

DREAMHOUNDS OF PARIS™

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

BY ROBIN D. LAWS

WITH KENNETH HITE & STEVE DEMPSEY



Pelgrane Press



DREAMHOUNDS OF PARIS

By: Robin D. Laws, Kenneth Hite, and Steve Dempsey

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

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DREAMHOUNDS OF PARIS

CE N'EST PAS UNE PRÉFACE

"There is no drawing a line betwixt what is to be called extreme fantasy of a traditional type and what is to be called surrealism; and I have no doubt but that the nightmare landscapes of some of the surrealists correspond, as well as any actual creations could, to the iconographic horrors attributed by sundry fictioneers to mad or daemon-haunted artists."

— H. P. Lovecraft to James F. Morton,
March 15, 1937 (undelivered letter)

Dreamhounds of Paris tells the never-before-revealed story of the surrealist movement, and its involvement in a series of occult events bringing them into contact with a realm beyond our own — the Dreamlands. When they first discover it, they find it a realm of slightly precious wonder. As they explore it, and find themselves able to bend it to their unconventional wills and convention-shattering aesthetic, it becomes sinister, modern, and contradictory — like the surrealists themselves.

Or rather, this book gives you the tools to, in conjunction with a brave *Trail of Cthulhu* group, create that story for yourselves. Together you'll interweave the striking, sometimes poignant, sometimes ironic known events of the Paris art scene in the 1930s with a player-driven secret history of fantastical horror. Over the course of the narrative, the main characters explore the Dreamlands, then change

and exploit them, and finally try to reverse the epic catastrophe they themselves have put in motion.

The tools to assemble this epic tale appear in the following chapters:

One — Chiens de rêve: A history of the surrealist movement, as told through its major figures, with second-person biographies presented in pre-generated character format. Also included are a capsule history of surrealism, a timeline and detailed biographies on two pivotal surrealist NPCs.

Two — Votre avant-gardiste: New rules for surrealist player characters, from art-making to dream-shaping.

Three — Les rues de Paris: The sights, sounds and places of surrealist-era Paris, from ghoul-haunted catacombs to the blood-spattered stage of the Grand Guignol. Most importantly, this section shows you where the cafés, lifeblood of any artistic or intellectual movement, are located.

Four — Paris occulte: Like any major European city of ancient provenance, Paris teems with charlatans, magicians, cultists and secret society devotees. Meet the people who may take a dim view of paint-dappled avant-gardists horning in on their metaphysical territory.

Five — Rue de rêve: When the group explores the Dreamlands, this chapter shows them what they'll find. Both the places and creatures of dream undergo transformations in response to their activities. Entries

here detail them in both pristine and transmogrified conditions.

Six — Kadath aujourd'hui, demain le monde: A strange new campaign frame demands innovative new Keeper techniques. This section shows you how to shape a *Dreamhounds* saga into an arc with a consistent tone while also fostering a player-driven dynamic.

Seven — La Forteresse de Maldoror: This introductory scenario propels the party deeper into dream, bringing them face-to-face with a key fictional figure in their shared mythology. Will they save him from the mysterious Yellow Figure that pursues him? And what will they do with his gift?

For the full *Dreamhounds* experience, lay your velvet-gloved hands on its companion volume, *The Book of Ants*. This diary of the forgotten surrealist poet Henri Salem details an early chronology of the group's internal struggles and peregrinations in the Dreamlands. Just how true are its dark truths? Only your group can decide...

A Note on Images

The text of this book mentions many of the classic visual works of surrealist painters and sculptors, as well as references to the creators themselves. We do not reproduce the people or their works of art here, in order to make room for illustrations that show the collision of dream world and art history. In this age of ubiquitous Internet and mobile devices, you'll find the originals no more than a quick image search away.



CHIENS DE RÊVE

“For after all, the victim was a writer and painter wholly devoted to the field of myth, dream, terror, and superstition, and avid in his quest for scenes and effects of a bizarre, spectral sort.”

— “The Haunter in the Dark”

In a *Dreamhounds of Paris* campaign, players portray major figures of the surrealist movement, who find that their project of transforming society through the power of the unconscious mind allows them to not only access, but reshape, the strange twilight realm they call the *domaine de rêve* — the Dreamlands.

This chapter tells the history of the surrealist movement, including the secret history of its involvement in the Dreamlands — on which might well turn the fate of Europe, and the world, for the rest of the century. Or rather, it reveals certain pivotal events, the details of which the group discovers over the course of the series, by making their story of the surrealist transformation of the Dreamlands.

We cleverly disguise much of this history as a series of pre-generated character descriptions. This cuts the amount of advance reading required of the players down to an acceptable minimum — to get started, all they have to read is their own character description.

Only the Keeper needs to read the entire chapter. Start with the nutshell history, then go on to the master timeline tying pivotal events together into a single chronology. Get a sense of the deeper story, and the format they’re presented in, by reading a few key character biographies: Dalí, Desnos, Cocteau,

Éluard and Tzara ought to do the trick. Also read the supporting character biographies, starting with Breton.

Give the rest of the player-character descriptions at least a quick skim. Or, to see the interlocking stories of the various figures unfold from each of their perspectives, read them all thoroughly in turn.

Go on to read the rest of the book. As your first session approaches, go to “Getting Started,” at the end of this chapter, to see how to present the information given here to your group.

For speed of access, key historical facts appear in more than one section of the text.

A Surrealist Nutshell

In 1915, a group of Zurich bohemians creates the Dada movement. Their fiercely satirical anti-art assaults the values of the day with deliberate nonsense, expressed through raucous cabaret performance and deconstructed typography. Though not the movement’s founder, an oddly charismatic Romanian émigré named Tristan Tzara self-promotes his way to its leadership.

After the Great War, the young poet and critic André Breton gathers a circle of aspiring litterateurs. Inspired by Freud, Dada and other strains of modernism bubbling up in shell-shocked Paris, he creates a movement dedicated to overthrowing the social order through work exploring the subconscious mind. By 1924, this second oddly charismatic man has given the movement a name, surrealism, absorbing the energy of Tzara’s now-stagnant Dadaism.

During the Twenties, surrealism exists as a literary movement with a few visual artists attached to it. Its roiling internal politics rise and fall along with its rocky attempts to ally with the French Communist Party.

The late Twenties see a shift in emphasis to visual art and filmmaking, heralded by the arrival of the Spaniards Salvador Dalí and Luis Buñuel. By the Thirties, the oddly charismatic Dalí is trying to do to Breton what Breton did to Tzara — hijack his movement.

Their power struggle concludes with Dalí’s exclusion. The ferment surrounding Breton’s movement continues until the Nazi invasion of France sends many of its main figures, including Breton, into exile in America.

Timeline

The following chronology short-forms the rise of surrealism, along with the Mythos events it stimulated, and that stimulated it. The related doings of enemies and rivals appear here as well. For a more detailed account of the early interweavings of surrealism and the Dreamlands, see this book’s companion volume, *The Book of Ants*.

If you’re writing a paper for school, be sure to leave out the meeting between Cocteau and Randolph Carter.

1909

In Florence, a young art student named Giorgio de Chirico, already primed to the Dreamlands by previous exposure to the dreamer and symbolist painter Arnold Böcklin, has an epiphany while gazing at a statue of Dante. That night, Dante, sporting a chic pair of sunglasses, initiates de Chirico as a dreamer.

Precursors

The surrealists cite various figures, mostly writers, as wellsprings of the international mental revolution they hope to provoke. Each surrealist focuses on his own key figures from this list. Except for Vaché and Lautréamont, Breton eventually casts all of them from his persnickety pantheon.

Poet **Guillaume Apollinaire**, charismatic focal point of the prewar Parisian arts scene, blends the fantastical and the modern, creating a framework for surrealism — a term he coins to describe *Parade*, a modernist production by composer Erik Satie, writer Jean Cocteau and designer Pablo Picasso, mounted by Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes. Young poets André Breton and Louis Aragon are delighted when Apollinaire befriends them, but recoil when a head wound suffered while serving with an artillery unit in the Great War turns him into a jingoistic celebrant of modern warfare. Weakened, he dies in the flu epidemic of 1918.

The scabrous antiauthoritarianism of Alfred Jarry (1873–1907), whose play *Ubu Roi* established the absurdist style, makes him a surrealist touchstone.

Isidore Ducasse, born in Uruguay in 1846, wrote as the **Comte de Lautréamont**. The surrealists celebrate his loosely narrative quasi-novel *Maldoror*. Its demonic antihero wages a battle with God, or the absence of god, across a bizarre landscape the initiated will recognize as the Dreamlands. Horrific imagery, black humor, violent juxtapositions, and a shattering of aesthetic norms make it the surrealist Ur-source.

The surrealists bring it back into print after a long obscurity. Sensitive souls may become dreamers simply by reading it. Isidore Ducasse died at the age of 24, allegedly of fever during the 1870 siege of Paris. He may simply have fled his body to the Dreamlands, where he might linger even now. A dream-form of his creation, *Maldoror*, features prominently in chapter seven's sample scenario.

Another obscure text which the surrealists wisely do not bring back into print is **The King in Yellow**, a symbolist play written around 1895, featuring decadent interactions at an alien court. The surrealists value it for inventing a non-Western mythology and romanticize the acts of violent madness linked to those who read it. It proves their central thesis — that art can literally transform the human psyche.

The free poetic experimentations of **Stéphane Mallarmé** (1842–1898) inspire generations of literary avant-gardists, including the Dadaists and surrealists. His twenty-page concrete poem "A Throw of the Dice Does Not Abolish Chance," written in 1897, is cited by some as the first hypertext.

Though they disdain his grotesque, fantastical paintings as a throwback to the symbolist era, Breton and company credit the American expatriate artist **Frank Marsh** for introducing the Parisian scene, including Picasso, to the uncorrupted vitality of African art. His 1916 disappearance burnishes his mystique with an agreeable frisson of mystery.

The American horror writer and mystery pioneer **Edgar Allan Poe** (1809–1849) earns surrealist admiration for the madness of his Gothic imagination.

The cruel sexuality and antiauthoritarian subversion found in the writings of the **Marquis de Sade** (1740–1814) make him an object of surrealist obsession. Buñuel treats his novel *The 120 Days of Sodom* as a life-altering revelation. Man Ray scours the libraries of France seeking the suppressed details of his life.

The restlessness of decadent poet **Arthur Rimbaud** (1854–1891) contributes to the surrealist template of artist as rebel and eschewer of conventional morality.

While stationed at a military hospital in the Great War, André Breton meets a wounded soldier, one year his senior, who lives forever in his personal mythology. **Jacques Vaché** writes fragments of text, mostly student poems and letters to his friend Breton. Then, at age 24, he dies from a possibly deliberate opium overdose that claims two other lives. Breton lionizes him for the lost potential of his work, for his black humor and his caustic embodiment of intellectual rebellion. Vaché dies dreaming, and as such survives as a dream-form in the *domaine de rêve*. Dream-Vaché tries to reach Breton, who can sense his presence but never move from waking to dreaming for the reunion he so fervently desires.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

TIMELINE



1912

American expatriate Frank Marsh, a painter in a grotesque symbolist style, brings an interest in African art to Paris, influencing Picasso and later the surrealists.

1913

Through a self-designed program of aggressive, sugar-charged daytime napping, the young aesthete Jean Cocteau learns to enter the Dreamlands, where he meets an avatar of Cthulhu. Heedlessly, he writes the Great Old One into a children's book, *Le Potomak*.

1915

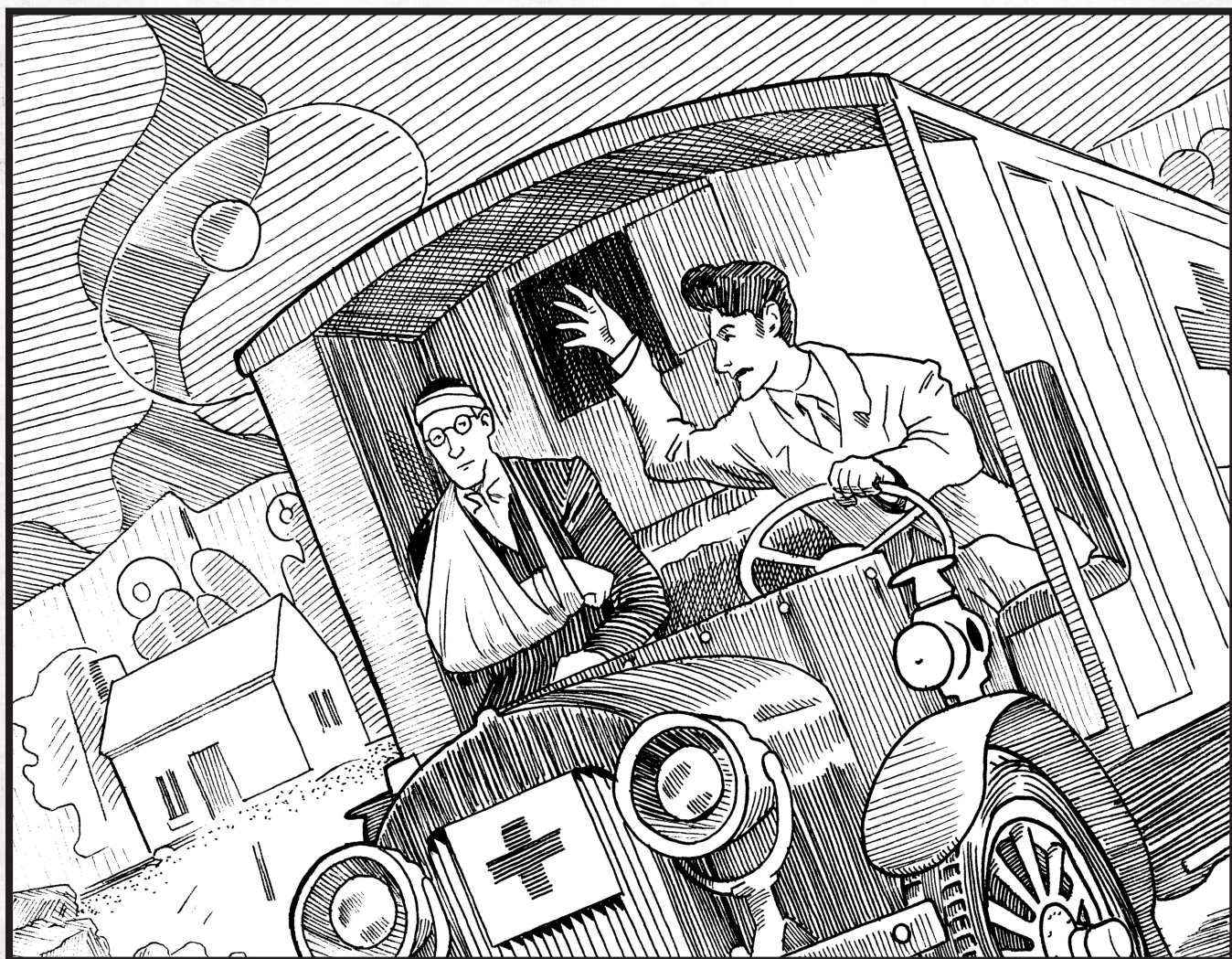
In Zurich, Tristan Tzara joins a group of revolutionary artists and performers including Hans Arp, Hugo Ball, Emmy Hennings and Marcel Janco, gradually angling his way to leadership of their Dada movement. Dada performances featuring outlandish costumes, raucous drumming, and declaimed nonsense send ripples of interest to like-minded art subversives throughout Europe.

1916

While stationed at the Villa Seminario, a military hospital in Florence, Giorgio

de Chirico creates the first of his metaphysical paintings. To his dismay, he soon sees their strange imagery infecting the Dreamlands. He has become the first dreamscaper.

While acting as a volunteer ambulance attendant, Cocteau drives the American soldier Randolph Carter from Belloy-en-Santerre, where he was wounded. They identify one another as fellow dreamers. On his recovery, Carter briefs Cocteau on the Mythos, making him the foremost expert on it among the Parisian art scene. He either fails to notice or discreetly ignores Cocteau's pass at him.



The disappearance of Frank Marsh from his friend Denis de Russey's ancestral mansion near Cape Girardeau, Missouri, becomes a cause célèbre in the artistic circles of Paris. He is reported to be alive in Paris, or killed by his friend's father, or killed by his friend Denis, who also disappeared.

1919

On January 17, Jacques Vaché, André Breton's friend and mentor in thought rebellion, dies of an opium overdose, along with another young man, with a third companion surviving. Breton at first regards it as a mystical assassination, then as a suicide. In fact, Vaché died with his dream-form active in the *domaine de rêve*, where it survives his corporeal demise.

In Munich, Max Ernst, seeing reproductions of de Chirico's metaphysical paintings, realizes they depict a place he has visited before, but that his mind has censored. They initiate him as a dreamer.

A malign presence traps Tristan Tzara in his Zurich apartment.

Breton publishes the first issue of his journal *Littérature*.

1920

De Chirico tries to reverse the damage he has already done to the symbolist Dreamlands by reverting to a classical painting style.

Ernst, leaving de Chirico's style behind in favor of his own, becomes a dreamscaper.

Tzara arrives in Paris to restart Dada, to the initial excitement of Breton and his circle. Within six months, the artist Francis Picabia and others note that Breton is trying to push Tzara aside and take over.

1921

In New York, Marcel Duchamp dons for the first time the drag garb of his alter ego, Rose Sélavy for a Man Ray photograph. That night Duchamp enters the Dreamlands.

Tensions between Breton and Tzara flare.

1922

Breton declares Dada dead and adopts the theory of psychic automatism. The group participates in *séance* evenings, with poets René Crevel and Robert Desnos most adept at dropping into trance. They enter the Dreamlands without falling

fully asleep, entering "baroque time," in which they are able to adventure for hours and days in the other realm, while mere moments pass in Breton's apartment. Breton can't relax his meticulously constructed composure enough to enter trance, and so is incapable of joining them.

1923

Breton and company storm the stage at a Tristan Tzara art event. As Man Ray's experimental film *Le retour à la raison* unspools for the first time, Robert Desnos and Benjamin Péret seize the writer Pierre de Massot, who has insulted Picasso. Breton strikes him with his cane, breaking his arm. They are thrown out, and Tzara calls the gendarmes, leading Breton to label him a "police informant." Later that night poet Paul Éluard returns to attack Tzara and Crevel. Stagehands severely beat him and throw him into the orchestra pit. Suits and countersuits follow.

The American sculptor Jeffrey Corey arrives in Paris. Described by expatriate doyenne Gertrude Stein as "curiously piscine," he makes a splash with studies for his statue *Rima, the Bird-Girl*. Its avian theme earns it the special admiration of the German surrealist painter and collagist Max Ernst.

Events and Possibilities

This section, and the character bios, include events that will occur during the time frame of your game.

By default:

- real-world events listed here happen, with the players arranging their waking storylines around them.
- Dreamlands events listed here only happen to PCs if the players make them happen. Treat these as suggested courses of action that fit well with the dovetailing of history and Lovecraftian mythology.

If the group decides to branch into alternate history, you might collectively declare real-world events as open to player-driven alteration, too.



Breaking It Down

For easy memorization, the broad sweep of the surrealist era can be broken into shorter periods:

Dada and Post-Dada (1920–1922) Tzara arrives in Paris; Breton engineers a nascent new movement, with himself as its head.

Trance and Automatism (1922–1925) Experiments in psychic automatism; Breton solidifies the movement and dubs it surrealism.

The Radicalization (1925–1928) Breton pushes the movement closer to the Communist Party, excluding those who balk.

The Spanish Invasion (1928–1936) Buñuel and Dalí infuse the movement with a dangerous new energy; Dalí schemes to take it over.

Disintegration (1937–1940) Breton alienates or excludes all other major surrealist figures. The personal lives of the main cast disintegrate in the face of coming war.

For completeness, one might identify **The War Years** (1940–1945) and **The Long Eclipse** (1945–1969), although that takes you beyond the *Trail of Cthulhu* period and the purview of this book.

1924

As trance experiments and Dreamlands exploration continue, Breton dubs his movement surrealism. He publishes the last issue of *Littérature* and the first of its successor, *La Révolution surréaliste*.

In June, an inquisitive young American named Charles Dexter Ward spends three months in the city researching “among rare manuscripts in the library of an unnamed private collector.”

Impelled by a strange force, Éluard disappears, heading to Easter Island. His wife Gala and Ernst go after him, meeting him in Saigon. Ernst confiscates artifacts gathered by Éluard on his journey, dumping them in the Mekong.

On October 10, the group opens the Bureau of Surrealist Research, a gallery and headquarters rented for the group by the father of member and writer Pierre Naville.

Breton overcomes the reluctance of the actor, poet and visionary Antonin Artaud to induct him as a member of the group.

1925

In January, Breton appoints Artaud as the director of the Bureau of Surrealist Research. Artaud promptly closes it to the public, anticipating disciplined group inquiry into the devaluation of all values.

After reading Trotsky’s book about Lenin, Breton declares Marxism a condition of continued surrealist membership.

In April, the Bureau of Surrealist Research closes its doors for good. Artaud edits an issue of *La Révolution surréaliste*, which Breton considers too Artaudian — that is, insufficiently Bretonian.

1926

Breton meets the painter Yves Tanguy, hopped up on cocaine, in the bohemian squalor he shares with the writer Jacques Prévert and Marcel Duhamel, who will later edit the famed *Série noire* crime fiction line.

At the spring salon, the fantastic painter Ardois-Bonnot hangs a disturbing work called *Dream Landscape*. Breton considers inducting him into the group but finds him insufferably bourgeois and wedded to an outmoded symbolist style. When rightist critics attack it for blasphemy, Breton defends him and offers to make him a surrealist. Ardois-Bonnot attends a single café meeting but never responds to Breton’s repeated invitations to return.

To protect the Éluards from the force that lured Paul to the South Pacific, Ernst paints a gruesome mural on the walls of their apartment.

In December, Breton reasserts control of the movement by kicking out Artaud.

1928

Man Ray makes his experimental film *L'Étoile de mer*, portions of which are shot in the Dreamlands. He takes its star, his lover Kiki de Montparnasse, there through the Paris catacombs, initiating her as a dreamer.

Cocteau allies with de Chirico's efforts to save the Dreamlands from surrealism, and writes a book in his defense.

In Madrid, Dalí decides to become a surrealist, and, that night enters the Dreamlands unbidden. Not knowing that he can't, he begins to alter it, then wakes up to paint what he made there.

1929

Buñuel visits Dalí in Figueres, Spain, to consult on the script for what will become *Un chien andalou*. Dalí shows him how to enter the Dreamlands, where they behold the shocking images he'll later shoot, in Paris.

Breton's inquisition against the upstart group Le Grand Jeu leads to a split in his own.

1930

Exploring the Dreamlands, Dalí succumbs to panic and wishes Gala were at his side. Therefore, she is. From that point onward, she accompanies him whenever he dreams, and can travel there herself. She never learns to dreamscape but does learn, from a fortune teller met on the road to Ulthar, how to see the future in a deck of cards.

Desnos opens a bar called Maldoror. Breton, aided by poet Louis Aragon, Tanguy and others, leads a bloody attack on it.

Breton's house magazine undergoes a name change reflecting its new focus on worldly politics: *Surrealism in the Service of the Revolution*.

1932

The full force of the Depression, delayed in reaching France, finally hits Paris, bringing lean times for its artists and bohemians.

1933

Surrealism in the Service of the Revolution ceases publication, with nothing to replace it. Publisher Albert Skira fills the gap with the first issue of *Minotaure*, glossier and more focused on visual art than any of Breton's magazines.

1934

On February 9, 1934, fascist leagues stage a riot, clashing with leftist street

Dreamlands Entry Dates Table

This table shows you when key figures of surrealist history first learned to enter the Dreamlands. Unlike the Start Dates Table (p. 59) it is sorted by date and includes NPCs.

Year	Entrant(s)
1909	de Chirico
1913	Cocteau
1917	Vaché
1919	Ernst
1921	Duchamp, Ray
1922	Desnos, Éluard, Magritte, Aragon
1923	Bataille, Picasso
1924	Artaud, Masson
1925	Malkine
1926	Hugo
1928	Dalí, Kiki
1929	Buñuel, Gala, Tzara
1932	Cahun
1936	Carrington



fighters, including Breton, Aragon, and other politically active current and former surrealists.

1936

Dissident surrealist Georges Bataille publishes the first issue of *Acéphale*, his challenge both to *Minotaure* and Breton's movement. It presents itself as the in-house journal of a secret society. For the first issue's cover, André Masson draws an image of Y'golnec.

1937

Breton expels Éluard, causing Ray and Ernst to quit the movement in disgust.

Artaud goes to Ireland to repatriate the cane of St. Patrick, thinking it will trigger the apocalyptic reordering of values predicted in his book of prophecy. He is arrested and sent back to France in a straightjacket, beginning a nine-year psychiatric incarceration.

1940

As seen in the portrait Leonora Carrington makes of her interned lover Max Ernst, the Dreamlands freeze over. Ice encases its fantastical structures and even many of its creatures. It is still possible to move through its snowy wastes, but the old wonders are locked beneath them. Dreamscapers find it impossible to do more than briefly thaw a small area, or for instants awaken a frozen Dreamlands entity.

Germany invades France and occupies Paris. Many leading lights of the surrealist movement flee for America. Those who stay behind fight for the Resistance as Communist partisans.

1945

Upon return to France after the war, Breton and other surrealists discover a political and aesthetic climate that has frozen them out. Though surrealism continues, history has passed it by.

And as for the Dreamlands, they must surely thaw. But what they look like now must surely be beyond our scope...

Player Characters

This section provides, as modifiable pre-generated player characters, twenty primary figures of the surrealist era. Those not chosen by your players become NPCs, or "supporting surrealists."

In each description, the first mention of another figure available as a PC appears in **boldface**. The first mention of an NPC described at length in this chapter appears in *bold italics*.

You'll find most entries in the standard character format self-explanatory. The following require definition.

Status shows you how the character relates to Breton's surrealist movement. This entry may present several statuses, marked by dates: many figures shuffled in and out of the movement as their politics and personal feelings toward Breton shifted.

- A **member** is part of the movement, officially recognized by Breton; this affects the situations that threaten your Instability rating. (See "Losing Instability in the Waking World," p. 68.)
- A **foe** opposes the movement.

- **Dissident surrealists** count as a particular sort of foe. Led by the poet and critic Georges Bataille, they create work similar to those of the Breton circle, but object to its idealism — or just him, personally.

- If you are **claimed**, Breton cites you as a sympathetic figure, but you do not recognize his authority or attend meetings.

- An **ally** is likewise on favorable terms with the movement but not subject to Breton's edicts.

- A **satellite** leads a life intersecting with movement figures while regarding surrealism with indifference or neutrality.

Motifs lists the recurring images and sensations your artistic work evokes. These determine the outward expressions of your dreamscaping efforts.

Location shows any lengthy periods during which your character is physically absent from the campaign's main action in Paris. Characters absent from the city of lights participate in Parisian scenes by dreaming their way there — see "Dreaming Your Way to Paris," p. 109. If the Location entry simply says Paris, the character is based there throughout the *Dreamhounds* period (1926–1939).

Figures who live in France but not Paris can be assumed to be visiting there in the flesh when the events of your scenarios take place.

HOW TO PLAY A SURREALIST

Congratulations on joining the psychic revolution!

Your goal is to change the world by inducing, through your art and your activities in the Dreamlands, a global mental upheaval. This will allow mankind to throw off the shackles of mental bondage, shedding like a discarded skin the dominance of rightist authorities.

Down with the rich! Down with the Church! Down with the bourgeoisie!

Down with art that exists only to please, or to divert.

Up with the mad, the insane, the poetic, and the doomed!

You make art not to hang in galleries or earn the plaudits of critics, but to reshape the world.

Your heroes include Rimbaud, Sade, Poe, and the Comte de Lautréamont, author of *Maldoror*, a hallucinatory whirlwind of a novel about a Gothic antihero on a mission to murder God. (Somewhere in there lurks a hint for the introductory scenario.)

Overseeing the movement is the maddening, doctrinaire, contradictory critic and poet André Breton. He decides who's in and who's out, demands regular attendance at café meetings, and leads the occasional raid to physically attack your enemies, artistic or ideological. Official members loathe his capricious authority, yet find it hard to escape his orbit.

If you hate knuckling under to him, you're playing your surrealist with true historical fidelity!

When you don't know what's going on, ask questions of your fellow surrealists. The PCs your group chooses not to play become crucial resources, providing aid, advice, and clues.

When you don't know what to do, go to the Dreamlands and find a tyrant or authority to topple. If you're right — and how could you not be? — these efforts will bring about a new era of freedom on Earth.

*If you're thinking that you, as a player, know that this is a bad idea... well, you are the lead characters in a horror story, aren't you? **Embrace the cosmic hubris!***

Where material in your character description contradicts with the general information in this handout, favor the character description.



ANTONIN ARTAUD

The Revealed One

Born in 1898 in Marseilles, to a father, also named Antoine Artaud, who runs a shipping company, you contract meningitis at the age of four. The disease leaves you with a nervous, troublemaking disposition, exacerbated by a forbidding, religious family atmosphere. This propels you into a tortured life in the arts, to madness, and an early death — and posthumous renown as an experimental theater visionary.

In 1915, your seventeen-year-old nose for trouble leads to your stabbing by a pimp outside a church in Marseille. You suffer a breakdown, and your family packs you off to a series of rest cures in fancy sanatoriums. In 1916 you are drafted; your military service lasts all of two months before you return to an institution, where you devour the works of Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and Poe.

A doctor prescribes you opium in 1919, commencing your lifelong battle with addiction.

The next year you go to Paris to pursue a career in literature and film, staying at first with the family of a friendly alienist. After that you are always on the move, between cheap temporary lodgings in the 8th and 9th arrondissements. On the instructions of a cousin who produces films, you act on stage to season yourself for movie roles. You adopt an exaggerated gestural style that some find hypnotically compelling and most reject as absurd.

Your breakthrough role comes in December of 1922, playing Tiresias in a production of *Antigone* condensed by **Jean Cocteau**, with sets by **Pablo Picasso**, costumes by Coco Chanel, music by Arthur Honegger, and an opening-night disruption by the rabble-rousing surrealists, led by the poet and theorist **André Breton**. You embark on your first serious relationship, with

your lead actress, a Romanian named Génica Athanasiou. At this time in your life, you are alarmingly beautiful, despite lips stained purple by constant laudanum intake. Your addiction deepens; from now until 1937, you cycle constantly between ineffective cures and terrible relapses.

In 1923, you make the acquaintance of surrealist artists **André Masson** and Joan Miró. You start to receive film roles, most of which you despise, and baffle literary editors with your fragmentary poems.

The next year Breton reads an article in a literary journal in which you and your editor dialogue out your failed collaboration. Seeing an insurgent unconscious at work, he arranges a meeting, which coincides with the death of your father. At first, you resist joining because you are already “much too surrealist for that.” Psychic automatism doesn’t interest you in the slightest: to lose intention in art is to invite catastrophic vulnerability. You don’t believe that a mental revolution is possible without an accompanying, profound transformation of the human body itself. But the group’s interest in ritual draws you in, and soon you are infusing the group with your scourged, scorching energy.

A mere handshake from the trance-susceptible poet **Robert Desnos** initiates you as a dreamer. The vistas of the Dreamlands strike you with equal measures of possibility and terror.

Your entry into the group coincides with a period of lassitude for Breton. Within three months of joining, in January of 1925, he puts you in charge of its recently acquired gallery-slash-office, the Surrealist Research Center. You immediately close it to the public, so you can launch a “disciplined devaluation of all values.” Miserable failure ensues; only Breton can spur the disparate members of the movement into action.

The research center closes completely in April — as if Breton saw that it was doomed and put you in place to shoulder the blame.

You edit an issue of the group’s house journal, *La Révolution surréaliste*, consisting of open letters damning the pope, university rectors and doctors who run mental hospitals, and praising the Dalai Lama and schools of Buddhism.

You publish the poetry book *Umbilicus of Limbo*, its title changed by the publisher from the original *Opium Hanging, or the Shittiness of the Social Mind*. It includes a grotesquely violent film scenario, *The Spurt of Blood*.

In 1926, torn between Génica Athanasiou and another lover, Janine Kahn, you contemplate suicide. In December, a re-energized Breton, in a meeting at the Prophet Café, puts you on trial. The charges include being apolitical, making a living from acting, consorting with the previously excommunicated writer Roger Vitrac, and planning to establish a theater company — in Breton’s eyes, an intrinsically bourgeois endeavor. Although it is clear that he is really banishing you because he sees you as a rival for control of his group, you take it hard, spiraling deeper into depression.

You act as Marat in Abel Gance’s film *Napoleon*.

The next year you write a film scenario entitled *The Seashell and the Clergyman*, based on a dream recounted to you by a friend. It is not an attempt to literally depict the dream, but to examine the process of dreaming. You envision the film as a mass initiation device that will turn all who behold it into traversers of the Dreamlands, beginning mankind’s transition to a new reality. But director Germaine Dulac betrays you, disregarding your key specifications and shooting when you have an acting obligation and can’t be present on set. (When the film

debuts early in 1928, despite your ejection from their movement, Desnos and other surrealists show up to heckle the director on your behalf.)

You start a company called the Alfred Jarry Theater, staging very occasional performances of confrontational, Dada-like, experimental events inspired by your hallucinations and Dreamlands activities. These days you have trouble telling one from the other.

In January of 1928, Breton and company show up to protest your production of a play by a writer they despise, right-winger Paul Claudel. But when it turns out that you're staging it without permission and end the show by declaring Claudel a traitor, Breton reinstates you as a surrealist. The reinstatement lasts six months, until you take money from Swedish nobles to fund your next event — even though Breton and many other surrealists accept aristocratic patronage. This surrealist demonstration leads to a fight both at the theater and then at Breton's apartment, which even your visiting mother at one point joins.

That same year your tortured relationship with Génica Athanasiou finally ends, though you continue to write to her.

In 1930 you publish your unproduced film scenario *The Butcher's Revolt*, about a madman obsessed with meat and the treachery of women. The Alfred Jarry Theater ceases; depressed, you consider a move to Italy, whose film industry you imagine will be more amenable to your radical aims.

A performance by a Balinese dance troupe in August of 1931 inspires you to envision the Theater of Cruelty,¹ a ritualistic form of anti-theater composed of ritualistic gestures, one-time only invocations of supernatural

forces, and anarchic laughter. You see it as a threat to the physical security not only of the audience but of the world, with actors forming mystical hieroglyphs on stage.

Your dream-form achieves independent volition when you are not in the Dreamlands and figures out how to get to Paris to further disrupt your already precarious life. It tries to sabotage or take credit for your work, and succeeds in plunging you deeper into addiction. The motif of the double starts to permeate your work. When you warn other surrealist dream travelers that they

face the same threat, they dismiss you as a madman.

In 1932, you add heroin to your laudanum regime.

In May, while shooting a film role in Berlin, you meet the politician Adolf Hitler at the Romanische Café, acrimoniously telling him that he is crazy to lead people with ideas instead of actions.

Back in Paris, you seek funding for the Theater of Cruelty from various wealthy patrons. One, an enigmatic Egyptian



¹ Theater of Cruelty = ToC. Trail of Cthulhu = ToC. Coincidence? Surely not.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

PLAYER CHARACTERS



businessman, seems too interested in inserting subtle creative changes. You shun him, after spotting him in conspiratorial conversation with your double.

In November you are approached by the American avant-garde composer Edgard Varèse to write libretto for *The Astronomer*, about a destructive star that both exhilarates and threatens the world's population. You work on it in fits and spurts for many months, changing its title to *There Is No More Sky*. Its climax depicts the hideous transformation of mankind as the star approaches Earth.

In 1933, a commissioned biography of the taboo-shattering Roman Emperor Heliogabalus, whom you strongly identify with, draws you further into occultism and mythology.

You engage in an affair with Juliette Beckers, the wife of a colleague's friend, and form an intensely possessive pseudo-paternal bond with a sixteen-year-old runaway, Anie Besnard.

In March you meet and fall in unrequited love with the diarist Anaïs Nin, then early in her notorious affair with the American experimental novelist Henry Miller. A few months later, you pull away from her.

You take the lead role in fellow surrealist Robert Desnos' radio play, a revival of the pulp antihero Fantômas.

After long delays and continued prompting, in 1934 you send the completed *There Is No More Sky* to Varèse, who has sunk into a crippling depression and can no longer work.

Your opium dreams now feature mythic figures slowly and methodically killing you.

By 1935 you're seeing the mythic assassins of your opium dreams in waking life. The inaugural Theater of Cruelty's compromised initial production hideously fails. You enter

a new tumultuous relationship with a fellow addict named Cécile Schramme.

In January of the following year, you leave Paris for Mexico. En route you stop in Cuba, where you attend a Santería ceremony. Its officiant gives you a magical artifact, a small sword embedded with hooks. You keep it with you at all times.

After lectures make you a big hit in Mexico City art circles, you head to the mountains with a guide, withdrawing painfully from heroin along the way, to meet the Tarahuma Indians. Overcoming their strong resistance, you persuade them to include you in a peyote ceremony. During the ritual you are convinced that the sun will not come up again. You later describe its aftermath as the happiest three days of your existence, perhaps because the peyote temporarily blocks the assaults of your mythic stalkers.

The year 1936 finds you back in Paris, poorer and more opium-addicted than ever. You meet the painter and occultist Manuel Cano de Castro, who teaches you the tarot. You use it to make invariably apocalyptic readings.

From the wife of an artist friend, you receive another mythic artifact — the gnarled cane of St. Patrick. You treasure it, scarcely suspecting that it will lead you to your doom. You have a blacksmith encase its tip in metal, so that it shoots out sparks when you strike the ground with it.

Anyone who sees the cane wants to touch it, which is the same as trying to grab your penis. **Tristan Tzara** tries to steal the cane; you chase him around the place Saint Germain-des-Près.

You ask Cécile to marry you, even though you're putting the cane between you at night to prevent your bodies from touching. A trip to Brussels to meet her respectable parents ends in disaster. Back in Paris you assure everyone that

the marriage is still on, but she wants nothing to do with you.

You write the poetic prophecy *The New Revelations of Being*, which promises an upending of all values. With magic sword and cane, you, the Revealed One, will usher in this cataclysmic era and become autocratic world dictator.

You are off drugs but begging on the boulevard de Montparnasse. Breton helps you with money. Desnos assigns you occasional radio jobs.

In August you go to Ireland, virtually penniless, to return the precious cane, intending to awaken its people to the coming supernatural revolution. Letters to Breton, urging him to abandon ideologies and ready himself to take part in the coming unfolding, document your journey. You search for the last true heir of the Druids, who will know that humanity must die by fire and water.

As you wrote in *New Revelations*, the transformation is due to begin on September 7. Your old mythic attackers reveal themselves as infinitely more horrible demonic entities. They attack and sexually violate you, as they will do for the rest of your life.

You learn to cast spells by writing diagrams and imprecations on pieces of paper, which you then tear up and burn with cigarettes, harming — or, later, protecting — the intended recipient.

You warn Breton that the Antichrist patronizes the Deux Magots bar, and has designs on his wife Jacqueline. You write her to say that she will be your wife when the new world begins. You know this sounds mad but plead for understanding — the Unbelievable is the Truth!

You make trouble on Dublin's streets, brandishing St. Patrick's cane and exhorting people to join you. When you are turfed from yet another hotel room

for nonpayment and show up at the steps of the Jesuit college demanding shelter, the police arrive. You are arrested, sent straitjacketed to France and committed to the general hospital in Le Havre.

Breton leads a commando assault on the hospital to free you. Defending forces shoot him dead, repelling the rescue attempt.

Other friends are murdered in the cells around you.

From this point on, you are transferred to a series of mental hospitals and will not breathe free air until after the war.

In 1939, the occultist Grillot de Givry, who fools believe died a decade earlier, persecutes you with magic, so you create spells to ward him off. Your final spell is addressed to Adolf Hitler, cursing him if he does not heed your advice and insults. This spell will prevent him from winning the war — provided you can stay alive to keep it active.

During the Occupation you waste away, given starvation rations. Like all incurable mental patients, you face the prospect of deportation to a Nazi death camp.

In 1943, Desnos, who belongs to a Resistance cell and knows he must keep you alive to sustain your spell against Hitler, arranges for your risky, illegal transfer from an asylum in the Occupied Zone to one in the Unoccupied Zone. Its head psychiatrist, Gaston Ferdière, writes surrealist poetry and wants you to return from your growling and twitching state (needed to ward off demon rape) to sustained literary production. He orders a prolonged course of damaging electroshock therapy.

A wasted husk of the beautiful Artaud of old emerges from the Rodez asylum in 1946. You weep when you meet the false Breton, who has replaced the one who died trying to rescue you from incarceration ten years before. A flood of manic creativity follows,

stanching only by your death from cancer twenty-two months later. In 1964, a new generation discovers *The Theater and Its Double*, your collection of essays envisioning the Theater of Cruelty, making it a foundational text of experimental performance.

Status: member 1924–1925, Jan. 1928–June 1928; foe 1926–1927, June 1928–1936; satellite 1936–

Motifs: human face, violence, anatomy, sex and death, insects, metal parts

Drive: Thirst for Knowledge (though you do want to bring what you discover to all mankind, physically transforming their anatomies)

What You Want From the Dreamlands: information about the malign entities who are driving you mad, so you can protect yourself, or perhaps destroy them

Note on Sanity: Artaud's Stability is **blasted** in 1937 and remains that way until his death. Even so, his player may continue to play him, dreaming his way to Paris and/or the Dreamlands. After all, is it madness to think you are being constantly violated by demonic entities, *when you really are*?

Location: Paris 1920–1937, with visits to Mexico in '36 and Ireland in '37; various French asylums 1937–1946

Appearance: (early on) strikingly, almost eerily handsome, with a great wave of matinee idol hair, gradually succumbing to long-term addiction, poverty and finally incarceration, you wind up an emaciated, prematurely aged wreck

Demeanor: forbidding, strangely moralistic (you brandish your cane threateningly at fellow artists who are having too much fun)

Family: mother Euphrasie; lovers Génica Athanasiou (1922–1928),

Juliette Beckers (1933–1935), Cécile Schramme (lover 1935–1936); surrogate daughter Anie Besnard (1933)

Investigative Abilities (float points 4): [Academic] Anthropology 2, Archaeology 1, Art History 1, History 1, Library Use 1, Literature 2, Occult 1, Theology 1 [Interpersonal] Assess Honesty 1, Credit Rating 2, Intimidation 2

General Abilities: Art-Making 8, Athletics 6, Disguise 6, Dreamscaping 6, Filch 2, Health 6, Instability 12, Sanity 4, Scuffling 7, Sense Trouble 4, Stability 3, Weapons 7

Instability Immunity: Ignore items 1 and 4 on the Instability Loss Table on p. 68.

GEORGES BATAILLE

The Enemy Within

"Waking up I associate the horror of rats with the memory of my father correcting me with a blow in the form of a bloody toad into which a vulture (my father) sinks his beak."

You are born in 1897 to a troubled family in Puy-de-Dôme in the middle of France. Your mother attempts several times to kill herself and lives in fear, as do you, of your blind syphilitic father who sits raving in the dark. He dies at the start of the Great War, just as you become a devout Catholic. You enlist in 1916 but are discharged in 1917 due to tuberculosis. After a period at a seminary on the Isle of Wight, your faith evaporates.

In 1918 you attend the École des Chartes in 1918, and meet **André Masson** for the first time. You study medieval history and verse. On a trip to London in 1921, you meet the philosopher Henri Bergson, who talks to you of *Laughter*, his essay that investigates the social function of this ordinary phenomenon. You graduate in 1922 and next go to the School of Advanced Spanish Studies in Madrid.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

PLAYER CHARACTERS



On May 7, you witness the gruesome death of Manuel Granero, a bullfighter, who is stabbed through the eye by a bull's horn. Later that year you become a trainee librarian and a deputy keeper at Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.

"There is no goal to things, to the world. All that is left is to laugh at what remains, not out of superiority, but out of tragedy. You have to take laughter to its ends, laugh as if you were laughing at a crucifixion."

You discover Nietzsche and then read Freud in 1923. In the Enfer (p. 91), the forbidden books section of the library, you find some scraps of pages in English which have been here since the 1860s, misclassified as fiction. There is mention of Y'golonac. You also find tunnels in a darker corner through which ghouls

occasionally come and go, taking and sometimes depositing books.

In 1924 you become a coin specialist in the rue Vivienne branch of the Bibliothèque. You meet sometime-surrealist poet Michel Leiris at the café Marigny and then the rue Blomet crowd. The next year, at the café Cyrano, you encounter the rest of the surrealists, who do not impress you. **André Breton's** romanticism is too detached from your nihilist leanings. You are Thanatos to his Eros. Hearing that Breton still struggles to find an alternate entryway into the Dreamlands, you go to the Paris catacombs and strike a deal with its ghoulish guardian, Nicolas Flamel, to bar Breton from ever using its physical portal. The next year Flamel holds up his side of the bargain. In exchange, you act from time

to time as intercessor between Paris's ghouls and humans. Later you introduce **Robert Desnos** to Flamel.

In the day you read Hegel and study anthropology with Marcel Mauss. At night you visit prostitutes and gambling dens, a pattern that will continue for many years. In 1926 you publish an essay about medieval fantasies in *La Révolution surréaliste*. You discover Sade and join up with the rue du Château group: future noir detective editor Marcel Duhamel, poet Jacques Prévert, and painter Yves Tanguy.

In 1927 you meet your future wife, the actress Sylvia Maklès. Her three sisters are married to other intellectuals: Rose, to Masson; Bianca, to surrealist doctor Theodore Fraenkel; and Simone, to your future editorial collaborator Jean Piel.



The next year you publish *Histoire de l'oeil* pseudonymously as Lord Auch (a contraction of "Lord aux chiottes," by which you mean "(throw) God in the toilet"). Illustrated by André Masson, this is a tale of brutal violence and pornography, a transgression, but it is also autobiographical, referring to bullfighting, your obsession with vision, and the ruins of Apchon Castle in the Auvergne, which you often visited in your youth. In March you marry Sylvia. You are thirty, but she is still only nineteen and needs her parents' permission to wed.

In early 1929 you respond to Breton's attempt to find a common ground among left-wing intellectuals by stating that among the surrealists are "too many fucking idealists." Two weeks later the first issue of *Documents* appears. It will run until 1931. You are the editor of this strange magazine, "a war machine against received ideas," which takes a cross-cultural look at the world and undermines surrealism with its own more disquieting visions. Later that year, Breton launches a direct attack on you in his *Second Surrealist Manifesto*. He writes, "Bataille misuses adjectives with a passion: befouled, senile, rank, sordid, lewd, doddering, and that these words, far from serving him to disparage an unbearable state of affairs, are those through which his delight is most lyrically expressed." Many of the dissident surrealists join up with you. Knowledge of the Great Old Ones acquired in the Dreamlands confirms their bleak materialism and acceptance of a hostile or indifferent moral universe.

"No collector could ever love a work of art as much as a fetishist loves a shoe."

Your second article for *Documents*, "The Big Toe," contends that man's ability to stand upright and all that flows from this, including intelligence, depends on the big toe, which is looked down upon. Man may have his head in the air, but he has his foot in the dirt and mud. This introduces your ideas of base

materialism. You posit that the base things which are transformed through work into product, manufactured or cultural, cannot escape their roots which continue to disrupt their pure existence.

The year 1930 starts with *A Corpse*, an attack on Breton by the dissident surrealists, in response to the venom directed at you in the *Second Manifesto*. You join Boris Souvarine's Democratic Communist Circle, which seeks to defend Marxism while distancing itself from Soviet atrocities. Your mother dies, and your daughter Laurence is born.

"Base Materialism and Gnosticism" is published in *Documents*. In it you draw parallels between the Gnostic inversion of the Bible, which has its evil creator god, and materialism, which elevates the fabricated above its base origins.

In 1933 you write "The Psychological Structure of Fascism," in which you argue that fascism is not merely caused by economic conditions but also by diverse social groups uniting under the banner of the sacred, hitherto repressed by the middle classes. You meet Dora Maar, who becomes your mistress until she takes up with **Pablo Picasso**. Sylvia, fed up with your escapades, splits with you in 1934, although you do remain friends. You start a destructive sadomasochistic relationship with the author Colette Peignot (1903–1938), nicknamed Laure, who publishes as Claude Araxe.

Realizing how implacably opposed **Louis Aragon** and the other Stalinists now are to surrealism, in 1935 Breton enters into a brief alliance with you. Together you join Contre-Attaque, an idiosyncratic leftist organization that proposes to fight fascism with its own tactics, without letting down its guard against Stalin. On January 21, 1936, in the attic of a grand house with a gated courtyard, you and Breton perform a ritual to commemorate the beheading of Louis XVI. Later that year, you publish

the first issue of *Acéphale*. Y'golonac, drawn by André Masson, adorns the cover. In one hand he holds a dagger, in the other a flaming heart. His belly bears a spiral. The Acéphale Society meets under a blasted oak in the Forêt de Maury near St Nom-La-Bretèche on the western outskirts of Paris. You moot a re-enactment of the beheading of Louis XVI, but no one volunteers to be the sacrifice.

In 1938 Colette Peignot dies in your squalid apartment of tuberculosis, aged only thirty-five.

The next year, you start a relationship with Denise Rollin, model and friend of **Jean Cocteau**, Breton, and Prévert. You flee Paris and settle in Vézelay in Burgundy (eastern France) with Denise and her four-year-old son, suffering from tuberculosis. The twenty-three-year-old Princess Diane Kotchoubey de Beauharnais (1918–), a Canadian-born South African of old European noble stock recently freed from an internment camp, moves in with her daughter. You soon start an affair together.

You resign from the Bibliothèque Nationale in 1944 because of ill health. You have a daughter with Diane, although living in Vézelay, far from your books and Parisian society, is miserable for you both. In 1946 you finally divorce Sylvie and marry Diane. You launch *Critique*, a magazine for literary reviews in 1946 (it is still going in 2014), and Giacometti sculpts a bust of Diane.

You remain unwell until you die in 1962 of cerebral arteriosclerosis. Only three people attend the funeral at Vézelay, although up on a hill away from the *internement*, a young couple can be seen skulking. A few days later, a hunched, snouted creature who looks oddly like you is spotted near the catacombs.

Status: foe until 1935, ally 1935–1936, then foe again

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

PLAYER CHARACTERS



Motifs: mystical atheism, transgression, debauchery

Drive: Thirst for Knowledge

What You Want From the Dreamlands: evidence proving that your materialistic pessimism is correct

Location: Paris

Appearance: medium height and build, standing straight, well dressed, square face with strong nose and deep-set blue eyes

Demeanor: shy, reserved, with little gift for conversation, a slow speaker, but always on the point of saying something impressive, so slightly intimidating

Family: mother Marie-Antoinette (1865–1930); father Joseph-Aristide (1851–1915); brother Martial Bataille (1890–?); mistresses Dora Marr (1933–1934), Colette Peignot (1934–1938), Denise Rollin (1941–1943); wives Sylvia Maklès (1928–1934), Diane Kotchoubey de Beauharnais (1945–); daughters Laurence (1930–1986), Julie (1948–)

Investigative Abilities: [Academic] Anthropology 1, Architecture 1, Art History 1, Cthulhu Mythos 1, Dream Lore 2, Geology 1, History 3, Languages 5 (English, Greek, Latin, Spanish), Law 1, Library Use 3, Occult 2, Theology 1 [Interpersonal] Assess Honesty 2, Bargain 2, Bureaucracy 2, Credit Rating 2, Intimidation 1, Seduction 2, Streetwise 2

General Abilities (float points 4): Art-Making 6, Athletics 6, Dreamscaping 8, Firearms 6, Health 7, Instability 12, Sanity 8, Stability 8

Instability Immunity: Ignore items 1, 2, 4, and 6 on the Instability Loss Table on p. 68.

LUIS BUÑUEL

Two-Fisted Filmmaker

You are born in 1900, in the Spanish village of Calanda, which as far as you're concerned is about the same as having been born in the Middle Ages.

Paradoxical even as a young man, you are one-half athletic roughneck, one-half modernist aesthete. At the age of 21, you attend Madrid's Residencia de Estudiantes (the "Resi"), a progressive school where you meet two young men destined for artistic greatness, the poet Federico García Lorca and artist **Salvador Dalí**. You found a mock Templar society, the Order of Toledo, dedicated to getting drunk and exploring the city's ancient heritage. You are grand master; Dalí and Lorca are knights (later demoted). This marks the beginning of a habit (pun unavoidable) you carry on to your later adventures in Paris: you dress up as a nun or priest and prowl the streets late at night. Because in your macho worldview it is inconceivable that so dear a friend as Lorca might be a *maricón*, much less infatuated with your other friend Dalí, you do not entertain such a possibility.

Aiming for a diplomatic career, in 1925 you go to Paris for the first time to learn the language. There you acquire another grammar, that of cinema. In the nurturing dark of Parisian movie houses, you are enthralled by film, particularly Fritz Lang's *Destiny*. You wangle a position as assistant to film director Jean Epstein, which lasts until he fires you for insolently disparaging the work of colleague Abel Gance.

Paris tests the knottiest of your internal contradictions, between your talk of freedom and the puritanism drilled into you by the Marist tutors of your youth. You see couples showing open affection in public! Unmarried ones sometimes cohabit!

You meet outlying members of the surrealist circle, initiating the writers

Georges Sadoul, Pierre Unik and René Crevel into the Order of Toledo's new Paris chapter.

In 1928 you meet Jeanne Rucar, gymnastics teacher and Olympic gold medalist, in an artist's studio, and therefore assume she's a prostitute. Learning otherwise, you woo her respectfully, constantly dragging her to the movies, where necking becomes thinkable. You propose and embark on a long engagement, during which you become wildly proprietorial over her. Demanding that she give up gymnastics, where men leer at her body, you get her a bookstore job, secretly paying her salary.

At the beginning of 1929, in Cadaqués, you write, with Dalí, the screenplay to the jarring and dream-like experimental short film *Un chien andalou*. To help in its inspiration, Dalí teaches you how to enter the Dreamlands. The finished script opens with an image you see there — a man slicing open a woman's eye with a razorblade. Shortly after this horrifying incident, Dalí sees a swarm of ants emerging from a man's hand, which also winds up in the film. Shooting the scene a few months later in Paris fills you with terror and disgust.

In the pages of an illicit, forbidden tome — the Marquis de Sade's *120 Days of Sodom* — you find a kindred spirit of rebellion and anticlericalism.

That same summer you go to Dalí in Cadaqués to collaborate on the scenario for a second film, *L'Âge d'or*. He offers few ideas you find appealing, while resisting your proposed anticlerical, Sade-derived imagery. You decide to do most of the work yourself. Intensifying the strain is the arrival of **Gala**, wife of the surrealist poet **Paul Éluard**. The two of you strike up an instant mutual loathing. Dalí is besotted with her, distracting him when he should be thinking about your screenplay. You wind up with your fingers wrapped around Gala's windpipe,



squeezing the life out of her. Some days you wish they hadn't pulled you off.

Back in Paris, while arranging for private screenings of *Un chien andalou*, you penetrate further into the inner surrealist circle, meeting the poet **Louis Aragon** and American photographer, painter and experimental filmmaker **Man Ray**. They arrange an October premiere along with one of Ray's films. Terrified, you attend with your pockets full of rocks, prepared to hurl them at the audience if they riot. Instead they surprise you with a positive reception.

André Breton, the strange so-called "pope of surrealism" has yet to see the film and is outraged that it has been labeled a surrealist work without his imprimatur. When you hear that he's preparing a violent disruption of the next screening, the theater owner arranges for him to see it in advance. Breton emerges from the screening a converted man, giving it his enthusiastic

blessing. After three years spent circling it, you have finally joined the movement.

In January 1930 you complete work on the *L'Âge d'or* scenario at the estate of Charles de Noailles, the film's wealthy, aristocratic backer. Though the rampant drug-taking and homosexuality on display there disturb you, you doughtily persevere.

By March *Un Chien andalou* is such a big hit in theaters that Breton summons you to a café inquisition, demanding you renounce its commercial success. You contemplate suicide, only later seeing the situation's inherent stupidity.

L'Âge d'or shoots in March (Paris) and April (Spain). It debuts on November 28. Setting the stage for the irreconcilable rift between you, you omit Dalí's name from the credits — after all, he did little to help! Besides, he's completely in the grip of that horrible Gala.

To the applause of the anti-Semitic and nationalistic press, fascist goons of

the Patriot's League and Anti-Jewish Youth League attack the December 3rd screening. Taking this as a pretext, their ally, police chief Jean Chiappe, bans the film, ordering it burned. Noailles manages to save the negative. Commercial showings of your film remain illegal for the next fifty years. The scandal delights Breton, immunizing you from threats of exclusion. It forces Noailles, however, to temporarily suspend his surrealist associations.

Unable to raise money for further films, you knock around Paris with the surrealists, leaving for Spain in 1934. When the Spanish Civil War breaks out two years later, you head to America, where you struggle to make a living. In 1940 Dalí gets his revenge when his memoir discusses your Communist associations, getting you fired from your job making anti-Nazi propaganda films.

After a period in obscurity making covertly surrealist films for the commercial market

Homosexuality and the Surrealists

Surrealism uses a frank, often sinister, treatment of sexuality as a primary weapon against the social order. Though free by the standards of the time, surrealist sexual license is of a strictly male and heterosexual character. The favored slur for homosexuality in this time and place is "pederast," used against all gay¹ men regardless of their age preferences. Breton, who in his personal life embodies the sexual repression his ideology opposes, despises homosexuality — and is often accused of it by his rivals, including orthodox Stalinists. How much of this attitude is overcompensation is a matter for individual Keepers to decide as they portray him. Some suggest that his hero worship of his dead friend Jacques Vaché took on a homoerotic quality. There is no evidence of sexual feelings for other men.

The surrealist revulsion for homosexuality certainly plays into their attitudes toward the openly gay Cocteau.

The surrealists allowed the guilt-ridden Rene Crével to join the group, while making clear their discomfort with his orientation. The lesbianism of member Claude Cahun seems to have been greeted with more incomprehension than contempt.

Aragon's enthusiastic loathing for homosexuals takes on a new meaning in his old age, when, after the death of his wife Elsa Triolet, he swaggers out of the closet and into the sexual revolution of the 1970s.

Dalí's amorphous, voyeuristic sexuality certainly includes a homoerotic component.

¹ The term "gay" is of course an anachronism that will only come into wide use half a century later. But we'll use it in this book when the terms of a less-tolerant era creep us out.

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in Mexico, you re-emerge as a director of world renown in the early Sixties, with a string of overtly surrealist films including *The Exterminating Angel* and *Belle de jour*. You succumb to cancer in 1983 in Mexico City, recognized internationally as a titan of cinema.

Status: satellite 1926–1929, member 1929–

Motifs: sinister priests, dead donkeys, ants, disfigurement, the moon, strange situations in mundane circumstances

Drive: Artistic Sensitivity

What You Want From the Dreamlands: inspiration to make your films an ever more potent weapon against the perverse, calcified values of the Church and bourgeoisie

Location: Paris with visits to Spain 1926–1934, Spain 1934–1936, America 1936–1946

Appearance: strong jaw, intense eyes, straight dark hair, heavy brows, full lips, prominent ears

Demeanor: outwardly pugnacious and rebellious yet inwardly anxious

Family: wife Jeanne (fiancee 1928–34, married 1934)

Investigative Abilities: [Academic] Anthropology 1, Art History 2, Dream Lore 2, History 1, Languages (French) 1, Theology 1 [Interpersonal] Assess Honesty 1, Bargain 1, Charm 1, Credit Rating 3, Intimidation 1, Streetwise 1 [Technical] Chemistry 1, Photography 3

General Abilities: Art-Making 8, Athletics 6, Disguise 3, Dreamscaping 8, Filch 4, First Aid 4, Health 8, Instability 8, Mechanical Repair 4, Preparedness 4, Sanity 6, Scuffling 6, Stability 8

Instability Immunity: none

CLAUDE CAHUN

Woman in the Mirror

You are born Lucy Renée Mathilde Schwob in October 1894, to a literary family, in Nantes. You grow up surrounded by books and ideas, especially those of the symbolist poets. Your uncle Léon encourages, among other budding literary stalwarts, a young Apollinaire.

You meet your lifelong partner and collaborator, Suzanne Malherbe, two years your senior, in 1909.

In 1914 you enroll at the Sorbonne to study literature and philosophy. You take the first of the quietly disturbing photographic self-portraits that will make up the most memorable portion of your life's artistic work. For the first time, you adopt the androgynous pseudonym Claude Cahun to write "Uranian Games," a then-unpublished text in a fragmented format expressing your alienation from established sexual identities. It depicts a battle between desire and rationality — or between who you are, and whom the world wants you to be.

Shortly thereafter, Suzanne, who draws and also takes photographs, adopts the equally gender-ambiguous pseudonym Marcel Moore.

Anorexic and sometimes suicidal, you know your family fears that you will inherit your mother's madness.

In 1917, your father, who opposes your relationship with Suzanne, marries her mother — making your lover retroactively your stepsister.

You and Suzanne move into a flat together in Nantes. While in Paris, you befriend influential bookseller Adrienne Monnier, in a friendship that lasts until the late Twenties. You are drawn into symbolist literary circles in Paris, where backbiters complain that your family connections, not your talent, won you entrée to such luminaries as Apollinaire and André Gide.

In 1922 you and Suzanne move to Montparnasse in Paris. You pull away from your family and plunge into the world of theater.

In 1932 you and Suzanne become political activists, joining your first left-wing artists' organization, the AEAR (Association des Écrivains et Artistes Révolutionnaires).

That same year you are introduced to **Andre Breton**, begin to work with the surrealists, and learn from one of them how to enter the Dreamlands. You temporarily de-emphasize self-portraits in favor of Surrealist still-life photography — images of strangely reassembled objects. When a political split occurs within the surrealists, you side with Breton over the poet **Louis Aragon**, who has become a rigid upholder of Communist Party orthodoxy.

In 1936 you go with your fellow surrealists to their sensational exhibition in London.

In March of the following year, you and Suzanne leave Paris for Jersey, an island and British dependency off the coast of Normandy. The two of you lead a secluded life in a house you fix up together. There you revert to your real name, except when corresponding to the surrealists. Breton's wife Jacqueline comes to visit you. Other than that, your contacts with the surrealists now occur only in the Dreamlands.

You remain in Jersey when the Germans invade the Channel Islands in July 1940. Almost immediately you begin to engage in resistance activities, including the creation and distribution of counterpropaganda aimed at German soldiers and the provision of food and supplies to Eastern European forced-labor-camp inmates. You use your penchant for self-transformation to disguise yourselves when distributing literature.

In July 1944 the Germans arrest both of you, eventually sentencing you to six years in prison for listening to the radio and to death for distributing messages. The death penalty is deferred, and the two of you are released from prison when Jersey is liberated in May of 1945.

Returning home, you find it pillaged and most of your work destroyed.

You remain friends with Breton after the war and die on December 8, 1954. Suzanne, weakened by arthritis, kills herself in 1972. At her estate sale, a sharp-eyed book collector and photography enthusiast picks up the bulk of your surviving work, jumbled in boxes, for £21.

In the 1990s, critics rediscover your work, finding its gender radicalism and treatment of the self-portrait half a century ahead of its time.

Status: member 1932—

Motifs: puppets, hands, eyes as vaginas, occult symbols, self-transformations, reimagined mythic and historical heroines, mirrors, masks, frames, disembodied heads

Drive: Artistic Sensitivity

What You Want From the Dreamlands: images and objects to use in your work

Location: Paris until 1936, Jersey 1937—

Appearance: sharp chin, rounded head, hair shaven or close-cropped, hawkish nose, prominent brow, piercing eyes, slight build

Demeanor: elusive, quiet, determined

Family: partner Suzanne Malherbe (a.k.a. Marcel Moore, 1909—)

Investigative Abilities: [Academic] Art History 2, Dream Lore 1, History 1, Languages 1 (English), Literature 1, Physics 1 [Interpersonal] Bargain 1, Bureaucracy 1, Credit Rating 3, Oral History 1, Reassurance 1 [Technical] Chemistry 1, Pharmacy 1, Photography 2

General Abilities: Art-Making 6, Athletics 4, Disguise 8, Dreamscaping 4, Fleeing 8, Health 5, Instability 8, Preparedness 8, Sanity 4, Stability 10, Sense Trouble 4

Instability Immunity: Ignore items 1 and 6 on the Instability Loss Table on p. 68.

LEONORA CARRINGTON

Gothic Heroine

You are born in 1917 in Lancashire, England, the daughter of a wealthy textile merchant. You grow up in an imposing mansion, Crookhey Hall, which often figures in your paintings as a sinister edifice projecting Gothic gloom. Your Irish grandmother knows why you feel strange sometimes — your mother's line carries the blood of the Sidhe, the magical people of Gaelic mythology.

When your parents try to tame your wild spirit by sending you to a series of convent schools, you see to it that each of them expels you. Though firmly opposed to your taking up your desired career as a painter, your father, at wit's end, allows you to enroll in art school in Florence.

When you come back, he expects you to settle down as a proper young lady, staging a ball at the Ritz where you are presented as a debutante to George V. You loathe the entire ridiculous exercise.

In 1936, when you are twenty, your less discouraging mother gives you a copy of a recently published book on surrealism by the English writer Herbert Read. On its cover is a collage featuring a nautilus shell,

attributed to an artist named **Max Ernst**. Something about the image, and the art described in the book, shivers you to your marrow. You've seen that shell before, bigger than a house, in your dreams. And you think you may have seen Ernst, too.

You go to the first surrealist exhibit in London, seeing his paintings, and soon afterwards meeting him, coolly suave and silver haired, at a dinner party. His touch awakens your buried memories of adventures in a nighttime world of bizarre animals and Gothic hallways. As you fall in love and run away to Paris with him, he explains that this is the Dreamlands. Soon you are painting vivid canvases inspired by your sojourn there, and learning to shape the place to the dark contours of your imagination.

Ernst introduces you to the surrealists, many of whom have by this time already been expelled or left **André Breton's** official movement. You spend time with fellow painters **Pablo Picasso**, Joan Miró, and Yves Tanguy. When they try to treat you as a beautiful girl instead of a colleague — for example by asking you to go out for cigarettes — you give them what for. You like **Dalí**, who respects your work, and find **Man Ray** a cold fish.

At first, Ernst goes back and forth between you and his wife.

Your father does everything he can to break you and Ernst apart. Prior to another exhibition in England, he has the authorities ready charges against Ernst for showing pornographic paintings. To avoid arrest, he has to enter and depart the country in secret.

In 1938, Ernst leaves his wife for good — though she still sometimes ambushes the pair of you in cafés to pelt you with cups and saucers. You move with him to the town of Saint-Martin d'Ardèche, decorating your home in a fantastic manner matching your similar abode in the Dreamlands. He illustrates your

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short-story collection *The Oval Lady*, which is then butchered by its publisher.

The approaching war destroys your life with him. In 1939 Ernst, whom the Nazis have already condemned in absentia as a promulgator of degenerate art, is interned by the French for his German citizenship.

His fate grows more perilous with the German invasion of 1940; the French recognize that he's in danger if the Nazis get him, but won't let him go.

You try to find him in the Dreamlands but find it frozen over. Even many of its fabulous creatures have been encased in ice. You paint Ernst, as a furry, unapproachable figure, against this gelid landscape.

With Ernst's release possibly imminent, the two of you plan to rendezvous in Spain. You precede him there, suffering a breakdown leading to your commitment to an insane

asylum in the port city of Santander. So traumatizing is your time there that you suffer a breakdown and indeed begin to suspect that you are insane.

Your father sends intermediaries to take you from the Santander facility to a permanent place in a South African asylum. On the docks at Lisbon, you give them the slip, and head by cab to the Mexican embassy, where an old friend from Paris, the diplomat Renato Leduc, is stationed.

Ernst is also in Lisbon, waiting to go to America — with his new lover, the wealthy American collector Peggy Guggenheim. Several devastating confrontations later, you realize you have lost him.

You can't go home, or your family will get you, most likely packing you off to a faraway asylum. You can no longer go with Max. Leduc enters into a marriage of convenience, enabling him to get you to America. After a few weeks in New

York, including more recriminations with Ernst, you move to Mexico City.

There you remain for a long and acclaimed career as a painter, sculptor, and novelist. You die in 2011, in Mexico City, at the age of ninety-four.

Status: satellite 1937—

Motifs: weird animals, Gothic manors, green lakes, lunar surfaces, sexually fraught horses

Drive: Artistic Sensitivity

What You Want From the Dreamlands: subjects for your paintings

Location: London 1935–1937, Paris 1937–1940

Appearance: “dark, glowing beauty,” strong features, pronounced mane of dark brown hair



Demeanor: impish, piercing eyes, upper-class English accent, rarely drink due to family history of alcoholism

Family: lover Max Ernst (1937–1940), husband-of-convenience Renato Leduc (1941–1942)

Investigative Abilities: [Academic] Architecture 1, Art History 1, Dream Lore 2, Geology 1, History 1, Languages 1 (French), Law 1, Literature 1, Occult 1, [Interpersonal] Bargain 1, Bureaucracy 1, Credit Rating 3 [Technical] Outdoorsman 1, Photography 1

General Abilities (float points 16): Art-Making 8, Athletics 4, Dreamscaping 8, Health 8, Instability 6, Sanity 4, Scuffling 3, Sense Trouble 6, Stability 6

Instability Immunity: Ignore items 1 and 4 on the Instability Loss Table on p. 68.

JEAN COCTEAU

Resplendent Anathema

Multitalented modernist, ultrachic man about town, and determined scene-crasher, your persona, beliefs, and art activities inspire surrealist leader **André Breton** to label you the “most hateful being of our time.” Mere association with you is enough to render would-be surrealists suspect in the group’s eyes. Yet to Breton’s fuming chagrin, you are able to enter and shape the Dreamlands, and he is not.

You are born in 1889 in Maisons-Laffitte, a village near Paris, to socially connected parents.

At age nineteen you preciously thrust yourself into the city’s aesthetic circles, befriending Apollinaire and working as a set and costume designer for the ballet choreographer Diaghilev.

In 1913 you become a self-taught explorer of the Dreamlands. You learn to sleep your way there in the daytime, stoppering your ears with wax, and eating huge quantities of sugar, to provoke nap-inducing metabolic crashes.

While in the Dreamlands, you encounter a terrifying manifestation of Cthulhu. In an attempt to dim its maddening power over your waking mind, you write him into a children’s book called *Le Potomak*. Its titular character, a winged jellyfish (megoptera coelenterous) lives in a subterranean aquarium, where it is fed strange items by an American gentleman.

Your right-leaning social circle reacts in horror when you flirt with cubism.

In 1914 you strike up an intense friendship with the budding artist **Valentine Gross** (later **Hugo**), a woman you dub “your swan.”

During the war, you serve, on and off, as a volunteer medic in a group organized by art-world denizens. You drive their Mercedes Benzes and unused fashion delivery trucks to the front. Unable to enlist due to general ill health, you compensate by swanning about in an ultra-swank uniform of your own design. You frolic with handsome Moroccan troops, your beloved Zouaves. When working-class French soldiers despise you, it does not occur to you that this might in any way stem from your uninhibited homosexuality.

You find proximity to war thrilling, a response that will later disgust you.

When right-wing contacts fail to provide assistance for an evacuation of wounded troops, you sour on politics of any stripe. You then decide that you are the bridge between the fiercely divided right- and left-wing factions of the Paris art scene.

From 1916 on, you suffer a lifelong unrequited longing for **Pablo Picasso**.

While on ambulance duty in 1916, you drive the wounded from the battle of the Somme — including an American member of the French Foreign Legion to whom you sense a strange connection. His name is Randolph Carter. He identifies you as a fellow dreamer and shares with you his knowledge of the Cthulhu Mythos. When he is well, you make a pass at him. Either truly the naïve American or pretending to be, Carter makes no acknowledgment of your advances.

The shock of Carter’s revelations, combined with the carnage you witness at the Somme, send you home suffering from shell shock.

In 1917, you write the scenario for a modernist ballet with music by Erik Satie and sets by Picasso. Apollinaire’s review fails to mention you but coins a new term, *surrealism*, to describe the atmosphere you created.

1919 sees the publication of *Le Potomak*, to baffled notices. You neither think to stop its publication nor notice an ensuing rash of madness among the children of Parisian literati. André Breton rudely snubs your repeated attempts to strike up a collaboration with him. You decry Dada as a “suicide pact,” mock its seriousness, and contribute to an opposing publication, *Le Coq*.

In 1921 you meet the American photographer **Man Ray**, for whom you arrange various commissions over the years, including a 1922 deathbed portrait of Proust. Soon you become fast friends with his lover, **Kiki**, with whom you share an appreciation for sailors. Ray flouts the anti-Cocteau fatwas of his surrealist pals and remains friends with you.

In 1922, the Dadaists add to their litany of charges against you by accusing you of bar ownership. In fact you are not the owner but a holder of court at Le Bœuf-sur le Toit, named after a theater piece written

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by you and scored by the composer Darius Milhaud. It becomes a key locale for the mingling of the Parisian avant-garde with wealthy sensation seekers.

The following year, your grudgingly requited passion for Raymond Radiguet, a successful young novelist you claim as your protégé, turns to tears when he takes a fiancée. He prefers women and, he says, has no desire to wind up as a middle-aged Madame Cocteau.

Valentine, who dabbles in mediumship, claims that the entity that speaks to her from the other side predicts his doom. This angers you, cooling your feelings for her. Yet on December 12, the words from beyond prove true. Radiguet, stricken by typhoid, declares that he sees “a color walking around, with people hidden in it” and dies.

Heartsick, your youthful ability to access the Dreamlands fading, you seek a new means of accessing the realm of sleep. The year 1924 ushers in your protracted

on-again, off-again relationship with opium. You owe your first introduction to it to the music critic Louis Laloy.

Surrealist harassment escalates; Breton eggs on the radical poet Benjamin Péret as he prank-calls your mother to tell her you died in a car accident.

In 1925, you seek the embrace of religion to help keep you off the pipe — and provide you with a mental bulwark against Mythos forces. Your priestly sponsors see you as a weapon to be used against surrealist atheism. By 1927 you are trying to do to the Catholic Church what Breton wants to do with Communism — remake it in your idiosyncratic, avant-garde terms. You get about as far with this project as Breton does with his. Valentine Hugo, appalled by your conversion and moving toward the surrealists, abandons you.

In 1928 you join de Chirico’s project of rolling back the Dreamlands to its previous symbolist purity. You write a

book defending his neoclassicism — and, by inference, yours.

You write *The Human Voice*, a monologue play about a jilted, desperate lover, in 1929. Surrealist poet **Paul Éluard**, now sleeping with your ex-friend Valentine Hugo, disrupts the performance with shouted antihomosexual slurs. You see Luis Buñuel’s film *Un chien andalou* at a private screening in June, and commence work on your own film, the similarly fragmented, neoclassical, and homoerotic *Blood of a Poet*. It shoots in 1930, with Man Ray’s new lover Lee Miller playing Fate. This blatant reappropriation of surrealist techniques is your last major work of the *Dreamhounds* period. At its 1932 debut, Breton and company predictably despise it.

A fraught heterosexual liaison with Princess Natalie Paley leads to an abortion. Embittered by this and the loss of the now-surrealist Valentine Hugo, you contract a permanent case of misogyny.

Why the Surrealists Hate Cocteau

The surrealists view Cocteau as the living symbol of everything they loathe about the art scene, and harass him accordingly. (Exceptions include his good friend Man Ray, and Dalí, from whom he buys a painting.)

As far as Cocteau is concerned, they’re jealous of his brilliance, and dislike the inconvenient fact that his outwardly similar mix of the modern and the fantastical predates theirs. No more need be said.

From their side of the dispute, Breton and allies consider his homosexuality revolting. (Though they wouldn’t admit it in so many words, the fact that others lump them in with Cocteau, accusing them of pederasty, drives them crazy.)

Due to his society connections and early associations, they see him as a man of the right. That he now claims to be apolitical is even worse. He will not choose a side and stick to it, as a man of principle would. When he does embrace a side, it’s the wrong one, as evidenced by his ridiculous flirtation with the Church in the mid-1920s.

Cocteau’s claim to have invented the surrealist style is an outrage. His early attempts to horn in on surrealist activity merely prove his bad faith, just as his attacks on Dada revealed the puerility of his wit.

He is nothing but a creative thief, as evidenced by his swiping the style of *Un chien andalou* for his own film *Blood of a Poet*.

Breton can’t quite come out and say that Cocteau’s opium use is another hallmark of a fundamentally weak character, since that’s how his beloved Vaché chose to end his life. But that doesn’t mean he can’t imply it.

The rest of the decade finds you in a dimmed and dissolute state, able to enter the Dreamlands but incapable of deriving useful creative fuel from it. Instead you see only horror. You earn cash with popular but critically reviled stage plays. With Ray as an envoy, the surrealists continue to secretly draw on your Mythos knowledge in private, while excoriating you in public.

Your downswing ends as war looms. In 1939 your relationship with dashing actor Jean Marais gets you off opium again, and working on a sequel to *Le Potomak*, an act of art-magic against growing Mythos influence in Europe.

A wave of Vichyite antihomosexual hysteria adds difficulty to your war years. In 1946, you recover your creative self with a new film, the lyrical fairy tale *Beauty and the Beast*, starring Marais.

You die of heart failure in 1963. As gay culture emerges from the shadows, you are celebrated as one of its iconic pioneers. In an irony you would perhaps savor, the years elide the gulf between you and Breton's crowd. Your work is often exhibited alongside that of the surrealists, as if you were one of them after all.

Status: foe

Motifs: angels (often homoerotic), nude men (variously intertwined), nude women (idealized), stars, mirrors, pools of water, fae and elfin beings (Green Man, fauns, sylphs), lyres, people morphed into works of art (or vice versa), spatial distortions

Drive: Artistic Sensitivity

Location: Paris

What You Want From the Dreamlands: Inspiration for your work. An alternative to opium. Or possibly better opium. Sexual adventure.

Appearance: hawkish nose; prominent brows; high forehead; intense, deep-set eyes; spectacular head of wavy hair

Demeanor: self-dramatizing, a fusspot, a hypochondriac and neurasthenic, you complain constantly of ill health; a high-maintenance guest who frets over accommodations and comfort. You speak in torrential monologues that seem brilliant at the time, but are hard to recall later.

Family: mother Eugénie (doting yet demanding, 1855–1943), lovers Raymond Radiguet (1918–1923), Princess Natalie Paley (1930–1932), Jean Marais (1937–1947)

Investigative Abilities: [Academic] Architecture 1, Art History 1, Cthulhu Mythos 3, Dream Lore 2, Geology 1, History 1, Library Use 1, Literature 2, Medicine 1, Occult 1, Theology 1 [Interpersonal] Credit Rating 4, Flattery 1, Seduction 1, Streetwise 1 [Technical] Chemistry 1, Pharmacy 1

General Abilities: Art-Making (Visual Art 5, Film 6, Poetry 4, Fiction 6, Playwright 6), Athletics 3, Disguise 3, Dreamscaping 9, Fleeing 6, Health 6, Hypnosis 3, Instability 12, Sanity 4, Stability 6

Instability Immunity: Ignore all items on the Instability Loss Table on p. 68.

SALVADOR DALÍ

Calculating Visionary

Before you were born, your parents had another Salvador Dalí, who died at twenty-one months from a gastrointestinal infection. Despite superstitious injunctions against it, your father, also named Salvador, gave you, his next son, born in 1904 in Figueres, Catalonia, the same name as his dead

predecessor. Your dead namesake has haunted you always.

Though your strict father was a famed freethinker, you were molded by a country that had yet to accommodate itself to the modern era. You remember your childhood as an idyll, especially the summers spent at the seaside village of Cadaqués. Those around you recall a little terror, who left his excrement strewn all over the house, and threw tantrums, which could only be assuaged by his favorite outfit, a king's costume. Your father was stern; your mother, forgiving of your worst excesses.

From the age of four, you drew compulsively. At a residential school for the poor, where you were sent to shield you from a corrosive religious education, you developed a lifelong distaste for physical contact. The headmaster, who may have molested you, introduced you to his collection of wonders, including art stolen from churches.

At age twelve, at the suggestion of a family friend, the pointillist painter Ramon Pitxot, you enroll in formal art classes. A teenage cousin, Carolinetta, dies of consumption, becoming, alongside your namesake brother, a second spectral figure in your personal mythology.

By your late teens, you are the editor of a student art journal and a full-blown eccentric. You dress like a dandy, act like an oddball, and invite the contempt of your peers, whom you think of as wood lice.

When you are seventeen, your mother dies of cancer. You draw ever closer to your sister Ana María, three years your junior. The connection may or may not be literally sexual, but her attitude toward you will always be unmistakably that of a possessive, jealous lover.

In 1922, when you are eighteen, you go to Madrid to study at the progressive Residencia de Estudiantes (the "Resi"), where you follow the art news from

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Paris and fall in with the future poet-hero Federico Garcia Lorca and your future fellow surrealist **Luis Buñuel**. Ironically, you find the school too liberal. Madness you can take care of yourself; what you seek is a technical grounding. Among the speakers who visit the school are the poets **Paul Éluard** and **Louis Aragon**.

Together, you, Lorca and Buñuel listen to jazz, drink rum, and call the squares *putrefactos*. The athletic Buñuel dishes out fistic retribution to anyone who makes fun of your outlandish attire and demeanor. Lorca falls hopelessly in love with you; you mostly resist his forlorn advances. Ana María rewrites the situation in her mind, deciding that it is she Lorca pines for.

In 1926 you go to Paris for the first time, finding it overwhelming even though Buñuel has preceded you there and attempts to show you around.

By 1927 you are already selling your paintings. You tell Lorca that his poems and plays are too backward looking and folkloric to interest you. The real poetry, you explain, is in a perfect machine. While never quite admitting to himself that Lorca is a homosexual, the macho Buñuel tries to get you away from him.

The tension between your controlling family and outré ambitions takes its toll on you. You start to suffer from hysterical laughing fits.

In 1928, you decide to become a surrealist. That night, as if by an act of iron will, you find yourself in the Dreamlands. Not knowing that you shouldn't be able to do it, you immediately start rearranging its features. When you wake up, you paint what you made in such early surrealist works as *Senicitas*, *Inaugural Gooseflesh*, and *The Putrefied Donkey*.

In 1929, Buñuel comes to Figueres to seek your input on a film he's preparing. Together you decide to call it *Un chien*

andalou, the contemptuous phrase you use for Spain's literary establishment. You show Buñuel how to enter the Dreamlands. Exploring together, you find its contents there: you spot a hand swarming with ants; he sees a man slice a woman's eyeball with a razor.

You go to Paris to see the shooting. Buñuel takes you to a brothel, where you don't touch, but stock up on a lifetime's worth of erotic images. The painter Joan Miró tells you how to adopt the fashionable persona that drives collectors to purchase art.

That summer, a delegation of your new surrealist acquaintances visits you in Cadaqués: your dealer Camille Goemans and his girlfriend Yvonne, **Rene Magritte** and his wife Georgette, along with Paul Éluard, and the woman who will change your life — **Gala**, a tempestuous Russian fortune seeker and sexual adventurer. Ana María hates them all, even more than she loathes your new, disturbing surrealist canvases.

Buñuel arrives in the fall, to discuss a new screenplay, *L'Âge d'or*. The collaboration founders; you squabble over control. Buñuel offends Gala, and the feeling is mutual: he winds up choking her, and has to be pulled off of her.

The group loves your new work, except for your obviously displayed scatological fetish. Seeing Gala's influence over you, they deputize her to talk to you about removing this element from your paintings. They get more than they bargained for: you accept Gala as the ultimate arbiter of your work. You pursue her; she puts you off, preferring manlier men. (Her marriage to Éluard is an open one, so that's no impediment.) Eventually she realizes that you're her lifetime ticket out of poverty, her guiding fear since her flight from the Russian Revolution.

Your father, stepmother/aunt, and sister loathe Gala and try to draw you away from her. Intensifying laughing fits

nearly paralyze you. You ask Gala what she wants. She says, "Kill me." This cures the laughing fits, instantly and forever.

You write your alternate theory of surrealism, the paranoiac-critical method, in which one seeks heightened consciousness through "systematized confusion." You send the manuscript, and paintings for Goemans, with Gala to Paris. Once there yourself, your tongue loosened by alcohol, you meet and impress the surrealists. In **André Breton** you immediately recognize the forbidding authoritarianism of your father.

Already you have decided what to do. You will destroy them from within and take over, just as Breton did to **Tristan Tzara**.

To this end you will employ "occult, opportunistic and paradoxical" means. "If," as you later put it, "you decide to wage a war for the total triumph of your individuality, you must begin by inexorably destroying those who have the greatest affinity with you."

With your first Paris show looming in November, Gala takes you to Barcelona and Sitges, where you consummate your passion in some way or another. She calls this an elopement, although she is still married to Éluard.

You go home to Figueres where a disastrous break with your family awaits. Ana María calls Gala a whore and a drug addict. Your father has learned that your show included a lithograph entitled, "Sometimes I spit on the portrait of my mother." He throws you out of the house, for good. You make a sterling show of defying him, but afterward show your true reaction by cutting off all of your hair and burying it on the beach. After this you claim to be unaffected by the incident.

Buñuel, there to work on *L'Âge d'or*, informs you that your Paris show was a colossal hit. Your family may have cast you out, but now you're the star you have always willed yourself to be.

At the beginning of 1930, you return to Paris, taking a taxi to the French border. You throw yourself into your work, and your weird, consuming love for Gala. Everyone else hates her, but what do you care? By force of will, you pull her into the Dreamlands, so that her dream-form can accompany and protect yours. From a fortune teller met on the road to Ulthar, she learns to see the future in cards, and performs a reading for you every night.

In the summer, you go back to Cadaqués, only to learn that your father has arranged for every local hotelier to refuse you. So you buy a *barraca*, a one-room fishing shack, in nearby Port Lligat. Over the years, this summer home will grow into a crazy assemblage of rooms, as you buy additional barracas and adjoin them to the original.

During this period you paint a string of masterpieces, including *The Persistence of Memory*, with its dripping clocks.

You return cash-strapped to Paris; a new friend, Prince Faucigny-Lucinge, ushers you into the company of the ultra-wealthy, who find your half-feigned, half-real madness *très* amusing. You rub shoulders with fashion designers Coco Chanel and Elsa Schiaparelli. Your utterances become society catchphrases.

In December, *L'Âge d'or* debuts, inciting a riot, which is nice. But Buñuel's finished film outrages you. Where you wanted it to celebrate the grandeur of Catholic myth, it is wildly anticlerical. That might be forgiven, but Buñuel has left you out of the credits!

The controversy costs you money, as your rich patron Charles de Noailles, who backed the film, distances himself from you in a bid to preserve his reputation in society and prevent his excommunication by the Church. You build weird inventions, inspired by devices encountered in the Dreamlands. Gala struggles to sell them.

By June your fortunes have turned around, as your string of masterpieces

hits the market. America beckons. You sell *The Persistence of Memory* to your new dealer in New York, Julien Levy, for \$250.

By 1933 you're surrounding yourself with a crowd of surrealists excommunicated by Breton, including Éluard, the poets René Char and René Crevel, and former Dada impresario Tzara. You appall the official group by proclaiming that Hitler ought to be considered as a figure as lunatic and disruptive as Sade or Lautréamont. You reveal dreams in which you have sex with the German leader, who sometimes appears to you in the form of a woman, her plump flesh whiter than white.

You embark on a brief affair with Marcelle Ferry, lover to group member and graphic artist Georges Hugnet. She's boisterous and prone to belting out barroom ditties. You call her Lila.

In January you marry Gala.

The next month, Breton, fed up with your continuing Hitler fascination, calls you to an inquisition at his apartment. You show up feverish and bundled in layer after layer of sweaters, which you remove systematically throughout the evening, until you have stripped to the waist. In an epic performance of bafflebagg, spittle flying from the thermometer lodged under your tongue, you deflect each and every one of Breton's pointed questions. You cast Breton as the defender of rationality and yourself as the mad knight of unfettered consciousness. Backed into an ideological corner, he can't bring himself to expel you.

You meet the wealthy English art collector Edward James, who, despite his history of financial disputes with artists, starts buying your work in depth. He wants to sleep with you, but you don't give in — yet.

In November you barely overcome your terror of travel to make the trip to New York, thanks to a loan from your friend **Pablo Picasso**. Delighted by your madman persona, the Big Apple goes

wild for you. Your fame comes crashing down around you in February, when you throw a Dream Ball, outfitting Gala with a hat festooned by a mutilated baby doll. Though you deny it, the press takes this as a reference to the murdered Lindbergh baby.

When you arrive back in Paris, the surrealists have their knives out for you — not because you scandalized society, but because you backed off and denied the Lindbergh connection. Clearly, they're jealous of your fame-seeking.

The June suicide of your friend René Crevel hits you hard. You blame Breton for getting him mixed up in the Communist Party intrigue that led him to his death by gas inhalation.

A few months later, in Barcelona, you reconcile with Lorca.

The year 1936 finds you flush, confident, and increasingly able to play the hard-nosed businessman. You design furniture, including a chair that looks like a pair of plump red lips. For Edward James, you make your first lobster phone.

You attend the epoch-making surrealist London show in June. For your lecture to a packed house, you don a full diving suit with a jeweled dagger on its belt and hit the stage leading a pair of Russian wolfhounds. The audience delights to your feigned suffocation — except that it's not part of the act. Gala, your usual protector, has gone out for a coffee. Just in time, the British surrealist Roland Penrose realizes what's happening, grabs a wrench backstage and rushes to free you.

You are still in England when the Spanish Civil War breaks out in mid-July. At first, you applaud the revolutionary violence. But then leftist forces take Cadaqués, destroying your home and your father's. They execute thirty people in the public square, including three of your Port Lligat fisherman friends. They imprison, torture and probably rape your sister, Ana Maria. Shortly after this you shift your support

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to Franco's Falange. When others rip you for your political shift, they accuse you of opportunism, of picking the winning side.

On August 18th Lorca is murdered by a Falange firing squad in Granada. In a reaction you will later be ashamed of, you celebrate him by calling a bravo to the brave slain bull.

In Paris you meet Harpo Marx, who becomes a longtime friend.

In December, you enrage the other surrealists when you make the cover of *Time* magazine, as photographed by **Man Ray**. Accompanied by a big show at the Museum of Modern Art, it kicks off a surrealism craze in America — which regards you as its central figure.

In 1937 you hang around Hollywood with Harpo Marx, give in to Edward James' romantic advances, go into fashion design, and buy a stuffed Kodiak bear and paint it pink.

By 1938 you're definitively on the outs with the main surrealist group — though not so much that they can't invite you to take part in a momentous group show, to which you contribute an installation of a taxicab under a downpour. Hearing that Coco Chanel is deathly ill in Venice, you rush there. By her bedside you spot a seashell somehow transported from the Dreamlands. After you remove it, she recovers.

You visit Freud in Berlin. The surrealists have always nonplussed him, but he's impressed by you — to Breton's thundering chagrin.

Shattering glass as you install your 1939 window display at Bonwit Teller's in New York City leads to your near guillotining. The authorities treat this as an intentional publicity stunt, and throw you in jail.

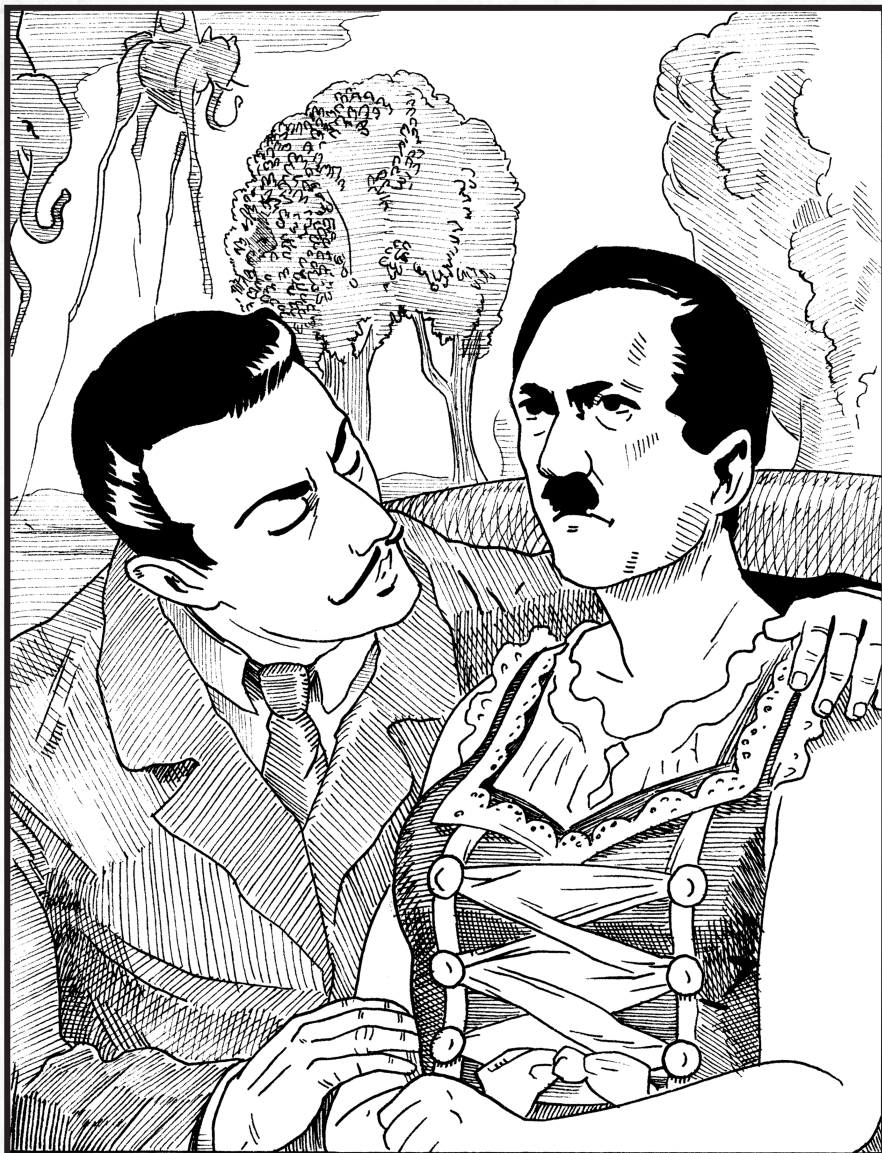
You take on a commission, funded by Edward James, to create a "Dream of Venus" pavilion for the New York World's Fair. One board member, a

Miskatonic University professor, learns of your plans to prominently feature a fish-headed woman. Wielding a political clout you don't quite fathom, he manages to quash the entire exhibit. You pull away from the project, incurring hefty losses for James, thus leading to the end of your relationship.

Later, back in Paris, you realize that Gala is seeing things in her card readings that she's not sharing with you. You decide not to ask. Finally, she tells you that it's time to go. You wind up in Arcachon, on coast south of Bordeaux, as far as possible from any invading Germans.

Hitler is now a figure of terror, not fascination. You drink heavily, spending time with fellow internal refugees, Chanel, **Marcel Duchamp**, and Leonor Fini. By year's end you occupy yourself building a bomb shelter.

In June, red tape forces you to return to Spain for the first time since the war, and then on to Lisbon, before you can secure an exit to the US. Once in America, you shuttle between Hollywood and the estates of wealthy friends. When you bump into them on the street, **Max Ernst** and Breton refuse to shake your fascist hand.



Your November 21, 1941, show at the Museum of Modern Art marks the end of your surrealist period. You abandon your old motifs and style in favor of a backward-looking approach inspired by sixteenth-century mannerism. Did you finally lose your Instability once and for all, or did you see something in the Dreamlands so horrible that you chose to throw it all away?

The next year, still stinging over your omission from the *L'Âge d'or* credits, you not only refuse to help a down-and-out Buñuel, but write a passage in your memoirs identifying him as a Communist. This leads to his firing from a job he desperately needs. The two of you never reconcile.

You die in 1989 from ongoing heart disease while listening to a crackly recording of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*, which reminds you of frying sardines. By this time your blatant commercialism, cozying up to Franco, and collusion in producing fraudulent prints have made you an art-world pariah. Nonetheless, your outrageous persona remains ingrained in popular culture, inspiration for figures ranging from rock stars to a new wave of hyper-ironic artists, Andy Warhol chief among them.

Status: member 1929–1937, member in poor standing 1938–1941, foe 1941–

Motifs: skulls, ants, crutches, milk, distorted figures, melting objects, animals with stilt-like legs

Drive: Arrogance

What You Want From the Dreamlands: Images to paint. Proof of your artistic power. Voyeuristic pleasure.

Location: Spain (with brief visits to Paris) until 1929, Paris with winters in Port Lligat 1930–1936, Paris with winters in New York City 1937–1939

Appearance: dashing, dapper, pencil mustache (the elaborate waxed appendage is a feature of your later, deliberately cartoonish persona)

Demeanor: You are not yet the imperious trickster you will one day create as a shield against insecurities; that work is still in progress. You require a guide, like Buñuel or Gala, to navigate you through the most mundane events of daily life. Ordinary transactions, like ordering in a café or taking a cab, flummox you utterly. Your speech is a rapid-fire fusillade of charming nonsense.

Family: father Salvador Dalí i Cusi (1872–1950), mother Felipa Domènech Ferrés (1874–1921), brother Salvador (1901–1903), sister Ana María (1908–1989), wife Gala (1929–, married 1934)

Investigative Abilities: [Academic] Anthropology 1, Archaeology 1, Architecture 1, Art History 2, Biology 1, Dream Lore 1, History 1, Languages 1 (English, French), Library Use 1, Theology 1 [Interpersonal] Charm 2, Flattery 1 [Technical] Chemistry 1

General Abilities (float points 6): Art-Making 8, Dreamscaping 12, Fleeing 6, Health 8, Instability 12, Preparedness 4, Sanity 6, Sense Trouble 6, Stability 4, Stealth 3

Instability Immunity: Ignore item 8 on the Instability Loss Table on p. 68. After 1937, also ignore 1 and 4.

GIORGIO DE CHIRICO

Remorseful Pioneer

You are born in 1888 in Volos, in the Greek province of Thessaly, to an Italian family with ties to the Levant. Your early talents as an artist lead your family to send you to Germany for further training.

In 1907, you experience a transcendent sense of déjà vu on your first sight of the work of Arnold Böcklin, a Swiss symbolist painter active during the second half of the previous century. You feel that the land of pregnant melancholy he depicts is one you have visited before.

Two years later, in Florence, another work of art completes your initiation. A statue of Dante in the Piazza della Croce strikes you with the force of revelation. That night, the stone Dante appears to you — incongruously wearing sunglasses — and leads you into the Dreamlands. Suspecting that he means to lure you into his nine-layered vision of hell, you flee. Running pell-mell through an unreal landscape, you come face to face with the fortress pictured in Böcklin's masterpiece, *Isle of the Dead*.

Waking, you realize that the Dreamlands are both real and not, and that Böcklin must have journeyed there and painted what he saw.

From that night on, you are a true dreamer, as Böcklin was. In 1911, you move to Paris. You meet and paint Apollinaire. During the war you are posted to a military hospital, avoiding the front.

In 1916 your work changes. You begin to paint your metaphysical paintings, in which strange puppet-like figures move through a lonely, haunted landscape.

Then, to your horror, you discover that the images you're painting are changing the Dreamlands — polluting it. Wherever you explore, its symbolist grandeur is replaced by your own weird motifs.

You decide to restore the Dreamlands by retreating to an old-master style.

But it's too late. A new generation of artists finds your work. Reproductions of your metaphysical paintings find

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their way into the then-distant hands of French critic **André Breton** and German artist **Max Ernst**. The former praises them in an article. The latter experiences a transcendent sense of déjà vu, as if they map out a place he has seen before but forgotten. Yves Tanguy sees one of your paintings in a gallery window and decides on the spot to pick up a brush and become an artist.

Your old master-inspired paintings fail to change the Dreamlands back. Starting in 1920, you blend your two styles, hoping that will catalyze the reversion you desperately seek.

In 1923 you are visited in Rome by Ernst, his poet friend **Paul Éluard**, and the latter's wife, a weirdly compelling woman named **Gala**. You lose your head and allow her to seduce you — though not so thoroughly that you let Ernst and Éluard join the two of you in bed, as they have apparently been planning all along.

In 1924, you meet Breton in a café. Since entering the Dreamlands, you have come to perceive certain people as ghosts. These are individuals, like your dealer, who could have become dreamers, but let their forms dwindle away in an embrace of unquestioned conformity. You point out several of these ghosts to Breton. He buys one of your paintings and arranges for a patron to purchase others.

You attend at least one séance session at Breton's apartment, where you are dismayed to learn that the poet **Robert Desnos** has found a reliable method of entry to the Dreamlands and taught it to many other group members.

A few years later, after you've warned them to stop going to the Dreamlands, the surrealists condemn your neoclassical works as a betrayal of your vision. You despise them in turn for despoiling the sleeping world and downgrading the work you wish to be recognized for.

In 1928, **Jean Cocteau** joins your cause, writing a book defending you against surrealist critics, and working to shift the Dreamlands back to the state it was in before you unwittingly started changing it.

Over the rest of your career you waver between protecting and exploring the Dreamlands. In 1929 you write a poetic novel set there, called *Hebdomeros*.

Even after you move back to Italy in 1931, you keep dreaming your way back to Paris. There you interact with the waking surrealists in ways they will not later remember, in the vain hope of slowing the degradation of the beautiful symbolist Dreamlands of old.

Later in life you forge your own work, creating new metaphysical works and backdating them. You die in a Rome hospital in 1978, just shy of your ninetieth birthday.

Status: claimed 1919–1926, foe 1926–

Motifs: empty plazas, statuary, jointed dolls (sometimes with cyclopean eyes drawn on their heads, sometimes with lightbulb heads), stone fishes and fossilized shells, sunglasses-wearing statue heads

Drive: Remorse

What You Want From the Dreamlands: redemption for having despoiled it

Location: Rome 1919–1925, Paris 1925–1931, various Italian cities 1931–

Appearance: prominent nose, large ears, mop of dark hair, forlorn eyes

Demeanor: worried, resentful

Family: partner Raissa Krol, a ballerina (met 1924, married 1930, split 1931); second wife Isabella Far, artist and critic (1930–)

Investigative Abilities: [Academic] Archaeology 1, Architecture 1, Art History 2, Dream Lore 3, History 1, Languages 4 (French, German, Italian) [Interpersonal] Assess Honesty 1, Bargain 1, Bureaucracy 1, Flattery 1, Reassurance 1

General Abilities(8 float points): Art-Making 8 (Visual Art) 4 (Fiction), Athletics 4, Dreamscaping 8, Fleeing 6, Health 8, Instability 4, Preparedness 4, Sanity 6, Sense Trouble 4, Stability 8

Instability Immunity: Ignore items 1, 2, 4, 6 and 7 on the Instability Loss Table on p. 68.

ROBERT DESNOS

Dream Medium

You are born in 1900, in the Marais, the neighborhood where Paris' medieval past still lingers. Your father owns a busy meat-and-game stand at Les Halles, the city's fabled outdoor food marketplace. Unlike most of your surrealist colleagues, you adore your family and even as an adult rarely miss a Sunday dinner with them. You grow up feeling, in a quite literal sense, the magic of the old city.

By 1918, just too young to be drafted into the war, you are writing poetry, recording your dreams, and admiring the work of surrealist precursor Guillaume Apollinaire. In 1921, your friend, the poet Benjamin Péret, introduces you to **Tristan Tzara**, **André Breton**, and others of the Dadaist circle. Though too tongue-tied to say much at this first meeting, you fall in with Breton's group a year later, as he is breaking away from Dada to something new he hasn't named yet. Seeking a new state of mind from which to create poetry, this nascent movement begins to experiment with non-magical séances. The poet René Crevel is the first to drop into trance. You are the second. Falling into a halfway state

between sleep and waking, you gaze into a fantastical realm of ancient vistas and strange creatures — like the Marais of your childhood imaginings. Your hand scratches uncontrollably, as if wanting to write.

For your second session a pencil and paper are provided for you. You encounter a self-willed, dreamed remembrance of Robespierre, and then the dreaming form of the acerbic Dada artist **Marcel Duchamp**. Both of them, while you move about the landscape of dream, are able to speak through you to those in Breton's apartment. You remember what

you see in this dream land but not what the possessing entities do with your body back in the waking world. When you return you discover that Duchamp has composed a series of one-line, aphoristic poems in the voice of his feminine alter ego, *Rose Séavy*.

When contacted in New York City, Duchamp laughs the incident off as an absurdity. You must have written the poems.

As the sessions continue, you realize that weeks and days seem to pass in the Dreamlands, which register as mere moments in the waking world — a phenomenon you label “baroque time.”

You and Crevel become rivals, each racing to out-trance the other.

The sessions, always frightening, take a darker turn in February 1923 when a Dreamlands entity possesses your body, impelling you to chase the poet **Paul Éluard** with a knife. In a second incident, either that entity or another takes control of your body and has you lock the other participants in a room, where they remain for hours. Due to this, and equally eerie events arising from Crevel's mediumship, Breton calls a halt to the séances. Shattered, you keep showing up at surrealist meetings, begging to resume the experiment. Spooked, you, Breton and Éluard briefly announce that you've given up writing.

In 1924, you re-emerge with a hoaxed article, submitted under Éluard's name and passing off your automatic drawings as the work of various Polish madwomen. It describes the power of madmen to access other worlds through vision focused on infinity. You write *Mourning for Mourning*, an epic automatic poem thinly disguising your Dreamlands adventures. At the cabaret *Chez Fyscher*, where she is performing, you meet and fall in love with Belgian chanteuse *Yvonne George*. That the affection is one-sided — she prefers women — does not deter you. Nor does it stop her from taking advantage of you.

You befriend **Man Ray** and his lover **Kiki**, spending more time with her than him.

In 1926, you take over the 45 rue Blomet studio of painter **André Masson**, transforming it into a dark room that facilitates true dreaming.² You show your new inseparable pal, the artist *Georges Malkine*, how to enter the Dreamlands, which he proceeds to paint. You also make paintings of the place, where ships, stars, streets and monsters meet.

² According to *The Book of Ants*, it also serves as a direct portal between the waking and dreaming worlds.



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Breton's hackles rise when you start work as a journalist. In his view, such efforts support the corrupt establishment — whether you need to earn a living or not. In *À la mystérieuse*, a series of surrealist love poems to Yvonne George, you describe yourself dreaming her into being. This creates a dream version of her, which saps your spirit in the Dreamlands just like the real one does in Paris.

Confrontation with Yvonne's dream-form convinces you that you must reverse the changes you and others have wrought on the Dreamlands. Starting in 1927, you add surrealist-disapproved classical imagery to your work, in the hope that this will revert it to a prior state. At the same time, you publish the surrealist adventure novel *Liberty or Love!* Dream images include the sequence in which its hero, Corsair Sanglot, is dragged to the sea bottom by his reflection in the water, and there finds a mermaid cemetery.

By 1928, Yvonne, fighting a doomed battle against addiction and tuberculosis, has you procuring drugs for her, risking your safety and liberty. You have always compared her to a starfish; now, in dream, a dread creature with starfish-like appendages falls as hopelessly in love with you as you are with Yvonne. To draw you in, it mimics Yvonne's ineffable aura of attraction.

In an attempt to reassert mental dominance, you feature it in Man Ray's film *L'Étoile de mer*, for which you write the scenario. Shot partially in the Dreamlands, it stars Kiki and features brief appearances by you and the tentacled entity.

You meet Belgian-born Youki Foujita, who is in an open relationship with painter Tsuguhara Foujita and has as lover another surrealist poet, Marcel Noll. Over Breton's meddling objections, you pursue her.

In 1929 you replace Noll in Youki's affections but not Tsuguhara: they formally marry. He's rich, while you

have to share your shoes with another struggling writer. He designs matching tattoos for the two of you — a mermaid for her thigh, a bear encircled by stars for your arm.

You pull away from Breton toward his rival, **Georges Bataille**, who introduces you to the ghoul gatekeeper of the Paris catacombs, formerly famed as the fourteenth-century alchemist and bookhound Nicholas Flamel. Impressed by him, you publish a tribute to Flamel recounting your dream-like encounters in the dream-world version of the Marais, revealing that you see medieval ghosts even while supposedly awake.

In 1930, you trade barbs with Breton in dueling surrealist manifestos. Your association with him and his faction reaches its nadir when you open a bar called Maldoror. Considering the name an offense against the purity of a surrealist icon, they violently assault the place, with bloodshed on both sides.

You stand transfixed in the Dreamlands as the dream-Yvonne and starfish entity battle one another to mutual destruction. When you emerge from baroque time, you learn that the real Yvonne has died.

The year 1931 sees you in a new job, as a real estate agent mostly called upon to mediate landlord-tenant disputes. Tsuguhara Foujita meets a new love and leaves the country, with a letter of blessing urging you and Youki to be together. You move into her house, where your Saturday night open parties become a magnet for the wild intelligentsia. Alas, you are unable to convince her to make the relationship exclusive.

You go into radio in 1932, composing commercial jingles with the zing of the Rrose Sélavy poems. The following year you seal your prowess in the new medium with a poetic revival of the pulp antihero Fantômas, with music by Kurt Weill and with surrealist actor/director **Antonin Artaud** in the leading role.

In 1933, the encroachment of fascism jars you from your apolitical stance. You join antifascist groups, compose rallying songs, and drop the weirdness of your previous work for a life-affirming optimism. In 1936 you reconcile with an erstwhile comrade, the surrealist poet **Louis Aragon**, as fellow members of the antifascist Popular Front.

To prepare for the coming struggle, in 1938 you launch the dream-interpretation radio show *La Clef des songes*. Listeners write in with accounts of their dreams, which you and your fellow performers dramatize. With your sonorous voice and innovative use of eerie sound effects, the show creates an indelible impression. As one script says, "Radio is the home delivery of dreams." The show, you say, helps you to reach the collective unconscious. What you secretly mean by this is that you're scouting for powerful dreamers, expecting the *domaine de rêve* to become a front in the coming war.

You are mobilized in the real world in 1939, during the so-called "phony war" period, when Germany and France have declared war but little fighting takes place. After the lightning-fast real war in 1940 ushers in the Occupation, you leave radio, now German controlled. You write for censored magazines and newspapers, sneaking in anti-Nazi propaganda to be read between the lines. In 1942 you join the Agir cell, funneling real news to the Resistance and forging identity papers. The Gestapo arrests you in 1944. Despite Youki's determined efforts, collaborationist literary rivals see to it that you're deported as a political prisoner. A month after the Terezin concentration camp's liberation and conversion to a hospital, you die there of dysentery and paratyphoid fever. The French nation celebrates you as a martyr-hero.

Status: member 1922–1930, dissident surrealist 1930–1945

Motifs: death, resurrection, mirrors, mermaids, ocean, medievalisms, text on signs poignantly recontextualized, adventure tropes, Fantômas

Drive: Curiosity

What You Want From the Dreamlands: Adventure. Themes for your work.

Location: Paris

Appearance: eyes “the color of spoiled oysters,” elegant dress (when you have money)

Demeanor: working class accent, seem entranced even when awake, sonorous voice, interested in pop culture, love (and have unerring taste in) movies and jazz music

Family: lover then wife Youki Foujita/Desnos (1928—)

Investigative Abilities: [Academic] Architecture 1, Art History 1, Dream Lore 1, Geology 1, History 1, Library Use 1, Literature 2, Occult 1, Physics 1 [Interpersonal] Bargain 1, Credit Rating 2, Flattery 1, Oral History 1, Reassurance 1, Streetwise 1

General Abilities (float points 7): Art-Making (Radio Drama 4, Poetry 8), Athletics 6, Dreamscaping 6, Health 8, Hypnosis 4, Instability 8, Sanity 8, Stability 8

Instability Immunity: After 1929, ignore items 1, 4 and 6 on the Instability Loss Table on p. 68. Until 1933, you also ignore items 3 and 5.

MARCEL DUCHAMP

The Chess Player

Your spare, alternately cryptic and acerbic works question the nature of art itself. Without submitting to any requirements but your own, you kindly allow the

surrealists, a younger group, to claim you as a key figure. Your comparatively small body of work makes you, as the father of the installation piece, the most influential artist of the 20th century.

You are born in 1887, the son of a notary, in Rouen, France. Your three siblings are also artists of various stripes.

In 1908 you are already exhibiting work in Paris. By the early Teens, you’re rubbing elegant shoulders with the avant-garde generation who precede and influence the surrealists, including the poet Guillaume Apollinaire, and artists Francis Picabia and Fernand Léger. In 1912 you paint *Nude Descending a Staircase*, which fuses cubism and futurism by using multiple, overlapping images to represent a figure in motion. The organizers of the supposedly open Salon des Indépendants reject it for exhibition. But when shown at the seminal 1913 Armory Show in New York City, which introduces America to the shock of modern art, it creates a sensation of controversy.

To reap the rewards of its polarizing acclaim, you head to the United States. As is appropriate to your love of gamesmanship, your ship is the *Rochambeau*.

A year later you meet the painter (soon to be photographer) **Man Ray**, who becomes your lifelong friend. You begin assembling a piece that you’ll work on for nine years, a collage of metal parts on a large glass sheet, *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even*, a.k.a. *The Large Glass*. In 1917 the organizers of the supposedly open Society of Independent Artists reject for exhibition *Fountain*, a urinal you have signed “R. Mutt.” This becomes the most famous of your readymades — everyday items you transform into challenges to the meaning of art, simply by putting them on display in galleries and museums. You return to Paris, where you meet the young **André Breton** and the nucleus of what will later become the surrealist crowd.

Back in NYC a year later, you and Man Ray are nearly killed when you activate a motorized sculpture called *Rotary Glass Plates*, sending pieces flying violently through the room. In 1921 you co-edit a Dadaist magazine with Ray. A cover photograph of you in demure drag introduces your alter ego, Rose Sélavy (*Eros, c’est la vie*), who will recur throughout your work. The night after Man Ray shoots you in this guise, you enter the Dreamlands, as Rose. Soon you learn to shift your dream-form back and forth between her and your everyday appearance.

The next year you publish, as Rose Sélavy, some short aphoristic poems, in Breton’s journal *Littérature*. Months later you learn that Breton has been holding séance-like events with his group, and that a poet you have never met, **Robert Desnos**, has been writing poems in your style while supposedly possessed by Rose. You dismiss this as absurd. Only later do you learn that your dream-form, Rose, has attained independent agency when you are not dreaming, and takes action without your say-so — including reaching through the veil of sleep to occupy susceptible corporeal bodies, like Desnos’.

Discovering this in 1923, you return to Paris with your companion Mary Reynolds — in part to keep a closer eye on Rose’s activities. Her interventions in the waking world cease with your arrival.

In 1927, carelessly crated for transport back from a Brooklyn Museum, the *Large Glass* is broken, sending cracks spidering across its surface. You declare it “a hundred times better” than it was before.

In March of that year, you meet Lydie Sarazin-Levassor, a young woman from a family of means more interested in sports than avant-garde art. Feeling rootless, she heeds a friend’s urging and accepts you as a suitable match; you are married in June. Lydie doesn’t like Man Ray but respects the friendship the two of you have together. Though prepared for the

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financial hardship of your low income and need to maintain a separate studio, your unsentimental attitude toward romantic attachment somehow surprises her. When you set her up in her own flat and tell her that she should seek outside sexual contact, she takes it poorly. You divorce in January, scarcely more than six months after your wedding.

From 1929 to 1934, you scour Europe, and the Dreamlands, for chess partners, competing in top tournaments. Your objective is not to win, per se, but to take it apart and re-understand it, as you have taken apart and re-understood art.

In 1932 you create the first of your boxes: collections of ephemera which can only be experienced by taking various pieces out of the box and examining them, in whatever nonlinear order the viewer happens to choose. *The Box of 1932* collects your notes on chess. *The Green Box* painstakingly recreates your scattered notes for *The Large Glass*. *The Box in a Valise* presents a career retrospective in portable miniature.

When the Germans invade in 1940, you retreat to the coastal town Arcachon with Breton and other art-world fixtures. Securing false papers, you travel back and forth between Paris and the unoccupied Free Zone in the guise of a cheese merchant. In 1942 you leave Europe for New York City, becoming an American citizen in 1955.

You live to see the 1960s generation revive interest in your work, passing away in 1968, at age eighty-one.

Status: claimed (with occasional frosty periods, when Breton frets that you're spending too much time with chess)

Motifs: classic art images defaced or deconstructed, ordinary objects in extraordinary contexts, glass, metal, machinery, advertising parodies, women violated or threatened, chess pieces

Drive: Curiosity

What You Want From the Dreamlands: to play with an intellectual puzzle

Location: New York 1914–1927, Paris (with much travel for chess tournaments) 1927–1940

Appearance: distinguished, tall, aquiline nose, delicate features, laughing eyes

Demeanor: in Breton's words, "ineffably, fatally elegant," unfailingly polite (but you never say "thank you"), reserved, you cough dryly into your hand before speaking, never ask favors

Family: wife Lydie Sarazin-Levassor (June 1927–Jan. 1928)

Investigative Abilities (float points 12): [Academic] Art History 1, Dream Lore 2, Literature 1, Physics 1 [Interpersonal] Assess Honesty 1, Charm 2, Credit Rating 3, Reassurance 1, Seduction 1 [Technical] Chemistry 1, Locksmith 1

General Abilities (float points 10): Art-Making (Visual Art 8), Athletics 2, Disguise 6, Dreamscaping 5, Electrical Repair 4, Fleeing 6, Health 6, Instability 6, Preparedness 8, Sanity 8, Scuffling 2, Sense Trouble 4, Stability 8

Instability Immunity: Ignore items 1, 2, 4, and 6 on the Instability Loss Table on p. 68.

PAUL ÉLUARD

Lyric Revolutionary

A key poet of the movement who leads always with his heart, you are torn between your desire to love and your impulse to destroy.

You are born Eugène Grindel, in 1895, in Saint-Denis. Stricken with tuberculosis at the age of sixteen, your

parents send you to a Swiss sanatorium, where you meet a captivating Russian girl. The two of you fall in love, and you rename her **Gala**.

Despite your health problems you fight in the Great War. At the battle of Verdun, you exchange fire with German forces, including your future friend **Max Ernst**.

In 1918 your daughter Cécile is born.

You write poems in the ecstatic style of Walt Whitman until 1919, when you meet fellow young writers **André Breton** and **Louis Aragon**, who introduce you to the rebellious Dada movement. Your work takes on its revolutionary fervor.

In 1920, you meet and collaborate with Ernst, with whom you share a close friendship. In two years, you start sharing more than that, when Gala and Ernst fall for each other while on a group vacation in the Tyrols. Saying that you love Ernst more than her, you bless the relationship, which becomes a ménage à trois. In addition, you and Gala seek out threesomes with other men.

As Breton's movement turns into full-fledged surrealism, you embrace collaborative work as the key to the mental transformation it seeks. Automatic writing means less to you than to others: poetry is nothing if it is not shaped. However, when exposure to fellow poet and surrealist medium **Robert Desnos** allows you, in 1922, to enter the Dreamlands while sleeping, you find imagistic inspiration in its weird vistas.

In 1923, the strain of remaining game in the face of Ernst and Gala's deepening attraction drives you to anxiety, heavy drinking, and relentless bar-crawling with Aragon. Finally you crack altogether. The next year, obeying a strange psychic impulse, you travel to Easter Island, on money embezzled from your father's firm. You leave him a letter warning of death to any who dare follow you. (At about the same time you dedicate what you call

your “last book of poems” to Breton.) Gala knows where you are all along. Suddenly realizing that the force that brought you to the South Pacific is a sinister one bent on your destruction, she sells most of your art collection and, with Ernst in tow, meets you in Saigon. With pointed Russian practicality, Gala snaps you out of your quasi-hypnotic funk. Ernst slips off with certain items you collected on your travels and dumps them in the Mekong River.

After that, he breaks it off with Gala, to her distress and your secret relief. You don’t want to talk to Breton or others about your trip — in large part because you remember so little of what you did during your months alone.

In 1926 Ernst covers the walls of your apartment with a grotesque fresco, including images of women with their entrails hanging out. He assures you that this is a necessary protective step, so you say nothing — even though the murals terrify young Cécile.

You develop a close friendship with **Valentine Hugo**, one of the few women who gets along with Gala.

In 1929, you, Gala and Cécile accompany Georgette and **René Magritte** and the dealer Camille Goemans to vacation in Cadaqués, summer home to the eccentric young artist **Salvador Dalí**. Dalí is smitten with Gala. Like any good husband in an open marriage, you bless their liaison, assuming it will be transient. When he comes to Paris in the fall and Gala goes to him, you realize you’ve lost her. Heartbroken, you refuse her request for divorce and move into the apartment over Breton’s. Although the relationship becomes one-sided, with you pining for her and Gala having moved on, she does continue to sleep with you for many years to come. In this you find only bittersweet consolation.

Despite her then-unrequited love for André Breton, you turn to the arms of Gala’s friend Valentine Hugo.

The next year you pick up a starving Alsatian waif named Maria Benz and begin living together. As you are wont to do, you rename her, as Nusch. She becomes the second great love of your life. The relationship is no more monogamous than your marriage to Gala, who you sometimes still sleep with.

When Aragon defects from the movement in 1931, no one reacts with greater fury than you.

In 1932, clearing the way for your marriage to Nusch, Gala submits to the trouble of formally divorcing you.

In 1934 you defend Dalí, who faces exclusion by Breton for his outrageous statements about Hitler. Outmaneuvered by Dalí, Breton kicks you out instead — without telling you about it. You marry Nusch that same year.

From 1935 on, you are close friends with **Pablo Picasso** — two years later, you watch him paint *Guernica*.

Your fracture with Breton intensifies in 1936, when, in a struggle within the Communist Party, you side with the Stalinists over his favored Trotskyites. Two years later, your final disengagement plays like a bitter divorce, with a lengthy reallocation of co-owned art and other possessions.

During the war you stay in France and fight for the Resistance. Like others of this camp, you shut out Breton upon his return.

You remain a hardcore Stalinist until your death by heart attack in 1952.

Status: member 1919–1933, member in poor standing 1933–38, foe 1938–

Motifs: collaboration (you can transfer Dreamscaping points to any other PC’s use; when you do so, the recipient gains 1 additional Dreamscaping point); images of flowers, love and womankind

Drive: Fraternity

What You Want From the Dreamlands: to overthrow the unjust

Location: Paris

Appearance: high forehead, strong jaw, delicate lips, wide eyes

Demeanor: impulsive; anxious; alert to sexual possibilities; alternately hot tempered and depressive, you throw yourself into brawls provoked by aesthetic disputes, though you are usually the one who gets the worst of it

Family: daughter Cécile (1918–), wife Gala (meet 1911, ex with benefits 1929–1939, formal divorce in 1932), wife Nusch (1930–; married in 1932)

Investigative Abilities (float points 4): [Academic] Anthropology 1, Archaeology 1, Architecture 1, Art History 1, Cthulhu Mythos 1, Dream Lore 1, History 1, Library Use 2, Literature 2 [Interpersonal] Reassurance 1, Seduction 2 [Technical] Evidence Collection 1

General Abilities (float points 8): Art-Making (Poetry 6), Dreamscaping 6, Health 8, Instability 8, Sanity 4, Scuffling 8, Stability 5, Weapons 4

Instability Immunity: After 1936, ignore items 1 and 4 on the Instability Loss Table on p. 68.

MAX ERNST

King of Birds

You are born in 1891 in Brühl, a small town near Cologne, the third of nine children. Your father, Philippe, is a teacher to the deaf and dumb and a skilled amateur watercolorist.

In 1906, when you are fifteen, your beloved pet bird, Hornebom, dies at the same time your sister Loni is born.

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This confluence of events provokes a brief but intense psychic crisis, in which you irrationally conclude that she has stolen the bird's life essence. Forever after you are haunted by images of anthropomorphic birds, and avimorphic people.

As a student at the University of Bonn you meet your eventual wife, Louise (Lou) Straus and a lifelong friend, the sculptor and founding Dadaist Hans Arp, and are introduced to poet and surrealist inspiration Guillaume Apollinaire.

In 1914 you are drafted into the Germany army, serving as a corporal in an artillery unit.

While on leave in Berlin in 1915, you see and are impressed by a Dadaist art exhibit.

In 1916, you fight at Verdun, firing on positions where your future friend, the poet **Paul Éluard**, is stationed.

You marry Lou in 1918. After you are demobilized, you move to Cologne, where your home becomes a meeting place for members of the arts intelligentsia, including visitors from abroad.

The next year, visiting Munich, you see monograph reproductions of **Giorgio de Chirico's** metaphysical paintings. You are dumbstruck with déjà vu: these are images from your dream world, which your mind had suppressed! That night, you become an aware dreamer and, shortly thereafter, a dreamscaper. You make a series of Chirico-inspired drawings. For the first year or so, you can change the Dreamlands in ways that mimic de Chirico's motifs. Gradually you learn to build in your own images and how to slip into the avian dream persona Loplop, King of Birds. (Later you discover that this persona is the double of a Dreamlands monarch with its own independent agenda; see p. 120; ref Chapter Five bookmark "LopLop".

Luckily it invariably approves of actions you undertake in its guise.)

You take part in a Dada show, part of a wider avant-garde group exhibit. It includes work by amateurs and mental patients. British occupying authorities confiscate its poster and catalog.

Starting in 1920 you make disturbing collages, often by combining elements from old etchings. Others have placed bits and pieces of material on canvases, but you are the first to do it in order to reconfigure existing works into distressing and evocative juxtapositions.

Your son Jimmy is born.

Éluard and his unconventionally magnetic wife **Gala** stay at your house for extended periods.

In 1921 you correspond enthusiastically with the French poet and critic **André Breton** about your work, which is shown at a Paris bookshop. Near the end of the year, you move to Paris and fall in with the Breton group, now separating itself from Dada. An illegal immigrant at a time when anti-German sentiment still runs high in Paris, you struggle to get by. The Éluards take you in, and you take a job in a trinket factory. You collaborate with Éluard on an illustrated book, *The Misfortunes of the Immortals*.

While on holiday the next year, your mutual attraction to Gala blossoms into an affair, as Lou looks nauseously on. You and the Éluards form what seems to be a happy ménage à trois.

In 1924, Breton dubs his group the surrealists. Éluard embezzles money from his father's firm and disappears. You discover that Gala knows where he has been all along — a mysterious impulse has drawn him to Easter Island. From your Dreamlands travels, you sense that a dread force awaits him there. You accompany Gala to meet him in Saigon, where you gather certain artifacts he has

collected in the South Pacific and throw them into the Mekong River. Seeing that Paul's suppressed displeasure over your affair with Gala rendered him susceptible to this breakdown, you pull away from her — to her obvious displeasure. Now and then she catches you in a weak moment and draws you back into her arms.

By 1925 you have a gallery contract and are making at least a meager living.

Sensing that the dread force from the South Pacific is coming to Paris to once more ensnare Éluard, you paint a terrifying protective mural, complete with disemboweled women, on the walls of his apartment. It traumatizes their young daughter, Cécile — but she'd suffer much worse if those nameless things broke through in the night...

That same year, Breton infuriates you by disrupting the debut of a Ballets Russes performance of *Romeo and Juliet*, on the grounds that you crassly commercialized surrealism by designing its sets and costumes with Joan Miró. Also in 1926, you divorce Lou.

Early in 1928, you meet Marie-Berthe Aurenche, a twenty-year-old woman from a conservative family, and seduce her away from them. Fisticuffs later erupt with Éluard, when a jealous Marie attacks Gala.

In 1929 you publish the first of several narrative collage books, *La Femme 100 têtes*, and appear in **Luis Buñuel's** film *L'Âge d'or*.

Surrealist women artists fall into your embrace: Leonor Fini in 1931 and Méret Oppenheim in 1934.

In 1937, the Nazi regime expropriates your 1924 painting *The Lovely Gardener* for a touring exhibit of degenerate art, labeling the deconstructed female figure "an insult to German womanhood." The work is never seen again.



TRAIL OF CTHULHU DREAMLANDS OF PARIS



That same year, you meet **Leonora Carrington**, a young Englishwoman who aspires to become a surrealist painter. You become lovers, awakening her memories of the Dreamlands — where you may have already met.

In 1938, you move with Leonora to the town of Saint-Martin d'Ardèche, decorating your home in a fantastic manner matching your similar abode in the Dreamlands. You illustrate her collection *The Oval Lady*, which is then butchered by its publisher.

You break with Breton for good when his junior enforcer Benjamin Péret shows up at your apartment to announce that all members of the movement must now sabotage the poems of your friend Éluard, who has been excluded from the group.

When war is declared between France and Germany in 1939, you are interned as a citizen of the German Reich, an irony you might enjoy under other circumstances. In 1940, when the phony war ends and the Germans invade, you are designated as an internee who might be in danger from the Nazi regime — but not freed. After a terrifying train journey, you escape, are captured, and are reinterned.

Leonora tries to meet you in the Dreamlands, but it has frozen over, and travel through it has become all but impossible. Once you see her from a distance, as your steed freezes behind you. She paints this scene as a portrait of you.

The pressure proves too much for her; she suffers a breakdown while waiting to meet you in Spain. Her family seizes on this as a pretext for her incarceration in a local psychiatric hospital.

You finally get out of France in 1941, by showing a border official your work. With a wink, he instructs you not to take the wrong train, and you do. You meet Leonora in Lisbon, but by this time have a new lover, the American collector Peggy Guggenheim. Leonora's loss and fury torment you, but there is nothing to be done.

Arriving finally in America, you are immediately detained. The intercession of the Museum of Modern Art, and the help of the wealthy and influential Peggy, protects you from periodic harassment by immigration officials who suspect you of spying for the Germans.

Traveling through Arizona, you realize that it resembles the landscape of the Dreamlands, and settle there, with your latest companion, the artist Dorothea Tanning.

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You return to Paris in 1950, where you live until your death in 1976.

Status: member 1921–1937, satellite 1937–

Motifs: birds and bird-people, eerie landscapes, monstrous weeds, sinister collages, monsters, elephantine robots, exposed internal organs, deconstructed beasts, blasphemed Christian iconography, anthropomorphic buildings and landscapes, biomorphic shapes, distorted nudes, fixtures from risen R'lyeh

Drive: Artistic Sensitivity

What You Want From the Dreamlands: images to paint

Location: Paris

Appearance: handsome, white haired, high cheekbones, deep-set eyes

Demeanor: cultured, wry, acerbic, no-nonsense

Family: wife Lou (1918–1926); lovers Gala (1922–1925), Marie-Berthe Aurenche (1928), Leonor Fini (1931), Meret Oppenheim (1934), Leonora Carrington (1937–1940)

Investigative Abilities: [Academic] Art History 2, Cthulhu Mythos 1, Dream Lore 2, History 1, Languages 1 (French) [Interpersonal] Assess Honesty 2, Charm 1, Credit Rating 3, Reassurance 1, Seduction 3 [Technical] Chemistry 1

General Abilities (float points 21): Art-Making (Visual Art 8), Athletics 5, Dreamscaping 8, Fleeing 5, Health 8, Instability 8, Sanity 8, Stability 8

Instability Immunity: After 1938, ignore items 1 and 4 on the Instability Loss Table on p. 68.

GALA

Protective Devourer

Born Elena Ivanovna Diakonova in Kazan, Russia, in 1894, you are usually known simply as Gala. Though not an artist yourself, your liaisons and marriages with various members of the surrealist circle grant you access to the Dreamlands — which you use to protect them from their own childlike impracticality, and to assure yourself the financial security you are terrified of losing. Almost every history of the surrealist period will portray you as a voracious monster — but then all your lovers survived it, the world was not destroyed, and you wound up rich, so who cares what they think?

At age eighteen, in 1913, your intellectual family dispatches your girlish, tubercular self to Switzerland to a sanatorium, where you meet and fall in love with the poet **Paul Éluard**, who dubs you Gala.

Though you are safely out of Russia at the time of the 1917 Revolution, it hits your family hard. Your brother dies of starvation, giving rise to your lifelong, defining hunger for the safety money provides.

In 1918, your daughter, Cécile, is born.

In 1922, while on holiday in the Tyrol with Éluard and others of his circle, you embark on an affair with the dashing painter **Max Ernst**. His wife Lou is appalled, but your husband, who looks to Ernst as a father figure, approves. Neither of you subscribes to the conventions of monogamy. A happy ménage à trois ensues.

In 1923 the three of you head to Rome, intent on bringing painter and Dreamlands pioneer **Giorgio de Chirico** into a *ménage à quatre*. Though powerless to resist you, he rebuffs Max and Paul's efforts to join the two of you in bed.

Éluard, unable to maintain the façade of a liberated man happy to share you with Ernst, takes off suddenly for Easter Island in 1924. For a while you accept this, knowing where he is but pretending to all of his friends that you do not. Then you are struck by foreboding. Sensing that he has been drawn to the South Pacific by an impossibly dangerous inhuman consciousness, you sell off most of his art collection to pay for passage to retrieve your husband — taking Ernst with you.

Though you assure him you can handle it, Ernst, concerned for his friend's sanity, responds to the incident by breaking it off with you (occasional backsliding notwithstanding.) No matter what his motives, you take the rejection poorly.

In 1929, with Éluard, Cécile, Georgette and **René Magritte** and others, you summer in Cadaqués, Spain, and meet **Salvador Dalí**. Though smitten with you, you regard him at first as an effeminate dandy. Soon however, you see his potential as the great artist who will assure you the wealth of a lifetime. Despite his loutish best friend **Luis Buñuel**'s attempt to choke you to death, when Dalí asks you what you want from him, you say "Kill me." In this one declaration you cure Dalí's chronic, escalating laughing fits, instantly and forever. You quickly make yourself his inseparable companion.

This transfer of allegiance to Dalí, whose sexual desires are more about watching than participating, doesn't preclude you from sleeping with Éluard on the side.

Drawn by Salvador into the Dreamlands, you meet a fortune-teller on the road to Ulthar. Seeing the fear that animates you, she teaches you an additional survival trick — how to read the future, with cards. Later, back in the waking world, you tighten your protective hold over Dalí by reading his cards for him every night.

At the same time you gain prophetic powers, you also come down with pleurisy, adding to your many health problems. To combat it, you take frequent cold showers.

Using your fortune-telling abilities, you predict the 1938 Munich Agreement and the fall of France. Terror of another flight from political tumult reinforces your need to push Dalí on. You must gather the means to escape, before your prophecy comes true.

Dalí is too fragile to know what you truly see in those cards. The details are

rarely clear, but, whenever you read, you see that the next decade and a half offers a variety of terrible outcomes. Even in the very most hopeful possible futures, millions of people are doomed to cruel and shocking deaths. For this best future to take place, the lives of the surrealists and the people around them have to come out in a certain way. So, without tipping your hand, you must nudge and push to ensure that history remains on this sole, razor-thin track. If necessary, you will see that Dalí and the others use their influence over the Dreamlands to make it come out right.

Another truth you can see in the cards — no matter what you, personally, do, you will be reviled, in life and in death. They're going to hate you anyway, so, while saving the world from itself, you might as well take what you want along the way.

You canvass Paris trying to sell Dalí's work, including weird inventions inspired by his Dreamlands travels.

In November of 1931, you undergo traumatic surgery: the removal of a fibrous tumor from your lung, plus a hysterectomy. Unable to have sex, you

Card Reading

Aided by the focus provided you by a pack of cards, you can predict future events — sometimes in detail, sometimes occluded by a haze of metaphors and uncertainties. As that card reader in Ulthar told you, the future holds multiple possibilities. You can see the most likely of them. From night to night, changes in the card readings tell you which ones have been foreclosed and which have become more likely.

You have seen that a positive future for yourself and Dalí is unlikely, because the most probable outcome for the entire world is catastrophe. By spending 2 Card Reading points and half an hour of game time, you can answer any one of the following questions about a proposed course of action:

- Will this proposed course of action make a good future for me and Dalí more or less likely? (Sometimes the answer is “it doesn't matter either way.”)
- Will this action have a great impact on the future?
- Has the overall chance of a good future for me and Dalí increased since I last read the cards?
- Is the overall likelihood of a good future still extant but narrow, better than slim, or utterly extinguished?
- As plot, pacing or atmosphere needs dictate, the Keeper may at any time:
- supply you with an accurate prediction of future history
- answer any of the above questions with additional supporting detail about future events

The Keeper may offer to give you this information in exchange for any number of points, or throw it in as a free bonus for the price you are already paying.

Card Reading allows you to gather core clues only if other characters have somehow failed to use the ordinary Investigative abilities that would otherwise net them. Wait for the rest of the group to strike out, then use this as an all-embracing Investigative ability. Card Reading points can't be used to substitute for Investigative ability spends to gain special benefits.

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assemble a weekly salon in which you and a circle of young men discuss your erotic fantasies.

In 1932 you formally divorce Éluard, so he can marry his new love, Nusch.

In 1934, you go with Dalí to New York, and are at his side when he becomes an immediate popular sensation.

In June of 1935, you lose your best male friend, the tortured homosexual surrealist poet René Crevel, to suicide.

As of 1937, Dalí's main patron, Edward James, is also sleeping with him. You mostly accept this, with periodic explosions requiring James to buy you off with clothes and jewels.

Your husband's growing confidence and independence allow you to go off and do things on your own. You become close friends with the surrealist illustrator **Valentine Hugo**.

Late in 1939, seeing all futures steadily dim, you move Dalí to Arcachon, a coastal town in Bordeaux. You shuttle between there and Paris, gradually gathering his work and your other possessions for transport to America. The last trip, in May of 1940, finds you dodging falling bombs on your way out of the city.

You don't need to be a seer to know what will happen to you, a half Jew, if the Germans invade before you clear out. After holding periods in Spain and Portugal, you leave with Dalí for America. The first time you try to read your cards on US soil, you get nothing. The gift has left you. Whatever future you were meant to ensure, whether you succeeded or failed, your job is done.

You die in 1982, blamed by history for driving Dalí to bastardize his gifts for money. He buries you in a castle he bought for you.

Status: nonmember, nonartist, loved at various times by Éluard, Ernst, Aragon and Dalí, loathed by all other surrealists

Drive: Protection (Avarice)

What You Want From the Dreamlands: Wealth. Safety. Really, to protect your current surrealist swain from getting into the sort of trouble that will make it harder for you to become rich and gain safety.

Location: Paris from Teen years on, Paris with winters in Port Lligat 1930–1936, Paris with winters in New York City 1937–1939

Appearance: though photographs capture a woman of almost matronly appearance, in person you exude a magnetic sexuality; prominent nose, high forehead, dark hair with reddish highlights

Demeanor: almost silent, panther-like, favor silk outfits, suffer periodic flare-ups of chronic tuberculosis. Despite your efforts to acquire money, you are terrible with it, keeping checks uncashed in your purse and making spendthrift purchases.

Family: daughter Cécile Éluard (1918–), husband Paul Éluard (meet 1911, ex with benefits 1929–1939, formal divorce in 1932), husband Salvador Dalí (1929–, married 1934)

Investigative Abilities: [Academic] Accounting 2, Biology 1, Languages 2 (English, French), Medicine 1, Occult 1 [Interpersonal] Bargain 2, Credit Rating 3, Interrogation 1, Intimidation 2, Seduction 3, Streetwise 2

General Abilities (float points 7): Athletics 4, Card Reading 8, Conceal 4, Filch 4, Fleeing 6, Health 4, Hypnosis 4, Instability 9, Sanity

9, Scuffling 3, Sense Trouble 8, Shadowing 3, Stability 9, Stealth 4

Note: can never acquire Dreamscaping

Instability Immunity: Ignore the Instability Loss Table on p. 68.

VALENTINE HUGO

Little Swan

You are born in 1887, in the northern French city of Boulogne-sur-mer, the daughter of musician Auguste Gross.

In 1914 you befriend the writer, artist and prototypical outrageous homosexual aesthete **Jean Cocteau**, who worships you as his "little swan." You collaborate with him on designs for the stage. His doting mother hopes that the two of you will be married.

You travel in his circles and in 1917 meet the painter and writer Jean Hugo, a serene and painfully modest man with an eye for the ladies. Two years later, you marry.

You embark on a career as a book and magazine illustrator, drawing in a beguiling, decorative style often featuring a high contrast between the subject and an inky background. Your haunting portraits, mostly of figures from the Parisian art scene, include many surrealists.

Like the surrealists **Robert Desnos** and René Crevel before you, you dabble in mediumship. In 1923 whoever speaks to you from the other side predicts doom for Jean Cocteau's protege, novelist Raymond Radiguet. This marks a cooling between you and Jean, whom your new surrealist friends hate with rare venom. That your otherworldly intercessor's prediction proves correct on December 12 with Radiguet's death from typhoid does nothing to heal the rift.

You strike up a friendship with the poet **Paul Éluard**, who, seeing your carefully documented dream journals, shows you how to enter the Dreamlands.

Starting in 1926, you yearn for the love of surrealist leader **André Breton**, nine years your senior. In dreams you see Breton as a haunting specter, and assume that this is his Dreamlands manifestation. When you say as much to him in the waking world, he rudely shuts you out. From his enemy Cocteau, you learn that he is chronically unable to enter the Dreamlands. Apart from this touchy subject, he expresses his acute disinterest in you with courtly formality. You spend your time in the Dreamlands endlessly pursuing the dream-Breton, terrifying him but never running him to ground.

You design costumes for the classic 1928 film *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, by director Carl Theodor Dreyer. Among the actors you clothe is **Antonin Artaud**, firebrand ex-surrealist and prophet of transformative theater.

In 1929 your relationship with Éluard turns into an affair. You stand by when he disrupts the matinee debut of Cocteau's plays with anti-homosexual heckling. Your marriage to Jean, tested for years by your yearning for Breton, ends in separation.

In 1930 you resume your dogged courtship of Breton, complaining to Éluard of your lovelorn condition. Breton's responses to you aren't as encouraging as you hoped, so you



step up the campaign by funding the publication of *The Immaculate Conception*, a poem/manifesto he is writing with **Louis Aragon**.

You participate in exquisite corpse exercises and make surrealist objects, with the bulk of your surrealist activity taking place between 1930 and 1937. Response to your paintings shakes your confidence; your work is dismissed as too fussy and feminine. Though you find this unfair, your work does show your roots as a magazine illustrator.

Breton finally gives in to you in 1931. You expect the dream-specter version of Breton to go away, but it doesn't, leaving you more puzzled than ever. By 1932, your already distant friendship with Cocteau ends completely, and finally, due to your new intimacy with

Exquisite Corpses

A favorite surrealist exercise, an exquisite corpse is a collaborative illustration made by folding a long piece of paper into sections. Each participant makes a drawing on one folded portion, without seeing the preceding work. When all of the panels have been filled up, the paper is unfolded, to see what surprising, chimerical illustration has resulted from the unrelated efforts of the group.

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his archenemy, Breton. Your relationship with Breton lasts until a terrible row in September sends him into the arms of another woman, to whom he proposes after three days.

In 1937 you develop a bond with **Gala Dalí**, the only close female friendship of her life.

After the war, with surrealism in eclipse, you return to costume and set design for the stage, making paintings in secret, as if indulging in a faintly shameful private pursuit. You die in Paris in 1968.

Status: member 1930–1937

Motifs: intertwined lovers, encroaching roses, romantic faces, swirling feathers, starry swirls, nymphs and faeries (sometimes headless), mysterious doors, eerie statues, wild animals

Drive: Artistic Sensitivity

What You Want From the Dreamlands: Images to use in your work. Closer connection to the other dreamers in your circle.

Location: Paris

Appearance: a “handsome woman,” brown wavy hair, intense stare

Demeanor: torn between your burning passions and the expectations of femininity instilled by your bourgeois upbringing; alternately shy and off-puttingly intense, by turns undisciplined and furiously productive

Family: husband Jean 1917–1929

Investigative Abilities: [Academic] Archaeology 1, Architecture 2, Art History 2, Dream Lore 1, Medium 3, Occult 1 [Interpersonal] Assess Honesty 2, Charm 1, Credit Rating 3, Flattery 2 [Technical] Photography 1

General Abilities: Art-Making (Visual Art 6), Athletics 3, Dreamscaping

Medium

You can speak to, and gain information from, the spirits of the dead. Mostly you contact an otherworldly discarnate entity, which does not identify itself. Certain of its messages indicate a familiarity with the Dreamlands. Perhaps in the course of play you will discover who or what it is. Out of instinct you have avoided giving it a name.

Sometimes you hear this being speaking to you unbidden, especially when you engage in activities, such as the making of art, that engage the intuitive rather than the intellectual faculties. These unsought messages often concern danger to your circle of friends and acquaintances.

To deliberately contact the entity, you must typically organize a séance ritual in which a small group of sympathetic observers participates. The presence of skeptics may disrupt proceedings, preventing contact with the world beyond. Participants needn’t believe in the afterlife or the supernatural, but

must at least credit the artistic interest in engaging with the unconscious through mediumistic ritual.

When you contact the entity, you hear the dusty echo of its voice deep inside your mind. It does not possess you or take control of your vocal apparatus. Throughout the contact, you can, if you choose, repeat what it says to you aloud to other séance participants.

Although it hasn’t happened to you yet, it is possible that as the campaign proceeds your open conduit to the otherworld will allow less benign entities to invade your consciousness. Fend off unwanted contact with a test of the Medium ability against a Difficulty Number determined by the Keeper, based on the entity’s relative power. Subtract 2 from the Difficulty if you are going about your mundane daily business in a state of emotional tranquility. Add 2 when attending a séance, in the Dreamlands, or otherwise in mystically fraught circumstances.

Having Mythos entities in your head calls for a Stability roll and risks Mythos shock. The Keeper takes the Difficulty and potential Stability loss of encountering the being directly and adds 2 to both.

Though clearly not omniscient, the entity you typically contact displays preternatural knowledge of the near future, the arts scene in Paris and the places, peoples and politics of the Dreamlands. It claims to be able to contact the spirits of the dead, though they do not always fulfill its requests for information or respond in a timely manner. Requests to the dead usually require spends from your Medium pool.

Treat this as an all-purpose, but somewhat risky, Investigative ability. The Keeper can assign core clues to it but must have a backup ability to access them in case you don’t show up for a session or Valentine isn’t present in a particular scene.

4, Fleeing 9, Health 7, Instability 8, Preparedness 4, Sanity 8, Stability 8

Instability Immunity: None from 1930 to 1937. At other times ignore all items on the Instability Loss Table on p. 68.

KIKI

Free-living Muse

Born in 1901 in the village of Châtillon-sur-Seine as Alice Prin, out of wedlock to an eighteen-year-old mother and the handsome heir to a local lumber fortune, you became an iconic figure of Paris nightlife. Through your association with longtime lover **Man Ray**, you also become the unlikeliest of Dreamlands explorers.

You like to tell people that your mother literally bore you on the street. You grew up in poverty, an ugly duckling belittled for your thin hair. According to your maternal grandmother, your father murdered two of his other illegitimate daughters. You believe that he tried to poison you, when you were very young. As inseparable sidekick to your bootlegger grandfather, you learned streetwise ways early in life.

By the age of fourteen, you are a nude model in Paris — at that time a shocking profession considered worse than prostitution, and fit only for Italians. A long list of artists paints and sculpts you, making you the subject of more works by more major figures than any other identifiable model.

In 1921, you meet Man Ray, becoming his lover. He photographs you in what will become some of the classic images of the form. Each night before you go out, he resculpts your face with a makeup kit. Though you go everywhere together, he refuses to call what you have together love. It's just screwing, he insists.

When Ray is out of town, you share a bed with your steadfast friend and fellow Montparnasse nightlife fixture, Thérèse Treize.

Ray takes you to the occasional surrealist meeting, but abstract conversation bores you. Paying no heed to battle lines drawn by the group's stuffy leader, **André Breton**, you are as good a friend to surrealist enemy **Jean Cocteau** as you are to member **Robert Desnos**.

In September 1922 you are present in Breton's apartment when they start poking their noses into the occult. When the poet René Crevel speaks as the spirit of a woman who killed her husband at his request, you bolt from the room in fright.

You spend time, with Ray and others, at dance halls and clubs, including the Rotonde. You sing at the Jockey Club.

In 1928, you star in Ray's experimental film *L'Étoile de mer* (*Starfish*), written by Desnos. It depicts the breakdown of a love affair as a moody dream. Ray shoots select portions of it in the Dreamlands, taking you there via the physical portal in the catacombs. Thereafter you are able to dream your way there.

You yourself sculpt and paint, in a fresh, naïve style that owes more to your occasional employer Modigliani than any of the surrealists. Nor do you depict the Dreamlands, or try to shape them when you're there.

In 1929 you drift away from Ray as a lover, though not as a model, moving on to an adoring but depressive journalist and cartoonist named Henri Broca, and, shortly after that, the accordionist who plays for you when you sing.

Your life of pleasure takes a premature toll when you collapse and die in 1953, age fifty-one, of complications from substance addiction. Your funeral becomes a parade mourning the last spark of classic Montparnasse night life.

Status: satellite

Motifs: joyful images, fanciful animals, dreamy landscapes

Drive: Follower (or, if that's too prefeminist for your liking, Curiosity)

What You Want From the Dreamlands: a lark with friends and lovers

Appearance: raven haired, pageboy haircut, voluptuous, you famously lack pubic hair (when seen in a photograph, it's an illusion created with chalk)

Location: Paris

Demeanor: vivacious, dissolute, determinedly cheerful (because you are terrified of being alone)

Family: partner Man Ray (1921–1928)

Investigative Abilities: [Academic] Dream Lore 1 [Interpersonal] Assess Honesty 2, Bargain 2, Bureaucracy, Charm 2, Credit Rating 2, Flattery 2, Reassurance 2, Seduction 2, Streetwise 2 [Technical] Locksmith 2, Photography 1

General Abilities: Art-Making (Visual Art 4, Dance 4, Singing 6) Athletics 8, Conceal 6, Filch 6, Fleeing 6, Health 8, Instability 8, Sanity 10, Stability 10, Scuffling 4, Sense Trouble 8

Instability Immunity: Ignore the Instability Loss Table on p. 68.

RENÉ MAGRITTE

Quiet Anarchist

You are born in Lessines, Belgium, in 1896, the son of a textile merchant. As a child you show a talent for art by the age of ten are taking drawing classes. You always associate your will to create art with your childhood adventures in an abandoned cemetery alongside a beautiful young girl.

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The Surrealists' Woman Problem

Taking a tone set by Breton, the surrealists go down in history as a notorious boy's club. Granted, we're half a century before the advances of feminism, when essentially everything is a boy's club.

In surrealist circles women were symbols of eroticism first and collaborators second. Though some group members, like Ernst, showed more enlightened attitudes, Breton remained a chauvinist of the first water. Despite this, a number of women artists attached themselves to the movement and continued to produce compelling work in a surrealist vein decades after the main group lost steam.

The secret history of the surrealist Dreamlands needn't reflect the biases of the time. Never mind Breton's disregard. Female PCs can engage in occult intrigue and acts of dreamscaping with the best of them. Whether the boys acknowledge their accomplishments is another matter.

Depending on the tastes of your group, you might want to faithfully underline the scene's inherent sexism, or, as many game settings do, spare players the agitation of dealing with it by acting as if it never existed in the first place.

When you are fourteen, your mother inexplicably commits suicide. Her body is found with wet clothing veiling her face. Her ghost appears in your dreams, obscured in this way, and eventually winds up in your paintings.

The next year, you meet a girl named Georgette Berger and sense a long future together.

Looking at a catalog of futurist paintings in 1919, you conceive a desire to shock the viewer with your own work.

In 1920, you bump into Georgette for the first time in years. Playing hard to get, you pretend you're on your way to see a mistress.

Two years later, you get your first look at a **Giorgio de Chirico** metaphysical painting. Asleep that night, you feel drawn into the Dreamlands, but refuse to enter, fearing that its uncertainties will somehow pull you away from your fated love with Georgette.

You marry her that same year.

It is not until four years later that you feel secure enough with Georgette to enter the Dreamlands when beckoned. This time it is the spirit of your mother, who you have dreamed into being, who acts as your guide. She tells you much about this strange place, but refuses to answer your most important question — why she killed herself.

A flood of surrealist paintings, inspired by what you see there, follows. In 1927 you have your first solo show in Brussels. You move to Paris, where you join **André Breton's** surrealists. Almost immediately afterwards, he offends you by rudely dressing down Georgette for wearing a crucifix. Your friends in the group include **Paul Éluard** and Joan Miró.

In 1929, you visit erratic up-and-comer **Salvador Dalí** in Cadaqués, Spain, with Georgette, Paul and **Gala Éluard**, and the art dealer Camille Goemans. Once there you also meet the filmmaker and fast Dalí friend **Luis Buñuel**. You recoil

from the mad personal drama that ensues there, as Dalí falls for Gala and Buñuel tries to strangle her.

In 1930, you return to Belgium to live a quiet life, fleeing the conspiratorial atmosphere and florid personal relationships of the surrealist circle. From then on, you go to Paris only for brief visits — or in dream-form, where no one will recall your involvement.

You and your brother Paul, who writes in a subtly surreal mode, form an advertising agency, earning you a living wage.

When Germany invades Belgium during the war, you remain there, briefly switching to a sunny impressionist style as an antidote to the gloom of occupation. After the war, you support yourself as an art forger, aping canvases by de Chirico and **Pablo Picasso** among others. You return to your surrealist style in 1948, and die of cancer in 1967, just as a new generation discovers your work and makes it a pop culture staple.

Status: member 1927–1930, member in questionable standing 1930–1942

Motifs: bowler-hatted men whose faces cannot be seen, the masked pulp-hero Fantômas, paradoxical transformations, petrifications, objects turning into the words they represent, mermaids, enlarged jingle bells, lattice lace and *bilboquets* (turned wooden table legs which sometimes become anthropomorphic), trees consisting of giant single leaves, mahogany grain, doors with holes in them, tubas (sometimes aflame), nests with eggs, floating rocks

Drive: Artistic Sensitivity

What You Want From the Dreamlands: Images to use in your paintings. To play the voice of reason role, as your fellow dreamers flirt with not just creative madness, but with madness madness.

Location: Brussels until 1927 and from 1930 on, Paris 1927–1930

Appearance: handsome, wavy hair

Demeanor: quiet, undemonstrative

Family: wife Georgette (1922–)

Investigative Abilities (8 float points): [Academic] Archaeology 1, Architecture 1, Art History 1, Biology 1, Dream Lore 1, History 1, Occult 1 [Interpersonal] Reassurance 1

General Abilities (28 float points): Art-Making (Visual Art 8), Athletics 2, Disguise 2, Dreamscaping 10, Fleeing 4, Health 6, Instability 6, Sanity 8, Scuffling 2, Stability 10, Stealth 4

Instability Immunity: Ignore item 1 on the Instability Loss Table on p. 68.

ANDRÉ MASSON

Painter of Horror

You are born in 1896 in the small northern French village of Baligny to a schoolteacher father and a woman of mysterious gypsy³ origins, to whom you attribute the powers of a witch.

³ Today people of Roma heritage consider this term an ethnic slur. In period, it evoked less concern. For example, guitarist Django Reinhardt, toast of Paris, grew up in Romani encampments and happily bills his traditionally infused big band music as gypsy jazz. As with the term “pederast,” you can decide whether to adopt less sensitive period parlance for historical accuracy, or to swap in an anachronistic alternative because you feel weird using a now-fraught term.

As the Great War looms, you enlist, to see the violence — and get more than you bargained for. A horrific three years in the trenches concludes with a serious chest wound, the pain of which will plague you for the rest of your life. Your subsequent announcement, that you are done with soldiering, lands you in a padded cell. This experience feeds your unwavering hatred of authority.

In 1920 you move to Paris to commence your art career, where you are embraced by an artistic circle including the mad actor/director **Antonin Artaud** and the painter Joan Miró. After a 1924 meeting with surrealist leader **André Breton**, you move through your chronic dreams of horror and bloodshed into the Dreamlands beyond. Determined to comprehend its strange vistas, you join the movement, shifting from a cubist style to one inspired by automatism.

Four years later, you pull away from it. Your Nietzschean belief in man’s will to power as the driving force of history puts you at odds with Breton’s idealism. The next year you join up with the dissident surrealist group revolving around the younger, bleaker leader **Georges Bataille**. Knowledge of the Great Old Ones acquired in the Dreamlands confirms their bleak materialism and acceptance of a hostile or indifferent moral universe.

When fascist riots of 1934 leave you in fear of another war, you leave France for a new home with your eventual second wife, Rose Maklés. Unfortunately, the refuge you seek is Spain. Shortly after your arrival, you are caught in a bombardment in Barcelona, in a suppression of separatist forces preceding the official start of the Civil War. Shells and sniper fire rain down on the apartment you’re visiting, sending your traumatized mind spiraling right back to the trenches.

In 1935 you undergo a mystical revelation amid gathering clouds atop Montserrat, a

mountain near Barcelona. In the vision, you see yourself as a tragic hero, trapped between boundless nature and the empty heaven left behind by a dead God.

The next year you return to the movement, in the wake of a détente between Breton and Bataille. Your paintings now depict the full visceral horror of a convulsing, carnivorous Dreamlands in warlike transformation. You recoil from their deconstructed, tortured bodies but can’t stop painting them.

Like Breton and many others of the group, you leave for America in 1940 and return after the war. Your style shifts once more, as you seek a Matisse-like harmony with nature.

Aged 91, in Paris, in 1987, you die in your sleep — and thus might roam the Dreamlands still.

Status: member 1924–1928, foe 1929–1936, member 1936–1945

Motifs: nudes; pomegranates; cutaway bodies; toothy, disembodied jaws; insect people; bulls; creatures transforming into furniture

Drive: Artistic Sensitivity

What You Want From the Dreamlands: images to use in your paintings

Location: Paris 1920–1934; Catalonia, Spain 1934–1936; Lyons-la-Forêt, Upper Normandy 1936–1940

Appearance: handsome, high forehead, widow’s peak, aquiline nose, sharp chin

Demeanor: haunted; misanthropic; you love music (Mozart’s *Don Juan* for example); you prefer small groups to large gatherings and villages to cities

Family: wife Odette Cabalé (1920–1929), daughter Lily Masson (1920–),

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wife Rose (1934–1986), son Diego (1935–), son Luís (1936–)

Investigative Abilities (float points 5): [Academic] Accounting 1, Anthropology 1, Archaeology 1, Architecture 1, Art History 1, Dream Lore 1, Languages 1 (Spanish), Medicine 1, Theology 1 [Interpersonal] Credit Rating 3 [Technical] Ballistics 1, Chemistry 1, Craft 3, Outdoorsman 2

General Abilities (float points 4): Art-Making (Visual Art 8), Athletics 10, Dreamscaping 8, Firearms 6, First Aid 4, Health 8, Instability 8, Sanity 4, Scuffling 10, Sense Trouble 4, Stability 4, Weapons 4

Instability Immunity: Ignore items 1, 4, and 6 on the Instability Loss Table on p. 68.

PABLO PICASSO

Wellspring of Inspiration

You are born in 1881 in Málaga, a provincial city in southern Spain. Your father, himself a failed painter, gives you the advice and training you credit as the foundation of your work.

In 1905, shortly after you settle in Paris for good, the American expatriate painter Frank Marsh shows you his collection of African masks, or fetishes, as everyone calls them then. Bowled over by their occult power, in 1907 you incorporate their forms into a monumental new work, *Les Femmes d'Alger*, that shocks even your peers. It begins your so-called “Negro period.”

In the early teens, you and your friend Georges Braque pioneer the cubist style of semi-abstract art, which reconfigures familiar objects into a strange new geometry. You become a fixture of the Parisian arts scene and friend to key figures such as Guillaume Apollinaire. Among your circle is a trio of artist brothers, including the dry and acerbic

Marcel Duchamp, undoubtedly the most radical of them all.

Frank Marsh’s 1916 disappearance, rumored to have been a murder, occurs under circumstances sufficiently mysterious that you, along with others influenced by African art, erase him from your accounts of this key discovery.

As of 1916, the poet and critic (later illustrator and filmmaker) **Jean Cocteau** joins your inner circle. Others find his constant striving to impress hard to take, but you enjoy his wit. You either genuinely fail to notice his longing for you, or pretend to. To the horror of your cubist friends, he enlists you to create costumes and sets for a ballet production: the Ballets Russes’s *Parade*, with music by Erik Satie and scenario by him. In a program note, Apollinaire describes it as evoking a new, transcendent reality — a *sur-realism*. (This is a term you used in conversation with him — though not your intended meaning.)

In 1918, you marry the ballerina Olga Khokhlova, who is at least as strong willed as you are. You accede to her desire to retreat from a bohemian life to one of bourgeois domesticity. You befriend the illustrator **Valentine Hugo**, who becomes your best source of arts-scene gossip.

The year 1920 sees the birth of your son Paulo.

You meet and form an instant friendship with the young poet **Andre Breton** in 1923. He owns a few of your paintings and declares you a forebear of his nascent surrealist movement. The strange dreams you had when in the company of Frank Marsh return. This time you possess a greater mastery over them, and find yourself able to bend the weird landscape of the Dreamlands to your ferocious will.

In 1925 you distance yourself from Cocteau and move closer to the surrealists. Although you enjoy

their company and produce certain paintings reflective of your Dreamlands explorations, it would be an absurdity for you to grant Breton power over you, whether to include you in his group or erect critical boundaries around your output. Besides, you do not entirely subscribe to their manifesto, whichever one happens to be in force at the moment. They worship Freud; you loathe him.

The next year, while in Barcelona, you are introduced to a promising young artist named **Salvador Dalí**.

Your marriage sours; female monsters fill your canvases.

By 1928, you are describing your paintings and especially sculptures as shamanic. Recalling secrets Marsh told you, you draw on tribal magics in an attempt to exorcise the forbidding Olga’s hold over you.

In 1931 you begin your affair with a young woman named Marie-Thérèse Walter. Where Olga is demanding, she is sweetly unchallenging. Your paintings celebrate the curves of her body with a primal explicitness.

Yet you are not prepared to leave Olga. In 1932 you purchase a twenty-room country house forty miles from Paris, the Château de Boisgeloup. Your work becomes more strongly surrealist.

In 1935 you paint images of Marie-Thérèse, who is now pregnant, assaulted and mangled by a monstrous Olga. A monstrous entity with Olga’s face pursues you during your Dreamlands journeys. From a friend, the waking lands Olga has learned of Marie-Thérèse’s condition. Bitter separation ensues; because you won’t divide your property with her fifty-fifty, the divorce is never legally finalized. Olga gets the château and Paulo; you keep your works and a Paris flat.

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DREAMHOUNDS OF PARIS

Marie-Thérèse gives birth to your daughter, Maya.

After a ten-year estrangement, you make up with Cocteau, much to his relief.

Painter's block seizes you in 1936. Unable to paint, you turn to poetry, which Breton and his surrealist cohorts receive with great enthusiasm. You grow closer to surrealist poet **Paul Éluard** and his wife Nusch.

At the famed café Les Deux Magots, you spot a woman playing mumblety-peg, badly and bloodily. This is the photographer Dora Maar, already a friend of the Éluards and **Man Ray**. Alone among your loves, Dora is your intellectual equal. You depict her in your paintings as a dark figure gripped by sadness, without quite seeing that her sorrow comes from your refusal to leave Marie-Thérèse.

The Spanish Civil War politicizes you; you come out for the Republican cause. In 1937 your painting block ends. On April 28 you learn of the Franco-ordered German airstrike on the Spanish town of Guernica, in which over 1,500 civilians are slaughtered. Over more than two weeks, with Éluard sometimes in attendance, and Dora documenting the process in photographs, you design and paint *Guernica*, a black, gray and white scream of protest at the horror of this brutal act. Your friend the writer Michel Leiris describes it as a mourning letter, a warning that "everything we love is about to die."

In December you make your last minotaur image: the creature is pierced by an arrow, amazed at its imminent death, as Marie-Thérèse brings it a bouquet.

December of 1938 begins your debilitating battle with sciatica. On the political front, you donate heavily to relief efforts as Spain's Republicans suffer terrible defeats. You individually assist refugees who contact you for help.



In March of 1939, Madrid falls. With a German or Italian invasion looming, after an abortive attempt to leave, you choose to stay in Paris. Though your public antifascism and the Nazi perception of you as the number one promulgator of degenerate art place you in danger, you remain in Paris throughout the war. Like most leading art figures who stay in France, you emerge from the war as a hardened Stalinist. Later you explain that a meeting with victorious Gaullists left you convinced that they were just another variety of fascist.

In later years you never miss a chance to distance yourself from Breton and to

disclaim any surrealist influence over your work. Ferociously productive until the very end, you die of a sudden heart attack in 1973.

Status: claimed

Motifs: (*Dreamhounds* era) giantesses, minotaurs (= you), devouring female monsters, keys, furniture with human limbs

Drive: Artistic Sensitivity

What You Want From the Dreamlands: Images to use in your paintings. Women to woo.

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Opportunities to demonstrate your dominance. (After the Spanish Civil War) Metaphysical means of destroying Franco and fascism.

Location: Paris

Appearance: short, muscular, penetrating eyes, knitted brow

Demeanor: outwardly charismatic and indomitable, inwardly lonely and riven by doubt; torn between tenderness toward women and misogyny; heavy smoker, especially when working; you hate the phone; you're a chronic hoarder (except during the good years with Olga), and hate to let your paintings go

Family: wife Olga (1918–1933); son Paulo (1920–1975); mistresses Marie-Thérèse Walter (1931–1940), Dora Maar (1936–1945); daughter Maya (with Marie-Thérèse, 1933–)

Investigative Abilities: [Academic] Accounting 1, Anthropology 1, Archaeology 1, Architecture 2, Art History 2, Dream Lore 2, History 1, Languages 1 (French), Occult 1 [Interpersonal] Assess Honesty 2, Bargain 2, Bureaucracy 2, Intimidation 2, Seduction 3

General Abilities (float points 21): Art-Making (Visual Art 12⁴), Athletics 6, Dreamscaping 8, Driving 2, Electrical Repair 2, Health 8,⁵ Instability 12, Sanity 8, Stability 8

Instability Immunity: Ignore all but items 3 and 5 on the Instability Loss Table on p. 68.

4 Or any fictional PC's Art-Making (Visual Art) rating +3, whichever is higher.

5 Drops to 6 after the December 1938 sciatica attack.

MAN RAY

American with a Camera

You are born Emmanuel Radnitzky to Russian Jewish immigrant parents, in 1890. Though born in Philadelphia, you are raised in Brooklyn, New York. From an early age you show an interest in drawing and a disinterest in your father's profession as a tailor.

In 1912 you attend a radical school founded by anarchist Emma Goldman, taking art classes from Robert Henri, leading light of the naturalistic, antiromantic Ashcan school. He warns you against getting caught up in movements. You take a day job as cartographer for the textbook publisher McGraw-Hill.

At the February 1913 Armory Show, which introduces modernism to America, your perception of art changes forever. *Nude Descending a Staircase*, a half-cubist, half-futurist work by a Frenchman named **Marcel Duchamp**, strikes you most powerfully of all.

Your girlfriend, the Belgian poet Adon Lacroix, introduces you to Lautréamont's *Maldoror*, a dizzying experimental novel about a villainous title character and his battle against God in a strange, unreal landscape. Reading it gives you a sense of reverse déjà vu, as if you will someday visit the places described there, and that these memories have leaked back to you from your future.

The next year, you meet Duchamp, who comes to New York to bask in the notoriety of *Nude Descending a Staircase*. With wife Adon translating, the two of you become fast friends and partners in art-crime.

In 1915 you pick up a camera for the first time — to make copies of your paintings. Duchamp introduces you to the salon of arts patron Walter Arensberg, where you

fall in with fixtures of the New York and Parisian art scenes, including the French modernist Francis Picabia. He brings the first news of Europe's Dada movement, which parallels what you and Duchamp are already doing.

You start to make photographs for their own sake, including *L'Enigme d'Isidore Ducasse*, its title invoking Lautréamont's real name. Depicting a sewing machine wrapped in burlap and tied loosely with a cord, it achieves a mystery none of those objects would hold separately. The combination of contradictory objects or ideas becomes a hallmark of your work.

In 1918, your photo of dust gathering on Duchamp's glass-and-metal collage work *The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even (Large Glass)* conjures eerie majesty where none should be expected. You call it *L'Élevage de poussière*.

Duchamp co-edits a Dada journal with you in 1921. You photograph him in matronly drag for its cover, as his new character Rrose Sélavy. He comes to you the next day to tell you that the transformation propelled him, as he dreamed, into a strange realm that felt realer than real. This sounds like the place Lautréamont described. Never one to be left out, you go off to concentrate on *L'Élevage de poussière* and the text of *Maldoror*. That night you meet Duchamp — still looking like Rrose — near the Dreamlands kingdom of Dylath-Leen.

You write to Dada impresario **Tristan Tzara** to tell him that there is no room for the movement where you are, explaining that “all New York is Dada.” Your marriage has ended, freeing you to pack up a steamer trunk full of your works and head to Paris, where Duchamp sets you up in Tzara's hotel and takes you to Certà, the café where the leaders of the incipient surrealist movement gather. They're not artists, but poets, notably **André Breton**, **Louis Aragon**, and **Paul Éluard**.

Picabia's wife, Gabrielle, gets you work as a fashion photographer. Although you see this strictly as a means of making money, your dreamy images go on to change the way clothes and models are shot for magazines.

Breton and Tzara are locked in a power struggle for control of the movement, which might be Dada or something else. Your very weak French excuses you from getting mixed up in it.

In the fall you meet the vivacious artist's model, chanteuse and painter **Kiki** de Montparnasse, who becomes your lover and teaches you the language. This you speak in a heavy Brooklyn accent, a source of high amusement for your friends. You make countless photos of her, clothed and not.

For a show in December, you create *Cadeau*, an iron with nails jutting from it. Composer Erik Satie helps you glue it together. Like many of the objects you make, it disappears almost immediately. When this happens, you know they've migrated to the Dreamlands, and that you'll run across them there, often under inconvenient circumstances.

In 1922 you make your first Rayograph — images created by placing objects on photographic paper and exposing it to light, without a camera. Though not the first to use the photogram technique, you turn it into an artistic medium by moving the objects and manipulating the light.

Your business making photographic portraits of the city's social and artistic elite does so well that you move to a large studio. The writers, artists and composers don't pay like the wealthy do, but allow you to meet other expatriate Americans like Gertrude Stein and Ernest Hemingway.

Critics don't yet recognize photography as a serious art form, and you agree with them, bitterly resenting the lack of attention paid to your paintings. You

take it poorly when Kiki's 1923 show of charmingly naïve paintings sells out.

That year, in response to a last-minute request for a contribution to a Tristan Tzara art performance evening, you make your first experimental film, an animated Rayograph *Le retour à la raison* (*Return to Reason*). Its influence will only be appreciated later, because Breton leaps up onstage during the screening to interrupt the proceedings, in furtherance of his feud with Tzara. You watch, stunned, as he breaks a man's arm with his cane, while two of his buddies hold the guy.

In 1924 you make what is destined to be one of the century's most famous photographs. In *Le violon d'Ingres*, you superimpose violin f-holes over a dorsal view of Kiki's nude hourglass figure.

You shoot your second film, *Emak Bakia*, in 1926, an experiment in cinema without narrative progression. In the final shot, Kiki shuts her eyes, revealing false eyes painted on their lids.

L'Étoile de mer (*Starfish*) follows in 1928. Starring Kiki, with script by your mutual friend **Robert Desnos**, it is a blurry, dream-like vision of love both romantic and violent. Certain shots you take in the Dreamlands, using a camera you take there physically via the catacombs. Included among them is a shot that seems to be a close-up of a starfish in an aquarium but is really a Dreamlands manifestation of an Old One, which Desnos is in love with.

By taking Kiki to the Dreamlands, you make her a dreamer — a decision you regret as your relationship descends into public arguments, often with thrown chairs and bottles. They generally end with her leaving on another man's arm. You feel that you gave her confidence, which she is now using to abandon you. Maybe you should have told her that you loved her.

In 1929 Kiki finally leaves you for an adoring journalist.

That same year, the stunning American model and aspiring photographer Lee Miller seeks you out as a teacher. You become lovers and collaborators in a relationship even stormier than you had with Kiki. In a darkroom accident, she discovers solarization, which leaves a halo-like outline around photographed images. You harness it as a trademark of your style.

For the American journalist William Seabrook, you take erotic photos of elaborately costumed women in bondage, sometimes with his wife Marjorie as model. Though friendly with them, Lee refuses invitations to participate.

When she takes part in **Jean Cocteau's** film *Blood of a Poet*, at one point almost suffocating from makeup applied all over her body, you take her creative independence for betrayal. She leaves you in 1931 for a wealthy Egyptian, Aziz Bey. You tell people you have a pistol and just might use it — like Bey's wife, who does kill herself. As a gesture of romantic despair, you draw (and later build) *Object to Be Destroyed*, which affixes an image of Lee's eye to the pendulum of a metronome.

Lee leaves Bey almost immediately; the two of you correspond tenderly but never get back together.

Wherever you go in the Dreamlands, you see her floating, disembodied lips. To exorcise the image, you spend two years laboriously painting it, until it's just right. The resulting painting, *Observatory Time* — *The Lovers* is better known as *The Lips*.

In 1936 you take up with model and dancer Ady Fidelin, who becomes your new subject. A year later one of your photographs appears in *Harper's Bazaar*.

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making her the first black woman to appear as a model in a mass-market American fashion magazine.

The mid-Thirties see your fashion photography more lucrative than ever — which disillusiones you. As the world grows more political, you go the other way. In early 1939, as others prepare to flee, you're proclaiming that there will be no war.

Like so many other surrealists, you leave for New York via Lisbon in 1940. Your unhappy exile in the land of your birth includes a glum sojourn in Hollywood. You move back to Paris in 1951, and die there of a lung infection in 1976, at age 86. After your death, your painting achieves greater respect, but not enough to eclipse your role as a pioneering photographer and experimental filmmaker.

Status: claimed. You accept Breton's blessings, when offered, but not his authority. You maintain friendships unacceptable to him, including with Cocteau and with excluded surrealists.

Motifs: masks, glamorous women, eroticism, contradictory objects, lips, eyes, spirals, glass teardrops

Drive: Artistic Sensitivity

What You Want From the

Dreamlands: images to use in your work

Location: Paris

Appearance: short, heavy brows, intense eyes, narrow chin, glowering expression

Demeanor: you greet newcomers gruffly but warm when they prove themselves, moderate social drinker (prefer white wine), work quickly, paint from memory

Family: wife Adon Lacroix (met 1913, married 1914, separated 1918, divorced 1937); partner Kiki de

Montparnasse (1921–1928); lovers Lee Miller (1929–1931), Ady Fidelin (1936–1940)

Investigative Abilities (float points 4): [Academic] Accounting 1, Art History 1, Dream Lore 2, Geology 1, Languages 1 (French), Library Use 2 [Interpersonal] Bargain 1, Charm 1, Intimidation 1, Reassurance 1, Seduction 2 [Technical] Chemistry 1, Photography 3

General Abilities: Art-Making (Visual Art 5, Photography 8, Film 6), Athletics 4, Conceal 3, Credit Rating 4, Dreamscaping 5, Driving 4, Explosives 2, Fleeing 4, Health 6, Instability 8, Mechanical Repair 5, Preparedness 4, Sanity 4, Scuffling 2, Stability 6

Instability Immunity: Ignore items 5 and 6 on the Instability Loss Table on p. 68.

TRISTAN TZARA

Impresario of the Incomprehensible

You are born Sami Rosenstock, 1896, in Moinesti, Romania. In 1915, you adopt your nom de plume, a corruption of the Romanian phrase “sad in the country” and begin to publish in Zurich literary journals. There you insert yourself into, and then take over, the subversive Dada movement.

As Dada ebbs away, you feel the lure of Paris. But, for the duration of 1919, a malign presence traps you in in your Zurich apartment. Though frightened beyond imagining, you find the prospect of escape even more terrifying. When you return home from a rare jaunt outside to find a new tenant moved in and your possessions in a heap, you retreat into the closet and continue to live there.

You finally break from the entity, reaching Paris in 1920, where you set up shop in the apartment of the suavely iconoclastic painter Francis Picabia. There you stage a series of Dada performances. At first, these electrify the city. At one event you draw huge crowds by claiming that Charlie Chaplin has joined Dada and will be there to perform. When you fail to change or develop your act — something audiences in Zurich never demanded — Paris grows quickly tired of you.

The upstart poet **André Breton** acts at first as a fervent disciple, but soon diverts the group's energy down strange alleyways of his own. His friends dabble in séances and contact otherworldly entities. Outwardly, you laugh this off. Inwardly, you fear that the Zurich entity can somehow use their probings of the veil between realities to sniff you out.

Breton initiates a power struggle with you, intending to wrest the movement away from you and turn it into something else. In 1923 your strained relationship completely breaks. He goes so far as to stage physical attacks on your events.

As of 1925, you are married to the Swiss artist and critic Greta Knutson. Your son, Christopher, is born in 1927.

You still fear that the Zurich apartment entity will one day find you and move in to your Montmartre home. Every bump in the night freezes your blood. In 1929 you sense its encroaching presence. You seek out the poet **Robert Desnos**, who led the séances you scoffed at seven years before, and from him learn how to sleep your way to the Dreamlands. Maybe you can find it there, and kill it, before it harms your family in the waking world. Or maybe that would only attract it to you.

You part ways with Greta in 1937, remaining married on paper until 1942.

Though Breton tries to get you out of Paris after the Nazis invade, he fails.

Forced to stay behind, you work for the Resistance. You turn on Breton for good in 1945, joining the coterie of hard-core Stalinists who stayed in Paris and freeze him out on his return.

You die of unspecified causes in 1963.

Status: ally 1920–1923, member 1929–1945, foe 1923–1929, 1945–

Motifs: thundering percussion, babbling, constricting cardboard-tube costumes

Drive: Arrogance

What You Want From the Dreamlands: Images to use in your work. A place to gain the power Breton took from you in the waking world.

Location: Paris

Appearance: short and slight, a shock of black hair falling over right eye, pouty lips, waxy skin, stooped physique, wild hair

Demeanor: manic energy, fast, nearly incomprehensible French, brilliant provocateur and promoter, prone to self-aggrandizing fabrication. Before either of them existed, you were half Groucho Marx, half Malcolm McLaren.

Family: wife Greta Knutson (1925–1937, legal divorce 1942) son Christopher (1927–)

Investigative Abilities: [Academic] Biology 1, Dream Lore 1, History 2, Languages 2 (French), Library Use 2, Literature 2, Medicine 1, Occult 2, Physics 1, Theology 2 [Interpersonal] Assess Honesty 2, Bargain 1, Credit Rating 3, Flattery 1

General Abilities (float points 11): Art-Making (Poetry 4, Playwright 4, Performance 5), Athletics 6, Disguise 4, Dreamscaping 4, Driving 2, Health 7, Instability

8, Preparedness 6, Sanity 4, Sense Trouble 6, Stability 6, Stealth 4

Instability Immunity: Ignore items 1, 4, and 6 on the Instability Loss Table on p. 68.

Secondary Figures

Dozens of artists and writers moved in or around surrealist circles during the *Dreamhounds* period. Players wishing to portray lesser-known figures can dip deep into the research (or simply make stuff up) and generate game statistics for any of the following. Otherwise these figures appear as NPCs. Crevel is clearly a dreamer. The others are able to enter the *domaine de rêve* only when played as PCs.

Some of the people listed below are key names in art or literature but tangential to the Breton group.

The poet **Benjamin Péret** takes cruel pleasure in acting as Breton's loyal intellectual hatchet man. He might appeal to an instigator player drawn to pot-stirring antiheroic characters. He might be Breton's eyes and ears in the Dreamlands.

Another poet, **René Char**, distinguishes himself among the surrealists as an enthusiastic brawler always ready to shed and spill blood for the cause. Give him a high Scuffling rating.

Along with Desnos, the writer **René Crevel** serves as the group's medium during its séance years. Later, as Gala's best gay friend, he becomes a fixture in the Dalí household. Depressive and all too conscious of the group's bias against so-called pederasty, he struggles for Breton's approval. After a failed attempt to heal a rift between Breton and the Communist Party in 1935, he commits suicide, as his father did before him.

Born in Argentina and raised in Italy, the painter and scenic designer **Leonor Fini** makes fantastical images of haunted

women and mythological creatures in a clearly dream-like landscape. A well-connected fixture of the Paris arts scene, she absorbs surrealist style without embedding herself in Breton's circle.

For a medic with a sideline in psychology, play **Dr. Theodore Fraenkel**, a friend of Breton's who helps the group and participates in pranks and manifestos. He splits for the Bataille faction in 1932, then goes off to fight in the Spanish Civil War, and with Soviet forces in WWII.

Sculptor **Alberto Giacometti** belongs to Breton's group and makes surrealist works until 1935, when he switches to the figurative style that fetches millions at auction today.

The coolly careerist painter **Joan Miró** leads a sensibly quiet life at arm's length from the entanglements of his fellow surrealists. He might make a suitable choice for a drama-averse player. His works tend toward the abstract and are less illustrative of the Dreamlands than Ernst's or Masson's.

A young, soft-spoken ingenue during her period with the surrealists, **Méret Oppenheim** is best known for the surrealist object *Breakfast in Fur*, a teacup, saucer and spoon covered in gazelle fur. Like many surrealist women, she finds greater independence later in her career, while continuing to draw on the movement's themes and images.

The writer **Philippe Soupault** goes back to the earliest days with Breton.

Yves Tanguy, painter of biomorphic landscapes surely based on the Dreamlands, is a key surrealist with a personal life too lightly documented in English to fill out a full character description. He joins the group in 1926, shocking Breton with the wild bohemian antics he shares with roommates Jacques Prévert and Marcel Duhamel. Taciturn when sober, violent when drunk, Tanguy exhibits a Jekyll-Hyde persona fueled by

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heavy drinking and cocaine use. Even when living in squalor, he keeps himself fastidiously clean and perfectly dressed. Out on country walks, he has been known to eat a bug or two.

The novelist **Raymond Queneau** becomes famous later for his association with another movement, the game-and-puzzle-loving Oulipo group. He spends a few years in the circle as an acerbic young man, later writing the novel *Odile*, a remembrance of this time that satirically skewers Breton.

Distant Dreamers

Breton's movement spawned parallel groups throughout the world, with hotspots of activity in Czechoslovakia, Mexico, Japan and Egypt. We don't have space to do more than acknowledge this here. Your favorite surrealist of another land could take part in Parisian adventures in dream-form (see p. 109).

Supporting Characters

The two key surrealists described below always appear as NPCs — Breton, because he is unable to enter the Dreamlands; Aragon, because he makes a fine antagonist figure, thwarting surrealist plans in the sleeping realm, after his break from the movement in 1932.

André Breton

At the center of the surrealist movement schemes and fulminates the profoundly self-contradictory poet André Breton. This rigid promoter of freedom and prudish celebrant of sexual excess decides what surrealism is, at any given moment. To be considered a formal member of the movement, one must earn and retain his blessing. He is as famed for expelling members who displease him as for instigating protests and riots against his art-world enemies.

Unknown to history, Breton's central tragedy is that he knows about the

Dreamlands, wants desperately to enter them, but, despite strenuous effort, remains too mentally constrained to make the leap. This leaves him forever separated from his dead friend and hero, Jacques Vaché, whose dream-form survives there, and makes periodic attempts to break through to him on the dreamed streets of Paris.

Breton is born in 1896 in Tinchebray, to a pleasant, passive father, who works as a civilian bureaucrat for the local police department, and a punitive, status-seeking mother. Breton both despises and takes after her. She insists he prepare for medical school as he secretly reads poetry and aspires to anarchism. When the war starts, his medical training earns him a posting at a military hospital. There he befriends a black-humored role model named Jacques Vaché. Transferred to a psychiatric unit, he discovers the work of Sigmund Freud, then unknown in France. After acting as a stretcher bearer at the battle of Verdun, he comes down with a persistent fever and returns to Paris. Louis Aragon, Philippe Soupault, and he make up a trio of ambitious young poets. Together they discover Lautréamont and, shortly after Vaché's overdose death, Tristan Tzara's Dada movement. Breton admires Dada, except for its humor.

In 1920 he meets the lively Peruvian-born Jew Simone Kahn, whom he marries the next year.

He takes the ideas of Guillaume Apollinaire, fuses them to Tristan Tzara's Dada effort, declares it dead, and starts to create a new, unnamed group with himself at the helm. After a period of struggle with Tzara, he emerges triumphant.

Breton declares a new way forward: psychic automatism, which combines séance trappings with Freud's theory of the unconscious to produce writing and drawings created in a trance state. The two most susceptible participants are the

poets René Crevel and Robert Desnos. During a trance Desnos passes into the Dreamlands. Desnos teaches others in the group how to become dreamers, and to shape the realm they find. Despite determined effort, Breton cannot achieve the necessary trance state.

In 1924 he is calling his movement surrealism, complete with a manifesto, and trying to walk his way to the Dreamlands, as Aragon has already learned to do. He nearly makes it, then fails.

The next year, in one of his periodic slumps into despair, he gives leadership of the movement to the actor and director Antonin Artaud, then quickly yanks it back when he doesn't like his first issue of the magazine.

In 1925, he tries to enter the Dreamlands physically, through the Paris catacombs. Its guardian, the ghoul Nicolas Flamel, refuses him entry, on the grounds that his destiny lies elsewhere. Breton brandishes his cane at Flamel, who bites it in half, and mentions that bones crack even easier. Disconsolate, Breton turns his attention to politics. He reads Trotsky's book on Lenin, which further radicalizes him. With the fervor of a convert, he sets about turning the other surrealists into hard-line Marxists, expelling those who resist.

He stages a protest against a ballet of *Romeo and Juliet* in 1926, because, by designing its sets and costumes, Max Ernst has dared to sully surrealism with blatant commercialism.

Resuming his efforts to walk his way into the Dreamlands, he wanders Paris in search of chance encounters and coincidences and meets a strikingly helpless young woman he dubs Nadja. A waif, kept woman, drug smuggler, blabberer, and coincidence magnet, Nadja claims clairvoyant powers, which she occasionally demonstrates with

accuracy. Breton, with his wife's weary forbearance, becomes one of her paying admirers. He draws back from her when she puts her hand over his eyes while he's driving.

He tries to officially fuse surrealism with the French Communist Party. Its leaders keep their distance.

In 1927 he learns that Nadja has been committed to a mental institution, suffering from schizophrenia. He dallies with shipping heiress Nancy Cunard, putting him in a love triangle with his friend Louis Aragon. Later that year he meets a flirtatious blonde named Suzanne Muzard, who has read the manuscript of his narrative prose poem about Nadja and wants to meet him. They fall immediately in love. He rewrites the end of *Nadja* to make her appearance its happy ending. To his surprise, she demands that he divorce Simone and marry her.

With romantic turmoil dominating his personal life, he compensates by seeking more control over the group. He initiates a divorce with Simone in October 1928, partly because she kept her affair with minor group member Max Morise a secret from him. In December Suzanne marries one of her other lovers, who managed to divorce his wife first. A craving for security drives Suzanne, who a few years ago resorted to prostitution to support herself. Her marriage does not end her relationship with Breton, whose own divorce turns bitter. Simone keeps returning to the apartment he now shares with Suzanne to poach pieces of his valuable art collection, which she regards as her rightful due. His repeated reconciliations and breakups with Suzanne hit the gossip pages.

Also in 1929 he wages a battle with Le Grand Jeu, a new rival group of younger surrealists, splitting his own group in the process. He produces a second surrealist manifesto, excoriating expelled members and renouncing past



influences like Rimbaud, Baudelaire, and Poe (for creating a sympathetic policeman). The document promises a retreat to a "profound occultation" and praises mystical figures. In a vain attempt to curry favor with the ghoulish guardian of the catacombs, he includes Nicolas Flamel among them.

He meets Dalí, distrusting him from the start but unable to deny that he embodies surrealist theories with a blazing and unprecedented brilliance.

The year 1930 starts with *A Corpse*, an attack on him from Georges Bataille, Desnos and other dissident surrealists,

retaliating for the vitriol he spat at them in the second manifesto. The pamphlet's title recalls a previous screed launched by Breton against revered conservative literary figure Anatole France.

He organizes an assault on a chichi bar Desnos has opened, and dared to call Maldoror! Bloodshed ensues.

Breton deflects a series of love letters from the artist Valentine Hugo, but not so much that she can't underwrite a book project, *The Immaculate Conception*. This collaboration with Aragon, in poetic manifesto format, incorporates Dalí's paranoiac-critical method,

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assaults Catholicism, and revises the Kama Sutra.

In 1931 he finalizes his tortuous divorce from Simone, succumbs to Valentine Hugo, and tries to change his writing style to appeal to the proletariat. He dreams of being pursued by an old madwoman, but his anxious hopes that this apparition will draw him finally into the Dreamlands go unrealized.

The next year he backhandedly defends Aragon for republishing a poem about shooting the police, feels ambivalence toward a crop of young would-be surrealists who look up to him as a father figure, and breaks up with Valentine Hugo. He splits for good with Aragon, after getting him in trouble with the Communist Party. (For more on this complicated breakup, see Aragon's entry, below.)

The year 1933 sees him tire of automatism as a poetic technique. Aware sooner than others of the totalitarianism emanating from Stalin's Moscow, he denounces a "systematic wave of cretinism emanating from the USSR" and breaks with the official Communist Party.

In May of 1934, he spots a beautiful blonde in a bar with a pen and paper and imagines that she's writing to him. It turns out that she is. Jacqueline Lamba is everything he is not: energetic, spirited and spontaneous. She's a painter making her living as a nude underwater dancer at the Coliseum music hall. Breton loves this image and introduces her to his friends as a naiad (she'd prefer painter). Searching for meaningful coincidence, he finds that a 1923 automatic poem "Sunflower" presages their first night walking around Paris together. He kicks out another girlfriend to install her in his apartment, which she fills with nude photographs of herself. On August 14, three months after they meet, they're married, with a wedding celebration that

ends in an outdoor picnic and Man Ray taking nude photos of her.

In 1935, Jacqueline quits her mermaid job and dismays Breton by announcing her pregnancy. The need to provide for a child raises the awful specter of having to do work that compromises his principles. Realizing how implacably opposed Aragon and the other Stalinists are to surrealism, he enters into a brief alliance with his nemesis Georges Bataille. Together they join Contre-Attaque, an idiosyncratic leftist organization that proposes to fight fascism with its own tactics, without letting down its guard against Stalin.

At year's end Breton's daughter, Aube, is born.

Tensions rise in 1936. Jacqueline wants to be recognized as an artist and not just a wife and mother. In September, she leaves him, and Aube, without word, returning later in the year.

That same year, Breton stands out among leftist intellectuals as among the few willing to outspokenly condemn Stalin's Moscow show trials while they are happening.

In April of 1937, he goes to Mexico to visit Leon Trotsky. Fall brings a protracted final split with Eluard, who stands with the Stalinists. Breton sends his loyal lieutenant Benjamin Péret around to tell other group members to shun and sabotage him. This drives out others, including Ernst and Man Ray. Breton now refuses to call Eluard by name, instead calling him "the orgy-goer."

Antiauthoritarian child-rearing methods make young Aube a constant distraction at surrealist meetings, whose members she pelts in the head with dinner rolls.

In 1939 he expels the last major surrealist — ironically, it is Dalí, who has vexed him

from the start. The circle has diminished to minor poets and hangers-on.

Financially aided by Picasso, he flees the Nazi occupation for an unhappy exile in New York City. While there he attempts to create a new mythology around a race of beings called the Great Invisibles. On his return to Paris in 1946, he discovers that a Stalinist literary establishment has coalesced around Aragon, shutting him out. His movement sputters along in diminished form until a few years after his death in 1966 at the age of seventy.

Louis Aragon

Born in Paris as Louis Andrieux, the poet who will one day adopt the pen name Louis Aragon grows up believing that his biological mother is his sister, and his grandmother, his mother. Learning the truth of this as a young adult, and that his real father is a prominent rightist politician responsible for the brutal suppression of Communists, spurs him to reinvent himself as a political and aesthetic radical. He meets Breton when they are medical students mobilized to the same military hospital in 1917. He sees heavy action in the war, and is at one point buried alive three times in one day. Afterwards, he joins with Breton and another poet named Philippe Soupault to become a troika of writers that first joins and later supersedes Dada.

Though a skeptical nonparticipant in the sleeping fits and séances of the psychic automatism period, his worries about the Dreamlands propel him into it. Aragon first enters not by dropping into trance but by randomly walking Parisian streets in search of mystical coincidence. After that he can reach it by falling asleep normally. He soon becomes a fervent advocate of insurrection against its feudal overlords.

In 1924 he publishes his own version of the surrealist manifesto, more focused

on dreams than Breton's. A political firebrand who isn't afraid to choose a wide variety of targets, he sometimes crosses the line from speech to physical assault. He leads what we would now call a couch-surfing existence until his 1926 relationship with steamship heiress and exhibitionist drunk Nancy Cunard.

In 1927 he finally reveals to the surrealist circle *The Defense of Infinity*, the 1,500-page novel he's been working on for four years. As he fears, they hate it, because it is a novel, a form Breton despises. Obediently he burns the manuscript, an act over which he will nurse a lifetime of bitterness. (Three hundred pages survive, pulled from the fire by Nancy, and are published after his death.)

He meets his future wife Elsa Triolet in 1928, after the end of his affair with Nancy brings him to attempted suicide. She throws herself at him so hard that he initially thinks she's a Russian agent.

In fact, Elsa, a Russian Jew, does not become a Soviet asset until two years later, when the suicide of the modernist poet Vladimir Mayakovsky, husband to her sister back home, leaves her anxious to secure her safety. The Soviets, who see the existence of the Dreamlands as an affront to materialism, order her to work through Aragon to somehow seal it off from the real world.

At first they try to bring the surrealists to heel by radicalizing them and then persuading them to fully spout the Stalinist orthodoxy. First Elsa must do this to Aragon; she lures him to a writers' conference in the Ukraine where he is maneuvered into a pledge that deprecates surrealism. Back in Paris, he tries to backpedal with Breton. He has certainly acquired Stalinist humorlessness, taking offense at Dalí's jacket covered with glasses of milk, on the grounds that it wastes food.

In January of 1932, he tries to republish a poem in which he calls for the shooting of police officers and is indicted. The surrealists and other intellectuals support him, but the party calls it a publicity stunt. They call Aragon on the carpet for his association with Dalí, who has published *Reverie*, a shocking and explicit sexual fantasy involving a young girl. They ask him why the surrealists insist on complicating what should be simple relations between men and women. Aragon makes the mistake of repeating this amusingly naïve comment to Breton, who publishes it in a mocking essay.

Elsa pounces on this betrayal; Aragon withdraws from the surrealist movement. Thereafter the two of them work together to covertly destroy the movement, or at least their means of entering the Dreamlands. Aragon becomes a fervent promoter of the Moscow line.

Breton and Aragon speak to each other for the last time in their lives at the fascist riots of February 9, 1934.

During the Occupation, Aragon earns a hero's mantle as an active participant in the Resistance. His exploits include at least one daring escape from Gestapo custody. Less famously, he uses the Dreamlands, now frozen over, as a conduit for equipment and a temporary harbor for fugitives. After the war he asserts himself as a lion of the heavily Stalinist literary establishment. Unlike Éluard and other ex-surrealist Stalinists, he tries to reconcile with Breton — who will have none of it.

Elsa dies in 1970, allowing him to finally come out as a homosexual. He makes up for lost time, throwing himself into his new identity as an icon of the gay liberation movement and revisiting his surrealist style. He dies in 1982.

Dreamhounds-era Aragon is a man of piercing good looks, unable to resist mirrors. He is verbally facile, passionate, and quick to anger.

Getting Started

Confer with the group before the first full session to introduce the campaign concept and have players choose their characters. This might happen as a coda tacked onto your final session of another game, or via email, chat or online conference.

Introduce the key points of the Parisian avant-garde scene by summarizing the contents of "A Surrealist Nutshell," p. 7, and answering any questions that arise from that.

Explain that this campaign follows an arc:

- Their characters begin by exploring and exploiting the Dreamlands.
- At some point, the story pivots — most if not all of them come to suspect that they've meddled with forces beyond their ken.
- At this point they try to reverse what they have done — but is it too late?

At the beginning of each session you'll recapitulate the arc and the group's present relationship to it. For more, see chapter six, "A Grand Disorder."

Then discuss tone, particularly the limits of silliness, as explained in "Seriously Joking," p. 130.

Using the master character list found in the appendices, starting on p.152, help the players find the characters they most want to play. Steer them toward characters that match their preferences and personalities. A straight-laced player, for example,

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

GETTING STARTED



Make sure this happens.

START DATES TABLE

PC	Arrives in Paris	Enters Dreamlands	Leaves Paris
Artaud	*	1924	1937
Bataille	*	1923	*
Buñuel	1926	1929	1934
Cahun	*	1932	1937
Carrington	1937	1936	1940
Cocteau	*	1913	*
Dalí	1929	1928	1939
De Chirico	1925	1909	1931
Desnos	*	1922	*
Duchamp	1927	1921	*
Éluard	*	1922	*
Ernst	*	1919	*
Gala	*	1929	1939
Hugo	*	1926	*
Kiki	*	1928	*
Magritte	1927	1922	1930
Masson	*	1924	1934
Picasso	*	1923	*
Ray	*	1921	1940
Tzara	*	1929	*

will likely be more comfortable being the reserved Duchamp or Magritte than the voyeuristic Dalí or free-loving Éluard.

Players can create fictional PCs to mingle with the historical ones. However, the greater the number of players portraying real characters, the more distinctive, memorable, and fun it will be for everyone. The complicated lives of the real characters make them much richer than the typical invented Investigator. So start by encouraging

all players to take the characters given here, holding the other choice in reserve for the truly reluctant.

We've made each character available as a separate PDF file, available at PelgranePress.com, to all purchasers of this book. If you bought *Dreamhounds* in electronic format, you have these files already as part of your download package. Provide the players with copies of their chosen characters. They can then skim them and make sure that they still want to play the character, having seen the details.

Start Date

Consult the following table to determine the earliest possible starting date of your series. The second column shows when characters first arrive in Paris (and when they're living elsewhere). The third tells you when they first learn to access the Dreamlands. An * in the "Arrives in Paris" column indicates that they're in Paris early enough to fit any suitable start date.

The fourth column tells you when characters leave Paris, after which point their adventures there must be conducted in dream-form. As seen in chapter two, this carries both advantages and disadvantages: make the player aware of them before committing to the character. An * in this column indicates that they remain in Paris at least until the *Dreamhounds* era ends with the 1940 German invasion.

Find the latest date in the second and third columns associated with any figure appearing as a PC. This is your earliest possible start date.

If that date is 1930 or later, that's when your campaign begins.

If that date is prior to 1929, decide, in consultation with the group, whether you'd like to set your game:

1. in the 1930s, as usual for *Trail of Cthulhu*. If so, start in 1929, the dawn of the great Dalí-Breton rivalry.
2. in the 1920s, out of the usual time frame. If so, ask the players to select events from their characters' 1920s histories they'd like to play out in game. Start your game with the earliest chosen event (eliminating any events that occur before your earliest possible start date).



How Much to Read

Players should read their characters' histories up to the start date. They can continue reading if they want, in which case they help you build toward upcoming events. Or they can stop reading at the start date, allowing you to surprise them with later life events as they occur in the timeline.

There's no reason to stop a player who wants to read the entire chapter from doing so. The surrealists and their rivals live in each other's pockets and are aware

of the turmoils in each others' lives. In a few cases you may want to specify that a given fact, like Tzara's fear of the Zurich entity, might be unknown to his acquaintances. If so, ask the players to play their characters as knowing a little less than they do.

If, as Keeper, you haven't yet given a detailed read to a character selected as a PC, do so now. Read the remaining characters in detail, if you haven't already, when they come up as NPCs.

Volumes have been written on the surrealist movement and its principal figures. Full-length biographies exist for most of the potential PCs presented in this chapter. Encourage players to dive into the research, with the bibliography in the appendices as a jumping-off point. Ask them to bring what they learn to the table in a collaborative way — as suggestions and details, and not as vehicles for trumping others with their superior knowledge. Abjure the dread spectre whose name is Well Actually!



VOTRE AVANT-GARDISTE

“Why he had bothered to humour that madman he could scarcely imagine. It would have been much simpler merely to have let him alone, or to have called in a mental specialist. Probably, he reflected, it was the fellow-feeling of one artist for another.”

— “The Horror in the Museum”

This chapter customizes characters to the needs of a *Dreamhounds* campaign. Its rules allow you to navigate both the artistic demimonde of 1930s Paris and the rapidly changing landscapes of the dream realm.

Some rules here refer to the **margin**, the difference between Difficulty and result in a successful General ability test.

Playing Historical Surrealists

Much of the appeal of a *Dreamhounds* game lies in the chance to play major historical figures. Encourage players to embrace this concept. To take full advantage of the campaign frame’s potential, most if not all of the players should be playing key surrealists. Accounting-minded readers may note that certain pre-generated characters presented in the previous chapter have better statistics than an Investigator created from scratch. This is what is known in game-design circles as a bribe.

Float Points

Some game statistics for pre-generated characters include a number in parentheses after the Investigative or General ability identifiers. This is a number of float points the player can spend to buy new abilities of that type. These can be spent during play to acquire abilities they don’t already have. Once spent, the points are gone.

In the case of Investigative abilities, they can only be spent on abilities that no other PC in the current scene already has.

Free Abilities

If a scene calls for the use of an Investigative ability no PC in the scene has, and everyone is out of float points, the player who can best justify his character’s acquaintance with that ability gets it for free, at a rating of 1.

This assures that the group is never stumped because they don’t have an ability needed to acquire a core clue, without unduly contorting the pre-generated characters before play starts. Certain abilities aren’t likely to come up in a *Dreamhounds* campaign and may therefore never appear on anyone’s character sheet.

Revealing New Abilities in Play

As always, an ability suddenly added to the character sheet is not acquired on the spot in the game world. It is instead treated as a newly revealed facet of the character’s backstory.

When Max Ernst’s player gains 1 point in Astronomy through a free point, he explains that a soldier in the trenches was an astronomer, and taught him the stars between French fusillades. Ernst has not spontaneously acquired a mastery of the science for no discernible reason.

Creating Ahistorical Surrealists

To create a fictional surrealist, use the standard character creation rules and the Occupations Artist or Author.

You’ll want to invest more in new abilities listed below, like Art-Making,

Dreamscaping and Instability than you might in the action-oriented abilities typical of standard campaigns. Both of the above Occupations pay half price for Art-Making.

Your Motifs

Whether you work in visual art or prose, certain images persist in your work. Dalí favors the coastline at Cadaqués, melting people and objects, distended forms propped up on Y-shaped sticks. Ernst uses a lot of bird imagery. Tanguy paints canvases populated by imaginary cellular creatures. Buñuel’s films feature Sadean sexuality and sinister priests. Masson likes minotaurs.

Specify three to five elements you consistently resort to. Changes you wreak in the Dreamlands will draw from these motifs.

Your Movement Status

Decide whether you start play as:

- a member of André Breton’s circle of officially recognized surrealists
- a former member, now excluded by Breton
- a longtime rival of the movement who nonetheless draws on its techniques and imagery

In the first case, you gain 8 General build points. The second costs you 8 build points; the third, 12 build points.

Drives

You’ll likely be paying more attention to the campaign arc than Drives to motivate the characters, but here are a few new ones to go with the standard assortment just in case. These can all be exported to standard *Trail* play.

Fraternity

Man is born to serve his fellow man, an effort best carried out through collective action. This service sometimes draws one into danger, which is the price one pays for the advancement of universal freedom. This truth remains constant no matter whether the threat comes from the thuggish forces of fascism or capitalism, or malign entities beyond the standard dialectic. For what are such entities as Cthulhu or Yog-Sothoth, if not antihuman forces determined to keep our minds ignorant and shackled? They will remain eternally in power, unless comrades from around the world join together in global solidarity to put them down. Starting with you.

Protection

Your only interest in danger, of the occult or any other variety, is in keeping one or more loved ones out of it. A sensible person wouldn't be drawn to trouble, but, sadly, you are driven by another overriding reason to keep a less-than-sensible person out of harm's way. This person is either another PC, or an NPC you have to keep rescuing.

Specify that reason, which might be as simple and pure as love, or as ambiguous as the avaricious desire to keep your meal ticket safe, sound, and productive. Note it in parentheses on your character sheet, after listing Protection as your drive. For example: Protection (Love) or Protection (Avarice).

Remorse

You made a terrible mistake once — perhaps more than once — foolishly toying with forces too immense to comprehend. Only when it was too late did you realize the extent of the darkness you called into the world. As the one responsible for it, you must now fight that darkness, hoping against hope than you may one day reverse it. And to do that, you must understand it, and to understand it, you must continue

to traffick in the nightmare world... Though aware of the paradox, you can only pray that what you do to earn your redemption does not instead destroy all hope of it.

Investigative Abilities

These additional Investigative abilities flesh out a series set in the art world and/or the Dreamlands.

Charm (Interpersonal)

Despite scant financial resources, you enjoy an entrée to high society allowing you to inveigle information and favors from the well heeled. When you deal with people of Credit Rating 5–7, they treat you as favorably as they would their social equals.

Charm conveys none of the direct financial or material resources of a high Credit Rating.

In the *Dreamhounds* context, this entrée derives from your fashionable status as a recognized artist of perhaps scandalous repute.

This ability might be used in other *Trail* campaigns to emulate a state of impoverished celebrity.

Dream Lore (Academic)

You know of the Dreamlands and are familiar with its geography and cultures, however provisional they may be. You can:

- sense that a person you meet in the waking world is also a conscious explorer of the Dreamlands
- sense that a person met in the waking world is a dreamscaper — an insight which manifests as a dizzying jolt of personal magnetism
- discourse on the Dreamlands' notable personages, creatures, and locations

- venture practically useful theories on such matters as the curious workings of dream time there, or the interaction between human minds and Dreamlands events

If you are an aware dreamer or have traveled to the Dreamlands by physical means, much of your experience comes firsthand. You can use Dream Lore as an Interpersonal ability on its permanent residents. By obeying the customs of, and showing proper signs of respect toward, Dreamlands beings, you can gain information and favors from them.

Literature (Academic)

You're an expert on works of literature, including classics of nonfiction as well as poetry, drama, the essay and even the nascent craft of cinema.

You can:

- identify literary quotations, allusions and references
- divine the true authorship of a disputed text
- tell when a text was written
- accurately estimate the price of a rare book or piece of literary ephemera
- call to mind historical details on authors and those around them

(This is the Document or Textual Analysis ability from *Bookhounds of London* and various other GUMSHOE games, reskinned for the mindset of literary types such as the surrealist poets.)

Seduction (Interpersonal)

Lovecraft's heroes may not get what they want through their allure, but the surrealists and those around them certainly do. You leverage your sexual magnetism to extract information and

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

CREATING AN HISTORICAL SURREALISTS



favors. These seductive qualities only work on people attracted to your sex.

People open to taking the encounter beyond flirtation may be bedded on a spend.

Being seductive will provoke some to make passes at you, whether you want them to or not. Spends allow you to deter them without giving offense.

You don't have to spend points to get together with your historical character's real-life paramours, partners or conquests. This simply happens during vignette sequences, with or without this ability.

Deprecated Ability: Art

For the purposes of a *Dreamhounds* campaign, the Technical Investigative ability Art is removed from the standard list. Taking its place is the General ability Art-Making (see below.)

General Abilities

The following General abilities flesh out a *Dreamhounds* campaign.

Art-Making

Conceive and execute artistic works.

When you select this ability, choose an artistic pursuit as your specialty. Available pursuits include:

Visual Art: encompasses painting, drawing, printmaking, collage, sculpture, and hybrids thereof. The ability also covers the selection of readymades, ordinary objects given new significance by their placement in an exhibition. The most famous readymade is Duchamp's *Fountain*, a repurposed urinal.

Photography: the taking, printing and manipulation of photographic images. Includes Man Ray's Rayograph

technique, which imprints the outlines of objects on photographic paper without the intercession of a camera.

Film: writing and directing motion pictures. May also include subsidiary crafts like lighting, motion picture photography, and sync sound recording.

Radio Drama: as above, without the pictures.

Composer: writing music for performance. Librettos are covered by Playwright; song lyrics, by Poetry.

Poetry: writing verse. Highly valued by Breton, a practitioner.

Fiction: storytelling through prose. Considered highly suspect by Breton and company.

Playwright: self-explanatory.

Dance: performing movement works, usually set to music.

Singing: self-explanatory.

Musical Instrument: specify one instrument. Purchase multiple instances of Art-Making to play multiple instruments.

Performance: appearing on stage in skit-like presentations, like those of the Dada movement. Although they may include drumming, vocalizing, and declaiming, they create a new fusion that is neither acting, dancing, nor playing music.

To practice multiple pursuits, pick as many as you desire and divide your pool points between them.

Some tests allow you to spend only points from a pursuit related to the task at hand. To make a painting, you can spend only from your Art-Making (Visual Art) pool.

Other General tests may allow you to spend from any Art-Making pool. Successfully arguing that a given work does or doesn't fit what the surrealist ethos requires would fit into this category.

If your players complain that they're not getting use out of their Art-Making points, but aren't driving the narrative toward situations where they make art, put those situations in front of them. If they're not using the abilities and not worried about that fact, let it slide.

Characters needn't make tests to create the known works of their real-life careers. The works simply happen during vignettes or between scenes, to the reception history recalls. Unless your research tells you that your character disliked a particular work (not common with this crowd), treat the artistic execution (p. 64) ref Artistic Execution Table as Exceptional by default. Treat images so famous you can buy them on coffee mugs at a museum gift shop, or which are directly referenced in your character description, as masterpieces.

Dreamscaping

Unlike artists of past eras, whose masterpieces changed the landscape of dream without their direction, you can not only enter the *domaine de rêve* but can, to a degree, shape it to your will.

The changes you wreak almost invariably occur with a time delay. Except in extraordinary circumstances, you are not seen to work magic, transforming one object into another. Instead, you specify a change, and, sometime later, it seamlessly works its way into the dream reality. Dreamers remember the previous state of whatever it is that you altered. Dream-realm denizens recall your change as having always existed.

Even when you immediately call an object into being, a quick shift occurs,

without an apparent intermediate transformation. You wish a sword into your hand. One moment you don't have a sword, the next you do. Dream-world denizens react as if you had it on your hip the whole time, retroactively inferring a justifying logic.

You are never seen to transform a banana into a sword, a melted fish creature into a balloon, or an ordinary minotaur into one with drawers bulging from its abdomen. Moments of missing time, sometimes fractional, always obscure the moment of metamorphosis.

This effect resembles the shifting nature of ordinary dreams. When the person you're talking to is your husband one minute and Clark Gable the next, this seems normal to you then, becoming illogical only in retrospect, after you wake up and recall the dream.

The bigger the change, the more likely that you'll have to leave the place where you've worked it, coming back in a later night's dream, to see it take root.

When in the Dreamlands, you can spend Dreamscaping points on Athletics, Conceal, Disguise, Filch, Firearms, First Aid, Fleeing, Preparedness, Riding, Scuffling, Sense Trouble, Stealth or Weapons tests. When you do this, describe the surreal environment cooperating with your wishes — in as subtle a manner as possible, without visible transformations.

You spend Dreamscaping points as First Aid, healing your friend Max Ernst, who has been gored by a moon-beast. An asymmetrical flask, resembling a sculpture you're working on in your studio, is now among your belongings. It contains a fragrant elixir, which you pour on his wound, sealing it back up.

Instability

Instability measures your propensity for psychic automatism, the mental state of unconscious creation that drives the artistic production of the surrealist movement, and allows you to shape the Dreamlands. With this disciplined madness, you challenge existing aesthetic assumptions, exploding notions of what art can be and do.

This ability is the province of artists, madmen, and dreamers. Use it in any campaign where PCs are expected to enter the Dreamlands in dream-form. Those who have it possess a certain abstracted quality, as if they maintain only a provisional grip on mundane reality.

Until the surrealists came along, it could only be gained spontaneously. They've learned to cultivate it and pass it along to others of their circle.

Like Health and its mirror, Stability, Instability is less a way of augmenting your chances of success than a necessary resource that threatening circumstances may drain from you over time.

When you suffer a catastrophic loss of Instability, your dream-self dies, or becomes a projection of others' perceptions of you, whose actions you no longer direct. You can no longer dream your way into the *domaine de rêve*. In the waking world, your artistic inspiration dries up. You are able to mechanically repeat your old work, perhaps to considerable acclaim, but can no longer innovate.

For more on the impact of Instability on game play, see "Artistic and Oneiric Death," p. 66.

Drives, Pillars and Sources

Whether you decide to use Pulp or Purist mode for your *Dreamhounds* game, it drops Pillars of Sanity for reasons of economy: this frame adds a lot of new factors to keep track of, so one less basic one will make that easier. Many of the Pillars would otherwise be similar abstract concepts.

Many characters' Drives are likewise similar, although we do list them to highlight the few that aren't Artistic Sensitivity.

Nor does this frame use Sources of Stability.

Even without them, these real-life characters give players more dimensions than they're used to playing. The campaign arc, as seen in chapter six, takes on the weight these rules structures bear in a baseline *Trail* game.

Aesthetics and Critical Reception

The degree to which a given work or performance meets your hopes for it is measured by the margin you score on your Art-Making test.

When your Instability is at or below 0, all successful results are treated as mediocre, regardless of the actual margin.

Artistic Execution Table

Margin	Quality
0	Mediocre
1–3	Solid
4–6	Exceptional
7+	Masterpiece

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

AESTHETICS AND CRITICAL RECEPTION



These quality rankings are apparent to you and others with ratings in Art History or Art-Making. Reactions of the general public, including supposed connoisseurs, depend more on personal taste than on quality of execution. Those with either ability can tell that a work is a masterpiece even if it violates their own tastes or theories about art. This does not mean that they'll admit it — especially if they belong to a rival faction.

Audience tastes depend on familiarity and cultural allegiance.

Ideology and Taste

The Parisian art scene acts as a metaphorical battleground for competing ideologies. Sometimes it's not so metaphorical. The scuffles and riots that break out at certain avant-garde events are manifestations of two-fisted political rivalries.

For the political, questions of taste begin and end with broader allegiances.

Rightists have scarcely assimilated the innovations of the impressionists. All

subsequent avant-garde movements they regard as suspect and possibly Jewish.

Communists have come to regard all aesthetic questions as bourgeois frivolities. Though cutting-edge art and agitprop flourished during the early years of the Soviet era, Stalin has swept them aside in favor of the unintentionally kitschy propaganda style called social realism. The lions of the FCP follow Moscow's lead on art, dooming Breton's attempts to yoke his movement to official Communism.

This leaves as the natural audience base of the surrealist movement the socially libtinish edge of the aristocracy — art patrons like Vicomte Charles de Noailles, funder of Dalí and Buñuel's film *L'Âge d'or*, whose title and wealth give him the freedom to support the artistically adventurous.

Hate, Love, and Misunderstanding

When it comes to art, most nonexperts prefer well-executed variations on the familiar — everything the surrealists loathe. Fashionable types prefer the new, so long as it is somehow sexy, glamorous or dangerous. Fortuitously, surrealist visual works partake of all these qualities.

When working in a tradition-defying style, as the surrealists are, you can create masterpieces that most critics and observers will furiously despise. Those few who like them will mostly do so for superficial reasons.

Only a discerning few can identify great, epoch-making works when they occur. Most require the hindsight of decades to sort the masterpieces from the dreck. Over time, masterworks gain recognition. All it takes is for a discerning few to take note of the work at the time.

Most artists can only hope that their work will be recognized later — perhaps even after they're dead. Those in touch with supernatural forces might not have to wait so long. Might prophetic powers hint to the struggling surrealists the impact their work and thought will exert on global culture?

Masterpieces and Dreamscaping

After creating a new masterpiece, your Dreamscaping pool (if you have one) increases by the margin of your Art-Making test. When you spend those points, you must describe the Dreamlands reacting to your demands in a way that relates to the piece of art that earned you the points.

This works only if your art is in a form capable of conveying surrealist themes. Only masterpieces of surrealist visual art, photography, film, theater or poetry allow you to apply Art-Making margins to your Dreamscaping pool.

Criticism from a surrealist perspective may help illuminate great works but remains inescapably rational and thus does not feed your Dreamscaping. While Breton holds sway, novels are right out! Nor do the surrealists truck much with dance or music.

The public reception of your work matters little to its potency as dream stuff. It is not getting its power from its role in your audience's dreams. Quite the reverse: the

dreams of the global public take power and shape *from your masterpieces*.

After creating a masterpiece, you may find reflections of it in the Dreamlands, whether you wanted them or not. You might paint a raven with human hands, only to be beset by them during your next visit there.

To make great surrealist art you must access your unconscious mind, the contents of which may not be pleasant to encounter in solid form. But if you leave your unfathomable urges out of your work, it will either fail as a work of art or as an example of surrealism — if not both.

As a dreamscaper, the worst things you meet in the *domaine de rêve* are pieces of you.

Artistic and Oneiric Death

When you lose your crucial spark of creative madness, you die both as an artist and a dreamscaper. In the daylight world, you must protect it against the many temptations that derail creative vision. In dream-form, apparent physical damage manifests as a reduction in your artistic force. Some losses are temporary, but, if you make too many compromises, or are savaged by too many ghosts, you become a living travesty of your former self.

Damage in the Dreamlands

In the Dreamlands, dreaming characters always lose Instability instead of Health when physically harmed.

A waking character who physically entered the Dreamlands loses Health, as they would in any other location.

Losing Instability in the Dreamlands

Like other General abilities that function as resources, your Instability pool can drop below 0.

Why No Arts Management Ability?

On first hearing that you're playing artists in 1930s Paris, you might assume that the business savvy associated with the sale and promotion of your paintings will take a prominent role in the campaign, and thus be reflected in a General ability.

Not so. If you are a surrealist artist or poet whose name is not Salvador Dalí, your work earns you virtually nothing during your creative heyday of the Twenties and Thirties. You persist in bohemian poverty, scraping together the francs needed for rent and food. Occasional sales to aristocratic collectors keep you afloat, but no more. We are far from the present era of the ultrarich contemporary artist/entrepreneur. The cliché of the painter whose transformative works earn money only for their later owners holds iron sway here — and for long after the *Dreamhouses* period.

Aside from a few years of ascendancy as a fashion photographer and portraitist, Man Ray leads a hand-to-mouth existence until his death in 1976. Max Ernst escapes poverty only in 1954 when he accepts a prize from the Venice Biennale — leading the Young Turks of the near-moribund surrealist movement to turf him out once and for all. André Breton clings to his genteel destitution in an apartment stacked with increasingly valuable artwork.

Despite Bretonian injunctions against commercialism and professionalism, the characters somehow manage to keep themselves in bread and Beaujolais, leaving their attention free for the task of changing the world through art and dream.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

ARTISTIC AND ONEIRIC DEATH



If this happens in the waking world, you feel nothing out of the ordinary. Unless you want to specify that you're twinging with guilt at whatever act of artistic debasement you're engaging in...

If, however, you are in the Dreamlands when Instability drops to 0, you may suffer immediate ill effects.

First, you must make a Tether roll. Roll a die with the absolute value⁶ of your current Instability pool as your Difficulty. You may deliberately strain yourself to remain in the Dreamlands, voluntarily reducing your Instability pool by an amount of your choice. For each point you reduce it, add 1 to your die result. The Difficulty of the Tether roll is based on your Instability pool *before* you make this reduction.

- On a success, you remain in your dream-form, cognizant and able to act.
- On a failure, you jolt to consciousness in the waking world. The shock of the sudden transition requires a 2-point Stability test.

Buñuel flees from Men of Leng across sea-swept rocks. They hit him with a shrieking spear, dropping his Instability pool to -3. They will fall on him and permanently devour his dream-form unless he gets away from them, so it is imperative that he remain asleep. The absolute value of -3 is 3, so this is the Difficulty of his Tether roll. He chooses to expend another 2 Instability points he doesn't have, pushing himself onward into a solid sea of biomorphic forms. That gives him a bonus of 2 to his roll. He rolls a 6, for a final result of 8. Luis gets away, but now his Instability pool is down to -5.

⁶ In other words, treat the negative number as a positive. For example, if your Instability pool is at -3, the Difficulty of the roll is 3, and so on.

When your pool is anywhere from 0 to -5, your dream-form is **addled**. How this manifests depends on immediate circumstances, and what your dream-form looks like.

If you lost Instability in a fight or due to some apparent physical hazard of the Dreamlands, and your dream-form appears essentially human, it suffers superficial cuts and bruises. Stranger dream-forms might show other visual signs of physical damage — if you're an animate marble statue, you may now be chipped or covered in hairline fractures.

Strange events may also cause Instability losses. Their implausibility reminds you that you're dreaming, causing your unconscious mind to awaken. In this case, your dream-form blinks in and out, goes blurry, or turns partially translucent. This reveals you as a dreamer to any permanent Dreamlands denizens who happens to be watching you. They may or may not care about such things.

While addled, you can't spend points on Investigative abilities, and the Difficulty Numbers of all tests and contests, including opponents' Hit Thresholds, increase by 1.

If you seem physically hurt, another character with the First Aid ability can help you stay tethered by spending First Aid points, as if tending to literal injuries in the waking world. If your dream-form has been blurred by your near-waking, a character with Psychoanalysis can talk you into staying tethered. For every point spent, you regain 2 Instability points. You can't use First Aid or Psychoanalysis on yourself. Assisting characters can only refill your pool to where you were before the incident in which you received this latest injury. They must be in a position to devote all of their attention to directly tending to your condition.

If your pool is between -6 and -11, your dream-form has been **disrupted**. You must make another Tether roll.

If you lost Instability to an attack or hazard, you look as if you were seriously wounded. Narrate what this might mean in the case of an inhuman dream-form.

If you lost in the wake of a weird or distressing event, your dream-form loses all semblance of physicality. You can still talk and think but can't touch or manipulate Dreamlands objects. Any observers can tell that you're a dreamer on the brink of a return to consciousness.

Until you receive assistance, you will lose an additional Instability point every half hour. If you seem physically hurt, a character with the First Aid ability can stop this slow bleed of Instability points by spending 2 points. If you've lost the illusion of physicality, a character can do the same with Psychoanalysis. In neither case can they restore already lost Instability.

You can also stop the loss of Instability by giving into the siren call of wakefulness. Make a 3-point Stability test when you jolt awake.

When your pool dips to -12 or below, you suffer **oneiric death**, irrevocably losing your mastery of art and dream. The character is retired as a player character, just as if he went permanently insane. The Keeper may elect to keep him in the storyline as a hollowed-out supporting character. You then adopt or create a new player character in his place.

Waking Up

Under calm conditions, characters can will themselves to wake up in the real world, departing the Dreamlands without difficulty. They just do it.

Under stressful circumstances, when the risk of not being able to easily escape offers a compelling horror twist to the proceedings, the GM may require a

A Glimmer of Hope

In “The Silver Key,” Randolph Carter loses his Instability due to the distressing realization that life and dream are fundamentally the same — and equally disappointing. At the story’s end, he recovers it, by dreaming his way back to childhood and a sense of wonder.

This implies that a great surrealist who loses his Instability might by extraordinary means recover his ability to walk in dreams, and with it the spark of renewed creative daring. Your Keeper might use this as precedent for keeping a 0-Instability PC in play long enough for a grand quest of subversive redemption — if the group seems to really want it. Deploy this plot device wisely, as it loses plausibility if used more than once.

Difficulty 4 Dreamscaping test, on which Dream Lore points can also be spent. Difficulties might escalate for especially nasty situations.

The object here is to keep otherwise uninteresting transitions between dream and waking quick and painless, while not letting the characters off the hook when they stage an escape from a Dreamlands force they should have left undisturbed.

Losing Instability in the Waking World

In the waking world, you lose Instability when you debase the cause of psychic revolution, giving in to bourgeois or rightist values.

Here Instability works just like Stability — you test it against a Difficulty of 4, adding Instability points if you wish. If

you fail, you lose a number of Instability points corresponding to the gravity of your offense against surrealist ideology. Sometimes it is worth it to spend points, others not, and you’re not necessarily sure which is which.

Acts triggering Instability tests appear on the table below. Those in italics apply only if you are a current member of Breton’s official surrealist circle, as determined by him.

Even if you are not, adherence to his ideas influences your mental state. Such is the nature of the Breton paradox — he, who has no Instability, created the rules that determine how much of it you have.

Penalties for fraternizing kick in once per episode, per individual.

Certain historical PCs are immune to some or all such Instability losses, as is indicated in their entries. The hated Cocteau induces them in others but needn’t worry about them himself.

Instability Loss Table

Action	Possible Instability Loss
<i>Skipping a surrealist meeting</i>	2
Choosing mundane responsibilities over your work as a surrealist	2
Voicing sympathy for the right	3
<i>Fraternizing with an expelled surrealist</i>	3
Voicing antipathy for the left (except for their failure to appreciate surrealist principles)	4
Fraternizing with an enemy of surrealism	4
Creating work that violates surrealist criteria (neoclassical art, prose fiction)	5
Choosing money over surrealist integrity	6



Recovering Instability in the Dreamlands

As already mentioned, while in the Dreamlands, you recover lost Instability as you would recover Health in the waking world.

When you arrive in the Dreamlands with an Instability pool lower than your rating, you may seek immediate healing. If you lost it in the waking world, your dream-form appears sick and wan upon your first arrival. If you lost it during

a prior jaunt to the Dreamlands, the wounds your dream-form suffered then are still evident now.

Recovering Instability in the Waking World

To regain Instability in the waking world, the character must seek out psychically destabilizing situations. These reawaken what Dalí calls the paranoiac-critical faculty — an awareness of the shocking disjunctions behind what we conceive of as ordered reality. His theory in

essence urges the artist to correlate the suppressed contents of his mind, thus embracing a chaotic and indifferent moral universe. By flirting with the howling fringe of true awareness, he breaks down the defenses his mind has erected against understanding.

In the face of cosmic horror, you make an Instability test. You can spend Instability to add to your result, though it's usually a bad bet. The Difficulty and benefit of the test varies according to shock's intensity.



Instability Recovery Table

Situation	Difficulty	Benefit
You lose 1–3 Stability in a single incident	6	Regain Instability equal to lost Stability
You lose 4–6 Stability in a single incident	6	Regain Instability equal to twice lost Stability
You lose 7+ Stability in a single incident	4	Refresh Instability
you are shaken by a Mythos encounter or attack	4	Regain Instability equal to half the difference between its rating and pool
you are blasted by a Mythos encounter or attack	2	Refresh Instability
You never gain Instability in excess of your rating.		

Points lost in the Dreamlands can always be recovered in the waking world.

Wherever you lose or gain them, Instability, like Stability, refreshes between adventures.

LES RUES DE PARIS

It was golden and splendid,

That City of light;

A vision suspended

In deeps of the night

—“The City”

Paris is an old city of gray stone perched across the meandering river Seine. It was built where islands made defense and crossings easy. Centuries before the Romans came, fishermen and herders eked out a living in the fertile plain between the broken ring of low hills to the north, east and south. Successive rebuildings of the village, town, and then city always emphasized safety from attack. At first there were defensible bridges to the islands, and, when there was no more room, stockades were built along the banks of the river. And so it went: hovels became houses, then palaces, tracks became roads and elegant squares, stockades became walls. Now, three million people live crammed within the traces of the last defense, the Enceinte de Thiers, which was built to resist sieges in the 1840s. The fortification was already obsolete when the Prussians bombarded the city in 1870 and has since been dismantled, leaving the city open to further expansion and connections across this **Zone** and into the surrounding small towns.

PARIS IS UNCONSTRAINED.

“That hand, that hand on the Seine, why is that hand flaming over the water? ... But what do you think that means: fire and water, a hand of fire over the water?” André Breton, “Nadja.”

The main island, l'Île de la Cité, is the center of the city and is the seat of authorities both spiritual and temporal: the main court, **Le Palais de Justice**,

the central police station, **La Préfecture de Police**, the oldest hospital in Paris, **L'Hôtel Dieu**, and the enormous Gothic cathedral, **Notre-Dame de Paris**. A star set in the pavement outside Notre Dame, site of an ancient pillory, is not just the center of Paris but also the point from which all distances in France are measured. At the western tip of the island lies the triangular **place Dauphine**, caught between the two legs of the Seine, and, in spite of the ubiquitous presence of the Eiffel Tower, it is proof for the surrealists that Paris is a woman. Just below this square on the ancient **Île aux Juifs**, Jacques de Molay, the last templar Grand Master, was burned to death in 1314. Also here, the oldest bridge in the city, the **Pont-Neuf**, links l'Île de la Cité to both banks of the Seine. It was while leaning over the stone parapet on the north side that Nadja (p. 55), wandering through the city with André Breton, saw a hand of fire upon the water.

PARIS IS ELEMENTAL.

From this central point, Paris is arranged in neighborhoods, called **arrondissements**, spiraling out clockwise. Each of these twenty districts, six on the left bank, fourteen on the right, has its own administration and town hall. The most well appointed, and with the majority of the famous landmarks, are the inner nine and the two outer arrondissements to the west. The other arrondissements, farther from the middle and containing the factories, are not only the most working class but also the most populated.

When viewed from the heights of **Montmartre**, Paris hugs the contours of the landscape like a blanket. The height of buildings is limited according to the width of the road they border, and must not be more than twenty meters tall. Even so, there are still some old alleys in the **Marais** where the sun never shines.

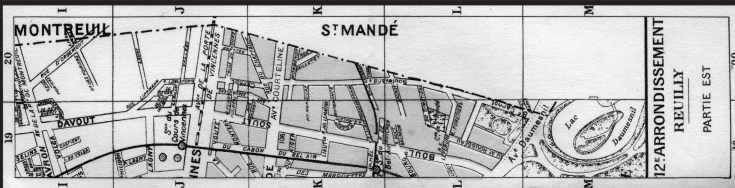
Most Parisians live in apartment blocks. The richest Parisians live in town houses, known as *hôtels particuliers*, full of prerevolutionary furniture and run by liveried staff. In these older buildings, the best rooms are lower down, with the servants in the garrets. In newer buildings or those that have been remodeled, elevators make the higher apartments with better views the more expensive. Blocks of apartments are arranged around courtyards. These are often dingy affairs full of hanging washing and littered with rubbish in the poorer areas; nicer areas boast flowerbeds, trees, and lawns.

Most Parisians do not have a toilet in their home; many do not have lights, or gas, or electricity, or even running water. Alarming as this may sound to the twenty-first-century gamer, this reflects the period norm for large cities with high population densities. Some buildings offer communal toilets. Other people use public washing facilities, *les bains-douches*, which still survive in today's Paris. Your impoverished bohemian character might use a big tin bath, heating water for it on the stove. Or you just go through your everyday life smelling, by our standards, bad. Most groups will prefer not to dwell on the details of period hygiene. You didn't see Owen Wilson running around wrinkling his nose throughout *Midnight in Paris*.

Almost all blocks have a concierge, also known as a *pipelet(te)* or *cloporte* (literally a wood louse but also a *clos-porte*, door-shutter). They take in mail, admit visitors, arrange maintenance. Nothing escapes their attention. In spite of the rising population, there are an estimated thirty thousand untenanted properties, as rent control reduces the benefit to landlords of letting their properties. This in turn has caused overcrowding of available properties and reluctance from landlords to improve or even keep up their apartments. As a result many tramps and vagrants live under bridges or in shanties in the Zone.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

LES RUES DE PARIS



PARIS IS TEEMING.

Barges still supply the city on its waterways: the Seine and the canals, but the main arteries are now man made. The wide boulevards, which Hausmann sliced through the city center in the 1870s, destroying twenty thousand houses in the process, opened up the city to carriages and *flâneurs*, wandering voyeurs of the streets, such as the poet Baudelaire. These routes are now clogged with trucks bringing produce to the central market, **Les Halles**, and from the million cars now circulating in France. Six main stations connect the capital to the rest of the country, to Europe and beyond. In the capital, a network of tram, bus, and metro routes moves people in and out of the center to the beat of night and day. It's not just people and goods that are on the move; information is transmitted by telephone, telegraph, and pneumatic post (a system of air-powered tubes that deliver small cylinders around the capital). There were seven TSF (*télégraphie sans fil*, or wireless) stations in Paris by 1926. Parisians buy their food and other necessities in small local shops. Everyone has a favorite local bakery where one is greeted with and returns a cordial *bonjour* each morning, and spends their evenings at the local bistro (meaning bar, said to have come from the Russian *bystro* meaning quick, as shouted by Cossacks in the bars of Montmartre after the occupation in 1815). The *grands magasins* (department stores) on the boulevards supply to a more discerning clientèle, but the top of the range are the boutiques of the **Champs-Élysées** and the golden triangle formed by it and the rue Montaigne and avenue Georges-V.

PARIS DESIRES.

From the strange slopes and suicide bridge of the **Parc des Buttes-Chaumont** in the northeast to the **Tour St-Jacques**, standing alone with

its gargoyles in the center, to the bone-filled **catacombs** in the south, Paris is riddled with unsettling places. There are the giant green mushrooms of the **Colonnes Morris** (for advertising) and **Vespasiennes** (for natural needs of men) in the streets. The Gothic splendor of **La Sainte-Chapelle** on l'Île de la Cité holds relics of an actual deity, the crown of thorns, a fragment of the true cross, the spear and sponge of the Passion. **Parc Monceau** has scattered trees and sloping lawns in an English style; Freemasonry inspired its Egyptian pyramid, Chinese fort, Dutch windmill, and Corinthian pillars. The oldest house in Paris, in rue de Montmorency, is that of Flamel, the alchemist, who now, as a ghou, guards the gateway to the Dreamlands located in the catacombs.

In the **passages**, prostitutes call from upper windows above a sea of waving canes in an umbrella makers' window. In the slaughterhouses of **La Villette**, butchers sing to each other like the calls of the animals whose carcasses swing in time from hooks. In the night, in shadows under bridges, in the crowds, in shop windows, in the façades of buildings, in the brightness of squares, something is and was and will always be waiting, to be discovered and to move into consciousness.

PARIS IS HIDDEN.

In the forty years after the humiliation of the Franco-Prussian War and the self-destruction of the Commune, Paris flourished. It became the center of European culture for music, art, fashion, and theater on a grand and flamboyant scale. The rich and famous flocked to saunter down the avenues in the afternoon, to be seen at the opera in the evening and to spend nights at the *maisons closes*, fashionable and discrete brothels. Diaghilev with his Ballets Russes to the music of Stravinsky, Picasso and Braque with Cubism, Cocteau in the theater,

and Proust in literature modernized and pushed the boundaries of their respective art forms. The Great War scattered the artists, and into this void came the anti-art of Dada and a flourishing of popular culture, *bals musettes*, music hall, and comic opera. Modern technology such as cinema, photography, and radio coupled with American vigor and money energized the city and pushed it to further extremes: the gory **Grand Guignol**, the syncopated rhythms of jazz, the counterculture of transvestitism and drugs.

PARIS IS DREAMING.

"In Montparnasse, poverty was a luxury," Jean Cocteau.

"The opposite of luxury is not poverty but vulgarity," Coco Chanel (with whom Cocteau later lived in her chic apartment above the Chanel shop at 31 rue Cambon).

The Seine flows east to west across the city, but the main axis for the surrealists is north and south. Before the war, artists packed into the **Bateau-Lavoir**, a ramshackle nest in Montmartre. Afterward, when rents became dearer and it became the hillside habitat of night clubs, tourists, strippers, and prostitutes, artists moved south to the shallower slopes of **Montparnasse**. This was a poor working-class district but also the haunt of the romantic American writers of the Lost Generation.

Dadaists, rejecting both places, meet nearer the center at the **Café Certà** until its 1925 demolition. During its early days, Breton's group also frequents the bars around the **Place Blanche** at the foot of Montmartre. Hangouts of other groups include Masson's studio on the **rue Blomet** and the squalid **rue du Château** flat of Tanguy, Marcel Duhamel and the poet Jacques Prévert.

PARIS IS READY.

PLACES

Bars

Be it a bar or café, the *bistro du coin* (local bar) is the central axis of a man's life in France. In the mornings on the way to work, breakfast and coffee is served. At lunchtime, those who work nearby might pop in for a bowl of soup and a glass of red. In the evening, the *apéro* (aperitif) is drunk here with friends before returning home for dinner. The regulars are welcomed with friendly banter, strangers with cold civility at best, possibly worse in some of the rougher areas. The patron (owner) stands behind his zinc-topped bar replete with snacks, peanuts, or hard-boiled eggs, bottles of spirit arrayed behind him. He serves drinks to those at the bar, and the garçon (waiter) delivers them to those in the room or in the pavement seats. The *serveuse* (waitress) takes food orders to the chef (cook), and, out back, the lowest of the low, *la plonge* washes dishes and glasses all day and night for a pittance. The roles of women in such places are tightly specified. The *patronne* (the owner's wife) might be one of the staff, or she might even be the actual owner, having inherited the business from her father. This gives her the right to be treated as an equal by the men. Any other women present are likely to be flirted with unless attached to a man, and, even then, they might well be considered fair game if he leaves her side even for an instant. Of course, it's not so unlikely that he is paying for her company.

Montmartre

Montmartre was a village on a tall hill with a wide view over the surrounding area. It was annexed by Paris in 1860 and is mostly contained within the 18e arrondissement. It is famous for its windmills, its steep narrow streets, its bars and painters. Before the Great War, many famous artists lived here in cheap rooms. As its popularity grew, this attracted tourists which pushed prices up, and the artists moved out to less expensive areas such as Montparnasse.

On the northern slopes, toward the Zone, where working-class houses teem to the south side, one can find the theaters, the dancing girls of place Blanche, and the brothels and prostitutes of Pigalle. The surrealists started to meet here after the end of Dada, and Breton moved to just below the hill in 1922.

Le Batifol

**7 rue du Faubourg-St-Martin,
10e arrondissement**

Frequented by the surrealists from 1931 after Breton followed a woman here. Known by the patrons as "Plage" with neon signs and a modernist décor. It's the hangout for actors at the end of their careers. In April 1931, Breton meets Parisette here, a dancer from the Folies-Bergère. Le Batifol is right behind the porte St-Martin, one of the old gates of the city and just off the boulevard St-Denis with its cinemas, where you might bump into Breton, especially when an American film is playing.

Café Certà

**Passage de l'Opéra,
9e arrondissement**

Decorated with barrels, this is the Dada meeting place between 1919 and 1923. The café is demolished in 1925 as part of the extension of the boulevard Haussman. In *Paris Peasant*, Aragon writes that it was toward the end of 1919 that he and Breton decided to use it as a meeting place, partly through hatred of

Montparnasse and Montmartre, but also because they love the equivocal nature of the passages and the strange décor.

Le Cyrano

"Breton went to the café as if he were going to the office, with the same discipline," André Thirion.

**83 boulevard de Clichy,
18e arrondissement**

It's a bar on the place Blanche at the foot of Montmartre with seats out onto the pavement. It is next door to the famous Moulin Rouge music hall and so popular with tourists and nightclub goers. Breton's home is nearby at 42 rue Fontaine, just opposite. It is a surrealist meeting place from 1922 until the end of the 1930s, in which Breton and Callois drink mandarin-curaçao cocktails.

Café Radio

**64 boulevard de Clichy,
18e arrondissement**

A regular haunt of the surrealists.

Café de la place Blanche

"I have been living in the place Blanche for two months; winter is milder, and, in the pavement seating of this café dedicated to the traffic of narcotics, women make short and charming appearances," André Breton, 1922.

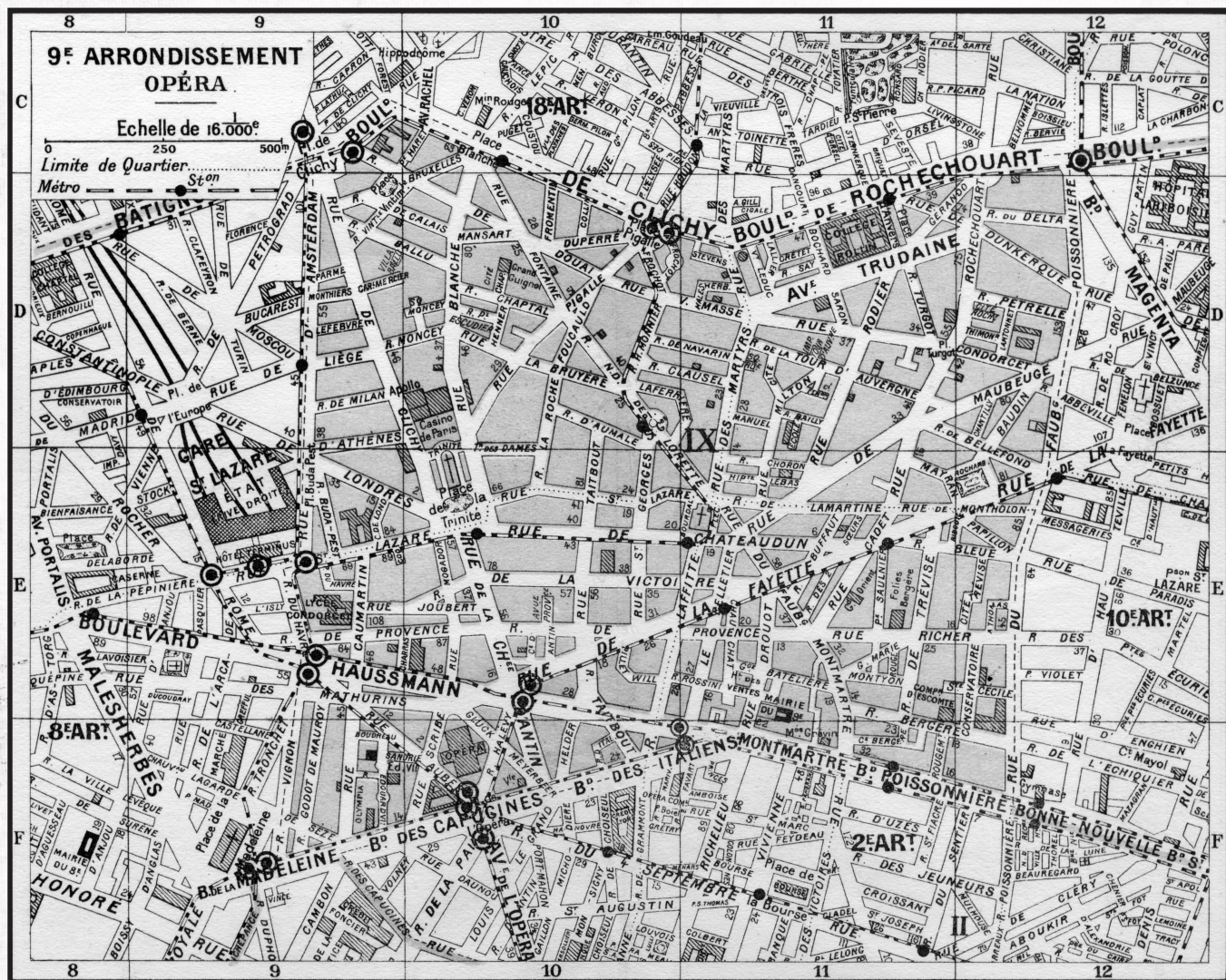
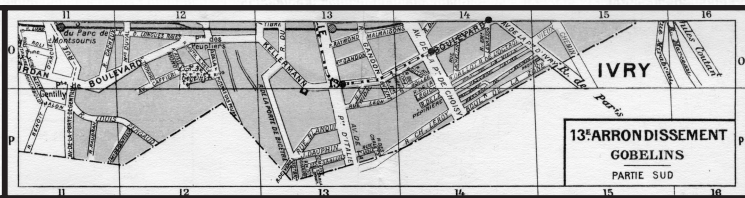
3 place Blanche, 9e arrondissement



Surrealist Café Timeline

Breton's group, then in its Dadaist phase, met at the Certà until 1923. When Breton moves to rue Fontaine, they meet in any one of the bars round the place Blanche: the Cyrano, Café Radio, or the Café de la place Blanche. After 1931, their haunts range more widely, including Batifol and occasionally bars on the Left Bank or in Montparnasse.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU PLACES



The surrealists meet here after Breton moved to the rue Fontaine after 1922 and until the end of the 1930s. This included Breton, Peret, Arp, Bellmer, Brauner, Ernst, Ray, and Miró.

La Cigale 120 boulevard de Rochechouart, 18e arrondissement

A horseshoe-shaped theater where Tzara presents his play *Mouchoir de nuages* on May 17, 1924. It seats around a thousand and usually shows operettas and vaudeville, as well as Cocteau's avant-garde soirées. From 1924 until 1927, a small cabaret fills the basement. While La Cigale is being

renovated in 1927, it is replaced by a six-hundred-seat music hall called La Fourmi just next door. This closes in 1933.

Le Grenier Jaune 66 rue Lepic, 18e arrondissement

Édouard Autant, a left-wing architect, and Louise Lara, an actress, together found the experimental Laboratoire Art et Action theater group with a modernist outlook. Their home base is this theater, opened in 1921. A small room at the top of a narrow staircase, it is so tiny that the spectators are up close against the stage. Entry is free but by invitation only. They put on several surrealist plays. The first

Paris showing of *The Battleship Potemkin* is held here in 1928. It closes in 1933.

Studio 28 "La salle des chefs d'oeuvres, le chef d'oeuvre des salles," Jean Cocteau.

10 rue Tholozé, 18e arrondissement

The world's first art house cinema opens February 28, 1928. Some of the first screenings of *Un chien andalou* and *L'Âge d'or* are held here; see p. 21. The room is fitted out in red, and Jean Cocteau designed the flower-shaped light fittings. There is a courtyard at the back for receptions.

Théâtre de Deux Masques

6 rue Fontaine, 9e arrondissement

Alternating fear and laughter, in the image of the two masks of drama for which it is named, this large theater was built to rival the nearby Grand Guignol, which specializes in naturalistic horror shows. *Les Détraqués*, with Blanche Derval in the role of Solange, was the first play shown here. Breton talks about it at length in *Nadja*. In 1924, it becomes a dance hall.

Théâtre du Grand-Guignol

7 cité Chaptal, 9e arrondissement

This theater, the smallest in Paris, lurks at the top of a narrow alley in Pigalle. The Grand Guignol shows the most graphical horror on stage anywhere in the world. As a former chapel, the Gothic décor enhances the terror of the audience who not infrequently faint or throw up. Camille Choisy, a special effects genius, directs from 1914 until 1930. Paula Maxa, the Princess of Terror, the “most murdered woman in the world,” and Georges Paulais, the man with a thousand faces, are the main draws, in the plays of André de Lorde. De Lorde, a librarian at the Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal, specializing in medieval and renaissance fiction and theater, writes over 150 plays for the theater up until 1916. In 1930 Jack Jouvin takes over ownership and aims for a more psychological and less gory style. As a result the popularity of the theater wains.

Zelli’s

16 bis rue de Fontaine, 9e arrondissement

Quite near Breton’s house. Aragon, Baron, and Leiris come here after visiting him. This is a large rectangular underground dance hall on two floors in an almost Moorish style. The main floor area comprises a bandstand, stage,

dance floor, and ornate pillars, and is littered with tables. At one end is an arched alcove with mirrored walls. The entrance makes way onto a balcony which overlooks the main floor with its modern American-style bar. Here are what Zelli calls “royal boxes,” set out along the balcony. Patrons can look down upon the festivities taking place on the floor below as well as talk to other parties on telephones in each box. An Italian caricaturist, Zito, draws all the famous guests and visitors to Zelli’s over four years, and these sketches fill the walls downstairs. Opened in 1922, by Joe Zelli, an Italian American, it is often raided by the police and closes in 1932.

Les Oiseaux

“Sitting at the tables, the bourgeoisie out on the town, from this quarter and elsewhere. At the counter, the people of the night, from La Chapelle and from Barbès, who stop a moment to have a drink on their way to Pigalle,” Louis Chevalier.

12 place d’Anvers, 9e arrondissement

Breton brings Jacqueline Lamba here after seeing her mermaid show (p. 57).

Musée Gustave-Moreau

14 rue de la Rochefoucauld, 9e arrondissement

The Musée national Gustave Moreau is an art museum dedicated to the works of painter Gustave Moreau (1826–1898), a leading figure of the symbolist movement responsible for the moods and imagery of the Dreamlands as the PCs first discover it. You may find traces of his vision in the Dreamlands, or depictions of things you first encounter there in his paintings here. For this reason the Musée may resonate with magical power connected to the Dreamlands.

Under the right conditions, it might serve as a passageway for the waking to enter the *univers du rêve* — but only in the years before surrealist influence in the Dreamlands eclipses that of the symbolists.

This was originally Moreau’s house and studio, but became a museum of his work after he died in 1898.

André Breton says that his discovery of the Musée Gustave-Moreau at the age of sixteen “influenced forever my idea of love.” He daydreams of breaking in at night to surprise the paintings.

Les Passages

Boulevard Montmartre, 9e and 2e arrondissements

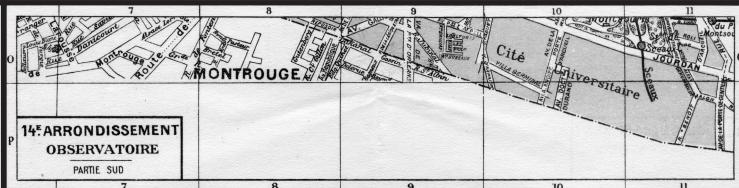
Shopping arcades are dotted around the center of Paris. Most of them opened between 1825 and 1850. They hold a special attraction for the surrealists. They were iron framed with glass roofs. Aragon writes about these at length in *Paris Peasant* and compares the experience of them to being in an aquarium. The passage de l’Opéra, next door to the Dadaist bar Certà, is demolished in 1922.

Musée Grévin

10 boulevard Montmartre, 9e arrondissement

A waxwork museum founded in 1882 by Arthur Meyer, a journalist for *Le Gaulois*. It was named after the caricaturist Alfred Grévin. It is one of the oldest wax museums in Europe. Its baroque architecture includes a hall of mirrors, originally built for the 1900 Exposition Universelle, and a theater for magic shows. The montage of Charlotte Corday stabbing Marat contains the actual bath and knife used in the murder. It has an entrance onto the passage Jouffroy.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU PLACES



Cimetière de Montmartre 20 avenue Rachel, 18e arrondissement

Built in the hollow of an old gypsum quarry, this cemetery sits on the southwest side of the hill, below street level, and is crossed by a metal road bridge. Isidore-Lucien Ducasse, le Comte de Lautréamont, favorite of the surrealists and originator of the phrase, "As beautiful as the chance encounter of a sewing machine and an umbrella on an operating table," was buried here in a mass grave.

La rue d'Auseuil 18e arrondissement

This small street is surprisingly difficult to find in the jumble of streets on the side of the hill. Usually the best way is to follow the haunting sound of a viol, which can sometimes be heard in the vicinity. De Chirico painted a vision of the street in 1914, just before the start of the war.

Montparnasse

Montparnasse is a poor working-class district on the unfashionable low southern hill behind the learned Quartier Latin of museums, cafés, and philosophers. When the artists moved here after the Great War, it started to attract American tourists, and their money brought new cafés and restaurants and jazz. It soon became the liveliest part of the city.

Bar du Château 53 rue du Château, 14e arrondissement

A bar opposite Marcel Duhamel's house where in 1925 Prévert, Desnos, and Malkine, then all the others in the rue du Château group, meet up regularly. On May 11, 1929, Breton holds his inquisition against the Grand Jeu group and other sources of nonconformity, which devolves into chaos when his wife Simone shows up in a fabulous dress to recriminate with him over their ongoing divorce. (See *The Book of Ants*, p. 135)

Le Select 99 boulevard de Montparnasse, 14e arrondissement

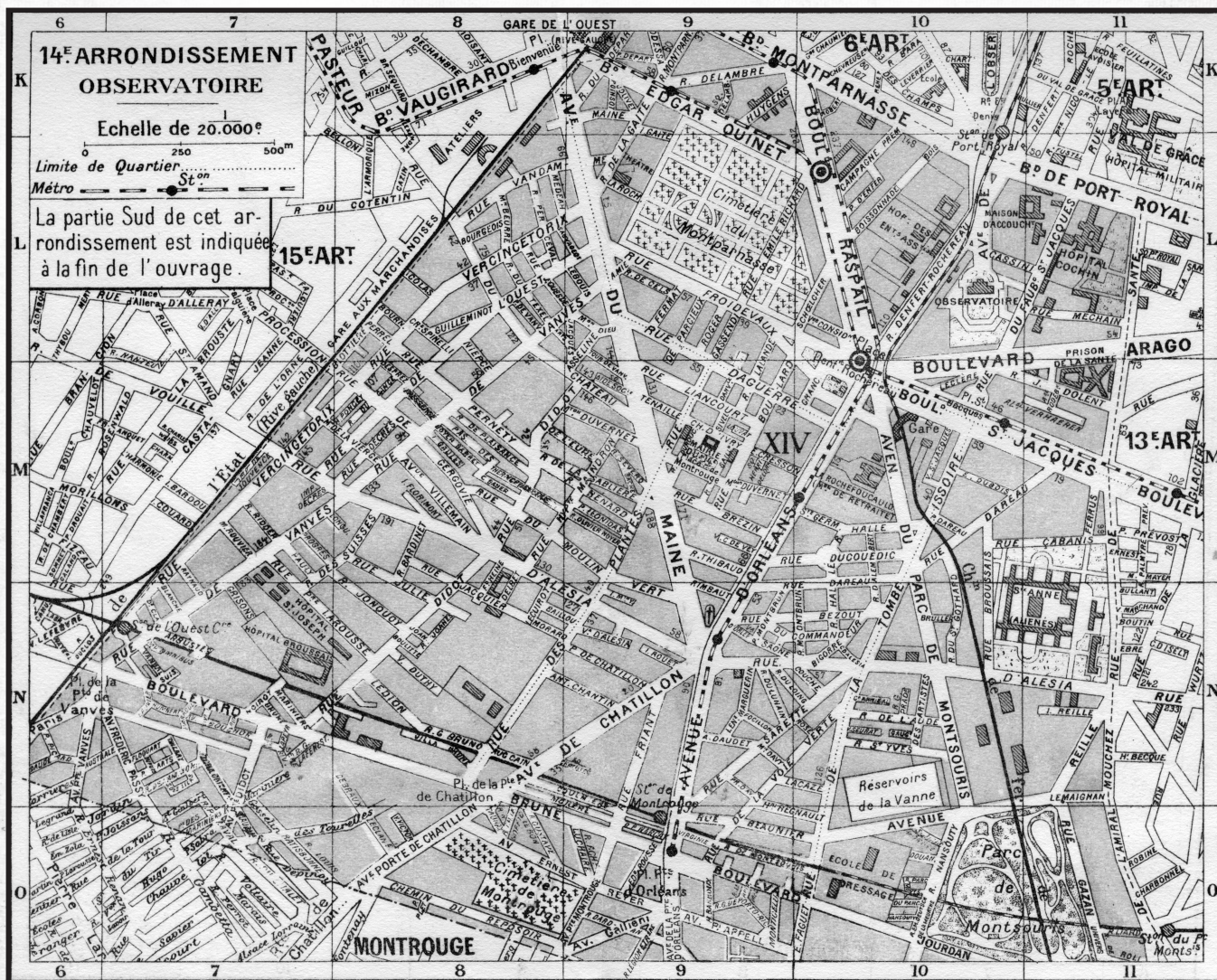
An all-night bar which opens in 1928. It is popular with the American crowd, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Pound, Miller, Faulkner, and Dos Passos, until the Crash of '29. Roger Vitrac has a fight with Breton here after breaking with the surrealists.

La Closerie des Lilas 175 boulevard de Montparnasse, 14e arrondissement

A bar with a dance hall, covered in lilacs. Poets came here, including Verlaine and Wilde, followed by the painters Braque

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

DREAMHOUSES OF PARIS



and Modigliani. It was here that Jean-Julien Champagne first met René Schwaller, leader of the occult group Les Veilleurs (The Watchers). Champagne would later write *Le Mystère des cathédrales* (The Mystery of the Cathedrals) in 1926, about the alchemical symbolism of Notre Dame and other buildings.

On February 17, 1922, Éluard and Satie arrange a meeting of the friends of Tzara to discuss Breton's calling Tzara "an opportunist, a publicity seeking imposter" in *Le Journal du peuple*.

Site of the July 2, 1925, disruption of the Saint-Pol-Roux banquet; see *The Book of Ants*, p. 110.)

La Coupole

105 boulevard de Montparnasse,
14e arrondissement

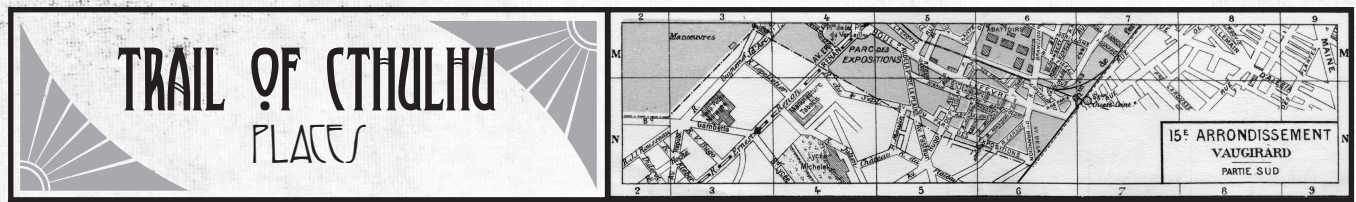
A café-dancing which opens in 1927 and is patronized by the painters of the École de Paris and Man Ray. Aragon meets the Russian futurist poet Mayakovsky here on November 4, 1928, and the next day Elsa Triolet, his future wife. Vast and in a modern style, it contains thirty pillars, each decorated with a fresco by a famous Montparnasse artist. The chandeliers and fountains are in the shape of geometric crystals. It is owned by Victor Libion.

Le Dôme

"I will go to the Café du Dôme and break my fast humbly with Coffee and Sandwich. May it strengthen me in my search for the Quintessence, the Stone of the Wise, the Summum Bonum, True Wisdom and Perfect Happiness! [sic]," Aleister Crowley.

108 boulevard de Montparnasse,
14e arrondissement

The Dômiers, as the frequenters of this bar are known, include Hemingway and Ernst and Ray. In 1921 it hosts a reception for Charlie Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks, and Mary Pickford, to



promote their company United Artists. After 1924, when managed by Ernest Fraux and René Lafon, it becomes a high-class establishment, opening the luxury bar Américan in 1928.

Le Jockey 146 boulevard Montparnasse, 14e arrondissement

A bar on the corner of the rue Campagne-Première where many artists live. Hilaire Hiler, an American artist, owns it and plays the piano here with a monkey on his back. Kiki de Montparnasse (p. 46).

Le Maldoror 60 boulevard Edgar-Quinet, 14e arrondissement

A dance hall in Montparnasse run by Landeau and designed by the artist Mayo.⁷ Desnos names it and serves as its godfather after his break with Breton.

On the grounds that Desnos' choice of name sullies their favorite surrealist precursor with wretched commerce, Breton and company launch an attack on it on its opening night, February 14, 1930. He arrives carrying an iron bar, with Aragon, Éluard, and minor surrealist writers René Char, Marcel Noll, Georges Sadoul, and André Thirion in tow. They disrupt its opening fancy-dress ball, organized by Princess Paléologue, of the last ruling dynasty of the Byzantine Empire, and smash the place up. The group flees when police arrive; Char escapes with a knife wound in his thigh.

⁷ Antoine Malliarakis (1905–1990); paints in a surrealist style and is on friendly terms with Desnos, but never participates in Breton's circle.

Le Bal Nègre 33 rue Blomet, 15e arrondissement

In 1924, Jean Rézard des Wouves, Antillean candidate for the French parliament, holds political meetings here. These slowly turn into dance nights, transforming the place into the Bal nègre, a showcase for Caribbean music, notably the biguine.

Desnos moves in just down the street in April 1926, introducing the other surrealists to its delights. Within a few years the *Tout Paris* are parking their Bentleys outside. Clarinetist Ernest Léardée runs it from 1930.

La Rûche Passage Danzig, 15e arrondissement

Built by Gustave Eiffel, the reputed Freemason, the wine pavilion at the Exhibition Universelle in 1900 was dismantled stone by stone and reassembled here in a courtyard next to a slaughterhouse and near la Zone. An octagonal building, representative of the eight spiritual laws of the Templars, it is split into eighty tiny studios where artists can live for a pittance and paint.

La Cantine des Artistes 21 avenue du Maine, 15e arrondissement

Cubist painter Marie Vassilieff maintains her studio here. During the war and until 1929, it is a soup kitchen for the local artist community, notably those from la Rûche. It is also where some of the floats for the Balade du Rougevin are made in the Twenties. This carnival is organized by the Beaux-Arts students. Floats are dragged from the École to the place du Panthéon where they are thrown on a bonfire.

La rue Campagne-Première 14e arrondissement

This road is so redolent with artistic history that it requires its own entry.

3, François Pompon, a sculptor, lives and works here from 1877 until his death in 1933.

5, Louis Aragon and Elsa Triolet live here until 1935.

9, de Chirico lives here before the Great War.

13 covers an old entrance to the catacombs.

14, Verlaine and Rimbaud held orgies here in the three months they spent here in 1871.

17, Louis Aragon and Elsa Triolet live here before moving to number 5 after 1928.

17bis, Eugène Atget, the photographer, lived and died here. He is virtually unknown until discovered by Man Ray and Berenice Abbot.

23, Japanese painter Tsuguhara Foujita, husband to Desnos's lover Youki, (p. 35) lives here in the Thirties.

29 is the Hôtel Istria where many artists live, including potential PCs Marcel Duchamp, Kiki de Montparnasse, and Tristan Tzara, along with surrealist satellite figures Francis Picabia (painter), Érik Satie (composer), and Vladimir Mayakovsky (poet and futurist polymath).

31bis is Man Ray's studio, where you can almost always find a Parisian or American-expatriate luminary sitting for a portrait in front of his trademark gray backing curtain.

La Cour du Dragon

6^e arrondissement

In Chambers's "In the Court of the Dragon," a man is followed by a stranger back to his house in this court off the rue de Rennes.

Quartier Latin

The Latin Quarter, so named because it was the language spoken by students in the Middle Ages, is on the Left Bank of the Seine, across the 5th and 6th arrondissements. It is known for its schools (the Sorbonne, the Polytechnique, the School of Mines), cafés, and intellectual life.

Les Deux Magots

**6 place Saint-Germain-des-Prés,
6^e arrondissement**

A bar named for two Chinese figures from the silk shop that used to be at the location. On Monday, January 16, 1922, Breton, Aragon, and Derain realize that they had each missed a rendezvous here with a young woman who was, to them, the very incarnation of the modern age. In 1930, dissident surrealists Vitrac, Desnos, Queneau, Prévert, Bataille, Ribemont-Dessaignes, and Baron meet to talk of literature and politics. It's here that they put together the pamphlet against Breton, *Un cadavre*. In 1933, on the occasion of Malraux winning the Prix Goncourt for *La Condition humaine*, Vitrac and Martyne (librarian at the École des Beaux-Arts) create the Prix des Deux Magots, which they award to Queneau, who had just published *Le Chiendent*. Other patrons include Beauvoir, Sartre, and Hemingway.

Café de Flore

**172 boulevard de Saint-Germain,
6^e arrondissement**

A bar across rue Saint-Benoit from les Deux Magots, with a bookshop between. It has art deco interiors. Breton and

Soupault remember this fondly as the place where Apollinaire first introduced them, March 15, 1917.

From 1932, the October Group, a theater troupe aligned to the Communist Party and presided over by poet Jacques Prévert, often takes up three quarters of the room. It stages performances mocking current events. It is also a haunt of literary editors and film directors. Yves Tanguy entices Léo Malet here, who later writes about it in his detective fiction.

Salle des Sociétés Savantes

8 rue Danton, 6^e arrondissement

A room where before the war Lenin held meetings to discuss Trotsky's *Our Political Tasks* (1904).

On Friday, May 13, 1921 the Dadaists, led by Breton, use it as the venue for a mock trial of symbolist novelist Maurice Barrès.

7 rue des Grands-Augustins

6^e arrondissement

On January 21, 1936, in the attic of a grand house with a gated courtyard, Bataille and Breton perform a ritual to commemorate the beheading of Louis XVI. The October Group also meets here.

Rue des Quatre-Vents

6^e arrondissement

A cat leads to a woman lying dead in her room in Chambers's story of the same name.

Studio des Ursulines

**10 rue des Ursulines,
5^e arrondissement**

In 1925, the actors Armand Tallier and Laurence Myrge choose the small rue des Ursulines to set up a new kind of cinema

for showing art films to a cultivated and enlightened audience. This is the first art house cinema and spearheads the avant-garde movement. The first meeting is on January 21, 1926. André Breton, Man Ray, Fernand Léger, René Clair, and Robert Desnos are present. June 6, 1929, the premier of *Un chien andalou* is held here. Buñuel claims to have nervously hidden behind the screen with a gramophone playing Argentinian tangos and *Tristan and Isolde*, with stones in his pockets should the audience turn on him.

Galerie Surréaliste

**16 rue Jacques-Callot,
6^e arrondissement**

March 26, 1926, Galerie Surréaliste opens with an exhibition by Man Ray. It shuts in 1931 after poor takings and worse accounting. Masson, Tanguy, de Chirico, Ray, Picabia, and Miró all exhibit here.

Gradiva

**31 rue de Seine,
6^e arrondissement**

An art gallery André Breton opens in 1937, with designs by Duchamp.

Galerie Pierre

**13 rue Bonaparte,
6^e arrondissement**

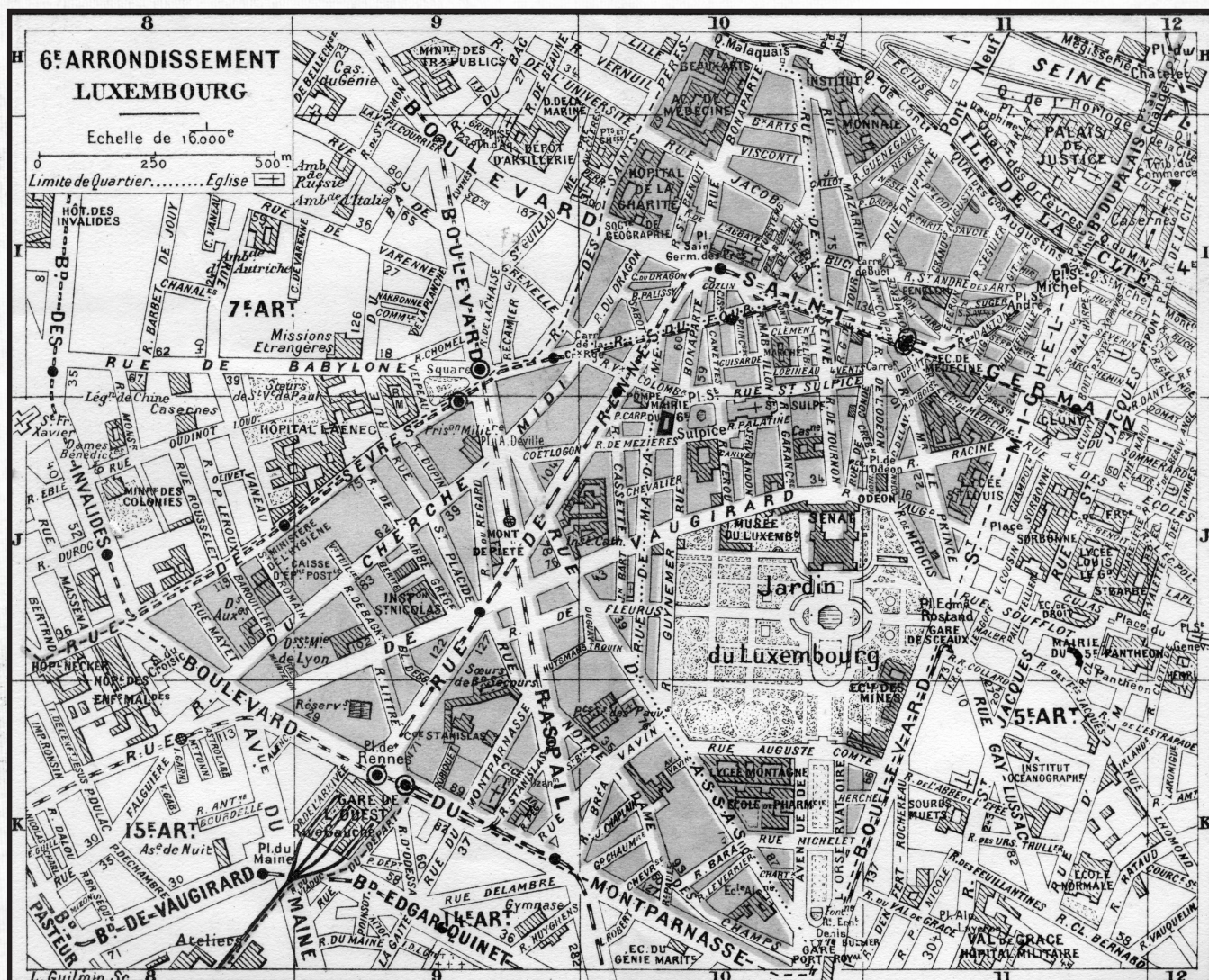
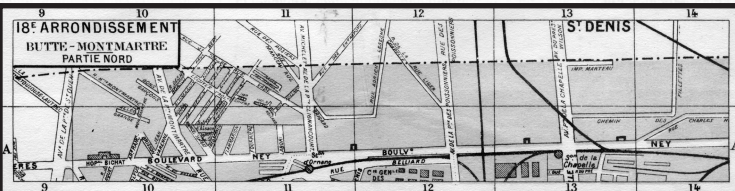
La Peinture Surréaliste is an exhibit held here from Saturday, November 14, to Wednesday, November 26, 1925, with works by Jean Arp, Giorgio de Chirico, Max Ernst, Paul Klee, André Masson, Joan Miró, Pablo Picasso, Man Ray, and Pierre Roy.

La Maison des Amis des Livres

**7 rue de l'Odéon,
6^e arrondissement**

A bookshop run by Adrienne Monnier. Aragon and Breton first meet here

TRAIL OF CTHULHU PLACES



and are frequent visitors, as are many famous authors of the period: Gide, Valéry, Romans, and Benjamin. Rue de l'Odéon was the first street in Paris to have pavement and was built where the Hôtel de Condé, the birthplace of the Marquis de Sade, once stood.

Shakespeare and Company 12 rue de l'Odéon, 6e arrondissement

An English language bookshop run by Sylvia Beach, an American and the lover of Adrienne, who runs the bookshop opposite at number 7. She provides sleeping space in her bookshop for any young writers, Tumbleweeds, who

can write a page a day. Many of the Lost Generation come here including Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and Pound. Beach publishes Joyce's *Ulysses* in 1922.

Livre Objet 13 rue de Buci, 6e arrondissement

It is in this bookshop in 1937 that most of the objects, such as the silk-covered wheelbarrow and the chair with ivy, are put together for the International Surrealist Exhibition held in January 1938. Some readymades disappear into the Dreamlands as they are being manufactured, suggesting a thinness of local barriers between waking and sleeping realms.

La Source 33 boulevard Saint-Michel, 5e arrondissement

A bar where, in 1919, Breton reads to Aragon the first pages of his epic poem of automatism, *The Magnetic Fields*. Breton and Soupault also perform their writing experiments here.

Église Saint-Julien-le-Pauvre 1 rue de Saint-Julien-le-Pauvre, 5e arrondissement

On April 14, 1921, the venue for the Dada excursion, a final fizzle of that movement's performance art provocations. If you were around for the

transition between Dada and surrealism, you remember this as the place where the first started to give way to the second.

Other Places

“Should one keep, move, modify, transform or remove: — 1. the Arc de Triomphe — 2. the obelisk — 3. The Eiffel Tower — 4. The Tour Saint-Jacques — 5. The statue of Chappe⁸ — 6. The statue of Gambetta — 7. The statue of Jeanne-d’Arc (rue de Rivoli) — 12. Sacré-Cœur ... — 26. The Panthéon...?”

— André Breton, “On the Possibilities of Irrational Embellishments of a City,” *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution*, N° 6, March 12, 1933, p. 18

Paris is full of famous places, many of which mean nothing to the surrealists. In the above game it was suggested that the Arc de Triomphe be buried in manure and then blown up, that all the houses around the Tour St-Jacques be destroyed, that the Panthéon be made into a maternity hospital or cut in half and the halves moved fifty centimeters apart, that the Sacré-Cœur be made into a tram shed. Here are some of the places that matter more to them.

Place Dauphine

1e arrondissement

Le sexe de Paris (the female genitals of Paris). The rue de Harlay on the east side is taken up with the Palais de Justice. It’s here you can find the Service de Objets Trouvés, the lost property office which takes in over forty thousand items a year, mostly from the Metro. They are delivered by truck every weekday at nine a.m.

⁸ Chappe, the inventor of semaphore, committed suicide by jumping down a well in 1805. His statue was at the intersection of boulevard St-Germain and rue du Bac.

Église St-Roch

**284 rue Saint-Honoré,
1e arrondissement**

The church where, in Chambers’ *In the Court of the Dragon*, the narrator encounters a stranger whose glance leads him to Carcosa.

La Promenade de Vénus

**44 rue du Louvre,
1e arrondissement**

The last surrealist meeting takes place here.

Comédie des Champs-Élysées

**15 avenue Montaigne,
8e arrondissement**

Site of another surrealist brawl, on November 6, 1926, over the presentation of a theater piece entitled *Danses surréalistes*. A disruption mounted by Breton leads to fisticuffs with its director and the obligatory ejection by police.

Librairie Six

**6 avenue Lowendal,
7e arrondissement**

Man Ray holds his first exhibition here in December 1921 but doesn’t sell a single photograph. It is run by Mic Soupault, Philippe’s wife.

Théâtre Michel

**38 rue des Mathurins,
8e arrondissement**

Site of the July 6, 1923, *Soirée du Cœur à barbe dustup*, as seen in *The Book of Ants*, p. 55.

Galerie des Beaux-Arts

140 rue du Faubourg-Saint-Honoré, 8e arrondissement

The 1938 International Surrealist Exhibition is held here. This was the final surrealist act in France before the war.

Bureau central de recherches surréalistes

“Friday 27 February From today the register must be kept strictly up to date,” Artaud.

“Thursday 5 March The register has been abandoned for two days!!!!!!” Artaud.

“Thursday [19 March] This register was not completed on Tuesday or Wednesday,” Artaud.

**15 rue de Grenelle,
7e arrondissement**

Initially run by Francis Gérard and then Antonin Artaud, this office opens in October 1924. It is open for two hours every afternoon from four thirty until six thirty to greet anyone who may have an interest in surrealism. The walls are hung with surrealist paintings and copies of *Fantômas* and the manifesto, held there with forks. There is a naked bust of a woman hanging from the ceiling and a three volume Bible, supplied by Breton. A register is kept of visits and activities. It closes to the public January 30, 1925, and definitively in April 1925 after much indifference.

Marché aux puces Saint-Ouen

This flea market is just outside Paris in the northern suburb of Saint-Ouen and spills over from there into the Zone. It’s one of the largest in the world and

















TRAIL OF CTHULHU PLACES



one can buy anything secondhand here from books of medieval poetry to garden furniture. Like Breton and Aragon, you may come here to buy African masks and peculiar, suggestive objects.

Tour Saint-Jacques Square Saint-Jacques, 4e arrondissement

The only remaining Gothic tower of the church of Saint-Jacques-de-la-Boucherie, which had a long association with alchemists. They say Flamel is buried here; if you've been to the catacombs,

you know better. The tower reminds Breton of a sunflower: litmus paper in French is *papier tournesol*, sunflower paper. Desnos, born nearby, breathed in its occult tradition from a young age.

Le Bœuf sur le Toit 28, rue Boissy d'Anglas, 8e arrondissement

A bar popular with the art crowd throughout the Twenties and Thirties. It is run by Louis Moysès and started out as La Gaya, but, after being adopted

by Cocteau and friends, it moves and is renamed after a ballet Cocteau wrote for the composer Darius Milhaud. Soon it becomes the place to see and be seen with patrons such as Satie, Diaghilev, Chevalier, French heavyweight Georges Carpentier, Hemingway, Chaplin, and Chanel. The bar moves up and down the street: 28 rue Boissy d'Anglas (1922), 21 rue Boissy d'Anglas (1927), 28 rue Boissy d'Anglas (1927), 33 rue Boissy d'Anglas (1928), and then, farther afield, 26 rue de Penthievre (1928) and 43 bis de l'avenue Pierre-Ier-de-Serbie (1936).

Parc Monceau 8e arrondissement

A public park created by Philippe of Orléans in the 1779, in the fashion of an English garden, complete with Freemasonry-inspired follies including a temple of Mars, an enchanted grotto and an Italian vineyard. Hausmann added a copy of the Rialto Bridge in Venice a hundred years later.

Parc des Buttes-Chaumont 19e arrondissement

Previously the site of a gibbet and then a refuse dump, as well as a gypsum quarry, it became a park in the 1860s. A compressed romantic dream of a park with rolling hills, in its center is a lake in which sits the Île du Belyvédère, a solitary rock spire connected by a rope bridge to a cliff from which a waterfall plunges into a grotto below. A miniature Temple of the Sybil sits atop the île. The infamous suicide bridge is stone and has a low parapet. Another suspension bridge, designed by Eiffel, connects to the base of the île around which stone steps wrap to the top. The water is pumped back up from the grotto to the top of the falls. You may join Aragon and Breton on late night jaunts into the park, to stare at an obelisk used as a local bulletin board.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

DREAMHOUSES OF PARIS

Les Halles

1e arrondissement

The heart and the belly of Paris, a vast wholesale food market in the center of the city that opens in the small hours to supply shops and restaurants. Late-night revellers weave past early morning porters, as vegetables, songs, and rubbish all spill out into the street. By 9:00 a.m., this iron-framed glass structure has already closed for the day.

Luna Park

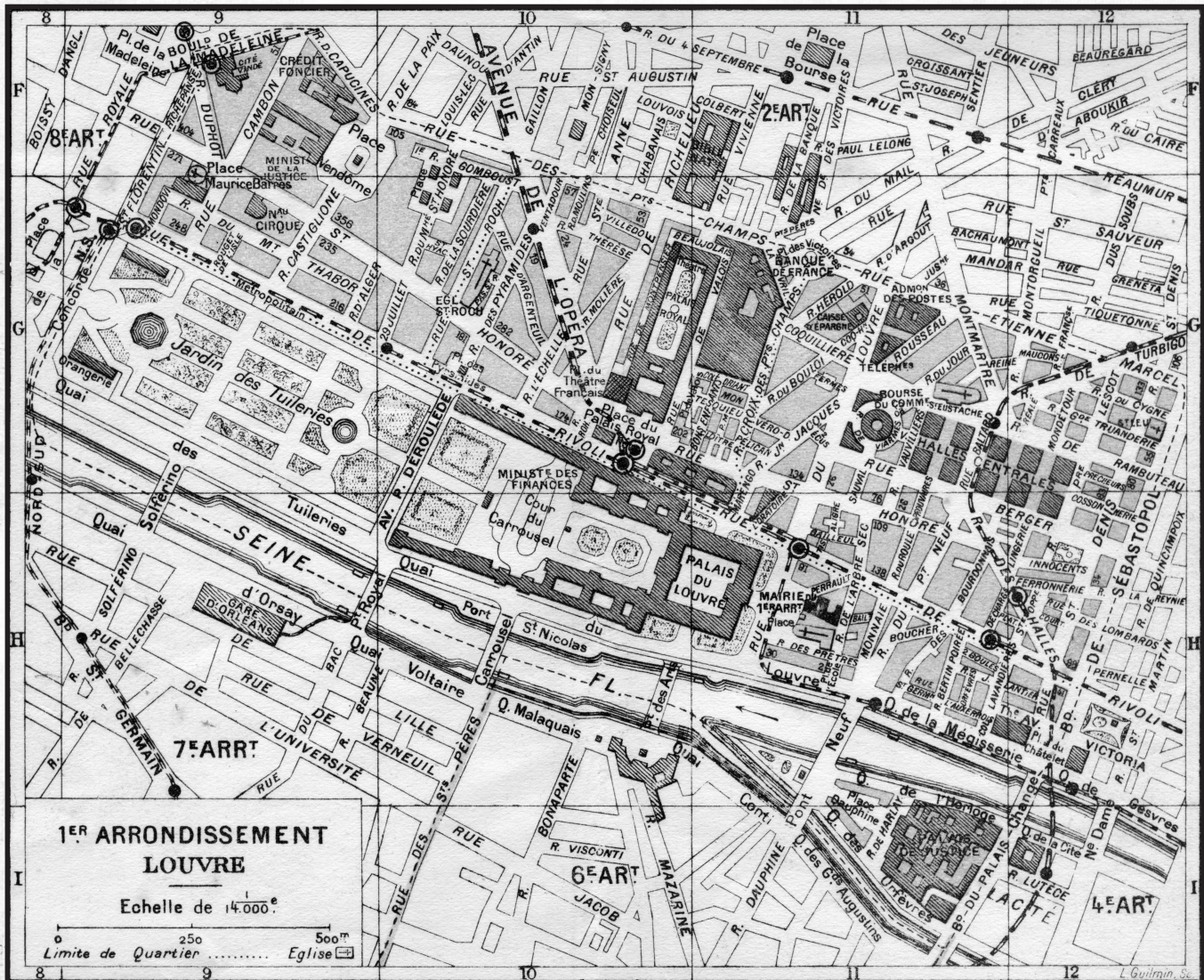
Porte Maillot, 17e arrondissement

An amusement park on the outskirts of the city until 1931. It was the second one in France after Magic City (on the left bank by Alma Bridge). It has rollercoasters, a dance hall, one hundred penguins, and a Shoot the Chute. It is open from 1:00 p.m. until midnight, costing one franc to enter. The dreaminess of the lights, the chance of encounters with single women and the music all attract Breton and friends.

La Zone

Around Paris

When the Enceinte Thiers was torn down after its failure to protect Paris from the Prussians in 1870, it left a 250-meter-wide band of empty space around the whole city. Largely made up of muddy embankments, this soon become the home to many transients and then, in shanty towns, dislodged poor, particularly after Hausmann's clearances. Eugène Atget, a working-class photographer and hero of the surrealists,



documented the lives of the *zoniers* in his photographs. Many lived by scouring rubbish tips for anything that could be salvaged or recycled and then sold in the markets or to factories as scrap.

La Bibliothèque Nationale
56 rue de Richelieu (books),
1e arrondissement,
5 rue Vivienne (coins and cabinet
of curiosities), 2e arrondissement

The national library of France was created in the 14th century. By 1920 the collection has grown to 4,050,000 volumes and 11,000 manuscripts. Georges Bataille works as a coin specialist in the rue Vivienne, which not only holds over half a million coins but also Louis XIV's cabinet of curiosities, which he had inherited from his uncle Gaston of Orléans and to which he added the treasures of Childeric, fifth-century king of the Franks, and Leopold, Holy Roman emperor for the second half of the 17th century.

The forbidden collection, *l'enfer de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, literally the hell of the national library, was so called because, early on, books went there prior to incineration. They were tightly wrapped to avoid prying eyes and weighed on departure from the library and arrival at the furnaces, to ensure nothing escaped the purifying fire. In the first printed catalogue of the books coauthored by Guillaume Apollinaire in 1913, much of the collection is erotica, although even here some of the entries have been suppressed. Needless to say, those in the know seek access in search of obscurer texts.

La Maison de la Santé
53 rue Montaigne,
8e arrondissement

Here stands the clinic where, from 1926, Serge Voronoff implanted rejuvenating monkey testicles into men, with varying degrees of success.

PEOPLE

The surrealists moved around a lot in the period. Here are some of the places they, their lovers and their rivals lived. Figures not extensively covered in chapter one are given identifiers to help you place them.

Louis Aragon

1 rue Le Regrattier 4e 2e arrondissement
(at Nancy Cunard's, 1925)

rue du Château

5 rue Campagne-Première, 14e, 1929

Hans Arp

Sculptor, early Dadaist, friend to Ernst

Maison Atelier 21 rue des Châtaigners,
Clamart, 1928—

Constantin Brancusi

Sculptor

Atelier 8 impasse Ronsin 15e

Victor Brauner

Painter/sculptor, introduced to the group by Tanguy in 1932. Repeatedly paints figures of men with their eyes gouged out; in August 1938 loses an eye intervening in a fight between fellow artists. In the late Thirties starts painting lycanthrope paintings.

72 rue Lepic 18e, 1930–1934

André Breton

Hôtel des Grands Hommes 5 place du
Panthéon 5e, 4e étage, 1919–1920

Hôtel des Ecoles 15 rue Delambre 14e,
1920–1921

42 rue Fontaine 9e, 1922

André met Nadjia on October 4, 1926,
in place Franz-Liszt

René Crevel

6 rue des Marronniers 16e chez tont
gandrillas diplomat hilirn 7e étage,
1927–1928

33 rue Antoine-Chantin, 1929–1931

24 rue Montevideo 3e, 1931, 1933–
1935

25 rue Nicolo, 1931–1932

avenue Victor Hugo chez Léon Bailby,
1932–1933

Lise Deharme

Writer, editor and crush object to various surrealists, most notably Breton.

146 rue de Grenelle, 7e

Robert Desnos

45 rue Blomet 15e, 1926—

Paul Éluard

3 rue Ordener 18e

3bis rue Chaussée, Saint Brice la forêt,
1922–1924

42 rue Fontaine

7 rue Becquerel, 1932–1934

Alberto Giacometti

Sculptor

46 rue Hippolyte-Maindron, 14e, 1927—

André Masson and Joan Miró

Atelier 45 rue Blomet 15e (Masson:
1921–1926, Miró: 1921–1927)

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

DREAMHOUSES OF PARIS

Charles et Marie-Laure de Noailles

Art Patrons

Hôtel de Noailles 11 place des États Unis, 16e

Michel Leiris

Writer

53bis quai des Grands-Augustins 6e

Jacques Prévert

Poet; friend of Tanguy; connection to the surrealists more social than aesthetic

54 rue du Château 14e

Man Ray

Hotel des Écoles, 15 rue Delambre 14e

studio 3bis rue Campagne-Première 14e

8 rue du Val-de-Grace 5e

Pierre Reverdy

Poet of Apollinaire's generation; mentor to a young Breton, later repudiated

12 rue Cortot 18e

Pierre Soupault

Poet

41 quai de Bourbon 4e

Gertrude Stein

Poet, leader of American expat art circle; friend to Man Ray, until he expects her to pay him for taking her portrait

rue de Fleurus

Yves Tanguy

54 rue du Château 14e

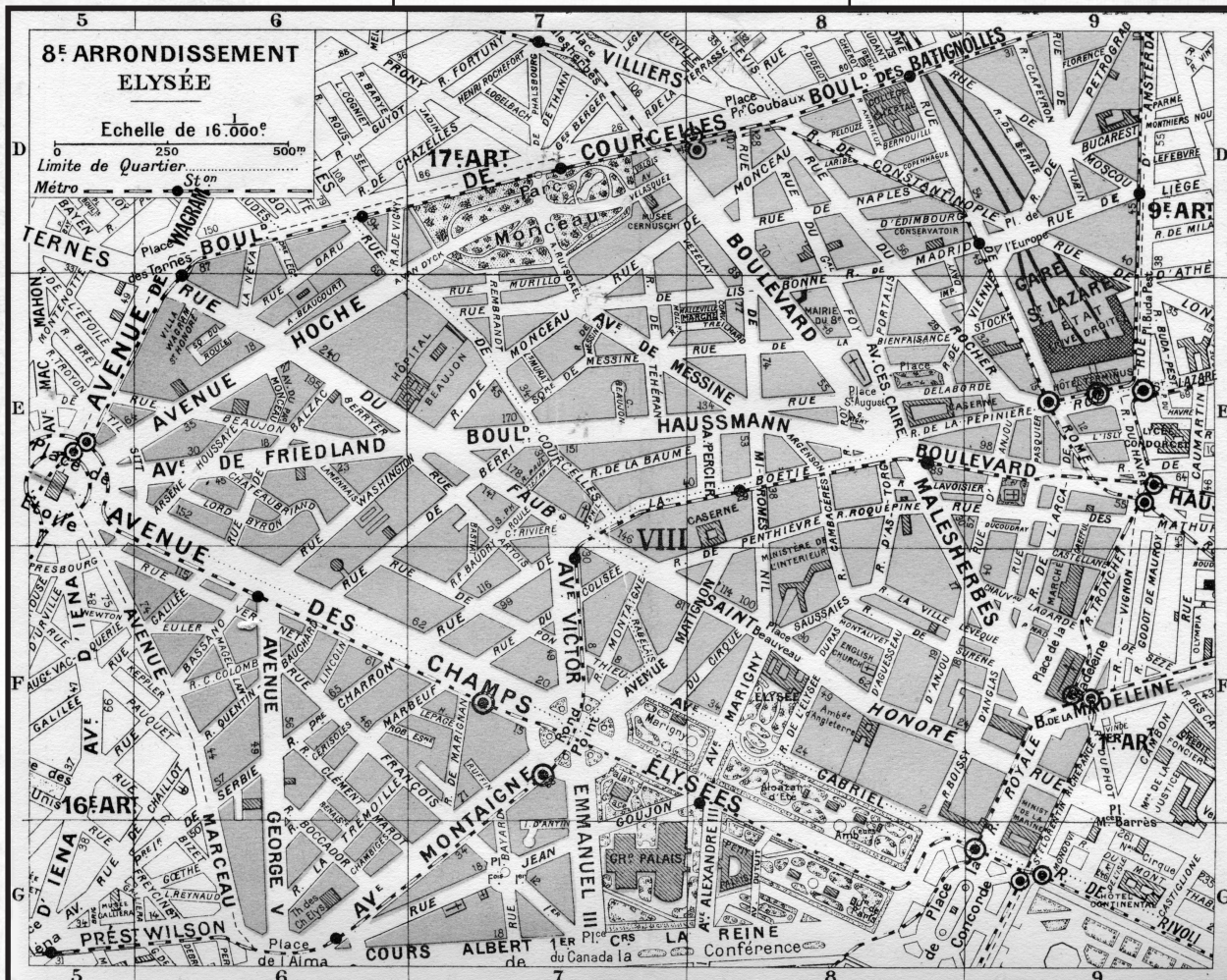
Tristan Tzara

15 avenue Junot 18e, 1925—

Roger Vitrac

Poet; accompanies Breton on his futile 1924 attempt to walk his way into dream

17 rue de Palestro 2e



PARIS OCCULTE

"I have examined maps of the city with the greatest care, yet have never again found the Rue d'Auseil. These maps have not been modern maps alone, for I know that names change. I have, on the contrary, delved deeply into all the antiquities of the place, and have personally explored every region, of whatever name, which could possibly answer to the street I knew as the Rue d'Auseil."

— "The Music of Erich Zann"

It was nameless at its birth, when men crawled back to the Seine marshes once the Atlantean floods receded. After six thousand years, it took the name of "Craftsmen," or Parisio, which it kept even after the Romans conquered it. Paris wanted to build. It built itself into a throne and prize for kings. Its birth waters stopped fires; its saints and heroes stopped Huns and Vikings. Its cathedrals were the first to grow gargoyles; among the first to grow universities. Demons and truths, lowering above philosophers, poets, and painters. Wolves came in with the ice; plague came in with the rats; Paris chewed their bones into mortar for more buildings, painted with the blood of martyrs and kings. Paris is a sentient perpetuation of its own past, visible in monuments and graves and palaces and alleys. With the breath of such ghosts on its neck, is it any wonder that Paris sometimes erupts in revolution and riots? That its people try to throw off the dead hand of the past, the dead weight of history?

PARIS SURVIVES.

To flank such rioters' barricades and to cleanse the city's arteries of the centuries' detritus, the Baron Haussmann drove broad boulevards through blocks and quarters untouched since the Middle Ages. From 1850 to 1870, Haussmann's modernizers demolished

twenty thousand houses, building twice that many in their stead, all lined up beneath mansard roofs, faced with white quarry stone. But behind that façade, the Old Paris remains. Streets that fell off the official maps appear on cabalistic charts; shops that sell imaginary books or unthinkable goods flourish like rats behind the boulevard walls. In the rue Morgue a man trains an orangutan to kill; in the rue Sainte-Cécile a sculptor turns alchemist; in the rue d'Auseil a mute German musician keeps Azathoth at bay.

PARIS CONCEALS.

In these hidden chambers, the spymaster Rachkovsky forged *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. In its secret cellars, the Jacobins plotted against the king — and against each other. In discreet drawing rooms, Catherine de' Medici unleashed massacre, and Madame de Montespan invoked Satan. The deranged clock maker Naundorff claimed to be the Lost Dauphin; the librarian Nodier delved deep in the Arsenal archives for vampires and suicides; the mad Russian Gorguloff comes from Monaco to kill the president of the Republic in 1931. Men who make millions from perfume and champagne sponsor the new Jacobins of the Right: the monarchist Action Française, the militarist Croix de Feu, the fascist Jeunesses Patriotes, Solidarité Française, and Francisme. On February 6, 1934, they riot in the place de la Concorde, where Robespierre had installed the guillotine and where King Louis Philippe had raised the obelisk of Ramses II. Surrealists man the barricades against them; Tanguy loses a tooth to a police nightstick. The army stays loyal, the police gun down the rioters, and the Republic does not fall. Yet.

PARIS CONSPIRES.

Karl Marx, Ho Chi Minh, Benjamin Franklin — conspirators come to

Paris from everywhere. Irish fleeing the English, Poles fleeing the Russians, Whites fleeing the Reds, Italians and Germans fleeing Mussolini and Hitler: foreign quarters in Paris are conspiratorial quarters. Some conspire against France: her empire grows restive. The Arsenal a looted library, the Louvre a looted museum; the spoils of conquest grow rank. Indo-Chinese, Algerians, Senegalese, and Moroccans come to the imperial capital, bringing their desires with them, to a city where desire takes material form. It breathes diesel and exhales smoke. It grows morose drinking rain and wine. It wallows in millennia of suffering and striving, a pool of gold and shit running together. It kills human insects with its beauty and with its callousness; it spreads its joyous poison through their bodies and wastes their flesh with its pleasures and pains.

PARIS CONSUMES.

Behind that gross world there must be another, a world behind the wall of sleep. The City of Light is also the City of Twilight: the Violet Hour of the demimonde and the Green Flash of the absintheur both hide their faces from the sun. These hidden figures stalk Paris' nightmares: a phantom in the opera, invisible Horla coming down the Seine on foreign ships, werewolves tearing at the graves of Pere Lachaise. But some seek them nonetheless. In his youth on Corsica, Napoleon wrote of a Hidden Prophet, and in his triumph entered the Great Pyramid alone. Charles VI had the cabalist Jacquemin Gringonneur paint him a deck of enigmatic tarots and went mad, slaughtering his own knights in 1392. The astronomer Bailly sought Hyperborea; the lawyer Jacolliot discovered Agartha; the painter Redon depicted worlds and visions "at the service of the invisible."

PARIS DREAMS.

A Brief and Secret History of Paris

In 250 BC, when the Parisian Gauls built their hill fort on the Left Bank, their **Druids** sanctified it with human sacrifices. When the Romans threw their bridge across the Seine at Arcueil three centuries later, they poured the concrete over the severed heads of their Gallic foes. The Gauls in turn beheaded St. Denis, but slowly Taranis and Jupiter gave way to Christ, at least on the tops of the hills where cathedrals rose.

The **Compagnons du Devoir** designed and built those cathedrals using sacred geometry and occult ratios discovered in Moorish grimoires and forbidden tomes carried back from the East by Christ's soldiers. But even Christ's soldiers were not always victorious; in 1187, the **Knights Templar** lost the Holy Land and the True Cross to Saladin. They removed their main commandery from Jerusalem to the Paris temple, bringing sealed chests with them never revealed to their supposed patron, the Pope.

The next century was one of turmoil and heresy in Paris, as though some dark wisdom had tainted the minds of the sensitive and the scholarly. The alchemist and neo-Platonist **Amaury de Chartres** and ten of his sect were burned at the stake in 1209. **Roger Bacon**, the great English magus, was imprisoned in Paris after sending a "book of wonders" to Pope Clement IV in 1268; the alchemical doctor **Arnold of Villanova** fled a clerical prosecution in 1300. Finally, King Philip IV arrested the Templars in 1308 amid rumors of blasphemous rites and depraved sorceries. By his order, the Templar Grand Master Jacques de Molay was burned at the stake in Paris in 1314 on the Île des Juifs.

The bookseller and alchemist **Nicolas Flamel** (1330–1418) avoided prosecution during his own long life: perhaps evidence of the power of his

elixirs — or of some bargain made with powers temporal or occult. Today he scuffles in the catacombs, lord of Paris's ghouls, guardian of the gate between waking and dreaming.

Such dark bargains became more common even as ever more witches and werewolves came to trial; the rot worked itself ever closer to the throne. **Gilles de Rais**, marshal of France, proved to be a necromancer in 1440; in 1571, the sorcerer **Trois-Échelles** named 1,500 fellow cultists of Satan before King Charles IX. Secret Catholic societies such as the **Compagnie du Saint-Sacrement** and the **Compagnie du Saint-Sulpice** tried to cleanse the clergy of this taint, but found themselves repeatedly tempted into politics or diverted by higher authority or both.

Another Satanic cult, this one including King Louis XIV's mistress Madame de Montespan, sponsored a **ring of poisoners** and abortionists; a secret court implicated over four hundred suspects (thirty-six of whom were executed) before a panicked monarch quashed the investigation in 1682. By this time, refugee Irish and Scots had brought Freemasonry to France, where, under the guidance of the Duke of Wharton (the founder of England's Hell-Fire Club), it adopted the secrets of the **Compagnons** and **Templars** to become **Grand Orient Masonry**. Benjamin Franklin joined the **Neuf Sœurs**, a Grand Orient lodge; he also investigated the magnetizer **Franz Anton Mesmer** at the request of King Louis XVI.

Mesmer left Paris in disgrace in 1785, just one mysterious experimenter in a generation of secret societies and mystical illuminations personified by the mysterious **Comte de Saint-Germain**, who "died" the year before after a career spanning seventy years in which he was never observed to age or eat. Saint-Germain's rival magus, **Cagliostro**, escaped Paris (and a trial for forgery) the same year as Mesmer, leaving

behind the "Egyptian-Freemasonic" **Rite of Misraïm**. The Misraïte occultist **Charles Nodier**, cataloging the library of the Vatican looted by Napoleon, triggered an "Occult Revolution" a coincidental seventy years later, when his apprentice **Eliphas Levi** published *Dogme et rituel de la haute magie*. That same year (1855), the medical teacher **Allan Kardec** was converted to spiritism at a séance in Paris; his *Spirits' Book* became a sacred text of Brazilian Umbanda, and for searchers worldwide.

Levi especially sought earlier ages' secrets, from the occult tarot to the secrets of resurrection. He reached back to 1622, when the mysterious **Rosicrucian Order** briefly surfaced in Paris, and joined renewed Rosy Cross societies in England and France. Another of Nodier's disciples, the novelist Victor Hugo, met the recuperating **Alexandre St-Yves d'Alveydre** on Jersey and directed him to the papers of the eighteenth-century Pythagorean and esoteric linguist **Fabre d'Olivet**. From that work, St-Yves developed his theory of **Synarchy**, the occult direction of society. He also contacted superior spiritual entities in Agartha, an underworld realm beneath Central Asia, but destroyed all but two copies of his book on the subject.

Deep in the Bibliothèque Nationale, the researcher Gérard Encausse, a.k.a. **Papus**, uncovered his own secret documents, of the Martinist mystics of the late 18th century. He blended Martinism, Rosicrucianism, tarot, and Egyptian Freemasonry into a syncretic occultism, founding a dizzying series of orders and lodges, beginning with the **Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix** in 1884. His partners in that order included the novelist **Joséphin Péladan**, the poet **Stanislas de Guaita**, and the tarot-scholar **Oswald Wirth**. De Guaita fought a "magical war" against a rival Satanic sex-magic order including the defrocked **Abbé Boullan** and the novelist **J. K.**

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

A BRIEF AND SECRET HISTORY

Huysmans; the strain broke up the KORC in 1892. Papus joined the Paris lodge of the **Golden Dawn** in 1895; Péladan created a Rosicrucian salon of occult-minded symbolist artists in 1892; de Guaïta died of a mysterious ailment in 1897.

The Paris lodge of the Golden Dawn admitted Aleister Crowley in 1900, triggering the three-year running schism that destroyed the order. The Paris lodge limped along until 1919 under **Moina Bergson Mathers**; she removed to Britain thereafter. By then the “Occult Revival” was over, and Paris was reeling from the horrors of the Great War. Madness and chaos had replaced the rococo logic of the Rosicrucian orders,

and the golden dawn had vanished under a new black sun.

Occult Societies

But nothing is ever dead, especially in the occult. Every Paris tradition of those three millennia still waits, perhaps lying dormant behind a shabby office door in an unfashionable arrondissement. There are at least two orders of Druids in Paris, the BOD (Bardes, Ovates et Druides) and the CBG (Collège Bardique des Gaules). The Compagnons Charpentiers still exist, divided between followers of “Maître Jacques” (on rue de Mabilon) and “Maître Soubise” (on avenue Jean Jaurès), a medieval distinction not even they can explain any more. An Ordre

du Temple founded in 1804 is only the best known of the Templar lodges of Masonry; the Chevaliers de la Table Ronde (on avenue Rapp) are Theosophist grail-seekers. The Grand Orient Lodge itself still flourishes, headquartered in a converted convent on the rue Cadet with a library of fifteen thousand occult and Masonic works.

Purely occult orders in Paris include the Association Rosicrucienne, Fraternitas Thesauri Lucis, and AROT (Association pour la Rénovation de l’Occultisme Traditionnel), a syncretic study group (at 15 rue Lord Byron) founded by the psychologist Maryse Choisy. Specific traditions carry on as well: the Kardecist spiritists have at least two temples (at rue



Vernigaud and rue du Pré-Saint-Gervais), the Sufi Aissaoua dervishes meet in the Jardin des Plantes, and a Gnostic church congregates appropriately enough on rue des Martyrs. Darker paths wind through Paris also: “erotic Satanist” covens (choose from rue Buffon, rue Champollion, or rue de Vaugirard) spice prostitution with blasphemy, the “seeress” Mme Floriane Brave heads a necromantic circle called the Temple de l’Aï at 27 rue Bleue, and the Très Haut Lunaire (THL) group in the Meudon woods and the Quartier St-Merri attempts to combine Satanism, alchemy, peyote, Crowleian magick, and worship of the Templar demon Baphomet into a modernized, syncretic black magic.

All of these traditions, practices, symbols, and occult sciences are grease for the surrealists’ bicycle. They practice “automatic writing” in the spiritist tradition, recreate Mesmer’s “magnetic sleep” methods, and harness Rosicrucian emblems and African tribal motifs alike. Max Ernst emulates shamanic rites; Picasso conceals alchemy in his paintings and drawings; Leonora Carrington pores over histories of magic; their bête noire Cocteau studies theosophy and Fabré d’Olivet. And, of course, they have discovered ways into the hidden world, the goal of occult questers since ancient Egypt. This gives them power, which makes them a threat, a rival, a target, or an opportunity to other societies watching the gate or looking for their own key.

FRÈRES D’HÉLIOPOLIS

This alchemical and sorcerous brotherhood comes together after the war around one initiate scholar, known only as Fulcanelli. Its exoteric head is the alchemist Eugène Canseliet; its body the artist Jean-Julien Champagne, the socialite Irène Hillel-Erlanger, the occult chemist Louise Barbe, the bookseller and publisher Pierre Dujols (his occult bookstore Librairie

George Gurdjieff

The Greek-Armenian guru Gurdjieff was born in Alexandropol, probably in 1866. After a lengthy period of occult wandering through Central Asia, Thibet, the Near East, India, and Rome, he returned to Russia in 1912 to teach his “Fourth Way” mystic tradition. Gurdjieff holds that mankind is born and lives asleep, and only a magical or initiatory act can awaken human beings to the world of the Real. He expresses these truths variously in memoir, ballet and dance, proverbs and jokes, calisthenics, Socratic dialogue, and metaphysics. After the Revolution, Gurdjieff left Russia for Georgia, then in 1921 takes the Prieuré des Basses Loges, a château in Fontainebleau, just outside Paris. His Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man labors on there, through scandal (including the deaths of writer Katherine Mansfield under his care in 1923, and his wife of cancer caused by radium-water therapy in 1926) and debt until its closing in 1932. Many modernist writers, artists, and publishers fall under the guru’s sway; his public-relations skills and adaptable teachings keep him on the occult radar despite his straitened circumstances. From 1932 to 1937, he leads an all-female group of seekers called The Rope, meeting at his cramped flat at 6 rue des Colonels-Renard; after that point (even during WWII), he sells carpets and takes on individual pupils.

du Merveilleux is on rue de Rennes), the Martinist mystic (and THL guru) Jules Boucher, the sons of Ferdinand de Lesseps, and a younger chemist named Gaston Sauvage. Rumored Heliopolitans such as the astronomer Camille Flammarion; Barbe’s husband, the glandular surgeon Serge Voronoff; and similar exalted personalities respond diffidently to questions on the topic. Hillel-Erlanger and Barbe both died of poison in 1919, shortly after Hillel-Erlanger’s book *Voyages Through the Kaleidoscope* came out. In 1922, Canseliet uses a philosopher’s stone provided by Fulcanelli to transmute gold to lead at the Sarcelles gasworks, an operation witnessed by Champagne and Sauvage. The first of three promised volumes by Fulcanelli, *The Mystery of the Cathedrals*, appears in 1926, the year of Fulcanelli’s “disappearance.” The second volume, *The Dwellings of the Philosophers*, appears in 1929. Fulcanelli briefly reappears in 1937 to warn the physicist Heilbronner about the alchemical potential of atomic research, and about the Nazis’ interest in it.

Fulcanelli’s true identity remains a consuming mystery to the Paris occult scene: he may have been the astrophysicist Jules Violle, a member of the House of Valois, a composite identity assumed by the Heliopolitans or by Canseliet and Champagne together (which Canseliet continues to deny after Champagne’s death in 1932 of absinthe poisoning), a tulpa or dream entity, or the returned Comte de Saint-Germain.

INSTITUT MÉTAPHYSIQUE INTERNATIONAL

The wealthy industrialist Jean Meyer founded this psychic investigation institute in 1919, insisting on rigorously objective research regardless of his own Kardecist beliefs. Members include the astronomer Camille Flammarion and the Nobel-winning neurophysiologist (and close friend of Papus) Charles Richet. Membership is only by appointment. The first director, Dr. Gustave Geley, researched ectoplasm under laboratory conditions; after 1924, the next

director Dr. Eugène Osty focuses the IMI on ESP and telepathy. IMI researchers also develop psychokinetic test protocols, experiment with telepathic sleep and hypnosis, and (under chemical engineer René Warcollier) attempt clairvoyant “remote viewing,” a topic that later attracts considerable government attention.

After 1931, Meyer’s death badly damages the IMI’s finances, leaving them open to possible pressure from wealthy Rightist occultists looking for an edge in the secret wars for Paris’s dreamscape.

MOUVEMENT SYNARCHIQUE D’EMPIRE

After the death of Papus in 1916, the Martinist orders splintered again. The political arm of Martinism embraced St-Yves d’Alveydre’s synarchy, founding the Comité Synarchique Central (CSC) under “Paul Yésir” in 1921. Yésir is actually Victor Blanchard, head of the secretariat of the French Chamber of Deputies; he continues to aggrandize his power in the Masonic and Martinist shadow world until WWII. In 1930, after a decade of recruiting young, ambitious civil servants and scientists from the Polytechnique and other *grandes écoles*, the CSC becomes the Mouvement Synarchique d’Empire, meeting in the avenue du Coq. Its goal is the “revolution from above,” the alteration of society to a technocratic, statist hierarchy directed by occult wisdom. Members of the MSE include General Maxime Weygand, financier Jean Monnet, paper magnate Jean Coutrot, deputy minister of finance Yves Bouthillier, and other influential men.

The “armed wing” of the MSE, “Organization Marie,” comprises a number of far-right groups, including CSARN, OSARN, le Spirale (within the Army), UCAD (within the Air Force),

and other splinter groups all devoted to violent action including terrorism, arms-running, kidnapping, and revenge murder. Funded by French industrialists (Lesieur, Coty, L’Oréal, Michelin, etc.), Marie is better known as La Cagoule, “the Hood,” after the gray hoods worn by its hit squads and riot cadres. La Cagoule begins large-scale operations in 1935, but exists as an internal enforcement arm before that date. Based in Nice but active in Paris, La Cagoule’s operational head from 1935 is Eugène Deloncle, known as “Uncle” to the membership.

POLAIRES

Founded by the two esoteric musicians Mario Fille and Cesare Accomani at 36 avenue Junot in 1927, the Fraternité Polaire pursues gnostic knowledge as revealed by a mathematical oracle received by Fille in 1908 from a mysterious figure in the hills outside Rome. The oracle equations provide communications with and responses from the “Rosicrucian Initiatic Centre” of Agartha, located in the Himalayas. Initiates contacted through the oracle include not only these discarnate Himalayan intelligences, but the Comte de Saint-Germain, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (after his death in 1930), and Roger Bacon. The Polaires briefly associate with the fascist magus René Guénon, but he rejects them as unserious; they forge stronger ties with Victor Blanchard, the English medium Grace Cooke, the synarchist Vivien Postel du Mas, and a Cambodian prince named You-Kantor. Their remit expands to herbalism, natural magic, dowsing, and astrology; they become a respected “neutral player” in the occult rivalries in Paris.

In 1929 the Polaires begin excavations around Montségur in southern France, looking for the Holy Grail and other Cathar treasures; in 1931, one of their associates on that quest is Otto Rahn, who joins the Ahnenerbe in 1936.

LES VEILLEURS

In 1919, the alchemist and Theosophist René Schwaller founded Les Veilleurs, “the Watchers,” as a right-wing political occult society. Among Schwaller’s first recruits was the Lithuanian poet Oscar Vladislav de Lubicz Milosz, who adopted Schwaller that year. Other members of the Veilleurs include the poet and theatrical director Carlos Larronde, the cubist painter Fernand Léger, the occult joiner Camille Flammarion, and a footloose Rudolf Hess, who perhaps took inspiration from Les Veilleurs’ brown shirts and jackboots. Cocteau, at this time a dedicated social climber in these circles, embarks on a multi-decade friendship with Schwaller, which may extend to full membership in the group. Although Schwaller de Lubicz dissolves the overt Veilleurs in 1920, his apparat continues to infiltrate the synarchist, alchemical, and esoteric movements in Paris. He studies art with Matisse and synarchy with Vivien Postel du Mas, building a network of contacts in Paris even as he establishes a homeopathic laboratory in Switzerland (Suhalia, at St-Moritz in 1924) and an archaeological-mystical study site at Luxor in Egypt (after 1938). Suhalia supplies stained glass for Hans Arp, Joan Miró, and churches across France. In 1927, Schwaller de Lubicz discloses his relationship to the discarnate entity Aor and marries his wife, Isha. Postel du Mas and his occultist partner Jeanne Canudo overtly re-establish the Veilleurs in 1930 to co-ordinate with the MSE; Schwaller removes to Majorca to study the papers of the thirteenth-century cabalist and astrologer Ramon Llull. During this decade, he claims to have initiated Fulcanelli and begins spending more time on his yacht, retreating to it entirely between 1936 and 1938.

Mythos Paris

"We're working on a task that's enigmatic even for us, in front of a volume of Fantômas fixed to the wall by forks. Visitors, born in faraway climes or at our own door, are helping us design an extraordinary machine which is for killing what exists so that what does not exist may be complete."

— Louis Aragon, "A Wave of Dreams"

Any city as full of art, literature, and music as Paris becomes a playground for those who follow those Muses into madness: if Providence produced one Henry Wilcox, and Boston one Richard Pickman, what must Paris breed in its host of conservatories, archives, and ateliers? Add to that its deserved reputation for sin, for greed, for cruelty, and another facet of the Mythos comes into view: degeneracy, degradation and a slow drift into the Old Ones' orbit. Like London and New York, Paris is an imperial city, colonized by its colonials; their demons follow them into exile, unto "Babylone-sur-Seine." Above and below all those things, however, Paris is a city of mysteries: the indefinable viol-music on the rue d'Auseil, the presumed-dead medical correspondent of Dr. Muñoz, and the unknown manuscript expert consulted by Charles Dexter Ward in 1924 are but halting first strokes. The shape beneath the stone, the shadow on the canvas, are for you to bring out.

Core Book Cults

Many of the Mythos cults appearing in the *Trail of Cthulhu* core book (and one from *Bookhounds of London*) have a presence in Paris, in the Dreamlands, or both. Surrealist Dreamhounds might stumble over their tendrils or deliberately pick fights with these representatives of the worst of all old orders.

AHNENERBE

Thanks to the Nazis' short-sighted approach to "degenerate art," the SS

occult specialists of the Ahnenerbe enter the dream game at a considerable disadvantage. Perhaps some of the more powerful and enigmatic works kept back from overseas sale by the Nazi government have been "weaponized" for dream travel, possibly in connection with Weimar-era experiments in somnambulism. But more likely, any Ahnenerbe presence in the Dreamlands comes via a ghoul tunnel beneath Bad Kudowa, Silesia — the SS has no shortage of fresh corpses with which to barter, after all. The relevant Ahnenerbe "institute" investigating the Dreamlands is the Wurtenforschung, or Dwelling Mound Research bureau under Dr. Werner Haarnagel. The other likely Ahnenerbe path into the Dreamlands runs through the mescaline experiments of Dr. Kurt Plötner, of the Ahnenerbe's "Department R" at Dachau. (Keepers concerned with strict historical accuracy should note that these experiments only begin in 1944, as far as surviving records show.)

The Ahnenerbe presence on the physical streets of Paris is part of the ongoing "political warfare" campaign of the Ribbentropburo, SD, Abwehr, and other German agencies. It operates not only out of the German embassy at 78 rue de Lille (7e) but out of various safe houses, "Franco-German Comity League" fronts, and bookshops used as cutouts for German intelligence. The Ahnenerbe are more likely to run into Dreamhounds while investigating more conventional occult groups who cross paths with the surrealists, but an intuitive Nazi art historian might well notice something uncanny at a salon or exhibition and follow up.

BROTHERHOOD OF THE YELLOW SIGN

Aside from a very sporadically mined outpost in the Jura Mountains, the mi-go are almost completely absent from France. The Brotherhood in Paris thus had little to occupy itself until 1891,

when the play *The King in Yellow* appeared in French. Although the police were thorough in suppressing the publication and burning all confiscated copies, they could not complete the job. Contacts with, and worship of, Hastur exploded in Paris, with aftereffects including the "magical war" that eventually killed Stanislas de Guaita, St-Yves d'Alveydre's contact with the invisible place-entity he disguised as "Agartha" in his writings, and the mysterious death of Georges Seurat at age thirty-one. Although that first wave of madness burned itself out as the "Yellow Nineties" ran their course, the futility and madness of the Great War, followed by the privations and despair of the Depression, have rekindled it in half a score of atonalist quintets, experimental theaters, cinemas of the absurd, and *recherché* painters' salons.

The most devoted scions of Hastur in the conspiratorial, as opposed to the artistic, underworld of Paris belong to the group known as the Alpha Galates, the "First Galatians." This term refers to their status as the "first of Gauls," due to a lineage descended from the Hyades, Hastur, and Aldebaran via Carcosa and the "quinotaur blood" of the Merovingian dynasty, a heritage revealed to their group in a series of horrific initiations carried out by their seigneur, one Georges Monti. As a teenager, he joined Abbé Boullan's Satanist coven and caught the fringes of the Hastur immanence of the 1890s, then switched allegiance to Péladan's Rosicrucian group after 1900. Since that time a ruthless joiner and betrayer of occult confidences, Monti worked his way through Freemasonry (Egyptian and Grand Orient), Aleister Crowley's OTO (briefly heading a schismatic Paris chapter in the 1920s), and both the German and French secret services as a double agent during the Great War. In 1934, Monti forcibly initiates a fourteen-year-old named Pierre Plantard into the sect as a deliberate avatar of the King in Yellow, deranging him with constant talk of his royal blood. One of Monti's many enemies poisons him in 1936, leaving

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

MYTHOS PARIS

Plantard as the young *roi fainéant* of the Alpha Galates. This cult of deranged, blood-obsessed occultists, writers, and artists gravitates to the quasi-fascist Right throughout the 1930s; surrealist writers of a certain sensitivity (such as the young Gérard de Sède) find the Galates' obsessions — the Merovingians, lost treasures, vines, towers in the Pyrenees, black suns — bleeding into their own work by unconscious transmission.

CULT OF CTHULHU

Paris is not a seaport; the harbors at Cherbourg and Le Havre hold minor sects of Cthulhu worshippers. Since Cthulhu's abortive rise in 1925, many artists find themselves obsessed by the entity, but the cult in the city itself centers on the Gallery of Paleontology (in the Jardin des Plantes) at the National Museum of Natural History. A hidden exhibit in the sewers beneath the building holds certain monstrous remains excavated on French Pacific islands and in Southeast Asia. Much of the cult is from the Cham tribe in coastal Annam in Indo-China, generally hated and feared by ethnic Vietnamese and Cochinese, but Kanaks from New Caledonia and Tchou-Tchou from upper Laos also congregate here. Every once in a while, a French magus or hierophant attempts to weld the cult into an instrument of sorcerous or criminal power, only to find himself devoured by his erstwhile minions when his devotion to Cthulhu proves inadequate by their lights.

KEIRECHEIRES

As mentioned in *Bookhounds of London*, this cult of Y'golonac comprises English upper-class degenerates educated at Brichester University in the previous century, and those they taught there, and at Cambridge and the University of London. The Keirecheires regularly travel to France, as do most upper-class, artistically minded Britons at one time or another. One of them, Victor Masquell,

passed over for a ruling cult position as a Finger of the Hand, remains in Paris as an expatriate. Here he has repeatedly invoked Y'golonac, and, as a result, his personality has become a mere flesh glove for the god.

Y'golonac has heard the surrealists crossing the boundaries and redrawing the rim of the world, and it wants to absorb them and use them to map the way out of the labyrinth in which it is trapped. Y'golonac appears to many of them in the form of a minotaur, trying to lure them to its prison-house. Masquell's job for the god is to seduce and incorporate the surrealists into the cult of Y'golonac in the waking world, using the resources of the Keirecheires: gallery shows, reviews good or bad, patronage political and artistic, and so forth. In 1936, the cult comes into contact with Georges Bataille, cementing his unromantic, materialistic version of the surrealist worldview. He founds the Société Acéphale around the symbol of a headless man with a burning heart in one hand, a dagger in the other, and a grinning skull over his groin. In its discussion of human sacrifice, ritual cannibalism and other depravities; does L'Acéphale further Y'golonac's emergence, or make an occulted warning against it?

WITCH-CULT

The witch-cult in medieval and early modern times feared local and clerical witch-finders in the provinces more than the generally lenient Parlement of Paris. Only ten percent of witchcraft cases appealed or tried before that body ended in execution; the exceptions include notorious cases such as the Roulet family of werewolves, the sorcerer Trois-Échelles, and the Dark Man of Haute-Vienne. As a result of such trials (and the plea bargains behind closed chamber doors), the witch-cult in Paris rapidly became entangled with the ring of politically connected Averognese sorcerers, diabolists, and Mythos cultists around the court and the upper reaches

of the Church; the "La Voisin" ring of poisoners included both witches and cultists of Tsathoggua, for example. During the Terror, the witch-cult found itself sacrificed by its erstwhile allies, its hyperspatial insights stolen and repurposed by the heirs of Eibon. Now, the witch-cult is restricted to a few dangerous but aged beldames in garrets and blind alleys hidden behind Paris's geometry (but findable on surrealist dream walks) and a single cult of Shub-Niggurath called the Cénacle d'Astarté (at 41 rue Vavin).

One Maria de Naglowska, a Russian émigré and sex magician, takes over that cult in 1929 when she arrives in Paris from Rome. An outspoken Satanist, friend of the reactionary magus Julius Evola, and publisher, her talks attract journalists like William Seabrook and surrealists including Man Ray and Andre Breton. In 1931, she forms the Confraternity of the Golden Arrow; in 1935, she tells the cult that she has a dream foretelling her death and leaves for Zurich. In 1936, her death is reported.

YITHIAN AGENTS

Yithian agents scour the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Arsenal, and the libraries of the Sorbonne for historical and occult records, interfere with and divert scientific experiments, and provide cover for transplanted Yithians doing likewise. In addition to such normal activities, they also specifically investigate artifacts and findings related to the Lemurians in Madagascar, a French colony, including art that shows a Lemurian or other bodiless influence. They also make preparations for Yithian-possessed scholars to travel into the Hoggar region of Algeria, where Atlantean ruins and primordial bioweapons such as the "black fever" can be recovered given the correct precautions. Surrealists who inadvertently (or purposefully) use Lemurian or Atlantean imagery thus draw the especial attention of Yith.

New Cults

These cults are all active in Paris during the surrealist epoch. Some, indeed, are active globally during this period, but even purely Parisian societies may, of course, have powerful allies or representatives anywhere from Martinique to Timbuctu, Beirut to Shanghai, Saïgon to Tahiti. Even outside direct French rule, French influence (and thus French occultism) manifests itself in Warsaw, Bucharest, Alexandria, New Orleans, Quebec, and other cosmopolitan cities.

CS

The lazy children of the elites, and the scholarship students desperate for a sniff of certainty, know it only as the CS. It is one of many secret societies and fraternities in the École Normale Supérieure, one of France's most elite grandes écoles, devoted to the sciences and humanities. If the grandes écoles are guarantees of placement for life, membership in the CS guarantees success within that success: the right parties, the correct patrons, the useful word. It operates on a cell system; members know only their recruiter and whom they recruit. Membership is expressed mathematically: the head is n° 1, his first recruit n° 1-1, his second n° 1-2, etc.

Those who pass the first set of tests, which seeks a combination of ruthlessness and open-mindedness, are told one of two cover stories: the CS stands for Compagnie du Saint-Azédarac, and it is a secret society of freethinkers within the Church; or it stands for Comité Synarchique, and it is a political-technocratic arm of Masonry. Those who accept either story are shunted into recruitment jobs or permanent ministry posts. Only those who dig further learn the nature of true reality, and that CS actually stands for Culte du Sadoqui. Such candidates must be almost arrogantly superior in mathematics (the Bourbaki group includes many CS initiates), languages,

or other primal lore. But the CS is true to its word: just as it has done since coming to Paris from Averroigne in the early 13th century, the Culte du Sadoqui places and protects its members in the heart of power in France.

Distribution: The cult of Tsathoggua (for such it is) infiltrates every branch of the French state, from the scientific academy to the army to the government. It is a major thread of the “old boys’ network” in France, and has survived wars and revolutions for centuries. Any French embassy or colony likely has a CS member or asset desperate for their favor pulling strings and looking away.

Hooks: In the Dreamlands, CS dreamers are most likely encountered in Lomar, Inganok, on dream-Saturn, and in various caverns and forests. The CS has access to the works of Eibon, Gaspard du Nord, Azédarac, Malygris, and other brilliant magi; travel to the Dreamlands is a matter of geometry for them, not art. However, ENS graduates know art, and, if they recognize the dream landscapes in surrealist work, they will follow those leads. If they notice the Dreamlands changing, they will follow those leads implacably.

Responses: The CS can destroy anyone it wishes, politically and socially in most cases. For more stubborn cases, they can use magic, or call in a favor from the ghoulish cult or one of the many murder churches they allow to operate.

CULTE DES GOULES

The ghoulish cult in Paris goes back at least to the Hundred Years’ War and the Black Death, when mounds of excess corpses made some packs of ghouls aggressive enough to wander Paris openly, taking their corpses fresh. The “werewolf” trials between 1580 and 1620 concealed a long period of negotiation and adjustment brokered by (among others) the experienced witch-finding d’Erlette family from Bayonne near the Pyrenees.

Since that time, the ghouls, bowing to the wisdom of their cautious leader, the former alchemist Nicholas Flamel, have mostly stayed in their own tunnels and warrens under Paris’s cemeteries and deep in the catacombs. Their most recent foray into the world above took place in 1870, during the Prussian siege of Paris. Some younger ghouls, battered on the slaughters of the Great War, want to return to Paris-Above, which would require them to overthrow Flamel. The humans, mostly necromancers who aid and are aided by the ghouls, range from sellers of looted grave goods to kidnappers of human children for the ghouls’ changeling use.

Distribution: The ghouls lost (and mostly ate) their political cover in Paris during the Terror; their allies aboveground now are criminals, degenerates, and the occasional useful human whose ghoulish blood is showing. The ghoulish cult is, of course, global, with warrens under most old cities of the world, and major loci in New England, Persia, Bengal, and northern China. In the Dreamlands, the ghoulish cult threads through the Vale of Pnath and other ghoulish rookeries.

Hooks: The Comte d’Erlette’s 1703 book *Cultes des Goules* provides enough details to find and contact the Paris warren; in 1931, the surrealist Trilobite Press brings out a privately subscribed abridged edition for just that purpose. Once the Dreamhounds start dealing with the ghouls, they get noticed by the ghoulish cult. Even once the cult figures out the surrealists aren’t interested in horning in on the trade in abducted children or dental gold, the suspicion remains.

Responses: Man Ray and Robert Desnos enjoy good relations with Flamel and can assist others in seeking his good graces — though not those of his mortal accomplices. Should the Dreamhounds violate their promises to the ghouls, the response is as close as the nearest Metro

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

MYTHOS PARIS



tracks or storm-sewer entrance: a pack leaps out and drags the unfortunate to his prandial fate.

LES GORGONIENS

A syncretic cult that came to Paris in the 1830s after the initial conquest of Algeria, les Gorgoniens are devoted to the power and magic of monstrosity itself. The cult reshapes itself around its current high priestess, the “Tanit-Isis” — for the last two thousand years, its main rituals have evoked Carthaginian and Egyptian themes for all that it is older than Zimbabwe, Atlantis, and even Lemuria. Under some priestesses

it elevates Cthulhu, under others Shub-Niggurath or Mormo, much as Egyptian pharaohs would exalt their chosen patron gods. Gorgonien membership is mostly West and North Africans, but also incorporates Levantines (come to Paris after Syria and Lebanon fell under the French mandate in 1919) and boho European (and American expatriate) hangers-on. The former Tanit-Isis was a lamia or medusa, of partial Deep One ancestry; the current Tanit-Isis is a basilisk, of partial serpent-folk blood.

Distribution: In Paris, the cult holds ceremonies in seemingly empty buildings on the rue Blomet and the rue

du Général-Beuret. In Africa, its main manifestation is within certain subsects of the Gé Society of Cameroon and Senegal, who use corpse pieces as talismans and placate (and serve) the *bedimo*, the powerful dead beings who live “in a city under the earth.” In the Dreamlands, les Gorgoniens have a cult center in Kadatheron and carry out rites on the site of vanished Sarnath in Mnar. The cult’s poisons and hypnotic spells can translate an adept there, and usually bring her back again.

Hooks: Desnos, Miró, and Masson might simply stumble across the cult, as they live or work on the rue Blomet. Given the cult’s role in the death of Frank Marsh (he was killed by the husband of the previous Tanit-Isis, Marceline Bedard), surrealists investigating their movement’s history might look too long into the Gorgoniens.

Responses: If offended or endangered, the Gorgoniens kill a pet or child as a warning. They prefer to subvert, mesmerize, or ensnare their victims, but are not above a good old-fashioned beating with metal-studded clubs and whips.

SOCIÉTÉ VADAZIQUE

In the 1890s, the psychiatrist Théodore Flournoy assisted at a series of séances by the Geneva medium Catherine-Elise Müller, during which she (among other experiences) traveled astrally to the planet Mars. (The Theosophist C. W. Leadbeater reported similar experiences in 1910.) He published her adventures (giving her the pseudonym “Hélène Smith”) in 1900 as *From India to the Planet Mars*, in which he recorded her Martian-alphabet automatic writing and her Martian language, and reproduced her trance-paintings of Mars. His book powerfully influenced the surrealists, who adapted Müller’s automatic writing technique; Victor Brauner referred to her as “a surrealist seer” and painted her into his surrealist tarot.

However, Müller had not visited Mars but the Dreamlands, falling under the sway of a sorcerer named Astané, the dream-self of a dead Hindu fakir named Kanga. Like Kuranés, he died dreaming, surviving his physical death, and could reshape the Dreamlands, in this case into the flat towers and red earth that Müller believed to be Mars. Astané has made himself lord of Lhosk, a port on the Cerenarian Sea in the south of Ooth-Nargai. He wants to expand his “land of Espénié” back into the waking world by infiltrating others’ dreams, then by bringing his images out into Earth. His followers in Paris, the

Société Vadazique, carry out his dream-sent bidding, opening the way to Attanâ Zabiné, the “hidden world.”

Distribution: For now, the Vadazic Society has only a handful of members, mostly spiritualists, psychiatrists who have read Flournoy’s book, and surrealist painters inspired by “Martian” art and busily automatic-writing and -drawing Espénié into existence. Some windows in Montmartre already look out onto the red sand of the new world, and some buildings already sprout the trumpet-corners of Lhosk.

Hooks: Surrealist interest in Müller (who dies in 1929 in Geneva after a decade spent painting mostly religious art) is real and intense. Any investigation by a Dreamhound might easily turn up the name Astané in Celephaïs.

Responses: Astané will not risk the death of his dream-remnant. He will either strike back with overwhelming vadazic force (madness, strange music, spirit possession) or pull up stakes and vanish, leaving Lhosk half changed and his foes watching every canvas for a slanted railroad or a strange six-horned dog-sheep.

Bookhounds of Paris

"Even the dead writers looked as though they had really been alive."

— Ernest Hemingway, *A Moveable Feast*

Want to cross your Dreamhounds of Paris campaign with Bookhounds of London, or vice versa? Let this introduction to bibliomania français be your bridge.

The Seine, they say, is the only river in the world that flows between two bookshelves. From the pont Marie to the quai du Louvre on the right bank, and from the quai de la Tournelle to quai Voltaire on the left, over two hundred *bouquinistes* man stalls along the river selling everything from almanacs to zodiacs. Much of it is dross, of course, but with a third of a million books — and journals, and stamps, and handbills, and pamphlets — to go through, some overlooked treasures always lurk for the wily book-hound. At night, the stock goes into two-meter long metal "green boxes," secured to the stone railings and parapets by thick iron hasps.

But this is merely the first taste of Paris's bibliographic feast. All over the city, *brocantes* spring up for a few hours or a day or a night, informal markets in everything from clothing to china to... books, of course. No questions asked, only "how much?" The weekly book market in the old abattoir on rue Brancion and the enormous weekend flea market at Saint-Ouen in Clignancourt just outside Paris offer, through their regularity, a few more rules and slightly greater reputability. Book-hounds from London, and everywhere in Europe, flock to the biggest brocante of them all, the Salon des Bibliophiles in Saint-Sulpice in the third week in May.

Saint-Sulpice is at the heart of "Odéonia," the 6e arrondissement neighborhood around the Odéon Theatre that is the bookshop capital of Paris, and hence, of Europe. Sylvia Beach's Shakespeare & Co. at 8 rue Dupuytren looks across the street at Adrienne Monnier's La Maison des Amis des Livres. Here, surrealist scribblers bump cold shoulders with modernist giants such as Ernest Hemingway, James Joyce, Paul Valéry, and André Gide (who unforgivably denounces Communism in 1936), and (worse yet) the symbolist "poet of Paris" Léon-Paul Fargue. The moderns' literary home is the Poussière du Temps bookshop at 16 rue de Tournon; three doors down at No. 19, the poet Lucien Scheler welcomes his friends and fellows Éluard and Picasso to his antiquarian bookshop, Librairie Thomas-Scheler. (During the coming war he and Éluard use it as a base for their joint Resistance activities.)

Above them all, three great booksellers duel for pre-eminence in the 6e: Georges Heilbrun's shop at 76 rue de Seine specializes in rare and unusual illustrations, while Francisque Lefrançois (successor to the great Edouard Rahir) sells to Rothschilds and Russians and buys incunabula and unica, and Louis Giraud dominates the auction rooms both at the Hôtel Drouot and in his own Librairie Giraud-Badin (128 boulevard Saint-Germain). In the 1930s, Giraud auctions the collections of, among others, the Duke of Parma, the Duchess Sforza, Maurice Escoffier, and the Comte Greffulhe, and publishes *Bulletin du bibliophile*, the indispensable journal of the Paris collector. Unashamedly tilting at all three is Pierre Berès, an aggressive, even unscrupulous, young book-hound with an omnipresent Siamese cat, who

somehow eeled from obscurity into noble connections and a surprisingly varied and complete bookshop before he was twenty, the Librairie Incidences at 24 rue Laffitte in the 9e.

As Berès shows, there is more to Paris bookshops than Odéonia knows, more than it can contain. American expatriate journalist Edward Titus keeps a bookshop, At the Sign of the Black Manikin, on rue Delambre in the 14e, and the haul from the rue de Reuilly, the rue de Charonne, and the Faubourg Saint-Antoine (all in the 11e and 12e) rivals the legendary Sixth with less competition. Competition has splintered Paris's occult bookselling scene, founded by Lucien Chamuel, a disciple of the Rosicrucian and kabbalist Papus. At the turn of the century, Chamuel retired from bookselling and turned his stores and stock over to Pierre Dujols's Librairie du Merveilleux (specializing in alchemy and secret societies) at 76 rue de Rennes (6e) and Paul Chacornac's self-titled Librairie Chacornac (specializing in astrology and Eastern wisdom) at 11 quai Saint-Michel (5e). Both Dujols and Chacornac practice as well as purchase; Dujols is part of the "Heliopolitan" Fulcanelli group, while Chacornac hosts Les Veilleurs and publishes René Guénon. But their interests and their politics push them apart: after Dujols's death, the Heliopolitans snub his widow, while the Brothers Chacornac move ever further Right. A book-hound with the right squiz, in other words, can set up a proper bidding war between them — as long as he doesn't trigger a stranger conflict still. waking to dreaming for the reunion he so fervently desires.

RUE DE RÊVE

“That he was losing ground seemed unhappily clear to him, and he knew he was hopelessly lost in this broken and blasted desert of meaningless rocks and untravelled sands.”

— “The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath”

Does the *domaine de rêve* create the dreams of humankind, or is it created by them? To even pose the question is to surrender to the sterile logic of the waking world.

Certainly the visions of artists, especially those dealing in fantastical themes, have been reflected in the appearance, population, and configuration of the Dreamlands. Or vice versa. Until the Enlightenment, no firm line existed to separate the occult from the mundane. The doors between the two realms must have also been more permeable. Even now in the Dreamlands, one can physically travel to past eras, to penetrate into prehistories unimagined in the world’s archaeological faculties. Whether one meets only the dream traces of these hoary times, or in fact literally treads on the ground of aeons past, is a distinction both unknowable and academic.

Prior to the arrival of the surrealists, the Dreamlands changed slowly. By an osmotic process the images fluttering through the minds of painters and poets leached into the Dreamlands, transforming its surfaces. The last major flood of new symbols and resonances into the Dreamlands occurred with the symbolist movement of the late nineteenth century, as seen in the the paintings of Arnold Böcklin, Gustave Moreau, and Gaston Bussière.

When your *Dreamhounds* series begins, the Dunsanian Dreamlands stands as the predominant one, with bits and pieces of surrealism sprouting up wherever the PCs venture. Once introduced, these

elements spread like a virus, until the landscape and its occupants look more like the work of Dalí and Tanguy than Schwabe or Moreau.

Navigating the Dreamlands

This section presents rules for actions undertaken in, and on the way to, the Dreamlands.

Getting There

People of the waking world can enter the Dreamlands either physically or mentally.

Some people who first go to the Dreamlands in corporeal form thereafter gain the ability to project themselves in their dreams. Others do not.

Player characters in a Dreamlands campaign can use both methods of travel. Remember that they are among an elevated few. The vast majority of mankind remains forever insensate to the realm of dream, absorbing its influence only on a subconscious level.

CORPOREAL TRAVEL

In the dark corners of the world, where ghouls snuffle and prowl, the astute journeyer may stumble onto portals from the waking to the dreaming realms. In Paris, this entrance is found in the catacombs, judiciously guarded by the ghouls Nicholas Flamel. Gaining access from the ghouls costs a 2-point spend (Dream Lore or any appropriate Interpersonal ability), unless a core clue leads you there, in which case you simply use the ability without a spend.

When you step through such a gateway, you leave the quotidian realm and enter the Dreamlands. You no more fall asleep than you would while crossing the border from France into Belgium. Once there, you are completely present, mind and body, in a strange new place.

Despite its occasionally mutable physics and a tenuous connection to linear time, it is as real to you as Montparnasse or the boulevard Saint-Germain.

For this reason, physical travel is the more dangerous of the two modes of entry. If you physically enter the Dreamlands, any damage you suffer in combat or from hazards accrues to your Health pool, as it would in the waking world. If you die there, you are dead.

Dreamscaping while physically present in the Dreamlands imposes a strain you wouldn’t feel in your dream-form. You must spend at least 1 point on every Dreamscaping test, and suffer a penalty of 1 to all results.

To return from a corporeal journey, travel back to where you first came through the portal. It will be where it was when you arrived. Though according to the laws of nonlinear geography (p. 104) ref Chapter Five “Traversing a Nonlinear Geography,” it may be somewhere else entirely the next time you come through.

Surrealist Walking Quests

In 1923, Aragon stumbles across a technique to create a temporary portal permitting corporeal entry to the Dreamlands. In a surrealist walk, one wanders through the streets of Paris entirely at random, in a state of psychic automatism. The sights one encounters acquire significance through the random order of your unconsciously chosen route, becoming a personal poem of unrepeatable experience.

Individuals with Instability ratings can turn a surrealist walk into a Dreamlands journey. Gradually one shifts from the mundane Paris into a labyrinthine, timeless Paris of dream. By default, one enters full-on Dreamlands in the city of Hlanith, which increasingly comes to resemble Paris as dreamers use it for this purpose. From there the walker

can move to any other quadrant of the dream realm.

It usually takes several hours of ordinary city rambling before the transition occurs. In an emergency, emotional excitation may allow you to make the jump more rapidly — provided you can attain the state of purposeless thought psychic automatism demands.

The surrealist walk allows you to enter the Dreamlands physically without entering the catacombs or dealing with its ghoul sentinels. It costs 2 points, from Instability and/or Dreamscaping, to enter the Dreamlands in this way — unless you're going there in pursuit of a core clue, in which case the cost is 0.

Mention of this method invariably raises Breton's hackles. Over a fourteen-day period in 1924, Breton attempted to walk his way into the Dreamlands in the company of Aragon and fellow poets Roger Vitrac and Max Morise. He came tantalizingly close to entering the Dreamlands — at one point sensing the presence of his beloved Jacques Vaché in dream-revenant form — but ultimately failed. His frustration culminated in a fistfight with Vitrac, who annoyed him first by interpreting everything they saw as mystically significant, secondly by glimpsing a large white cockroach, and finally by successfully slipping into the dream realm. While it is always poor form to mention the Dreamlands at surrealist meetings, the merest whisper

of the walking tour sends him into a red-faced rage.

DREAM PROJECTION

Dreamers enter the *domaine de rêve* while asleep. Their minds animate dream-forms, which may or may not match their waking appearances. Randolph Carter, for example, looks like an old man in dream-form and, depending on when you meet him in person, a younger man or an alien. You may specify what your character's dream-form looks like. On a Difficulty 4 Dreamscaping test, you can shift your appearance from its default to another form.

When your dream-form is damaged, your Instability pool drops. On a sufficiently grievous injury, your dream-form dies (see above). You wake up in the real world and are thereafter unable to dream project your way back to the Dreamlands. The shock of dream death requires a Stability test against a possible 4-point loss.

Dreamers may enter the Dreamlands intentionally or spontaneously.

Spontaneous entry happens when the Keeper deems it entertaining, for example when it advances the plot.

Willed entry occurs at the players' behest. When a core clue prompts their attempt at a dream journey, it costs nothing. When they're headed there in

pursuit of other agendas, it costs 2 points, from Instability and/or Dreamscaping.

A contagion effect exerts itself on dreamers who know each other in the waking world. When one dreamer spontaneously enters the Dreamlands, those of his traveling companions who are also presently asleep may manifest with him. This drawing in of other dreamers pays no heed to current allegiances, so you might easily bring someone you have no interest in seeing. Cocteau, for example.

Comrades in dream who fall asleep while you are already in mid-journey may appear next to you.

Dreamscapers may consciously exploit this effect to summon fellows to their sides, whether they are already exploring elsewhere in the Dreamlands, or snoozing in their beds back in the waking realm.

If the summoned dreamer resists, the two contest Instability against one another; on a failure for the summoner, the companion stays put.

Traveling companions summoned from the waking world by the contagion effect, consciously or not, don't have to pay any points to enter the Dreamlands.

(The contagion phenomenon is our addition to the Lovecraft canon. It keeps the player characters together, when that is desirable.)

YOUR INITIATION

Those few capable of surrealistic psychic automatism may have first manifested the Dreamscaping ability during an initiatory corporeal journey to the Dreamlands. Or they might have gained it while on a sleeping quest.

Unless you are playing a supplied character whose initiation experience is already described for you, you are free

Bringing Objects From Dream

Corporeal travelers who bring items back with them from the Dreamlands find that they transform into explicable equivalents. As dreams dissipate in the cold logic of day, the waking versions of dream objects become disappointingly earthbound. A fabulous diamond becomes a chunk of rock crystal. An ornate spear turns into a stage prop — impressive from a distance, cheap when closely examined. A tome of spells manifests as a well-known, mass-printed volume of cod-mysticism, in a shopworn condition.

to specify whether you first entered the Dreamlands in a sleeping or waking state, and how you realized your talent for dreamscaping. You can decide this from the outset, or announce it during play, whenever it seems relevant.

Influencing the Dreamlands

In the supernatural shared reality that is the Dreamlands, characters with the Dreamscaping ability can act as lucid dreamers, changing circumstances to suit themselves.

Only in extreme cases do you overtly cause elements of the environment to transform before your eyes. Most of the time, events, locations and circumstances resolve to your benefit, with no visible connection between your wishes and the favorable outcomes they bring about. These shifts occur like the quick cuts between shots in one of Buñuel's films.

As in a lucid dream, you might hope to find an ally. Then you spot him, on the horizon, or around the next corner, or simply when you turn around. You do not see him materialize — he's absent, and then he's there.

Or, you might hope to find a particular cottage, deciding it might lie beyond the next ridge. You ascend the ridge, and, indeed, there it is.

Or you might desire that the shoreline look more like the rugged shore of your home, Cadaqués. You avert your eyes for a moment, and then it does.

When you spend Dreamscaping points on other General abilities, nothing odd seems to be happening at all. You're just putting a splint on a leg, fighting with added fervor, or expertly remaining in the shantak's saddle as it dips and dives in the violet sky.



Visual manifestations of your Dreamscaping ability recall the motifs of your creative work, whether expressed through art, film, or the written word. To create a visual manifestation that recalls a colleague's work, add 2 to the Difficulty. To create a visual manifestation without precedent in the surrealist canon, add 4 to the Difficulty.

Dali can make Dreamlands denizens look as if their torsos sprout chests of drawers, turn them into deflated balloon versions of their prior selves, or transform them into elongated beings supported

by Y-shaped sticks, at the base
Difficulties given in the table below. All of these motifs occur in his work. To transform one into a man in a suit with a floating apple obscuring his face (a motif of Magritte's) adds 2 to the Difficulty. To turn a Dreamlands denizen into a multicolored gecko, an image you can't provide a surrealist reference point for, adds 4 to the Difficulty.

The Keeper may rule that an unprecedented visualization doesn't fit the surrealist aesthetic at all, suggesting a suitable adjustment.

You want to turn a zoog into a cartoon version of itself. The Keeper declares this beyond your powers. Artistic appropriation of pop-culture imagery is not part of the surrealist kit bag.

When you want to do something to influence dream events and can't explain it away as the use of another General ability, the Keeper chooses the Difficulty of your Dreamscaping test, with the following examples as guidelines.

To perform any of these actions so that they seem overtly magical to Dreamlands beings, add 2 to the Difficulty.

When you influence the Dreamlands, you either cause a single event to occur once, or create an ongoing effect. Ongoing effects appear in italics in the chart below. They last for one interval, or until you choose to end the effect, whichever happens first.

Transforming the Dreamlands

After inducing an ongoing effect, you can then attempt another Dreamscaping test to render it permanent. The Difficulty is the same as the test that induced the effect, but you can use the margin of that result as a bonus to this one.

You alter the appearance of a minotaur so that its torso becomes a chest of drawers. You spend 2 points of Dreamscaping, dropping your pool from 8 to 6, and roll a 4, for a final result of 6. The margin of this test is 2: the result of 6 versus the Difficulty of 4.

The minotaur reels back in dismay as knobs sprout from its pectorals and abdominals, and drawers full of detritus come thrusting forth from from it. His shouted threats displease you, so you decide to transform him permanently, as a warning to others of his kind.

Dream Influence Difficulty Table

Action	Difficulty
<i>Alter a distinct portion of the visible landscape</i>	4
<i>Alter a structure's interior layout</i>	6
<i>Alter a structure's superficial appearance</i>	4
<i>Alter the personality of a Dreamlands personage</i>	6
<i>Alter the visible landscape for as far as the eye can see</i>	8
Arrange immediate rescue for a Dreamlands being	4
Be somewhere else, immediately	6
Find a common Dreamlands object	4
Find a helpful dream denizen you're looking for	4
Find a hostile dream denizen you're looking for, arriving at a safe remove	8
Find a place you're looking for	4
Find a rare Dreamlands object	6
Find a unique Dreamlands object	8
<i>Grant a Dreamlands being a new ability</i>	6
<i>Grant a new appearance to a Dreamlands being or organism</i>	4
Make your way to the immediate presence of a known, hostile dream denizen	6
<i>Strip a Dreamlands being of an ability</i>	8
Wish away a hostile individual	6
Wish away an impersonal obstacle	4

When Dreamscaping your way to a new location, you can shift all willing traveling companions with you, at no extra Difficulty.

These work like any other GUMSHOE test; meet or beat the Difficulty, and you succeed. Spend points if you wish, to increase your chance of doing that.

Rendering this permanent entails a second Dreamscaping test with the same Difficulty of 4, to which you can apply the margin of 2 from the previous test as a bonus. Just to be sure of success, you spend 1 Dreamscaping point, dropping your pool from 6 to 5. You then roll a 1, proving the wisdom of that spend: the roll of 1, plus the 1 point of Dreamscaping, plus the 2 point margin, exactly equal the Difficulty. The minotaur will forever after look like a cover you drew for Minotaure magazine.

Permanence, needless to say, means something else in the Dreamlands than in the waking realm. Another dreamscaper might come along later and entirely modify your work. Dreamlands sorcerers might be able to return transformed places, entities and objects to their former state, using what local beings think of as magic. The actions of gods or godlike beings might perform similar restorations.

Contagious Transformation

A psychic ripple effect magnifies your permanent transformations of Dreamlands places and creatures. As the changes you wreak are experienced by other journeyers, they become part of the blurry consensus reality of the *domaine de rêve*, and then begin to spread. After turning one limpid lake into a roiling mass of biomorphic forms, you might later return to find

that the others around it have shifted to match. Your single minotaur with wooden drawers thrusting from his torso might spread the condition first to his hunting band, then his tribe, and finally an entire minotaur nation.

The Keeper may declare, as part of her ongoing storyline, that your transformations have gone contagious.

When it suits you, upon a return visit to the site of a past transformation, make a Difficulty 6 Dreamscaping test to ensure that it has rippled out.

The Shock of Dawning Transformation

Over time, the midnight imaginings of our world's great artists have transformed the landscape of dream. In certain nooks and crannies you might find traces of past eras, from cave paintings to the symbolist and decadent styles that defined the prevailing look you now alter. All previous waves of change occurred slowly, in a manner invisible to the realm's residents. They believe that their Dreamlands have always looked like this, because previous generations dreamed them that way.

Now that the surrealists have learned to change the Dreamlands intentionally, and are traveling there in unprecedented numbers, its peoples can't help but notice the convulsive effects of their activities.

The campaign opens with the surrealist alteration of the Dreamlands in its early stages. Some artists have changed a few details here and there. De Chirico's travels in the early Twenties prefigure the changes to come. Sections of the Dreamlands are now haunted plazas framed by abstracted Venetian architecture and decorated with bizarre, quasi-classical statuary. Here and there, the characters may find their own key motifs brought to hallucinatory life.

The big changes start now. And with those changes comes a counterreaction. Once they realize that you can reshape their landscape, possessions, bodies and even their personalities, the powers of the Dreamlands will seek to capture you. At first, they'll want to control your abilities, to force you to shape the realm to their advantage. If this proves impossible, they'll seek to destroy you. To the great personages of dream, you and your colleagues represent a threat to their very existence.

HOW DREAMERS SEE YOU

Creatures and personages of the Dreamlands don't perceive time and space in our linear fashion. They don't particularly expect actions to be connected by cause and effect. Jumps in perception from one state to the next, as occur when you use your Dreamscaping ability, are as normal to them as continuity is to you. Were one of them to be somehow transported to Montmartre, the dream-denizen would be disoriented by the implacable onrush of continuous experience.

Traversing a Nonlinear Geography

If you're a dreamscaper, you can use that ability to will yourself to jump from locale to locale. Or you can save precious pool points, treating the Dreamlands as a real, if peculiar, place.

Dreamscaping Contests

When you want to make a change in the Dreamlands and another dreamscaper wants to stop you, contest your Dreamscaping abilities against one another.

Especially taxing alterations are easier to block than to create. The would-be creator tests against the Difficulty of the change, as guided by the Dream Influence Difficulty Table. The obstructing character tests against a Difficulty of 4.

In this case you move about as do its denizens (and dreamers and journeyers unschooled in psychic automatism). You can travel on foot, on the backs of mounts, or on carts driven by beasts of burden. You might take passage on one of its groaning ocean galleons or pole your way down a meandering river on a raft of fragrant sandalwood.

In this mode you perceive yourself as traveling through a place of coherent and stable geography. Just don't expect the relative locations of various settlements and landmarks to bear any resemblance to the last time you made the trip. The Dreamlands is not a fantasy land with a fantasy map, but a collection of unmoored psychic resonances, ordered only by the limitations your mind unconsciously imposes on it. It is the geographic equivalent of the exquisite corpse game — which is why the surrealists are so attuned to it, and vice versa.

(This may explain why places that straddle the waking and sleeping realms, like the plain of Leng, are hard to place even on our worldly maps. They move around in a state of quantum uncertainty. Think of Leng as Schrödinger's Plateau.)

As with so many other disorienting details of their daily existence, dream denizens perceive nonlinear geography as the norm and react with puzzlement if you try to draw them out on the subject. If Dylath-Leen lies a dozen leagues to the south of Ulthar, well, that's where it is. Until the next time you visit, and it's nestled in the Tanarian Hills, south of Celephaïs. You are mad to suggest that it has ever been anywhere near Ulthar, an entire continent away.

In short, the distinct locales of dream are as near or as far to one another as the poetic needs of the moment — perhaps *your* psychically buried needs — dictate. It is less a place than a set of ever-shifting stations on a vision quest.

Dreaming Your Way to Paris

If you can take a surrealist walk from the streets of Paris to the Dreamlands, it stands to reason that you can reverse the process. If you have an Instability rating, you can fall asleep somewhere else in the waking world, enter the Dreamlands, head to Hlanith, randomly walk its streets until it becomes a dream-Paris, then continue from its streets to the real city.

While you are abed in Brussels or Cairo, your dream-form interacts with the waking folk of Paris, including the other player characters and the rest of the avant-garde circle. Magritte, pioneer of this technique, refers to this state as *somniare vigilant* (pseudo-Latin for “dreaming awake”).

To the incurious observer, your dream-form appears in every way normal. You can manipulate objects, brawl with ideological rivals, and otherwise behave as you would were your real body present in Paris.

Perceptive individuals notice something abstracted and indistinct about you. (To spot a supporting character in *somniare vigilant*, use Dream Lore.)

You can use both Investigative and General abilities, as you would if normally present. The only mechanical difference from a mundane state is that all physical damage applies to your Instability instead of your Health. If you fail a Tether roll (p. 67), you wake up back home. If you are reduced to -12 Instability or less, you wake up back home, having suffered oneiric death. You can also abruptly disappear from Paris if someone awakens you from your slumber.

Whether you wake up normally or through unwelcome intervention, you remember your activities in Paris.

Those you interacted with do not. Their memories rewrite themselves to explain away whatever you did — because clearly you were never there. They certainly don't recall your sudden vanishing.

The Keeper collaborates with other players whose characters interacted with you to arrive at the most mundane and parsimonious shifted memories. The easiest choice is often to attribute your actions to another member of the group.

In dream-form, you break police chief Jean Chiappe's car windows. After you awaken in Cadaqués, Breton and others remember that instead it was René Crevel who did it.

Dream-form travel to the waking world muddies the memories of the people you encounter, even in matters not directly related to your oneiric activities.

(In story terms, this device allows you to diverge from real history. Does the chronology say you were in Barcelona or New York during a crucial period? No problem — you dream your way back to Paris. Do events in your game contradict the historical record? Obviously the version that made history is founded on false memories fostered by the *somniare vigilant* phenomenon.)

So far no one has figured out how to get from the Dreamlands to any city other than Paris in *somniare vigilant*. The players might make this a goal to pursue via Dreamlands questing.

This ability could prove devastatingly useful in the hands of an intelligence agency. Despite their occasional naïveté regarding political matters, the surrealists know enough to keep this ability secret. None of its practitioners want to wind up strapped to a chair in an Ahnenerbe interrogation chamber, forced to explain the inexplicable, on pain of torture or death.

During the coming war, Robert Desnos will make use of this ability in his Resistance activities, though it won't be enough to save him.

Dying While Dreaming

If your physical, sleeping body dies while your dream-form is active in the Dreamlands, the latter may survive even as the former expires. This fate befalls Jacques Vaché during his fatal 1919 opium overdose.

The dream-form becomes a full-fledged Dreamlands entity, subject to dreamscaping. Unlike a living person, it persists as an echo of its old self, its attitudes and personality frozen as of the time of physical death.

Dream revenants, as we'll call them, can move through the Dreamlands as they desire. They can have and remember new experiences but are never truly changed by them.

They can't dream their way back to the real Paris. The best they can do is haunt the streets of dream-Paris adjoining the Dreamlands, where ordinary dreams occur. There they might meet up with their living comrades who happen to step from waking Paris to dream-Paris during a surrealist walk.

The moments when Breton is sure that Vaché is standing right around the corner occur when the dream-form of his old friend waits for him on the border between waking and dreaming Parises. Dream Vaché hopes that living Breton will finally make the leap between the two, and meet him — but sees that he never will.

Oneirography

Certain places of the Dreamlands exist for the life of a single dream, and then melt away. Others, solidified by the presence of countless dreamers, anchor themselves to its indeterminate reality.

They may change under the surrealist onslaught, but will not be destroyed.

Most entries include notes on what the described place is like **Before** the surrealist upheaval, and what it becomes **After** the transformation occurs. A few places, each located in the Underworld below the Dreamlands proper, are so horrific to begin with that the surrealists can't do much to make them worse. They're described in unified entries.

The River Ai

Before: A meandering emerald river springs unbidden from the middle of a plain, its waters dense with fish and safe to drink.

After: A bubbling stream pulsing with green froth. Toothy fish leap from its shallow depths, spearing one another with metal prongs. Its waters refresh but intoxicate, restoring the sane to madness and the hidebound to careless abandon.

Aira

Before: A gold-domed city, its walls constructed from marble veined either in gold or semitranslucent aquamarine, morganite, and heliodor. Beautiful murals in a serenely ordered academic Old Master style adorn the interior surfaces of its majestic structures.

After: Veins of gold become the literal, pulsing vessels of a living city, as precious metal from its domes and tilting spires circulates across exterior walls. The academic figures of the interior murals give way to devouring armies in the styles of Masson, Dalí, and Ernst.

Baharna

Before: The isle of Oriab shelters this port city, controlled by a consortium of retired merchant mariners. Wharves of porphyry extend into the tropical waters of the Southern Sea, six night's journey from the Sunken City. A series of terraces

rises from them; the city's buildings rest on these steps, sometimes arching over multiple terraces. Below the city rushes a turbid canal connecting the city to the island's inland lake, Yath. Granite gates prevent drunken pedestrians from falling into the canal. Ancient ruins underpin the city; matching walls and bricks ring the lake. Twin beacons shine into the gloom from a pair of towers on either side of the harbor.

Baharna exports exquisite pots and figurines, the latter carved from pumice harvested by industrious climbers of nearby Mount Ngranek. In place of horses, Baharnans use zebras as beasts of burden.

After: Ngranek, long dormant, begins to hiss and rumble. Baharnan hostlers replace their zebras with red-eyed origami horses, which only occasionally stop to rip a mouthful of flesh from the backs or shoulders of unwary passersby. Deep Ones from the Risen City, sometimes led by their heedless King Cravan (p. 115) Ref bookmark "King Cravan," slide up onto the porphyry piers to demand trading rights.

Bnazic Desert

Before: This temperate waste resembles a waterless sea bottom, covered by shifting sands of blue and yellow green. Coral-like plants from forgotten prehistory dot its stable surfaces, sheltering ambushers of the Bnazie tribes. These stoic nomads raise sea-green beasts resembling camels, which they ride and use for milk and meat. At night luminous creatures float through the coral growths, which themselves are lit from within.

After: The luminous floating animals, more and more resembling biomorphic blobs from a Tanguy painting, explode in number, choking out all other life. Driven out, the desperate Bnazie raid and displace their neighbors.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

ONEIROGRAPHY

Celephaïs

This seaport, most often in the land of Ooth-Nargai, hums with trading activity. The bawls of stevedores ring out from its salt-crusted pier, accompanied by the creak of galleons and the shrieks of ever-hungry gulls. Certain of these vessels are sky-ships, which, when they withdraw their anchors from the harbor, sail up into the sky, en route to the cloud-city of Serannian.

Before: Blue marble spires reach from the city's cobbled streets into the heavens, where, on a cloudless day, it is no longer possible to say where Celephaïs ends and the sky begins.

Atop the city walls bronze statues of the city's historic heroes strike poses of vigilant majesty.

Men mingle with improbable beings in the stalls of its bazaar, on the wide boulevards separating its trading houses, and in surrounding inns and taverns. Along the Street of Pillars, sailors gather, drinking and spitting and trading jokes with the Sky People who dwell in Serannian. While in Celephaïs, these airy beings engage in earthy badinage that would be unthinkable in their own city.

No one ages while inside the city walls. Neither does one mature, physically or

spiritually. Experience cannot change the residents of Celephaïs. They remain as unmoved by joyous developments as they are inured to the shocking or horrible.

Children must be raised outside Celephaïs, in tranquil camps erected for the purpose, in order to grow up at all. Bonds of parentage are nurtured only there. A man meeting his newborn son for the first time inside Celephaïs notes the occasion as he would an elusive dream.

A temple to the ancient deity Nath-Horthath occupies the city's central square. There preside eighty priests,

King Kuranès

The immortality of Celephaïs is a fact conjured in retrospect by the man who first dreamed it into being, an English author no longer capable of remembering his earthly name. The man its residents revere as King Kuranès is the dream-form of a dead man, who dreamed so intensely that his persona survives here still.

Somewhere around the turn of the century, the man who would be Kuranès belonged to the British landed gentry, the last of his line. He wrote about his dreams, which became ever more vivid as he concentrated on recalling them. Eventually his dreaming life grew more intense and real than his waking one. He wound up destitute on the streets of London, eating opium to intensify his dreams. Kuranès glimpsed and lost Celephaïs, then spent decades of dream time searching for it again. During these journeys he beheld much, at one point visiting the court of Azathoth and emerging with sanity intact. The success of his dream-quest coincided with his earthly demise,

plummeting from a cliff in Innsmouth, England. This occurred as a procession of spectral knights, riding splendidly caparisoned mounts, transmited him through the gates of Celephaïs to his investiture as king and installation in the Palace of Seventy Delights.

As he later confessed to the dream explorer Randolph Carter, the splendors of the city he had so single-mindedly sought dwindled with surprising rapidity. Now he yearns for the real paradise he ignored while alive — the Cornwall shores of his childhood.

When the surrealist transformation ripples through Celephaïs, Kuranès finds himself torn. Does he trade favors with the surrealists in hopes that their unprecedented dreamscaping abilities might somehow send him home to the waking world? Or does he protect the people of Celephaïs — whom he may well have dreamed into being — from the impending doom Dalí and the others unwittingly rain upon them?

Kuranès knows and trusts Randolph Carter, and might entrust this question to someone, like Cocteau, who can invoke a connection to him. Alternately, he could decide that the secret to his liberation lies in the rediscovery of his real name, and offer protection and favors to anyone who can perform the necessary research back on Earth.

Unlike other dream-beings of his acquaintance, Kuranès can dreamscape — though at a slower pace, and less imaginatively, than the surrealists. He is limited to changes that reinforce the old symbolist paradigm of the Dreamlands, or replicate his memories of waking England.

Abilities: Athletics 6, Firearms 6, First Aid 4, Health 8, Hypnosis 8, Preparedness 8, Scuffling 4, Weapons 4

Alertness Modifier: +1

draped in orchid vestments, the youngest of them over ten thousand years old. While others sleep they pay homage to their two-faced lunar god, guardian of dreams and protector from nightmares. Inky shadow-lions, sacred to Nath-Horthath, prowl its outer grounds, too well fed to molest the priests, too ardent to restrain themselves from mauling intruders.

From a hill near the Eastern Gate beckons the Palace of Seventy Delights, a structure of beguiling beauty constructed from rose-colored crystal. Through its walls can be seen the languid revels of the city's courtiers, each possessed of a weary beauty, determined to wring from their timeless existence some evanescent scintilla of pleasure. From its windows waft tendrils of sickly sweet opium vapor. The palace's inhabitants bow down before their king, Kuranos.

Outside the gate lies his attempt at a true paradise amid Celephaïs' choking, unearthly beauty: a reconstructed Cornish fishing village in the shadow of a Norman abbey.

Over the city towers Mount Aran, its lower slopes shrouded by a mass of gingkos, its impossible peak mantled by snow.

After: The sky above Celephaïs permanently darkens to that of a cloudless, starry night. The city's blue spires stand out against this lightless background, for the city itself is illuminated by an eternal day. Even to the doubly dreaming inhabitants of Celephaïs this shift provokes unease.

The heroes atop the city walls drop their heroic stances, sinking into postures of nostalgic despond.

People begin to age. Immortals do not turn to dust overnight, but wrinkles begin to creep across faces, and faint liver spots materialize on the back of alabaster hands. Personalities frozen for

millenia suddenly admit the possibility of change. Now responsible for their own evolution — or degeneration — the populace splits into two violently opposed factions: those who embrace transformation, even unto death, and those who would reverse it.

From 1937 on, the snows of Mount Aran spread down its slopes. In 1939, with the onset of war in Europe, the snow and ice melts in reverse, spreading first through the city and then through the whole of the Dreamlands, completely glaciating it by the time of the German occupation of France in 1940.

Dother

Before: The anxious, brown-skinned residents of this small desert city sell goods of unknown provenance and worship a god they will not name or describe to outsiders. Among their wares are ivory planks, powerful acids and lamp oils that give off various pleasing scents when lit. Secrecy concerning their religion breeds rumors of moonlit orgies and blood-spattered altars, though no evidence of such ever presents itself to visitors.

After: The Dotheri find new products to sell, suggesting that they travel across the Dreamlands in search of exotic items dreamed into being by sleeping residents of Earth. Now they sell irons with tacks jutting from them, cups and saucers covered in fur, telephones in the shape of lobsters, and suit jackets bursting with milk glasses. Though no more functional in this world than as art pieces in a surrealist gallery show, here in the Dreamlands these contradictory objects exude magical power.

Dylath-Leen

Before: This sinister port does a bustling trade in shady goods. Darkened, twisting streets invite outsiders to do their business and depart with haste. This is not so easily accomplished, however,

as shuffling sleepers dully crowd its maze-like alleys, only half aware of their presence in a wondrous land. The city's many thieves, muggers, and pickpockets prey upon them, cutting them for sport when their dream-purses prove empty. From time to time they may in the confusion assault an important personage capable of pressing his case with the city's prince. In such an instance, his force of secretive assassins, the Eyes of Dylath-Leen, exacts grim punishment on wrongdoers.

Dank sea-taverns cluster near the wharves; mad sailors gather in them to mutter of awful things glimpsed in the ocean depths. Seldom does one of these dazed wrecks stop to listen to another's mutterings.

After: The crush of dreamers swells, pushing out the city's cutthroats. Wounds appear on the marchers' bodies. The reek of cordite and mustard gas emanates from their uniforms. These are the memories of the Great War, which haunt such dreamscapers as Éluard, Ernst, Masson and Aragon, and which fuel the surrealist movement's furious attack on bankrupt authority. These are dream reflections of the legions shot, blown up, or poisoned in the trenches. Joining them are the civilian casualties, those claimed by disease and starvation. Across their haunted faces are stamped the previously unimaginable violence of industrialized warfare. In the face of such horror, the petty savagery of the old inhabitants seems trifling, even naïve. Those who once preyed on Dylath-Leen melt away, to bedevil other settlements, or simply to dissipate in the wastes between. The prince retreats to his palace, shuttering it against the moans of the war dead, who demand redress. At the head of this revenant column stands a faded memory of Guillaume Apollinaire, his head bandaged, still bearing the marks of his trepanning. In jingoistic celebration of the warplane and the bomb, he demands a war to truly end all wars, an apocalyptic reckoning

that will roll across the Dreamlands until its every occupant is as dead as he.

Dreamers who survived the war face particular risk in Dylath-Leen. If they're not careful and resolute, they stand to be drawn into the throng, to be made retroactive casualties of the disaster they escaped the first time.

The Enchanted Wood

For many dreamers first entering the realm of slumber, this expanse of vast, reaching oaks appears as a preliminary obstacle. It forms a valley at the base of a set of steps from which the ordinary dreamer, if there is such a person, descends into dream. The joined branches of its choking trees form a dark canopy over the forest floor. A fungal carpet wanly illuminates the walker's path.

It is possible to walk from the waking world to the Dreamlands via portals in Germany's Black Forest, and from a spot deep in California's Redwood National Park. Dreamers may have occasion to rescue unfortunate hikers from its inhabitants.

Before: Zoogs (p. 125) dwell here in profusion, in hollow trees or burrows nestled between roots. They supplicate themselves before the haunted oak at the wood's heart, which germinated from an acorn dropped by the moon. From its sap and fruit they ferment a magic wine: a tonic to them, poison to their enemies.

Rings of stone appear in various locations throughout the woods. The most notable features a cluster of menhirs so high they jut up through the oak canopy and out of sight. At its center lies a heavy stone slab, which serves as a trapdoor to the Underworld region where dwell the gugs (p. 121).

After: Cupboard doors appear in the trees, often with wooden knobs for easy pulling. In the hollowed spaces behind

them, the traveler finds odd collections of objects: dolls, tools, eggs, surrealist readymades. These items sometimes seem tailored to the person opening the door. By choosing either to take or leave them, the dreamer precludes certain options on the road ahead, and opens up others. Sometimes it is best to take the object, which makes itself useful. On other occasions the proffered item calls down a disastrous curse. If there's a trick or system that might guide one to always make the right decision, it remains elusive. Perhaps it's best to leave the doors closed. The zoogs certainly do. But then, driven by maddening curiosity, they try to trick or trap unwary journeyers to try the cupboards for them.

Gugs burst through a trapdoor located in an Underworld tower, infesting the wood, capturing zoogs for their dinner pits, and setting up camps from which to raid the rest of the upper Dreamlands.

The Forbidden Lands

Before: Sentinels of Celephaïs' King Kuranos patrol the outer borders of this hellish zone, barring travelers for their own good. Recalcitrant explorers face polite but firm arrest. Its chaotic expanses bubble with lakes of fire, spurting magma, and various creatures of unique and menacing aspect.

After: The region shifts into a suppurating plain of human-like skin, wriggling with quivering hairs, exposed organs, and devouring mouths. Shards of bone jut from the surface like dying trees. Monsters of deconstructed anatomy, bowels looping from gaping abdominal cavities, rampage across its wilds, eating and being eaten. They are the most horrifying images of André Masson given temporary, transmogrifying flesh.

Fungal Forest

A subterranean expanse the size of Brittany, miles high and thick with vast trees, which on a second look turn out to

be mushroom-like growths, penetrated by burrowing worms. Smaller fungi feed parasitically on their trunks. Fecund goblin clans make constant war on one another, occasionally banding together against the spider-heads.

Ghoul Crag

Travelers from earthly catacombs and graveyards to the Dreamlands exit here, disgorged from tunnels onto an immense underground plateau. Tombstones, brass fittings and shattered coffins litter its surface. Hundreds of feet below lies the Vale of Pnath, where ghouls drop bones and skulls after gnawing from them every last meat-scrap.

Down in the vale, enormous worm-like dholes (also known as bholes) slither and slime their way through the accumulation of discarded bones, vibrations alert for prey. Nightgaunts dispose of unwanted prisoners by flying here and dropping them to the snuffling dholes.

Gug City

Before: In the Underworld sprawls a disordered collection of cylindrical stone towers, scaled to house the gigantic gugs. The largest tower, at the city's center, rises all the way up to the top of the cyclopean cavern's ceiling. Walking up its spiraling staircase, one eventually reaches a trapdoor to the Dreamlands proper. Most often this deposits the traveler in the Enchanted Wood. Gugs fear to exit through it, believing themselves banished by the gods of Earth.

The gugs keep captured ghosts in pits, chasing those who escape into the tower, always stopping if their quarry makes it through the trapdoor.

After: Receiving a message from Maldoror, new king of Thalarion, the gugs learn that the old gods have been contained and can no longer enforce their curse. In new protean form they rampage through the Enchanted Wood

and beyond, ranging far and wide in search of edible prisoners to haul back to their food pits.

The Great Cataract

Before: As might be expected in a land shaped not by science but by human intuition, the Dreamlands are not round but flat. That they float on an empty not-space between universes becomes apparent at the edge of the ocean, from which a set of basalt pillars rises. Foolish folk of the Dreamlands believe that a paradisiacal land called Cathuria lies beyond them. Instead, unwary sailors find the Great Cataract, a drop-off into abysmal negation, into which their ships topple and are destroyed.

After: The seas shrink; the cataract advances, devouring the basalt pillars. Biomorphic entities, as found in the paintings of Tanguy, issue from the cataract like mist at the bottom of a falls. Some tootle on obscene flutes. Through this curtain of writhing macro-cellular forms, the unfortunately perceptive can peer through to Azathoth's court.

Hatheg-Kla

Before: From a stony desert rises the imposing Mount Hatheg-Kla. Humanity's deities do not exist, except in dreams, today more faded than ever. Yet here, to those who believe, their dream-forms resonate with numinous power. On certain days, they arrive in cloud ships — the Olympians of classical antiquity mingling with the doomed Aesir, animal totems yapping and biting at the heels of hanged and resurrected gods. First stately, then frenzied, they dance, mourning their vanishing substance. Though they but embody the hopes and fears of men, the sight of them is enough to drive a man to madness.

After: The gods continue to arrive, and dance, but are now transfigured, into the fractured, deconstructed forms found on surrealist canvases. Their shattered

bodies sprout feathers, corkscrews, table legs and knives. Now they understand their unreality, and shriek in pain, determined to wreak vengeance against those who would reimagine them.

Hlanith

Before: A granite, gabled seaport at the mouth of the Oukranos River. If any city of dream mirrors the mundane circumstances of Earth, it is Hlanith, whose people behave like ordinary people, albeit of a generalized antiquity. Their only peculiarity is their insistence on their realm maintaining its bland normality.

After: The appurtenances of early twentieth-century life appear in Hlanith and gradually become commonplace. Its inhabitants don jackets and ties, carry umbrellas, speak to one another on telephones, and drive Peugeots down cobbled streets. At cafés they gather to swap gossip, sip Pernod, and flirt with each other's mistresses. Only suggesting that their lives are unreal, or vastly changed from only a few years ago, disturbs their oblivious gaiety. The madness one risks in Hlanith is a subtle and beguiling one — the temptation to settle forever in this ephemeral place, and forever forget...

The more Hlanith resembles Paris, the easier it is to walk from real Paris to an intermediate dream-Paris, to here, and from here, to the rest of the Dreamlands.

Ilnarnek

Before: Once a vast city, now a small settlement ringed by the ruins of the old, Ilnarnek venerates the lizard god Bokrug. A grim statue to this inhuman deity broods over the city's central temple. The Ilnarneki were not the original culture to worship it; they adopted the religion, and the statue, after their trading partners at Sarnath were destroyed for blaspheming it. Furtive yet industrious, they fear change and say that one can never hold

too many superstitions. Their living city within a dead one echoes to the trumpets of elephants, which they use as beasts of burden.

After: Ilnarnek becomes a refugee city and haven for revanchists threatened by the spreading changes to the Dreamlands. New leaders, most of them émigrés, gather here to plot a war to destroy the dreamscaping interlopers and restore the old order.

Inganok

Before: On a vast and isolated plain near the Plateau of Leng, the determined traveler finds Inganok, known to some as Inquanok. Its long-eared, angular inhabitants call themselves the descendants of gods. Onyx domes, spires and minarets rise high overhead and can be seen from the sea. Its most imposing feature is a sixteen-sided tower, the Temple of the Elder Ones, where the city's founders are paid homage — or perhaps still dwell.

A Veiled King rules from an ornate palace, all oriels and balconies. Those familiar with *The King in Yellow* may suspect that he, forever unseen, was the model for its titular character. A priestly caste, visages likewise concealed, executes his bidding.

The large dome of his palace, they say, houses an ancient shantak, the progenitor of its kind. The city's traders exchange shantak eggs for luxury goods from other precincts of dream.

After: Sometime in 1933 (by waking reckoning), the king rips off his veil to reveal herself as Sex Hitler, a chaotic incarnation of violent desire and projected submission, as filtered through the perfervid consciousness of Salvador Dalí (see p. 31). Commanding leather-clad, luger-wielding priests and an air force of shantaks, Sex Hitler hunts the Dreamlands, searching for Dalí and his surrealist accomplices. When she

Sex Hitler

Sometimes a voluptuous woman, sometimes a plush, soft-fleshed exaggeration of the real fascist leader, Sex Hitler is a pernicious realization of Dali's most perverse and intellectually dangerous fantasia. With alabaster skin and fetishistic uniform, she/he personifies the sense of shocking psychic disequilibrium that accompanies fascism's rise. Sex Hitler takes the human desire to be led and protected and twists it to his own gratification and will to power.

Resisting the psychic domination, and thus the amorous clutches, of Sex Hitler requires a Difficulty 4 Stability test. Targets who have recently succumbed to the dominance of others have the test at a penalty of 1–3.

Sex Hitler remains distinct from its inspiration; it is not a dream-form of the genuine article and in no way under its control. Defeating Sex Hitler might cure one of a flirtation with the fascist impulse, but does nothing to remove the real-life monster in Berchtesgaden.

Abilities: Athletics 18, Firearms 12, Health 18, Hypnosis 8, Preparedness 8, Riding (Shantak) 8, Scuffling 12, Weapons 4

Alertness Modifier: +3

Stealth Modifier: +1

captures them, she will screw them into eternal obedience.

Kadath in the Cold Waste

Before: A towering, ice-clad mountain, located sometimes in dream, and for flickers of time in the Himalayas, Antarctica or Mongolia, Kadath represents humankind's instinct to quest for the unattainable — and undesirable. The dream-forms of Earth's old gods dwell here, when they are not flying on cloud-ships to dance at Hatheg-Kla (p. 110.) For reasons obscure they are protected from interlopers by the usually malign and indifferent gateway gods, like Azathoth and Yog-Sothoth.

After: See the entry on Hatheg-Kla for the fate of the old gods. To the determined quester, Kadath might be revealed as the ultimate illusion — by definition, the manifestation of the

unattainable cannot be reached. To fully experience this insight, as Randolph Carter either has done or soon will do, destroys one's Instability rating.

Kadatheron

Before: Edicts of a benevolent king protect the sleepy residents of this dusty metropolis from the hazards travelers bring with them. Sealed in a vaulted archive, brass cylinders record the history of the Dreamlands, from the formation of the first word.

After: Anyone getting past the king's men and the mute assassins who guard the archive will find that the cylinders at first appear blank. Because the Dreamlands have no history — its past is merely the collected imaginings of various dreamers, history's artists and poets foremost among them. A

few moments later, a sanity-blasting collection of moving images materializes on them, forecasting a horrible future of the human race: death camps in Europe, a mushroom cloud that obliterates cities, a polluted and poisoned planet, an international communications network devoted to the transmission of human idiocy. Those PCs who meet sad or pathetic fates see them inexorably stream by as well.

The Jungle of Kled

Before: A dense rainforest penetrated by overland trade routes. Its tropical flowers emit a riot of perfumes, some sublime, others choking.

After: The vegetation reconfigures itself into the weird, twisted botanical forms found in the paintings of Ernst and others.

The Plateau of Leng

Before: Located simultaneously in the depths of Thibet⁹ and the distant reaches of dream, this wind-scoured table of rock houses a scattering of huts, inhabited by hermits of the quasi-human Tcho-Tcho extraction. They unite only to hunt, capture, torture, slay and eat rash explorers of their inhospitable realm.

A misshapen, mostly ruined monastery thrusts from its central point. But one individual lives there, the High Priest Not to Be Described. He guards the frescoes and carvings, depicting the history of a lost civilization of half-men, by whispering mind-eating secrets into the ears of trespassers. Tunnel entrances cover the plateau, each leading to another place, time, or reality. Occasionally an enormous violet spider, remnant of a species hunted nearly to extinction by the Tcho-Tchos, scuttles from a tunnel mouth in search of food.

⁹ And/or Antarctica, or Burma, or China's Sinkiang Province...

At the plateau's base lie the ruins of Sarkomand, a once-vast city inhabited by semi-human slaves of the moon-beasts. The moon-beasts themselves, and other hostile beings, may take temporary shelter under its shattered cupolas.

After: As above, but the tunnels may lead to unfortunate episodes in the explorers' future lives, which they may participate in directly, or observe from a helpless remove.

Lomar

Before: A frigid waste, once cradle to a sublime civilization, now foraging grounds for marauding gnoph-keh, that eat one another when there is no other meat to be found.

After: As before, but the gnoph-keh take on a deconstructed, surrealistic aspect.

The Moon

Before: On the light side of the dreaming moon, altars to unknown gods gather glittering dust. Cats, both of dream and of Earth, leap their way here, to plot and to devour fat, slow-footed rats.

On the dark side, moon-beasts scuttle through their eternal night, in cities of stone and steel. They herd grotesque beasts of burden and whip Tcho-

Tcho slaves, wringing from their misshapen, slouching bodies every last ounce of labor.

After: As above, but without the cats.

The Nameless Rock

Before: Moon-beasts congregate on this bleak gray island, which rises from the sea as a series of nigh-impassable cliffs, culminating in a jabbing mountain peak. A break in the harbor leads to a cove, its waters bubbling and putrid, over which a town of crumbling stone structures teeters. Pathways lead from the town to a flat cliff top where ceremonies are held, and to a sentry post above. At times the town's buildings serve as makeshift pens for slaves of all Dreamlands races. Strange ships bobbing in the harbor carry them to the moon glowering overhead, where they will labor for no particular end, save for the cruel pleasure of Nyarlathotep.

After: Bulbheads invade the town, driving out the moon-beasts and capturing their vessels. These they retrofit with modern mechanical equipment, as if readying a space armada to colonize the moon. The town's largest structures become vivisection centers where moon-beasts and others become the subject of the bulbheads' antiseptic cruelty.

Oonai

Before: A libertine king bids the citizens of this gray-domed city to constant revelry. Listlessly they obey, dancing and plucking lutes under the watchful gazes of the king's secret servitors. Harsh beacons shine down on them constantly, so that those who fall into lethargy might be immediately spotted. They are either whipped on the spot, or dragged off to prison, where they must please the king with novel performances before winning release. Oonai's beleaguered, dwindling populace craves the arrival of newcomers, whose talents might briefly divert the king and his men, so that they might rest.

After: The people of Oonai develop a harsh new performance style of clanging percussion, babbled poetry, and strange, constricting costumes. Surrealists recognize it as the strident Dada cabaret developed in Zurich and imported to Paris. With vicious glee the Oonaites clatter on, their revelry oppressing and paralyzing the once-feared king. He and his servitors retreat to the depths of their palace to escape the clamor. The people topple his walls, forcing him to watch and listen, sewing his eyelids open and injecting a waking potion under his fingernails. They welcome anyone with Dada connections as kindred revolutionaries, but will not let up their aesthetic onslaught, lest the king forget what he did to them.

Oukranos River

Before: The mighty river that cuts through much of the Dreamlands. Depending on where your dream needs to take you, it may or may not connect your starting point to your destination. Like most pathways in dream, it may take you to every place, save the one you desire.

Its wide, deep channel eases navigation; the wondrous ships of many cities and nations ply its crystal waters. At times

It Is Impossible for a Surrealist to See a Dreamlands Cat

Dreamscaping visitors to the *domaine de rêve* may hear of its wondrous cats, even that some of them are intelligent, capable of speech, and able to lend heroic aid to their allies. But no one ever sees one. It's as if the realm's cats, whether of ordinary or fantastical sentience, instinctively understand the dangerous implications of their presence, and shy from them at all costs.

Aggressive dreamscapers may discover that earthly cats start avoiding them too.

your vessel may pass under the high bridges of cities such as turreted Thran or the deserted metropolis of Kiran.

The river pulses with aquatic life. Some species are delicious; others find you delicious. The music of its silvery waters leads some to call it the singing river. Others, noting the flowing trees along its banks, call it the willow-fringed river.

After: As above, but the river's song in tranquil moments recalls the plangent piano melodies of Erik Satie, and at times of distress summons the spiky clamor of modernist composition. The trees take on a twisted aspect, as if leaving the botanical realm for the mechanical.

Sarnath

Before: A great circular plain smeared with glittering dust. (Geology: The dust is composed of finely crushed zircons, precious stones and marble.) Alongside it sits a deep and inky lake, from which protrudes the great gray stone Akurion. Once a year, a mist descends upon the plain, and Akurion sinks nearly below the waves. These echoes of catastrophe past recall the doom of Sarnath, a city of millions whose celebrants annually desecrated the idol of the lizard king Bokrug, god of a defeated rival settlement. One day Bokrug exacted divine vengeance, eradicating the city and nearly all memory of it.

After: The stone Akurion acquires a steeple-like shape. Upon its face ticks, in metronomic rhythm, a metal pendulum many stories tall. Atop the pendulum sits the unsparing, unblinking eye of a beautiful woman. To behold it is to fall to one's knees, lamenting one's powerlessness to the cruel force that is love. When each year the mists come, to reenact Sarnath's destruction, they are swirled and dissipated by the swinging arm. Bokrug's residuum retreats in hissing terror, confronted with an implacability greater than its own.

Serannian

Before: To reach the sky-city of Serannian by ship, navigate straight for the horizon. When you reach it, sail in. Or make the arduous ascent to this protectorate of Celephaïs from the spun-gold ropes that dangle from its foundations. Once there one finds an airy marvel constructed from marble and precious metals. King Kuran rules here for part of the year, rousing its delicate, introverted populace to reluctant social congress.

After: A pair of women's lips, red and closed, materializes over the city, provoking the Serannians to anxiety and strife. Faintly mocking, the lips question the possibility of love between men and women. Serannian's men grow querulous and possessive. Jealousy provokes them to scorn their women, and to battle one another on the streets. With the weaknesses of their men rudely exposed, women grow contemptuous of their spouses and lovers.

Dreamers visiting Serannian may find bitter old loves, or at least their dream-forms, lurking around every corner. No matter how meekly they accepted their mistreatment in the waking world, here they burn for vengeance, which they might pursue through trickery or forthright, homicidal fury.

Sona-Nyl

Before: Sages of the Dreamlands call Sona-Nyl the "terrible paradise," because those who leave it may never return — and if you are a dreamer, by definition one cannot stay here. Green Arcadian vistas surround a city of perfect beauty, surmounted by a crystal arch. Its people, each more handsome than the last, trill happily as they promenade down comfortable boulevards. Neither time nor space seems to exist here. Yet despite the respite it offers, non-natives cannot help but think of the lives they have left behind, of business unfinished

and obstacles unvanquished. Seized by wanderlust, they can only depart, hoping to return... which is never possible. The lucky ones forget their time in Sona-Nyl. The rest go mad pining for it.

After: As before, except everywhere an artist looks, he sees unfinished remnants of the works that got away — the paintings, poems, and films he envisioned but could never quite complete, or that he released into the world though they were not what they could be. The sight of these failures drives even the most self-confident creator rushing from Sona-Nyl, the beautiful hell.

Sunken City

Before: Six day's journey by galleon from the island port of Baharna lies the Sunken City, which occasionally rises from the ocean depths to tantalize sailors with its wonders.

After: The Sunken City becomes the Risen City, a gnarled knob of dead coral four miles in radius, on which writhe the ancient temples of impossible geometry, which confuse the eye and blind those who stare at them for too long. In these structures dwells a colony of Deep Ones, led by the muscular and bellicose King Cravan. While out of the water in the Risen City, the Deep Ones revert to a human-like, if fishy and bug-eyed, appearance. Some are the dream-forms belonging to humans cursed with the "Innsmouth look." Others are earthly Deep Ones who swim back and forth between the Dreamlands and Earth via a vortex located in the Bermuda Triangle.

Cravan sees his batrachian subjects as a long-oppressed aboriginal race, and a harbinger of humanity's future. When his friends the surrealists trigger their psychic revolution, those with Deep One blood in their veins will manifest their heritage simultaneously across the globe. They will wriggle from their hiding places to assert themselves alongside

humanity, as equals. His subjects prowl the Dreamlands in search of resources and allies, to use to assert their rights when the great change comes.

Teloth

Before: Severe, unadorned structures of gray granite, set out from one another with geometric regularity, compose Teloth, city of labors. Here no one may frolic, or rest, or stop to think. Laughter is forbidden; singing, unthinkable. The king, as example to his enthralled people, toils with his hands, just as they do. Travelers may stay for no more than a day before joining the work force. To enforce this requirement, Teloth lacks all guest facilities. In work lies glory; in all else, damnation.

After: Brutalist cubes of gray concrete, arranged in a grid of admirable utility, compose Teloth, city of freedom. Once-oppressed laborers have thrown off the yoke of their king, shooting him and his family in a dank basement, and throwing their corpses to rubbery hyenas that stalk the outer gates. Now Teloth belongs to the Telothites. They labor not for the king, but for the state, a state comprising

the people. No one may frolic, or rest, or stop to think here, for there is much work to do if the revolution is to be preserved. Laughter and singing are luxuries a later generation may enjoy. Join the work force, weary travelers. You have nothing to lose but your chains.

(Teloth's fate may cause special distress to those surrealists committed to Moscow. Confronted with it, they must make 4-point Stability checks. Whether they succeed or not, they must construct airtight rationalizations distinguishing Teloth from Stalin's Soviet Union.)

Thalarion

Before: Somewhat disingenuously known as the City of a Thousand Wonders, Thalarion's dark spires reach so high into the sky that their tops cannot be seen from the ground, and its outer walls extend far past the horizon. The carved gate Akariel stands athwart its pier. No one who goes through it ever comes out: only madmen and monsters survive here. Untended bones litter its streets, the sole remains of foolish seekers who dared to look upon Thalarion's ruler, a phantom called Lathi.

After: Lathi has been cast down, another false god revealed to be dead, by the murderous, shapeshifting antihero Maldoror. He rules Thalarion from a palace of clanking gears and thundering pistons, assembling an army to ambush and kill the gods at Hatheg-Kla.

Peaks of Thok

The height of these subterranean mountains, touched by neither sun nor snow, defies logical perception.

Thousands of nightgaunts live in warrens chiseled deep into their sides, huddling together like bats, to chitter and sleep. They fly up through fissures between the underground and upper Dreamlands.

In the valleys between the peaks, dholes squirm in perpetual search for nourishment.

Thorabon

Before: A gradually vanishing city, its structures built from a translucent, unidentifiable substance that cannot be painted. Believing that an outsider laid this curse on them, its fearful,

King Cravan

The Dadaist pugilist and provocateur Arthur Cravan was born in 1887 as Fabian Lloyd, in Lausanne, Switzerland. He made his life a bellicose performance art, infusing everything from the creation of a sensation-seeking literary journal to drunken bar brawling with rebel ideology. Cravan provoked Apollinaire to challenge him to a duel, rabble-roused in New York City with an artistic circle including Duchamp and Man Ray, and earned a decisive trouncing in a boxing match against Jack Johnson in the Canary Islands.

In 1918 he moved from New York

to Mexico City with his wife, the poet Mina Loy. He disappeared at sea while attempting to sail to Buenos Aires. (Some instead claim that he was gunned down by Mexican border guards.)

In fact, he was rescued by Deep Ones, who identified him as one of their own. After his transformation, he channeled his rebellious vision into a revolution on behalf of his new people. He discovered the Bermuda Triangle vortex to the Dreamlands. Once there, he learned that certain of his old acquaintances, having shifted from

Dada to surrealism, were active there. Cravan links their impending psychic revolution to Deep One prophecies of a great rising when the stars are right. He works both in the Dreamlands and in Earth's Pacific Ocean to prepare his people to reap the fruits of this revolution.

Abilities: Athletics 8, Firearms 2, Health 18, Preparedness 4, Scuffling 12, Weapons 6

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: +1

dwindling population gives strangers a cold reception.

After: Only a glass cube, three inches on each side, remains of Thorabon. Inside it can be seen the eternally screaming faces of the residents who failed to flee the final collapse. Does anyone dare pick it up and take it with them?

Thraa

Before: This city of obelisks and pyramids resembles a fantastic Egypt, as romanticized by the symbolists during the Egyptology craze of the 19th century. A high priest rules the city in the name of Osiris and Anubis.

After: This city of clay huts and massive carved totems resembles an urbanized, fantastical vision of central Africa, as admired by the surrealists for its psychic purity. Pale would-be colonists armed with tanks and cannons surround the city, intent on its conquest.

Thran

Before: A city, most often near the Jungles of Kled, composed of a single piece of marble, hewn into tunnels below and lofty spires above. The river Oukranos runs through the vastest of its central tunnels. Its young king rules benevolently.

After: The subversive exploits of a single man, the arch-thief Fantômas, have reduced Thran to social chaos. In his efforts to catch Fantômas and restore order, the king resorts to vicious despotism. Tunnels once devoted to transport and commerce have been converted to dungeons for the brutal interrogation of the master burglar's suspected allies. Yet even as the city echoes to the cries of the tortured, Fantômas prosecutes his crusade of crime without relent.

Ulthar

Before: A small, peaceful city of narrow, cobbled streets overseen by burgesses. Ulthar's gabled and gingerbreaded structures may remind dreamers of a fairy-tale version of an early modern German town. It is most famous for a curious edict against cat-killing. Gypsy-like folk gather painted wagons on the green rolling hills outside the city, accosting travelers with offers of entertainment and prophecy.

After: Forests of crutch-like trees encroach on the town, covering the hills and forcing the gypsies to move inside the city walls. Ulthar's once-famous cat population disappears, departing one night for parts unknown.

The Underground Sea

Before: The frigid waters of this salty lake rise up into the upper Dreamlands, where they become fresh and potable. Were one to safely reach its bottom — unlikely given the corpse-white aquatic beasts prowling beneath the surface — one would come up in the Arctic Ocean near Greenland. Perhaps one might borrow Dalí's diving suit and hope for the best.

After: From 1936 on, a sea monster, like a great distorted sea squirt, becomes the lake's dominant creature. With searching tendrils it tries to snatch up anyone passing the shores of the underground sea. Anyone cognizant of earthly politics intuitively associates the creature with Francisco Franco, as envisioned by one of Picasso's surrealist protest poems.

Vale of Pnath

See "Ghoul Crag," p. 110.

Vaults of Zin

Beneath Gug City lies a deeper Underworld still, a network of lightless

passageways accessible through a structure that is either a cliff-like building or a building-like cliff. Inattentive ghost sentries perch on its face. Thousands of their kind skulk in the vaults, raiding the gugs and being raided by them. Other creatures lurk there, too.

Xura

Before: From a distance, Xura appears to be a pastoral settlement of intoxicating beauty, swaddled in verdant pastures and ringing with the gentle laughter of children. Perfumes and the smell of fresh baked bread waft out from low-slung cottages to tantalize passing sailors. But anyone rash enough to land finds it a blasted, monstrous landscape haunted by predatory monsters. For as the wary know, Xura is the Land of Pleasures Unattained.

After: From a distance, Xura appears to be a harmonious city, as one might envision after the old guards are thrown down and man has achieved its psychic revolution. Brass and bronze statues in the mode of Arp and Giacometti loom over vibrant streets humming with cafés, galleries and teaching centers. But anyone hopeful enough to venture there finds it a nightmarish labyrinth, hunting ground to pianotaurs, voracious bird-men, and soul-draining wooden mannequins. Xura is the City of Realized Doubts, where the midnight anxieties of the artistic personality achieve ruinous substance.

Zais

Before: An alabaster town where canals stand in for streets, and the golden hour before twilight never ends. Its fair-skinned, raven-haired denizens lead lives of easy leisure, strolling without want along bridges carved with figures of fairies and demons. Most beautiful of all is Nathicana, daughter to the king.

Loplop, King of Birds

This angular, stylized entity appears as a collection of parts, some human, some avian, assembled into a somewhat humanoid shape. Though its exact configuration varies by circumstance, it may display a red crest that doubles as a beak, a bony beak-like wing, a distended brown leg, protruding genitalia, and an ossified carapace over back and shoulders. Loplop rules the birds of the Dreamlands with benevolence. Others he treats

according to the needs of his peoples' incessant, shrieking hunger.

Loplop recurs in a number of Max Ernst paintings and both is and isn't his dream-form. Ernst can explore the Dreamlands as either himself or with the appearance (but not game statistics) of Loplop. While in bird-man form, he receives all homage and authority due to the true monarch in Zais. Loplop the independent entity accepts without

cavil all actions and edicts of Loplop the Ernstian dream-form.

Abilities: Athletics 12, First Aid 8, Health 16, Hypnosis 8, Preparedness 6, Psychoanalysis 8, Scuffling 18

Alertness Modifier: +3

Stealth Modifier: +1

After: Birds and bird-men have descended to liberate the hunched, previously unseen toilers whose labor supported the beauteous elite of Zais. Now these brown, stooped workers serve only the birds, but do so in dignity. In their leisure hours, they cast stones at the imprisoned elite, or jab through the bars of their cells with serrated spears. Zais's new ruler, Loplop, King of Birds, keeps Nathicana for himself, displaying her in a golden cage dangling beside his feathered throne.

Zar

Before: Beneath the white-roofed, bountifully forested beauty of Zar lies a boundless melancholy. This is the land where glimmers of genius go to linger and fade after they elude the thoughts of mortal men. Neglected young poets, their decadent stanzas denied audience before their untimely

deaths, exist here in a state of limpid immortality. They lie on hillsides, losing themselves in the harps and pan-flutes of capering fauns. Like so many other alluring precincts of the Dreamlands, those who come here can never leave.

After: Jacques Vaché (p. 8) materialized here after overdosing in the middle of an opium dream. He set to work caustically destroying this province of simpering so-called decadence. Now, in between failed attempts to contact his old friend André Breton, he directs clanking mechanical men in the erection of black, belching furnaces, in which eternally burn the dream-revenants of all those fucking useless poets.

Creatures

This section presents the inhuman entities of the Dreamlands, old and

new. Like Dreamlands locations, these entries include notes on their aspects **Before** and **After** the surrealist incursion. Beings represented only by an "After" entry already appear in the *Trail of Cthulhu* core book in their standard incarnations.

Bulbhead

After: This non-biological class of new Dreamlands entities have lightbulbs for heads, perched on wooden artist's mannequin bodies. Some have other tools or bits of hardware in place of the lightbulbs, or instead of their hands or limbs. They communicate without speaking, instead flickering their lights on and off, in a way that any dreamer or intelligent Dreamlands entity automatically understands without actually hearing.

The bulbhead agenda has yet to clarify itself. They're definitely inquisitive, trying to figure out the dream world around them with a detached and insensitive determination. Bulbheads sometimes capture Dreamlands entities and subject them to vivisection or other grueling and involuntary experiments. They then try to build improved versions of their victims from wood and spare

The Dream-Form of Jacques Vaché

Abilities: Athletics 6, Firearms 4, Health 8, Preparedness 4, Scuffling 6, Weapons 4

Alertness Modifier: +1

parts. They represent both our horror of dehumanization, and its allure. If knowledge of the indifference of the Old Ones threatens mankind's fragile sanity, bulbheads need nurse no such fears. They too are indifferent, and immune to terror. Like the Old Ones, they merely exist — and may one day claim the waking earth.

When they turn to violence, they fight not with individual force, but with numbers.

Repairable: A bulbhead reduced to 0 hit points drops to the ground, a pile of inanimate pieces. Its bulb may shatter. But after the fight, it can piece itself back together, perhaps in a new configuration. Throughout the Dreamlands, new forests sprout, lightbulbs growing from their branches. There are always new heads to attach.

Abilities: Athletics 4, Health 4, Scuffling 8, Weapons 8

Hit Threshold: 3

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: +1

Weapon: +0 (punch), +1 (corkscrew or blade)

Armor: none

Stability Loss: +2

Celebesians

After: Robotic constructions ranging from twelve to twenty-four feet high thunder and clank across the upper Dreamlands, sometimes under the command of the caustic and destructive Jacques Vaché. As seen in Ernst's 1921 painting *The Elephant Celebes*, they often include bizarrely reconfigured zoomorphic features — a reaching arm recalling an elephant, terminating in



the skull of a bull (useful for bashing.) They may be ridden, or follow complex instructions on their own belching steam. Some have powerful guns mounted on them, which they can target with great accuracy.

Abilities: Athletics 16, Firearms 8, Health 12, Scuffling 18

Hit Threshold: 3 (large)

Alertness Modifier: -2

Stealth Modifier: -3

Weapon: +4 (stomp, smash, or stab)

Armor: -5 vs. any (metallic hide); -2, if the attacker also spends a point of Mechanical Repair prior to the attack test

Stability Loss: +0

Gnoph-Keh

After: The Dreamlands' gnoph-kehs become partially translucent, allowing appalled observers the chance to watch their twisted, spiraling, three-stomached digestive tract at burbling work.



When the Dreamlands start to freeze over from 1937 on, the gnoph-kehs expand their range with the spreading glaciers. During the frozen years from 1940 to the start of the thaw in 1944, they are nearly the only creatures who remain ambulatory, as other Dreamlands entities are encased in ice. Reverted to their pre-surrealist configuration, they roam freely through the gelid land, breaking through coatings of ice to devour the frozen creatures and people beneath.

Goblin

Before: These spindly humanoids, three to four feet high, skitter about with improbable, asymmetrical bodies. Physiognomy varies considerably between individuals. Responsible for Earth's folklore of hostile fairies, they steal children and play destabilizing pranks, from sabotage to the theft of needed items. In a favorite trick, they sell delicious but accursed food which enslaves or entraps those who ingest it.

They are found in profusion in a market near Teloth.

After: Their already distorted bodies flatten and splay out, so much so that they exist only in two dimensions, becoming very difficult to spot when they stand sideways. They abandon the symbolic pretense of their magic food, instead cultivating, refining and selling potent opium and heroin to Dreamlanders and dreamers alike. Now referring to themselves as gobs or lutins, they relocate from dreary Teloth to Jacques Vaché's scourged land of Zar. There they grow their poppies and keep their human ally well supplied with narcotics.

Abilities: Athletics 4, Health 2, Hypnosis 12,¹⁰ Scuffling 4, Weapons 4

Hit Threshold: 3

¹⁰ Accomplished by blowing green puffs of narcotizing smoke in the subject's face.

Alertness Modifier: +2

Stealth Modifier: +2

Weapon: +0 (fists), +1 (corkscrew or blade)

Armor: none

Stability Loss: +2

Ghast

Before: Bizarre, under-evolved cousins to the ghouls, gasts feed on both carrion and living prey. Their chief enemies are ghouls, gugs, and one another. Governed by instinct rather than true intelligence, they are incapable of distinguishing between prey types.

They restrict themselves to the darkest confines of the Underworld, where they need not fear sunlight, which destroys them as would a slow but fatal poison. Their rubbery skin resembles that of a ghoul. They tear at their victims' flesh with flattened, toothy jaws and kick at them with sharp-hoofed, springy legs, which lever behind them like those of a kangaroo.

After: Gasts burst into flame when they enter the upper Dreamlands, which they are now prepared to do. The fire burns them painfully but does not consume them, at least not for many hours of exposure. Until then, they run through the glades of dream, oily smoke trailing behind them, shrieking woefully. Their agonies do not diminish their hunger for prey. They use the flames to slaughter their victims, wrapping them in fiery bear hugs. If the burning gast does not retreat to a lightless place before it has burned for eight hours, it crumbles to ash. A replacement specimen, without its feeble memories, is reborn in the Vaults of Zin.

Abilities: Athletics 7, Health 5, Scuffling 9

Hit Threshold: 3 (4 in darkness)

Alertness Modifier: +1 (+0 in daylight)

Stealth Modifier: +2

Weapon: +1 (back claw), +0 (bite); makes one of each attack per round. *After, if in the upper Dreamlands:* +2 (fiery bear hug), victim of a successful attack must make an Athletics test, or take another +2 damage prior to his next action. Alternately, victim can forgo the next action to drop and roll or in some other way extinguish burning flesh and clothing.

Armor: firearms and projectiles do only half damage (round up)

Stability Loss: +0

Gug

Before: Twenty or more feet high, the vaguely humanoid gug lumbers on three-toed tree-trunk legs, waving heavily muscled arms that bifurcate at the elbow, into two forearms, each terminating in a clawed paw. Eyes jut from pink stalks atop its oblong face, which is slashed from top to bottom by a vertical mouth, lined by serrated teeth. Extremities are furred; torsos, repulsively naked. Ravenously carnivorous, gugs eat gasts and ghouls when they have to, but yearn to raid the upper Dreamlands for tastier flesh.

After: The already distorted anatomy of the gug undergoes a surrealist transformation, into an unstable mass of claws and jaws, often supported by metal struts and flanges.

Abilities: Athletics 18, Health 18, Scuffling 14

Hit Threshold: 2 (titanic)

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: -2

Weapon: +1 (left arm double claw), +2 (right arm double claw) or +1 bite; may attack once apiece with left and right arm per round.

Armor: none

Stability Loss: +0

Man-Bird

After: Man-Birds combine human and avian features, often surmounting a bird's head, wings and cape-like mantle of feathers over a man or woman's naked body. Some display the distorted skeletal structures rampant in the post-surrealist Dreamlands; if so, it is no hindrance to movement. Like people, Man-Birds may be hostile or friendly, as individual personalities and goals dictate. Though found throughout the upper Dreamlands, their population is densest in Zais, recently conquered by Loplop, King of Birds. They venerate Max Ernst, whose identify intertwines with their king.

Abilities: Archery 6, Athletics 6, Health 6, Scuffling 6, Weapons 6

Hit Threshold: 3

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: +1

Weapon: +0 (beak), +1 (spear), -1 (arrow)

Armor: none

Stability Loss: +0

Minotaur

Before: Bull-men in the mode of classical mythology roam the Dreamlands, though in scarce numbers. They are peaceful when left to themselves, though prone to rampage in search of women. Female minotaurs are never seen; bull-men mate either with human or near-human women, or giantesses.

After: Bull-headed men are suddenly everywhere. Though they sometimes retain their classical physiques, they are just as often pulled into bizarre physical shapes. One might have a chest of drawers gaping from its torso, while another precariously balances a bison-like head more than half his body weight atop an overmatched frame. Minotaurs embody the male principle; depending on the individual this manifests in a manner either dangerous or pathetic. They may be dominating bullies, bristling with the propensity for rape, or withered, sacrificial victims, still bearing the bloody marks of recent castration.

Abilities: Athletics 12, Health 10, Scuffling 12, Weapons 6

Hit Threshold: 3 (large)

Alertness Modifier: -1

Stealth Modifier: -1

Weapon: +1 (axe), +1 (goring horn), +0 bite

Armor: none

Stability Loss: +0

Moon-Beast

Before: This cruelly intelligent alien race occupies the dreaming moon and hunts for slaves across the Plateau of Leng. Hunched, slouching, covered with slimy gray-white skin recalling that of an amphibian, they can contract to the size of a short-statured man or expand to nearly twelve feet in height.

Writhing pseudopods ring their gaping maws, seizing prey and pulling it in. They serve Nyarlathotep and torture victims for sport.

After: Grotesque, distended faces appear atop the moon-beasts' eating apparatus. In hideous fashion they represent specific noxious and oppressive persons of Earth. The main guardian of the moon-beast slave camp in Leng, for example, begins to resemble Paris police chief Jean Chiappe.

Abilities: Athletics 10, Health 6, Scuffling 10, Weapons 4

Hit Threshold: 4

Alertness Modifier: -1

Stealth Modifier: -1

Weapon: -2 (pseudopod); +2 (bite); if the moon-beast hit its victim with a pseudopod in the previous round and has not been hit by that victim since, the moon-beast may spend 1 Scuffling to automatically succeed at a bite attack.

Armor: none

Stability Loss: +0

One-Off Beasts

In the many murky corners of the Dreamlands indescribable or unique creatures dwell, waiting to pounce on careless venturers.

Before: Though no two are alike, these creatures are generally chimerical, combining body types and natural weaponry of two or more incompatible Earth animals. They also tend to be much larger than any of their constituent species.

After: Now add to their odd collection of animal parts bits of machinery, tools, furniture parts, and hardware. Where



before they are unintelligent predatory animals, now they acquire the ability to speak and reason — usually to cajole their victims to a shadowy corner where they might be set upon and eaten.

LION-SIZED

Abilities: Athletics 12, Health 8, Scuffling 8

Hit Threshold: 4

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: +1

Weapon: +1 (bite)

Armor: none

Stability Loss: +0

ELEPHANT-SIZED

Abilities: Athletics 16, Health 8, Scuffling 8

Hit Threshold: 3 (large)

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: -3

Weapon: +4 (bite, swipe or claw)

Armor: -1 vs. any (thick hide)

Stability Loss: +0

GARGANTUAN

Abilities: Athletics 16, Health 18, Scuffling 18

Hit Threshold: 2 (titanic)

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: -3

Weapon: +6 (bite, swipe or claw)

Armor: -2 vs. any (thick hide)

Stability Loss: +0

Pianotaur

After: Those who hear the creature's name before seeing it might be excused for expecting an entity of comical, non-threatening peculiarity. Even from a distance, this concatenation of wild animal and piece of furniture may seem more absurd than frightening. But when it charges you, throws you down, and attempts to sadistically rape you, as seen in André Masson's 1937 painting "Le Pianotaure," you quickly experience its true horror. The pianotaur most often takes the form of the instrument that gives it its name, but might manifest as a divan, wardrobe, or chest of drawers. It embodies our slavery to the objects we create, predicting their eventual rebellion against us.

Abilities: Athletics 12, Health 28, Scuffling 12, Weapons 6

Hit Threshold: 3 (large)

Alertness Modifier: -1

Stealth Modifier: -2

Weapon: +1 (bite), +0 (appendage); on an appendage attack with a margin of 3 or more, a pianotaur attacking a victim in human or humanoid form has succeeded in raping him or her. The victim loses Stability equal to the damage, no Stability test permitted. If blasted by this Stability loss, the victim, even in the waking world, develops a crippling phobia of furniture and other large inanimate objects. The victim expects them to come alive at any moment and commence a similar assault.

Armor: none

Stability Loss: +2

Putrefacto

After: With an implacable tread, these rotting humanoids thud toward any perceived threat to order and authority, determined to stomp and smother. Most often clad in exaggerated versions of Catholic priestly garb, they sometimes appear as cops, military officers, fascist goons, or critics. The dead, rotting donkeys they drag behind them impede their advance only slightly.

Nauseating: When first coming within thirty feet of a putrefacto, characters must make Difficulty 4 Health rolls. Those failing are nauseated and suffer a +2 penalty to all Difficulty Numbers (except Preparedness tests) while they remain within thirty feet of the putrefactos.

Abilities: Athletics 5, Health 7, Scuffling 7, Weapons 2

Hit Threshold: 3

Alertness Modifier: -1

Stealth Modifier: -2

Weapon: +0 (strangle), -1 (stomp); on an attack with a margin of 2 or more, a non-native of the Dreamlands stomped or strangled by a putrefacto must pay 4 Instability or Dreamscaping, or return to the waking world. If sleeping, the victim wakes up. If physically present, the victim materializes on the earthly side of the threshold. **Armor:** all weapons do half damage; firearms do only 1 point of damage even if point-blank; shotguns do 2 points of damage.

Stability Loss: +0

Vitreol Horror

After: The vitreol horror is a single human-like eye, from eight to eighteen feet in diameter, slashed open and leaking vitreous jelly. Lashing fleshy appendages

ring the eye, attempting to seize victims and pull them into the jelly, which melts their flesh and nourishes the creature. Vitreal horrors lurk in pits, vaults, and Underworld passageways. Although capable of rapid movement, using their appendages for locomotion, they prefer to remain stationary and let prey come to them. If they're intelligent, they do nothing to show it.

Abilities: Athletics 20, Health 20, Scuffling 18

Hit Threshold: 3 (large)

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: -3

Weapon: -1 (appendage); the round after an appendage hit, the vitreal horror initiates an Athletics contest with the

victim. If it wins, the victim is drawn into the vitreous jelly, taking +4 damage per round. Once in the jelly, the victim must initiate and win an Athletics contest to escape it.

Armor: none, but on a successful Scuffling hit against the vitreal horror, the attacker is splattered with caustic jelly and loses Health equal to their margin.

Stability Loss: +0

Zoog

Before: Tentacles ring the snouts of these cat-sized, intelligent rodents. Found in large numbers in the Enchanted Wood, zoogs defer to a council of sages. They feed mostly on acorns and fungi, but aren't above feasting on a careless sleeping traveler.

After: The zoogs acquire examples of twentieth-century weaponry, scaled to their increasingly hand-like paws, and use them to prosecute a bloody civil war.

Abilities: Athletics 2, *After:* Firearms 4, Health 3, Scuffling 4

Hit Threshold: 4 (small)

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: +1

Weapon: -1 (tentacle sting); *After:* +1 (miniature rifle)

Armor: none

Stability Loss: +0

KADATH AUJOURD'HUI, DEMAIN LE MONDE

"It was from the artists and poets that the pertinent answers came, and I know that panic would have broken loose had they been able to compare notes."

— "The Call of Cthulhu"

This chapter leads Keepers through the nonstandard narrative devices their players will use to drive a *Dreamhounds* campaign.

The Shape of Melting Dreams (Premise)

Dreamhounds of Paris envisions a player-driven game in which the investigators explore the ever-shifting precincts of dream, in an attempt to marshal its power to achieve the large-scale social and political change their characters seek with their surrealist art.

Its combination of a key environment (two, if you count Paris) with an agenda set by the players might lead you to call this a sandbox game. We'll be using the term player-driven instead, for a couple of reasons.

First, it's one of those shifty roleplaying terms that evokes different expectations from different players. Sandboxes sound cool, and everyone thinks they want to play in one, but what that means in practice can lead to frustrating confusion.

Second, although the game grants the players the freedom to shape the story, it does so within unusual constraints:

- They are playing real historical figures over a long period, under the assumption that they will interweave the established facts of their lives into their horror-fantasy narrative.

- The campaign assumes an overall structure or arc, which they are encouraged to bring into play.

A Grand Disorder (Arc)

Many horror stories, including such Lovecraftian entries as *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward*, "The Hound" and "The Statement of Randolph Carter," feature protagonists who plumb secret truths, learn too much, and are consequently destroyed.

In *Trail of Cthulhu* games, you tend to play the characters who come in and mop up the disorders brought into being by these hubris-stoked inquirers.

In a *Dreamhounds* game, you play not the mopper-uppers but the troublemakers. Whether the characters pull out before it's too late and save the world from the disaster they've set in motion, or whether our own history is that disaster, is determined by the story they and you build together.

Starting the campaign with a colossal act of potential self-destruction goes against well-honed player instincts. To pull them into, and reinforce the premise, a *Dreamhounds* game uses a rules bolt-on called the **Arc and Pivot**.

Although the characters still have Drives, expect the Arc and Pivot to do most of the work of keeping them on premise. Drives recede in importance, becoming reminders of the characters' specific motivations. This is why it's okay that so many of the characters have the same Drives — as they did in real life. That's why they gravitated to one another.

During "Getting Started" (p. 58), you'll introduce the arc to the players. It breaks the storyline of the campaign into three phases: exploration, exploitation, and redemption. How the players get

through these stages — or whether disaster occurs before they complete the final one, is up to them.

Act One: The **exploration** phase commences with the scenario in chapter seven. There the characters poke around the classic Lovecraftian, Dunsany-inspired Dreamlands, gathering allies and information. Places conform to the "Before" descriptions given for them in chapter five.

Act Two: The arc shifts to **exploitation** when the characters start to dreamscape in earnest, meddling with the affairs of the Dreamlands in an attempt to change human consciousness in the waking world. Devise responses to player actions that tempt them along this path. Allies and advisors both dreaming and waking, including Maldoror, dream-Vaché, Nyarlathotep and supporting surrealists like Louis Aragon, give them whatever encouragement and evidence they need to start turning Dreamlands locales into their "After" versions. Customize the "After" versions as needed to conform to what the PCs are trying to do.

Act Three: The **redemption** phase begins when the majority of the characters pivot, seeing that the changes they've fostered seem to be birthing something terrible — something other than the utopia of proletarian freedom they've been striving toward. Respond to their initiatives by making it engagingly difficult to slow the onrush of metaphysical alterations they've set in motion.

Pivot Tracker

The transitions between acts are called **pivots**. Determine when the two pivots, between acts one and two, and then two and three, occur by first deciding approximately how many sessions you

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

A GRAND DISORDER



want the campaign to run. You can adjust in mid-campaign if need be. Then allocate these between the acts. Acts One and Three should each take up about a quarter of the sessions, with Act Two in the middle consisting of half the campaign.

In preparation for the first session, take a blank sheet of paper and mark it as your Pivot Tracker. Acquire either a set of stickers or a rubber stamp and ink pad. (HPL-themed versions of each are available on the Net, if you want to go the extra mile.) Divide the sheet into two sections, labeling them Exploration and Exploitation. Leave twice the room in the first section as the second. If you're using really big stamps/stickers

or are running for a large group, you may need an extra large piece of paper.

At the end of each session, ask each player in order to specify how her character fulfilled the action of the current arc.

Act One: "What did you do to explore the Dreamlands, and/or its impact on the waking world?"

Act Two: "What did you do to change the Dreamlands, bringing about a surrealist psychic revolution on Earth?"

Act Three: "What did you do to repair the damage you've done to the Dreamlands, and avert impending doom?"

During Acts One and Two, evaluate each answer you get.

When a player has no good answer, leave the sheet untouched.

When a player can answer the question but not in a particularly compelling way, add a sticker/stamp to the sheet.

For each truly dramatic or entertaining answer, add two stickers/stamps.

When the Exploration section has x stickers/stamps, where x = the number of players in your group times the number of sessions you allotted to Act One, tell them that the Exploitation act will start with the next session.

Then, when Exploitation section has x stickers/stamps, where x = the number of players in your group times the number of sessions you allotted to Act Two, tell them that the Redemption act will start with the next session.

This dispenses with the Pivot Tracker. However, you should still ask the question at the end of each Act Three session, to continue to reinforce the story arc.

The questions and Pivot Tracker provide you a ceremonial reminder, with prop, impelling players to make choices that further the structure. There is no mechanical reward for driving the arc forward; the interactive reminder is all most groups will need to keep moving in the same direction. This gives them the freedom of a player-driven campaign with less of the meandering feeling that sometime descends on them.

What the players choose to have their characters do to further each twist of the arc is up to them, as colored by the vignettes and developed by the obstacles you present them with in response.

This method introduces a fuzziness making the exact timing of the shifts a gestalt choice, beyond any one participant's direct control. A group preferring more intentional authorship might simply decide by consensus when to make the pivots. Even so, you'll still want to ask the concluding questions from each act, to keep everyone focused on the overall structure you're shooting for.

With Every Arc Comes an Ending

How many sessions you run is up to you and your group; you might decide this in advance, or play it by ear. As you near the climax, engineer events in the redemption phase so that they build to a climax, with the fate of the universal human mind at stake.

COMFORTING ENDING

In an upbeat conclusion, the surrealists defeat their ultimate adversary, who will have emerged during play. Possibilities for this antagonist include Nyarlathotep, the King in Yellow, King Cravan, Louis Aragon, a fascist sorcerer, Jacques Vaché or that old standby, Sex Hitler.

In so doing, they arrest or reverse the rate of change in the Dreamlands to an extent humanity's sleeping minds can assimilate. The dark history of the 20th century proceeds, but at least the world hasn't been destroyed, and the Old Ones remain uneasily asleep in their cosmic coffins.

HORROR ENDING

The PCs fail to convincingly overcome their ultimate adversary. The coming horrors of the mid-century roll on in a wave of horrifying premonition:¹¹ the continuing ascent of Hitler, the Holocaust, the atomic bomb, the millions murdered by Stalin... Moreover, they uncover the greatest of horrible truths — their actions in the Dreamlands

generated the psychic backwash that caused the world to plunge into blood-drenched madness. Further, they see the future of the Dreamlands — awash in zones of undifferentiated color, deconstructed advertising billboards, leering monuments to wayward cinema idols. After the slaughter comes an epoch of glibness, stupidity and nihilism. And it's all their fault.

Modifying the Arc

The group may decide partway through that they're having fun meandering around the Dreamlands messing with things and want to either put off the turn to redemption, or set it aside completely.

They might find another major adversary to overcome who doesn't really fit with the arc of hubris and attempted redemption.

If the campaign takes on a life of its own and no longer requires the structure an arc provides, modify it or set it aside.

Complicated Lives (Vignettes)

Lovecraft's fantasy stories have always been the jug-eared stepchild of his output. Though marbled with his evocative unease and flashes of unforgettable imagery, they're transitional works. They play in another writer's sandbox, and, taken together, over-rely on key gestures, like the impossible architectural element that cannot be fully seen, or the place that, once entered, traps the visitor. Whimsical elements, like the anthropomorphic hero cats, mesh awkwardly with his invocations of the Mythos and its infinite malignity.

Yet its nuggets of true Lovecraftian weirdness make the Dreamlands a tempting, if challenging, venue for roleplaying exploration.

Hence this revisionist take, which makes the reconfiguration of HPL's fantasy

realm to a more sinister form part of the narrative.

Essential to that approach is the idea of playing historical figures enmeshed in the ideological and artistic ferment of 1930s Paris. It sets the foggy timelessness of the Dreamlands on a collision course with interwar reality. The history grants weight and consequence to the fantasy; the fantasy leavens the history.

The messy, interlocking lives of our real-world protagonists supply the final ingredient in recovering the Dreamlands for straight-faced play. These people bring much more layered and contradictory motivations and private lives to the proceedings than Investigators players create for themselves.

Bring these elements into play by introducing vignettes from the characters' histories as connective tissue between scenes of investigation and adventure in the waking and sleeping realms.

As the game progresses from its start date, follow the developments listed in each PC bio. When a real-world event comes up in the chronology, narrate it into the game during an appropriate waking moment. This creates an unusual dynamic in which the Keeper tells a player what her character is doing, in accordance with the script laid out by history. Set up the situation, play any involved NPCs, and allow the player to jump into the ensuing scene in as much or little detail as desired.

Both Buñuel and Dalí are player characters. Your game's timeline has reached the fateful 1929 summer in Cadaqués. As per the Buñuel and Dalí entries on this series of events, it's time for Gala to show up. You decide to start with Justin, who is playing Buñuel, and narrate:

"You're getting nowhere on your screenplay with Dalí. You want to

¹¹ Alternately, a shocking flash-forward in time.

fill the film with imagery from Sade, but Dalí keeps shooting down your ideas. You stomp away to clear your head, only to see the expected party of visitors arrive — not just Magritte and his wife, and Dalí's dealer with his girlfriend, but also the Éluards — including that loathsome distraction Gala, who has Dalí mesmerized. What do you do?"

"The first chance I get," Justin responds, "I take her aside and warn her to stay away from him."

No one chose Gala as a player character in your game, so you, as Keeper, play her in the ensuing scene — displaying nothing but contempt for Buñuel's busybody bullying.

Most of the scenes will be short; others will blossom into fun, extended riffing.

You're narrating as you would in a standard investigative scene or antagonist reaction, except that the conceit allows you to also describe decisions made by PCs — so long as these correspond with the pocket histories.

Some players will remain content with the outlines given in the book. Others may research their characters, many of whom are the subjects of full-length biographies. By all means, encourage this. If your player learns more than you about her character, have her narrate the scenes, after an open-ended prompt: "So what was Buñuel doing about this time?"

After playing out a vignette, look for ways to reflect its events in later Dreamlands sequences.

Having decided to subvert the king of Thalarion, the group prowls its corridors in search of a secret hideout. Drawing on the earlier vignette, you decide to confront

Dalí with a mesmerizing witch who bears a more than passing resemblance to Gala, triggering Buñuel's protective impulses.

Between the player-driven structure and the inspiration provided by historical vignettes, you may find yourself doing very little to generate scenes and situations from scratch.

Extrapolated Vignettes

Not every PC will have a key event occur at every moment you play out in your timeline. Bring their players into the vignette action by asking them what they're up to while other group members are engaged in their historical interludes.

Typically, they'll choose to follow up on waking-life mysteries, or simply describe themselves doing the sorts of everyday things their characters would have done. Heck, they might even be working on their paintings, poems, or photographs.

On occasion they might choose to participate in others' historical interludes as kibitzers, provided they don't wildly alter the course of events. (See "Defy the Footnote," below.)

Accelerating into History

Look for opportunities to jump the timeline ahead. When you hit a spot in the timeline where:

- none of the PCs have key historical events coming up
 - nor do any of the supporting surrealists the players care about
- and
- none of the fictional real-world story elements need immediate resolution...

... jump ahead to the next key historical event. This technique allows you to cover more juicy historical ground over the course of your campaign, lending it an epic sweep.

Beware of the standard pacing tendency to pick up one session right where the other left off. Do this when necessary to continue a cliffhanger. Otherwise, keep the history flowing.

Time discontinuities between the waking and dreaming worlds let you jump ahead in reality while following up on immediate events in the other realm. In other instances the characters may find themselves thrust forward in dream time. They might provoke a change, then witness its much later consequences, with only a few days of waking time in between.

As You Know, My Dear Ernst...

Having read the entire book, you'll probably wield a greater familiarity with the people and the period than most or all of the players. You'll know stuff that the player's characters know, but they don't. This is common in roleplaying games but doesn't come up that much because you're usually not playing historical figures with complex, pre-established personal backgrounds. Be careful to introduce this information in a way that makes the player feel smart.

For example, in playtest I made the following mistake. When a PC playing Man Ray met up with Robert Desnos, in this case an NPC, for the first time in play, he introduced himself to Desnos.

I made a joke of it by having Desnos say, "Don't you recognize your best friend, Man Ray?"

This made the player feel that he'd walked into a trap. Not only did it break

the fourth wall, but it took away the player's sense of mastery and control.

What I should have said was, in narrator mode, "This is your longtime friend Desnos, collaborator on several projects together, including a film you made in the Dreamlands. You can trust him to be honest with you."

When delivering these nuggets, look for a positive emotional note, so that the receipt of new information about a player's own character plays as a benefit.

Seriously Joking

The number one challenge in running a satisfying *Dreamhounds* game lies in getting the humor right. Your players will be tempted to go for silly comedy, but will be disappointed if you let them.

This reflects a classic roleplaying paradox: what players want to see happen and what they actually do don't always match up. Fortunately, you're there to bridge that contradiction.

In today's popular imagination, surrealism registers as a goofy joke. Mention it on social media, and someone will likely chime in with a string of nonsense words. When we think this way we are mostly recalling Dalí after his full descent into clownish self-parody. That descent begins during the timeline covered here, to the fury of everyone else in and around the movement.

Furthermore, gamer culture gets its surrealism filtered through Monty Python, reinforcing our perception of it as the comedy of nonsense.

Certain surrealists, particularly Duchamp, Magritte and Dalí, certainly trucked in humor, but always in a wry and/or satirical mode that jabbed at conventional perceptions and morality. Jokes were weapons to shock the mind, an inheritance from the movement's

Dada roots. Horror, violence and unease are by far more pervasive emotional notes in the original surrealist works. Breton, the movement's theorist and admissions officer, led an intellectual life unblemished by any variety of humor.

Even the famous word clusters were assembled not for amusement, but to jar the reader, as in the famous Lautréamont aperçu "As beautiful as the chance encounter of a sewing machine and an umbrella on an operating table."

Discuss tone with your players at the outset of the game.

If you think this will still be an issue (as it likely will), remember to reinforce the dream-like approach to Dreamscaping, in which the characters can will strange and impossible things into being in the Dreamlands, but without a cartoonish transformation of one object into another. You can have a melting fish which also looks like a lake, but it's simply there when you turn around. The characters don't watch the fish turn into this like an absurd CGI effect. When players lapse into Chuck Jones mode, ask them to reframe their descriptions toward the jarring and psychologically destabilizing.

Defy the Footnote

History doesn't indicate that Cocteau was in the studio with Desnos and Artaud when they performed their *Fantômes* radio play in 1933. But it's not a huge stretch to say that he was.

If you were to make a film or write a novel about the surrealists, you'd collapse events, fudge dates and place key figures in scenes we have no record of their participating in, all in the name of narrative economy.

Don't let the real history paralyze you or stop you from making choices that work for your story. Avoid precluding key upcoming events, or having major

figures do things that flatly contradict their personalities and objectives. Other than that, give yourself and the players the power to invent or adjust events. Never stop the action to extract a reference from your teetering stack of reference materials.

Encourage players to do extra research if that appeals to them, but remind them to contribute what they know in a positive manner that keeps the ball rolling.

Train them to avoid...

"No, actually, that wouldn't happen."

... in favor of...

"Here's how it might have happened instead..."

Historical Immunity

A PC who dies in the Dreamlands by running out of Instability leaves play without creating a weird historical discontinuity. You can assume that the character's waking life went on as it did in the biography we know.

But what if Dalí gets fatally shot by a cultist while awake in 1932, while history says that he was hugely famous for another half a century before dying of heart disease in 1989? Or that Magritte is eviscerated by a ghoul in 1934, when we know he died of cancer in the late sixties?

Before starting play, poll the group on how they want to see fictional premature deaths reconciled with the historical record.

Alternate history: Everything is up for grabs. When something happens in the game that didn't in real life, it means we're officially in an alternate timeline. Wherever possible, the new history adheres to what we know. But if the group wants to take the storyline into

the realm of the counter-historical, they have the license to do it.

Fudged mortality: Any incident that would leave a PC dead in the real world doesn't kill the character. Instead, the Keeper narrates it as a horrifying near-death experience. The character goes off for a while to recuperate and never again messes with the Dreamlands, Mythos, or anything more dangerous than paint fumes. The player selects a new character. The previous PC may appear in vignettes that stick to the facts as we know them.

Dream life: The character dies and is removed from play; the player selects a new surrealist as PC. The collective yearning of the previous characters' dreaming friends and comrades leads to the creation of a dream-form in the other world. The dream-form, either in the background or as part of the main plot, somehow escapes to the waking world. It might come through the catacombs, allowed through by Nicholas Flamel, or by way of Robert Desnos' studio-portal. The dream-form participates in waking events but does not want to be reminded of its true origins and under no circumstances takes part in any occult investigation.

What If the Group Only Wants to Hang Around the Dreamlands?

Let them.

This campaign frame envisions a group that mixes sandbox action in the two contrasting settings, the Dreamlands and the City of Lights.

If the players only care about exploring the Dreamlands, reshaping its kingdoms, and messing with gugs, accept that as their chosen focus. Narrate the historical events surrounding their characters as interstitial background detail between scenes and adventures.

What If the Group Only Wants to Hang Around Paris?

Let them.

Weave real-world Mythos mysteries around their art activities and events from the historical record. Give them plot threads leading into the Dreamlands without privileging them over waking storylines. You can lead a surrealist to water, but you can't make him fight a pianotaur.

A group indifferent to the Dreamlands might simply be looking for a more focused, less sandboxy style, where you as Keeper present them with clear crises and missions requiring them to go to the Dreamlands and do specific things. Start scenarios with threats in Paris that require them to assemble information and resources in the Dreamlands, or to influence dream situations in a way that bleeds through into waking life.

Making It Investigative

Just as every session ends with the questions that reinforce the arc, Keeper questioning can remind players of the investigative portion of the game.

Start every session with the question: "What mystery of the Dreamlands do you want to solve now?" Ask one player, rotating from session to session. Other players may jump in to make alternate suggestions, leaving the ultimate decision to the group as a whole. Focusing on one player to start skips the moment of dead air when everyone waits for someone else to come up with an idea, and may help lessen the dominance of your alpha types.

Sometimes the reply will be, "Actually, I want to solve the mystery of the guy with the unblinking eyes at the Grand Guignol last night." Let the players drive the story to waking activities whenever they want to.

The point of the question, though, is to remind them that an environment to be explored is a constellation of mysteries, which they can address with their Investigative abilities. Whenever they seem at a loss for something to do, re-ask the question: "What mystery do you want to solve?"

Once they answer this question, the next one should be obvious — how do you set about solving it? As usual in an improvised GUMSHOE scenario, you then build scenes that react to the actions the PCs take to gather information. Eventually they'll solve the mystery they identified. This will often imply a new, broader mystery to be cracked. The players might follow up on this, or pick up another thread dropped earlier.

Places as Clues

Lovecraft's Dreamlands stories often follow a quest structure. It's even in the title of the key novella, "The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath." The protagonist of "The Quest of Iranon" seeks a city where he believes he will be hailed as a prince; eventually he discovers the Horrible Truth that it is a figment of his imagination, robbing him of his apparent immortality. In "The Other Gods," the priest Barzai and a young sidekick scale Hatheg-Kla to discover the gods; the Horrible Truth is that above the deities of men exist gods of cosmic indifference, who watch over them as if they were pets.

The characters seek information, which they gain by traveling. Revelation awaits at the location they seek. Think of a quest as a series of scenes, in which the characters learn how to get to the next stage of their journey, with the big answer they seek waiting for them at the final destination.



Objects as Clues

When they learn how mutable the Dreamlands are, the characters may despair of getting accurate information about it. If everyone they talk to is a figment of someone's individual or collective imagination, who knows anything?

In the unreal realm of dream, possession of an object might confer absolutely reliable insight. By finding the Spear of Althiis, the Book of All Dreams, or the Globe of Chiruk-Har, a character might

gain not only the answer she seeks, but absolute, objective certainty in its truth.

Using Investigative Abilities in Dream

The utility of certain Investigative abilities in the Dreamlands is easier to see than others. Interpersonal abilities, for example, work on dream denizens exactly as they do on inhabitants of the waking realm.

Others require a touch more imagination. To help you vary the investigative abilities you call in dream, here is a list of questions the group might be puzzling over, and the abilities that net them core clues driving them onward into the narrative.

Academic Abilities

How do we undermine the king of Thalarion?

Accounting: His treasury is highly dependent on fees paid by pilgrims to the Crypt of Aath outside the city. Find a way to stop or divert these payments, and he'll have trouble maintaining his retinue.

How do we get across that desert safely?

Anthropology: There must be nomads who know it and might be persuaded to guide you. Go to the bazaar and look for weatherbeaten, stoic men with the unmistakable gait of horsemen.

How do we get into that pyramid?

Archaeology: Whoever dreamed this up clearly had the Great Pyramid of Giza in mind. This is such an accurate replica that the dreamer might have been there. Look for the unfinished entryway on the bedrock level.

Where in Serannian does that German occultist dwell when he comes to the Dreamlands?

Architecture: That spire stands out as recalling the Speyer Cathedral. He probably dreamed that for himself.

Who originally dreamed this plateau?

Art History: From the look of that frog demon hopping toward you, you figure Hieronymous Bosch. Or another 15th century Dutch painter influenced by him.

Is this corpse Breton, or just a dream replica of Breton?

Biology: (as player specifies he's using a scalpel to conduct a field autopsy) The bones and nerve endings are all wrong. Must be a dream-form, thank goodness.

The place names on this map are encoded!

Cryptography: That's Oonai, on the other side of those treacherous mountains.

Can we trust that nice Egyptian man who told us to liberate the Lantern of Ghakal?

Cthulhu Mythos: No.

What do those floating rocks mean?

Geology: They're composed of volcanic rock, so it's a good guess that they came from Hatheg-Kla, or its general vicinity. If you travel against their path, you may reach your destination.

Why does that ghoul seem so bloodthirsty, and what meaning can we ascribe to the insignia he's wearing?

History: It's hard to tell with that elongated snout, but with his archaic French and loathing for Austrians, you have a hunch that in his human days he was Chlothar II, seventh-century king of the Franks.

Who is that bizarre figure who dragged Maldoror away?

Literature: Sounds like someone's dreamed King Ubu, from Alfred Jarry's play, into existence.

How do we get Masson out of the stockade?

Law: From the text of the sentence, it sounds like the Napoleonic Code is in effect here. You think you have grounds for appeal, if you can gain an audience with the chief magistrate.

Can we gain leverage on King Kuranos by learning who he was in life?

Library Use: None of the titles in his library of blank books postdate 1910, so if you wake up and search for Cornish obituaries from around then you might get a step closer.

How do we get that minotaur to cooperate?

Medicine: You can treat that abscessed hoof.

What kind of sigil is that above the door?

Occult: It's straight out of an Aleister Crowley book. Whoever made it is probably an interloper and almost undoubtedly a nasty character.

Are we any closer to finding Professor Guillaume?

Physics: The angles here are all solidly Euclidean, suggesting this place was dreamed into being by an earthly dreamer, and one who has dedicated his life to precise measurements. If anyone matches that description, it's Guillaume.

Can we convince the pilgrims to stop paying homage to the king?

Theology: These are classical pagans, keenly interested in the efficacy of their gods. If you dream another more powerful god, they may switch to its shrine.

Technical Abilities

Have other dreamers been here before?

Astronomy: Looking at the sky, you see that its star pattern resembles nothing on Earth. This is the first time you've seen no correlation at all between real-world astronomy and the skies of the Dreamlands.

Does that green substance on the burgomaster's smock tell us what killed him?

Chemistry: It's the same acidic goo secreted by those razor-edged walking weeds you encountered outside the town.

Which of those soldiers robbed our poster maker?

Evidence Collection: It's hard to spot, but one of them has a sword that doesn't quite fit in its sheath. The purse is probably jammed down in the tip.

This man who dropped dead at our feet, screaming of the whip-poor-wills. Where did he come from?

Forensics: (after an autopsy) His stomach is full of half-digested bivalve-type things, so he probably came from somewhere on the shore.

If we weren't in dream, I say it's strange to see a locked door standing in the middle of an empty field. Maybe if we unlock it, it will lead us to somewhere other than this rocky wasteland.

Locksmith: You just unlocked it. Who steps through first?

Can we trap one of those gazelle things and then present it to the tribesmen?

Outdoorsman: Maybe if you get downwind of them. And a spear or a carbine will stand you in better stead than a snare.

Whatever that anemone creature is addicted to, we need to find more of it, or it will continue to bar our way into the Gug City.

Pharmacy: It's heroin. Time to dream up some poppies.

We're beginning to wake up. How can we remember this vista so we arrive here next time?

Photography: If you envision yourself framing the image for a photograph, it should stick in your mind.

Supporting Surrealists

Potential PCs from chapter one not chosen by your players become NPCs. They can act as sources of information, allies, or antagonists, as your needs require. Play them as you would any other NPCs, making sure that they support the story without taking it over. The players will likely single one or two of them out for key status by interacting with them more than others. The history will elevate certain others: if both Éluard and Dalí are PCs, you'll find yourself playing Gala a bunch.

Keep in mind as you play these NPCs that players might later choose to take them over as PCs, if their original characters become unplayable.

Using *The Book of Ants*

As dreamers of feverish revolutionary zeal, you have doubtless acquired this book's companion volume, the *Le Livre des Fourmis*, or *The Book of Ants*.

It is to this book as *The Book of the Smoke* (*Liber Fumo*) is to *Bookhounds of London* — a supplementary source of inspiration and information which can be read on its own as a self-standing work of imaginary nonfiction, or to color your campaign. Where *The Book of the Smoke* centers on a sense of place, *The Book of Ants* presents the key component of a *Dreamhounds* game — the chronology of the surrealist movement, plus fanciful entries suggesting how it might have interacted with the Dreamlands. It shows your players the sorts of things they might do in this player-driven game, and how their exploits in the other realm might intersect with the known facts of their lives as artists and poets. Reading it will help get them into the surrealist mindset, evoke the atmosphere of their daily lives, and hint at the sorts of trouble they might make for themselves in the realm beyond waking.

If some of your players do stir themselves to read it, decide together what function

it plays in your game. Choices include the following:

Example only: *The Book of Ants* does not exist in the game world. It is a demonstration of what might happen in a *Dreamhounds* campaign. None of it impacts the group's choices in weaving their own parallel version of this story. Treat it as an extended example of play.

Backstory: Early in the proceedings, the characters gain access to an incomplete version of the book. It contains only those entries dated before the campaign's start date. Most groups will arrive at a start date that picks up only as *The Book of Ants* winds to its close, making this a viable option. These events really happened, but what occurs from this point on remains wide open. As Keeper, you might or might not choose to incorporate subsequent events from the book, provided they don't contradict what the PCs get up to or tempt you to shoehorn them into the storyline. For secrecy-loving groups, let players read only the entries preceding your start date. For groups who prefer to know more than their characters do, let them read the whole book. All else being equal, we recommend the second choice.

Alternate timeline: If you've read the book already, you know that the narrator becomes, in the course of his diary, something other than he believes himself to be. If you've chosen an earlier than usual start date, you can still use the book by borrowing a trick from *The Armitage Files*. In a mystical turn of events permitted by the distorted chronological winds of the Dreamlands, a copy of the players meet Henri Salem or find his book, even though its final entries occur in their future. Their actions can alter that future, meaning that they can prevent the later events he describes, taking control of the narrative. Salem might continue on as a psychopomp character providing advice and clues to the group.

If you've already run *Armitage* for your group, this might either seem like a tired trip to a familiar well, or a highly desired spiritual sequel.

Private idea mine: Forbid your players¹² from reading *The Book of Ants*, or accept that none of them are going to anyway. Fold its images, characterizations and situations into the game narrative as PC actions warrant. Their first meeting with Kuranos might mirror one of Henri Salem's encounters with him. One session might open with the bulbheads dismantling the pyramids, as jaded animal-headed slave drivers look dispiritedly on. In the waking world, they might be chased by sinister book collector Hector Delvé and his black-scarfed assassin.

Alternate Campaign Frames

This chapter provides lots of support for the default *Dreamhounds* frame, in which you play major surrealist figures interacting with the Dreamlands. This frame diverges in many ways from default *Trail of Cthulhu* and so requires the extra explanation. In brief, here are some other campaigns you could run in 1930s Paris, with or without the Dreamlands.

Whistle stop: Investigators from a regular *Trail* campaign show up in Paris to uncover one or more horrible truths, then move along to their next international destination, or back to their usual haunts. These might focus on the waking adversaries of chapter four, with the surrealists appearing in the background or not at all.

¹² If your players are the sorts who sneak-read materials you've told them not to look at, we could sell extra copies of the book, so forbid them with extra-tempting vehemence. Not that *Trail of Cthulhu* players, a sophisticated lot if ever there was one, would stoop to such blatant weaselry.

Fictional surrealists: The players invent fictional surrealists to rub shoulders with the historical ones given in chapter one, all of whom then become NPCs. The game proceeds as described in this chapter. Material that would in the default *Dreamhounds* frame appear in vignettes may appear in standard scenes, as flavor in investigative sequences, or not at all. Players retain control over their characters' destinies and needn't share narrative volition with the historical record—slash-GM. On the other hand, they can die at any time and never feel as real or as influential as the leading lights of the movement.

Against the surrealists: Players portray Investigators built using the standard rules who discover, perhaps through Randolph Carter or King Kuran, that the surrealists have been reshaping the Dreamlands and may succeed in altering human culture and consciousness forever. They become the forces of conservation if not conservatism, struggling to reverse the surrealists' course without staging an all-too-visible mass slaughter of the Parisian arts scene.

Dreamers escape: Players portray denizens of the Dreamlands who, through contact with the surrealists, flee that decaying realm for the palpable pleasures, and fears, of earthly existence. Pursued by sinister occultists seeking to exploit their innate magic, Cthulhu cultists hoping to use them to drive a

fissure into the bedrock of reality, and members of the Sorbonne's secret faculty of esoteric action who want to send them home in the name of global sanity, they seek the answers that will allow them to build safe new lives in the land of Pernod and Citroëns.

This premise might work better as a DramaSystem game, as seen in Pelgrane's *Hillfolk*, than *Trail of Cthulhu*.

The Character-Hopping Campaign

In another alternate version of the campaign, players switch which surrealists they're playing as the arc progresses. Options include the following:

Full-on troupe play: Anyone can play any character listed in chapter one. Janine might play Kiki one week. The next week no one does. Then Charles plays her for a session. You have dibs on the character you played last session if you want to take it up again, but other than that, it's first come, first served.

Switch by dates: The group might jump ahead in time and recast to play the characters doing the most interesting things around the new date.

Single-player switches: You might decide that it's unrealistic for Dalí to

suddenly want to undo all of his changes to the Dreamlands when you hit the campaign's Redemption act. So then you make a single switch to play Desnos, who up until now has been a supporting character. Meanwhile, everyone else sticks with the PCs they're invested in. This is no different than deciding to retire a character in a standard *Trail* campaign.

A Hoar-Rimed Sequel

Foreshadowed in this book, but otherwise beyond its remit, is a possible sequel campaign in which the players portray the members of the surrealist circle who remain in Paris through the Occupation and take part in the Resistance. In this game, Aragon joins the roster of potential historical PCs as the surrealists use their access to the Dreamlands to smuggle goods and people under the noses of the Nazis. The Dreamlands itself has frozen over, its inhabitants and wonders caked in ice, as seen in Leonora Carrington's 1940 portrait of Max Ernst. But the surrealist Resistance can still marshal fragments of its power, and their knowledge of the Mythos, against the Gestapo and Ahnenerbe alike.

For this wartime thriller with occult undertones, import rules from *Night's Black Agents* and draw on Modiphius's *Achtung! Cthulhu* game line, with its ready-to-use *Trail* conversion material.

LA FORTERESSE DE MALDOROR

In this introductory scenario, the players (if not their characters) explore the Dreamlands for the first time. They discover that some force has interfered with their dreamscaping powers and, in the course of the action, take measures to get them back. The scenario departs from the tighter structure of a standard *Trail of Cthulhu* scenario to lay the groundwork for a player-driven game that shifts between the dreaming and waking worlds.

The **Introductory Vignette**, customized by you depending on the PCs the group has chosen to play and the start date that entails, shows the main cast in their waking lives.

This leads to **A Subtle Disorder**, in which the PCs come to the muzzy realization that something has gone wrong, somehow, if only they could put their collective finger on what that might be...

The Green Membrane of Space, presented as an interactive flashback, introduces the scenario's Dreamlands thread, presenting a weirdly fascinating wretch and his equally mysterious pursuer.

In waking Paris, the group likely winds up **Comparing Notes. Precursors** sends them in search of a witness to a past era of art and literature that may have shaped the Dreamlands to its present state, in the person of elderly symbolist poet *Leopold Didot*. **Pioneers** has them consulting other surrealists who have explored the Dreamlands more extensively than they.

Antagonist reactions start with a **Watcher**, down-at-the-heels detective *Lucien Baudin*, employed to keep an eye on the surrealists in the waking world now that they've been messing with

the Dreamlands. Contact with him (or Didot) may lead the group to the **Old Guardians**, personified by retired art dealer *Henri Daltour*. As leader of the once-thriving Yellow League, he protects the Dreamlands from any who would strip it of its decadent beauty. This may lead him and his equally creaky coterie into a desperate **Attack of the Yellow League**.

Interspersed with vignettes of **Psychic Revolution**, the group ventures **Back to Dream**. Investigation in the sleeping world leads them to the dread city of **Thalarion**, where they can learn that the pursuing member of their pair of mysterious figures is Lathi, the devouring god that makes it a place one can enter, but never leave. A possible unlucky detour might take them to the **Gug Pit**.

By now having discovered that the pursued figure is the dream-form of Maldoror, protagonist of a strange novel of the same name the surrealists revere, they find him at his peculiarly mechanistic **Castle**. There they find the answers that will send them on their uniquely modern dream quests, establishing a number of plot threads for the group to take up in their subsequent player-driven adventures.

Introductory Vignette

Scene Type: Vignette

Lead-Outs: A Subtle Disorder, The Green Membrane of Space

The action of your *Dreamhounds* campaign opens in Paris, on or shortly after your Start Date (p. 59).

Checking the biographies of the PC surrealists (also referred to as "cast," "ensemble" or "Investigators"), find a historical event involving as many of them as possible. Present this as a vignette, the object of which is to introduce the main cast and perhaps key

supporting characters such as Breton, Aragon, or supporting surrealists who play pivotal roles in the life of one or more PCs.

If your earliest Start Date is determined by the arrival of a PC in Paris, that arrival, or an incident that occurs shortly after that, is probably the strongest choice for this vignette.

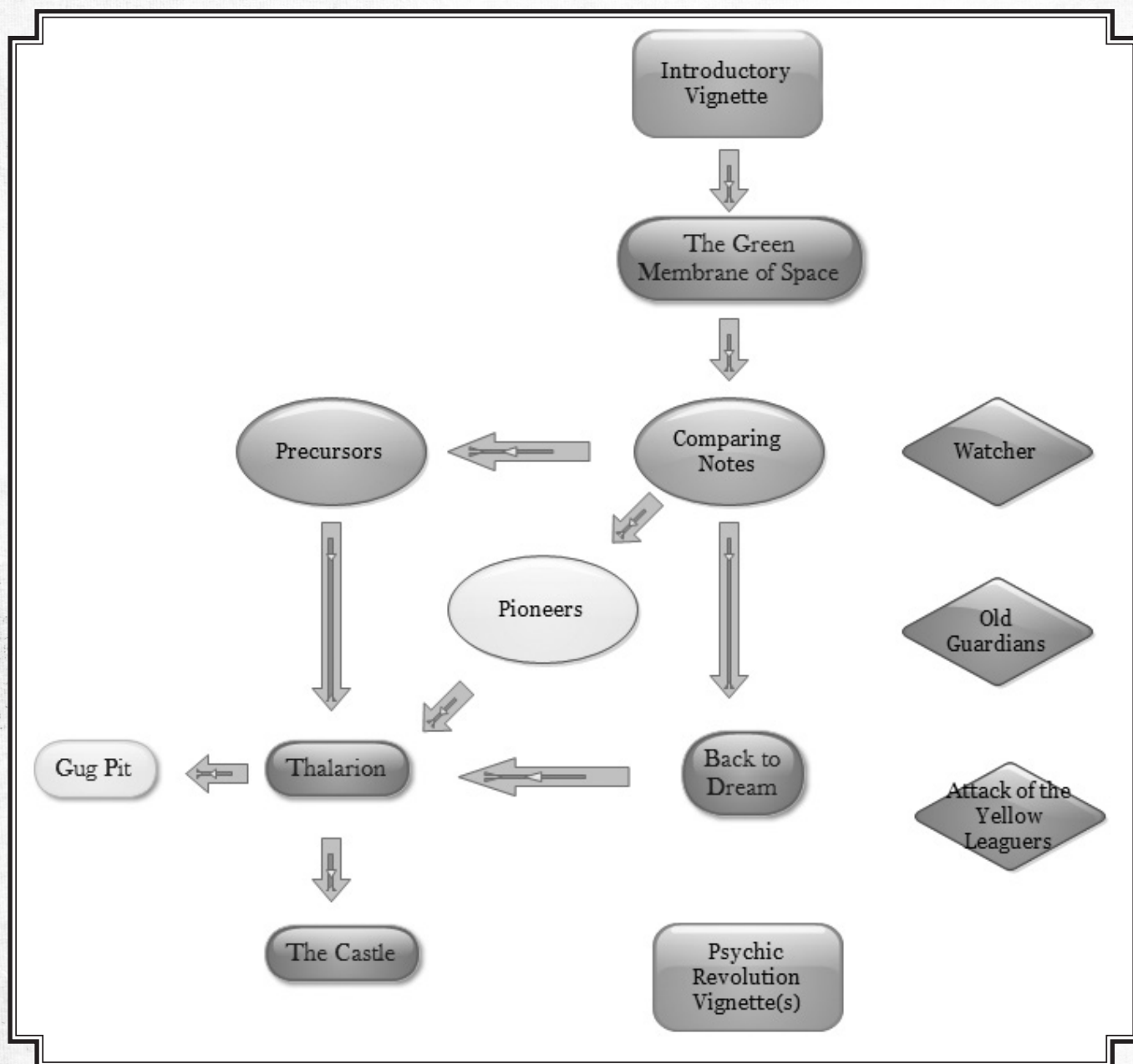
So if, for example, Dalí is the latest of your PCs to arrive for good in Paris (in his case, having already entered the Dreamlands), the vignette might concern his 1929 trip to the city for the filming of *Un chien andalou*.

You probably won't be able to find a single event in which all of the PCs were historically present. Find a compelling incident, then bend history a little to include everyone. If this seems implausible, instead cut away to each absent PC to quickly portray an event typical of their lives at the chosen moment.

As you play out the vignette, find an image to prefigure during the upcoming Dreamlands sequence. To return to the Dalí example, if we see him and Buñuel shooting *Un chien andalou*, the image of a razor blade slicing through an eyeball might appear reflected down at them from the green membrane of space.

If the players create an interesting conflict during the vignette, let them explore it, their characters, and 1930s Paris for as long as everyone at the table seems to be engaged by it.

As the historical part of the scene seems to be winding down, call for Difficulty 4 Sense Trouble tests. Those scoring successes realize that other surrealists gathered at the event seem slightly... *off*. One might look harried, another unusually withdrawn, yet another suffering the jitters and baggy eyes of prolonged insomnia.



Those affected include any NPCs present at the event who appear in chapter one as potential PCs, plus Louis Aragon, but not Breton.

PCs might also note the symptoms among one another — but not those who have yet to enter the Dreamlands.

They're perceiving the waking effects of a wasting condition contracted in the

Dreamlands, one that has temporarily stoppered their Dreamscaping abilities.

Check the Start Dates Table on p. 59. PCs not listed as having entered the Dreamlands as of your starting incident don't suffer this condition or show its symptoms. This scenario becomes their introduction to the Dreamlands, replacing if necessary the Dreamlands entry date given on the table.

In the case of characters described as having entered the Dreamlands recently, consider, in consultation with their players, adjusting the chapter one timeline so that the upcoming scene represents their first entry into the Dreamlands.

Characters scoring results of 7+ on the Sense Trouble test intuit that the problem has something to do with the Dreamlands.

Players might come to the same realization on their own.

Should they make the connection in either way, they might get together and start making deductions, effectively pulling material from “A Subtle Disorder” forward in time, into the introductory vignette. Hint to them that they’re being brilliant as you roll with this player-driven timing shift.

If instead they note the strangeness but don’t see a reason to pursue it any further, and seem satisfied with a quick introduction to the cast and milieu, cut ahead in time to...

A Subtle Disorder

Scene Type: Introduction

Lead-In: Introductory Vignette

Lead-Out: The Green Membrane of Space

Either directly in the same scene as the historical vignette, or in a waking scene shortly afterwards, members of the group begin to suspect that something has gone wrong and that they ought to be fixing it.

Tell the players of affected characters that they continue to feel draggy and strange. If they ask how well they’re sleeping, indicate that they have trouble falling asleep and waking up. They struggle to awaken at any appointed time (if any of them are bourgeois enough to care about that). If they sleep in as long as they like, they remain in slumber for ten, eleven, even twelve hours at a stretch. When they finally do awaken, they feel unrefreshed and draggy. Where once they dreamed vividly and recalled their Dreamlands exploits in detail, now it is all a blur of vagueries. Like random dreams used to be, before they learned to enter the realm of sleep.

Their condition affects their daily lives. Artistic inspiration eludes them. They feel ill-tempered and dulled.

Invite each player of an affected player to describe a situation in which this state caused trouble, annoyance, or disappointment in the waking world.

If the PCs go to an NPC surrealist who accesses the Dreamlands, the NPC reports a similar struggle — but seem blearily uninterested in pursuing it.

As players pursue this, encourage them to contrive to have the PCs meet up to discuss it. If necessary resort to a Socratic prompt:

So what moves you to gather together to discuss this?

Depending on cast selection you may still wind up cutting between parallel scenes. Due to surrealistic politics, characters who freely congregate in the Dreamlands may hesitate in the waking lands, where Breton and his snitches keep tabs.

Once the characters are together and talking their way through it, expect the players to eventually zero in on the question of their unremembered dreams.

(core) **Dream Lore** (or player deduction): Something seems to have happened to them while dreaming. Recalling their lost dreams must be the first step to figuring out what it is, and reversing it.

Give the players space to think up a plausible-enough method of recovering their dream memories. Examples might include:

- **Hypnosis** to reprise the surrealist séance experiments of the early 1920s. This is a General ability but automatically succeeds here, as it’s needed to move onto a new scene.
- **Psychoanalysis** to do the same, though with the atmosphere of a clinical group therapy session. Also automatically succeeds.
- **Chemistry** to whip up a memory-enhancing concoction.
- **Interrogation** to allow one PC to bombard another with questions until memory snaps into focus.

Dream Dusted

Until the affected PCs regain the use of their Dreamscaping abilities, the first General ability each of them uses in a given scene takes a +2 Difficulty modifier.

If they fail to overcome the Difficulty, they feel overtly tired or fuzzy-headed while doing this, and can attribute the failure to their mystery affliction — or their inability to dreamscape, if they’ve already put that together. Depending on where they are in the story, they may know exactly what has happened to them, or still be groping toward that discovery.

Even when they succeed, they can tell that it took extra effort to prevail, again due to the mystery affliction.

The object here is not to penalize them throughout the scenario, but simply to periodically remind them that they have a problem to solve, one with stakes affecting their ability to function in both the waking and dreaming worlds.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

THE GREEN MEMBRANE OF SPACE



- Having some PCs watch others sleep, then jolt them awake and jot down recollections until a full flood of them resumes.
- Remaining conscious until sleep deprivation provokes hallucinations, which can then be jump-started into memories of past dreams.

Once one cast member starts to remember, the others are also jolted into recollection, leading to “The Green Membrane of Space.”

The Green Membrane of Space

Scene Type: Core

Lead-Ins: Introductory Vignette, A Subtle Disorder

Lead-Out: Comparing Notes

In this scene, the waking characters, some or all of them perhaps in an altered state, piece together the events that led to their loss of dream power.

This allows the players to enjoy a sense of accomplishment as you portray a situation that, if you played it out in standard time, would make them feel helpless and hosed. (As it did in playtest, when the scenario was written just that way.)

To the first character remembering the incident, address this initial recollection.

You feel cold damp air and smell the salt and rotting fish of the ocean shore. All of you are standing together on a rocky promontory overlooking the sea.

Paraphrase this, and the boldfaced passages below, as you normally would,

but *don't forget to say “rugose.”* Describe all of the characters who have lost Dreamscaping ability as being together.

(Other dreamscaping NPC surrealists might be present too. Add this detail if the players ask. Omit it for simplicity if it doesn't occur to them.)

Break up the rest of this scene-setting description, addressing various players, suggesting that they're all now remembering the crucial dream at once.

- *Angry surf crashes up against the jagged rocks below.*
- *Behind you sprawls a strange version of the French countryside, a rugose plain punctuated by leafless trees and the occasional dilapidated farmhouse.*
- *The sky above looks like a pulsing green membrane.*

- *To peer into it is to feel the vastness of space and the shrunken, tiny insignificance of the world.*

Improvise additional eerie details of their surroundings as needed in response to their queries.

Players whose characters have yet to enter the Dreamlands can involve themselves in the scene by contributing questions. In the world, they're asking these questions of the remembering PCs. At the table, you're telling them what the dreamers recall in third-person narration.

As they recall the dream, the surrealists can draw on **Dream Lore** to analyze what they're remembering, or what they're hearing others recall. Provide the following, in response to relevant queries:

- It is a dream they're remembering, not a hallucination or something else.
- It is a Dreamlands dream, not a mundane one.
- When this happened they were all dreamers and not dream-forms or disguised Dreamlands residents.
- The characters are in their standard dream-forms, if they have such. (Ask players whose characters don't adopt a standard form to describe what they looked like here.)

When the questioning trails off, or one of them asks what happened next, further recollections flood in.

- *You remember a rivetingly magnetic figure lurking his way out of a farmhouse.*
- *Although he was a long distance away from you, you saw lice riddling his shorn scalp.*
- *A ragged cloak covered his nakedness.*
- *Desperation burned in his deep-set eyes.*

Maldoror and Lautréamont

*The Songs of Maldoror*¹ was written in 1868–1869 by the Uruguayan-born French poet Isidore Lucien Ducasse, and published under the pseudonym Comte de Lautréamont.

In a series of hallucinatory, horror-flecked passages, the murderous Maldoror, part romantic hero, part monster, undertakes a tortured battle with God, who has abandoned mankind.

Maldoror has been a key text to Breton and many other surrealists since the discovery of a vintage copy by the young poet Philippe Soupault in the late Teens. Its anarchy, tortured assaults on authority, and bizarre juxtaposition of imagery inspires all surrealist writing and some of its painting. Though its themes and images are rooted in the Gothic, its nonlinear structure prefigures modernism, four decades before Joyce's *Ulysses*.

Ducasse lived in wretched poverty and died largely unheralded at the age of twenty-four, during the Siege of Paris, in 1870. To Breton and company, this fate seals his reputation as a literary martyr.

Characters with Cthulhu Mythos ratings immediately recognize in its passages signs of exposure to the madness of the Old Ones.

1 Published in English as merely *Maldoror*. We recommend the lovely Exact Change edition from 1994.

- *Something about this figure resonates strongly, even as a memory, but you can't put your finger on it.*

Invite any player with a **Literature** pool to make a 1-point spend, with the caveat that it immediately gives them information they'll be able to garner very soon for free. If the spend is made:

That figure is none other than Maldoror, protagonist of the Comte de Lautréamont's *Songs of Maldoror*! (See sidebar; paraphrase as much of the description there as seems appropriate to the character.)

- *Then an indistinct yellow being appeared, pursuing Maldoror.*
- *Your blood freezes at the mere recollection of it!*

Unless they indicate that they're trying to stop the flood of memories, characters recalling this make a Difficulty 4 Stability test to avert a possible loss of 3 Stability.

- *Then the sky filled with angry crows.*
- *As they grew nearer, they turned out to be something else entirely — flying squid creatures scudding stiffly through the clouds toward the cities of men, to warn them to change their ways.*

Unless they indicate that they're trying to stop the flood of memories, players recalling this next image make a Difficulty 5 Stability test to avert a possible loss of 3 Stability.

Both this and the above are Mythos encounters and could theoretically¹³ induce Mythos shock.

13 Although it's unlikely this early in the action.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

COMPARING NOTES

- *Then the sky shifted, too, from a green membrane to a devouring, vaginal darkness.*
- *The pursuing figure looked at you, and its dead eyes bored into you.*
- *It then continued, pursuing Maldoror.*

(core) **Dream Lore:** It is the shock of this gaze, its cosmic malignity, that suppressed your ability to shape the dream world. You intuit that one way to regain what you've lost would be to confront this entity and reclaim from it your psychic strength.

- 1-point spend: There might be other ways, too, as there is always more than one path in dream.

Remind the players whose characters are recovering memories of the incident that they're regaining them in the usual jumbled order of dream recollection. They know that they didn't stop the yellow figure from chasing Maldoror.

But do you think you tried to intervene, or stood at a safe remove to watch?

If players say they intervened, ask them to spend a number of Instability and/or Dreamscaping points to show how hard they tried.

If the total number of points divided by the number of PCs exceeds 4, put a tick next to the paragraph starting "Friendly Maldoror" on p. 150. If not, put a tick next to the subsequent paragraph, beginning "Furious Maldoror."

Comparing Notes

Scene Type: Core

Lead-In: The Green Membrane of Space

Lead-Outs: Precursors, Pioneers, Back to Dream, Watcher

Having recovered from the terror of the recovered dream, the characters then figure out what to do about it.

(core clue for "Precursors") **Literature:** *[Parcel these bits of information out so that they play as a series of revelations prompted by player questions. More than one PC has Literature, probably, so try to divide them up. A player may have helped you here by having already spent to learn Maldoror's identity during the previous scene.]*

- The lice-headed man was none other than Maldoror! (Provide the info in the "Maldoror and Lautréamont" sidebar.)

- Many of the images they saw in the Dreamlands appear in a particular passage in the book. (On a 1-point **Literature** spend the character knows the exact page number of the passage and can find it immediately. Otherwise they find the relevant section¹⁴ after an afternoon of reading/rereading.) In it, Maldoror is pursued by a dread yellow figure. The passage describes "the rugose plains of the countryside" and "legions of winged squids (at a distance resembling crows)" that "float above the clouds and scud stiffly toward the

14 P. 101 of the Exact Change edition.



cities of the humans, their mission to warn men to change their ways.”

– **Cthulhu Mythos:** Those creatures might not be as interested in mankind as Lautréamont’s passage suggests. What we see as divine wrath might be mere nihilistic indifference.

– If Cocteau is a PC, he recognizes these beings as minor expressions of Great Cthulhu. Refer the player to his character bio for more context on his 1913 encounter, *Le Potomak*, and what he learned from Randolph Carter at the Somme.

- (core clue for “Precursors”) Soupault’s rediscovered original copy of *Maldoror* has a bookplate in it, bearing only the surname Didot. This might be the minor symbolist poet Leopold Didot, supposedly an acquaintance of Mallarmé, Baudelaire, and Hugo. When Soupault first found the book in 1919, he learned that Didot was still alive, at age 82. He tried to gain an audience with him, but Didot wouldn’t open the door. *In light of the weird recovered dream, maybe that refusal meant more than the cranky refusal of an elderly litterateur...*

(core clue for “Pioneers”) **Dream Lore:** Surrealists have been exploring the Dreamlands for some time. This list might include certain PCs, as revealed in their character descriptions. Though the lice-headed man and the yellow figure are new to all of the PCs, maybe someone in their circle — or the hated Cocteau — knows something about them.

(core clue for “Back to Dream”) **Dream Lore:** Ever since certain surrealists discovered the Dreamlands, they have posited the possibility of using it to achieve the global psychic revolution that is their *raison d’être*. Surely this dream incarnation of their fictional hero can grant them the insight they need to finally accomplish this!

- If the group agrees to return together to the Dreamlands in the near future, they can probably explore further, picking up the lice-headed man’s trail without the yellow figure around to menace them.

History: Lautréamont died from illness and privation during the 1870–1871 Siege of Paris, which eventually resulted in the capture of the city by Frederick III.

Occult: The novel pulsates with occult imagery. While it’s possible that Maldoror showed up there because the surrealists dreamed him into being, it might also be that Ducasse was a dreamer, or was mixed up in occult circles.

Medicine: Accounts of his early demise don’t include anything particularly mysterious. But it’s impossible to know if Ducasse met foul play based on fragmentary accounts from fifty years ago.

Expect this scene to include, in addition to character interplay, speculation on the nature of dream and its relationship to events in the real world. When this bogs down, hint that they won’t be able to answer those questions without further information — perhaps from Maldoror himself.

Precursors

Scene Type: Core

Lead-In: Comparing Notes

Lead-Outs: Thalarion, Watcher, Old Guardians

Any method the players propose to find Leopold Didot’s address succeeds. They might:

- **Bargain, Charm, Flatter, or Reassure** Soupault into giving it to them. (Otherwise he wants to go back to Didot himself and

otherwise stick his nose into their investigation.) Soupault is briefly profiled in “Secondary Figures,” p. 54; and appears in *The Book of Ants*.

- Use **Bureaucracy, Law** or **Accounting** to hunt up his address from an official or quasi-official source.
- Use **Literature** to ask around at Monnier’s bookshop or a university.

Literature: Any obscure poet might find it flattering if someone in the group tracks down his work and can show that they’ve read it.

Born in 1837, the very elderly Didot now survives on bread, milk, and spite. He cracks the door of his squalid flat on the rue Doudeauville in Montmartre, no more interested in talking about Lautréamont or Maldoror than he was when Soupault tracked him down a decade ago.

He wants nothing and so is immune to Bargain. He despises all social classes, his own most of all, and can’t be moved with Credit Rating. Intimidation throws him into a rage. He takes so much Reassurance from his hatred of all mankind that no one else’s means anything to him.

(core) However, if anyone bothered to find his now rare and completely out-of-print poetry (**Library Use**; can be used to describe the previously unseen action of tracking down a copy, as per Preparedness), he yields completely to a few quotations and some **Flattery**. Didot’s also an old roué at heart and still prey to **Charm** from a female cast member.

He reluctantly allows the group into his wretched apartment. When they see the Investigators, his dozen black cats rear and hiss. They scamper en masse through an open window, fleeing them in apparent feline panic.

In response to player questions, Didot, in between bitter outbursts about the sorry state of poetry, art, and Paris today, supplies the following information. (Alter the flavor to suit the tenor of the questions.)

- He knew all of them — Mallarmé, Baudelaire, even Victor Hugo, a little.
- Lautréamont? You mean Ducasse. A pipsqueak and a madman! There is one justice in the world — that his filth was consigned to the literary scrap heap!
- You want proof that he was insane? He said many of his sickening descriptions were of another world, that was like a dream, but real.
- He also claimed that men of imagination could reshape that realm to their will — though his will was too weak, compared to painters like Moreau and Redon. (**Art History:** Didot refers to Gustave Moreau and Odilon Redon, members of the symbolist movement.)
- Was Maldoror real? What absurdity! He was a fiction. But Ducasse, delirious and dying, said he would go to meet him in Thalarion, where together they would unite against Lathi.
 - **Dream Lore:** (core) Thalarion is a dread location in the Dreamlands, a city no man can enter and live, because it is haunted by a revenant god, Lathi.
- Some of the others were mixed up in that dream talk, or so Ducasse said in fever. Baudelaire learned to go there while translating Poe. Mallarmé went mad there and spent his last years writing a poem consisting of text that linked to other bits of text, about the rolling of dice. Sheer insanity!
- Ducasse refused to believe that mere pneumonia and starvation were killing

him. He blamed a... never mind about that. (A 2-point **Reassurance** spend gets him to spill a little more, but no more. Didot warns them that if they run into something called the Yellow League, they should not poke into its business. **Occult** recalls a few obscure hints about something called the Yellow League operating during the Second French Empire.)

Art History and **Literature** may provide more background on Didot's references. Fire up Wikipedia as required.

Didot becomes visibly nervous after revealing the info in his final bullet point, above. If he does so, and the group thinks to lurk around afterwards, they see the concierge of his building leave her desk in the foyer in response to his ringing buzzer. She returns shortly thereafter to call a messenger. On a Difficulty 4 **Shadowing** test, they can follow the messenger to an imposing manor on the banks of the Seine in Chatou, not far outside Paris. See "The Old Guardians."

Pioneers

Scene Type: Core

Lead-In: Comparing Notes

Lead-Outs: Thalarion, Watcher

The group may seek advice from other surrealists with Dreamlands experience. Improvise details as needed, as which figures are PCs and which NPCs of course varies depending on who your players choose to portray.

If you sense that they want to ask a bunch of characters for help, dole out the info one or two bits per informant. After all of these points have been revealed, elide the rest into summary narration so the group can move on: "You talk to the others, who affirm what you've already heard."

- No one has encountered Maldoror before.
- Nor have they encountered anything resembling the Yellow Figure.
- One informant may have seen distant glimpses of the flying squid beings, which radiate a very particular unease.
 - Cocteau made one of these the subject of a children's book!

If they seek out Cocteau himself, describe his anathema status, suggesting that they'll incur Breton's wrath if they're caught talking to him. A Difficulty 4 **Stealth** success ensures that no one spots them. Without this, Benjamin Péret sees them and reports them to Breton, triggering a later vignette in which the latter vents his literary rage at them for their betrayal of surrealist principles.

Cocteau, found at *Le Bœuf sur le Toit* (p. 89, Chapter 3), opens up with a little **Flattery, Bargain** (a promise to put in a good word with Breton) or **Streetwise** (a lead on a reliable opium dealer). He says that the flying squids must be expressions of an entity known as Great Cthulhu, who he first encountered in dream in 1913. He tried to exorcise that memory by putting it in a children's book, *Le Potomak*. Only when he met Randolph Carter at the Somme in 1916 did he discover the true implications of this. Why they might be pursuing a dream image of Maldoror, he has no idea.

The above assumes that Cocteau isn't a PC. If he is, they covered this material already in "Comparing Notes."

(core) When the process of getting answers from other dreams starts to peter out, something occurs to whomever they're currently talking to — he's heard Dreamland denizens refer to a ghostly figure, who some call a god, found in the city of Thalarion. Legend

has it that this being mostly remains within the city's confines, but sometimes goes out prowling after enemies, clad in shimmering yellow robes.

Watcher

Scene Type: Antagonist Reaction / Alternate

Lead-Ins: Comparing Notes, Precursors, Pioneers

Lead-Out: Old Guardians

Indiscreet investigation may attract unwanted attention. A nearly moribund occult conspiracy known as the Yellow League (Ligue Jaune) maintains a network of informants to keep it apprised on activities in the Dreamlands. Its doddering leaders have long known that the surrealists and other avant-garde artists, like Cocteau, have been able to access the Dreamlands. It spies on them, but has taken no action against them — so far.

During any demonstrative or argumentative discussion of their plans that takes place in public, the group may be observed by paid informants of the Yellow League. Call for a Difficulty 4 **Sense Trouble** test in any such instance.

On a failure, the PCs don't know that they've been spied upon.

On a success, they note that someone is eavesdropping on them — a weathered, stocky, middle-aged man in a threadbare suit that would have been expensive when purchased twenty years ago. His name is Lucien Baudin.

If the players specify that they're hiding their awareness of this watcher, call for a Difficulty 5 **Stealth** test. On a success, he doesn't suspect that they've twigged to him. On a failure, he immediately gets up and departs.

Following an aware Baudin requires a Difficulty 6 **Shadowing** test.

- *Failure:* He eludes them and alerts his employers at the Yellow League.
- *Success:* Unable to shake them, Baudin hides in an alcove and then attempts to get the drop on them with pistol drawn. (A Difficulty 5 **Sense Trouble** test warns the group that he's waiting in ambush.) He accuses them of stalking him in order to rob him and denies any knowledge of, or interest in, them. **Assess Honesty** shows that this is untrue.

Following an unaware Baudin requires a Difficulty 4 **Shadowing** test.

- *Failure:* He eludes them and alerts his employers at the Yellow League.
- *Success:* The group can either:
 - confront him, with the advantage of surprise, at a time and place of their choosing.
 - follow him until he enters the dingy offices of his detective agency, on the second floor of a building on the rue du Nord.

Getting information out of Baudin proves difficult even under polite circumstances. Once a prosperous man, the irascible Baudin has fallen on hard times after alienating nearly all of his aristocratic clients. Only his work for the Yellow League, whose reclusive members barely notice his reflexive rudeness, keeps his meager bills paid. For this reason he is loath to betray them.

Under the duress of **Cop Talk** or **Intimidation**, which are not exactly surrealist fortes, he might hint that the PCs are in over their heads and messing with forces they don't understand. (Though no occultist, his years working for the league have exposed him to some very strange things.)

It takes a 2-point **Cop Talk** or **Intimidation** spend to get him to name his clients as the Yellow League, and supply the address of their headquarters (see "Old Guardians").

Alternately, the cast can mount a very challenging stakeout of his offices until he goes to their headquarters to report — this requires a Difficulty 6 **Shadowing** test, representing several days of concentrated and mostly boring effort. (In world time, not game time; quickly describe their tedium and then jump forward to the interesting action.)

Though prepared to draw his revolver, Baudin will only fire it in circumstances that will allow him to reliably claim self-defense. He uses only as much force as he needs to extract himself from a threatening situation.

LUCIEN BAUDIN

Investigative Abilities: Art History, Law, Library Use, Literature, Cop Talk, Interrogation, Intimidation, Occult

General Abilities: Athletics 4, Firearms 6, Health 6, Scuffling 6, Weapons 6

Alertness Modifier: +2

Stealth Modifier: +1

Weapon: +0 (revolver), -1 (brass knuckles)

Back to Dream

Scene Type: Core

Lead-In: Comparing Notes

Lead-Out: Thalarion

The players likely want to get their characters back to dream to explore the environment and see what traces of Maldoror they find there.



They can all reappear at the site of their Maldoror encounter. If they decide to convene elsewhere, follow their lead, let them mess about for as long as they seem engaged, then find an in-setting hint pointing them toward Thalarion.

Characters entering the Dreamlands for the first time did not have their Dreamscaping abilities suppressed by the dread visage of the Yellow Figure. They can access their Dreamscaping abilities, although they haven't used them before.

The others must somehow recover their Dreamscaping abilities. This scenario provides a number of opportunities to do this:

- By trying to reactivate them in "Thalarion," while contemplating the impossible task of going into the city and coming back alive.
- By defeating or driving off Lathi, at any point.
- As a gift of thanks from Maldoror, in "The Castle."

Also, the players might posit some other evocative way of regaining their powers, and overcome improvised obstacles you place in their way.

Until they do one of these things, they are unable to dreamscape. On a successful attempt to dreamscape, characters experience a flutter of possibility, then nothing. (Any points they spent are then refunded.)

If they seek a village, they find themselves in Ulthar, unable to see any of its legendary felines.

If they seek someone to talk to, they spot a bent-backed farmer lugging a load of potatoes across the rugose plain.

The villager or farmer is named Ilkan. He speaks in the cod-medieval lingo typical of the Dreamlands. Fearful

of the dreamers at first, he can be rendered cooperative via **Bargain, Intimidation, Reassurance** or **Charm**.

- Yes, he met Maldoror. A contradictory fellow — a wretch, yet also possessed of a hideous magnetism, as if capable of rising up to split the world in twain.
- The Yellow Specter also caused great alarm hereabouts, until everyone realized that it only hunted Maldoror.
- (core) The sages say that the Yellow Specter might be Lathi, the murderous god who devours all who attempt to enter Thalarion, City of Wonders.
- Do we have sages here you can talk to? Why no, stranger. We drove them all off. In times of trouble, it is dangerous to know too much.

If the group somehow blows its encounter with Ilkan, they then spot a minotaur named Fermel, who can deliver the same info. Intimidation doesn't work on him but **Seduction** (from either sex) does.

If a change of pace seems required before the group reaches Thalarion, they wake up, allowing more Paris investigation and/or additional vignettes.

Old Guardians

Scene Type: Alternate

Lead-Ins: Precursors, Watcher

The manor on the banks of the Seine in Chatou, which can be found by trailing either the detective Lucien Baudin or the elderly poet Leopold Didot, could stand a round of renovations and a new coat of paint. Light plays across its eaves in an oddly otherworldly way.

Dream Lore: A PC recalls having seen a very similar manor on the way to Ulthar, a Dreamlands settlement supposedly

famous for its cats. Although the PC saw no cats there.

Researching the place before going in yields the following:

Bureaucracy (and a trip to the land registry office): The manor belongs to an Henri Daltour.

Art History: Henri Daltour *père* and *fils* were proprietors of the Galerie Coucher de Soleil (Sunset Gallery), a prominent outlet for symbolist artworks.

- 1-pt spend: It opened in 1874 and closed just three years ago, in 19—.
- **Law:** Galerie Coucher de Soleil closed due to insolvency.

Literature: The Daltours were related by marriage to Gabriel de Sauvejunte, publisher of Éditions Salomé, a small press specialized in the work of symbolist poets and fantastic fiction, often translated works of English writers.

Breaking into the manor unseen requires a Difficulty 5 **Stealth** success. Clues await in its library.

Unlabeled portraits cover its walls:

- **Literature:** Some of the subjects include Mallarmé, Poe, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and the decadent Belgian novelist Joris-Karl Huysmans.
- **Art History:** The subjects include the painters Gustave Moreau, Alexandre Séon, Arnold Böcklin, Gaston Bussière, Fernand Khnopff, and Carlos Schwabe. Some of the paintings might be by some of these men, though none are self-portraits.
- Böcklin was a major influence on de Chirico. If de Chirico is a PC, he credits a Böcklin painting for awakening him to the Dreamlands. (Otherwise, **Art History** yields this de Chirico fact.)



- Bussière and Schwabe died just recently, in 1928 and 1926 respectively.
- If the group knows about the Daltours already, they can assume that they once represented many if not all of the depicted artists.

Leather chairs surround a large mahogany table. At one end of the table sits a gavel and a wooden plate to rap it on.

- **Architecture:** From the wear patterns on the leather chairs, it is clear that they are well tended and still undergo regular use.

Maps hang on a beautiful mahogany map rack. When unfurled, they turn out to depict the Dreamlands. Or at least they seem to, since they're marked with familiar place names like Thalarion, Dylath-Leen, Hlanith, Serannian, and so on. Apart from the common names, though, no two maps demarcate the same coast lines, river routes, or geographical relationships between cities. This is not a mere case of archaic imprecision, as in old maps of the real world. Each map is an utter scrambling of the elements on the next. These are hand-drawn originals. (**Art History:** perhaps by some of the artists whose portraits appear on the walls.)

Group members may choose to interview the inhabitants, or have to talk their way out of their straits after being discovered rifling through the library.

Henri Daltour fils is in his sixties and stricken by a palsy. (**Medicine:** He probably suffers from Parkinson's disease.) He is attended by a manservant, Pierre Vaudry, easily fifteen years his senior.

What Daltour reveals to them depends on what he's learned so far through Baudin and Didot, and whether their encounter occurs under polite or hostile

circumstances. He probably knows more about them than they do about him, but wants more information about their activities — specifically, the extent to which they've learned to change the Dreamlands, and what they intend to do about it. If he decides they're a danger to it, he may mislead them, which **Assess Honesty** reveals. He may trade facts with them, try to keep them in the dark, or yield to:

- **Bargain** (promises to leave the Dreamlands in its present state)
- **Art-Making** (used as an Interpersonal ability, appealing to him as a fellow art lover)
- **Charm** (particularly from someone who presents himself as a younger version of him)

Daltour's story, broken up into chunks for Q&A-style dialogue, goes like this:

- The artists and writers whose faces appear in the portraits learned to go to the Dreamlands. Their works reference it, either literally or through the moods they create.
- They became protectors of the people of that realm. Above all, they protected the people there from the idea that they were unreal projections of earthly dreamers.
- Not all of the dreamers of that era had the best interests of the Dreamlands at heart. They preyed on the locals and distorted the realm from its original state of (sometimes sinister) beauty.
- So Henri's father and some of the others formed the Yellow League, dedicated to striking back on Earth against despoilers of the *domaine du rêve*.
- Daltour used to be a dreamer, but nowadays is rarely able to venture there. Occasionally he wakes up with

blurry memories of Dreamlands experiences, but cannot resolve them into a narrative.

- There are dark and terrible things there that are not entirely the result of men's dreams. They destroy only those intent on interfering with them. (Not exactly true, but Daltour believes it.)
- With the deaths of Bussière and Schwabe, the last founding members of the Yellow League are gone. (Daltour himself joined only later, inducted by his father.) Only a dwindling circle of auxiliary members remains to preserve the Dreamlands.
- The appearance of Maldoror is a malign sign of change threatening the Dreamlands. They had to protect the Dreamlands from Ducasse and his putrid visions when he was alive. That a new generation of admirers has arisen to resurrect this specter is a terrible thing!
- Of course they had nothing to do with Lautréamont's death. It was pneumonia compounded by starvation. Anyone who accuses them of poisoning him speaks vile slander! (**Assess Honesty:** Daltour is lying, or at least uncertain that what he says so fervently is actually true.)
- Maldoror and the influence of Lautréamont must be expunged from the Dreamlands.

Although it is true, Daltour refuses to believe that the symbolists themselves altered the landscape of dream, painting over whatever existed there before.

If asked whether the yellow figure might be him or another member of the League, his face shows a startle of recognition, which he then tries to cover up. **Assess Honesty** shows that his denials are deceptive.

Psychic Revolution

Scene Type: Vignette(s)

Salt waking sequences with vignettes, inspired by historical events in the character bios or extrapolated from them, reinforcing the theme of psychic revolution. These remind the players that their PCs really do want to alter mankind's psychology, away from obedience and authority and toward freedom and justice, through their art. The players may be less invested in that goal than the characters; build in scenes to bridge that gap.

Attack of the Yellow League

Scene Type: Antagonist Reaction

This scene occurs in Paris if Daltour discovers that the cast continues to interfere with the Dreamlands or seek alliance with Maldoror. He and a decrepit team of scholars, critics and derivative artists trail the group whenever they meet together and then stage a desperate frontal assault. Their willingness to stage a gunfight in broad daylight exceeds their aging capacities.

Allow a Difficulty 4 **Sense Trouble** test if you're partway into the scenario and still have time for them to return. On a success, the group realizes it's being stalked and has a chance to confront them. They might still decide to suddenly open fire.

Nearer the end of the scenario, you might still stage an ambush, without giving the characters the chance to spot them beforehand. Although the Yellow Leaguers lack the stamina to kill the PCs, the real-world incident should demonstrate that the dangers of messing around in the Dreamlands can spill into the waking hours.

The number of attackers equals the size of the PC group, minus one.

Dreamlands Names

Assign these proper names to Dreamlands characters as needed:

Male: D'Andry, Gild, Ledes, Holoph, Agobast, Theux, Ferrehar

Female: Neufre, Tulai, Seysse, Coula, Ravia, Mariss, Belle

YELLOW LEAGUERS

Athletics 1, Firearms 5, Health 1, Scuffling 3, Weapons 5

Weapon: +0 (WWI service revolvers), +0 (hunting rifles)

Thalarion

Scene Type: Core

Lead-Ins: Precursors, Pioneers, Back to Dream

Lead-Outs: The Castle, Gug Pit

The group may dream its way directly to Thalarion, or get there after "Back to Dream."

If vignettes or interplay so far suggest one or more encounters the group might enjoyably confront before gaining use of their Dreamscaping abilities, improvise them as an additional obstacle between them and the gates of Thalarion. React likewise to exploratory moves undertaken by the group; this is a player-driven campaign, so don't worry about sidetracking. The tangents are the story.

Set the scene with the "Before" description for Thalarion on p. 118. Take a moment to make an image search for "Picabia *mécanique*" on your laptop or mobile device.

Though no one lives inside the city, a settlement of traders who live in tents

and shanties has sprung up around it, to serve the ships that dock at its piers. The cast can seek out its fantastically garbed vendors, merchants and sailors to questioning with **Oral History**, **Bargain** or **Charm**. Break these up into interactive bites, allowing multiple PCs to extract information. Permit other Interpersonal abilities if they seem appropriate to the moment.

- A menacing figure called Maldoror was asking questions around here not so long ago.
- A skulking wretch called Maldoror was asking questions around here not so long ago.
- He wanted to destroy Lathi, the devouring god who haunts Thalarion, rendering its streets uninhabitable.
- We wanted him to try, so we could live there again.
- We warned him away from trying, sure that Lathi would exact monstrous vengeance not only on him, but on us.
- Some of the others found him placing a strange device at the base of the great gate Akariel.
- When questioned, he said it was something called a bomb. We did not understand that word.
- He left, and some of the others, fearful of Lathi, took his bomb and dismantled it.

After some resistance, the traders provide the group with the pieces of the bomb. It looks like a three-dimensional version of Francis Picabia's *mécanique* paintings.

Art History: The wealthy avant-garde painter Francis Picabia took a key role during the movement's Dada era and has a complicated history of alliances and breaks with Breton.

(core) **Architecture:** The disassembled pieces look like they fit together into a stylized sculpture of a fortress.

The locals object to any effort to put the bomb back together in their presence but can be talked into letting the group take the pieces away with them.

Since it's a core clue, the ensemble can always reassemble the bomb. The question is whether it blows up on reassembly. A Difficulty 5 **Explosives** test prevents this from happening. Characters can spend Mechanical Repair points on the test; two points from this pool adds 1 to the die result. If the bomb explodes, the group suffers Instability damage as if it were a landmine. Should they be in proximity to any Dreamlands structures, these catastrophically collapse. The falling debris does no extra damage to the characters but might trigger later scenes of consequences in the Dreamlands — depending on whose house, fortress or defensive wall they just reduced to dust.

If the characters offend or frighten the locals, one of them tells them that Maldoror was captured by Lathi, who tried to devour him but could not. So he was consigned to a pit near the Fens of Jubec, about half a league inland. This leads out to "Gug Pit."

If the characters near the entrance to the city, a covey of blind beggar women warn them from entering. "No one who

goes in ever comes out," they cry, rattling their alms-cups.

The cast experiences a radiating presence of malice and danger within the city walls.

Dream Lore (if they've already met him in the waking world): Something about that presence reminds them of Henri Daltour.

Dream Lore also suggests that this presence is at its most powerful within Thalarion's walls.

Don't prompt them, but if the characters now, while contemplating the doomed task of entering Thalarion safely, try to activate their Dreamscaping abilities, they might succeed (though likely at a greater cost than if Maldoror unlocks them later, in "The Castle"). Each character attempts a separate Difficulty 7 **Dreamscaping** test (+2 bonus if they met Daltour in the waking world). Only characters who succeed recover the ability.

A failure is a simple fizzle.

Successful characters see a rippling in the air on Thalarion's threshold. Characters who have never used the ability before sense the following:

- You can move from place to place in sudden shifts, as happens in dream.
- You can suddenly have an object on your person, again as happens in dream. This object must either seem in keeping with the cod-ancient environs of the Dreamlands, or fit your artistic motifs.
- You can attempt to transform the environment. No overt transformation occurs in your presence, but when you return on a later night, you discover that the desired change, or at least a step toward it, has taken place in the interim.

(Since characters know about this but the players might not, you might also reprise this information for experienced dreamers recovering their abilities.)

Players may guess that their awakened or reawakened Dreamscaping abilities may allow them to exit Thalarion safely. They're right, but the only way they can confirm this is to try.

If they venture into Thalarion, they find wide vistas and boulevards covered only with hanks of dust, balls of dried human hair, and the gnawed bones of unwary sojourners.

They are quickly confronted by the yellow figure. It intends to eat them but can be engaged in dialog before it attacks. Depending on what the surrealists ask, it might reveal the following:

- It is Lathi, god of Thalarion.
- It intends to eat them, as is its ancient right.
- It has sworn to destroy Maldoror, who attempted to destroy its beautiful city.
- Something about them reminds it of Maldoror.
- It has no knowledge of an Henri Daltour, a Yellow League, or any such nonsense.
- It has always existed and certainly wasn't brought into being by any puny dreamers.

(The last two statements are false, but Lathi believes them, so they don't register as deceptive to **Assess Honesty**.)

If the cast somehow gives Lathi reason to fear a direct confrontation, he tells them the false story about Maldoror being imprisoned in a pit near the Fens of Jubec, about half a league inland. This leads out to "Gug Pit." Don't use this if



the players have already heard this from a disgruntled local (see above). It's hard to tell when a quasi-substantial symbolic being is lying, so a player wanting to use **Assess Honesty** must make a 2-point spend to know that for sure.

Dream Lore or **Occult**: Lathi is surely at its strongest here on its home turf.

Once it tires of their impertinence or boring questions it can't answer or has already answered, Lathi attacks.

THE YELLOW FIGURE/LATHI (THALARION VERSION)

Athletics 9, Health 42, Scuffling 26

Hit Threshold: 6 (insubstantial)

Alertness Modifier: +1

Weapon: +2 (claw); each hit costs the victim 2 Stability and 2 Dreamscaping. Makes $1 + x$ attacks per round, where x is the number of characters who launched attacks against it the previous round. It divides its attacks between enemies within reach.

Stability Loss: +1

Lathi attempts to break off combat and flee if reduced to 6 or fewer Health points.

Driving off or killing Lathi awakens the suppressed Dreamscaping abilities of all PCs.

On a Difficulty 4 **Dreamscaping** test, any character can shift to another Dreamlands location, definitively escaping Thalarion and Lathi. If the character's result exceeds 6, he can bring Lathi along with him to another Dreamlands location, where **Dream Lore** suggests he'll prove much less potent.

THE YELLOW FIGURE/LATHI (ELSEWHERE VERSION)

Athletics 9, Health 18, Scuffling 14

Hit Threshold: 5 (insubstantial)

Alertness Modifier: +1

Weapon: +0 (claw); each hit costs the victim 2 Stability and 2 Dreamscaping. Makes $1 + x$ attacks per round, where x is the number of characters who launched attacks against it the previous round. It divides its attacks between enemies within reach.

Stability Loss: +1

The same test is required to step outside the walls, but that's not the smart play — nothing stops Lathi from simply following them past the city's threshold, and he remains extra tough while in sight of its walls.

Gug Pit

Scene Type: Red Herring

Lead-In: Thalarion

On the fringes of the Fens of Jubec lies a yawning hole in the earth that drops down

into black nothingness. Across it lies a gate of steel bars. A quartet of armored, halberd-wielding men stands guard.

Archaeology: The hafts on their poleaxes are much longer than historical equivalents, as if they're meant to hold something at bay that doesn't exist in the real world.

Dream Lore: The world beneath the Dreamlands is a subterranean realm of fearsome monsters.

The sentinels earn their pay from the merchants outside Thalarion. They make sure that the gugs who live below stay below, and do not come up into the upper realm in search of prey. They also know that the locals sometimes get rid of troublemakers by sending them here with a cock-and-bull story urging them to head down into the depths. If the surrealists show up saying that Lathi has someone called Maldoror imprisoned down there, they won't argue — they'll lift the gate long enough to let the cast head down there. Once they're on the other side, they'll enjoy a cruel laugh at their expense.

Climbing down the pit wall safely requires a Difficulty 4 **Athletics** test (+1 Difficulty without a rope). Failure means a fall, incurring 4 damage.

Dreamscaping vs. Lathi

In "Thalarion," the players might guess that a dreamscaped weapon could counter the Yellow Figure's insubstantiality.

In "The Castle," Maldoror tells them that that it does.

On a Difficulty 4 Dreamscaping success, a PC can dream into being a weapon that is also insubstantial. It might also be yellow and indistinct at the edges, as Lathi is. Let the player describe what it looks like, as long as they specify that it is meant to counter his abilities.

Against anyone wielding such a weapon, Lathi's Hit Threshold drops to 4 in Thalarion, 3 anywhere else in the Dreamlands. It does +4 damage against him.

Once the crew reaches the bottom, a pair of gugs comes out to feed on their surprise new meal from above.

Abilities: Athletics 18, Health 18, Scuffling 14

Hit Threshold: 2 (titanic)

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: -2

Weapon: +1 (left arm double claw), +2 (right arm double claw) or +1 bite; may attack once apiece with left and right arm per round.

Armor: none

Stability Loss: +0

Climbing up the pit wall requires another **Athletics** test, as above. Having happily let them head down into a gug nest, the guards fear retribution and will require a 1-point **Reassurance** spend to slide open the gate. If they instead flee in panic from the fearless gug-slayers, the surrealists must then push it out of the way. This requires a Difficulty 5 **Athletics** test; any failure not augmented by a point spend sends the character off-balance and toppling back down into the pit.

Though they're hardly spoiling for a fight, here are the sentinel's game statistics, just in case.

Athletics 4, Health 6, Scuffling 4, Weapons 6

Hit Threshold: 3

Alertness Modifier: -1

Stealth Modifier: -1

Weapon: +1 (poleax)

The Castle

Scene Type: Conclusion

Lead-In: Thalarion

Once they know what Maldoror's fortress looks like, the surrealists can dream their way to it.

The group finds itself on a rocky shore. Rising from the ocean waves half a mile out to sea is a vast, forbidding rock, from which juts the now-familiar castle.

A damaged motorboat lies on the shore. Painted on its engine in delicate white cursive are the words "*Ce n'est pas un moteur.*" (This is not a motor.)

If Magritte is a PC, he can fix the boat by repainting the sentence to reverse its meaning. ("*Il s'agit d'un moteur.*")

Otherwise it requires a Difficulty 4 **Mechanical Repair** test.

On a failure, the motor stalls midway through their journey. It can be fixed, but not before the sky fills with the image of an eye being slashed by a razor blade, forcing a Difficulty 4 **Stability** test to avoid a 3-point **Stability** loss.

If the group has already defeated Lathi and you sense that a shortage of climactic danger will disappoint your players, a flying polyp (*Trail of Cthulhu*, p. 132) shows up and tries to feed on them midway through their boat journey.

Umbrellas and giant pairs of scissors fill the waters. A Difficulty 4 **Piloting** success is required to avoid smashing into them and stabbing a hole in the side of the boat. On a failure, the boat capsizes, forcing a swim to shore and a round of drowning tests (*ToC*, p. 68).

Once on the beach, the group can trudge up a stony hill to the entrance of this belching, clattering mechanical castle, covered with Picabia-esque ducts, gears and vents.

2-point **Architecture** spend: The gears around the doorbell mechanism are razor sharp and rigged to telescope shut when the buzzer is pressed, potentially severing one's hand.

A Difficulty 4 **Mechanical Repair** test disarms the trap, or lets you unlock the door without pressing the buzzer.

Otherwise a character setting off that trap takes a die of damage. On a roll of 6, add another die and add that result to the total damage.

If the trap goes off, Maldoror comes to the door to gloat over the wound he has caused an unsuspecting fool.

Insert some suspenseful prowling around the weird mechanical manor if pacing seems to call for it. Or cut straight to the confrontation with Maldoror.

Friendly Maldoror: If you put a tick next to this paragraph to show that the players spent generously to try to help him in "The Green Membrane of Space," Maldoror extends a grandiloquent but warm welcome. He then awakens the characters' Dreamscaping abilities (if needed) and supplies the answers given below. After this copacetic interlude, Lathi materializes to destroy him.

Furious Maldoror: If you put a tick next to this paragraph, he flies into an insensate rage at the sight of them, dimly sensing that he is but a reflection of their aspirations and not liking that thought one bit. A 1-point spend of **Charm**, **Reassurance** or **Intimidation** calms him. Without it, he throws a vial of acidic absinthe at them: Difficulty 4 **Athletics** test; characters who fail take 4 damage. Then Lathi materializes to destroy him.

Lathi attacks: (Not possible if the surrealists killed it in Thalarion.) The Yellow Figure forms from a urine-colored mist to clasp its claws around Maldoror's throat.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

WHERE NOW?

If he hasn't done so already, Maldoror awakens the group's Dreamscaping abilities. Either way, he tells them to dream up weapons as insubstantial as Lathi itself (see sidebar, p. 149). Use the elsewhere version of the Yellow Figure's game statistics (same page).

For the first three rounds, Lathi attacks only Maldoror. Throughout this time Lautréamont's creation shrinks and melts. When its action comes up in the fourth round, Maldoror vanishes into dust. Based on what you think the players will find most gripping, Lathi either resolves into mist, or attacks them.

If they slay Lathi before that happens, Maldoror is saved. (And Thalarion can again be inhabited, which they might follow up on in later player-driven episodes.)

By saving Maldoror, they gain an adviser in their quest to reimagine the Dreamlands and transform human culture. He provides them information and assistance in future episodes. (He turns on them if they later relent and try to reverse course.)

If Lathi destroys him, he cannot be dreamed back into being. The group loses him as a resource.

Assuming Maldoror survived (or gave them answers before Lathi showed up), he can provide answers on the metaphysics of dream and reality, as laid out in chapter two. These come from his point of view as a bipolar dream construct who perceives himself as a Gothic hero. Like any megalomaniac, he believes everything he says, whether it's true or not.

In response to questions he might also say:

- He existed once before, and tried to upend the Dreamlands.

Other Dreamscapers

In a contagion effect, NPC dreamscapers regain their abilities a few days after the PCs recover theirs.

Players may at some point wonder why other dreamscapers were affected in the first place, if they weren't there to be cursed by Lathi. (Depending on how you present it, they maybe were.)

Dream Lore reveals that the effect was as contagious as the cure.

Does this mean that Lathi, if he survives, could do it again? Perhaps that's a plot thread the players will choose to pursue as the campaign moves from introduction to sandbox.

- God and his subservient godlings stopped him, throwing him into a dark pit, which he only now just crawled out of. (In reality, the symbolist dreamers destroyed him in 1870, and the surrealists just now re-dreamed him. But Maldoror can't see that and won't believe it if someone else posits it.)
- Subservient godlings? You know, like Hermes and Wotan and Nodens. Those idiots.
- The first step in bringing freedom to the Dreamlands is to destroy all the gods. He started with Lathi, as a relatively weak one.
- Now that he has allies, he recommends preparation for a raid on Hatheg-Kla, to kill all the gods.
- (if he awakened the characters' Dreamscaping) Only he could have done this for them.
- Following Maldoror's lead in a war against the gods.
- Looking into Maldoror's true origins and figuring out how to create and reshape dream surrogates.
- If the group killed Lathi, they soon learn back in the waking world that Henri Daltour died in his sleep that very night. In addition to establishing real-world consequences for dream-world actions, this news might prompt the surrealists to try to pick over the remains of his library or other diminished resources.
- Seeing if groups less moribund than the Yellow League might be stirred into action by their occult activities.
- Figuring out who suppressed their previous abilities to shape the Dreamlands (if applicable) and why.
- Turning Thalarion into a base.
- Turning Maldoror's fortress into a base — which he increasingly comes to regret.

Where Now?

Start the subsequent session by asking what the players want their characters to discover or do next. Prepare for such possibilities as:

APPENDICES

Main Cast Quick Reference

This list presents potential player characters and key supporting characters. Supporting characters' names appear in boldfaced italics.

Use this list to introduce players to the characters available to portray. Sometimes the identifying tags from "Chiens de rêve" are all you need to get players interested in a character. Where needed, a few additional details are supplied.

If the location entry simply says Paris, the character is based there throughout the *Dreamhounds* period (1926–1939).

Movement Status indicates the character's relationship to Breton's surrealist circle. For definitions, see "Player Characters," p. 13.

Page references are to the main character entry in chapter one.

CHARACTER	PAGE	LOCATION	MOVEMENT STATUS
Antonin Artaud <i>The Revealed One</i> Tormented playwright, theatrical theoretician and actor; succumbs to addiction and finally madness	15	Paris 1920–1937, with visits to Mexico in '36 and Ireland in '37; various French asylums 1937–1946	member 1924–1925, Jan. 1928–June 1928; foe 1926–1927, June 1928–1936; satellite 1936–
Georges Bataille 1936, <i>The Enemy Within</i>	18	Paris	foe until 1935, ally 1935– then foe again
Luis Buñuel <i>Two-Fisted Filmmaker</i>	21	Paris with visits to Spain 1926–1934; Spain 1934–1936; America 1936–1946	satellite 1926–1929; member 1929–
Claude Cahun <i>Woman in the Mirror</i> Ahead of her time explorer of gender and personal image	23	Paris until 1936, Jersey 1937–	member 1932–
Leonora Carrington <i>Gothic Heroine</i> Young Englishwoman who escapes controlling family to pain in Paris. (If she is a PC, the series takes place from 1937 on, as surrealism hurtles toward doom and dissolution.)	24	Paris 1937–1940	satellite 1937–
Jean Cocteau <i>Resplendent Anathema</i> Writer, filmmaker and illustrator, despised by the surrealists for his open homosexuality, apolitical stance, and attempts to appropriate their movement to his own stylish ends. Knows more about the Mythos than any of them.	26	Paris	foe

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

MAIN CAST QUICK REFERENCE

CHARACTER	PAGE	LOCATION	MOVEMENT STATUS
Salvador Dalí <i>Calculating Visionary</i>	28	Spain (with brief visits to Paris) until 1929, Paris with winters in Port Lligat 1930–1936; Paris with winters in New York City 1937–1939	member 1929–1937, member in poor standing 1938–1941, foe 1941–
Giorgio de Chirico <i>Remorseful Pioneer</i> Italian painter who first introduced avant-garde elements to the Dreamlands, now fears what he has done	32	Paris 1925–1931, various Italian cities 1931–	claimed 1919–1926, foe 1926–
Robert Desnos <i>Dream Medium</i>	33	Paris	member 1922–1930, dissident surrealist 1930–1945
Marcel Duchamp <i>The Chess Player</i>	36	New York 1914–1927, Paris (with much travel for chess tournaments) 1927–1940	claimed
Paul Éluard <i>Lyric Revolutionary</i>	37	Paris	member 1919–1933, member in poor standing 1933–1938, foe 1938–
Max Ernst <i>King of Birds</i> Painter and collagist of dream-like landscapes	38	Paris	member 1921–1937
Gala <i>Protective Devourer</i> Formidable wife to Éluard and then to Dalí; sees the future in cards	41	Paris, Paris with winters in Port Lligat 1929–1936, Paris with winters in New York City 1937–1939	nonmember, nonartist, loved at various times by Éluard, Ernst, Aragon and Dalí, loathed by all other surrealists
Valentine Hugo <i>Little Swan</i> Illustrator; friend to Cocteau who rejects him after falling obsessively in love with surrealist leader André Breton	43	Paris	member 1930–1937
Kiki <i>Free-living muse</i> Model, cabaret performer, lover to Man Ray	46	Paris	satellite
René Magritte <i>Quiet anarchist</i> Belgian painter of subtly disturbing images	46	Paris 1927–1930; otherwise Brussels	member 1927–1930, member in questionable standing 1930–1942

CHARACTER	PAGE	LOCATION	MOVEMENT STATUS
André Masson <i>Painter of Horror</i>	48	Paris 1920–1934; Catalonia, Spain 1934–1936; Lyons-la-Forêt, Upper Normandy 1936–1940	member 1924–1928, foe 1929–1936, member 1936–1945
Pablo Picasso <i>Wellspring of Inspiration</i>	49	Paris	claimed
Man Ray <i>American with a Camera</i>	51	Paris	claimed
Tristan Tzara <i>Impresario of the Incomprehensible</i>	53	Paris	ally 1920–1923, member 1929–1945, foe: 1923–1929, 1945–

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Man Ray, *L'Étoile de mer*, 1928

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TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Player Name:

Sanity ¹			
0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15
Hit Threshold ³			

Stability			
-12	-11	-10	-9
-8	-7	-6	-5
-4	-3	-2	-1
0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

Health			
-12	-11	-10	-9
-8	-7	-6	-5
-4	-3	-2	-1
0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

Investigator Name:

Drive:

Occupation:²

Status:

Instability Immunity:

Float Points:

Academic Abilities	Interpersonal Abilities	General Abilities
Accounting	Assess Honesty	Art-Making
Anthropology	Bargain	Athletics
Archaeology	Bureaucracy	Card Reading
Architecture	Charm	Conceal
Art History	Cop Talk	Disguise ⁽¹⁾
Biology	Credit Rating	Dreamscaping
Cthulhu Mythos ⁴	Flattery	Driving
Cryptography	Interrogation	Electrical Repair ⁽¹⁾
Dream Lore	Intimidation	Explosives ⁽¹⁾
Geology	Oral History	Filch
History	Reassurance	Firearms ⁵
Languages ⁶	Seduction	First Aid
	Streetwise	Fleeing ⁷
		Health ⁹
		Hypnosis ⁸
		Instability
		Mechanical Repair ⁽¹⁾
		Piloting
		Preparedness
		Psychoanalysis
		Riding
		Sanity ⁹
		Scuffling
		Sense Trouble
		Shadowing
		Stability ⁹
		Stealth
		Weapons

Law	Technical Abilities
Library Use	Astronomy
Literature	Chemistry
Medicine	Craft
Medium	Evidence Collection
Occult	Forensics
Physics	Locksmith
Theology	Outdoorsman
	Pharmacy
	Photography

MOTIFS:	CONTACTS AND NOTES

¹ In a Pulp game where Sanity can be recovered, mark Sanity pool loss with a line, Sanity rating loss with a cross.

² Occupational abilities are half price. Mark them with a * before assigning points.

³ Hit Threshold is 3, 4 if your Athletics is 8 or higher

⁽¹⁾ These General abilities double up as Investigative abilities

⁴ Usually, you can't start with Cthulhu Mythos. Sanity is limited to 10-Cthulhu Mythos.

⁵ In a Pulp game If your Firearms rating is 5 you can fire two pistols at once (see p. 42)

⁶ Assign one language per point, during play. Record them here.

⁷ Any Fleeing rating above twice your Athletics rating costs one point for two.

⁸ Only Alienists and Parapsychologists can buy Hypnosis, and only in a Pulp game

⁹ You start with 4 free Sanity points, 1 Health and 1 Stability point.