlightenment, and the results-pleasant and unpleasant – that they can bring. Excerpt from the Adtkeh Diaries of Major Yuri Melanov of the Russian Army, edited and translated into English with the assistance of Mikal Warchola...

Jerked up my left hand as a signal to halt the party, momentarily wheeling part way around to hold a gloved finger up to my lips. My heart started to beat faster, and I felt a shudder go through my body. Like a hand of ice slipping around me, the temperature seemed to drop another twenty degrees.

I was about a hundred feet ahead of the others and could see the massive white haunches of the great white bear protruding from a boulder.

The polar beast's haunches jerked convulsively, rocking first forward and then back, as if the bear were energetically tearing at and devouring something. Whatever engaged the beast was hidden behind a large rock, which partially blocked a smaller ravine that opened off of the main one.

Focusing my attention on the bear, I unshouldered the high-powered rifle and raised it to my shoulder. I pulled off my right glove with my teeth and let it fall to the ground. The rifle was already chambered; so once I seated its butt in my shoulder. I flipped the safety off with my right thumb. I closed my left eye, the one closest to Askey, and took aim at the bear. "An easy shot," I remember thinking.

The rifle cracked sharply in the thin air, and the bear twitched as the drugladen dart hit it; I saw instantly the tiny dark spot where the projectile struck. The bear lurched forward, more than I expected it to, and then lay still.

"That was fast," Askey said to me, and started to move forward, but I stopped him.

"Load it again." I said to the younger man, handing him the rifle and then drawing my pistol and chambering a round. "Stay behind me and to my right." I led the way, and could tell that the American soldier was as nervous as I was as we crossed the broken ground separating us from the bear. I could feel my flesh quivering inside my clothing. Still, a certain edge seemed to have disappeared from the cold. Behind us, the rest of the party moved forward cautiously and at a distance.

As I neared the rock, I noticed a stench of blood, of carnage. Something inexplicable seemed wrong as I moved toward the sprawled form of the bear. My senses seemed to heighten. every cell of my body attuned to the intense cold; my nose to the bloody stench: my ears to Askey's boots on the rock behind me, and to something else: a wind howling up through one of the intertwined ravines.

I reached the bear, my automatic pistol leveled at it. Somehow I felt foolish, impotent. I began to edge round the white mound, my nostrils clogged with the smell of death.

Suddenly, I staggered back, and think that I clutched at my face. Askey and the rest of the party recoiled. I fell to my knees, turned away from the bear, and retched violently. My pistol hung uselessly in my hand.

Horrified, I was unable to prevent Askey from moving forward to look behind the rock. When he did he dropped his rifle and staggered back, screaming.

We had steeled ourselves to see the remains of who or what the polar bear had been eating.

But all we saw was half a bear.

The other half was gone, ripped away from the torso up. Ragged strips of flesh were all that remained of the animal's front half: shredded hunks of pulped internal organ protruded from the exposed body cavity: frozen blood stained the torn, white coat...



MINI-CATALOG

good through July 31, 1995; write, call, or email for a free catalog and to get on the mailing list for new catalogs

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T-SHIRTS

T-SHIRT: PAGAN PUBLISHING L/XL \$12; XXL \$14 Pagan's signature shirt, this is a grim black tee with our striking logoon the front — a dark sphere with a double-pentagram in red stretching across it into the gloom. Around the sphere hangs our slogan: "Pagan Publishing — Plotting The Downfall Of Humanity Since 1990." Want to help us?

T-SHIRT: CLOCKWORK CHILD L/XL \$12; XXL \$14 As seen on page 63, this is bound to be the freakiest shirt of 1995. The front depicts the enigmatic Clockwork Child, accompanied by acryptic text. On the back is a quote from the King in Yellow. Must be seen to be believed, and sure to draw stares. Printed in white on a black t-shirt.

T-SHIRT: TUO

L/XL \$12; XXL \$14

A new incarnation of our original t-shirt, this is the horrific and graphic cover art to TUO1 with the TUO logo and a Lovecraft quote from "The Call of Cthulhu" on the front. The back features a swirling Yellow Sign. Printed in white and yellow on a black tshirt.

All t-shirts are 100% extra-heavy cotton, and are pre-shrunk.

ORDERING INSTRUCTIONS

Add up what you want, and write it down. If you're getting a Cthulhu Doll, **specify color**; if you're getting t-shirts, **specify size**. Shipping & Handling in the United States is **50%** of your total or **\$5**, whichever is <u>less</u>. Outside the U.S., it's **30%** of your total for surface mail, **80%** for air mail. *Subscriptions and Cthulhu Dolls already include postage costs, so don't add postage if that's all you're ordering.* Send a check or money order to the address below, or call **[206] 528-7665** to place a C.O.D. order (\$5 extra, 12AM-8PM PST). We cannot take credit card orders at this time. We can take non-U.S. personal checks in non-U.S. currency! Use April 21st exchange rates for the conversion rate, please.



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CTHULHUPUNK Ancient Horror Crawls Into the Dark Future

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