

CTHULHU APOCALYPSE™

Graham Walmsley with
Gareth Ryder-Hanrahan

TRAIL OF CTHULHU



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CTHULHU APOCALYPSE™



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Introduction

In most tales of horror, the threat is ultimately confined in some way. If you leave the haunted house, if the police catch the serial killer, if the demon gets its promised souls, if you flee the monster's lair, then the peril passes and normality reasserts itself. Horror is the exception, the aberration from normality. The protagonists of the ghastly tale fall victim to some awful fate, but they are cautionary examples to the rest of us. They warn us that there is danger out there, somewhere, and we should hope to avoid it.

Cosmic horror offers no such hope, no shelter. The house is not haunted – the universe is haunted, possessed by entities we can scarcely perceive until they stir and move against us. Our reality, our normality is the aberration, a fragile soap-bubble, an accident of physics and history that momentarily protected us from the truly hostile and ghastly existence we actually live in.

Many of Lovecraft's tales promise apocalypse – and we must remember that apocalypse means both a terrible revelation, as well as the end of the world we know – but he never follows through on these promises. The Cthulhu cultists in the swamps outside New Orleans may await the time when “all the earth would flame with a holocaust of ecstasy and freedom; the Great Race of Yith speak of the “hardy coleopterous species [that would come] immediately following mankind” in Earth's future; Wilbur Whately might anticipate how the Earth will be cleared of earthly forms of life, but even Lovecraft's protagonists get to scurry back to the ‘normal’ world. They now know the truth, making them heralds and prophets rather than cautionary examples, but can offer only hints of that revelation, that apocalypse.

In *Cthulhu Apocalypse*, that veil is finally torn down. The world ends, and humanity is wiped out. Even the player characters, who by chance survive the initial catastrophe, know they are doomed. They are doomed explorers of the world that comes afterwards, rather than survivors or saviours of the previous order.

Abandon hope in a future. Bear witness to the terrible truth.

Cthulhu Apocalypse was initially designed and written by Graham Walmsley – the engine of *The Apocalypse Machine* and the entirety of *The Dead White World* are his alone. In completing this project, I drew on Graham's notes, outlines and plans to write *Slaves of the Mother*, as well as the shorter adventures and essays added to this compilation edition.

- Gareth Ryder-Hanrahan



The Apocalypse Machine





Introduction

On November 2nd, 1936, the world died. Humanity perished, women and men died in their millions. Finally, the stars had come right, and the things that had lurked under the seas for eons rose to claim their rightful place. Now, they rule the earth, stalking it like titans.

Yet you survived this destruction. Some miracle or design left you alive to watch the destruction of everything humanity built. You are doomed to wander the devastated ruins, discovering what little you can. What went wrong? Are there others like you? How can you stay alive? Can you fight back? And, most importantly of all, is there a way to put this right?

The Apocalypse Machine continues the investigations of *Trail of Cthulhu* in a post-apocalyptic world. In these pages, you will find instructions on designing your own apocalypse; new Occupations, Skills and Drives, and explanations of how the old ones function in this post-apocalyptic world; and many ways for the Mythos to take over the world.

Note that these rules add to, rather than replace, the *Trail of Cthulhu* rule set. Unless

otherwise noted, everything in the original rules applies. Specifically, *The Apocalypse Machine* uses the rules for the Pulp mode of play. For example, **First Aid** refreshes your health pool up to maximum (rather than a third, as in the Purist mode of play). You'll need it. Note also that, although we use the Pulp rules, the tone of post-apocalyptic adventures differs greatly from pulp fiction.

Additionally, *The Apocalypse Machine* makes a distinction of its own: between Aftershock adventures and Wasteland adventures.

Aftershock

Aftershock adventures are set in the immediate aftermath of the apocalypse. Perhaps the adventure begins with the apocalypse; perhaps it begins immediately after. Either way, civilisation is destroyed. The Investigators wander their newly-destroyed homeland, searching for the truth and for those they love.

On their journeys, they meet others, coping with the collapse of society in various ways: with compassion, with violence, by helping themselves, by helping others. Aftershock adventures

draw literary inspiration from sources such as H. G. Wells' *The War Of The Worlds* and John Wyndham's *The Day Of The Triffids*.

Where something applies to Aftershock adventures, it is marked with this symbol:



Wasteland

Wasteland adventures are set some time after the apocalypse. The old civilisation has gone: a new, rougher society has risen in its place. The Investigators travel across the wasteland, through frontier townships, destroyed buildings and poisoned farmland. As they travel, they meet individuals and communities, who will help and hinder them. Wasteland adventures take their fictional cue from David Brin's *The Postman*, the movie *Mad Max* and the *Fallout* games.

Rules intended for Wasteland adventures are marked with this symbol.





The Apocalypse Machine

It is time to discover how the world was destroyed. What was the nature of the apocalypse that left civilisation in ruins? Besides humanity, what else did it destroy? And who or what was ultimately responsible for the apocalypse?

Now, not every disaster qualifies as an apocalypse. An apocalypse in *The Apocalypse Machine* must meet the following requirements.

- It kills at least 99.99% of humanity. Hardly anyone is left. There are, at a maximum, thousands left in any country, perhaps merely hundreds or dozens. Certainly, there are not enough people to keep society running: power plants stand idle; water cannot be sanitised; communication lines are dead. Human civilisation is no more.
- It is global. The apocalypse affects everyone that the Investigators know about. The Investigators cannot hike across country or fly over the ocean to find civilisation. Everyone they contact is in the same situation. Perhaps, perhaps there is a hint of a better society, far across the sea, out of reach. More probably, however, the world is destroyed. The Investigators are alone. Nobody is coming to save them.
- Mythos entities are rising. Perhaps they caused the apocalypse; perhaps they are reacting to humanity's destruction; perhaps it is simply their time. Either way, potent and incomprehensible horrors are stalking the earth.
- The Investigators survive. Despite the apocalypse, the Investigators remain alive: free to wander the wasteland, witness the destruction and investigate. Hence, although eldritch horrors have arisen, they are not coming for the Investigators yet. Why? Are they confined to the sea? Do they not care about a few straggling humans? Are they

biding their time? Do they need the humans alive, for some reason?

With those conditions, we can decide how the apocalypse happened.

USING THE MACHINE

The Apocalypse Machine lets you create an apocalypse. You will start by choosing a Cause. What was ultimately responsible for the apocalypse? Was it humans, overreaching themselves? The Mythos, whom humans were powerless to stop? Or nature, against whose fury man had no defence?

Each Cause leads you to Disasters: the things that destroyed society, killed humans and created the wasteland. The Disasters are: Monsters, Technology, Weapons, Disease, Heat, Floods, Earthquakes, Cold, Meteor, Wind and Barbarism. Monsters are mandatory: whatever your apocalypse, it must have monsters.

Eventually, you come to Casualties. Apart from humans, what did the apocalypse damage? The Casualties are: Reality, Biology, Water, Food, Books and Soil. Choose as many or as few as you wish.

Now, some parts of the apocalypse will be obvious to Investigators: for example, if an earthquake caused the apocalypse, everyone will know there was an earthquake. Other aspects of the apocalypse are not immediately obvious: for example, if the Cthonians caused the apocalypse, the Investigators will begin the game without knowing that fact. When an aspect of the apocalypse is not obvious (and hence a worthy subject for investigation) it is marked with this symbol:



To begin creating your apocalypse, choose a Cause.

Ancient Terrors

In *The Apocalypse Machine*, the Mythos does not just include the imaginings of H. P. Lovecraft and his followers. It also encompasses other horrors from post-apocalyptic fiction. Hence, H. G. Wells' Martians are considered honorary members of the Mythos; John Wyndham's Triffids are similarly promoted; Richard Matheson's vampires, and the virus that creates them, also join the Mythos club. In short, any monster becomes part of the Mythos.

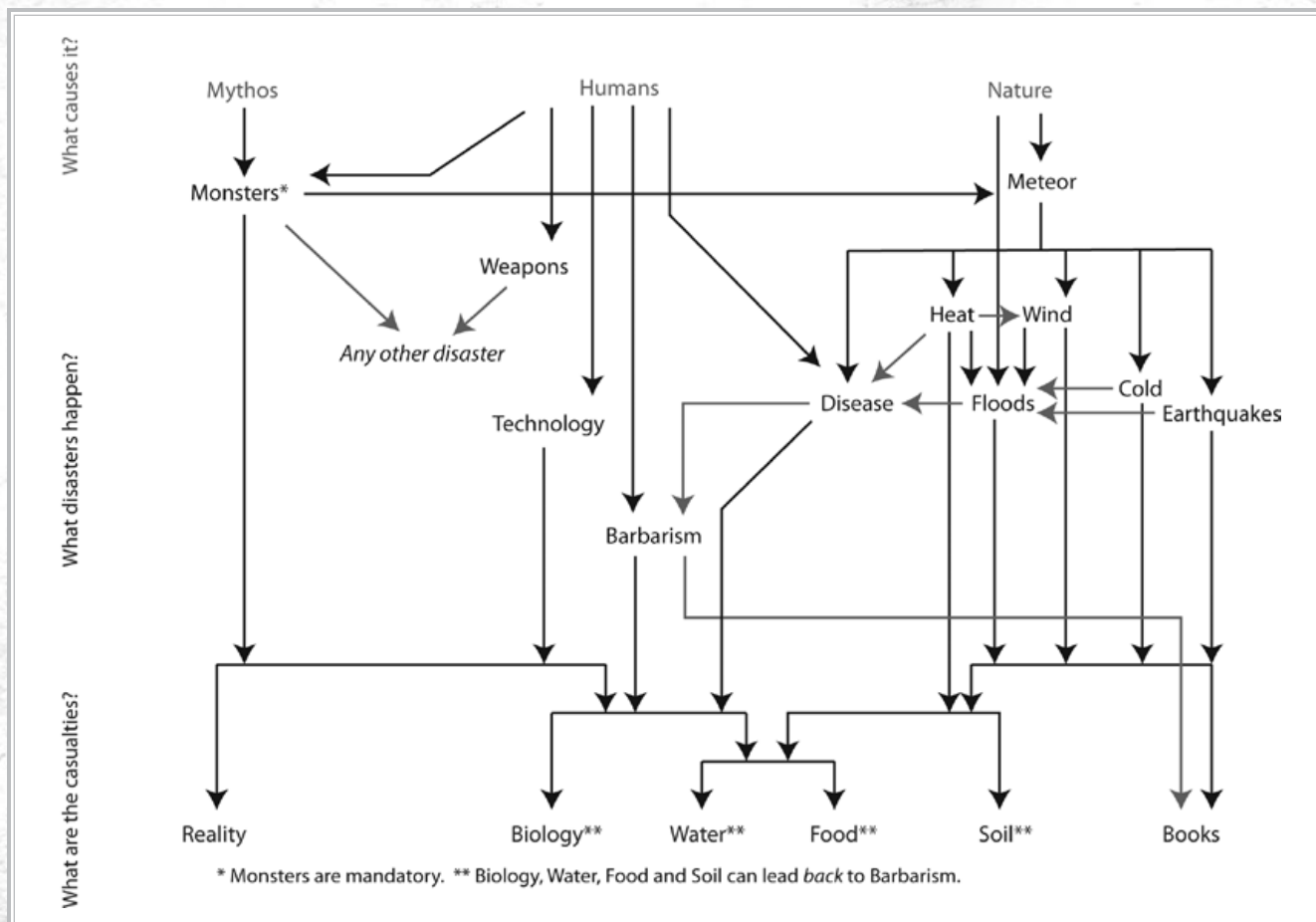
Often, this requires reimagining the monsters. Like those of Lovecraft, every creature is considered eldritch and unimaginable. So, in *The Apocalypse Machine*, Wells' Martians are prehistoric horrors, finally awakening after countless millennia. The Triffids grow from an ancient seed, revived by modern scientists. In this apocalypse, every horror is ancient.

Even human science is not new, but an insight into an ancient, terrifying truth. For example, the Martian's heat ray is not futuristic, but an ancient and incomprehensible weapon. General relativity is a glimpse into the fundamental and warped geometry on which the universe is built. In developing their science, humans perceived an underlying reality, which they could not understand and were not meant to know.

Throughout *The Apocalypse Machine*, the terms "monster" and "Mythos entity" are used almost interchangeably. Everything in the Mythos is monstrous. All monsters are part of the Mythos. Because apocalypses often involve many Mythos entities, it is often more convenient to talk about "the monsters".



The Apocalypse Machine



Apocalyptic Dating

Some apocalypses are fast and some are slow. If Mythos entities destroy the human race, its demise is probably quick. All over the world, things rise from the sea, and everyone dies within a day. If the world floods, on the other hand, it probably happens slowly. Gradually, the water level rises, first covering the low-lying areas, then getting higher and higher.

When apocalypses are fast, we assume they happen on November 2nd, 1936. When they are slow, we assume they start on 22nd January 1936, reaching their climax on November 2nd. These dates are chosen to interrupt history at an interesting moment: the Hoover Dam is complete; the Hindenburg airship is making transatlantic voyages. Because of the apocalypse, some historical events do not happen: the Spanish Civil War does not end; the Japanese do not invade Shanghai; King Edward VIII of the United Kingdom never abdicates.

In the United States, we make one tweak to history: President Roosevelt dies in the apocalypse. This leaves the tantalising possibility that the Investigators meet "Cactus Jack" Garner, an outspoken Texan who, at least nominally, is President of the United States.

Disasters that might happen slowly are marked with the following symbol:





Causes



HUMANS

In the end, humanity destroyed itself. It had created folly after folly and the apocalypse was its final act. Perhaps people invented a technology that later destroyed them; perhaps, exploring too far, they woke ancient and powerful creatures; perhaps greed led them to attempt to harness the power of the Mythos. Those few left alive can only look back and marvel at their race's stupidity.

When the humans died, the creatures of the Mythos rose to reclaim the Earth, dividing it among themselves. Nature, too, staked its claim: animals returned to the cities and grass grew on the highways. The remaining humans wander their destroyed cities, which stand as monuments to their hubris.

If you choose humans as your cause, the theme underlying your games will be: *we did this to ourselves*. As the Investigators investigate, they will uncover evidence that humanity destroyed itself. For example:

- If a monster destroys the world, it was released, awoken or provoked by humans.
- If a virus destroys the world, it was released or created by humans.
- If cold destroys the world, it is a product of human technology, perhaps because an explosion creates a "nuclear winter".

In this scenario, humanity is seen as powerful, although it has abused its power. This is not cosmic horror, in which

humanity is powerless against the Mythos and its demise was inevitable. On the contrary, humanity could have survived, but killed itself through stupidity.

Is there hope? Perhaps not. Perhaps all races must die and this is humanity's time. But perhaps people can learn from their mistakes, building a new civilisation, carving out their place among the monsters. Perhaps there is a way to fight back.

Humanity can cause the following disasters.

- Technology
- Weapons
- Barbarism
- Disease
- Monsters (by summoning/waking them)



THE MYTHOS

In the end, humanity's destruction was inevitable. There were things vastly more powerful than humans and, when the stars were right, they returned. Perhaps Cthulhu awoke and his servitors butchered the humans; perhaps Colours feasted on the soil; perhaps the lloigor tortured the humans to death. The few survivors can only hide from this vast, unknowable power.

After a Mythos creature destroys humanity, the other races emerge to claim the Earth. For example, perhaps Cthulhu kills everyone, then the mi-go set up mining operations in areas previously occupied by humans,

while Deep Ones turn the East Coast into a swamp. Hence, the Investigators will meet many Mythos entities in their investigations, not just the one that destroyed the world.

If you choose the Mythos as your cause, your underlying theme will be: *we are powerless against the Mythos*. Humanity's destruction was inevitable. The Investigators will investigate the ancient creatures that have destroyed the world and, eventually, will destroy the survivors. In this scenario, then:

- If a monster destroys the world, it was inevitable, perhaps because it awoke when the stars were right.
- If a virus destroys the world, it is an ancient disease against which humans have no defence.
- If cold destroys the world, it is a by-product of a Mythos entity, perhaps Ithaqua gaining in power.

Thus, humanity is powerless. Perhaps people can eke out survival, running like rats while greater creatures walk the Earth. More likely, though, their demise is inevitable, just as the destruction of the rest of their race was inevitable. Humans are tiny when set against the rest of the cosmos. There is no hope.

The Mythos can cause the following disasters.

- All of them



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NATURE

In the end, humanity had overestimated its control of nature. For years, humans had lived on a knife-edge, one natural disaster away from extinction. When it happened, humanity was unprepared. It had thought itself separate from nature, not realising it was part of it. Its short evolutionary reign was cut short in a flash.

After the humans were gone, nature moved unhurriedly to reclaim its territory. Grass grew over the highways. As the cities fell, plants grew on them, too. And the creatures that had long lived under the sea rose and roamed the Earth. As the few surviving

humans wander, they marvel and fear the power of the natural world.

If you choose nature as your cause, your underlying theme will be: *we are powerless against nature*. Describe roads matted with grass; seeds growing from cars; animals prowling the streets; tree roots toppling buildings. Meanwhile, the Investigators will investigate the alien races that now control the world.

If nature caused the apocalypse, then:

- If a monster destroys the world, it was roused by a natural disaster, such as an undersea earthquake.
- If a virus destroys the world, it is a strain that evolved naturally, a testament to nature's ingenuity.

- If cold destroys the world, it is an inevitability of the natural world, perhaps a new ice age.

Although humanity is powerless against nature, there may still be hope. Perhaps humans can rebuild their civilisation, with a new respect for nature's power.

Nature can cause the following disasters.

- Meteor
- Disease
- Heat
- Wind
- Floods
- Cold
- Earthquakes





Disasters

Each disaster, below, starts with a brief fictional description. Following that, there are questions listed in italics. Some sample answers are given: either use these or invent your own. For example:

What benefit did the technology promise?

- It stopped the aging process.
- It would cure all known disease.
- It allowed us to see the structure of the universe.

After these questions, there is more information on the disaster. Some disasters take different forms, depending on what caused the apocalypse. For example, when humans cause the apocalypse, any technology-based disasters will be failures of modern science. However, when the Mythos causes the apocalypse, technology-based disasters involve alien, ancient machines.

If the disaster can lead to other disasters, these are listed. Finally, all the things that the disaster can damage are listed.

MONSTERS

The monsters rose up and annihilated humanity. Whether they came from the stars or the sea, they were greater than any threat we had seen before.

Influences

In the fictional descriptions and example answers, you might recognise direct references to post-apocalyptic fiction, especially that of John Wyndham, John Christopher and J. G. Ballard.

Which monster or monsters destroyed the world?

- Great Cthulhu
- Triffids
- Martians

Why did they invade now?

- They were awoken by explorers
- They struck when the humans were weak
- The stars were right

Why do they not kill the survivors?

- They cannot find them.
- They are too insignificant to matter.
- They need them for experimentation.

Monsters hold a special place in the Apocalypse Machine: whatever your apocalypse, it must always include monsters. See the Mythos section, pp. 53–61, for ideas of how each monstrous entity could destroy the world.

As mentioned above, you will choose one Mythos entity or race to destroy the world. After that happens, the other races rise up to reclaim the Earth, so that Investigators will encounter many Mythos creatures.

Monsters can cause:

- Floods
- Earthquakes
- Barbarism

Monsters can damage:

- Reality
- Biology



TECHNOLOGY

The technology was a brilliant leap forward. Yet we had overreached ourselves. Looking back, it seems so obvious, but at the time, everyone thought only of the benefits. The scientists, driven by greed and pride, took us past the point of no return, and we watched helpless as everything we fought for was destroyed.

What does the technology look like?

- Green lichen
- Invisible
- A vast array of cogs and wiring

What benefit did the technology promise?

- It stopped the aging process.
- It would eradicate smallpox.
- It allowed us to see the structure of the universe.

If the Mythos caused the apocalypse, then the technology is ancient or alien. Perhaps it is a mi-go machine; perhaps it is a machine of the Elder Things; perhaps it is an ancient bacterium masquerading as a cure.

If humans caused the apocalypse, the technology was invented by human scientists. Perhaps the discovery promised great benefits, but eventually proved horrifically harmful, like the virus in *I Am Legend*. Perhaps the technology is so beneficial that people cannot control themselves: they tear each other apart to get it or destroy it.

Or perhaps the technology harmed vested interests. For example, a cure for all known disease would harm the medical establishment. Perhaps the problem was not the technology itself, but the drastic action that happened because of it.

Technology can lead to:

- Barbarism



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It can damage:

- Reality
- Biology
- Water
- Food

WEAPONS

We knew our governments were preparing for war, but did not know about the weapon. If we had, would we have stopped them? Probably not: our fear of Hitler overwhelmed all rationality. We never thought to worry about our own side first.

What did the weapon look like, when it triggered?

- A blinding light, followed by a cloud.
- A beautiful display, like that of fireworks.
- A purple cloud, which drifted gradually across the world.

What type of weapon was it?

- Biological
- Chemical
- Nuclear

What does the land look like afterwards?

- A dusty wasteland, the skyline punctuated by broken buildings.
- A fused mass of black glass.
- Dark and cold, the sun hidden behind an endless black cloud.

People in the 1930s feared war and, more specifically, the weapons to be used. They especially feared chemical weapons, such as mustard and tear gas, which had seen use in the Great War. These fears were not without reason: after the First World War, German chemical weaponry had been washed ashore, after being dumped in the sea.

The greatest fear, however, was biological warfare, spreading diseases such as bubonic plague and anthrax. Although

banned by the Geneva Convention in 1925, biological weapons had been used in the Sino-Japanese War, and tested on American prisoners. Such weapons could transmit diseases by contaminating food, infecting animals or, worst of all, tainting the water. To simulate such weapons using the Apocalypse Machine, follow the line to Disease.

Nevertheless, the greatest weapon in post-apocalyptic fiction is the atomic bomb (see *Going Nuclear*, p. 15). Once detonated, accidentally or deliberately, such a bomb wipes out a city. Thereafter, the radioactivity might poison the soil and drift, like a cloud, to kill the entire world.

Weapons can lead to:

- Disease
- Heat
- Cold (via a “nuclear winter”)
- Earthquakes

They can damage:

- Reality
- Biology
- Water
- Food
- Books
- Soil

Or, to put it another way, everything.

DISEASE

When the news reports started, we felt sorry for the foreigners affected by it. We watched their countries descend into anarchy, but they were far-off places, and we didn't feel threatened.

Eventually, the first case was reported in this country. Still, we thought we were immune: the government moved quickly to establish a quarantine, while scientists worked on a cure. Soon, the first case was reported nearby, and gradually our society crumbled, just like the others had.

What did the disease target?

- All species of grass.
- Humans.
- 90% of animals.

What did it do to them?

- Kill them.
- Turn them into vampires.
- Make them poisonous to humans.

When something became infected, what did it look like?

- Black, lank and slimy.
- Grey and bald.
- Hairless, with open cuts that refuse to heal.

If the Mythos caused the apocalypse, the virus is ancient, perhaps found at the bottom of the sea or in a meteor. Humans have no resistance to it.

If humans caused the apocalypse, they probably invented the disease, perhaps as a weapon. Alternatively, they may have accidentally released the disease during scientific research.

If nature caused the apocalypse, the disease evolved naturally: every attempt to cure it merely caused a new, incurable strain to emerge. Perhaps it is a known disease, such as smallpox or influenza. (Note that the 1918 Spanish Flu epidemic killed over 50 million people worldwide and infected ten times that number. It is arguably the biggest killer in history.)

Disease can lead to:

- Barbarism

It can damage:

- Biology
- Water
- Food



Disasters

Going Nuclear

Nuclear war, and its aftermath, has featured in post-apocalyptic fiction for nearly a century. H. G. Wells imagined an atomic bomb in 1914; Nevil Shute wrote about a nuclear aftermath in 1957; today, electronic games such as the Fallout series continue to imagine a nuclear wasteland. Add to that the reality-bending nature of atomic physics and, clearly, *The Apocalypse Machine* must allow a nuclear apocalypse.

To do so, we must bend reality. Nuclear fission was, in fact, discovered in 1938. The Manhattan Project, to develop an atomic bomb, began in 1939. Realistically, it is implausible that nuclear weapons could have devastated the world in the 1930s.

So, to make nuclear apocalypses possible, *The Apocalypse Machine* moves the discovery of nuclear fission forward, by stealing from H. G. Wells' *The World Set Free*. In 1933, Holsten discovered nuclear fission by "a wonderful combination of induction, intuition and luck". Immediately, the German and American governments began research into nuclear weaponry.

By 1936, there was a prototype bomb. Its first test, on November 2nd, began the apocalypse. Afterwards, it was the radioactivity that killed the rest of the world. It spread through the water, infecting the soil and the crops. A great radioactive cloud spread. Only a few survived: perhaps because they sealed themselves underground, perhaps through a strange immunity.

Alternatively, perhaps that first atomic test invoked Azathoth, the nuclear chaos at the heart of the universe. If this appeals to you, see the Mythos section, later in the book. (Note that, when Lovecraft described Azathoth as the "nuclear chaos", he was probably not thinking of nuclear weaponry. Nevertheless, the association is too good to miss.)

Finally, rather than taking nuclear imagery from reality, why not steal more from fiction? H. G. Wells imagined nuclear bombs as two-foot iron spheres. Once thrown from the side of the plane, they devastated cities by creating miniature active volcanoes. Thereafter, they continued exploding for days, in bubbling craters, a mile across.

HEAT

The world died slowly. At first, we noticed only that the summer sunshine persisted into September and October. Later, the weather patterns changed, so that winds and snow came unpredictably. I remember seeing my first mosquito: they were vanishingly rare, this far north, but they are common now. As the world heated more, the equator became uninhabitable, and our woodlands became tropical jungles.

What does the heated world look like?

- Tropical, with humid air and buzzing flies.
- Desert-like, the sun burning mercilessly through the day.
- Blackened, with smoke drifting from the few trees left burning.

If humans caused the apocalypse, then the world heated as a result of humanity's presence. Perhaps the smoke, from burning coal, caused the earth to warm like a greenhouse; perhaps the proliferation of factories and machines simply heated the world.

If nature caused the apocalypse, then the heating is beyond human control. Perhaps the sun simply grew hotter; perhaps a change in the Earth's orbit sent it closer to the sun.

As the world heats, it becomes unrecognisable. The light changes. Tropical animals are seen in formerly temperate regions. Some crops no longer grow. Social customs change to suit the heat: the midday sun is no longer safe; clothing is selected to ward off heat; buildings are adapted to repel the sun. Gradually, the people of

the 1930s see their civilised cities grow to resemble the heathen towns of foreign, godless countries.

Finally, humanity dies a slow death. As lands become uninhabitable, populations flee north. Millions die in refugee camps. Fires burn unchecked. As the heat pushes people farther and farther north, there is less land and resources to share. Gradually, by attrition, people die. At the last, only a few remain, waiting for their death in turn.

Heat leads to:

- Floods
- Disease
- Wind

It can damage:

- Food
- Soil

FLOODS

At first, it was an oddity, the high tides reaching ever higher. The coastal towns were the first to go. We became scared when Venice went under: the pictures in the newspapers showed St Mark's Square standing nearly a metre deep in water. When Amsterdam drowned, the governments moved to protect New York and London. For a while, sandbags kept back the water, armies of volunteers building the barriers ever higher. But eventually, the weight of the water was too much. When a breach came, there was no way back.

The water drowned the cities. For a while, it was only a foot deep. People moved to the upper floors, swapped cars for boats, and continued their business. But the floods kept rising. An early casualty was drinking water: clean water mixed with sewage and seawater, making the cities uninhabitable. Populations rushed to higher ground. In the United States, everyone moved west: Denver, with its reputation as the Mile High City, was besieged. In Britain, Harrogate became the new capital. Today, if you take a boat, and look down through the water, you can see the drowned buildings we used to inhabit.



The Apocalypse Machine

What does the flooded world look like?

- Tropical, with jungles surrounding lagoons.
- Cold, with the tops of buildings poking through vast expanses of water.
- Wrecked, with debris and wreckage floating past.

If the Mythos caused the apocalypse, the seas probably rose as the monsters arose.

If humans or nature caused the floods, the most likely explanation is a rise in temperature. As the Earth heats, the grounded Antarctic ice melts, and the waters rise. The water also expands, like other materials, as the temperature rises. As the sea expands, the sea level rises.

Floods can damage:

- Water (although this sounds strange, floods do damage the supply of clean, drinkable water)
- Food
- Books
- Soil

EARTHQUAKES

When the first shocks hit, we knew what was coming. There was nothing we could do. In the middle of the city, you are never safe: you are always close to a wall, gas pipe or rolling vehicle. We stayed still, then watched, as the city we knew crumbled beneath us. Monuments fell, trees were uprooted and a network of cracks ran through every wall, road and marble facade.

What does the aftermath of the earthquake look like?

- A mass of warped, leaning buildings.

- An endless carpet of debris.
- A smoking, soaked bowl of ash, dust and blackened water.

An apocalyptic earthquake will level the cities of the Earth in hours, then burn the remnants in the following days. It strikes without warning. Buildings fall as the ground beneath them liquefies. That initial shock destroys bridges, roads and lines of communication, which prevents the medical and fire services responding. Power lines and gas pipes are severed.

Thereafter, a series of aftershocks hits the city, again and again, until only rubble is left. In the days after, fires spread. With no communication and impassable roads, response is nearly impossible.

Note that, according to modern seismology, a global earthquake is impossible. But seismology in the 1930s was in its infancy.





Disasters

By the standards of the day, no-one would be surprised if an earthquake shook the world.

If the Mythos caused the apocalypse, there are many potential culprits. Perhaps Cthulhu, rising from his grave beneath the Pacific, causes the sea to boil and the earth to tremble.

If nature caused the apocalypse, then the earthquake was simply inevitable. There was nothing humanity could have done to prevent it.

Earthquakes can lead to:

- Floods

They damage:

- Water
- Food
- Books
- Soil



COLD

The snow never stopped falling. At first, the roads were passable, and we got by with snow-chains. Later, the cars froze into the ground, and nothing we could do would get them out. As the snow deepened, we retreated into the upper floors of buildings. Millions died from exposure, but most remained happy, walking on rivers that had not frozen for years.

Next, the water froze in the pipes. Most of our power was spent melting snow to drink, but then the power lines went, and nobody could dig far enough to repair them. Fortunately, what little water we produced was clean: sewage could not contaminate it, because the sewage was frozen. Skis and sleds became part of everyday life.

As time went by, the crops refused to grow and the glaciers, encroaching from the north, destroyed cities. People retreated

south, walking on the frozen sea, fighting over land and food. Many forged forward to the equator, hoping to establish themselves as the first. Soon, however, all of what remained of humanity converged on that small band of habitable land. Now, the nights grow colder, and humanity awaits its end.

What does the icy world look like?

- A snowfield, with the tops of once-familiar buildings poking through the top.
- A crystal paradise, with icicles glittering in the clear sun.
- Grey, with snow falling endlessly from the dark clouds above.

If the Mythos caused the apocalypse, the culprit is almost certainly Ithaqua. As the icy wastes extend south, his territory grows, and eventually the Earth will be his.





The Apocalypse Machine

If humans caused the apocalypse, the cause is most likely a nuclear war and the resulting nuclear winter, as smoke prevents sunlight from heating the earth. As the ice grows, it reflects the sunlight still more, and so a vicious circle begins.

If nature caused the apocalypse, then there are various ways the cold could have arrived. Perhaps the sun's activity simply diminished. Perhaps the world is heading for another Ice Age. (As recently as the 19th Century, a Little Ice Age, which had lasted for centuries, gripped the northern hemisphere. In New York, the Harbour froze, allowing people to walk to Staten Island from Manhattan; meanwhile, Londoners held frost fairs on the frozen Thames.)

Cold can damage:

- Water (that is, the supply of water)
- Food.
- Books.
- Soil.

METEOR

As the meteor approached, it became an astronomic and popular curiosity. Domsayers predicted it would pass close enough to pull the Earth out of orbit. Most people anticipated the spectacle with glee.

We never expected it to hit. Weeks before, our fate became clear. There was nothing we could do: no rocket or bomb would divert its course. Finally, we braced for impact, and every country hoped it would hit another.

What did the meteor look like?

- An unimaginably large rock, like a mountain in the sky.
- A comet, burning through the stars.

- A red, fuzzy light, like nothing astronomers had seen before.

If the Mythos caused the apocalypse, there is something alien in the meteor. Perhaps it is a virus; perhaps a monster. Perhaps, even, the meteor is a spaceship, transport for Martians or mi-go. Either way, it will leave a crater. People will stand at the rim, marvelling; scientists will edge inside, exploring; the army will stand at the ready. Whatever emerges will kill them all.

If nature caused the apocalypse, the meteor is huge enough to destroy the world, through earthquakes, tidal waves and floods. Perhaps it throws up ash, causing a "nuclear winter".

Meteors can lead to:

- Monsters
- Disease
- Cold
- Flooding
- Earthquakes

They damage nothing directly (apart, of course, from the thing they land on).

WIND

The wind tore the buildings from their foundations and sent masonry flying through the air. There was no escape. Those that survived the buildings falling were crushed by flying rocks; those that sheltered from the rocks were sliced apart by glass shards.

What does the windswept world look like?

- Bare rock and clay, the topsoil all but torn away.
- A wasteland of uprooted trees and broken buildings.
- A featureless desert, punctuated occasionally by piles of unidentifiable debris.

Has the wind stopped?

- Yes. A few survivors live in the ravaged wasteland.
- No. The survivors have adapted to a life of shelter.

An apocalyptic wind is greater than any hurricane or tornado in living memory. Perhaps it is an endless hurricane, the air whirling chaotically in eddies, hurricane emptying into hurricane, always turbulent, never calm. Perhaps it is an endless gale, rushing around the world, gathering pace like a snowball. Whichever way the wind blows, its powers of destruction are immense. Certainly, it will destroy buildings. It may strip away the topsoil, too.

If the Mythos caused the apocalypse, find a suitable candidate and pin the blame for the wind on them. Ithaqua and the Flying Polyps are prime suspects.

If nature caused the apocalypse, the wind may have a more immediate cause, such as solar activity. Alternatively, it may simply be inexplicable. The winds grew, day by day, until they destroyed the world.

Wind might lead to:

- Flooding

It might damage:

- Food
- Books
- Soil

BARBARISM

As society broke down, people tore each other apart. We did not realise what we were capable of. The apocalypse did not just destroy the world: it destroyed our humanity.



Disasters

How does the world look, after the raging mobs destroyed each other?

- It is littered with naked and bloody corpses.
- Cities are covered in dried blood, the corpses long having been taken for food.
- Dismembered corpses are hung on walls, as warnings to travellers.

Perhaps the greatest danger is humanity itself. When resources run short, whether food, land or water, people kill to get

them. The Great War killed 16 million: is it unimaginable that war could kill 2 billion?

And killing breeds killing. In a world where anyone might shoot you, you must have a gun. When you encounter a stranger, the safest thing to do is shoot first. After all, resources are scarce, and they may have things you need.

As food grows scarce, too, cannibalism becomes practical. Dead bodies are, after all, an abundant source of meat. Another practical solution is slavery. Since farming, travel and fighting take work, why not force others to work for you?

Barbarism can damage:

- Water
- Food
- Books

Additionally, if any of the following are damaged, barbarism can result:

- Biology (as people attack those with unknown mutations)
- Water
- Food
- Soil





Casualties

What does the apocalypse damage? It kills people, of course, and destroys society. What are the other casualties?

(Some of these casualties include questions to answer, others do not.)

REALITY

How does damaged reality manifest itself?

- A psychic maelstrom, which everyone can sense, although only some can use it.
- Strange geometries and dreamlike movement.
- Occasional flashes of the true and terrifying universe.

The apocalypse ripped a hole in reality. Humanity is beginning to perceive the universe as it actually is. The strange physics and mathematics that hold the universe together seep, gradually, into our awareness.

BIOLOGY

What do people with changed biology look like?

- They have golden eyes.
- They appear distant, and make unnatural conversation.

Weird

When Biology and Reality are damaged, the Weird Dial (p.22) has a high setting. For guidance on mutations and psychic powers, see The Afflicted, p.46.

- They are visibly mutated, with stretched, shrunk or additional body parts.

Somehow, the apocalypse damaged human biology. Perhaps radioactivity caused mutations; perhaps alien experiments produced alterations. Although some humans escaped the changes, many have irrevocably changed.

WATER

The apocalypse damaged the supply of clean, drinkable water. Probably, the water is contaminated by sewage, although it may be frozen or poisoned. When the Investigators find water, they must boil and strain it before drinking. Even then, contaminants can get through.

When a human does not drink water, their life expectancy is measured in days: the exact survival time depends on temperature and activity. An Investigator riding a horse across the wasteland needs plenty of water; an Investigator searching a deserted and cool library needs less.

FOOD

There is nothing to eat. At first, food can be looted from shops and warehouses, but soon the tins run out. People scabble inside abandoned houses, hoping to find an overlooked can. Guns are drawn in battles for food. Finding a cache of tins and clean water is a godsend.

BOOKS

The libraries have gone. Books, accumulated over centuries, have been lost. Initially, the loss seems insignificant: when you need to survive, what can a book teach you? Later, the realisation grows. How can you learn to farm, without someone to teach you? How can you find your way, if not with a map?

Hungry and Thirsty

Use the lack of food and water as background information and plot material. For example, the Investigators might hallucinate a reservoir or, hoping to find an underground river, enter an ancient temple. They might be tempted by food caches or cannibalism.

However, be wary of letting drought and hunger distract from Mythos investigations. In particular, avoid penalising Investigators for hunger and thirst or insisting they break their investigation to find supplies.

Fortunately, not everything has gone. Fragments remain: though books are charred, some pages are readable. Physics textbooks are gone, but circuit diagrams remain. Maps are torn, but they can be pieced together.

In your games, destroyed libraries change investigations only slightly. An Investigator can still use **Library Use**, but they will search the fragments of destroyed books, rather than browsing shelves. Maps will be scribbled, rather than accurately printed, but will still guide the Investigators.

The main change is in the way you describe the world. In this blasted land, all knowledge has been lost, and you must start again.

SOIL

Nothing will grow in the soil: at least, nothing edible. When the food runs out, there will be no more. What hope is there for humanity now? Is cannibalism the only option?



Breaking the Machine

As you use the machine, you will invent ideas that it cannot encompass. Perhaps you want a monster, like Lovecraft's Colour Out Of Space, that damages the soil. Perhaps you want a disease, like John Christopher's Chung-Li virus, that damages food. But there is no line connecting Monsters to Soil or Disease to Food. What should you do?

Just do it anyway. Draw in a new line. *The Apocalypse Machine* is a source for ideas, not a constraint. The lines show the obvious links, but many more are possible. If you can think of a way for cold to damage the fabric of reality, do it.

In fact, look on the Apocalypse Machine as a challenge. For example, there is no link from Monsters to Heat or from Heat to Biology. Why not? Can you imagine a way to make that link? If so, use it.

Try inventing your own disasters, too. What happens if light cannot reach the Earth and the world goes dark? What happens if the world stops spinning? Use the disasters given as a guide: for example, if the world stops spinning, perhaps one half suffers a Heat-based apocalypse, while the other grows Cold. Again, see the Apocalypse Machine as a challenge, inventing things it does not cover. I can't think how a fire-based disaster would destroy the world, but if you can, use it.

So go beyond the ideas in *The Apocalypse Machine*. By doing so, you create post-apocalyptic stories of your own.

THE DIALS

The Apocalypse machine has four dials, which answer four questions about the apocalypse. How has humanity reacted to the apocalypse? When did the Apocalypse happen? How weird is the post-apocalyptic world? And is the game gritty or exhilarating to play?

By setting the dials, and answering these questions, you set the tone of your game.

The Humanity Dial

How does humanity react to the apocalypse? Does it bond together or tear itself apart? The higher you set the Humanity dial, the more the apocalypse throws people together. The lower you set it, the more it drives them apart.

When the Humanity Dial is set to Zero, everyone else is a threat. Most people survive alone. Crimes happen as a matter of course: murder is the way to survive. Resources are guarded jealously: if you want something, you take it from someone else.

This post-apocalyptic world is like that of Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*. If you meet a stranger, you hide. You only approach them if they are obviously not a threat.

When the Dial is set to Low, civilisation has collapsed. Communities form for survival, but people who cannot work are abandoned. If someone is injured, they are left behind. Crimes happen and are a fact of life: you cannot help the victims, so you do not try. Resources are guarded: you share them only if you get something in return.

Here, the post-apocalyptic world is like that of John Christopher's *The Death Of Grass*. If you meet a stranger, your first instinct is to raise your gun. If they are useful to you, you might work together, but would never trust each other.

When the Humanity Dial is set to Medium, there is both decency and inhumanity. Communities form, but do not agree on the best way forward: some attempt to impose military discipline on the others; some believe they are the true government. Crimes happen and go unpunished: murder, torture, slavery, perhaps sexual violence. Resources are guarded, although you might share them with the needy. This post-apocalyptic world resembles that of David Brin's *The Postman* or John Wyndham's *The Day Of The Triffids*. Here, if you meet a stranger, your first instinct is to ask questions. If they mean no harm, you would be happy to cooperate.

When the dial is set High, the apocalypse has brought out the best in people. Communities form and work together. The few offenders are dealt with reasonably. Resources are shared: food is rationed fairly and lasts a long time.

This post-apocalyptic world resembles that of the movie *I Am Legend*. In this world, if you meet a stranger, your first instinct is to help them. After all, the few survivors must work together.

Try setting the Humanity Dial somewhere in the middle, avoiding the two extremes. When everyone else is a threat, investigating is difficult; when everyone else is good, investigating is dull. Things get interesting when people might either be bad or good.

The Time Dial

When did the Apocalypse happen? Yesterday? A year ago? A generation? Or so long ago that people cannot remember it?

If you set the dial to Zero, the apocalypse happens at the beginning of the first investigation. Afterwards, survivors wander through their devastated cities. Some group together for survival.

If you set the dial to 1, the apocalypse happened one year ago. Communities have formed in the wasteland, as people adapt to their new roles in the post-apocalyptic world. Mostly, people eat tinned food, collected by raiding parties. There is enough for everyone. If the Humanity dial is set high, then nobody goes hungry; if it is set low, then the better-armed groups begin stockpiling. Nevertheless, as yet, nobody starves.

If you set the dial to 3, the apocalypse happened three years ago and resources are running out. The crucial question now is: was the soil damaged? If it was, then resources are getting low. If not, then farming becomes a source of food. If the Humanity dial is set low, then pitched battles are fought over stockpiles and land.



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If you set the dial to 10, a new generation is emerging. Older adults remember the apocalypse, but children do not. The Old Days, before the apocalypse, are becoming mythical. Now, post-apocalyptic life is well-established and agriculture is a regular source of food. Towns are constructed that were not there before the apocalypse. Occupations that mattered before the apocalypse, such as “artist” and “journalist”, do not matter now.

If you set the dial to 30, the apocalypse happened a generation ago. The Old Days are legendary. Now, investigations may concern pre-apocalyptic knowledge: for example, there might be an investigation to discover an intact library.

If you set the dial to 100, nobody alive remembers the apocalypse. The Old Days are the stuff of history. (For guidance on how the post-apocalyptic world changes over time, see *The Decaying Earth*, p.68).

Finally, this dial suggests whether you are playing an Aftershock or a Wasteland campaign. If the dial to Zero, 1 or 3, use the Aftershock rules; if it is set to 10 or greater, use the Wasteland rules.

The Weird Dial

How plausible is the post-apocalyptic world? Is it like today’s world, aside, of course,

from the monsters stalking the Earth? Or is it strange and wonderful?

If you set the dial to Low, the apocalyptic world resembles that of the 1930s. The technology is 1930s technology. Humans appear human and have everyday skills and abilities.

If you set the dial to Medium, there are strange changes in the world. Some people are mutants or psychics (see *The Afflicted*, p. 46). Strange technologies exist, including the super weapons proposed by Tesla: the Investigators might find death rays and electrical spheres. Nevertheless, such strangeness is rare. The world, at least superficially, is like that of the 1930s.

If you set the dial to High, the apocalypse has changed everything completely. Mutations, psychic abilities and strange technologies are an integral part of the post-apocalyptic world.

The Adrenaline Dial

Is your post-apocalyptic world exciting or grim? Will your Investigations be pulpy adventures, racing through devastated lands? Or will they be bleak, filled with death and the struggle for survival?

If you set the dial to Low, your Investigations will have an elegiac tone. The Investigators will walk through crumbling cities, as the great buildings of the Old Days slowly decay. If they find their loved ones dead (see *Sources Of Stability*, p. 35), the scene will be a sad one. Such investigations will feel like Purist scenarios, from the original *Trail of Cthulhu*, although you will use the Pulp rules.

If you set the dial to Medium, there will be moments of sadness and reflection, but also moments of excitement.

If you set the dial to High, there will be no time for reflection. The Investigators will drive at speed through crumbling cities, shooting as they go. If they find their loved ones dead, they will vow revenge. Such adventures will feel like Pulp scenarios in *Trail of Cthulhu*.

THE FINAL PICTURE

Finally, look again at everything the Apocalypse Machine has given you. Look especially at the answers, to earlier questions, about what things looked like. Use these to build a picture of your post-apocalyptic world.





Occupations

After the apocalypse, your occupation defines who you are, how you think and what you can do. In an Aftermath campaign, it describes what you did before the apocalypse. In a Wasteland game, it defines what you do now.

Not all the occupations from *Trail of Cthulhu* survived the apocalypse: Alienist, Archaeologist, Dilettante, Author, Parapsychologist, Private Investigator and Professor bite the radioactive dust. The remaining occupations are listed below, with a description of their place in this new world. Each of these occupations has a new special ability: the abilities from the original rules no longer apply. Some have new Occupational Abilities, too, which are listed in italics.

Additionally, there are new Occupations: Armourer, Agitator, Drifter, Farmer, Outcast, Outdoorsman, Socialite, Survivalist, Trader and Veteran. Each is listed with Occupational Abilities and a Special ability. Note that, because *The Apocalypse Machine* does not use Credit Ratings, values for this skill are not listed.

Finally, professionals know where to find whatever they need for their job. For example, doctors know where to find medical supplies; armourers know where to find guns. Hence, most Occupations have a Scavenging Speciality. When the Investigator looks for the type of equipment described in their Scavenging Speciality, the Difficulty Number is reduced by 1 (see Scavenging, p. 34). Of course, if an Investigation depends on finding a particular item, the normal investigation rules are used.

Agitator

You are a born leader, one who has risen to the challenge of the post-apocalyptic world. Perhaps you are benevolent, perhaps you are tyrannical, but people do what you say. Although you may not solve the investigation, you will direct it, leading people into danger.

Occupational Abilities: Assess Honesty, Bargain, Interrogation, Intimidation, Navigation, Outdoorsman, Reassurance, Sense Trouble, Streetwise.

Scavenging Speciality: None.

Special Abilities: Using Outdoorsman or Navigation, you can find a location to rest. You can, at the Keeper's discretion, make this location secure against normal, human invaders. These secure locations may, at the Keeper's discretion, be safe havens where General ability pools can be refreshed.

Antiquarian

You are obsessed with ancient treasures. Indeed, the apocalypse is a partial blessing, having brought strange and ancient artefacts to the surface. Now, museums can be freely viewed or plundered; wealthy houses, with their private collections, are open to you; long-drowned cities are accessible for the first time in millennia.

In an Aftermath campaign, you hold one of the professions suggested in the main *Trail of Cthulhu* rules, perhaps a curator or antiques dealer. In a Wasteland campaign, you are probably a trader in old curiosities and artefacts. Indeed, if the Time Dial is set high, you may trade in objects from the 1930s: perhaps a Zippo lighter is a valuable antique.

Occupational Abilities: Architecture, Bargain, History, Languages, Library Use, one other Investigative ability and *Scavenging*.

Scavenging Speciality: Old curiosities. In a boat, you would be the first to find the antique brass sextant.

Special Abilities: In cities, you can locate and name museums.

Armourer

In a lawless world, the gunman is king: and, even if he is not, he is respected and useful. Perhaps you owned a gun shop; perhaps you collected antique guns; perhaps you make guns yourself. In any case, your gunmanship

is more than a skill or profession. It is your enthusiasm, your obsession and part of who you are.

Occupational Abilities: Medicine, Assess Honesty, Interrogation, Intimidation, Craft (gun-making), Mechanical Repair, Explosives, Firearms, *Strategy*.

Scavenging Speciality: Guns and ammunition.

Special Abilities: You know where to find gun shops and military bases.

Artist

The post-apocalyptic world is awesome in its strangeness. Although your skills will not help you survive, your mindset may. You have taught yourself to look beneath the obvious, to see what others do not see. Perhaps, as you wander this devastated and astonishing world, your insight will see you through.

Occupational Abilities: Architecture, Art, Craft, Disguise, Flattery, Photography, any other two Academic or Interpersonal abilities and *Intuition*.

Scavenging Speciality: None.

Special Abilities: You may use your Intuition before any other Investigator uses a scientific ability.

Clergy

More than ever, in this blasted world, people want something to believe in. Whether you are a brilliant rabbi or a fire-and-brimstone preacher, you comfort those people. But how do you explain the creatures that have risen? Are you tempted to abandon your rituals and mythology? Or are they the only things keeping you sane?

Occupational Abilities: Assess Honesty, History, Languages (as appropriate to your religion, such as Latin, Greek, Aramaic, Hebrew, Arabic or Sanskrit), Library Use, Psychoanalysis, Reassurance, Theology, one other Interpersonal ability and *Intuition*.



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Scavenging Speciality: Items specific to your religion.

Special Abilities: You know where to find buildings associated with your religion, such as mosques, churches or synagogues.

Criminal

You live by lying and stealing. Sometimes, this means breaking the laws of communities; often, it means ignoring the few remaining moral codes. In an Aftermath campaign, decide what the apocalypse does to your criminal career: do you change your ways or continue living through deceit? In a Wasteland campaign, decide how your character lives: do you live in a community until they cast you out; do you ambush unwary travellers; or live through murder and cannibalism?

Occupational Abilities: Bargain, Intimidation, Locksmith, Navigation, Scavenging, Scuffling, Sense Trouble, Shadowing, Stealth, Streetwise, and one other Interpersonal or Technical ability.

Scavenging Speciality: None.

Special Abilities: You can find good hiding places, for equipment or for yourself (only).

Doctor

Never has your profession mattered so much. Diseases spread like wildfire: poor sanitation, nutrition and hygiene will kill people long before the monsters. Making do with salvaged and makeshift equipment, you hold the power of life and death: or, at least, the power to prolong life a little longer.

Occupational Abilities: Assess Honesty, Biology, First Aid, Forensics, Languages (Latin), Medicine, Pharmacy, Reassurance.

Scavenging Speciality: Medical supplies.

Special Abilities: You can find hospitals and medical facilities and navigate your way around them.

Farmer

Although your job seems humble, the future of humanity depends on you. If people want to eat, they must farm, and you can show them how. You, and people like you, have the knowledge to grow crops, raise animals and run a dairy.

If the apocalypse damaged the Soil, avoid Farmer as an occupation, unless you want a particularly hopeless character.

Occupational Abilities: Agriculture, Astronomy, Athletics, Botany, Firearms, First Aid, Mechanical Repair, Outdoorsman, Riding.

Scavenging Speciality: Farming equipment and machinery. Also, anything within a farm.

Special Abilities: You can find good farmland and establish a farm.

Hobo

You have seen many things, on your travels, but they never stopped you travelling. The apocalypse did not stop you, either. Sure, you can no longer ride the rails; sure, you scavenge rather than relying on charity. But, at heart, your life is the same. You wander and see the world.

Occupational Abilities: Athletics, Bargain, Filch, Navigation, Outdoorsman, Scavenging, Sense Trouble, Stealth, Streetwise.

Scavenging Speciality: Food and water.

Special Abilities: You understand how towns are laid out and can find any common buildings, such as churches, hospitals or shops.



Journalist

Someone must record what is going on. Perhaps you are the only one left who can. Whether you are a radio journalist, magazine columnist or newspaper reporter, you must write or go mad. Probably, these will be the last events you record: soon, either because nobody will want to read what you write or nobody will be alive to do so.

Occupational Abilities: Assess Honesty, Disguise, Evidence Collection, Languages, Oral History, Photography, Reassurance, Shadowing and one other Interpersonal ability.

Scavenging Speciality: Printed records, including books and newspaper archives.

Special Abilities: You can find newspaper archives and radio broadcasting stations.

Military

With the military gone, you feel lost. You have no orders to follow; no plan for your life. At least you can shoot and, indeed, there

is much to shoot. Will you find something new to fight for? Or can you make your own way in the world? With a gun by your side, anything is possible.

Occupational Abilities: Athletics, Firearms, Intimidation, Outdoorsman, Scuffling, Weapons plus others according to rank and service (see *Trail of Cthulhu* main rulebook). Also, Strategy.

Scavenging Speciality: None. You have been given guns before, but are not sure where you would find them.

Special Abilities: You can find and navigate within military facilities.

Nurse

In the post-apocalyptic world, medicine is a prized art, and your skills are being stretched to the full. When there is no doctor, your skills can keep someone alive. Perhaps, indeed, your practical skills are better than a doctor's theoretical knowledge. Where doctors would know the latest medical fad, you know the solutions that have worked for years.

Occupational Abilities: Assess Honesty, Biology, First Aid, Medicine, Pharmacy, Reassurance, plus, at the Keeper's discretion, Bureaucracy and Flattery.

Scavenging Speciality: Medical supplies.

Special Abilities: You have a special affinity for children: you know how to keep them entertained, reassure them and make them behave.



Outcast

Perhaps you stole, perhaps you blasphemed or perhaps they discovered your mutation. However it happened, you were cast out into the wasteland. Probably, you were branded or mutilated, so that other communities would avoid you.

Living in the wasteland has been both a blessing and a curse. You know, better than anyone, how to scratch a living from the wrecked earth. Yet, having grown used to your own company, you are unused to the presence of others. Perhaps you sleep apart from the other Investigators; perhaps, objecting to your stink, they sleep apart from you. Nevertheless, they keep you around, because you know how to survive.



Occupations

Occupational Abilities: Anthropology (you understand how societies function, although your understanding is not an academic one), Assess Honesty, Filch, First Aid, Fleeing, Intimidation, *Navigation*, Outdoorsman, *Scavenging*.

Scavenging Specialty: Food and water

Special Abilities: Using Intimidation, you can terrify others. In addition to making them reveal information (the standard use of Intimidation), they may, at the Keeper's discretion, run away, cooperate or hide.

Outdoorsman

You are one with the land: you can not only survive in the outdoors, but live well. Perhaps you are angry at whatever turned your country into a wasteland; perhaps you are phlegmatic, knowing nature will adapt and thrive. Your love, respect and fear for nature shines in your actions.

In an Aftermath campaign, you worked professionally on the land: perhaps you were a forester, a groundsman or even a cowboy. After the apocalypse, living in the wilderness was a sensible and practical solution. In a Wasteland campaign, you have always lived on the land. Perhaps, indeed, you were born to others who lived in the wilderness, and have learned your skills from childhood.

Occupational Abilities: Astronomy, Athletics, First Aid, Geology, Outdoorsman, Preparedness, Riding, Sense Trouble, Stealth.

Scavenging Specialty: Anything, when in the open countryside.

Special Abilities: You can navigate through the wilderness, by stars, winds, sun or the lie of the land.

Pilot

If you play a pilot, in *The Apocalypse Machine*, you accept you may never have a plane. Although this sounds odd, it is essential: post-apocalyptic stories require slow, difficult travel by land. A pilot, with a plane, can break the game. Why worry about the monsters, when you can simply fly over them? Why stay and investigate, when you could fly around the world, finding other survivors?

Hence, by choosing Pilot as your occupation, you are signing up to be the Keeper's tool. For much of the game, you will be a frustrated pilot. Any planes left after the

apocalypse will probably be grounded: by rust, by monstrous sabotage or by a mysterious and implausible plot device. Your character will be useful chiefly for other skills than Piloting. Because of this, the list of Occupational Abilities below is expanded from that in the main *Trail of Cthulhu* rules.

Why, then, does Pilot appear in this list? Because, once or twice in a campaign, a pilot can be essential. When the monsters finally overrun the country, and escape is essential, you may find a working plane mysteriously appears. At this point, you will take everyone to safety, and become a hero.

Finally, in a Wasteland campaign, it is remotely possible that a pilot might have a working plane. In such a campaign, your pilot will fly a rickety plane across the wastelands, trading and ferrying passengers. One day, your plane will break beyond repair, but for now, it is your living.

Occupational Abilities: Astronomy, Driving, Electrical Repair, Mechanical Repair, Piloting, Sense Trouble, Firearms, Languages.

Scavenging Specialty: Aviation equipment, maps, and airfields.

Special Abilities: If the Keeper has allowed an Investigator to be a Pilot, once per campaign you are guaranteed access to a working airplane.



Police Detective

Until the apocalypse, the law was on your side. Whether you believed in your job, or exploited your power, you knew your superiors would back you. Now the government is gone, what is your purpose? Are you simply a thug with a gun? Do you uphold the laws as they were or abandon all pretence?

Occupational Abilities: Assess Honesty, Athletics, Driving, Evidence Collection, Firearms, Interrogation, Sense Trouble. (Note that Cop Talk does not appear in *The Apocalypse Machine*.)

Scavenging Specialty: Police equipment and records.

Special Abilities: You can find police stations and navigate your way around them. You may also designate one neighbourhood of a particular town as your former patrol

route. You know this area very, very well and get a +2 bonus to Scavenging within it.

Scientist

If anyone can put this right, you can. There are centuries of human knowledge at your disposal, if you can find them. With that knowledge, you can discover how to fight the monsters. You can work out how to make crops grow. With time, patience and equipment, you can ensure humanity's survival.

However, perhaps the apocalypse has changed the laws of the universe. Is reality changing? Does anything you know still apply? Were those centuries of learning in vain?

As a scientist, three features of the Apocalypse Machine will affect your role. Firstly, if the apocalypse damaged Reality, then the laws of science have changed. You must discover what is the same and what is different. Secondly, if the Weird dial is set high, you can use your science to learn about weird phenomena, such as ray guns, mutations and psychic phenomena. Finally, if humans are responsible for the apocalypse, your science will be viewed with suspicion. It is probable that people like you, perhaps even you yourself, caused the world's destruction.

Scientists may never possess the Intuition skill.

Occupational Abilities: Electrical Repair, Evidence Collection, Languages, Library Use, Photography and any two of Astronomy, Biology, *Botany*, Chemistry, Cryptography, Forensics, Geology and Physics.

Scavenging Specialty: Scientific equipment.

Special Abilities: You can use your scientific methodology to investigate beyond your area of expertise. When you need to spend a point of a scientific skill (Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Cryptography, Forensics, Geology, Physics or Botany) you do not possess, you may, instead, spend two of another scientific skill.



Socialite

The world you knew is irretrievably gone. Never again will you host a dinner, attend a party or listen to music: at least, not with the cultured people that made it worthwhile. For a while, you can comfort yourself with the availability of champagne and caviar. After all, who



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would not enjoy a world where any luxury is there for the taking? After that, though, there are decisions to be made. What can you do? How will you live? Who will you become now?

Occupational Abilities: Architecture, Driving, Flattery, Languages (Latin and Greek), Reassurance, Riding, *Seduction*.

Scavenging Speciality: Luxuries.

Special Abilities: You can locate any place previously frequented by high society, such as theatres, gentleman's clubs and houses of the rich and famous.

Survivalist

You are a warrior of the wastes, equipped to defend yourself against nature, humans and monsters alike. Self-sufficiency is your watchword. You have equipped yourself to survive alone.

Why, then, do you cooperate with other Investigators? Perhaps because you have a Drive to investigate, which gnaws away at you. Perhaps, after one more Investigation, you will become self-sufficient again.

Occupational Abilities: Athletics, Driving, Electrical Repair, Explosives, Firearms, Intimidation, Mechanical Repair, *Navigation*, Outdoorsman, Preparedness.

Scavenging Specialty: Weapons and ammunition.

Special Abilities: None.

Trader

You are a travelling merchant, making your living through barter and haggling. Perhaps you are a scavenger and purveyor of junk. Perhaps, alternatively, you have a speciality, such as medicines, books or mechanical

parts. (If you want to sell curiosities, be an Antiquarian instead; if you want to sell guns, be an Armourer).

Yet something drives you to investigate. In your investigations, the skills you have gained will be invaluable: you travel well and can ingratiate yourself with communities in seconds.

Occupational Abilities: Accounting, Assess Honesty, Bargain, Driving, Flattery, *Navigation*, Preparedness, Reassurance, *Scavenging*, Streetwise.

Scavenging Specialty: Anything that is part of your trading speciality. If you have no speciality, you get a bonus for finding light, easily tradable items.

Special Abilities: You have access to some form of transport, perhaps a car or horse-drawn caravan. It is large enough to carry your stock.





Occupations

Veteran

You've dealt with the Mythos before and it broke you. Afterwards, you retired to live a quiet life. Now, however, humanity needs you. You must force yourself, one last time, to battle the ancient evil.

When you start the game, your Sanity may be no higher than 6. You must also have a Mental Illness (see the *Trail of Cthulhu* main rules). Use of this Occupation is entirely at the Keeper's discretion: in any case, do not have more than one Veteran in a team of Investigators.

Occupational Abilities: Astronomy, Athletics, Cthulhu Mythos, Explosives, Firearms, Languages, Occult, Preparedness, Scuffling, *Strategy*, Theology.

Scavenging Specialty: None.

Special Abilities: Working with the Keeper, choose one Mythos entity you have

encountered before. It is the one that broke you, mentally, causing your retirement. When making Stability Checks involving this entity, the Difficulty Number is increased by 1 (which will usually increase it to 6).

You recall sundry facts about this entity: how it moves, what it eats, what it looks like. For anything more complex, spend a point of an appropriate Skill.

Wanderer

Whatever you did before the apocalypse, it has no relevance now. You wander from town to town, surviving as best you can, hiding from the monsters. There must be many more like you: people who suddenly found themselves plunged into a strange and dangerous land. Perhaps occupations are meaningless in this wasted world. Perhaps all that matters is that you survived.

In an Aftermath campaign, you resemble the protagonist of many post-apocalyptic stories: an everyman figure, trying to survive. In a Wasteland campaign, you are a drifter, passing from town to town, surviving through the generosity of people who see your essential decency. Hence, this occupation works best when the Humanity dial is set high.

Occupational Abilities: Any three Academic or Technical abilities, to represent your previous occupation, plus Assess Honesty, First Aid, Intuition, *Navigation*, Preparedness, Reassurance, *Scavenging*.

Scavenging Specialty: Household items and groceries.

Special Abilities: None.





Drives

In this post-apocalyptic world, what drives you to investigate the horror? Why not simply avoid it, trying to survive amongst the ruins as best you can? As in *Trail of Cthulhu*, the answer is your Drive. Something makes uncovering the truth more important than your life or your sanity.

In *The Apocalypse Machine*, Drives are particularly important. After an apocalypse, most people would run from danger, but your Investigators must head towards it. If there are monsters stalking in the sea, the story requires that, somehow or other, people are there to observe them. If all the Investigators retreat inland, as sensible people would, things become dull.

The following Drives from *Trail of Cthulhu*, less suited for post-apocalyptic adventures, do not appear in *The Apocalypse Machine*: Artistic Sensitivity, Bad Luck, Ennui, Scholarship, Sudden Shock and Thirst for Knowledge. In their place are new Drives: Self-Preservation, Hunted, Fate, Humanity, Regression, Love, Preservation of Knowledge and Witness.

Adventure

Life is a grind, a dull struggle for survival. Is it any wonder you take to the open road, seeking out danger, never shirking from a fight? Even if your life is short, it will have been a life worth living.

This Drive works best when the Adrenaline dial is set high.

Antiquarianism

Because of the apocalypse, unimaginably old artefacts have risen to the surface. You are captivated by them. Sometimes, you wonder whether you are living in the present or the past: certainly, when you look around, all you see is an ancient, decaying world. No matter. You must explore further and delve deeper into history.

Arrogance

Nothing can hurt you. After all, when the whole world died, you survived. You have

faith in yourself. Whatever the Mythos has done to the world, it cannot harm you.

Curiosity

You need to know what is out there. It is like a scab you cannot stop picking; a hook in your brain, pulling you towards the horror.

Sometimes you wonder whether this urge is unnatural. Perhaps you are going mad or the creatures are controlling your mind. No matter. You must go and see the things that have destroyed the world. You must look.

Duty

It does not matter if the people you followed are dead. You have a code to uphold. Whether you believe your duty is to God, science or the United States, you are driven by your obligation.

Sometimes, you wonder whether your fight has any meaning. Are you fighting for dead institutions, a dead cause? Perhaps, however, people need an ideal to believe in. By fighting for something, you will rally people to your banner, whether the thing is real or not.

Example: The postmasters in David Brin's The Postman.

Fate

You didn't mean to get into this. You just wander the post-apocalyptic world, always finding yourself staring at the monsters. Whenever something happens, you are there to witness it. You seem to be a centre of gravity, around which things happen.

All post-apocalyptic heroes are, to some extent, driven by Fate. Somewhat improbably, the protagonists in post-apocalyptic fiction witness every major event of the apocalypse. Nevertheless, you are entirely dependent on fate. Things just happen to you.

Example: Gordon in The Postman.

Follower

The only way you will survive is by sticking together. Specifically, you are sticking with that person over there. Perhaps they're

stronger than you; perhaps they're smarter; perhaps you trust them; perhaps they are the first person you encountered. Whatever your reason, you will stick with them through thick and thin.

Example: Roger in The Death Of Grass, Josella in The Day Of The Triffids.

Humanity

This isn't just an investigation: it's a battle for human survival. The fate of humanity lies in your hands. Humans have weathered crises before, but nothing as bad as this. It is time to fight and you must lead the fight.

First, you must defend yourself. Then, you must find out about the monsters. Finally, when the time is right, you will use your knowledge to fight back.

Examples: Bill in The Day Of The Triffids.

Hunted

They are coming for you. Your life is an endless cycle of running and hiding: wherever you go, they will find you eventually. They killed all the others: now they are coming to finish the job.

Your only hope is to find out about the things, get them before they get you. What's that noise outside? Get your things. It's time to move.

A warning: using this Drive completely changes the scenario. Firstly, it implies that the creatures are coming after *all* the Investigators. (This need not mean that everyone takes Hunted as a Drive).

Secondly, this Drive requires the Keeper to pace the investigation cleverly. Although the Investigators are constantly hunted, the scenario must not be one continuous chase: not only would this be dull, but it would prevent investigation. Although hunted, the Investigators must have opportunities to meet others, find safe havens and bandage their wounds. Action scenes must be alternated with quieter scenes. Hence, although the atmosphere of the investigation will be tense,



Drives

there will still be quiet moments, to allow everyone to catch their breath.

Example: Jim in 28 Days Later, David in The Chrysalids.

In the Blood

You keep finding yourself here. You can't explain why. But night after night, you are drawn towards the monsters and the horror. It satisfies an urge inside you, something you have felt since a child.

As in *Trail of Cthulhu*, In The Blood is an invitation for the Keeper to mess with your Investigator.

Love

In a shattered world, you have found someone. You must devote yourself to them, protecting them against harm, putting them first. For their sake, you must find out what you can, and use your knowledge to fight the monsters. Not for you, not for humanity, but for the one you love.

The person in question must be a Source of Stability (see p.35). They must not be another Investigator: if you want to be in love with another Investigator, take Follower as your Drive.

If your love interest dies, you may replace this drive with Revenge. Alternatively, you may continue with this drive: from now on, the memory of your love will drive you to investigate.

Example: The Narrator in The War of the Worlds, The Man in The Road.

Preservation of Knowledge

Your best weapon is knowledge, accumulated by humanity over centuries. It must be preserved: yet, all around you, you see it being destroyed.

The only hope is to follow the trail, book to book, library to library, preserving what you can. Even if you are destroyed, you will leave a legacy for those who follow.

If Knowledge was destroyed in the apocalypse, this Drive is about collecting the scraps of what remains. If not, this Drive is about preserving books before they are destroyed.

Example: Almost everyone in A Canticle for Leibowitz

Switching Drives

When your Investigator changes their Drive, it is a powerful moment in their development. You thought you were driven by Curiosity, but now you realise your fascination is In The Blood. You tire of being buffeted by Fate and realise you have an underlying Duty.

Hence, when you improve your Investigator, at the end of a scenario, you may also change their Drive. You may do this once, during the lifetime of the Investigator: they have realised what *really* drives them. Be sure to roleplay the change.

Regression

The more you live in this dead world, the more your mind changes. Primeval nightmares haunt your sleep: you awake unrefreshed, your head bursting. You are inexplicably drawn to dark places. You find yourself wandering towards danger, oblivious, withdrawn and perversely fascinated. It satisfies some deep hunger inside of you.

Deep inside your mind, layers of brain, established thousands of years ago by evolutionary processes, are coming alive again. As the world regresses to a prehistoric state, so your mind follows. Your brain is becoming that of an animal: you are like a deer in headlights, like a mosquito drawn to a flame. Even if the danger destroys you, you must approach it.

Example: Kerans in The Drowned World.



Revenge

The apocalypse killed someone you loved. Your revenge will be cold and calculated: first, you will discover their weak points; then, you will strike.

Hate runs in your blood like opium. You will kill them, even if it kills you. Indeed, perhaps it would be best if they killed you. After all, your life would have little meaning if the monsters were dead.



Self-Preservation

Only a few will survive, in a world starved of resources, and you are damned sure you will be one of them. Both the laws and the pretence of civilisation have gone. Humanity has reverted to its natural state, fighting for survival, and you must kill or be killed.

Your greatest enemy is the monsters. Your priority, then, is to find out about them, to kill them before they kill you. You will band together with others, but from necessity, not comradeship. You must stick together to survive, but in the end, your own survival is your priority.

Example: John in The Death Of Grass.

Witness

This needs to be recorded. It is the most important event in the history of the world: perhaps, indeed, it is the last. Perhaps no-one will read it, but you must note everything down, as it happens. If anyone survives, they will read how the end of the world occurred.

Perhaps you are a journalist, trained by instinct to report the news, and unable to shake the habit. Perhaps you are an author. Perhaps you were not a writer before, but have decided to become one now.

Sometimes, you wonder whether you are only writing for yourself: perhaps to process what has happened; perhaps to remind yourself it is real. Whatever the reasons, there is always more to explore and more to record.

Example: Mike in The Kraken Wakes.



Investigative Abilities

These are the skills that will see you through the apocalypse and let you discover its secrets. Some abilities from *Trail of Cthulhu* do not fit into post-apocalyptic fiction: hence, we say goodbye to Accounting, Art History, Law (there isn't any), Cop Talk (there aren't any) and Credit Rating (you won't get any).

Instead, we get new Investigative Abilities: Agriculture, Botany, Intuition, Navigation, Leadership, Seduction and Strategy. There is one new General Ability, the immensely important Scavenging.

Having an ability does *not* mean you have the equipment needed to use that ability (a change to the *Trail of Cthulhu* rules). Just because you are skilled in Agriculture does not mean you have a farm; just because you have Evidence Collection does not mean you have fingerprinting equipment.

Here, then, is the new list of abilities. Some abilities, such as Flattery, have changed little from *Trail of Cthulhu*. These are mentioned only briefly. Some, such as Bureaucracy and Cryptography, function significantly differently after the apocalypse. And some are new.

For each ability, examples are given of how it might be used. These examples are in addition to those given in the *Trail of Cthulhu* rulebook: for example, Anthropology still allows identification of artefacts and rituals of living creatures, as mentioned in the original skill listing. Now, however, it allows understanding of alien anthropology.

Agriculture

You know how to farm land. You can:

- tell why crops will not grow.
- sense a change in weather.
- identify whether soil is fertile.
- grow your own food, given a patch of good soil and equipment.

This ability covers a practical understanding of plants, where the ability Botany covers an academic understanding. Agriculture lets you grow crops, which Botany does not.

Nevertheless, the two skills overlap. You can both identify a species of plant.

Anthropology

You can understand human cultures. More significantly, you can begin to understand alien cultures. You will never fully comprehend the cultures of other races, but you can figure out enough to be useful.

You can:

- realise, by watching the monsters, that they are a hive mind rather than a collection of individuals.
- spot that the cultists' sacrificial ritual resembles a Catholic Church mass.
- hypothesise that the woman was tortured because she is a mutant.

Archaeology

You understand historical objects and structures. You can:

- realise that an ancient object has been thrown up from deep beneath the sea bed.
- navigate within a Cyclopean city that rose from the sea.

Architecture

You understand how buildings are constructed. You can:

- spot whether a building would crumble in an earthquake.
- spot why a building crumbled in an earthquake
- reinforce a building against the monsters' next attack.

Art

You can create art, as detailed in the main *Trail of Cthulhu* rulebook. Before doing so, you must find the materials to do so.

If you are the Keeper, think of prized works of art as targets for destruction.

Assess Honesty

You can tell if someone is lying and guess why they are lying.

When this ability is used on someone possessed by monsters, the person may seem indefinably *wrong*. This use of Assess Honesty is at the Keeper's discretion. It will mysteriously fail at narratively convenient moments: for example, when you meet a librarian, your use of Assess Honesty may fail, if revealing he is possessed by a mi-go would ruin the investigation.

Astronomy

You know the movements of stars, planets and comets. You can:

- predict where a meteor would have landed.
- know that the chances against anything manlike on Mars are a million to one.

Bargain

You can strike a deal in the post-apocalyptic wasteland. See also Barter, p. 43.

Biology

You understand living organisms, whether human, animal or alien. You can:

- suspect that a dissected corpse is a hybrid between a human and a Deep One.
- understand that mi-go anatomy resembles that of a crustacean.
- guess the function of part of an alien's anatomy.



Investigative Abilities

The skill Botany, below, is a more specialised version of Biology, focussing on plants.

Botany

You understand plants. You can:

- tell whether a plant is alien.
- hypothesise how a plant might be killed.
- tell whether a plant's behaviour is governed by known science.

This ability covers academic understanding of plants, while Agriculture covers practical understanding. You can dissect an unknown plant and compare it to others, which someone skilled in Agriculture cannot.

Nevertheless, the two skills overlap. You can both identify a species of plant.

Bureaucracy

You can follow paper trails, left within abandoned offices. This ability mainly focuses on written records (in *Trail of Cthulhu*, it covered speaking to bureaucrats, but most of them are dead). You can:

- work out who ordered something to be done.
- find out what really happened, beneath layers of bureaucratic obfuscation.
- find a memorandum in the depths of a filing system.

Chemistry

You can perform chemical analyses. You need a lab for particularly specialised work, but can use makeshift facilities, such as a gas burner and a mug, for most tasks.

Beyond Science

A scientific ability can reveal that something is *beyond* science. Thus, Chemistry may reveal that the meteorite contains unknown elements.

Craft

You can make things of practical use. Perhaps you make them from spare parts of other things (guns, explosives); perhaps from raw materials (bows, clothing).

Cryptography

If someone in the wasteland is sending codes, you can decipher them.

More interestingly, you can begin to decipher alien communication. For example, you might analyse the chittering of the mi-go, recorded on a wax cylinder; the calls of the Martians, as they echo across the countryside; or the tapping of the Triffids.

Such research takes days or weeks of painstaking analysis. To complete it, you must study many examples of alien communication, either recorded or not. You can never learn the alien language (see Languages, p. 32) and, indeed, much of the language will remain strange to you.

Nevertheless, when you spend a point of Cryptography deciphering such communication, you either gain a benefit, such as:

- You can predict where the monsters' next attack will come from.
- You recognise how their communication changes just before they attack.

Alternatively, you may gain a piece of information, such as:

- The monsters' communications centre around one point.
- They are following you and waiting for a moment to attack.
- They are guarding a particular area.

Naturally, such benefits are at the Keeper's discretion: if a scenario requires that an attack be a surprise, then no amount of analysis will predict it.

Cthulhu Mythos

You are beginning to understand the horrific reality underlying the universe. This ability covers knowledge of all monsters: not just Cthulhu, Hastur and the Deep Ones, but Martians, Triffids and the Chung-Li virus. All these horrors are manifestations of the same underlying reality.

As in *Trail of Cthulhu*, you can get points of Cthulhu Mythos by witnessing horrific events, such as eldritch creatures rising from the sea. Since, in *The Apocalypse Machine*, these sights are common, they are the primary means of learning the Cthulhu Mythos ability.

As Keeper, consider what the Cthulhu Mythos ability represents in your campaign. Is it simply knowledge? If so, encountering one Mythos entity gives little insight into the others: for example, seeing mi-go gives no insight into the Deep Ones. Or is the Cthulhu Mythos ability a general and terrible insight? If so, encountering mi-go gives you a mysterious understanding of the Deep Ones and, indeed, everything.

Finally, for a peculiar take on the Cthulhu Mythos ability, see Daoloth, (p. 57).

Evidence Collection

You know how to search an area systematically, unearthing every secret it has to offer. In *Trail of Cthulhu*, this ability mainly covered crime scenes; in *The Apocalypse Machine*, it covers any systematic manual search for clues, over a limited area. Hence, you can:

- Find how the monsters broke into the house.
- Find where the documents are hidden.
- Find the patch of slime that indicates the monsters were here.

Note that Evidence Collection covers searches for *clues*, whereas Scavenging (see below) covers searches for anything



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else. To find the archaeologist's field notes, which lead you to the dig site, use Evidence Collection. To find her gun, to shoot what you find at the dig site, use Scavenging.

Flattery

Using your looks and charm, you can befriend, persuade and seduce.

Forensics

You can gain information from corpses. You may have learned this from books; you may be professionally trained; or you may simply have dissected many bodies.

Probably, your techniques are cruder than those available before the apocalypse. Nevertheless, you can:

- Determine the approximate time of death, from the body's temperature.
- Know whether the weapon that inflicted the wounds was blunt, sharp, heavy or light.
- Know whether the body was moved after death.
- Cut open the body to find anything odd inside.

If your knowledge is that of a police forensic expert, not just a layman who has seen many bodies, you might perform more complex analysis.

Geology

You know your rocks. You can:

- Realise a particular rock is unearthly.
- Suspect that a Cyclopean city is millions of years old.
- Understand the natural processes behind volcanic eruptions and earthquakes.

Additionally, you understand geological radioactivity. You know which rocks are naturally radioactive and which would retain radioactive water. Given a Geiger counter, you can tell whether radiation is significantly or dangerously above the background level.

Finally, you can determine if soil is suitable for farming. However, only Agriculture will determine whether other conditions, such as weather and location, are favourable.

History

You know, or think you know, about human history.

In Aftermath campaigns, your knowledge is based on 1930s academic knowledge. In Wasteland campaigns, you know what others know. If, for example, educated people think George Washington discovered America, your knowledge encompasses that fact.

Interrogation

Given appropriate equipment, you can perform an interrogation. This ability covers all interrogations (whereas, in *Trail of Cthulhu*, it covered police-style interviews). You can threaten, beat or torture the truth out of someone.

If the Humanity dial is set high, threats will normally reveal the truth. If is low, torture will probably be needed.

Intimidation

Using a threatening manner, you induce people to reveal information and do what you say.

Intuition

Through common sense, you see the consequences of science and technology. You understand the things to which the scientists are blind.

You can:

- Realise that a nuclear bomb will tear apart reality.
- Intuit that the disease that killed the world was a biological weapon.
- Understand that solving a mathematical equation creates a pathway for a monster.

Often, your intuition will be vague: for example, you see that solving this equation lets something through, but you cannot explain what or how. In such

cases, Intuition resembles a poor, but safe, version of Cthulhu Mythos. You glimpse a terrifying reality but, thankfully, do not understand it.

Languages

In languages other than your native tongue, you are fluent, literate or both.

You cannot learn alien languages, which are immeasurably complex and beyond your understanding. Only Cryptography (above) gives some limited insight into such communication.

Leadership

When you speak, people do what you want. They obey you almost without thinking, even before they know who you are.

You can:

- Order someone to tell you what they know.
- Tell someone to lower their weapon.
- Make them give you something you want.

It does not, *of course*, work on Mythos entities.

You may use Leadership without knowing what you are talking about. For example, you can tell people to man the barricades, even if you do not know how to mount an effective defence.

Library Use

You can find information from written records.

If Books were destroyed in the apocalypse, you will search scraps of burned paper; if not, you will search decaying, deserted libraries. In any case, if the information is there, you will find it.

Locksmith

You can skilfully force an entry.

Of course, in the post-apocalyptic world, many people force their way into abandoned buildings. Anyone can break a door, smash a window or crowbar a lock. You, however, can:



Investigative Abilities

- Pick a lock quietly.
- Force an entry, which will not later be detected.
- Open a safe without destroying it.
- Bypass particularly complex locks.

Navigation

Whether by the wind, stars, terrain or sun, you can find your way. Even in the complete darkness of the apocalyptic night, you know where to go.

Navigation can be used in two ways. Firstly, it is used in investigations, where the information to be uncovered is a physical location. For example, you can locate:

- The cave you are looking for, in the snowy mountains.
- R'lyeh, given the longitude, latitude and an airship.
- The former location of the Eiffel Tower, after Paris is destroyed by an atomic bomb.

Secondly, Navigation can be used to gain a benefit related to a known location, such as:

- Finding the farmhouse you visited as a child, which you think will be a safe haven.
- Finding the cache of food, where you buried it before the earthquake.

Note that tracking and hunting are covered by the Outdoorsman ability.

Occult

You know strange folktales and beliefs. In an Aftermath campaign, your interest might be academic; in a Wasteland campaign, you have heard or read many myths and legends.

You can:

- Recall legends about a particular creature.
- Know the folklore for a particular area.

- Understand the beliefs underpinning cult rituals and practices.

Oral History

People tell you their stories, giving you details they would not tell others. In Aftermath campaigns, they will tell you how they survived the apocalypse.

Outdoorsman

You can survive in the outdoors. If such things are available, you can find the following by spending Outdoorsman, rather than rolling Scavenging:

- Food, both animals and plants.
- Shelter, possibly even concealed shelter.
- Water, which you can render drinkable, unless it is severely contaminated.
- Firewood.

You can also:

- Build and light a fire.
- Skin and cook an animal.
- Tell how the weather will change.
- Track someone or something across land.

In short, you can survive outdoors, without tinned food or man-made devices. You can not only survive, but live with some comfort.

You can also survive within a deserted, decaying city. You can:

- Find enough food to survive.
- Make water safe or collect rainwater.
- Find an inconspicuous place to shelter.
- Avoid dangerous wild animals.
- Rig an electrical generator.
- Track people or other creatures through an urban area.

Pharmacy

You understand and can identify drugs and medicines.

Photography

You are a skilled camera operator. You can:

- Develop film using household chemicals, such as orange juice, coffee and ammonia.
- Rig an infrared filter, using developed slide film or chemicals painted on glass.
- Work how to use a movie camera.
- Spot unusual aspects in an existing photograph.
- Rig a simple camera to perform complex operations: for example, using an alarm clock and a Box Brownie, you can take a picture four hours from now.

Physics

You have a good knowledge of physics, the laws that you believe govern the universe. You are familiar with:

- Tesla's outlandish plans for electromagnetic weapons.
- Holsten's discovery of nuclear fission.
- Einstein's theories of relativity, which propose that neither time nor space are absolute quantities.

You can:

- Understand how a nuclear bomb might, conceivably, work.
- Measure the level of radioactivity and tell whether it is dangerous.
- Get a piece of scientific equipment working.

If the Weird dial is set high, you may encounter outlandish technologies. Using this ability, you can begin to understand them.



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Reassurance

Your calming presence stops people panicking and encourages them to reveal information.

Seduction

You use your charm and physical attractiveness to worm information out of people.

You can:

- Find information with an implied promise of sex.
- Get someone into bed, then find what you want to know through pillow-talk.

As with any Interpersonal skill, Seduction does not always succeed. Just as not everyone can be reassured or flattered, not everyone can be seduced.

Strategy

You understand military strategy and can, with some success, apply it to monsters. You can:

- Defend an area in an optimal fashion.
- Know how best to attack the monsters.

- Pinpoint the weak spot in a line of defences.
- Relate the attacks of monsters to historical battles.
- Suggest how to weaken the monsters: for example, by severing or confusing their communications.

Streetwise

You know how to talk to the baser elements of the post-apocalyptic world. You also know how they operate. You can:

- Safely enter communities of thieves, smugglers and slavers.
- Smooth over breaches of etiquette by other Investigators.
- Deduce how criminal operations work.

GENERAL ABILITIES

As with Investigative Abilities, possessing a General Ability does not grant the equipment to use it. Hence, having Driving does not imply owning a car; having Firearms does not imply having a gun.

The abilities Hypnosis and Shadowing do not appear in *The Apocalypse Machine*. If

you want to shadow someone, use Stealth instead. There is just one new General Ability: Scavenging.

Scavenging

Scavenging lets you find and salvage equipment. In the post-apocalyptic ruins, most things can be scavenged: guns, cars, rope, capacitors, pharmaceuticals, typewriters and much more.

The Scavenging ability works similarly to Preparedness. The Keeper sets a Difficulty Number, based on how difficult the item would be to find. If you beat that number with a Simple Test, you get the item. See Equipment (pp. 41–45) for further details.

Almost everything is available after the apocalypse: after all, you can simply walk into army bases and research laboratories. A Tommy gun, for example, is relatively easy to find in a military encampment. However, as with the Preparedness ability, Scavenging cannot find unique or specialised items: thus, Scavenging will never find a nuclear bomb.

Sometimes, a Scavenging roll is not needed. If you can locate a hospital, finding a syringe is normally easy. Finding bandages may be harder, if someone else has been there before you.





Stability and Sanity

SOURCES OF STABILITY

Whether the people you love are alive or dead, they are terribly important. Every Investigator, in *The Apocalypse Machine*, has Sources of Stability. This is how they work.

For each three full rating points you possess in Stability, you have one slot for a Source of Stability. You need not fill all these slots when you create your character. That is, you need not name all your Sources of Stability at character creation.

Instead, when you create your character, name one Source of Stability. This person must not be another Investigator and your Investigator must believe they are alive. You may fill the remaining slots, at any time, by specifying another Source of Stability.

At the end of each scenario, you may refresh your Stability pool by *dedicating an action* to your Source of Stability. You can do this whether they are present or absent, alive or dead. For example, you might:

- Write them a letter.
- Press your suit, remembering how they insisted on you looking your best.
- Go to sleep, with their photograph beside you.

Meanwhile, the Keeper should see Sources of Stability as targets. If you are the Keeper, kill Sources of Stability whenever is dramatically appropriate. (When an Investigator finds the body of a Source of Stability, they must make a Stability Test as per the *Trail of Cthulhu* rules. Gruesome deaths are particularly recommended.)

Once your loved one is dead, you may keep them as a Source of Stability. Moreover, you may continue refreshing your Stability pool, at the end of each scenario, by dedicating an action to them. You might:

- Bury their body.

- Clean your gun, vowing revenge.
- Go to sleep, with their photograph beside you.

However, at the beginning of each scenario, you must have one Source of Stability whom you believe to be alive. If all your Sources of Stability are dead, fill an empty slot with a new, living Source of Stability. If all your slots are full, remove one dead Source of Stability and replace them with a new, living one.

Additionally, you may add one Investigator (just one) as a Source of Stability. After all, the people with you keep you sane. You cannot do this when you create your character, but may do it at any time thereafter.

For example: When the Investigator Parker Mattheson is created, his Stability is 10. Hence, he has three slots for Sources of Stability. He fills only one: his first Source of Stability is his wife, Jennifer, who is not an Investigator.

In the first scenario, Parker sees Jennifer killed by a Martian heat-ray, and loses much Stability as a result. However, he keeps her as a Source of Stability. At the end of the scenario, he refreshes his Stability pool by dedicating an action to her: he polishes the silver cross she gave him.

Before the next scenario, Parker needs a new Source of Stability whom he believes to be alive. He takes Gertrude Lambert, another Investigator, who reminds him of Jennifer: she fills his second Source of Stability slot.

During the second scenario, Parker decides to fill the third and final slot with Michael Mattheson, his brother. Miraculously, both Gertrude and Michael make it through the scenario. To refresh his Stability pool, Parker dedicates an action to Gertrude: he treats her to a candlelit dinner of tinned meat and expensive wine.

In the third scenario, Gertrude dies, battling a Martian. Gleeefully, the Keeper kills off Michael, too: he is choked by a Martian red weed, as it spreads over the surface of the planet. Parker fails Stability rolls for both deaths, which nearly sends him irrevocably mad, but not quite. At the end of that scenario, Parker refreshes his Stability pool by dedicating an action to Jennifer: he buries her silver cross.

Now, Parker has three dead Sources of Stability. He must remove one and choose a new Source of Stability, whom he believes to be alive. He removes Michael and replaces him with Paul Mattheson, an estranged cousin, who was last heard of in France.

PILLARS OF SANITY

Pillars of Sanity work as they did in *Trail of Cthulhu*, with one additional twist.

When you create your character, choose one Pillar of Sanity for every three full points of Sanity you possess. For some examples, see the sidebar.

These Pillars of Sanity, like Sources of Stability, act as targets for the Keeper. Hence, if you are Keeper, design scenarios to question, undermine and smash the things that keep the Investigators sane. For example, if Parker Matheson's Pillar of Sanity is "Love of Chicago", you might design a scenario to reveal that Chicago gained its former power from a buried monster. When a Pillar of Sanity is smashed like this, the Investigator loses 6 Stability and 2 Sanity.

Alternatively, once an Investigator has lost 3 Sanity from other causes, the player may decide a Pillar of Sanity crumbles from

Reserve Supplies (Optional Rule)

When your Stability goes below zero, you may run out of ammunition for your gun, gasoline for your car, batteries for your flashlight or something similar. See Equipment (pp. 41-45).



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within. For example, having lost 3 Sanity, Parker Matheson may decide his “Love of Chicago” Pillar has crumbled. He should roleplay this, perhaps by leaving Chicago or tearing up a beloved photograph. This avoids the huge loss associated with the Pillar being smashed. A canny Investigator, who suspects the Keeper is about to smash a Pillar, may tactically decide to let the Pillar crumble.

When an Investigator has no Pillars of Sanity, they take Stability tests at +1 Difficulty.

Finally, *The Apocalypse Machine* adds another twist. In post-apocalyptic fiction, Pillars of Sanity can be difficult to smash. For example, if an Investigator has “The United States” as a Pillar, it is difficult to fully smash this Pillar, short of revealing the US was established by aliens. However, it is easy to question the Investigator’s belief in the United States: for example, by revealing that the atomic bomb that caused the apocalypse was a Government research program.

So *The Apocalypse Machine* allows the Keeper to *hit* a Pillar of Sanity. To do this, reveal something that would cause the Investigator to question, but not abandon, the thing their Pillar of Sanity embodies. Each time a Pillar is hit, put a cross against it. The third time the Pillar is hit, it crumbles, as above. Again, canny Investigators may decide to let their Pillar crumble the second time it is hit, avoiding a third hit, which would smash the Pillar.

MENTAL ILLNESSES

When monsters rise and take over the earth, people go mad quickly. Here, then, are some new and exciting mental illnesses.

They fall into three categories. The first two are **delusion** and **denial**, in which the afflicted Investigator believes something false about the world. The third is **defence mechanisms**: quirks of thinking and behaviour from psychiatry and Freudian psychoanalysis.

Do not allow too many Investigators to become mentally ill. In particular, avoid too many delusions and denials: too many changed facts make games confusing (we’re in France, but we’re actually in Kentucky, and that rifle is a broomstick because guns don’t exist).

As a rule, two mental illnesses is enough. After that, consider using the Insight rule (see p. 40).

Remember that, in *Trail of Cthulhu*, mental illnesses are usually portrayed by the other players and Keeper. When your Investigator has a mental illness, the others send you out of the room and decide how to portray that illness. For example, they may decide that Arkham never existed and react with disbelief when you mention the city.

The following descriptions of mental illnesses, then, assume you are using this collaborative approach to portray them.

Delusion

If your Investigator is **deluded**, they believe, wrongly, that something is true. To enact this delusion, the other players and Keeper choose a fact that is no longer true. This delusion can concern the Investigator:

- Your “wife”, Dorothy, is a figment of your imagination.
- You did not work for the New York Times.
- You are not a doctor, but merely a hobo.

Or it might be about the world:

- The Great War did not happen.
- Theodore Roosevelt does not exist.
- The Hindenburg does not fly (it is merely a ship).
- Be careful with delusions about the world. They create the impression that an Investigator has gone very, very mad. They are powerful, but use them sparingly: when the campaign world keeps changing, it is difficult to invest in it. Try them towards the end of a campaign.

Thirdly, the delusion might concern monsters:

- We didn’t see a sea-creature. It was all in your mind.

Be even more careful with monstrous delusions, since they implicitly dismiss the previous horror (as if it was all a dream). Occasionally, however, they work well.

Despite the change in the Investigator, continue to use the character sheet as before: for example, if the deluded Investigator has a non-existent Source of Stability, let them continue to use that Source; similarly, allow the Investigator to keep the same Occupational Abilities as before. It may not be realistic, but it is easier.

Delusions create real tensions between Investigators: as when, for example, the hobo attempts a medical examination of a patient. Some players will object to having

Stability Table

Use these Stability losses in addition to those listed on page 71 of *Trail of Cthulhu*.

Realising you are deluded or in denial about a mundane fact.	2
Being the target of psychic powers.	3
Seeing someone use an Affliction with which you are not familiar.	3
Getting Insight (see p. 40)	3
Realising you are deluded or in denial about a fact important to you.	3
Using an Affliction for the first time.	4
Seeing a Source of Stability use an Affliction.	5
Glimpsing inside the mind of a Mythos entity.	5
Realising you are deluded or in denial about a Source of Stability.	5
Seeing many, many supernatural creatures.	6
Seeing huge creatures striding about the earth.	6
Realising you have been possessed by an alien.	6
Finding proof that the human race is doomed.	8



Stability and Sanity

Some Common Pillars

Most Pillars of Sanity fall into five categories: God, Country, Nature, Humanity and Knowledge.

Use these categories to generate ideas for Pillars of Sanity. In doing this, pick Pillars of Sanity that would be particularly challenged by your apocalypse. For example, if humans have just destroyed the world, try “The Goodness of Humanity” or “Science leads to progress”.

Additionally, if you are the Keeper, use these categories to hit or smash Pillars of Sanity. If two Investigators have Pillars within the same category, it is often possible to smash both at once, killing two beliefs with one stone. For example, if one Investigator has “Knowledge leads to progress” and another has “Science is the only true way”, show both how science has produced biological or nuclear weapons.

Here are the categories in more detail. You will find God and Country particularly relevant when the Mythos causes the apocalypse; Nature relevant when nature causes the apocalypse (of course); and Humanity and Knowledge most relevant when humans cause the apocalypse.

For each category, there are three example Pillars of Sanity and some common methods to attack such pillars.

Country

- America is the land of freedom.
- Britain will be great again.
- The green, green grass of home.

To hit or smash:

Show Mythos entities ruling the country, smashing national buildings and symbols. For example, show Cthulhu walking the earth, smashing the White House (or, in Britain, Big Ben). Extra points for the landscape being irrevocably and horribly altered.

God

- God has a plan for us.
- God loves us.
- God made the world and everything in it.

To hit or smash:

Show Mythos entities ruling the earth, smashing religious buildings and symbols. For example, show Cthulhu walking the earth, smashing a church to rubble.

Humanity

- Humans are essentially good.
- Humanity will shine through in the end.

- Humans were given dominion over the Earth and everything in it.

To hit or smash:

Show humans warring or cannibalising each other; reveal that humanity will soon be extinct.

Knowledge

- Knowledge sets us apart from the animals.
- Science leads to progress.
- One day, we will learn to cure all known diseases.

To hit or smash:

Show science/knowledge/technology leading to bad things, such as nuclear destruction.

Nature

- Man and nature should live in harmony.
- Nature is beautiful.
- One day, I will live in the mountains.

To hit or smash:

Show nature killing humans, in all its bloody glory: animals preying on humans; avalanches burying villages; people starving because the ground is frozen. This time, extra points for showing the terrifying grandeur of nature.

their Investigator messed with, but, for many, it will be wonderfully intriguing.

Denial

If your Investigator is in denial, they deny that something is true or that something happened. To enact this delusion, the other players and Keeper invent something that happened or that is true. You, playing the deluded Investigator, deny this new fact.

It is particularly effective if this fact is about the apocalypse:

- The world was at war in 1936.
- The water level is rising and London is underwater.
- Before the monsters came, green meteors were seen, falling to Earth.
- The grass is black and lifeless.
- The Investigators saw California sinking into the sea.

Both delusions and denial can add much to your game. Do not overuse them,

particularly if the Weird dial is set low: when reality keeps changing, it becomes less believable and harder to invest in. Nevertheless, used in moderation, delusions and denial can make Investigators seem completely and pleasingly insane.

DEFENCE MECHANISMS

Most of these new mental illnesses stem from psychoanalysis, which dominated psychiatry in the 1930s. For each, there is a brief description, followed by instructions



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on how the other players and Keeper can collaborate to portray it.

Capgras Delusion

Someone close to you does not seem real: perhaps a Source of Stability, perhaps another Investigator. When they talk, they pretend to be human, but are not. When they smile, the smile is clearly false.

Are they possessed? Are they an alien in human shape? Why cannot your fellow Investigators see what has happened? Are your colleagues fakes, too?

To portray collaboratively: If the person is a Source of Stability, the Keeper should portray them with excessive falseness, smiling fixedly and speaking with exaggerated formality or friendliness. If the person is an Investigator, the player of that Investigator should be similarly false.

Depersonalization

You do not believe you are real. When you do something, it is like watching a movie of yourself. Although you see what you are doing, you do not feel in control. Perhaps you think you are possessed; perhaps you believe you are being controlled remotely.

As with Derealization, you will perceive your mental illness differently, depending on which Mythos entities you have encountered. If you know about the mi-go or Shan, you will instantly assume there is one inside you. Alternatively, you may assume you are the tool of Hastur or Cthulhu.

To portray collaboratively: The Keeper describes the Investigator's successes as being due to outside influence. For example: you hit with the gun, but you are sure something was controlling your hand, making you aim correctly.

Derealization

The post-apocalyptic world does not seem real. As you look around, everything appears strange and dreamlike. When you touch things, even that touch seems illusory. You feel as though you are walking through a dream.

Depending on the Mythos entities you have encountered or studied, you will perceive your mental illness differently. You may, for example, believe you are trapped in Cthulhu's dreaming or a Hasturian alternative universe.

To portray collaboratively: The Keeper describes particular elements of the world as though they are unreal. For example: the village shimmers like a mirage; the landscape appears to shift as you look at it.

Displacement

However you felt when you went mad, you now feel that way about another Investigator.





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Hence, if you were afraid, you are now afraid of another Investigator. If you were angry, you are now angry with another Investigator. If you felt violent, you now feel violent towards that Investigator.

To portray collaboratively: The Investigator concerned should speak in a particularly scary, annoying or inciting way towards the mad Investigator.

Eldritch Babbling

When you think you are talking your native language, you occasionally lapse into incomprehensible babbling. The language is nonsensical (and Investigators cannot spend a point of Languages to understand it). It sounds guttural, eldritch and disturbing.

To portray collaboratively: The other Investigators, when you are speaking, should sometimes stare at you as though you have said something incomprehensible. They should look shocked and perhaps scared.

Fantasy

When things get too much, you retreat into a fantasy world. It is somewhere from your childhood, somewhere you feel safe. Perhaps you sleep in the rubble of your childhood home, believing it is still standing. Perhaps you believe you have found a garden, but it is radioactive soil. Perhaps you dig tunnels, dreaming of restarting humanity in an underground empire.

To portray collaboratively: The Keeper lets the Investigator discover a pleasant, comfortable place: their childhood home, a garden, an underground network of tunnels. The other Investigators react appropriately when the mad Investigator retreats into this fantasy world.

Intellectualization

You talk with an unnatural lack of emotion. In doing so, you use much technical language and jargon.

For example: when the amphibious creatures arose from the sea, you were understandably fearful. Fear is, of course, a natural reaction in these circumstances, and very possibly an evolutionary instinct, if one accepts Darwin's thoughts on the subject. Naturally, your reaction was to run: perhaps, indeed, it was a biological instinct. At the present moment in time, the balance of your mind is perhaps somewhat disturbed, which is completely understandable and perhaps beneficial.

To portray collaboratively: When you speak, the other Investigators should sometimes react with disbelief, accusing you of being emotionless. You found your wife's body? Don't you care? How can you stay so calm?

Additionally, they should react to any words that are slightly uncommon, as if you are using technical language. There was a blue tinge around her lips? A tinge? You mean her lips were blue? Why don't you just say so?





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Night Terrors

You wake up screaming in the middle of the night. Sometimes, you dream of monsters you have encountered; sometimes, you dream of unknown horrors; sometimes, you awake knowing that something tried to break into your mind. Throughout the day, your head throbs, as though the dream is trying to get back in.

To portray collaboratively: Sometimes, you wake up surrounded by the other Investigators. The other Investigators have weapons drawn and ask why you were screaming.

Projection

However you felt when you went mad, you believe other people feel that way too. Hence, if you were afraid, you think

Insight

After a while, playing a mental illness may lose its appeal. This applies particularly if you use the collaborative approach (in which the other players and Keeper portray your Investigator's mental illness). For a while, it is superb fun. After a while, however, the player realises what is going on.

Once a mental illness is no longer fun, the Investigator may gain insight into their mental illness: that is, they realise they are mad. When your Investigator gains insight:

- Make a Stability test, as appropriate for the type of mental illness (see the Stability table, p. 36).
- Stop using the collaborative approach to the mental illness.
- Roleplay the mental illness yourself, but show awareness of being mentally ill. For example, you still believe people are plotting against you, but, when you think rationally, you realise they are not.

everyone else is afraid. If you were angry, you think everyone else is angry.

To portray collaboratively: The other Investigators should act terrified, angry or violent, but deny that they feel that way. If questioned, all the other Investigators will say they are behaving normally. No, nobody shouted. Everyone's calm. What are you talking about?

Rationalization

The thing that sent you mad? It was all a plan on your part. You allowed the monster to get close, so that you could get a closer look. You wanted your husband to die: you had been married too long, anyway. You summoned the monsters, so that they rose from the sea.

Whatever happened, it was deliberate, and you must explain that to the other Investigators. When bad things happen in the future, you will rationalize those, too.

This mental illness is better roleplayed by the Investigator than played collaboratively.

Reaction Formation

When you feel an extreme emotion, you exaggerate the opposite. So there are sea-creatures on Manhattan Island? You can't wait to fight them. You're excited about it. You're not afraid: you're going to beat them, right? Let's go there now!

To portray collaboratively: When you talk, the other Investigators should occasionally react with concern. Sure, we'll go to Manhattan, but why are you smiling? Did you just laugh when you talked about the sea-creatures?

Regression

The horrors you have seen have made you retreat into childhood. Perhaps you suck your thumb; perhaps you wet the bed. In any case, you have a childish habit, of which you are not aware.

To portray collaboratively: The other Investigators and Keeper choose a childish habit, in which you unknowingly indulge. From time to time, they react to this habit: first, by looking at you oddly; later, by asking you to stop (without, of course, explaining what you are doing).

Self-Destruction

Without knowing it, you have begun to flirt with the idea of suicide. Unconsciously, you drift closer to things that might kill you.

To portray collaboratively: The other Investigators decide that, when you perform a particular action, you are actually doing something dangerous. For example, when you think you are cleaning your gun, you are actually pointing it at yourself. When you think you are drinking beer, you are, in fact, drinking radioactive water. The other Investigators react appropriately.

This mental illness, of course, relies on the other Investigators stopping the action. It is perhaps unfair if the Investigator is allowed to unwittingly commit suicide.

Sleepwalking

In the middle of the night, you wake in strange places, always fully dressed. Sometimes, when you awake, you are performing an activity: perhaps digging a hole or staring at the sea. It feels as though your unconscious is guiding you, but when you wake up, you cannot remember what it wants you to do.

The activity should be related, tangentially, to the current scenario. For example, an Investigator on the trail of mi-go might wake to find herself assembling electronic circuits. If investigating Deep Ones, she might find herself wading in the sea.

To portray collaboratively: Sometimes, the Investigator should wake up in odd places, carrying out strange activities, especially ones they do not understand.

Somatization

There is something inside you. You can feel it. It hurts. Doctors cannot find it, but you know it is there.

Again, the nature of the thing depends on the Mythos creatures you have encountered. Perhaps you believe there is an egg inside you, gradually growing into a Deep One. Perhaps you think a piece of mi-go technology replaces your heart. Perhaps you think the Red Weed has infected your arm. You cannot see it, but it is there.

To portray collaboratively: the Keeper informs the Investigator that they feel a pain inside.



Equipment

After the apocalypse, finding some things is easier than ever. You want diamonds? Take them from a jeweller. You want silk clothing? Walk into a department store. Finding useful equipment, however, is harder. Perhaps it has rusted. Perhaps it has been taken already.

When you want to find something, use the Scavenging ability. First, specify the area you want to search: a town, a house, a military base. The Keeper sets a Difficulty Number, based on the item you want (see the Equipment table, p. 44) and the following factors:

Some searches, of course, will automatically fail. Searching military bases for guns and grenades is plausible; searching for biological weapons is not. Searching a house for guns is fine; searching for a scalpel or submachine gun is not.

When the Keeper has set the Difficulty Number, the Investigator then attempts a Scavenging test. On a success, the Investigator finds the item. On a failure, the Investigator does not find the exact item. Nevertheless, they may find *something*.

Failed Scavenging

When you fail a Scavenging roll, you may still find something. It depends on how badly you failed the roll.

Difficulty Roll Missed by / Item Found

1 / Almost what you were looking for. Not quite as good, but useful. For example, a flare pistol rather than a real gun; a sharp knife rather than a scalpel.

Never Scavenge for Clues

The Scavenging ability is used to find useful items, not essential clues. For clues, use an Investigative Ability, such as Evidence Collection.

Exactly what you were looking for, but broken. To repair it, attempt a Mechanical or Electrical Repair test (the appropriate ability depends on the item). The Difficulty Number is the same as for the Scavenging test.

Exactly what you were looking for, but disturbing. For example, a gun that is still warm; a bloody scalpel.

Exactly what you were looking for, but in a dangerous place. For example, a gun on the other side of that darkened basement. Choose whether to enter the location or abandon the object.

2 / Almost what you were looking for, as above, and broken, as above.

Something like what you were looking for. Definitely not as good, but perhaps useful. For example, a BB gun rather than a real gun; a rusted knife rather than a scalpel.

Exactly what you were looking for, but ominous. For example, a gun with a bloody handprint; a scalpel stuck in a corpse.

Exactly what you are looking for, but in an extremely dangerous location. For example, a gun in that house behind the Triffid.

3 or more / Exactly what you were looking for, but broken beyond repair.

Exactly what you were looking for, but extremely ominous. For example, a gun

Factor	Adjustment to Difficulty Number
Searching an area where the item would be commonplace (e.g. a military base for a gun, a hospital for bandages)	-3
Searching an area where the item would be expected (e.g. a military base for grenades, a hospital for a scalpel)	-2
Searching an area where the item would be more likely than normal (e.g. a military base for a field telephone, a hospital for anaesthetic)	-1
Searching an area where the item would be unlikely or concealed (e.g. a city for grenades)	+2
Searching for a particular make of an item (e.g. not just a car, but a Jaguar; not just a gun, but a Winchester shotgun)	+1 to +3
Searching quickly (e.g. searching a military base before sundown)	+1
Searching under pressure (e.g. finding a gun, in a military base, while being chased)	+2
Searching in total darkness	+2
Searching in partial darkness or fog	+1
Searching for an item with a Reserve (see p. 42)	+1 per Reserve



The Apocalypse Machine

covered in black slime; a scalpel that causes your Geiger counter to chatter furiously.

Definitely not what you were looking for, but something that could be used for the same purpose. For example, a baseball bat rather than a real gun, a hacksaw rather than a scalpel.

Although players should make suggestions, the Keeper determines exactly what is found. If you are the Keeper, use this to tempt the players into dangerous and inhuman acts. If they want dynamite, give them barrels of gasoline. If they want medical equipment, give them infected equipment.

As Keeper, be cautious of failed scavenging rolls turning into jokes. If, whenever the Investigators search for guns, they find water pistols instead, the atmosphere of cosmic horror will quickly disperse. Instead, let them find broken equipment or simply fail the roll.

Reserves (Optional Rule)

All items come with a limited supply of the thing that makes them work. For example, guns come with ammunition, cars come with gasoline, cameras come with film, flashlights come with batteries. In *The Apocalypse Machine*, these are called Reserves.

When an item needs a Reserve to function, it is marked in the Equipment table: for example, "Guns [Ammunition]". When you find these items, they have one Reserve with them. For example, a gun always has one Reserve of ammunition. When you mark such items on your character sheet, mark the Reserve too: for example, "Gun [with 1 Ammunition]".

You may scavenge for items with more than one Reserve. For example, you might decide to search for a gun with a stock of ammunition. To do this, add 1 to the Difficulty Number of your Scavenging Test for each reserve supply you want. If you succeed, write the number of Reserves on your character sheet, next to the item: for example, Guns [with 2 Ammunition].

For example: Florence Dubois has found an abandoned camp on a high, snowy plateau. She decides to search for a flashlight, for which the Difficulty Number is 4. If she finds it, it will come with a Reserve (i.e.

Time to Search

Searching a city, for a particular item, takes about a day. Of course, you do not search every building. If you want a rifle, you find an armorer's shop, then search it thoroughly. If you want medical supplies, you search pharmacies and hospitals.

Searching a large building or encampment takes a few hours. Again, you do not search every room: if you want a machine gun, you try to find the armory; if you want a land-mine, you figure out where explosives are kept.

Searching a house takes anything from minutes to hours. If you want a Bible, you check the bookcase. If you want a gun, you check around the bedroom. Searching a street, in the same way, takes an hour or two.

This, then, is a reason to narrow your search to a house. It's quicker. Searching the city takes the whole day, but searching this street takes a quarter of the time.

That said, do not worry about tallying minutes and hours: instead, say how the time will affect the Investigators. For example: "If you just search this house, you'll be out of the city by nightfall. Search the whole city and you'll have to camp here tonight."

If the search is time-constrained, use the modifiers for hasty and desperate searches, above.

Flashlight [with 1 Battery]). However, she also wants a spare battery, which adds one to the Difficulty Number, making it 5. She rolls a 6. Hence, she finds her flashlight, with an extra battery. On her character sheet, the player marks Flashlight [with 2 Batteries].

Now, these reserves are scarce. They run out at the worst possible moment. When you confront the monster, that's when your flashlight dies, your car runs out of fuel and your gun clicks on an empty chamber.

So, whenever a Stability test takes your Stability below zero, choose, at random, any item that:

- You are using, or likely to use shortly, and
- Requires a reserve to keep going.

For example, if you are exploring a temple with flashlight and gun, choose randomly between your flashlight and gun. If you are also holding your camera, hoping to use it, choose randomly between flashlight, gun and camera.

Cross off one Reserve for that randomly chosen item. For example, if your gun was previously marked Gun [2 Ammunition], it is now Gun [1 Ammunition].

If you crossed off the last Reserve, that item stops working, either immediately or the next time you try to use it. For example, your flashlight dies; your gun runs out of ammunition; your camera runs out of film.

For example: Florence Dubois has found a deserted camp on a high, snowy plateau. She already has a gun, but decides to search for a flashlight, for which the Difficulty Number is 4. This would let her find a flashlight with a single battery (Flashlight [with 1 Battery]).

However, she also wants a spare battery (a Reserve Supply). This adds 1 to the Difficulty Number, making it 5. She rolls a 6, which is a success. On her character sheet, the player marks Flashlight [with 2 Batteries].

Staying at the camp for the night, she finds a mangled corpse. She fails a Stability test, which takes her Stability to -2. She has two items that use reserves and that she is likely to use: her gun and her flashlight. She rolls a die to choose between them: it's the flashlight. Hence, her flashlight dies. Luckily, she has a spare battery, which she uses, adjusting her character sheet to read Flashlight [with 1 Battery]. Before sleeping, she uses Psychoanalysis to restore her Stability to 2.



Equipment

Later, she is awoken by howling. Looking out of the tent, she sees mutated, bloody snow-wolves circling the tent. She fails a Stability test, taking her Stability to -3. Again, she must randomly choose between her gun and her flashlight: again, the flashlight is selected. This time, she has no reserve supply, so the flashlight stops working. As the snow-wolves approach, Florence is plunged into darkness.

Table: Equipment

On the following pages are some approximate Difficulty Numbers for finding items. Some are surprisingly easy to find: if you want luxurious clothes, simply walk into any high-class store and take them. Knowing where to find a generator, however, is another matter.

MAKING EQUIPMENT

Rather than scavenging for equipment, practical Investigators may prefer to make it. To make something, roll Mechanical Repair or Electrical Repair, as appropriate. For example, roll Mechanical Repair for a gas mask, Electrical Repair for a flashlight. Use the same Difficulty Number for scavenging a similar piece of equipment.

If you succeed, you make a reasonable substitute for the piece of equipment. For example, instead of a lantern, you manufacture a light, using a car's headlight and battery. Instead of a cigarette lighter, you adapt a flashlight to ignite things with a spark.

Bargain

When bartering for clues, use Bargain instead of these bartering rules. You might also use Bargain to get a single object, useful in the investigation: for example, spending Bargain might get you that Geiger counter.

For specialised equipment, such as guns and Geiger counters, Keepers should ask players how they intend to manufacture a substitute. If they give a plausible method, then let them do it.

When you miss a roll, you don't make exactly what you want, but you might make something.

Difficulty Roll Missed by / Item Created

1 / Exactly what you wanted, but it will break when your Stability goes below zero.

Almost what you wanted, but impaired in some way. For example, your homemade wine tastes disgusting; your flashlight flickers at inconvenient moments.

Exactly what you were looking for, but it places you in danger. For example, your flashlight attracts a wild animal to investigate. The Keeper will reveal that the item is dangerous, but not specify the danger.

2 / Exactly what you wanted, but it will break when you next fail a Stability roll.

Something like what you wanted, but seriously impaired. For example, your camera exposes the film to light; your flashlight does not work in the cold.

Exactly what you were looking for, but it places you in serious danger. For example, your flashlight causes the monsters to surround you. Again, the Keeper will reveal that the item is dangerous, but not specify the danger.

3 or more / Not what you wanted at all.

Choosing Randomly Between Items

To randomly choose an item from a selection of items, roll a die.

For two items: On 1-3, it's the first item; on 4-6, it's the second.

For three items: On 1-2, it's the first item; on 3-4, it's the second; on 5-6, it's the third.

For four items: On 1, it's the first item; on 2, it's the second; on 3, it's the third; on 4, it's the fourth; on 5 or 6, roll again.

For five items: On 1, it's the first item; on 2, it's the second; on 3, it's the third; on 4, it's the fourth; on 5, it's the fifth; on 6, roll again.

For some items, you might use a combination of Scavenging and Mechanical/Electrical Repair. For example, when constructing a radio, you might scavenge the parts, then use Mechanical Repair to assemble them. To do this, spend a combination of Scavenging, Mechanical and Electrical Repair points to add to your roll.

Barter

For trading items, especially in Wasteland campaigns, use the Difficulty Number for each item as a rough price. For example, after 100 years, two sets of practical clothing (Difficulty Number 7) might be traded for one Geiger counter (Difficulty Number 15).

In later Wasteland campaigns, some durable object might be used as currency: perhaps old cent pieces, Zippo lighters or pieces of coal. If so, the Difficulty Number for each item represents the cost in that currency. Thus, if old cent pieces are the currency, a Geiger counter would cost 15 of them.



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Item	Number of years after apocalypse				
	1 year or less	3 years	10 years	30 years	100 years
Book, dime novel	2	3	4	5	6
Book, specialised	4	5	6	7	8
Book, religious	4	5	6	7	8
Zippo lighter [Naptha]	2	4	6	8	10
Light pistol [Ammunition]	3	5	7	9	10
Heavy firearm [Ammunition]	5	6	8	9	10
Very heavy firearm [Ammunition]	6	7	8	9	10
Bow [Arrows]	4	5	6	7	8
Art supplies [Paints and canvas]	3	4	5	6	7
Musical instrument	4	5	6	8	9
Perfume	4	5	6	7	8
Cigarettes	4	7	9	10	10
Diamonds	4	4	4	4	4
Wine	5	6	9	10	10
Bandages and antiseptic	5	6	7	8	9
Surgical equipment	7	7	7	7	7
Pharmaceuticals	5	5	6	6	7
Household cleaning materials	2	3	4	5	6
Water, in sealed container	6	8	10	12	14
Motorcycle [Gasoline]	2	3	4	6	8
Car [Gasoline]	1	3	5	7	9
Luxurious car [Gasoline]	3	3	4	5	6
Truck [Gasoline]	3	5	7	8	9
Aeroplane [Gasoline]	4	6	8	10	12



Equipment

Item	Number of years after apocalypse				
	1 year or less	3 years	10 years	30 years	100 years
Compass	4	4	5	5	6
Clothing, luxury	1	1	1	1	1
Clothing, practical and warm	3	4	5	6	7
Clothing, defensive	3	5	7	8	9
Laboratory equipment	4	5	6	7	7
Telescope	4	4	5	5	6
Geiger counter	6	8	10	13	15
Camera, Brownie [Film]	1	2	3	4	5
Camera, Specialised [Film]	4	5	6	7	8
Agricultural equipment	6	8	10	12	14
Seeds [Seeds]	4	6	8	10	12
Pencil and notebook	1	2	3	4	5





The Afflicted

Since the Apocalypse, some humans have started to change. Sometimes they are visibly altered, with warped bones, discoloured skin or a sixth finger. Sometimes, the alteration is invisible: they have strange mental powers. These people are the Afflicted.

Since they are different, either visibly or invisibly, the Afflicted arouse suspicion. If they are permitted in communities, they are rarely trusted. Indeed, many are outcasts, welcome nowhere. For these reasons, many of the Afflicted hide their affliction.

Perhaps, however, it is rational to distrust the Afflicted. After all, some can read minds. Others can tell the future: and who, in this doomed world, wants to know what will happen next? Perhaps their strange, unearthly powers are reason enough to avoid the Afflicted.

Where did the Afflictions come from? If there is radioactive fallout, then perhaps they are mutations. Or perhaps, instead, the Afflictions have a monstrous origin. Perhaps they are caused by Cthulhu's dreaming, as his powers grow and he warps human minds. Perhaps, alternatively, the Afflictions arise from an experiment of the Elder Things.

GETTING AFFLICTED

When you improve your Investigator, at the end of an investigation, the Keeper may decide that your Investigator is Afflicted. Sometimes, this will stem from an event in the investigation: for example, you were captured by the mi-go, who placed something in your brain. Sometimes, you will not know the cause of your Affliction.

When this happens, you get Affliction Points instead of Improvement Points. You may add these to the following abilities:

When you add Affliction Points to an ability, mark that ability as Afflicted. Now, your expertise with that ability is unnatural, powered by something beyond human understanding.

AFFLICTIONS AND STABILITY

Afflictions are disturbing. Any of the following events will prompt a Stability roll:

- Using an Affliction for the first time.

- Seeing someone use an Affliction with which you are not familiar.
- Seeing a Source of Stability use an Affliction.

Over time, your Investigators may grow used to people using Afflictions. At first, however, they are alien and mind-breaking.

Investigative Abilities

- Archaeology
- Astronomy
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Craft
- Cryptography
- Evidence Collection
- Geology
- Languages
- Locksmith
- Physics

- Fleeing
- Health
- Mechanical Repair
- Piloting
- Riding
- Scavenging
- Scuffling
- Sense Trouble
- Stealth
- Weapons

Psychic Abilities (pp. 47-50)

- Aura Reading
- Control
- Dreaming
- Emotion Projection
- Medium
- Mind Reading
- Premonitions
- Psychic Scream
- Remote Viewing
- Telepathy

General Abilities

- Athletics
- Disguise
- Driving
- Electrical Repair
- Explosives
- Filch
- Firearms
- First Aid



The Afflicted

Keeping Afflicted

If you are the Keeper, you have full control in assigning Affliction Points. You may, for example, give Improvement Points to some Investigators and Affliction Points to others. Alternatively, you may let players choose between Improvement and Affliction points. You may even give Affliction Points at character creation.

Thus, if you are the Keeper, you have the power to decide whether one of the Investigators is Afflicted. Be cautious with this power. It will change how that Investigator interacts with others: most obviously, it may make them a social outcast or a target for the other Investigators.

surround all humans. Instinctively, you know what the colours and shape of this aura signify.

Reading an aura takes focus and concentration: to the subject, it appears you are staring through them. Once you attune, you can do any of the following (spend one point for each):

- Determine, in broad terms, what sort of person they are: for example, honest, self-interested, vicious, a charlatan.
- Determine, in broad terms, how they feel: angry, scared, calm, curious.
- Determine whether they are healthy or unhealthy.

Additionally, Aura Reading is a tool for the Keeper. At appropriate dramatic moments, it may reveal that someone is hiding something; or in thrall to a higher power; or indefinitely *wrong*.

When a Mythos entity possesses a human subject, they might, at the Keeper's discretion, show a human aura, an alien aura or a human-with-something-wrong aura. Similarly, Deep One hybrids might appear human, alien, wrong or recognisably tainted.

Reading the aura of a Mythos entity, including possessed humans, requires a 5-point Stability test and may allow the entity to possess you.

Control

By placing your mind inside that of another, you become a puppet-master. Perhaps

WEIRDNESS AND STEALTH

All Afflictions are weird. Using them always looks strange: using Psychic and Investigative Afflictions requires unnatural concentration, while using General Afflictions makes you look physically different. Anyone watching will notice your odd behaviour, even if they cannot understand what you are doing.

Often, you will want to avoid such attention. To use an Affliction without being noticed, make a Stealth roll, against a Difficulty Number decided by the Keeper. If you fail, your Affliction is clearly visible.

PSYCHIC AFFLICTIONS

The Afflicted are most feared for their psychic abilities. After all, perhaps they are controlling others. Perhaps they are reading people's minds. Perhaps they, themselves, are controlled by ancient monsters.

In *The Apocalypse Machine*, psychic abilities are Investigative Abilities. They can only be bought with Affliction Points.

Aura Reading

You see colours others cannot, the wavelengths between wavelengths that

Psychic Investigations

Do not expect psychic abilities to reveal hard facts. You cannot question someone using Mind Reading; you cannot search for evidence using Dreaming; you cannot spy on someone using Remote Viewing. Psychic abilities do not give tangible evidence, but vague and terrifying insights: Mind Reading lets you glimpse someone's inner thoughts, Dreaming shows you abominable landscapes.

To be blunt: for serious investigation, psychic abilities are not very useful. Most contain get-out clauses, allowing the Keeper to withhold information. For example, if you are investigating a murder, Medium will give you hints about the killer, but not reveal their identity. If your psychic ability would cut short the investigation, it will fail. If this seems unfair, don't take a psychic ability.

Thus, rather than investigative tools, psychic abilities are roleplaying tools. They give insights that are fun, rather than useful. By choosing, say, Aura Reading over Assess Honesty, you choose roleplay over investigation. Do not

expect an easy ride. Psychic abilities make an Investigator's life interesting, rather as meeting Nyarlathotep makes one's life interesting.

Additionally, by taking a psychic ability, you become a conduit for the Keeper's narration. For example, the Keeper may use your Dreaming to give glimpses of a Cyclopean city. Hence, some psychic abilities are passive rather than active: the Keeper, rather than the player, decides when they reveal a clue.

Having said that, some psychic abilities can assist investigations. For example, Mind Reading and Aura Reading can give genuinely useful information. Others, such as Dreaming and Premonitions, are almost useless in serious investigation. They are pure roleplaying tools.

If you are the Keeper, do not let Core Clues require psychic abilities. A Core Clue might be revealed with a psychic ability, but it should not require that ability to be revealed. Psychic abilities gather interesting information, not vital evidence.



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the power is your own; perhaps you are channelling something darker. Nevertheless, you can wrench the mental gears and levers to control others.

The Control ability makes an NPC (not an Investigator) perform one particular activity. That “one activity” is loosely defined: you can make someone give you their gun; you cannot make them conduct a ritual. Your control is not subtle. The puppet can walk, drive and talk (although strangely), but cannot sign a letter. Additionally, since you cannot access their mind, you cannot make them reveal secrets. All edge cases are at the Keeper’s discretion.

To begin your control, you must be able to see your victim. You then enter a state of extreme concentration, focussing and jerking. If someone distracts you, while in this trance, your control is broken. Your puppet remains conscious throughout and, afterwards, knows they have been controlled.

If you attempt to possess someone who is, themselves, possessed by a Mythos entity, the entity may attempt to possess your body.

Dreaming

You dream of strange vistas and terrifying creatures. When you sleep, you penetrate the veil of the Mythos, seeing the universe as it really is. Fleeting, you glimpse the strange geometries, warped worlds and dark horrors that underpin your fragile existence.

Perhaps your dreams are reflections of Cthulhu’s dreams, as he begins to enslave you. Perhaps they are memories, your only insight into an abduction you have been forced to forget. Or perhaps you have brought them upon yourself: you have ventured so far into the fringes of knowledge that you stand on the precipice of madness.

In your investigations, you may use Dreaming to gain insight into the underlying horror. You will gather only vague impressions and confusing glimpses: you cannot consciously dream your way to an ancient city or alternate plane. If you focus on Azathoth (good luck with that), you will likely dream about him, but cannot dream your way to his throne. He controls what he shows you, not the other way around.

As your dreams progress, night after night, they intrude into daily reality. You wake exhausted, with a screaming headache, unsure whether you are dreaming or awake. Often, you see elements from

the dreamworld in your investigations: a mocking face, an alien object, a darkened sky. Sometimes, you cannot distinguish what you imagine and what is real.

To use the Dreaming ability, you must sleep when you normally sleep. You cannot take a nap in mid-investigation. Additionally, your dreams are unreliable and barely controllable: they come to you, rather than you coming to them.

Finally, the things you see in dreams can harm your Stability. If you dream about sacrificing babies, you make a Stability roll as if you had genuinely witnessed a sacrifice. And perhaps you did.

Emotion Projection

You can influence someone’s emotions. By projecting your thoughts, you inflame them, calm them, make them sad or make them happy. You can instil them with courage or fear.

This subtle ability requires you to spend several minutes talking with or focussing on the person. During this time, the other person is under your spell. If angered, they may blurt out something useful; if calmed, they may be reassured into revealing something. Afterwards, the state of mind persists.

However, when you finish talking, the person will remember a strangeness in your manner, over the previous few minutes. They will guess they have been manipulated, although may not know how. You can, of course, attempt Emotion Projection without being unnoticed, using the rules in *Weirdness and Stealth*.

Medium

You can contact the spirits of the dead or, rather, things you believe to be spirits. You know rituals and incantations that open doorways to the spirit world. Unlike many spiritualists, you are no charlatan: your gifts are grounded in some terrifying and intangible reality.

For each point of the Medium ability, choose a method:

- **Automatic art/writing.** You put yourself into a trance and you allow a spirit to control your hand. You then scribble furiously. On regaining consciousness, you can interpret what is written.

- **Ouija.** Using a planchette, you allow spirits to spell messages. If your planchette shows letters, the spirit spells words; if it shows “yes” or “no”, it answers questions; if the planchette shows other symbols, perhaps from the tarot or zodiac, its communication is more cryptic.

- **Seance.** When several people gather, you act as their conduit. You usher spirits into the room and may allow one of them to possess you.

All these methods require time, preparation and concentration. You cannot, for example, discover a dead body and instantly hold a seance.

Your mediumship contacts spirits in the immediate vicinity: those who have recently died and those who want to contact the Investigators. When their emotions are high, messages become obscured: for example, a murdered woman’s spirit might make a glass skid off the ouija board and smash.

The spirits, or whatever they are, may attempt to possess you. See the Possession rules (p. 50) for details. You may also *allow* a spirit to possess you, meaning no Stability roll is needed.

Mind Reading

You probe people’s minds, against their will, extracting thoughts and memories. When you extract thoughts, the victim feels their loss, like a nail being driven into their temple. When you extract memories, the victim relives them, briefly and unpleasantly.

Since this ability provokes great fear in non-psychics, you almost certainly hide it. If you could read minds as a child, you quickly learned to hide your skills: perhaps your parents isolated you until you understood your power was unnatural.

By spending one Mind Reading point, you scan surface thoughts: for example, discovering who a bounty hunter is hunting. Spending another point lets you uncover memories: for example, finding who employed the hunter. Note that people’s memories may be inaccurate: for example, if someone believes they saw a dead jellyfish, they remember a dead jellyfish, even if the creature was a mi-go.



The Afflicted

I See You Back

When an Investigator sees a Mythos entity, using Dreaming, Remote Viewing or Premonitions, it might see them too. If the Keeper thinks this is possible, make a Stealth roll, against a Difficulty determined by the Keeper. If you succeed, you are safe; if not, the monster knows you are watching.

Spending a third Mind Reading point lets you may recover memories of which the victim is not aware. For example, you might notice details of the building where the bounty hunter was hired.

If the person's attention is on you, they know you have read their mind. If their attention is elsewhere, you may try to read their mind stealthily: see *Weirdness and Stealth*, p. 47. If they are asleep, your task is easier: when they wake, they will know what has happened, but you will be absent.

You cannot read the mind of a Mythos entity: their thoughts are incomprehensible to humans. Reading the mind of someone possessed by a Mythos entity does one or more of the following, at the Keeper's discretion:

- Allows you to read the person's mind, with no indication they are possessed.
- Allows you to read the person's mind, with strong indications something is wrong.
- Lets you glimpse the mind of the Mythos entity (see *Stability table*, p. 36).
- Lets the Mythos entity try to possess you.

Premonition

You have visions of the future. They are painful, largely uncontrollable and happen without warning.

During these visions, anyone watching notices you behaving oddly. Perhaps you faint; perhaps you flinch and scream;

perhaps you clutch at things that are not there. (To suppress this reaction and remain unnoticed, see *Weirdness and Stealth*, above.)

Premonitions are dreamlike visions, not photographic images. Key points may be hidden: you see the Deep Ones swarming up a beach, but cannot tell which beach; you see someone held captive, but cannot tell where; you see a murder, but the murderer is obscured.

Hence, premonitions never solve the question you are investigating. If you have visions of a beach, for example, you cannot short-circuit the investigation by going straight to the beach. Instead, premonitions are often useful in retrospect, providing corroboration: when you step on the beach, you realise it is the beach from your visions.

Sometimes, premonitions come to you against your will. On meeting someone, you might be struck by a vision of their future; on seeing a city, you see it a year from now; on holding a gun, you perceive how it will be used. In such situations, the Keeper tells you that you have a premonition. If you wish, you may "block out" the premonition, which avoids using your ability.

Sometimes, you can control the premonitions. To attempt a controlled premonition, you focus on a question about the future, such as:

- "What will happen if I open this door?"
- "What will New York look like in a year?"
- "Where will I wake tomorrow?"

Then, if the Keeper has relevant information, you receive an appropriate vision. If not, your abilities remain frustratingly inaccessible. Again, key points may be obscured. For example, you may envision waking in a deserted hospital, but not know which one.

Finally, the future is malleable and unpredictable. Your actions, and those of others, will change what happens. Indeed, some Mythos entities, such as the Great Race and Ilogor, can manipulate time. Hence, your premonitions indicate what is likely to happen, but give no guarantee. A vision of yourself waking tomorrow does not prevent you dying tonight.

Psychic Scream

When you are scared or in danger, you scream in your head. Although there is no sound, the scream is deafening to anyone else with psychic abilities. It blots out every other thought, pulling them towards you, like a fishhook tugging inside their brain. Often, they arrive at your location with only hazy memories of getting there.

Whenever your *Stability* or *Health* falls to -6 or below, you automatically use your *Psychic Scream* ability, if you have any points remaining. When you do, psychics nearby are compelled to help you. To resist the compulsion, they must make a *Stability* check, against a difficulty of 4: if they fail, they must come.

Alternatively, you may scream deliberately, which allows you to control the intensity of your scream. If you scream intensely, other psychics must make *Stability* checks, as before. If you suppress the intensity, they make no *Stability* checks, and may choose whether to come.

Those who hear the scream receive vague mind-shapes of whatever is affecting you. As with all psychic abilities, this provides narrative colour rather than useful information: for example, they glimpse the monster attacking you, but do not see the layout of the room.

Remote Viewing

You project your sight, clairvoyantly, to see what is happening in another location. By going into a trance, you send your mind through space.

Remote viewing only allows you to see what is happening, not what *has* happened or what *may* happen. Similarly, you can only see locations on this Earth and this plane of existence: you cannot see into Dream realms, alternate realities or space.

The vision you receive is dreamlike, not photographic: as with *Premonitions*, key information may be hidden. For locations you know, your vision will probably be relatively clear. For unvisited locations, it will become hazier.



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For locations inhabited by the Mythos, the visions will be nightmarish and intangible. Thus, once you learn about R'lyeh, you can project your mind there, but you cannot possibly understand its layout. And don't expect it to end well.

Telepathy

You can communicate with other telepaths. It is a rich, rewarding source of communication, a part of who you are: losing it would be like losing your sight.

Explaining telepathy to an outsider is difficult. You might describe mind-shapes or mental music. Really, however, any

explanation is like describing colour to a blind person. Telepathy is too rich to capture in words.

Indeed, describing telepathy to outsiders is exceedingly dangerous. Among the Afflicted, telepaths are particularly feared: partly because their Affliction is invisible; partly because their talk is hidden from others. When young telepaths unwittingly reveal their abilities, they rarely survive.

You can do any of the following without effort (that is, without spending a point of Telepathy):

- Sense telepaths in the immediate vicinity who want to be identified.
- Communicate with these telepaths.
- Sense when a telepath disappears.

By spending a point of Telepathy, you can do any of the following:

- Shield your mind from other telepaths.
- Discover any telepaths, in the immediate vicinity, who have shielded their mind.
- Sense telepaths further afield.
- Communicate with these telepaths.

Here, the Keeper decides how far your telepathy can reach. Clever Keepers may use Telepathy to steer the Investigators towards distant locations.

Note that Telepathy is related to, but distinct from, Mind Reading and Aura Reading. Telepathy allows deliberate communication; Mind Reading allows probing for thoughts and memories; Aura Reading allows sensing of emotion.

INVESTIGATIVE AFFLICTIONS

When you put Affliction Points into an Investigative ability, you gain an unnatural, ancient insight into that domain. It is not academic knowledge, but something darker. For example, putting Affliction Points into Geology lets your mind pour

into the rocks, remembering how they felt as they grew over eons.

Such insights give you similar information to the normal Investigative ability. For example, by pouring your mind into rocks, you discover ancient volcanic activity, just as someone with the Geology ability would. However, your methods are psychic and unnatural, requiring no tools or books. Sometimes, your insight is instantaneous. Often, it involves a vision of prehistory or the patterns within space-time.

The exact nature of the insight depends on the ability.

Archaeology

You project your mind into the stones, feeling how they fitted together as they were built. You feel the stresses, the fractures and the builder's hands as each stone was placed.

Astronomy

Casting your mind into space and backwards through time, you remember how the stars and planets grew, observing their strange dances as they moved through the universe.

Possession

Some Mythos entities can possess humans. The Great Race of Yith, Cthonians and Shan certainly can: others, including Cthulhu, the mi-go and the lloigor, may also be capable. If you contact or view these entities with psychic abilities, they may try to possess you.

To resist, make a Stability Check, against a Difficulty Number determined by the Keeper. If you succeed, you are safe and the entity may not try again. If you fail, you are possessed.

There are two ways to handle possession in your game. Firstly, the Keeper may control your Investigator until the entity leaves. Each time the spirit attempts something malevolent, you may attempt to regain control with another Stability Check.

Alternatively, you can play your possessed Investigator. (This option is probably more fun for the player). The Keeper should explain what the alien wants and what it will do: for example, the Great Race might ask questions, while the Shan might tempt others to go to their temple.

Other GUMSHOE Games

If you are familiar with Fear Itself, another GUMSHOE game, you will recognise many of the psychic abilities. Note the differences, however: most obviously, in *The Apocalypse Machine*, psychic abilities are Investigative abilities.

Another GUMSHOE system, *Mutant City Blues*, has an extensive system of mutant powers. These powers are beneficial, controllable and well-understood. By contrast, *The Apocalypse Machine's* Afflictions are difficult to control, frequently harmful and dimly understood. If you prefer your mutant powers pulpier and lighter, like superpowers, try using the mutant powers from *Mutant City Blues*, rather than the Afflictions listed here.



The Afflicted

Biology

You mentally feel your way through the creature, understanding how it lives, breathes and dies. Placing your mind within the creature's flesh, you see what is natural and unnatural within it.

Chemistry

You see the atoms and the chemical bonds within every substance, understanding how they react together.

Craft

Your hands move as if repeating long-remembered actions. (Pick one particular Craft in which to specialise.)

Cryptography

You instantly see the reality beneath the codes. Compared with the structure underlying the universe, these codes are child's play.

Evidence Collection

Seeing the chains of causality, you understand where everything is, where it must be. Instantaneously, you see hidden items and obscure clues.

Geology

Casting your mind into the rocks, you feel them growing over millions of years.

Languages

Without explanation, you begin speaking a language you have never spoken before, fluently and brilliantly.

Locksmith

Without touching the lock, you place your mind within its workings, feeling every lever and tumbler. In a flash, at the speed of thought, you know exactly what must move, and make it move simply by wishing it so.

Physics

You see the fabric of space-time, observing how forces and masses interact within it.

Using such Afflictions is, of course, disturbing to anyone watching.

When you use these afflictions, you open your mind to the Mythos. Thus, anything you detect may harm your Stability. For example, in using Physics to analyse a nuclear bomb, you might glimpse the nuclear chaos that is Azathoth.

GENERAL AFFLICTIONS

When you put Affliction Points into a General Ability, you gain physical capabilities

that normal humans do not possess. When using it, you move with unnatural grace, strength, skill or flexibility.

If this General Ability holds 10 or more points, you have a physical manifestation of your Affliction, visible even when you are not using the skill. For example, an Athletics Affliction might give you unnaturally developed muscles; a Firearms affliction might give you eyes with no iris; a Sense Trouble Affliction might give you eyes that constantly scan. Such visible manifestations are subtle rather than obvious, horrific rather than comic (a Sense Trouble affliction does *not* give you a pair of antennae).

As with Investigative abilities, General Afflictions give you essentially the same capabilities as the normal ability, but with added weirdness.

Where Investigative Afflictions carry a risk to your Stability, General Afflictions carry a risk to your Health. Push these unnatural abilities too far and your body begins to break apart. If, when rolling, the total you get (the die roll plus the points you spend) is 8 or more, you take damage, equal to the total minus 7.





The Apocalypse Machine

Ability	Description	Suggested Manifestation
Athletics	You move faster and more dextrously than a normal human.	Unnaturally developed muscles
Disguise	Your features are unnaturally malleable. Perhaps, too, your skin has some limited ability to alter its tone.	Deformed features; strangely coloured skin.
Driving	In a car, you become one with the machine, your hands flitting between the wheel and gearstick without conscious control.	A smell of oil; a metallic sheen to the fingertips, as if the machine has bled into you.
Electrical Repair	When you repair an electric system, your hands move without volition, connecting wires, spinning screws by hand.	A toughness to the hands, as if your body is protecting yourself against the electricity.
Explosives	You connect and manipulate explosives with unnatural speed.	A blackening to the hands, as if burned.
Filch	When stealing something, you act with astonishing dexterity, your hands moving faster than the eye can see or the brain perceive.	A tremor in the fingers.
Firearms	Your hand-eye coordination is perfect, your gun moving like an extension of your arm.	A strangeness in the eye: a golden colour, lack of iris.
First Aid	You fix wounds with strange speed, using knowledge you did not know you possessed.	Strangely hot hands.
Fleeing	When escaping, you run unnaturally fast, moving faster than your pursuers could imagine.	Overdeveloped leg muscles.
Health	Injuries that would kill a normal human being do not kill you.	Rough, discoloured skin.
Mechanical Repair	You manipulate machines with strange dexterity.	Oily, metallic skin on the hands.
Piloting	You are at one with planes and boats.	The same metallic sheen as above, as if the machine has seeped into your skin.
Riding	Your control over a horse is total and awe-inspiring.	You are becoming horselike yourself: there is a sheen to your skin and a coarseness to your hair.
Scuffling	In a fight, you move and strike in a way no human could.	A sharpness and toughness to the knuckles.
Sense Trouble	You see and hear things beyond a normal person's capabilities.	Constantly scanning eyes, jumping from one potential danger to the next.
Stealth	When you choose, you become almost unnoticeable. You can move with total silence and keep unnaturally still.	You are easy to overlook, as if you were constantly in shadow.
Weapons	Your weapon is an extension of your body. Your control over it is perfect.	Without your weapon, your hands are constantly clutching for something to hold.

Mythos Entities

The creatures of the Mythos rule the Earth. No longer confined to watery prisons or icy wastes, they stalk the Earth unimpeded, plundering its resources and warring with each other. The few remaining humans can only watch, scurrying from bolthole to bolthole, attempting to survive.

Most humans, of course, have not seen the monsters yet. Those who have seen one monster have not seen them all. As the Investigators travel through the post-apocalyptic landscape, they will encounter these horrors for the first time.

When considering Mythos creatures (including those newly admitted to the Mythos, such as H. G. Wells' Martians), there are two questions to ask about the apocalypse.

- How might they *cause* the apocalypse?
- How would they *react* to the apocalypse?

For some entities, one question is more relevant than the other. For example, Azathoth would cause the apocalypse, if summoned, but would not react to the death of a distant and insignificant race. Conversely, the mi-go are unlikely to initiate the apocalypse, but would react to it.

For many creatures, a third question is useful:

- How are they summoned or released?

Thus, Cthulhu might bring about the apocalypse, but must first be liberated from beneath the Pacific. Similarly, if Azathoth causes the apocalypse, we must explain how he comes to Earth.

Importantly, nothing described here will instantly and completely destroy the world. If it did, there would be no story to tell,

no post-apocalyptic wasteland to wander. Thus, even mindlessly destructive entities, such as Azathoth, destroy the world slowly. In time, they will consume the world, but first, the Investigators must watch it being consumed.

In fact, the apocalypse itself will involve many creatures. There is a domino effect: if the Flying Polyps emerge, the Elder Things come to battle them. When Cthulhu rises, the Deep Ones bring their cities to the surface. When humans die, the mi-go build mines in their old cities. That is: when one Mythos entity strikes, all hell breaks loose.

Here, then, are the creatures of the apocalypse. Some are simply described. Others are given competing and contradictory explanations. Choose between these, as required, using them as adventure seeds and sparks for the imagination.

AZATHOTH

- When the first nuclear bomb detonates, it tears the fabric of space-time. That tear both *brings forth* Azathoth and *is* Azathoth: he is a fault in the universe, a physical division-by-zero. As the fault grows, the bubbling chaos pours forth.
- Azathoth is released by the Shan, who lure humans to their grey, metallic temples. There, the oozing grey mass of Azathoth is summoned, released and created, and rises into the world.
- Azathoth is a sentient truth underlying all mathematics. His creation/instantiation occurs when humans advance their understanding beyond a critical point. In 1936, an academic researching the fringes of her field, perhaps Godel's incompleteness theorems or

Einstein's relativity, proves Azathoth into existence.

- The coming of Azathoth blasts a continent into wasteland, killing all creatures and poisoning the soil. Houses crumble, trees are uprooted and rivers boil. Thereafter, in that land, plants grow stunted and animals are born deformed.
- Those who survive Azathoth's coming are doomed by the noxious cloud he releases. It drifts and spreads over the Earth, killing, infecting or sterilising. Those remaining can only wait helplessly to die.
- On Earth, Azathoth is a formless, shapeless mass, a nothing incomprehensible to the human mind. The few who look may remember a bivalvular shell or gelatinous greyness. However, this is a trick of perception, the brain's attempt to make sense of nothing.
- The mindless, bubbling mass consumes everything around it. As it sinks lower, eating its way downwards, it breaks through the Earth's crust. The volcanic crater remains, even as Azathoth sinks into the Earth's core, consuming the world from its centre.
- As Azathoth was the beginning of the universe, the explosion that created every star and planet, so he is the end. When he arrives on Earth, the stars begin to fall. Astronomers, if they look, notice that the rest of the galaxy, which previously was drifting away from the Earth, is now growing closer. As Azathoth is the end of the universe, so inevitably every star comes back to him. The universe collapses to a point and the Earth is crushed.



The Apocalypse Machine

CHILDREN

The Children are an ancient alien race. Their embryos were implanted, in 1927, in the wombs of women around the world. For one day, several rural towns around the world were uncontactable: all those within the towns, or entering the towns, fell unconscious. When the towns awoke, all women capable of bearing children were pregnant.

They grow with unnatural speed, resembling teenagers before they reach ten years of age. Although their form is human, they have an alien aspect, with golden hair and eyes with golden pupils. They are also identical, bearing no resemblance to their surrogate mothers.

As they learn, it becomes clear each gender possesses a hive mind. What one girl knows, all the others know. Additionally, they have other psychic abilities: they can possess

humans and control machinery, aircraft and cars. They believe that such qualities make them evolutionarily superior to humans. Their succession as the dominant Earth race is inevitable, as is humanity's extinction.

They react with disproportionate force to any injury. If one child is injured, the hive mind alerts others of the same gender, who come to the child's defence. They then possess the offending human, causing death or extreme harm. If a doctor pricks a child with a needle, she finds herself stabbing her arm with the same needle. If a motorist clips a child with his car, he accelerates before hitting a brick wall. If the Children are attacked, the attacking mob will find themselves fighting each other.

Probably, it is humans that initiate conflict with the Children. Governments, realising the Children are a threat, attempt to restrain or kill them. Perhaps the military try to bomb, quarantine or poison them. Naturally,

the children react, turning the weapons back on the humans. To prevent counter-attacks, they begin to systematically destroy humanity. They possess humans, and then make them kill each other.

Eventually, the Children must propagate. How they do this is unknown: perhaps female Children can mate with males. More likely, however, they continue to need human wombs to breed. Hence, the future of a small minority of humans is assured, as a child-bearing slave species. These few humans will be left to run among the wasteland, like rats, until needed.

The Children

Athletics 10

Health 10

Scuffling 15

Hit Threshold 4

Weapon: +0 (fist or improvised weapon).





Mythos Entities

Psychic abilities: Each Child may attempt to possess an Investigator once. The Investigator makes a Stability Test against a difficulty of 6. If the roll fails, the Investigator is possessed, and must attack other Investigators or harm herself.

COLOURS OUT OF SPACE

- First, there was a shower of meteors. There were hundreds, like fireworks, and people turned out of their houses to watch. Afterwards, plants grew wrongly and the soil turned to dust. As the horde of Colours sucked the life out of the earth, people and buildings crumbled. On November 2nd, 1936, they simultaneously departed, in

a scintillating display of light, leaving the ruined earth behind them, for Old Ones and alien races to fight over.

- A Colour is a living embodiment of radioactivity. After the bombs fall, the nuclear fallout produces such intense radioactivity that it forms Colours. They suck the post-apocalyptic wasteland into dust.
- Deep below the Earth, perhaps in the core itself, is an adult Colour. Through eons, it has drained the life from the deeper rocks, and now it begins draining the surface. Perhaps it spawns young Colours, too, who feast on the soil. The Colour remains until the Earth is lifeless and continents fall apart.

- The fertile soil, produced by the agricultural revolution, attracts the Colours to farmland. They feed on the mid-West of the United States, the farms of New Zealand and the Lake District of Britain. Within years, nothing remains but dust.
- For an unknown reason, the apocalypse attracts Colours to Earth. The few surviving humans see meteor after meteor, crashing from the sky into the wasteland. Perhaps these Colours feast on the dead bodies, breaking down their flesh; perhaps they come because humans can no longer interfere with them.
- Colours ooze radioactivity, contaminating soil and rocks. Mutated trees, animals and even human beings are a sure sign of a Colour beneath the ground.





The Apocalypse Machine

In areas inhabited by a Colour, Geiger counters crackle furiously. If the Colour itself approaches, the reading goes off the scale.

CTHONIANS

These ancient subterranean creatures resemble huge worms. They bore through rock at astonishing speed, as worms tunnel through earth, leaving perfectly smooth bore-holes behind them. For millennia, they had built up their numbers. Now, they have enough soldiers, and are ready to take over the Earth.

They have many weapons. By burrowing through rock, they can make the ground unstable, creating anything from localised tremors or full-blown earthquakes. Their first move, in the apocalypse, is to produce simultaneous earthquakes beneath the world's capital cities: first Washington, then Moscow, then London. With government decapitated, they systematically destroy other centres of population, until only a few scattered humans remain.

Other weapons are more insidious. Through telepathy, the Cthonians threaten and blackmail Investigators who study them. To punish determined Investigators, they encase their brains in vile, stinking filth. Veins and capillaries keep the mind barely alive, while it is milked for information. Sometimes, these disgusting black masses are sent, as warnings, to other Investigators.

The Cthonians are vulnerable to water, making jets or mists excellent weapons. They are also vulnerable to radiation. After a nuclear blast, they may perceive fallout as an attack.

Since there are few Cthonians, they are protective towards each other. If a Cthorian is trapped or endangered, others will rush to its aid. Cthorian eggs, pearlescent orbs four inches across, are indescribably precious: any Investigator possessing these eggs will find themselves a target.

The greatest Cthorian is Shudde-M'ell, a hideous blasphemy over a mile long, variously described as a regent or a god. From deep in the rock, he plots the dissemination of evil and plans the resurrection of other blasphemous creatures.

CTHULHU

- Before the apocalypse, Cthulhu sends dreams to sensitives throughout the world. Artists, writers and musicians produce nightmarish works: Cyclopean landscapes with incomprehensible geometries; carvings of dripping caverns beneath the sea; play scripts of ranting gibberish. As the dreams intensify, madmen in asylums grow euphoric, howling at the ground and gleefully tearing each other apart.
- Cthulhu personifies humanity's butchery and debauchery. He is summoned when humanity has sunk to its nadir, driven solely by violence and lust. Some cults whisper that the butchery of the Great War has made Cthulhu's coming inevitable. The stinking city of R'lyeh will rise and Cthulhu will stalk the world, inspiring humans to further depravity, until they destroy themselves by cannibalising each other.
- When the stars are right, Cthulhu calls his human servitors to release him from his undersea prison. As he rises, the minds of most humans are blasted, leaving them as mindless, dribbling husks. Only a few keep their minds and must survive among the drooling masses.
- On November 2nd, 1936, the United States government releases Cthulhu. They plan to subdue it, using vast arrays of electrical generators, and then keep it for military use. The plan fails. Cthulhu kills its would-be captors and heads east, stalking across the United States, exterminating the race that tried to capture it.
- When Cthulhu rises, so do the black spirits of the earth, seeping out of the blasted soil. By rising, Great Cthulhu has broken the grip of death, and long-dead things come back to haunt the

world. In the last, dark days of Earth, these dark phantoms drift over the decaying land, feasting on whatever life they find, until nothing is left.

- Imprisoned within R'lyeh, Cthulhu senses the death of humanity. Wakeful, yet entombed, Cthulhu waits as the other ancient races overrun the Earth. Finally, the worship of the Deep Ones brings him to full wakefulness and releases him. He rises against those who would usurp his throne, slaughtering them: the Elder Things, in their undersea cities; the mi-go, in the mountains; the few paltry humans that remain.

DAGON

- Dagon is not one, but many, a race of ancient sea-monsters. When the apocalypse comes, they rise to reclaim the sea. Standing on the sea bed, their bodies tower fifty feet above the water. They stride through the oceans, guarding them for Cthulhu's coming.
- Dagon is a fertility god of the sea, the progenitor, leader and god of the Deep Ones. In the end times, he lifts the cities of the sea bed to the surface. The seas drain away, leaving a hellish black mire, extending for hundreds of miles. Dagon rules this stinking, rotting land. Any human crossing this dark expanse will hear no sound of the sea: indeed, as they gradually realise, they will never hear that sound again.
- The creature called Dagon is, in fact, a vast, mutated Deep One. A twisted and blasphemous behemoth, he is the weapon of the Deep Ones. When he is forced on to the land, he thrashes madly at anything that moves, blindly lashing out, still growing and mutating. Before the humans kill him, Dagon reduces nations to rubble.



Mythos Entities

- Dagon is an aspect of Shub-Niggurath. As she represents the power of nature, through fecundity and fertility, so he represents the power of the sea, seething with life and darkness. When the end times come, he causes the seas to swell, bursting their dams, until every major city of the world is drowned. Thereafter, Dagon wades among the submerged ruins, crushing the last signs of human life.

DAOLOTH

- The world we see is an illusion. When the apocalypse comes, Daoloth sweeps away the veil, letting us see truly. The minds of most humans are shredded instantly. Only some, too ignorant or deluded to perceive reality, remain sane.
- On January 22nd, 1936, a convocation of Daolothic cultists in New York summons *The Render Of The Veils*. As reality tears slowly apart, bizarre deaths occur: a wife murders her husband, screaming about gelatinous terrors; a priest tears his eyes out, then jumps from the Brooklyn Bridge. As the madness spreads, people see each other as the spongy, oozing horrors they really are. Butchery and self-destruction ensues. By November, the tear in reality encompasses the world, with only a few immune.
- When the apocalypse happens, reality changes irrevocably, whether through Cthulhu's dreaming, Yithian time-travel or some other source. That change brings Daoloth into being: just as Azathoth is a fault in space-time, so Daoloth is a fault in the veil that prevents us from seeing true reality.
- On November 1st, 1936, many report strange visual symptoms to doctors and psychiatrists. All describe collections of hemispheres and rods, lurking in the corner of their eye, changing

size when they look away. These are glimpses of Daoloth, as the veil weakens. The next day, Daoloth breaks through the veil and reality tears apart.

- Daoloth is merely a personification of psychological denial. Because our minds cannot conceive the world as it is, they invent an illusion which suffices. Resting one's hand on a table, for example, creates a tactile psychological illusion of flatness. If we could see the world as it really was, all such illusions would be dispelled instantly.
- Daoloth is knowledge of reality: in game terms, he is the Cthulhu Mythos ability. He enables knowledge of the reality underlying the universe. Moreover, he *is* that knowledge and *is summoned* by those who seek that knowledge.
- Throughout the early 20th century, the Cubist and Surrealist movements had flourished. Gradually, the artists penetrated the veil, dimly perceiving the reality beneath. By 1936, the veil was weak enough to affect Daoloth's entrance into the world.

DEEP ONES

- After the raids on Innsmouth and other coastal towns, many Deep Ones are kept in Alaskan concentration camps, where freezing temperatures limit their access to water. Their brothers in the deeps take slow and brutal revenge. Eight years later, a vast army of Deep Ones storms the camps, butchering the guards. This army swims south, rising in San Francisco Bay, and then fanning across the United States. In panic, humans flee east, where a foolish few board ships to Europe. Within weeks, the human race is massacred.
- For millennia, the Deep Ones have spread their taint among humans. Some people show it visibly; some carry it unseen.

As the years pass, some tainted humans are called to the sea, while others remain, spreading the taint to future generations. In the final days, all tainted humans are called. All at once, they leave their homes and workplaces, and walk into the sea. In the deserted cities, only a few untainted humans remain.

- After Innsmouth is raided, there is no-one to provide tribute to the Deep Ones. Whereas before, young men and women would be sacrificed, now the creatures are forced to abduct them. Confrontations ensue. Police lie in wait for the abductors, and are killed. As the war escalates, the Deep Ones invade, destroying first the coastal cities, and then moving inland.
- The Deep One taint has spread around along the United States' East Coast and into British seaside towns. In many such towns, thousands of the creatures are stationed in abandoned houses, preparing to attack. Correctly realising this, the Germans strike against the Deep Ones, bombing the towns and killing the monsters. The resulting war sets nation against nation, tainted against untainted and Deep Ones against humans.

ELDER THINGS

- In the deepest parts of the ocean, the Elder Things have survived for millions of years, in great stone cities. They constantly watch humanity, the race they created as an experiment, keeping its numbers manageable by culls, such as manufactured natural disasters. In 1936, they realise humans cannot control the consequences of their technology: they can manufacture devastating weapons, but not repair the damage to reality they create. The only option is the total (and, in an ironic sense, humane) extermination of humanity.



The Apocalypse Machine

- On January 22nd, 1936, a tanker runs aground in the Strait of Hormuz. On investigation, the obstacle is an immense stone block, carved in one piece, the highest point of an undersea city. Soon afterwards, similar cities are constructed on isolated Pacific islands, the blocks hoisted into place by oozing monstrosities the size of ships. Next, coastal villages are built over, their buildings crushed as the monolithic blocks are placed. Next to be crushed are the port cities: Rio de Janeiro, London, Houston. The apocalypse proper begins as humans flee inland, murdering each other for land and food.
- The Elder Things are a race of scientists, periodically abducting specimens of major Earth races. Sometimes, humans are found half-alive on beaches, with strange incisions and missing limbs. However, as their abductions grow in scale, the Elder Things overreach themselves. When they attempt to abduct an entire community, the coastal town of San Gregorio, an Elder Thing is captured. In the ensuing war, which spreads worldwide, the humans are massacred.
- After the apocalypse, the Elder Things move to occupy land previously held by the human race. The crumbling remains of human cities are devastated in a brutal war with the mi-go, from the north, and the servitors of Cthulhu, from the Pacific.
- Once, the Elder Things had lived in machines. When the apocalypse comes, they build these machines again, not for living, but for fighting. Using technological principles unknown to man, their intricate weapons channel energy into devastating beams. When they turn these beams on human cities, buildings crumble and people burn.
- As the temperature rises, the Elder Things find their great

Antarctic city habitable. They had never abandoned the city, only withdrawn, and their years beneath the sea had taught them to control or cull the shoggoths. Some Elder Things remained in the city, entombed in ice, slowly coming to wakefulness as they thawed. In that city, the Elder Things prepare for war, to regain the land that was once theirs.

FLYING POLYPS

- For millions of years, the flying polyps dwelt in lightless caverns beneath the sea. When humans breached the caves, drilling for oil, the polyps rose from the depths: the bodies of the prospectors were found on a ship, torn into meaty shreds. Perhaps determining they would be disturbed again, the polyps swept around the world, systematically killing every human they could find. They formed a deathly wave, appearing as a monstrous, squirming mass, shortly before they tore cities into dust. Many humans heard radio reports of the destruction, shortly before they were themselves destroyed.
- The polyps were contained in their underground tunnels by great seals, placed there by the Great Race. In 1936, these seals were breached: perhaps by earthquakes, perhaps by cultists searching for R'lyeh, perhaps because the polyps themselves had determined a way to break them. The creatures rose invisibly and, as they had done millions of years before, exterminated the race that had overrun the planet. With the humans gone, they retreated underground, while other ancient races fought over the land and sea.
- The Flying Polyps are a form of sentient wind. In the early twentieth century, they slowly began to awake. Scientists noticed the winds rising, especially along the Pacific coast. These unnatural winds wrecked bridges, destroyed

buildings and flooded cities with great waves. As the winds grew, hurricanes drowned coastal cities and tornadoes tore towns into rubble. In the last days of the human race, people scurried for shelter in a devastated land, blasted by impossible and alien winds.

- The half-polypous race had watched the humans for eons: whatever their senses were, they were not blocked by rock, water or distance. They waited until people grew soft, incapable of fighting, reliant on technology. When they attacked, they did not need to kill humans: they simply destroyed their power stations, their roads and their communication. As the humans floundered, wild animals and other races moved to occupy their land.

GREAT RACE OF YITH

- The Yithians observe the death of the human race, but do not participate in it. When the apocalypse happens, the Yithians occupy some bodies of surviving humans, to gather knowledge of the last days of the human race. Later, this knowledge will help them survive their own apocalypse.
- The Great Race could undo the apocalypse, by taking a human mind, after the apocalypse, then placing it in the same body, before the apocalypse. That human, sent back in time, could prevent the apocalypse from happening. However, the Race will not do this: they have too much to learn from seeing the apocalypse progress.
- When, in the past, the Great Race are attacked by the flying polyps, they project their minds into a race of South American beetles in the present day. They attack the human race using precisely the same tactics as the flying polyps used. The human race is exterminated exactly as the bodies of the Great Race were exterminated.



Mythos Entities

- Millions of years ago, a clutch of Yithian spores fell on Antarctic ice. When found, they were sent to Miskatonic University for study. However, the ice thawed and the water activated the spores. The Yithians that grew killed everyone on the ship. Sensing the presence of an old enemy, The Elder Things sent soldiers to kill the Yithians. As the war between races grew, more ancient enemies re-emerged, and humanity died in the crossfire.
- On 22nd January 1936, people begin reporting visions of dark cylindrical towers and prehistoric twilight glades. Throughout that year, their minds are taken into the past, leaving their bodies unoccupied and inert. By November, only a few humans are left conscious, in a world of comatose bodies.

KRAKEN

In the ocean abysses, deeper than any human has probed, lives an intelligent race. Perhaps they have lived there for millions of years: perhaps, indeed, they are the sea monsters of legend. Or perhaps they are new arrivals. Some hypothesise that red orbs of fuzzy light, reported worldwide in 1935, were spacecraft, bringing the race to Earth.

The trouble began when mankind studied the abysses, using bathyspheres and scientific instruments. First the bathyspheres disappeared, their connecting cables severed; later, the research ships were electrified, killing everyone on board.

Cautious voices, who suggested the creatures were defending their territory, advised withdrawal. But warlike sentiments prevailed and bombs were dropped into the abysses. Inexplicably, some never detonated, and equally inexplicably, some detonated thousands of miles from their original location. Some suggested they had been neutralised, moved through vast undersea tunnels, then detonated in harmless locations. Clearly, this was nonsense, but no other explanations fitted the facts.

Soon afterwards, the attacks started. First, ships disappeared, their entire crew lost. Then great tank-like things emerged from the sea, thirty feet long, armoured and

grey. They devastated coastal villages: more disturbingly, they seemed to learn from their attacks, learning to destroy buildings by crushing structural walls. Disturbingly, many believed these tanks were not the race themselves, but organic drones, manufactured in the deeps.

Even worse than the sea-tanks were the weapons they carried. Once ashore, the sea-tanks emitted huge amoebic spheres. These rose into the air, then burst into white threads, which stuck to humans. As the sea-tanks retreated, the trapped humans were pulled into the waves, and drowned.

Gradually, governments learned to defend against these attacks: they rigged floodlights near coastal towns and mined beaches. Some sea-tanks were destroyed, by throwing grenades under their shells. For a while, humanity seemed to be winning.

Then the waters started rising. Scientists reported the icecaps were melting: somehow, the creatures had caused them to thaw. Amsterdam flooded. New York was drowned. When London went under, the capital of England was moved to Harrogate. Finally, humanity's baser instincts took over, and people murdered for land and food. The remaining few inherited a watery world, ruled by an alien race.

LLOIGOR

- Ever vengeful against their former slaves, the lloigor destroy human cities. Bombay and Peking are first, followed by New York, then London. In each, a huge explosion, from beneath the ground, blasts the city into a crater. As more cities follow, humanity flees, and tears itself apart fighting for land and food.
- Influenced by the lloigor, humans begin committing unspeakable crimes: bizarre mutilations, sexual violations, gross murders. Families torture, kill, burn and eat each other. A tearing madness descends on humanity: "tearing", as you might tear chicken with your teeth. The few surviving humans become the lloigor's slaves. When they transgress or try to escape, they

are punished by amputations or tentacles growing from their bodies.

- The lloigor, uniquely among the Mythos races, feed on human energy. Hence, when the apocalypse comes, their strange role is to defend humans. They destroy those who kill humanity: with huge explosions, they eradicate mi-go habitations and the cities of the Elder Things. When humans are needlessly slaughtered, they punish the killers as they once punished their human slaves, with amputations and tentacular growths.
- Using their limited control of space-time, the lloigor incite the humans into war. In June 1936, President Roosevelt meets Joachim von Ribbentrop, the Nazi Foreign Minister. The meeting occurs on Roosevelt's presidential yacht, Potomac, in the middle of the Atlantic. Neither returns. As both Americans and Germans prepare for war, the lloigor inflame a bloody, tearing rage. Within months, the human race tears itself apart.

MARTIANS

They arrive in great cylinders, thirty yards across, which fell from the sky like meteors. From those cylinders emerge metal fighting machines: walking tripods of glittering metal, each containing a single Martian.

In these machines, these creatures overrun the Earth, smashing cities to rubble. Their weaponry surpasses that of any terrestrial army. First, they release an invisible heat-ray, which makes ammunition explode and humans burst into white fire. Then comes a toxic black smoke, heavier than air, from which the only escape is flight or ascent to high ground. This smoke, after it disperses, leaves cities and countryside coated in fine, black powder. Finally, whether by accident or design, the Martians bring the Red Weed to Earth (see p. 61).

Inside the machines, the Martians are alien horrors. Their circular bodies, four feet in diameter, have dark eyes and a fleshy beak, surrounded by sixteen tentacles. These bodies are almost entirely brain: they construct and wear bodies, such as the fighting-machines, to serve their immediate needs. They make howling,



The Apocalypse Machine

ululating noises prior to feeding, but communicate via telepathy.

To feed, they take blood from living creatures, injecting it into themselves. The fighting machines have glittering tentacles, to capture humans for feeding, and cages, which hold them alive until their blood is needed. The victims are drained alive, then the bloodless bodies discarded.

In time, the Martians become rulers of Earth, standing sentinel over the Earth and striding through the sea. Any remaining humans are enslaved. In the following years, their children are controlled through "capping": when each comes of age, a mesh of silvery metal is implanted into their skulls. The Capped are docile, unimaginative and obedient to the Martians.

Yet, for a few humans, the Capping is unsuccessful. These become Vagrants,

half-mad and depending on charity, but uncontrolled by the Martians.

The new masters of Earth construct great domed cities, which they fill with gas, so that they can live without the fighting-machines. A few humans, chosen for physical fitness, are taken to serve the Martians in these cities. Although they do not survive for long, in the toxic atmosphere, they die knowing they have served.

Mi-Go

- The mi-go had avoided humans for centuries, judging them not to be a threat. However, in the 20th Century, human technology leapt forward, producing increasingly deadly weapons. Judging that it could not control them, the mi-go moved to protect their

mining operations on Earth. They swarmed down from the stars, overwhelming humanity with vastly greater numbers, tearing them apart with their claws. For days, the skies were black and red with flocks of mi-go. Having killed all the humans they could find, the mi-go returned to their mines, in the hills of Earth and on distant planets.

- After bloated crustacean bodies are found in flooded rivers, an ad hoc squad of United States Army Reserves wipes out the mi-go in the Massachusetts hills. For months, nothing happens; then, in November 1936, the populations of local villages start to disappear. First the police, then the army, investigate the deserted towns. When they reach





Mythos Entities

their hilltop mines, the mi-go defend themselves, lifting the humans to unimaginable heights, and then dropping them to their deaths. War ensues, mi-go reinforcements arrive from the stars, and the humans are routed.

- In 1936, the Outer Ones take human brains in greater quantities than ever before. Entire hillside towns are found murdered, their bodies crudely dissected and their skulls empty. The brains are placed in metal cylinders, and then stored in vast warehouses, with speakers and sensors allowing them to communicate. Some are shipped to distant planets; others remain on Earth, conscious, trapped and powerless.
- The Fungi from Yuggoth attack the residents of Greenfield,

Massachusetts. They take parts of their brains, leaving them with dulled senses, animal instincts, buzzing speech and an intense hunger. Reduced to drooling, stumbling wrecks, they devour any sources of food they can find. The mi-go surgery continues, although its purpose is unclear: perhaps it is a military strategy; perhaps a large-scale experiment. Those few that avoid the mi-go are torn apart by the mindless, drooling hordes.

RED WEED

The red weed is alien, a plant that overwhelms all terrestrial life. It spreads rampantly and rapidly, smothering fields and towns, creeping through tiny holes to spread inside houses. Where it finds water, it grows

luxuriantly, choking rivers and harbours, spreading outwards into the sea. Sometimes, it grows scrubbily, clinging to rocks and rubble; sometimes, it thrives, growing neck high, making valleys impassable. It swarms up trees, spreading over their branches, and strangles them.

To humans, the red weed appears tropical, resembling a hybrid of cacti and creepers. It tastes watery, sweet and metallic and is inedible, although not poisonous. In darkness, it is faintly phosphorescent, glowing with gentle violet-purple light. If it dies, it turns white and spongy, decomposing into a mass of pale vegetation.

Its origin is unknown. Perhaps it is a weapon, which kills people through starvation and thirst, smothering their plants and blocking their waterways. Perhaps it is an accident, its seeds brought to Earth by aliens, and its slow killing of humanity is a quirk of fate.





Tips for Players

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

Each investigation will have a central question, which the Keeper will tell you. It might be:

- How did the apocalypse happen?
- Where is the weapon that will let us fight the monsters?
- How can we stop the next attack?

As you play, make sure you investigate that question. If you have not answered it, keep investigating.

INVESTIGATE THE HORROR

Post-apocalyptic stories are about witnessing horror. In your travels across the wasteland, you will see vast scenes of destruction: armies of Deep Ones, Martians striding through the sea, Cthulhu laying waste to the land. You will walk on Antarctic ice and newly risen continents.

However, none of this will happen if you hide. As a post-apocalyptic Investigator, you must put common sense aside. Where any sane person would run from the monsters, you must investigate them.

Your Drive will push you forward to investigate. If, during your games, you wonder why your Investigator doesn't flee, your Drive is the answer: your curiosity, your duty or the preservation of knowledge is too important.

In *Trail of Cthulhu*, your Drive made you investigate, even when things seemed dangerous. In *The Apocalypse Machine*, your Drive is even more vital: it pushes you to investigate, despite definite and immediate danger. Compared to your Drive, your sanity and health are unimportant.

Hence, as you investigate:

- Make your Drive central to your Investigator. You are not just curious: you are burning with curiosity. You are not just dutiful: you would die for your duty. Your Drive defines who you are.
- Go towards the monsters. If you ever wonder where to go next, head towards the monsters. When common sense tells you to run from danger, run towards it. When others flee, you must investigate.
- Don't run away. When monsters invade your country, rational people would escape to another one, on a boat or plane. However, this ruins investigations. Once you begin investigating an area, stay there until the job is done.
- Remember the central question. If you have not answered it, keep investigating.

Finally, here is a rule of thumb about fleeing. Continue investigating as long as you can. Keep investigating when there is danger, keep investigating when monsters appear. Investigate *until the ground shakes under your feet*. When buildings start falling, that is your cue to run.

STAY ON TRACK

After the apocalypse, there is much to do. Indeed, in a devastated world, you can go anywhere. You might want to:

- Find your Sources of Stability.
- Find any remaining government.
- Find food and water.
- Find guns and ammunition.
- Find and fortify a stronghold.

In your investigations, take time to do these things. However, they are secondary to investigating the monsters. Rearm,

resupply, find loved ones: then get back to investigating.

Here is another rule of thumb: when you break the investigation to do other things, *take one scene, per Investigator*, then resume the investigation.

Example: James Wilthrop, Bessie Bartholemew and Reginald Allbright witness a Martian invasion. The central question of their investigation is: how can they fight the Martians? After fleeing, they find themselves in deserted New York. Each Investigator takes a scene to do other things: James tries to find his sister; Bessie looks for explosives; Reginald attempts to find government in City Hall. After each Investigator has taken their scene, they resume the investigation.

Sometimes, in your games, the investigation will go off track. For example, when the scenario is about finding a weapon to fight the monsters, you may get distracted, investigating who killed your Source of Stability. To avoid this, remember the central question. Take a scene to investigate who killed your Source of Stability, then get back to that question.

REACT

Cthulhu investigations are not just about uncovering mysteries. They are about reacting to the horror. Hence, don't just sit there when bad things are revealed. React to them. Scream, cry, blame someone, point your gun.

In these situations, you have two great roleplaying tools. The first is Stability. When you fail a Stability roll, roleplay your shock (see Roleplaying Instability in the main rulebook). Tremble, twitch, breathe faster, clench your fists. Best of all, try really hard to be calm. No, you're *fine*.

Secondly, remember your Pillars of Sanity. When the horror touches any Pillar of Sanity, roleplay it. Pray to a deity; grasp for a scientific explanation; touch a souvenir of



Tips for Players

your home town. Together with your Drive, your Pillars of Sanity define what your Investigator cares about. When they are threatened, react.

Often, the Investigators' reactions are more fun than the mystery itself. When one Investigator tries to shoot herself, and another tries to stop her, you know you're doing it right.

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

An important part of *Trail of Cthulhu* games is seeing how relationships develop between Investigators. For example: if we are friends, do I protect you from monsters or abandon you to your fate? If

we are enemies, do I learn to respect you or try to kill you?

So build relationships with other Investigators. Decide how you feel about them: do you envy them, hate them, like them or desire them? Sometimes, these relationships emerge when you create characters. If I'm a rationalist scientist and you're a bohemian artist, we probably dislike each other. If I'm a farmer and you're a botanist, we may respect each other or disagree vehemently.

Your main tool, for building relationships, is Occupation. Members of some professions have natural friends and enemies. For example, cops and criminals distrust each other, but cops and nurses

speak the same language. Where you cannot think of natural enmities, invent some. Perhaps, for example, socialites hate journalists, because they invent stories in the gossip columns.

For instant relationships between your Investigators, try this trick. Pick one Investigator you like, one whom you respect and one who makes you suspicious. Even better, do this as a group. Perhaps I like you, but you find me suspicious.

Get the relationships right and they will drive your game forward. When the Keeper leaves the room and the players continue talking in character, the relationships are working well.





Building Mysteries

Post-apocalyptic mysteries have their own quirks and pleasures. Here, then, is how to build scenarios after the apocalypse.

HIDE THE MYTHOS

In the post-apocalyptic world, Mythos entities control the Earth. But this does not mean the Investigators are accustomed to them. They are not used to the sight of mi-go mines, ElderThing cities or Cthulhu strolling past on his way to breakfast. At the beginning of the campaign, all these things are unknown. Whatever the Investigators have seen, there are many more horrors to come.

Hence, at the beginning of each scenario, the horror is unseen. Perhaps it is far away and the Investigators must travel to it. Perhaps it is hidden: many monsters, at the beginning of the scenario, are underground. Either way, when the Investigators see it, it will be for the first time.

Sometimes, creatures will appear in consecutive scenarios. For example, in the first scenario, the Martians invade Earth; in later scenarios, their fighting-machines stride over the post-apocalyptic wasteland. When such creatures become part of the landscape, the Investigators do, to an extent, become accustomed to them.

However, the *Mythos* remains mysterious and unknown. Although the Investigators have seen Martian fighting-machines, they have not seen the Martians themselves, nor the tortures they inflict on humans. Additionally, there are other Mythos entities: although the Investigators have seen Martians, they have not seen a shoggoth. There is always more horror to see.

STRONG VISUAL IMAGES

Use strong visual images as often as you can. At a minimum, each scenario must begin and end with such an image. Think big and dramatic. For example:

- An army of Deep Ones surges through San Francisco.
- Everyone in the town is dead.
- Cthulhu rises from the sea.
- In Paris, the Champs-Élysées is covered with grass and flowers.
- A red weed covers the land.
- A Cyclopean city stands on an icy plateau.
- The shoggoth towers above you, alien eyes and mouths covering its body.
- London burns.

Remember that *The Apocalypse Machine* differs from *Trail of Cthulhu*. In *Trail of Cthulhu*, you rarely describe events that change the world irrevocably: for example, New York falling, R'lyeh rising or Antarctica melting. You might threaten Manhattan with destruction, but not destroy it.

By contrast, *The Apocalypse Machine* demands that you must destroy the world. So let your imagination run wild. Destroy cities. Raise continents. Describe Shub-Niggurath tearing apart the world from inside. In destroying the world, you cannot go too far (and I encourage you to prove me wrong).

MONSTER OF THE WEEK

Most scenarios are about monsters. Sometimes, it is a single monster, such as Daoloth; sometimes, it is a race, such as the Shan. When writing a scenario, choosing a monster is a good place to begin.

By choosing a monster, you get a ready-made supply of themes for your scenario. For example, if you choose the mi-go, your scenario may include:

- Mines.

- Metal cylinders containing brains.
- Floating mi-go bodies.
- Possessed humans.
- Buzzing voices.

Whereas, if you choose Cthulhu, you might include:

- The sea.
- Dreams of R'lyeh.
- Cultists.
- Idols carved from a green, unknown rock.

For a simple scenario, just use one of these elements per scene. For example:

- On their travels, the Investigators find an abandoned town. Although it is empty, they overhear strange, buzzing voices at night.
- In a river, they find a bloated, crustacean body.
- On investigating, they find a surviving human. However, they discover he is possessed, by something strange and alien.
- Strange footprints lead them to an abandoned mine.
- It is filled with metal cylinders, containing the brains of all the former town residents.

Even better, vary these elements slightly. Perhaps Cthulhu sends, not just dreams, but waking visions of R'lyeh. Perhaps the mi-go tunnel under New York City. Perhaps the brains, in the metal cylinders, have been trapped and conscious for centuries. These changes keep the Mythos mysterious.

Additionally, make your images big. Rather than one metal cylinder, have



Building Mysteries

a mine filled with them, containing thousands of human brains. Rather than an idol, have a gargantuan statue, carved from the strange green rock.

Naturally, by putting these elements in, you indicate what the monster is. Most players enjoy this: they enjoy subtle hints of what is coming. However, if you prefer to keep the monster secret, do the opposite: avoid the elements above. For example, to disguise the mi-go involvement, avoid mentioning mines, cylinders and buzzing voices.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

In the post-apocalyptic wasteland, there is much to explore and many distractions. To keep things on track, decide a central question, which the investigation will answer.

Good questions are:

- What caused the apocalypse?
- What are these monsters?
- How can we fight these monsters?
- What happened to my Source of Stability?
- How can we prevent [a terrible event]?
- Where is [a certain object]?
- Where is [a safe haven]?

Often, the natural question is “What the hell is going on?”. Try something more specific than this: perhaps “What caused the apocalypse?” or “How can we fight these monsters?”.

THE HOOK

Once you know your central question, design a hook to bring it to the Investigators’ attention. Give this hook a strong visual image.

For example:

- Thousands of dead mi-go, washed up on the coastline. (Central question: what are these monsters?)
- A vision of R’lyeh rising from the sea. (Central question: how can we prevent R’lyeh rising?)

- A crackling radio broadcast from a group of survivors (Central question: where are the survivors?)

With the hook established, the investigation begins.

THE SPINE

As in *Trail of Cthulhu*, investigations in *The Apocalypse Machine* consist of scenes, linked by core clues. Because post-apocalyptic stories involve exploration, it is useful to think of scenes as locations. Each location

The Hook: A mysterious letter tells the Investigators they must prevent an invasion in the seaside town of Blackpool. There, they find survivors in the Metropole Hotel.

The Metropole Hotel: A dusty, old-fashioned hotel.

Core Clue: Something is hidden in the old quarry.

The Old Quarry: A disused quarry, full of Deep One corpses.

Core Clue: Albert Wade used to talk about these creatures.

Albert Wade’s House: Dark, crumbling, stinking of fish.

Core Clue: The Deep Ones are about to invade. The invasion can only be prevented from the centre of the Deep One’s city, Sh’gmarr.

Sh’gmarr: A cyclopean city emerging from a black mire.

holds many clues. The core clue leads to the next location.

Hence, when you design the spine of an investigation, invent a string of locations. Give each location a short description and a core clue, leading to the next location.

Your core clues might point, unambiguously, to the next location, as in the example above. Alternatively, they might require the Investigators to work out the next location. Choose whichever suits your game.

And, of course, your scenarios need not be linear. They can split into separate threads of investigation.

CLUES

In each location, the Investigators will discover clues. For example, in the example above, the Investigators might question survivors in the Metropole hotel. By doing so, they might discover local legends of a great undersea city.

So put some clues in each location.

You can specify these clues in various ways:

- Just specify the piece of information: “There are local legends of a great undersea city”. The Investigators might discover this clue from different sources, using various abilities. For example, using Oral History, they might get someone to tell them the information. Alternatively, using Library Use, they might find the clue in a book.
- Specify the piece of information and either where it is or who knows it: “Donna Wade knows legends of a great undersea city”. Again, Investigators can use various abilities to uncover the information. For example, they might use Oral History to get Donna to tell them the legends. Alternatively, they might use Intimidation, to threaten her into telling what she knows.



The Apocalypse Machine

- Specify the piece of information, where it is or who knows it and the skill needed to reveal it: "If Reassurance is used, Donna Wade tells the Investigators about legends concerning a great undersea city."

If you use the second or third methods, be prepared to change your plans on the fly. For example, although you specified that Donna Wade must be Reassured to gain the clue, you might allow the Investigators to Intimidate her, instead.

The Metropole Hotel: a dusty, old-fashioned hotel.

*There are local legends of a great undersea city.

Core Clue: There is something hidden in the Old Quarry.

PEOPLE

Since few survive the apocalypse, people are immensely important in *The Apocalypse Machine*. As Keeper, you flesh out the communities and individuals of the post-apocalyptic world.

At each location, describe who is there. For individuals, give three words to describe the person. For communities, give three words to describe the group. For a particular member of a community, take the three words from the community and change one.

For example:

When describing communities, think about the following questions.

- Where do they sleep?
- How do they eat?
- What is their moral outlook?

When describing individuals, consider how they survived the apocalypse. The

Investigators will almost certainly ask. Moreover, they will expect a different story for each person they meet. Be ready with answers.

EVENTS

Investigations in *The Apocalypse Machine* are punctuated by earth-shattering events. These always have a strong visual image attached.

Often, such events happen at the start of the investigation, as the Hook. Sometimes, they happen at the end, as a climax. Alternatively, they may also occur at a particular point in an investigation. For example, in this investigation, the Deep One city of Sh'gmarr rises before the final scene.

For each event, choose three particular things that will happen. For example, when Cthulhu rises from the waves: he towers forty feet in the air; the seas boil; and sky grows dark overhead.

Events are your opportunity, as Keeper, to take centre stage. Do it, quickly, then step back and let the Investigators react to the events.

BUILD THE HORROR

In your scenarios, let the horror increase as the investigation progresses. As a rule of thumb, simply increase the size of the Stability checks. For example:

- Start with a strange letter from a Source of Stability (Stability 2)
- Then find the Source of Stability missing (Stability 3)
- Then find a whole series of letters, addressed to you in the future (Stability 3)
- Finally, discover the Source of Stability was taken into the past, by the Great Race of Yith, and will never return. (Stability 6)

The Hook: A mysterious letter tells the Investigators they must prevent an invasion in the seaside town of Blackpool. There, they find survivors in the Metropole Hotel.

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Albert Wade's House: Dark, crumbling, stinking of fish.

Core Clue: The Deep Ones are about to invade. The invasion can only be prevented from the centre of the Deep One's city, Sh'gmarr.

Sh'gmarr rises from the waves. Monoliths break through streets. The hotel collapses. Black stinking silt oozes up.

Sh'gmarr: A cyclopean city emerging from a black mire. At the centre of Sh'gmarr, the Investigators play a mystical game. It allows them to prevent the Deep Ones' invasion but only if the white flowers invade instead.



Building Mysteries

As a variation, try beginning the game with major horror. For example, start with a deceased Source of Stability, a mi-go graveyard or, best of all, the apocalypse itself. After that, bring the horror back to zero, and build it slowly up.

PROVOKE A REACTION

When inventing horrors for the Investigators to discover, choose something that provokes a reaction. For example:

- A deserted village, which shows signs of recent occupation.
- Human brains, kept artificially alive.
- A cellar of human slaves.

Choose events that cannot be ignored. Choose ones that will provoke different reactions from Investigators. They cannot

just watch; they cannot just run; they must do something.

Best of all, present the Investigators with ethical dilemmas. For example, if they discover a concentration camp of Deep Ones, what do they do? Release them, kill them, leave them imprisoned? Similarly, if the Investigators discover one of their number is possessed by the Shan, what do they do?





The Decaying Earth

Finally, we return to the apocalypse and its aftermath. What happens to the Earth? How does nature take back the cities? In what sort of world will the Investigators live or die?

The answers to these questions, of course, depend on where the Investigators are and how the world was destroyed. But there are many constants: however humanity dies, telephone exchanges go dead and power stations fail.

In this section, then, we move forward through time, considering how the world decays after the apocalypse.

THE FIRST YEAR

After the apocalypse, the power goes off within hours. With no-one to operate the power stations and renew their supply of fuel, there is no electricity. The night after the apocalypse, then, is darker than most Investigators have ever known.

Save vs. Cholera

Let this section inspire your games, rather than constraining them. For example, you might describe the Investigators burning the furniture of an abandoned country house, to heat the freezing ballroom. But don't insist on Scavenging rolls for wood, then more rolls to find food and drink.

Describing the Investigators' struggle to survive is fun, but it is not the point of the game. *The Apocalypse Machine* is about investigating the Mythos, not managing resources or treating diseases. Get back to the investigation quickly.

When the power goes off, so does everything that runs on electricity. As electric water pumps fail, subways flood, as do the foundations of buildings. All modes of communication, including telephones and telegrams, instantly stop working: when the Investigators lift a telephone receiver for the first time, nobody at the telephone exchange will answer.

Running water lasts for a few hours, then stops when the water towers empty. Without working pumps, those towers will never be full again. If there were floods, sewage will have contaminated the water supply; otherwise, the water is probably drinkable. The gas supply, too, fails within hours.

However, on that first night, food is plentiful. The Investigators can eat whatever they find: fresh meat, fish and vegetables are all available. Cooking is more difficult, although not impossible. Once the gas runs out, camping stoves and wood fires are the best option.

Transport, too, is easy. Most cars are unlocked and few require ignition keys. Once the tank runs dry, the Investigators can simply find another car. Similarly, larger vehicles, such as trucks. Steam trains will run, although Investigators must periodically disembark to move the points. Electric trains, of course, are useless.

In the following days, life becomes harder. Without heating, buildings quickly reach the outside temperature. If it gets cold, at night, Investigators must find things to burn. Within days, fresh food decays. Investigators now subsist on tinned food and bottled drinks (mostly beer and orange juice), of which there is a large supply.

Any corpses will stink, but are not particularly dangerous (assuming, of course, the Keeper has not worked zombies into the scenario). They do not cause airborne disease, although if they are near a source of running water, they may contaminate it.

Indeed, finding drinkable water becomes difficult. Sooner or later most sources get contaminated by decaying bodies or human waste. Boiling it removes most contamination, but that requires the Investigators to find a source of heat.

As the winter draws in, survival becomes harder. If pipes freeze, there will be no water; later, when they thaw, houses will flood. Tinned food becomes scarce and essential. The main sources of fuel will be furniture, turf, manure and paper.

Water Power

After the apocalypse, the one power source that survives may be hydroelectricity. After all, where other power sources need resupplying with fuel, hydroelectric power just keeps running, until the dam falls or the world ends. If so, electricity may still supply the surrounding towns.

In time, something will fail: perhaps machinery will wear out or weeds block the turbines. Any leak, in the dam, will grow quickly, until the water crashes through, taking the dam down. Until then, however, power keeps on going.

Perhaps this is unrealistic, but it is conceivable and, as an idea, irresistible. In 1936, the Boulder Dam (now the Hoover Dam) was newly completed, and seemed as though it would last forever. Perhaps it does. Perhaps, in a post-apocalyptic world, Las Vegas burns like an electric lamp in the Nevada desert.



The Decaying Earth

ONE YEAR ON

Within a year, nature begins to take back towns and cities. Plants grow wherever the sunlight hits. By the end of the year, creepers and ivy cover buildings; lawns grown untended; moss covers stonework.

As cracks grow in roads, seeds grow within them, pushing them apart more. In colder climates, freezing water pushes the cracks apart still further. Within a year, roads and sidewalks are cracked, pushed apart by weeds. The pavement is not impassable yet, but it soon will be.

On all man-made surfaces, a layer of soil begins to form, from decaying moss, lichen and other vegetation. More plants grow in this soil. Patches of grass appear on roads. Then the plants spread, gradually burying the road.

Meanwhile, animals have returned to the cities. First, birds arrive, scattering their droppings over the buildings. Then the abandoned cities are invaded, by animals that people had chased out of gardens: perhaps foxes, bears or deer, depending on the city. At the end of that first year, then, nature is everywhere. If you listen in an abandoned city, you do not hear silence: you hear birdsong.

What about the animals that previously lived in the cities? Dogs die quickly, having been bred for looks, rather than survival. Some live on scraps for a while, but are quickly killed when larger predators arrive. Cats are wilier and harder, forming feral packs and surviving on birds. Rats and cockroaches, having survived on human waste, die quickly.

Now, an important question is: is there a zoo nearby? If so, and the animals escape, many will survive. Eventually, they may migrate south, but for now, they survive within the abandoned city. In their investigations, then, Investigators may encounter lions, snakes and tigers.

Meanwhile, in the abandoned cities, buildings are decaying. As nails rust, wooden boards spring apart. Simultaneously, moss, lichen, creepers and ivy push apart cracks in the brickwork. At the end of that first year, most buildings leak. Basements fill with water. Once this happens, plants grow within the buildings, and their destruction accelerates.

Did the Earth Move?

Was there an earthquake? If so, whether the cause was natural or monstrous, it cuts off everything instantly. Power cables, water pipes and lines of communication break. Gas lines break, too, and ignite as they do so. Railways bend, making them unusable.

These things, of course, will fail in any apocalypse. However, whereas they would normally last hours, days or weeks, an earthquake stops them instantly.

Most importantly, the earthquake damages the roads. Most apocalypses are kind to the roads: they only decay years later, when weeds destroy them from beneath. An earthquake, however, makes roads impassable within minutes.

Apart from the decay, however, the buildings are frozen in time. Bodies remain where they died; books remain open; drinks sit unfinished on tables. Entering such buildings is like entering an old photograph: every object tells a story.

As well as buildings, cars are under attack by plants. Seedlings grow, under the hood of the car and even in the interior. At the end of the first year, most cars are homes to mosses, lichen and small plants. They still run, but not for long.

When the Investigators visit the city, then, they will find nature taking it back. Nevertheless, there is little to halt their investigations: shelter, transport and food can all be found. The biggest danger is a chance encounter with a wild animal: a wolf, bear or an escaped zoo animal. Although human skeletons lie on the ground, life goes on.

THREE YEARS ON

Three years after the apocalypse, buildings are falling apart. Roofs are broken: many have trees growing through them. Windows break too, and once one breaks, the wind ensures that others follow suit. Now, the Investigators can find shelter, but it will take longer.

Cars, too, have been taken over by plants. Many have trees growing from their hoods. Again, the Investigators can find transport, but it will take time. To make things worse, the roads are becoming impassable. They are covered with cracks and patches of grass

and weeds. Occasionally, trees grow in the middle of the road. Equipment also begins to decay: most importantly, batteries begin to corrode.

When the Investigators come to the cities, they will find larger predators there. At first, there was little for these animals; now, however, there are smaller animals to eat. And, of course, Investigators.

TEN YEARS ON

Nature has had a decade to reclaim the land. Everything humanity constructed is crumbling, piece by piece. When the Investigators arrive in a city, they find a natural paradise: vines and creepers swarm over buildings, lawns have become forests.

As nature flourishes, it pulls buildings apart. The mortar between bricks dissolves. Seeds enter the cracks to complete the destruction. On these buildings, the paint is dulled and flaking, while balconies and masonry have fallen. Inside them, locks and bolts have rusted solid.

The higher buildings begin to fall. First, as their foundations become waterlogged, they lean to the side. When high winds come, they collapse entirely.

There are now two great dangers. The first is water. Low-lying cities, such as Boston and New York, flood regularly. Amsterdam and parts of London are now underwater.

The second danger is fire. Piles of dry leaves and timber have gathered, ready for a



The Apocalypse Machine

single spark to ignite them. Since lightning conductors have rusted, a lightning bolt will do this. Alternatively, cars may provide the spark. As they corrode, cars become time-bombs, suddenly exploding with little warning.

Once started, the fire spreads rapidly, leaping from building to building. Sparks, drifting on the wind, spread the fire over rivers and other natural breaks. With no-one to fight it, the flames burn until there is no fuel left. They leave behind melted roads and twisted metal. Investigators caught in a city fire are in great danger: if they stay in a building, they burn; if they step outside, the boiling road surface kills them.

Nature

From the apocalypse onwards, nature begins to undo humanity's work. To know what any city will look like, after an apocalypse, look at countryside that surrounds it: that is what the city will gradually become. Both plants and animals invade.

In particular, if woodland was cleared to build a city, it will grow back. Humanity has spent centuries fighting back the forests. When humanity dies, the forests return.

This assumes, of course, that the apocalypse left nature untouched. If the soil is infertile, plants will not grow. Nevertheless, do not underestimate the power of nature to fight back. Even if grasses are dead, mosses and hardier plants invade human cities.





The Decaying Earth

Ten years after the apocalypse, transportation becomes difficult. The Investigators will search for a long time before finding a usable car. Even if they do, the roads are nearly impassable, covered with grass, scrub and trees.

While this is bad news for humans, it is good for animals. Previously, roads had blocked their migration routes. Now grown over, the roads aid their migration, giving them pathways to the south. These pathways lead through the largest cities. Packs of wolves, for example, arrive in Manhattan and Chicago.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS ON

A century after the apocalypse, most signs of humanity are gone. Buildings have collapsed. Most larger structures, such as bridges, have collapsed too.

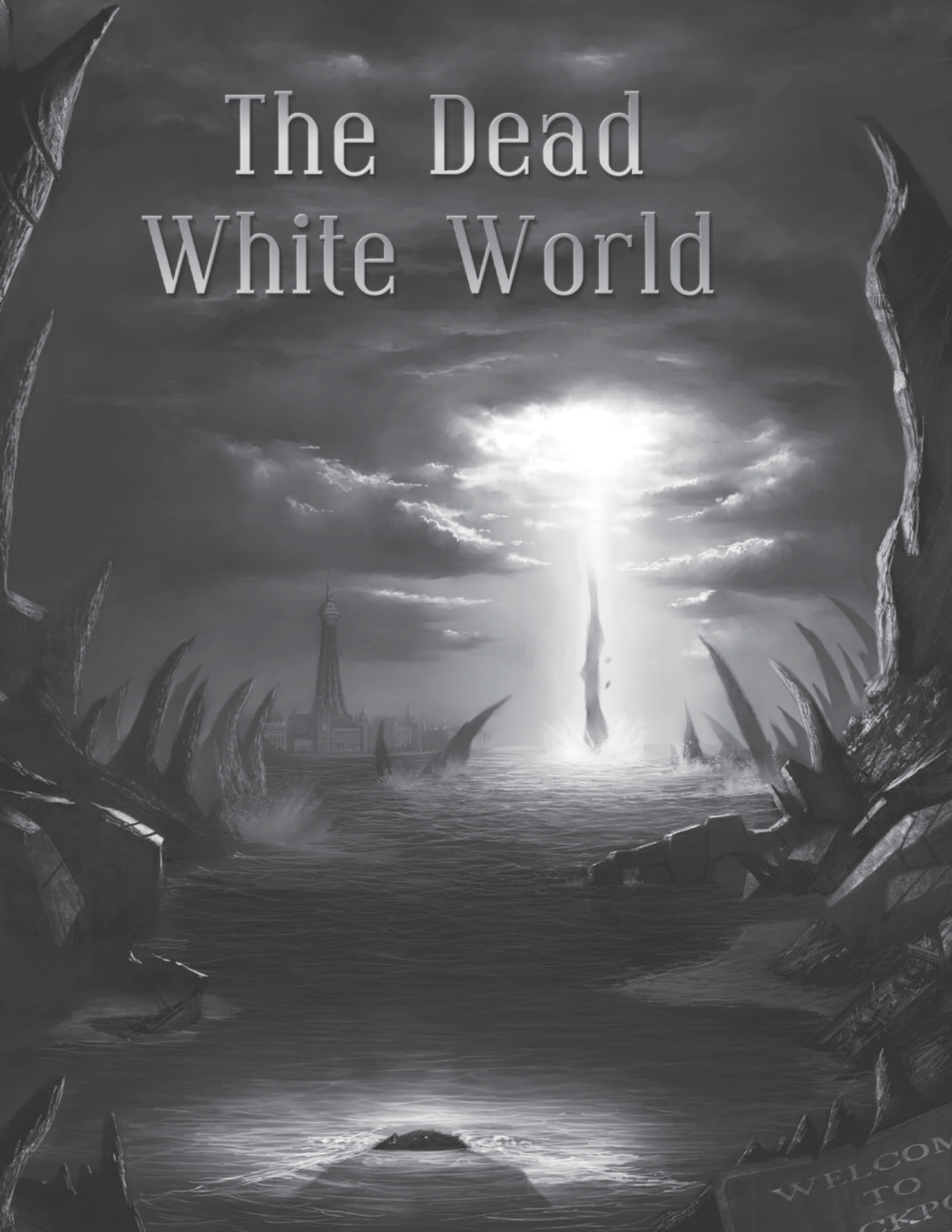
So what survives? Firstly, anything built from stone will stand. Just as Greek and Roman temples stand today, so Notre Dame de Paris and the Tower of London survive, a century after the apocalypse. The faces on

Mount Rushmore last forever; so does the Statue of Liberty, although it may have fallen into the water. Long after Tower Bridge and the Golden Gate Bridge fall, stone bridges remain.

Secondly, any underground chamber that escapes flooding will last forever. The catacombs of Paris, underground bases and research facilities all survive, long after the apocalypse. Finally, and crucially, bank vaults and their contents survive forever. The most valuable books and documents will be hard to reach, but they will be there.



The Dead White World





Introduction

The scenarios of *Cthulhu Apocalypse* begin with a train crash in Great Britain. When the Investigators recover consciousness, they find the world has mysteriously died. Then the creatures of the Mythos arise: the Great Race, the Deep Ones, the Shan and Shub-Niggurath herself. Finally, as a race of intelligent plants takes over Britain, the Investigators are forced to flee.

They arrive in Savannah, in the United States. From there, they travel across a deserted, radioactive wasteland, until they arrive at the West Coast and a final confrontation with creatures impossibly old and powerful. Finally, as the Earth breaks apart, the Investigators get one final chance to save the world.

How it Ends

On 2nd November 1936, the stars align. As ancient creatures stir beneath the sea, earthquakes shake England and great waves hit its south coast.

The waves smash into Dover harbour, dashing ships against harbour walls. This damages a Russian ship, the *Lysenko*, whose cargo of seeds begins to leak. The seeds are a Russian agricultural

experiment, co-opted by the British Government as a potential weapon in the coming war.

With astonishing speed, the seeds spread. They pollute the water invisibly, killing anyone that drinks it. As they multiply, they turn rivers and lakes milky white. When the seeds touch land, they become beautiful plants, which grow almost instantly and release more seeds. Within hours, almost everyone in Britain is dead.

Now, the ancient creatures rise from beneath the sea. Striding thirty feet above the waves, they take ownership of the ocean.

Some seeds spread to the Canada and the United States, taking root on the east coast. Here, President Roosevelt's reaction is swift. The General Headquarters Air Force drops a new, barely tested, atomic weapon on the spreading plants, killing them instantly.

Yet the weapon's destruction is even more appalling than predicted. Nobody knows why: perhaps the weapons are more powerful than tests suggested;

perhaps more sinister elements are at work. Whatever the reason, much of the Eastern Seaboard is instantly devastated. Even Washington feels the blast: Roosevelt is killed within a collapsing wing of the White House. Then, as the wind blows west, a radioactive cloud kills many more. Only deep in the South do people survive.

Thus, the human race nears extinction. The races of the Mythos swarm over the Earth. Deep Ones claim the coasts. The mi-go surge into human cities to build new mines. The Great Race, eager to learn from the human apocalypse, snatch survivors to study them.

Meanwhile, still older creatures are waking. Cthulhu stirs in his watery prison. And Shub-Niggurath, who grows through the centre of the Earth, begins to writhe.

THE BEGINNING

Yet most of that is in the future. In these three scenarios, the Investigators see the Mythos rise and the human race fall. They explore the horrors of the Dead White World.





The Investigators

AGNES BARTLETT

Drive: Arrogance. **Occupation:** Author.

Sources of Stability: Major Tom North, my father. Jane Partridge, my mother. Mrs Handy, my next door neighbour.

Pillars of Sanity: Nature can be tamed. People have inner strength. The countryside.

Investigative skills: Anthropology 1, Architecture 1, Biology 1, History 2, Languages 2, Library Use 2, Theology 1, Assess Honesty 2, Bargain 1, Intimidation 1, Reassurance 1, Craft 1, Evidence Collection 2, Outdoorsman 2.

General skills: Athletics 10, Driving 10, Health 10, Stability 10, Electrical Repair 5, Firearms 6, Mechanical Repair 5, Riding 5, Sanity 10.

In the quiet Cotswolds, you write romantic novels. Over the years, you have built a fan base, and your work involves writing to the formula they like. You watch sheep in the neighbouring fields, while writing tales of young love.

It is not a love that you have experienced yourself. Your love for your husband is built, not on passion, but practicality: he is amiable, useful and your daily routines fit well together. Sometimes, friends ask you whether your novels are an outlet for a hidden passion, but they are not. You are perfectly content.

In your marriage, you are the practical one. You find physical labour a useful break from your writing and enjoy making minor repairs about the house. Recently, you even built a small outhouse, teaching yourself bricklaying.

Richard, on the other hand, is happiest in the kitchen and enjoys cooking your meals.

Thus, you fit together rather well. Today, you are travelling to the wedding of a less well-fitting couple. Jackie Golightly, a flighty girl, is marrying Frederick Grant, a pleasant boy from a family you know. Your father, Major North, knows the boy from the army and is also invited.

It will undoubtedly be a pleasant day. You are particularly looking forward to the train journey, which you habitually pass by staring out of the window, occasionally writing your thoughts in a notebook. Richard has packed you both a lunch of bottled orange juice and sandwiches from yesterday's chicken. It will be a pleasure.

RICHARD BARTLETT

Drive: Follower. **Occupation:** Dilettante.

Sources of Stability: Major North, my father-in-law. Edward Bartlett, my father. Mrs Handy, my neighbour.

Pillars of Sanity: You can always rely on your money. You can trust plants. There is nothing that a good night's sleep won't cure.

Investigative skills: Archaeology 1, Biology 2, Geology 1, History 1, Languages 2, Library Use 2, Medicine 1, Theology 2, Art 1, Assess Honesty 1, Bureaucracy 1, Flattery 2, Oral History 1, Reassurance 1, Outdoorsman 2.

General skills: Athletics 5, Driving 5, Health 10, Sense Trouble 5, Scuffling 5, Stability 10, Firearms 10, First Aid 10, Riding 10, Sanity 10.

If you are honest, your farm does not make much money. Some years, especially recent years, it even loses money. Yet you still love farming, in the traditional way you learned from your father, even if more modern techniques would be more profitable.

In fact, your love of plants has become your obsession. You have taught yourself botany, through practical experience and hugely expensive books. You frequently travel to the British Museum Library to read botanical journals and are well-known at Kew Gardens.

Fortunately, you have a fortune to rely on. There is also your wife, Agnes, who writes rather silly novels. You are, as your friends tell you, something of a kept man. You are devoted to Agnes: you would, to be frank, follow her anywhere. She is your rock, the one constant in your life.

Agnes is off to a wedding in Dover, so naturally you are going too. You enjoy your days out with Agnes, passing them mostly in companionable silence and occasionally in gentle conversation. The journey promises to be pleasant.

MARK GOLIGHTLY

Drive: Duty. **Occupation:** Journalist.

Sources of Stability: Jacqueline Golightly, my soon-to-be-married sister. Major Golightly, my father. Richard Dimpleby, a colleague at BBC radio.

Pillars of Sanity: The truth must be reported. Humanity will get through this. There must be a rational explanation.



The Investigators

Investigative skills: History 1, Languages 2, Library Use 2, Assess Honesty 2, Bureaucracy 2, Flattery 1, Reassurance 2, Anthropology 1, Art 1, Evidence Collection 2, Outdoorsman 1, Photography 2.
General skills: Athletics 10, Driving 10, Health 10, Sense Trouble 5, Scuffling 6, Stability 10, Firearms 5, First Aid 5, Sanity 10.

You were born in 1901, the year that Marconi first broadcast radio across the Atlantic. Throughout your childhood, you were fascinated by radio, tinkering with electrical circuits until you could send a signal.

Once you reached adulthood, however, you put your love of radio aside and followed your father's career as a journalist. A friend got you a job on the South Wales Echo, but Cardiff was too rainy for your taste, and you quickly transferred to the Evening Post in Nottingham. After several long and happy years, you were asked to join the BBC as a radio reporter.

Here, finally, was an opportunity to combine your passions for journalism and radio. Journalism, you have always believed, was not merely a profession but a calling: you have a duty to tell people what is happening. So, at the beginning of this year, you took up the post. Your family, especially your sister, regularly tuned into the BBC Regional Programme to hear your voice.

Today is your first day off since you started the job. You have been given leave to attend your sister's wedding in Dover. To pass the journey, you have made a flask of coffee: in fact, if you are honest, you reheated last night's coffee in a pan. Although the train is late and you are sad to be away from the microphone, you look forward to the event with happy anticipation.

IRENE MIDGELEY

Drive: Curiosity. **Occupation:** Doctor.

Sources of Stability: Jemima Midgeley, my mother. Professor Elizabeth Derringer, who trained me at the Royal Free Hospital. Dr Jason Travis, my fiancé.

Pillars of Sanity: Keeping people alive is what counts. If you work hard enough, you can achieve anything. Women can do anything as well as men.

Investigative skills: Biology 2, Languages 2, Library Use 1, Medicine 4, Theology 1, Assess Honesty 2, Bargain 1, Bureaucracy 1, Oral History 1, Reassurance 2, Streetwise 1, Anthropology 2, Astronomy 1, Forensics 2, Pharmacy 2.

General skills: Driving 10, Fleeing 10, Health 8, Sense Trouble 10, Preparedness 10, Stability 10, First Aid 10, Mechanical Repair 3, Sanity 10.

You are used to people not believing you are a doctor. You would prefer, however, that they didn't assume you were a nurse, especially when they then ask where the doctor is.

Getting trained as a doctor was difficult, especially given your middle-class upbringing: it would have been easier if your parents were landowners, but they were teachers. Nevertheless, you fought your way into training at the Royal Free, then talked your way into a job at the London Child Guidance Clinic. Children wouldn't be your first choice of patients, but you cannot complain.

You met Jason, a junior doctor at the Royal Free, during your training. He amused with his over-gentlemanly solicitations: was it really necessary, for example, for him to send you flowers before asking you to dinner? You are surprised he didn't ask your father first.

Surprisingly, you have been invited to a wedding in Dover. You went to school with the bride, Jackie Golightly. You were good friends at the time, although you are surprised she still remembers you. Nevertheless, it will be a pleasant change from the clinic.

EDITH PEEL

Drive: Antiquarianism. **Occupation:** Archaeologist.

Sources of Stability: Patience Peel, your aging mother. Harriet Chalmers Adams, your rival. Martha Peel, your younger sister.

Pillars of Sanity: If you can shoot it, it can't hurt you. Nothing can compete with the dangers you saw in Africa. Ignore the pain and it will go away.

Investigative skills: Anthropology 1, Archaeology 2, Architecture 1, Biology 2, Geology 1, History 2, Library Use 2, Medicine 2, Occult 1, Assess Honesty 1, Bargain 1, Flattery 1, Oral History 1, Chemistry 1, Outdoorsman 1, Photography 1.

General skills: Athletics 10, Driving 10, Health 10, Scuffling 10, Stability 10, Explosives 1, Firearms 10, Sanity 10, Weapons 5.

You have just returned from Africa, where you unearthed ancient and strange cities in dense forests. While there, you were attacked by a lion and survived. Having coped with that, you feel nothing could scare you.

For the last week, you have been with your elderly mother in Chelsea, an affluent part of London. These visits are becoming longer, you find, since her memory is not what it was. When you arrived, she did not recognise you: the first time this has happened. You wonder what will happen to her: will you be expected to abandon your travels and look after her?



The Dead White World

Perhaps it was this thought that prompted you to leave. An invitation arrived to speak in Paris and you jumped at the chance. You threw some things in a suitcase, including your water bottle: you never trust the local water, however irrational it may be in this country.

This morning, you took the first train from London to Dover. As is typical with British trains, it was severely delayed for an unknown reason. Now, however, the train is moving again.

In fact, the invitation is not for another week. However, by a happy coincidence, your old friend Frederick is getting married in Dover. You had declined the invitation as a matter of course, but fate obviously wants you to go. You have not seen Freddie for ten years. It will be a memorable occasion.

YOUR INVESTIGATORS

Alternatively, the players may create their own Investigators. If they do, ensure they have **Sources of Stability** that fit the following descriptions:

- The bride at the wedding.
- Another guest at the wedding.
- A London resident.
- Another London resident, preferably one who is less mentally able (perhaps elderly).

Don't combine descriptions: for example, the bride at the wedding should not also be the London resident.

Additionally, incorporate the following facts into the Investigators' stories:

- None have drunk water from the tap today.
- At the beginning of the scenario, all of the Investigators are on a train to Dover.
- Most are travelling to attend a wedding at the Crown Hotel.

And, when allocating points to abilities:

- Cap **Health**, **Sanity** and **Stability** at 10.

- Ensure some Investigators have the **First Aid** ability.
- Players may leave 3 points unspent, in both Investigative and General abilities. They may allocate these on the fly during the campaign, when they need a particular ability.

If players want to be Pilots or take the **Piloting** ability, tell them they will not discover a working plane until later in the campaign. If they survive until the sixth scenario, they will have their chance to fly: until then, they will be a frustrated pilot.

Finally, consider whether you want Investigators to have the **Psychoanalysis** ability. Since the **Stability** losses in *Cthulhu Apocalypse* are large, it is fairer if they do. However, you might decide to ban **Psychoanalysis**. After all, going mad is fun.





The Supporting Cast

FLORENCE CRISPIN

Florence is aging, yet reluctant to relinquish her youth. Her life is a whirl of parties, functions and events, free from responsibility, but not from care. Nevertheless, she is self-assured and does not expect to be challenged.

To portray Florence:

- Mime holding a glass in one hand, a cigarette in the other. Hold the cigarette between your first and second fingers, turning your hand sideways so the fingers are horizontal.
- Speak loudly and imperiously.
- Occasionally look away, as if searching for someone more interesting.

JACK GARTH

Jack is a middle-aged family man from Blackpool. He is also, as it happens, a Deep One hybrid. He has no time for niceties: he says what he means and tells people what they need to do. Thus, he is honest, bordering on blunt.

To portray Jack:

- Keep your face deadpan.
- Speak directly and bluntly.
- Occasionally point at the person to whom you are speaking.

MARTIN GARTH

Martin is Jack's young son, another Deep One hybrid. He is scared by the changes about him.

To portray Martin:

- Widen your eyes slightly.
- When someone talks to you, look at them suddenly and guiltily.
- Raise the pitch of your voice slightly.

MARTHA GARTH

Martha is amiable and practical. In a crisis, she is someone you would want near you. In an apocalypse, she is someone you would need. Unlike the rest of her family, she is entirely human.

To portray Martha:

- Smile.
- Be energetic.
- Suggest people do things to aid the community, imagining, as you do so, that the things are enormous fun to do.

WILFRED GARTH

Wilfred, a Deep One hybrid, is almost entirely monstrous. He lives imprisoned in a house in Lytham St Annes.

To portray Wilfred:

- Often talk to the table or the air, as though seeing things there.
- Speak as though you are attempting not to burp.
- Occasionally, swallow hard.

JESSICA MARDELL

Jessica is a self-assured young socialite, utterly at ease in the company of her peers. When the Investigators meet her, however, she is captured and terrified. Her manner, then, changes as the Investigator know her.

To portray Jessica at first:

- Widen your eyes, as if scared.
- Let your voice tremble.
- Imagine backing away from the person talking to you.

To portray Jessica later:

- Look directly at people when you speak to them.
- Occasionally, touch them gently on the arm.
- Sit up straight.



The Dead White World

PERRY MONTAGUE

Perry has an unfocussed intelligence, which has never been effectively harnessed in a job. When he speaks, there are clear flashes of brilliance, accompanied by a relentless desire to be taken seriously. He wears a moustache and smokes a pipe, both chosen to emphasise how different he is from others.

To portray Perry:

- Mime holding and waving a pipe.
- Occasionally talk over other people, when you think you have something more interesting to say.
- Pepper your conversation with literary or scientific references.

THE RUSSIAN

The Russian is a scientist, dressed as a sailor. When the apocalypse came, he got drunk and reached for his shotgun. He captured Jessica Mardell. Now, he stumbles about Dover, his vision swimming with alcohol and self-hate.

To portray the Russian:

- Tighten the corners of your mouth in anger.
- Turn your face away from anyone that speaks, but look at them with your eyes.
- Try hard to articulate words accurately.

BILL SHAKESPEARE

Bill Shakespeare is a postman, working in Battersea, London, where he sorts undelivered mail.

When the apocalypse came, he simply continued with his work: partly for the comfort of routine, partly from a conviction that the postal service would become valuable as the world was rebuilt.

To portray Bill Shakespeare:

- Tuck your chin in, to draw your head backwards.
- Be friendly and welcoming.
- Occasionally turn your palms upwards, in an accommodating gesture.

SOURCE OF STABILITY

This **Source of Stability** lives in London. They are largely housebound. Since the apocalypse, they have simply continued with their day-to-day routine, subsisting on their supply of food and bottled drink.

They are also currently possessed, by a member of the Great Race of Yith. This is hard to tell, however, since the person normally appears to be somewhat bewildered. This may be because they are elderly or simply because, as schoolteachers would say, they are somewhat “slow”.

To portray the **Source of Stability**:

- Respond to questions slowly, as if thinking is difficult.
- Appear amiable.
- When someone speaks, turn slowly to face them.





The Rules

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Here are some tips for playing *Cthulhu Apocalypse* with the *Trail of Cthulhu* rules.

Firstly, use the **Pulp** style of play (*Trail of Cthulhu* p7). Although this is not a traditional pulp adventure, the Pulp rules give the Investigators better chances in combat and against insanity. They will need every chance they can get.

Note, also, that each scenario specifies “The Question”, alongside The Hook, The Horrible Truth and The Spine. Tell the players this question at the start of each scenario: it indicates exactly what to investigate.

REFRESHING POOLS

Refresh Investigative pools at the end of each scenario.

Refresh General pools, except for **Health**, **Stability** and **Sanity**, when the Investigators are in a temporary safe haven. Generally, if the Investigators experience trouble during the night, they are not safe and cannot refresh their pools (even if, after the trouble, they get back to sleep).

IMPROVEMENTS

At the end of each scenario, each player takes one additional build point to improve their Investigator.

Note: this is one build point per scenario, not, as in the main rulebook, one per session attended. They may also reassign two build points.

DEATH AND MADNESS

Expect Investigators to die. Never hold back from killing an Investigator. It’s an apocalypse.

Similarly, expect Investigators to go mad. After all, when monsters rise from the sea, people get disturbed. The **Stability** losses in these scenarios are huge. Again, it’s an apocalypse.

When an Investigator dies or becomes incurably insane, either create a new character or create an NPC as an Investigator. In these scenarios, Jessica Mardell, Bill Shakespeare, Florence Crispin, Martha Garth and Perry Montague all make good Investigators. Alternatively, create a hitherto unmentioned member of the Fanham’s Hall or Blackpool communities as an Investigator.

In any case, when a player’s Investigator dies, bring that player back into the game as soon as you can.

POWERFUL WEAPONS

To fight the horrors, some Investigators will want powerful weapons, such as machine guns and bazookas. After all, since the apocalypse, they can simply walk into military bases and get them.

Allow this occasionally. However, if powerful weapons become a regular feature, they will become dull. Hence, such weapons should somehow disappear at the end of each scenario. Perhaps they jam; perhaps the Investigators cannot maintain them properly; perhaps they run out of ammunition. Be honest with the players about this: they can find powerful weapons, but they won’t last long.

Alternatively, simply ban powerful weapons. Perhaps, when the Investigators look for them, they have been taken by someone else. Alternatively, perhaps all such weapons are jammed with the alien plants that spread over Britain. The plants, being intelligent, have disabled the most powerful weapons.

Certainly, however, all aircraft are disabled, their engines blooming with alien plants. This ensures the Investigators cannot simply hop over the ocean at the first sign of trouble. Again, the intelligent plants have destroyed the Investigators’ means of escape.

APOCALYPSE TIME

Let us be clear about the timing. Early this morning, an earthquake capsized the *Lysenko* and the seeds began to leak. Within minutes, they began growing around the harbour. A northwesterly wind carried the seeds inland. By whatever means, the seeds travelled faster than this wind.

Hence, two hours after the *Lysenko* capsized, Britain was covered in white seedlings. At this point, the water was infected, but appeared normal: the seeds had not multiplied sufficiently to turn it white. When people woke and drank the water, they became infected.

As Britain was waking, the Investigators boarded the train in London. For various reasons, they had not drunk water that morning. The train was severely delayed and nearly derailed by an earth tremor. Later on its journey, a greater earthquake completely derailed the train. Many were killed and the Investigators were unconscious for several hours.



The Dead White World

Meanwhile, the seeds blew across the Atlantic Ocean. Travelling even faster than the wind, they landed within hours on the shores of Newfoundland and Maine. Quickly, they began multiplying. (Here, some artistic licence is necessary: to complete the journey within hours, the seeds must have travelled with astonishing speed, much faster than the wind).

Thus, while the Investigators were first delayed on the train, and then unconscious, the people of Britain died. When the Investigators come round, many hours after they departed, almost everyone is dead.

DRIVE YOURSELF MAD

One of the pleasures of *Trail of Cthulhu* is going mad. To assist players in this process, use these alternative rules, which hand the responsibility for Stability checks over to the players.

Firstly, let the players have the Stability Loss Table from the main rules (*Trail of Cthulhu*, p. 70). Then, instead of calling for **Stability** Checks yourself, get players to call for them, whenever something happens that disturbs their Investigator. Let them set their own potential **Stability** losses, using the chart as a guide.

To further encourage madness, ignore the usual penalties associated with low **Stability**: that is, continue to allow Investigative Abilities to be used by Investigators who are shaken, and add no additional penalty to General Ability checks.

Additionally, let players have the Cthulhu Mythos Stability and Sanity Loss table from *Trail of Cthulhu* (p. 76). Then, whenever they discover something using the **Cthulhu Mythos** ability, ask them to decide their own **Stability** and **Sanity** losses, using the table as a guide.

These rules encourage players to enjoy going mad, rather than resisting it. They treat **Sanity** and **Stability** loss as a pleasure, not a punishment. In an ideal game, the players will seize on every attempt to lose **Stability** and **Sanity**.

All **Stability** checks, throughout the game, are Mythos related.

RAVE ON

In *Cthulhu Apocalypse*, it is probable that Investigators will go mad. Indeed, as mentioned above, we hope the Investigators will enjoy going mad, losing **Sanity** and **Stability** with relish.

However, by the standard rules, their character must leave the game when their **Sanity** reaches zero or their **Stability** reaches -12. This may be a disincentive. It also robs the player of the opportunity to play someone truly, utterly mad. This alternative rule, then, allows mad Investigators to continue playing.

When **Sanity** reaches zero or **Stability** reaches -12, they are mad, as before. They should roleplay this.

Yet, like Danforth in *At The Mountains Of Madness*, the Investigator can continue to function. As with the Drive Yourself Mad rules, they can use Investigative and General skills. The Investigator cannot lose any more **Sanity** or **Stability**, nor regain either.

The Investigator is, effectively, over. They are an empty shell, continuing to function. The player should retire the Investigator at the earliest opportunity: perhaps at a break in the action; perhaps at the end of the game session; certainly, by the end of the scenario.

Meanwhile, however, the Investigator keeps going, powered by adrenaline and madness.

CLUES

Throughout this campaign, clues are presented as follows. First, the piece of information itself. Next, some examples of abilities that might reveal the information.

For example:

1. The Russian sailor worked under *Lysenko*, a Russian agronomist. The plants you have seen are a Russian experiment, originally intended as an agricultural crop, then repurposed as weapons.

- **Botany**: Although they are in Russian, the papers begin to make sense. They are records of an agricultural experiment, conducted under *Lysenko*, a Russian agronomist. The crop spread so wildly that it was destroyed and repackaged as a weapon.
- **Languages (Russian)**: He tells you about the plants. They were intended as an agricultural crop, but it became clear that their only use was as a weapon. He is unclear where *Lysenko* found the plants originally: he mentions a meteor, but you are not sure why.

Here, **Botany** and **Languages (Russian)** are simply examples. Any ability can reveal the clue, if you think it is plausible.

For example, an Investigator could use Intimidation to threaten the sailor into revealing the information. Perhaps, even, an Investigator could use **History** to remember a historical example of plants being used as weapons and relate that to the current situation. Use your discretion as Keeper. If you think an ability could plausibly get the clue, reveal the information.



The Dead White World

For the Investigators, the end of the world begins in Dover. After a train crash, they awake to discover that the world has died, with dead bodies littering the roads.

Exploring further, they find a Russian tanker, which has leaked its cargo of seeds. These seeds are a biological weapon. When the Investigators find the tanker, creatures arise from the sea, and the Investigators must flee.

This scenario is constructed around two big events:

- Waking up to find everyone is dead.
- Creatures rising from the sea and destroying Dover.

Compared to other scenarios, there is little investigation. The scenario is about witnessing the apocalypse, rather than investigating it. So encourage the players to linger, particularly during the initial scenes.

THE HOOK

Everyone is dead.

THE QUESTION

What caused the apocalypse?

THE HORRIBLE TRUTH

In Dover Harbour, a Russian tanker contains seeds for the British government. These seeds are weapons, created by a Russian agronomist. Once released, they infect water supplies and breed with astonishing rapidity.

This morning, an undersea earthquake produced a great wave, which dashed the trailer against the harbour wall. The seeds leaked out and began to multiply.

At first, the seeds were invisible in the water. People who drank it later died, as the seeds grew inside them. The only survivors were those who had not touched the polluted water.

The earthquake also caused a train to derail. It crashed, killing almost all the passengers. Hours later, a few survivors wake, to see how the world has ended. These are the Investigators.

The Investigators have not been infected with the seeds. Having been unconscious for hours, they have not drunk the infected water. If they drank anything before losing consciousness, it was tea on the train, and the tea urns were sealed.

Hours later, the water is white, packed with the seeds. Meanwhile, the earthquakes continue and the sea-creatures prepare to emerge.

THE SPINE

When the Investigators wake after a train crash, they find everyone dead and everything covered with white flowers.

They reach the Crown Hotel, where they find their **Sources of Stability** dead. There, a Russian sailor attempts to kill the Investigators. From the sailor, they find that the flowers came from a ship in Dover Harbour.

As they approach the ship, there are earthquakes. Inside, the Investigators find the flowers were ordered, as a weapon, by the British government. Finally, great creatures emerge from the sea, and the Investigators flee.

PROLOGUE: THE PLANT

To begin the scenario, choose one Investigator: a botanist or biologist is ideal, but any Investigator will do. Reveal the following information slowly, step-by-step, as they wake and look around.

When that Investigator wakes, they see a plant growing before their eyes. It is delicate, like a snowdrop. Yet, since it is early winter, it cannot be a snowdrop. Certainly, it is not a common plant.

If the Investigator touches the plant, it scatters white seeds. The wind catches the seeds, blowing them far away.

Coincidence

Why are the Investigators the only people to survive the train crash? Isn't this an extraordinary coincidence?

In fact, the situation is the other way round. Only a few people survive the train crash, by not drinking water, then avoiding serious injury when the train derailed. Those people are the only ones left to investigate. Hence, they become the Investigators.

Now, the Investigator feels grass pressing against their face. They are, they realise, lying in a field. Looking around, they see similar plants scattered everywhere.

Next, as their eyes focus, they see a wrecked train. Slowly, they remember. They were on a train to Dover to attend a wedding. It must have crashed.

THE CRASHED TRAIN

The train lies on its side. As the other Investigators wake, the first thing they notice is the cold: they have lain motionless for hours in the wintry air. The shadows are lengthening, the sky is cloudy. Within an hour, the sun will fall below the horizon.

Ask the Investigators where they wake up at the crash site. Some have been thrown clear of the wreck; some are wedged between corpses. If the Investigators are strangers to each other, let them meet now, as they rescue each other, attend to wounds and search for survivors.

But there are no survivors. Bar the Investigators, everyone is dead. Indeed, everything is eerily still: there is no noise, save for the piercing cry of an occasional seagull.



The Dead White World

At the top of an embankment is the railway. The tracks curve, here, and it appears the train shot straight off the tracks. The road to Dover runs alongside the railway. Indeed, the town is distantly visible, about three miles away.

There is a signal box, a short walk down the tracks. Inside, the Investigators find the signalman's corpse. It is curled in a corner, with agony on the face and a white froth around the lips. If the Investigators try the telephone, there is no reply. Indeed, on closer examination, there is no electric power.

The road, also, is strangely still. About half a mile towards Dover is a car, parked at the side of the road. As the Investigators approach, they notice a man and a woman inside. Both are dead. The man has shot the woman, then himself, with a revolver clutched in his hand. They are holding hands and, judging from the rings, are a married couple. Around their lips, again, is the white froth.

As the Investigators head further towards Dover, they find more cars, similarly parked. It seems that people tried to flee Dover, then realised they were dying. One family sits on the grass verge, huddled together. Two young women, together in a car, killed themselves by drinking bleach from a tea flask. All have the white froth around their lips.

If the Investigators prefer to drive to Dover, they can take any of these cars. They will need to move the bodies first.

As they travel, the Investigators realise the plants are everywhere. Clumps are scattered along the grassy banks at the side of the road. When the wind gusts, or the Investigators pass in a car, the seeds float gently away, like a wisp of smoke. The surrounding fields, too, are sprinkled with patches of white. It is eerily beautiful.

Equally disturbing is the stillness. There is no sound of engines. There are no lights

in Dover. Nothing moves, apart from the clouds overhead, as the Investigators cross a bridge and head down the road.

Give the Investigators two **Sense Trouble** rolls, difficulty 5 (but see the sidebar, Sensing Trouble). The first roll is for the clouds. They're not really clouds. Instead, to anyone who makes the roll, they resemble a curious white smoke. They are, the Investigators realise, clouds of seeds.

The second roll is for the bridge, which crosses a stream. Anyone who makes the roll notices a flash of white in the corner of their eye. When they look down, the river is white, like milk. Looking closer, it is filled with seeds. The river banks bloom thickly and beautifully with the white plants.

As the Investigators approach Dover, they see many, many corpses. Most are sitting by the side of the road. Some have committed suicide, some have died in agony. The





The Dead White World

Investigators see dozens of corpses, but thousands, even millions, must be dead.

If the Investigators look for them, the following clues are available. The clues involving plants are available at any time during the scenario.

1. It seems the train lifted off the rails and kept going, straight off a curve in the track. The only rational explanation is an earthquake.

- **Geology:** Similar accidents have happened in California and other regions prone to earthquakes.
- **Mechanical Repair** (used as an Investigative Skill): There seems nothing mechanically wrong with the train. It lifted directly off the tracks. Although it seems far-fetched, you can only think that there has been an earthquake.

- **Outdoorsman:** Rail tracks can rust or grow over, but this hasn't happened here. Conceivably, an earthquake might explain how the train lifted from the rails and kept going.

2. The plants are unnatural.

- **Biology:** Plants may not be your field, but you know enough to realise these are not natural.
- **Botany:** These are unlike any plants you have seen. Indeed, they are not even related to plants you have seen.
- **Outdoorsman:** God knows what these plants are, but they are nothing like plants you have seen before.

3. The plants are spreading with extraordinary speed.

- **Botany:** The strangest thing about the plants is the speed with which they reproduce and grow. Moments after a cloud of seeds passes over some soil, you see shoots emerging. Sometimes, you believe the plants are growing as you watch.
- **Intuition:** This isn't something that science can explain. These plants are spreading like a plague. The seeds they produce take root instantly.
- **Medicine:** These plants resemble things you have seen under microscopes. They multiply with astonishing speed, quite unlike any normal living thing.





The Dead White World

4. The victims died because seeds grew inside them.

- **Intuition:** You don't care what the doctor says. Obviously, these plants killed everybody.
- **Medicine:** The white froth consists of seeds, mixed with saliva. It is an unfamiliar form of death, but you hypothesise that these people died because plants grew inside them.
- **Outdoorsman:** There are forms of lichen that kill people by growing inside their stomach. Perhaps something similar has happened here.

When the time is right, remind the players that their **Sources of Stability** are in the Crown Hotel. From then on, the scenario will focus more strongly on investigation and move more quickly towards a conclusion. So linger over these initial scenes. Let the Investigators explore the dead world.

DOVER

If the Investigators enter Dover itself, it is a dead town. Corpses sit beside roads and in homes.

Sensing Trouble

The **Sense Trouble** rolls are for effect: they create foreboding. If they are not right for your group, ignore them: just describe the clouds and white water.

Take It Slowly

Take this first part slowly. It is about exploring the apocalypse's aftermath, rather than investigation. Describe the world. Ask how the Investigators react.

Things may happen in a different order to that described. Perhaps, for example, they find the signal box after the cars or never find it at all. Either is fine. Follow their lead. They will find death everywhere.

Many buildings stand open. When the Investigators find the police station, they can walk straight in: the desk sergeant sits motionless as they explore. Even the army base is free to enter. Around the hospital are many corpses: evidently, a crowd descended, and many have been trampled.

There is no power. The town is dark. There is also no communication. If the Investigators find a radio (a **Scavenging** roll, **Difficulty** 3), they receive only static. In the Post Offices, the telegraphs are dead.

More strangely, the town is silent. When a dog barks or a bird sings, it cuts the stillness. It is so quiet that you can hear the waves.

You may find the Investigators linger in Dover, wandering around the buildings, collecting supplies and futilely trying to contact survivors. Let them do this. When they are finished, let them find the Crown Hotel.

The following clues are available.

1. Official records mention the plants spreading, but then stop rapidly. Nobody was prepared.

- **Evidence Collection:** In the police station, you find an officer's notebook. He has recorded many people asking for help, whom he advised to go to the hospital. There is a brief mention of white flowers, then nothing.
- **Medicine:** In the hospital, you compare the notes of various patients. Symptoms are similar in all: stomach pains, frothing around the mouth, leading rapidly to death. One doctor has noted the white flowers, with two query marks next to it, indicating his confusion.
- **Strategy:** There are no signs, anywhere, of an organised response. These people were killed before they could react.

2. The plants have spread abroad.

- **Bureaucracy:** In the home of a radio enthusiast, you find a transcribed broadcast from

Copenhagen. The sender, Nødskou, retreated to the highest hill as the flowers engulfed the city. At the end of the broadcast, the flowers surrounded him, and then the broadcast went dead.

- **Intuition:** In the newspaper's offices, someone has looked at the distance to the United States and concluded that the plants cannot possibly reach there. You do not believe it. These plants moved too fast. Nobody could have survived this. The world is dead.
- **Simple Search:** In the military base, you find a half-decoded message. It begins "WHITE FLOWERS SUOMENLINNA WHITE FLOWERS". From previous communications, you realize that some Helsinki residents fled to a military fort when the plants destroyed their city. Quickly afterwards, the plants penetrated the fort.

THE CROWN HOTEL

The Crown is a small, unassuming hotel, three stories high and whitewashed. As the Investigators enter, through oversized wooden doors, a bell rings cheerily. The echo hangs in the air.

Inside, the hotel is frozen in time. The registration book lies open at this morning's page. Room keys hang, on a board behind the counter. A newspaper lies on the floor. And corpses, of course, are everywhere.

On the ground floor, near to the reception area, is the bar. Clearly, many residents came here when they realised they were dying. Bottles of wine sit half-finished on tables. All seats are occupied: some guests sit against walls, a bottle on one side, a glass on the other. On close examination, there are white seeds floating in the drinks.

Where are the Investigators' **Sources of Stability**? Some are here, some are in their rooms. To reach the rooms, the Investigators climb a staircase, covered in fading red carpet. The rooms lie off long, dark corridors.



The Dead White World

Some rooms are open, some are locked from the inside. A **Locksmith** spend will open the lock, as will a **Mechanical Repair** roll (Difficulty 5). A **Scuffling, Firearms** or **Weapons** roll (Difficulty 5) breaks the door down: the sound echoes throughout the hotel, until, finally, the door splinters, leaving an Investigator face-to-face with their **Source of Stability**.

All are dead. Some died as the plants grew inside them. Some committed suicide. Make the discovery of each corpse as different as you can: for examples, see the Flowery Death table on page 198.

On the bright side, however, the Investigators have everything they need for a night's stay. The food is excellent: there are fresh steaks in the pantry and an ample supply of vegetables. These are uncontaminated by the plant seeds (although sadistic Keepers will ask for a **Sense Trouble** roll anyway). Alternatively, there is tinned food: most luxuriously, salmon. The wine is superb and the bar is well-stocked.

When the Investigators turn on the taps, however, the water flows milky white, filled with the seeds. Instead, there is an ample supply of bottled drinks. There are also medical supplies, in First Aid cabinets throughout the hotel.

However, there is no way to communicate with the outside world. The telephone is dead. The wireless produces only static.

As night falls, the hotel grows dark and cold. Give the Investigators a **Scavenging** roll (Difficulty 3) to find a source of light: candles, lanterns or flashlights. They might also find firearms: either a shotgun in the staff quarters or a pistol in a guest's bedside table (Difficulty 5).

Don't rush this scene. Many Investigators linger within the hotel, discovering their **Sources of Stability** one by one, then dining, drinking and sleeping. Others will leave to explore the town. Let all this happen, and then tell the players that it is late at night. They need to sleep.

The Russian

In the early hours of the morning, the Russian arrives, dressed as a seaman and carrying a shotgun.

We Must Get to London

When the Investigators finish exploring, they should head towards Dover. Everything is constructed to encourage this. After all, they need to recuperate, they are close to Dover and they have **Sources of Stability** there. Why would they go anywhere else?

However, Investigators often want to head elsewhere. They want to go to London, to inform the War Office, or Glasgow, where their sister lives. This is the problem with apocalypses. They make people unpredictable.

If this happens, remind the players of the following:

- You have just been in a train accident. You are injured, tired and hungry. You can travel tomorrow.
- There is a military base in Dover. If you want to alert the authorities, that is the place to go.
- If you want to contact someone, use a telephone. It's faster. (In fact, telephones are not working, but they should at least try.)
- Before you leave, shouldn't you check your **Sources of Stability** in Dover are alive?
- Judging from the speed with which the plants spread, the whole of Britain has been affected. You can't drive faster than the plants spread. There is no one left to save.

Alternatively, here is another way. The next location in the scenario, the Crown Hotel, can be anywhere. It is intended to be on the road to Dover, but it could be in the centre of Dover instead. Alternatively, if the Investigators approach along the coast, it could be along the coastline. If they head straight for the military base, it could be near the military base. It could even be somewhere completely different, such as the road back to London (although, then, the wedding party will not be there).

And, if the Investigators avoid hotels, the Russian (see below) can appear anywhere. Simply let the Investigators go wherever they want, then bring in the Russian. Once he has arrived, they will get the first piece of the mystery.

If you can, however, steer the Investigators towards Dover and the Crown Hotel. You wouldn't want them to miss the fun.

With his free hand, he propels a woman forward, her hands bound behind her back. She was clearly dressed well, but now is bruised and dishevelled. Before it was torn, her dress was probably beautiful. Her stockings are silk, although, now she has lost her shoes, they have torn away to leave her feet exposed. She is silent, because she is terrified.

The Russian arrives wherever the Investigators are. If they have kept watch, they will see him coming. If they have split into separate groups, the Russian will encounter only one group, although other Investigators should hear the commotion.

Probably, the Investigators are at the hotel. On a **Sense Trouble** roll (Difficulty 5),



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they hear the main door open and the bell ring quietly. If nobody hears him, he goes upstairs to check the rooms: another **Sense Trouble** roll (Difficulty 4) hears him as he enters a bedroom.

The Russian shoots any Investigator he sees. He shoots the Investigators if they intercept him in the hallway; he shoots them if he discovers them in their beds. When he shoots, all Investigators wake up.

The Russian

Scuffling: 10

Firearms: 10

Health: 10

The Russian does not die when he reaches zero **Health**. Instead, make **Consciousness** rolls when his **Health** goes below zero, as you would for an Investigator. This allows the Investigators to capture and interrogate him. However, if the Investigators kill him, let him die.

Once the Russian is beaten, the woman makes her presence known, probably by sobbing. Once released and made comfortable, she talks freely. Her name is Jessica Mardell. Last night, she went to a cocktail party, where she drank only spirits and wine. Today, she had an appalling hangover and slept through the day. The servants did not answer her bell when she woke, so she went looking for them. Stumbling into the streets, she found that the world had died. In her confusion, she was captured by the Russian.

Whether alive or dead, the Russian stinks of cheap alcohol. The following clues are available, either by interrogating him or reading papers concealed about his body.

Importantly, he does not know who was buying the cargo. The instructions were to bring it to Dover, where it would be collected. There might, he indicates, be more details aboard the ship.

1. He is a Russian scientist, disguised as a sailor.

- **Intimidation:** You yell at the Russian, whom you have trussed up on the floor. With his head, he indicates something concealed within his clothing: it is a scientist's log book.

- **Languages (Russian):** He looks insulted when you call him a sailor. He is, he insists, a scientist.

- **Streetwise:** This man is dressed as a sailor, but his soft hands give him away. Searching his body, you find a log book. He is a scientist, not a sailor.

2. He worked under Lysenko, a Russian agronomist. The plants you have seen are a Russian experiment, originally intended as an agricultural crop, then repurposed as weapons.

- **Botany:** Although they are in Russian, the papers begin to make sense. They are records of an agricultural experiment, conducted under Lysenko, a Russian agronomist. The crop spread so wildly that it was destroyed and repackaged as a weapon.

- **Languages (Russian):** He tells you about the plants. They were intended as an agricultural crop, but it became clear that their only use was as a weapon. He is unclear where Lysenko found the plants originally: he mentions a meteor, but you are not sure why.

- **Reassurance:** You speak calmly, almost soothingly, to the man. Eventually, he indicates his log book. By studying the drawings, you surmise that the plants were originally intended for agriculture, but proved more useful as weapons.

3. The plants evolve in a Lamarckian, not a Darwinian, pattern. That is, they adapt rapidly. When a plant reproduces, the new plants take on the characteristics of the old: for example, if one plant roots itself in human flesh, it spawns plants that grow in human flesh. If one grows unexpectedly tall, it spawns plants that grow tall.

- **Biology:** The name "Lamarck" stands out in the log book. Although it seems scientifically impossible, you suspect these plants evolve in a Lamarckian pattern.

- **History:** Although you cannot understand the Russian, you recognise the name "Lamarck", which he repeats. Remembering the debate between supporters of Lamarck and Darwin, you wonder whether the plants evolve in a Lamarckian fashion.

- **Languages (Russian):** Although you cannot understand the details, the Russian explains that the plants evolve quickly. He mentions the name "Lamarck".

4. He blames himself for the mass deaths. This has sent him mad.

- **Intimidation:** When you threaten the man, he remains calm, as if he feels he deserves to be beaten. Clearly, he is unhinged, but you wonder whether he blames himself for the world dying.

- **Medicine:** You have seen people like this before. He is clearly mad, but you also notice marks on the wrists, perhaps an attempted suicide. Perhaps he blames himself for the apocalypse.

- **Psychoanalysis:** This man is clearly unhinged. You suspect that, because he helped develop the plants as a weapon, he blames himself for the deaths.

5. **Core Clue:** The seeds leaked from a Russian tanker, the *Lysenko*, currently moored in the Dover Docks. More information on the seeds is on the ship.

- **Bureaucracy:** You search systematically through the sailor's papers. One document, you are sure, is a cargo manifest. The name of the ship is the *Lysenko* and its destination is Dover.

- **Intimidation:** You hold the sailor against the wall, pushing a diagram of the plant, from the log book, in his face. Frightened, he holds his arm out, pointing.



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You realise, when you take him outside the door, that he is pointing towards the docks.

- **Languages (Russian):** The sailor tells you that the seeds leaked from his ship. It is the *Lysenko* in Dover Docks.

EARTHQUAKES

From now on, earthquakes shake the land at frequent intervals. At first, they are mere tremors, and the Investigators do not notice the ground shaking. They may, however, hear the glasses in the bar ringing or see a bottle skid across a table. If they investigate, any appropriate ability reveals that there is an earthquake.

Later, the shaking is more obvious. Simply insert earthquakes at dramatically appropriate moments or whenever the Investigators get too comfortable. Start with tiny tremors, then, as the Investigators approach the harbour, describe obvious shaking.

However, do not make these tremors too dramatic. If you do, the Investigator might decide that entering the Russian ship (below) is too dangerous. In particular, when the Investigators find the *Lysenko*, ensure the ground is still, so that entering it seems safe.

If the Investigators use their abilities, the following clue is available:

1. The earthquakes are not natural.

- **Geology:** There is no geological reason why earthquakes of this magnitude should occur in Kent.
- **History:** There is no record of earthquakes like this occurring locally.
- **Intuition:** You know, instinctively, that this is not natural.

THE DOCKS

The approach to the docks is lined with corpses. Now, the strange white plants are growing from the bodies. As the Investigators pass, they disturb the plants, which release seeds into the air. Caught by the wind, the seeds blow away.

If the Investigators examine the bodies, the following clue is available:

1. The plants are causing the bodies to decompose, as if feeding on them.

- **Botany:** Examining the plants closely, you wonder whether they are getting their nutrition from the human flesh. That would explain why the bodies are decomposing.
- **Medicine:** These bodies should not decompose yet. Perhaps the plants are breaking them down.
- **Outdoorsman:** If these plants are growing on the bodies, they must be feeding from them.

As the road descends into the harbour, the Investigators see the sea. Like all the water, it is infected with the white cloudiness. Only far out to sea does the white disperse.

More significantly, they see the White Cliffs, which to patriotic Investigators are highly symbolic. Many will remember seeing them from a ship, as they returned from foreign parts. The cliffs have come to symbolise Britain herself.

In the harbour, the ships are disordered. One has broken free of its moorings, at the bow end, so that it points out to sea. The jetties themselves appear damaged, as though great waves had propelled the ships into them.

Amongst these ships is the *Lysenko*. Its grey hulk lists slightly, but otherwise looks soundly moored. On closer inspection, it is damaged close to the waterline. Around the damaged area, the water is particularly white, as the seeds have leaked from the ship.

This ancient vessel is a rusting lump of steel. As the Investigators explore the metal corridors, their footsteps echo. The steel sings and creaks in the wind. Throughout the ship are dead sailors, with clumps of white flowers growing from their bodies.

There are two obvious ways to proceed. The Investigators might head up, towards the bridge, or down, towards the cargo hold. In either location, or anywhere else plausible, the final clue of the scenario is available.

1. **Core Clue:** The seeds were being delivered to the British government, for use as a weapon.

- **Bureaucracy:** After searching the bridge's records, you find a letter from a Lieutenant-General in the British Army. The seeds were being delivered, as a weapon, to the British Government.
- **Cryptography:** The cargo is marked with coded text, which may be delivery instructions. It takes you a while, but finally, you can interpret parts of it. The seeds were to be delivered to the military base in Dover. Effectively, they are being delivered to the British government, presumably as a weapon.
- **Locksmith:** In the captain's cabin is a safe. Since the ship is listing, it takes you longer to crack than normal, but finally it opens. Inside is a letter from the War

How the Flowers Kill

The seeds are deadly only when they germinate in water. Hence, the Investigators can still breathe, without worrying about the flowers taking root: there is not enough moisture in the lungs to make the seeds dangerous. Similarly, if an Investigator has an open wound, seeds do not normally grow within it.

For whatever reason, animals are not susceptible to the seeds. Hence, after the apocalypse, the Investigators still hear birdsong and see farm animals in the fields. Food, also, remains uninfected: most notably, there are no flowers growing in meat.

Sealed bottles are the Investigators' best source of liquid. Orange juice, tonic water and ginger beer are all safe to drink. Beer, too, was a common drink in the 1930s. Discourage the players from drinking alcohol continuously, however. Drunk Investigators lower the tone.



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Office, ordering large quantities of an “agricultural weapon”.

When the Investigators discover this final clue, the earthquakes resume and Dover begins to fall.

THE FALL OF DOVER

The ground shakes and the sea churns, dashing ships against jetties. The White Cliffs crumble, at the top, scattering chalk dust into the wind. The *Lysenko* lists still further and begins to sink.

Far out at sea, the Investigators see something rising. The ocean seems to boil, in shades of brown and black. Then a monster rises from the waves: first, huge pale eyes; then a scaly head; and finally its immense body. Black ichor runs down its skin, dripping into the darkened sea.

As it emerges fully, it stands forty feet above the waves, and then lumbers towards Dover Harbour.

As the Investigators flee, Dover crumbles around them. The white cliffs

collapse into the sea. Buildings fall and cracks open in roads. And, all around the Investigators, corpses bloom with beautiful white flowers.

If the Investigators look behind, they see the monster stop in the harbour, like a sentry watching over the sea. Behind it, similar creatures waded through the ocean, towering above it.

And then Dover slides into the sea.

EPILOGUE

The Investigators escape into the Kent countryside, while Dover crumbles behind. All around, white flowers bloom in the fields. Above, the skies are cloudy with pollen.

Nobody, it seems, is alive. There are no distress calls on the radio, no lights in distant houses. As the Investigators head west, the roads are littered with corpses, all covered in flowers. The bodies are badly decomposed, barely recognisable as human.

They drive for miles, seeing no signs of life. Then, parked in the centre of the road, the Investigators see a Royal Mail van. It is abandoned, in the centre of the road, with its lights on and its doors open.

Landlocked

Some Investigators may, understandably, prefer not to get on to a leaking ship. Instead, they search for clues around the harbour.

It's more dramatic if they board the ship. If they won't, simply place the final Core Clue in the harbourmaster's office or a nearby military base. Wherever they are, add some bodies, with clumps of white flowers growing from them. Then, when they find the core clue, start the final scene.



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Save vs. Apocalypse

To escape, give the Investigators two rolls each. Usually, these will be:

- A roll to get to a car (probably **Athletics** or **Fleeing**)
- A roll to escape in the car (**Driving**)

However, tailor them to the Investigators' mode of escape. Perhaps, instead, players roll to escape the harbour (**Fleeing**), and then roll again to escape Dover (**Fleeing** again). Or perhaps they roll to find a vehicle (**Scavenging**), and then roll to escape Dover (**Driving**). However they escape, it normally takes two rolls.

When they fail a roll, judge the consequences by what seems dramatically appropriate. But here is a rule of thumb: the *first* failed roll by an Investigator should be a setback; the *second* means their death. Thus, each Investigator gets one second chance. Failing a roll might make future rolls more difficult or might require additional rolls.

Here are some examples of failed rolls.

1. An Investigator rolls **Athletics** to escape from Dover Harbour, with the ground crumbling beneath her feet. She fails.
 - The Investigator slips, but grabs the clifftop. The Difficulty to get back up, with an **Athletics** roll, is 8. If other Investigators assist, this will delay their escape, making their next roll more difficult.
2. An Investigator rolls **Driving** to escape from Dover. He fails.
 - As cracks open in the road, a wheel becomes stuck. The car is unusable. The Investigator can continue fleeing with either **Athletics** or **Fleeing**, Difficulty 8. Alternatively, they can make a quick **Scavenging** roll to find another car (Difficulty 3), then try the **Driving** roll again.
3. An Investigator fails a **Riding** roll to mount her terrified horse.
 - The Investigator takes 1d6 damage as she is thrown from the horse. The horse bolts. She may quickly look for a motor vehicle (**Scavenging**, Difficulty 5) or flee on foot (**Athletics**, Difficulty 8).

Going Out Fighting

If they simply fire guns, the monster brushes off their attacks. Even heavy artillery will barely harm it. If they come up with a brilliant plan, let them kill one monster, then describe a horde of others approaching.

For these rolls, set the Difficulty Numbers high, perhaps 7 or higher. Don't be afraid to let the Investigators die. If the Investigators help each other, use the rules for piggybacking and cooperating. See the sidebar for guidance on failed rolls.

Be open to cunning plans from the Investigators: for example, if they distract the monster with a well-aimed shot, give them a bonus or allow them to skip a roll. Perhaps an Investigator spends **Geology**, to predict where the ground will be safest (reduces Difficulty Number of **Fleeing** or **Driving** by 2). Perhaps they spend **Outdoorsman**, to avoid rock falls (reduces Difficulty Number of **Fleeing** or **Driving** by 1).



Letters from Ghosts

As the Investigators flee Dover, the road is blocked by a Royal Mail van. It stands in the middle of the road, with lights on and doors open, as though deliberately positioned to attract attention.

In the van are letters, addressed to the Investigators, from their **Sources of Stability**. Yet, soon after, they find those who wrote the letters: one is dead and the other denies writing.

The plot for this scenario involves time-travel. As with all such plots, it will mess with your players' heads. Unless they guess the secret, expect them to be very, very confused.

THE HOOK

The Investigators receive letters from their **Sources of Stability**.

THE QUESTION

Where do the letters come from?

THE HORRIBLE TRUTH

While the world was ending, the Great Race of Yith stole human minds, to study the apocalypse. They transported these minds into Yithian bodies, millions of years

in the past. Simultaneously, members of the Great Race transported their minds into the vacated human bodies.

These stolen minds include those of the Investigators' **Sources of Stability**. Thus, these **Sources of Stability** are trapped in the past: in an underground city, in what is now the Severn Valley. There, they talk to other trapped minds, and learn about the post-apocalyptic world.

In particular, they learn exactly where the Investigators will travel. Using this information, the **Sources of Stability** write letters, addressed by time and place:





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for example: “39 Camden Mews, London, November 3rd 1936 at midday”. They stow these letters within the granite city.

Years later, the letters are discovered, by the Victorian explorer Chester Crispin. He takes most of them to his home, Fanham’s Hall in Cambridgeshire. When he dies, his estate donates the letters to the Royal Mail. After all, they are undelivered letters. They must be sent.

For decades afterwards, the letters remain in a Royal Mail archive in Battersea. Then, after the apocalypse, a postman working at this archive survives. Partly out of curiosity, partly out of duty, he begins to deliver the letters.

THE SPINE

On the road from Dover, the Investigators find a Royal Mail van, containing curiously-

worded letters from their **Sources of Stability**. However, when they find their **Sources of Stability**, they are either dead or ignorant of the letters.

When more letters arrive, the Investigators find the postman who delivers them. He leads them to the Unsorted Parcels Office in Battersea, where the letters are kept.

Records show that the letters came from the estate of Chester Crispin. At Crispin’s home in Hertfordshire, the Investigators find his daughter, together with a group of friends. They also find Crispin’s diaries, which record that the letters were found in a cave near Brichester.

Under that cave is a subterranean granite city. In its depths, the Investigators find the halls where their **Sources of Stability** lived the remainder of their lives.

Sources of Stability

Choose two **Sources of Stability** who live in or near London. These are the **Sources of Stability** who have been abducted.

INSTRUCTIONS

Not content with abducting the **Sources of Stability**, the Great Race might also abduct an Investigator.

Fold up the four sets of instructions below. Two of these are dummies: they contain nothing of interest. The other two specify the following events:

- An Investigator is abducted by the Great Race.
- An Investigator finds a plant growing out of their arm.





The Dead White World

Now, ask which players are willing to have their character manipulated. Give out instructions to those players.

As you do this, carefully select the player whose Investigator will be abducted. This player will portray the Yithian who occupies their Investigator.

If you can, choose someone who has previously acted as Keeper, who knows when to reveal information for maximum effect. They should not reveal their identity too soon. Neither, however, should they keep their secret forever. Ideally, the player should reveal that their Investigator is possessed towards the end of the scenario. (However, if other Investigators grow suspicious sooner, that player should go with it and reveal the abduction.)

Whoever you choose, that player has clues to reveal. This is their reward for allowing you to mess with their character.

Instructions 1

There are no specific instructions for you.

However, please act as if you have been given detailed instructions. To assist you, here is a block of text to read.

“Toward the end of the year 1920 the Government of the United States had practically completed the programme, adopted during the last months of President Winthrop’s administration. The country was apparently tranquil. Everybody knows how the Tariff and Labour questions were settled. The war with Germany, incident on that country’s seizure of the Samoan Islands, had left no visible scars upon the republic, and the temporary occupation of Norfolk by the invading army had been forgotten in the joy over repeated naval victories, and the subsequent ridiculous plight of General Von Gartenlaube’s forces in the State of New Jersey. The Cuban and Hawaiian investments had paid one hundred per cent and the territory of Samoa was well worth its cost as a coaling station. The country was in a superb state of defence. Every coast city had been well supplied with land fortifications; the army under the parental eye of the General Staff, organized according to the Prussian system, had been increased to 300,000 men, with a territorial reserve of a million; and six magnificent squadrons of cruisers and battle-ships patrolled the six stations of

the navigable seas, leaving a steam reserve amply fitted to control home waters.”

Instructions 2

When the monsters rose from the sea, you were taken from your body. Your Investigator is now occupied by an alien, whom you will play in this scenario.

You are one of the Great Race of Yith. Your race learns about other species by taking their minds from their bodies. The abducted minds are placed in a Yithian body, where they write details about their life. Meanwhile, a member of your Race occupies the original body.

This transfer takes place across time. Hence, your original Investigator is now in prehistoric times, in an alien body, writing about their life at a large granite table. You now play the alien that inhabits your Investigator’s body. Continue acting normally: you do not want to reveal your identity yet.

However, you remember nothing that happened before the creatures rose from the sea. Thus, you do not remember the train crash, nor the Russian sailor, nor the creatures rising from the sea. In conversation, you are strangely distant. Finally, your knowledge of humans is learned from books. This means, for example, that you cannot tell the time, from a clock, unless you pause to calculate it.

Keep rolling for **Stability** and **Sanity** and tracking their scores, so that other players do not get suspicious. However, these scores do not matter: you will suffer no ill-effects for low scores. Keep track of your Health as before. This score does matter: you can still fall unconscious or be killed.

Later, the other Investigators may discover your true identity. Indeed, towards the end of the scenario, you should make your alien nature more obvious. Ideally, they will unmask you right at the end.

If the other Investigators discover who you are, reveal the following clues. Give them one at a time, when someone uses a plausible skill:

- You are one of the Great Race of Yith, who learn about other species by taking them from their bodies. You are fascinated by humans’ reaction to the apocalypse. In particular, you are enjoying observing how the Investigators cope with their dying world.
- One day, your race will face its own apocalypse. You, then, must learn whatever you can from the human apocalypse.
- The Investigators’ **Sources of Stability** are safe. They are in prehistoric times, writing about their lives.
- The Great Race could change history and avert the apocalypse. You could, for example, transplant the Investigators’ minds into their bodies before the apocalypse. Then, knowing what they know now, they could stop the world ending. But you will not do this. Instead, you will continue observing, learning from the destruction of the human race.

Transferable Skills

Realistically, the Yithian-occupied Investigator would have different skills than the true Investigator. However, don’t worry about this. Firstly, it’s too complicated. Secondly, it will alert other players that something is wrong.

Besides, if we were going to make things realistic, we should probably have started before the forty foot high sea-monsters arrived.

Growing Pains

If someone receives Instruction Sheet 3, occasionally inform them that the plant in their Investigator’s arm has grown. Perhaps it has flowered or its roots have embedded themselves deeper. Perhaps it causes a shooting pain.



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Once this last clue is revealed, the alien leaves your body and your original Investigator returns.

Instructions 3

In your arm is a small green growth, resembling the shoots of a plant.

Instructions 4

There are no specific instructions for you.

THE A2

From Dover, the A2 road leads back to London. The Investigators pass fields that once were green, but now are white with flowers. As they round a corner, they find the road blocked by a Royal Mail van. It is parked directly in the centre of the road, with headlights on and doors open.

There is no-one in the van or the surrounding fields. The back of the van is open. There, a box is prominently placed.

It is an unremarkable steel box, like a safety deposit box: in fact, it is a Royal Mail archive box. Inside are two envelopes, addressed "The middle of the road, Exactly 10 miles outside Dover, The A2, Kent, England." Marked in the top left hand corner are today's date and a time two hours previously.

From the letters or the van, the following clues are available.

1. Someone drove the van here, with a motorcycle in the back. They then drove the motorcycle back to London.
 - **Evidence Collection:** In the back of the van, you find fresh motor oil. It probably dripped from a vehicle, perhaps a motorcycle.
 - **Geology:** In the back of the van, you find caked mud, shaped like the tread of a tire. Clearly, some vehicle, perhaps a motorcycle, was in the back of this van. However, the soil is too chalky for this region: it is more likely that the motorcycle was last ridden in London.
 - **Outdoorsman:** It is not often you track a motorcycle across the countryside. Nevertheless, behind the van, you find tire tracks. It seems someone drove here with

a motorcycle in the back. After tracing the motorcycle a short distance, it cuts across particularly muddy fields. You lose the trail, but you believe the rider was heading to London.

2. The letters are written in an unidentifiable black liquid on parchment, made from an unidentifiable animal. It has also been somehow preserved, using an unidentifiable method.

- **Archaeology:** This is not paper, but parchment. The skin, from which the parchment is made, resembles nothing you have seen before.
- **Biology:** The paper feels like skin. You suspect it is parchment, yet it is not made from any animal skin you recognise. It also appears to have been treated, perhaps to preserve it, although again you do not recognise the method of preservation.
- **History:** The technique by which these letters were made is ancient. In fact, you recognise them as parchment, although you cannot place the type of skin.

3. Although the handwriting resembles that of the **Sources of Stability**, there is something wrong: as if they were injured or writing with the wrong hand.

- **Art History:** The writing resembles that of your Source of Stability, but is strangely formed. It reminds you of the brushwork of an artist you knew, after he had had a stroke.
- **Evidence Collection:** Although the handwriting superficially resembles that of your Source of Stability, you find strange inflections in it, as though they were disturbed, perhaps injured.
- **Medicine:** The handwriting is odd, as if your Source of Stability was injured or distressed.

After this scene, the Investigators should head to London to find their **Sources of Stability's** corpses, as instructed in the letters.

As the Investigators approach London, they notice its stillness. Nothing moves. There are no buses, taxis or cars. The city seems dead or waiting.

The Letters

Write the **Source of Stability's** name at the bottom of each letter. These also appear as handouts at the end of the book (page 200).

My dear,

Do not worry. I have been taken, but I am safe. If I had not been taken, I would have died, and for that deliverance I am thankful.

You believe the world has ended. Believe me, though, you must not fear. There is yet hope and I will guide you towards that hope. Although the human race is doomed, life goes on.

You must go, now, to find my body. Again, my dear, do not worry. I will write soon.

Yours ever,

Old gal,

This is a turn-up, isn't it? I bet you thought you'd never hear from me again. You must be dreadfully shocked, poor thing. Poor Dover, too. Nevertheless, stiff upper lip and so forth.

Now, this will come as a shock, but you will find my body soon. Don't worry! I am safe. From where I am now, I can write and give you a bit of advice.

For the moment, keep soldiering on. Your country needs you, not to mention the rest of the bally world! I'll drop you another line before long.

Tracing the Postman

In this first scene, there is no obvious way to trace the postman. If the Investigators invent one, you could skip to the Unsorted Parcels Office scene, p. 96.

But avoid this. Ideally, the postman should slip through the Investigators' fingers this time. Later, they will be eager to catch him.



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A quick request, before I go. When you find my body, it will have those damnable plants growing in it. Get rid of them. I hardly care what you do with the corpse.

Be off with you, now! Good luck!

A LONDON HOME

As the Investigators journey through London, there are moments when everything seems normal. The Crystal Palace still stands, sparkling in the sunlight. The Palace of Westminster towers over the Thames. Yet the roads are lined with corpses, on which flowers grow. As the Investigators drive past, clouds of pollen waft from the plants.

Where do the Investigators' **Sources of Stability** live? It could be anywhere in London, but as a rough guide:

- If the Investigator is a **Criminal** or **Hobo**, the **Source of Stability** lives in a **flophouse in Clapham**.
- If the Investigator is an **Agitator**, **Artist**, **Wanderer**, **Journalist**, **Outdoorsman**, **Veteran** or **Farmer**, the **Source of Stability** lives in a **flat in Camden**.
- **Sources of Stability** for **Antiquarians**, **Clergy**, **Military**, **Nurses**, **Pilots**, **Police Detectives** and **Scientists** rent a **room in Spitalfields**.
- **Socialites** and their **Sources of Stability** live in a **house in Chelsea**.

As the Investigators arrive at their **Source of Stability's** home, the chimes of Big Ben ring out across London. The bells seem unnatural, a reminder of another age, yet are louder than ever. The streets are quiet. The Investigators' footsteps echo as they walk to the door.

In this scene, an Investigator discovers their **Source of Stability's** corpse. Improvise the scene, depending on where their **Source of Stability** lives. Here are some guidelines.

Take the scene slowly, starting when the Investigators enter the **Source of Stability's** home. Describe each room as they enter: the

The London Sandbox

While the Investigators are in London, don't worry about scenes happening in order. The Investigators might, for example, go to the War Office first, and then find their **Sources of Stability**. This is fine. Let the Investigators explore.

Once you bring in The Postman, the investigation will move faster. So, as with the first scenario, linger over these initial scenes. Let the Investigators explore dying London. When you feel something needs to happen, bring in The Postman.

More Letters

As the Investigators explore, they may find more steel boxes, containing more letters. Use these additional letters to increase the tension: for example, when the Investigators leave the War Office, they may find another box waiting on the step outside.

All letters come from the **Sources of Stability**, phrased like the letters above. None give any additional information. All are addressed with time, date and location.

The letters are delivered by the same postman as before. Sometimes, the Investigator might hear a distant motorcycle. Perhaps, even, if the Investigators succeed a difficult **Driving** roll (Difficulty 7) they might catch him. If so, proceed to The Postman (below). If the Investigators examine the letters, they can discover Clues 2 and 3 from the scene "A2", above.

hallway, the living room, the bedroom. This builds the tension, since the Investigators won't know where the body will be.

Describe the light. Is it night or day? Are the curtains closed? How bright or dark is the room? Describe, also, how the home smells. Are there wilting flowers? Is it warm and dusty? Is there a familiar perfume in the air? Choose pleasant smells: it makes the scene more sinister.

Finally, in one room, the Investigator finds their **Source of Stability**. Use the *Flowery Death Table* to inspire their death. Describe how the body is lit. Is it in shadow, so that the Investigator takes a moment to notice it? Or is it brightly and starkly illuminated?

There are no clues in this scene. Proceed to the other **Source of Stability's** house or *The Postman*.

ANOTHER HOME

If the Investigators seek the other **Source of Stability** who sent letters, begin the scene like the previous one. Describe the Investigators entering each room in turn. Finally, they find the **Source of Stability**, sitting or lying. Give the Investigators a moment to examine the body. Then the body moves. The **Source of Stability** is alive.

How did they survive the apocalypse? Use the *Flowery Survival Table* for ideas. Probably, they have not left their home and have only drunk bottled liquids. They seem bewildered, but are otherwise lucid.

In fact, however, their mind has been taken by the Great Race. Try to ensure that the Investigators do not suspect the **Source of Stability** is possessed or take the **Source of Stability** with them.

It helps, then, if the **Source of Stability** normally seems distracted, so that absent-mindedness and forgetfulness do not seem extraordinary, and has good reason to stay in their house. Elderly **Sources of Stability**, who might easily be bewildered and housebound, are ideal.

Keep this scene short. The **Source of Stability**, while pleased to see the Investigators, wants to stay in their home: they are as likely to survive here as anywhere. They gratefully accept any practical help, such as food, but will not accompany the Investigators.

Later, the truth will emerge. The Investigators have been talking, not to their **Source of Stability**, but to a member of the Great Race.

THE POSTMAN

In the silent city, a growling noise splits the air. It becomes louder and closer, echoing through the streets, making



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windows tremble. It is, the Investigators realise, a motorcycle engine. Wherever the Investigators are, the motorcycle parks around the corner. The rider dismounts, leaves a steel box for the Investigators to find, then returns to his motorcycle.

If intercepted, the man identifies himself as William Shakespeare. He wears a postman's uniform and has Royal Mail identification to prove both his occupation and his unlikely name. The Investigators, he says, should call him Bill.

Without being prompted, he volunteers that he only drinks tea. That, he says, is how he survived the apocalypse: the water in the Royal Mail's tea urn was not contaminated. After everyone died, he continued delivering the mail. Perhaps, one day, it might do someone good.

From Bill Shakespeare, the Investigators discover the following Core Clue. They can find this in many ways.

1. **Core Clue:** The Investigators must go to the Unsorted Parcels Office in Battersea.

- **Bureaucracy:** As Bill talks to the other Investigators, you observe him. His postal bag has a tag on it marked "Battersea". Perhaps that is where the letters come from.
- **Driving:** On his motorcycle, Bill is easy to follow. He crosses the bridge to Battersea, turns up Lavender Hill and you follow him to the Unsorted Parcels office.
- **Leadership:** You take charge. If we're going to rebuild Britain, you say, you need Bill's help. You will need the postal service, too. So, you say, he must tell you what he knows. Impressed, he tells you where he is based: the Unsorted Parcels Office in Battersea.
- **Navigation:** For a long time after Bill leaves, you hear his engine as he drives south. Presumably, he is heading to a post office. Using a map of London, you find only one post office directly south: the Unsorted Parcels Office, on Lavender Hill in Battersea.

- **Reassurance:** You tell Bill that you won't interfere with his deliveries. You are interested only in the letters. Bill shrugs. "Well, I suppose they're addressed to you, anyway. They're in the Unsorted Parcels Office in Battersea."

More Letters

When the Investigators meet Bill, he gives them these letters.

My dear,

I wanted to let you know how well you are doing and how much I love you. Perhaps, indeed, my deliverance has granted us a blessing. After all, when I lived, there was never the time to tell you that I loved you. Now that I must write, my communication becomes more thoughtful.

I have been here a good while, now, and often think of you. One might think that the memories would fade, but they do not. After the initial shock, I have learned to be happy here. There are others here, with whom I converse. Life continues, differently from before, but nevertheless it continues, and I am thankful for that.

Have you found my body yet? Do not fret if so. I am very, very proud, both of who you are and of what you are doing.

Yours ever,

Old gal,

Well, dash me, it's another letter. Here we go again.

I hope you won't mind if I get a little philosophical. Perhaps it is the old age. I wanted to let you know how fond I am

We Must Go to the House of Commons

Since the Investigators are in London, they are likely to explore. For example, they might go to:

- The War Office, the Ministry that controls the British Army.
- Number 10 Downing Street, the office of the Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin (deceased).
- The House of Commons, the seat of the British Parliament.

Indeed, they might go anywhere. Even if you planned the above three locations in detail, some Investigator would go to Camden Market (a big market), Kew Gardens (a botanical garden) or Alexandra Palace (the main site of BBC television transmission).

So, again, you will need to improvise. Here are some guidelines.

- Describe the interior of the building, using any knowledge you have as your guide, especially movies and TV series. For example, the interior of Number 10 Downing Street looks like a large, well-furnished town house.
- Make up anything you don't know, keeping descriptions as obvious as possible. Probably, for example, the interior of the War Office looks like a normal office, but with maps on the wall and people in uniform. Probably, Alexandra Palace is filled with cables and humming machines.
- Describe corpses, covered in flowers.
- Describe the place as frozen in time. For example, a cold cup of tea might sit in the Cabinet Room of Number 10 Downing Street. A General in the War Office might be halfway through writing a memorandum.



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of you. Always was. You've always been special to me and, right now, you make me very, very proud.

Now, I know what you're thinking, but no! I am not drunk. Merely being affectionate and, perhaps, a little nostalgic. No need to worry, old gal. Things here are tickety-boo, by which I mean pleasant and not a little fascinating. It was strange at first, but I'm perfectly happy these days.

Still, what am I doing, waffling on, when you have work to do? Onwards, now, to Battersea! So much to do!

UNSORTED PARCELS

The Investigators trek through deserted and beautiful Chelsea, over Battersea Bridge, soon arriving at Lavender Hill. Halfway up is a darkened brick building, which is the Royal Mail's Battersea Delivery Office.

Behind enormous double doors are service counters, where customers received and delivered mail. Behind that is a vast expanse of wire cages, labelled SW11 to SW20: the postal codes for South West London. Trolleys are abandoned, cages are unlocked. There are corpses, too, but the Investigators are becoming oblivious to them.

Tucked away behind the cages is the Unsorted Parcels Office. When mail is ambiguously or nonsensically addressed, it remains here while Royal Mail staff trace its correct recipient. Before the apocalypse, Bill Shakespeare worked here. Now, it is his home.

He seems comfortable here. His office contains a camp bed: a lethal-looking contraption of wires, springs and an ancient mattress. Outside the office door, worryingly close to stacks of paper, is a gas burner. There is an ample supply of tinned food, coffee, bottled water and spare gas canisters. Most importantly, there is everything required to make tea.

When the Investigators arrive, Bill offers them a cup. Making tea, it is clear, is a ritual not to be interrupted. First, Bill boils water in a tiny pan, and then splashes some into a teapot to warm it. Then, using a teaspoon, he measures tea into the pot: one spoon for each Investigator, one for himself and one "for the pot". Finally, he places a woollen tea-cosy over the pot. Only then, when the tea is brewing, will he talk to the Investigators.

Taking them deeper into the building, he shows them the Unsorted Parcels Archive. Here, wire cages are crammed with strangely-shaped bundles and aging paper. In the final cage is a Victorian mahogany chest, once beautiful, now scuffed and scratched. Judging from the rings on its top surface, it has served as a table for tea breaks.

Within this chest are more letters addressed to the Investigators. As before, they are addressed by time, date and location. These, however, are dated in the future.

Only some letters are in the chest. Others are scattered around the Unsorted Parcels Office, in filing cabinets and loose piles, after half-finished and ill-advised attempts at organisation. Sorting through this lot will take a while, but will reveal the following clues.

1. When the future letters are placed in date order, the Investigators can discern the locations where they are expected to travel. They start in the UK: London, Christchurch, East Anglia. Other letters, it seems, were forwarded to the United States Post Office Department.

- **Bureaucracy:** You painstakingly place the letters in date order. There is a pattern. First, the letters are addressed with the UK, and then a later bunch was forwarded to the United States.
- **Interrogation:** You ask Bill Shakespeare what on earth is going on. This filing system is completely incomprehensible! He apologises, tentatively suggesting he tidy it up. Well, that would be useful, you reply, with heavy irony. After he works for a few hours, you notice a pattern to the locations.
- **Oral History:** Over several cups of tea, you let Bill tell you about the letters. Eventually, he tells you about letters in the future, addressed throughout the UK and then the US.

2. There are some letters missing.

- **Flattery:** You coax Bill Shakespeare to produce the letters and arrange them in order. Nevertheless, some appear to be missing.

- **Leadership:** You ask Bill for the rest of the letters. Here is what we have, he says. But some are missing. They have always been missing.

- **Library Use:** You piece the letters together, but this is an incomplete archive. There are references to letters which are not present.

3. As the letters progress into the future, the handwriting becomes more like that of the Source of Stability.

- **Art:** In the early letters, the penwork is inexpert, becoming more proficient later. You imagine that the writer was learning to use a particular pen. Later, you wonder whether they were learning to use their *hand*.
- **Medicine:** The handwriting reminds you of that of a recovering stroke victim. Gradually, the writer gains control over their hand.
- **Oral History:** Bill's stories about the Unsorted Parcels Office are long and many. In time, however, he shows you something interesting. Look at the handwriting on the letters, he says. Look how it changes over time, as if the person was learning to write.

4. **Core Clue:** The letters were donated to the Royal Mail by the estate of Chester Crispin, a Victorian explorer. He lived in Fanham's Hall in Hertfordshire.

- **Bureaucracy:** The filing is badly organised. However, in a locked filing cabinet, you discover where the letters came from. They were given to the Royal Mail in 1885, by relatives of Chester Crispin, a Victorian dilettante and sometime explorer.
- **Evidence Collection:** Eventually you find where the letters came from. A receipt stub, dating back to 1885, shows they were donated by Chester Crispin, a Victorian explorer.



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- **Intimidation:** After much bullying, Bill Shakespeare finds a receipt book from Victorian times. The letters, it seems, were given to the Royal Mail in the 1880s, by the estate of Chester Crispin, an explorer.

FANHAM'S HALL

The home of Chester Crispin lies an hour north of London. Taking the Great Cambridge Road, the Investigators quickly find themselves in the countryside. For a moment, everything seems normal: the Investigators could imagine the apocalypse never happened. Then they notice the white flowers, on every hilltop, standing like sentries.

The Investigators arrive in Ware, a tiny, white and silent village. There seem, at first, to be flowerbeds everywhere. On reflection, however, they are not flowerbeds: they are corpses, blooming with flowers. No-one is alive.

Just east of Ware is Fanham's Hall. Around it, the fields are thickly white, as if blanketed with snow. As the Investigators turn up the driveway, they hear music. It is swing music, loud and distorted, played through a gramophone at exceptional volume.

Outside the hall are other cars. Clearly, nobody has tried to flee. As they get closer, the Investigators hear shouting and laughter over the music.

Inside, a riotous party is in full swing. Half-empty champagne flutes cover the polished tables. There is frenzied dancing in every room, as two gramophones, playing different music, compete to be heard.

The partygoers are all women, dressed with fashionable absurdity. The party's theme appears to be "flowers". One woman is dressed as a sunflower. Many others have imitation flowers woven into hats. Most of the flower costumes are white.

Men, and anyone from the working classes, are not instantly welcome. These people

may spend an appropriate Interpersonal ability to be tolerated: perhaps **Flattery**, to fit in; **Reassurance**, to seem harmless; or **Streetwise**, to create interesting cocktails.

The women, initially, talk only trivialities. Any remotely serious conversation is met with a sigh and an offer of champagne. Ask them how they survived the apocalypse and they answer: *"Don't be so tedious, darling. Have a drink"*.

They will, however, happily answer questions about the party. The night before the apocalypse, they held a party here. Seeing that the world had ended, they simply continued with the party. After all, they will die soon. What better way to spend their final days?

If the Investigators ask why there are no men, they explain that men were not invited. Why not? Because men are *tedious*, darling.

Later, if the Investigators use their abilities, the partygoers will talk more seriously. There are quieter areas in which conversations can be held: the conservatory, for example, or the grounds. Both are studded with white flowers.

The party's host is **Florence Crispin**, Chester's daughter and the owner of Fanham's Hall. In the dim, artificial light, she appears young. In direct light, she is clearly over forty and slowly decaying. Like the others, she is enjoying herself and initially unwilling to talk.

The following clues are available, either by talking to the women or more devious methods.

1. Fanham's Hall collects rainwater, which fills a sealed tank. By drinking this water, the women survived the apocalypse.

- **Architecture:** When you turn on a tap, the water runs clear. This explains why everyone here is alive: their water was never contaminated. By following the pipes, you find the water tank. It is sealed and collects rainwater.

- **Botany:** Why is the water here not infected? From what you know of the plants, they would have polluted the water supply. After a short search, you find the answer: there is a rainwater tank, which is sealed.

- **Streetwise:** You make Florence a particularly lethal cocktail, which she downs appreciatively. How did she survive the apocalypse, you ask? Their water tank is sealed, she explains. Everyone was here that night. Naturally, they have stayed since.

2. Despite their frivolity, the community has the skills to survive. They have stocked up with food, essentials and, of course, champagne.

- **Leadership:** You take Florence aside. How, you demand, have they managed to survive? She flares up, suddenly more sober. They are not stupid, she says. They can keep themselves alive.

- **Medicine:** Despite being extremely drunk, there are no signs that the women are hungry. You slip into the kitchen and inspect the larder. Certainly, they have everything they need to survive for a while, including food and medical supplies.

- **Stealth:** Wondering how the women are surviving, you sneak into the kitchen. It is surprisingly well-stocked, albeit with expensive food, presumably looted from other houses. There is also, you note, a generator. Clearly, these people have some practical abilities.

Apocalypse Machine

If you are using *The Apocalypse Machine* rules: Socialites, Farmers and Military personnel are instantly welcome at Fanham's Hall. Everyone else must spend an Interpersonal Ability to fit in. Seduction is ideal.



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3. The partygoers are taking drugs.

- **Medicine:** This woman's pupils are dilated, which explains her frenzied dancing. These people are taking cocaine.
- **Seduction:** You get pleasantly drunk with a young flapper in the conservatory. She talks animatedly and, without breaking the flow of the conversation, offers you cocaine.
- **Streetwise:** This is not just champagne. There's cocaine here somewhere. (An extra point of **Streetwise** scores some).

4. Chester Crispin was a dreamer. His "expeditions" were not taken seriously.

- **Archaeology:** In an upstairs bedroom, you find books written by Chester Crispin. All are vanity productions: he paid a printer to produce them. He recounts his expeditions, but they are absurd, with erroneous geography and fairy-tale elements. You doubt, for example, that he killed a unicorn in India.
- **Flattery:** You pour Florence more champagne. Was her father really an explorer, you ask? Not really, she says. He made most of it up.
- **Oral History:** In the library, one of the flappers is holding court. She is, in fact, making fun of Florence's father and his expeditions. Chester Crispin, she says, was delusional. Does anyone really believe he fought a vampire?

5. **Core Clue:** Chester Crispin found the letters in a set of caves near Brichester. He took only some, leaving more letters within the caves.

- **Bargain:** Look, you tell Florence, you will leave if she tells

you where the letters came from. Fine, she says. Some caves near Brichester. Apparently there were more letters there. She points at a map, and then looks at you. Will you go, now?

- **Locksmith:** Although the trapdoor to the attic is locked, a palette knife eases it open. Inside is a chest, containing Chester Crispin's papers. Most are nonsensical scribbling. However, he mentions caves near Brichester, in which he found the letters. Intriguingly, he says that he did not take them all.
- **Outdoorsman:** Reading through Chester Crispin's self-published books, you find a reference to caves, where he discovered the letters. Although he does not describe the location, he mentions particular trees, black rocks and a large river. That, you suspect, must be near Brichester.

THE GRANITE CITY

In the woods outside Brichester, the Investigators find the caves that Chester Crispin explored. They appear shallow and unremarkable. At first, the Investigators wonder whether Crispin was lying. Certainly, there are no letters here.

Quickly, however, the reason for Crispin's excitement becomes clear. At the back of one cave is a rock fall, masking a dark drop. By shining a flashlight, the Investigators see the cavern into which it descends. Its walls are granite and black as night. The drop itself is twenty feet.

The Investigators need rope to descend and something to light their way. Once they have descended and their eyes have grown accustomed to the light, they see the cavern more clearly. It is, in fact, not a cavern. It is a smoothly curving tunnel, dozens of feet in diameter, spiralling into the darkness.

After approximately a mile, the tunnel opens into a vast cylindrical space. Now, the spiral passage becomes a walkway,

snaking around the edge of the cylinder as it continues down. The cylinder itself is a plummeting darkness, with no visible bottom. From the walkway, large doorways open into smaller rooms.

Many of these rooms resemble libraries. Dark, empty shelves line the walls, with stone blocks, like desks, in the middle of the room. Other rooms resemble scientific laboratories. They contain many stone blocks, the tops of which are stained and scratched. Still other rooms have no obvious function.

Yet these rooms are not designed for humans. The doorways are twelve feet high. The granite blocks are too high for normal desks: the Investigators must climb on top to see over them.

As the spiral walkway descends, scratches on the walls become visible. These are mathematical and physical figures, curvilinear in design, barely comprehensible to the Investigators.

Finally, the walkway reaches the bottom of the cylinder. On this vast floor are more granite desks: this, clearly, was the writing room. Scratched on these desks is human handwriting, where the desks' occupants have written their names. Some are modern, 1930s names; others seem archaic; others simply strange.

From anywhere in this granite city, the following clues are available.

1. The human handwriting is immensely old.

- **Archaeology:** The handwriting is impossible. Although you cannot pinpoint its exact date, it certainly predates human existence. These people were here in prehistoric times.
- **Geology:** Even in this sealed, deep cavern, the granite has partially eroded. This erosion has made the handwriting less distinct, blurring the letters. You estimate, although it is impossible, that the writing dates from prehistoric times.

2. These caverns were carved, using techniques beyond human comprehension.



Letters From Ghosts

- **Architecture:** You cannot fathom how these corridors and walkways were created. Perhaps a huge drill bored through the rock, but that does not explain why the walls are smooth.
 - **Geology:** Clearly, these walls are carved rather than natural. However, you cannot understand what could have carved them.
 - **Intuition:** These caves are like nothing carved by humans. They are beyond our science or technology.
3. The curvilinear diagrams depict strange geometries and physical principles. (Gain one point of **Cthulhu Mythos**.)

Describing the Rooms

If the Investigators explore the city's rooms in detail, improvise details as necessary. Here are a few suggestions:

- **A library:** Fragments of book binding (but no books). Desks. Vertiginous banks of shelves.
- **Living quarters:** Oddly curved recesses for sleeping. Huge dormitories, with many of these recesses.
- **A laboratory:** Fragments of radioactive substances. Pieces of mirror. Curvilinear scratchings everywhere.
- **An unidentified room:** Black leather-like strips hanging from the ceiling. Grooves in the floor. Pyramids at regular intervals around the edges of the room.
- **Another unidentified room:** A gradual slope. Drainage system. Holes in ceiling.

- **Cryptography:** Deciphering these strange diagrams, even for you, is a challenge. As you stare at them, their meaning comes together, in the back of your mind. You perceive the geometry of the room differently.
 - **Occult:** The curvilinear designs remind you of chalk symbols drawn by Victorian cults. However, there is something darker about these. As you begin to comprehend them, you see mind-breaking patterns. When you turn away, reality seems subtly different.
 - **Physics:** Some diagrams make sense in terms of Einsteinian relativity, although their design is unfamiliar. However, they go beyond relativity, giving you insights into space and time that gnaw at your mind.
4. The Investigators' **Sources of Stability** were here in prehistoric times (see The Plan of the Desks, page 199).
- **Evidence Collection:** You find a diagram, which you realise is a plan of the desks (page 199). Marked on it is the name of every **Source of Stability**.
 - **Library Use:** Over days, you record, in detail, the scratching on the desks. By cross-referencing, you build a picture of who sat at which desk.
 - **Simple Search:** It takes hours, but you search every desk in the writing room. In time, you find the names of all the **Sources of Stability**, carved into the desks. They were here, a long time ago, and must have died here.

5. They appear to have been trapped in alien bodies, conical and eight feet tall.
- **Anthropology:** Humans could not have lived in this city. The desks, doorways and rooms are too large. The people that wrote here were human minds, but in alien bodies.

- **Art:** Scratched into one desk is a curious amalgam of human face and alien body. The artist, you think, was human, but trapped in a monstrous cone-shaped body.
 - **Biology:** How could humans have written at these desks? You look at the patterns of wear on the seats and the writing on the top. You can only imagine that the human minds were trapped in alien bodies, approximately eight feet tall.
6. **Core Clue:** The Investigators must get to Blackpool to prevent an invasion.
- **Archaeology:** You wonder where Chester Crispin found the letters. Eventually, you find a dark recess within the writing room. Inside are the remaining letters from your **Sources of Stability** (see below). Presumably, Crispin left them behind. Perhaps it was an oversight. Or, perhaps, he read them and realised they belonged here.
 - **Architecture:** Something is strange about the construction of a particular wall. Looking closer, you realise: it has been built to accommodate a small recess. Within are the remaining letters from your **Sources of Stability**.
 - **Locksmith:** Looking around the walls carefully, you find a strange-looking slab of stone. By pressing precisely, you open it. The remaining letters are there.

The Final Letters

My dear,

This is my very final letter to you. This is where I spent my remaining days, in a body that was not my own, but in the company of many others. Our captors were kind to us: I read and travelled much while I stayed here.

Perhaps, indeed, captors is too strong a word. They rescued us. When the apocalypse came, they took us from our bodies and brought into the past. Some of them sent their minds forward into our bodies, too. This is where I spent my final days.



The Dead White World

As I said, I have read much and communicated with people who lived after I did. From this, I know the path the world will take, and can give you one warning.

You must go to Blackpool. There will be an invasion, shortly, which you must prevent. I cannot tell you more, because I do not know more and because I fear that our captors would destroy this letter if I told you too much. Nevertheless, the warning is genuine. Go to Blackpool and stop the invasion.

Yours ever,

Old gal,

And here you are! This was where I spent my final days. What do you think, eh? It doesn't look like much, but I was rather happy. Happier than I would have been with plants growing inside me, anyway.

The oddest thing was my body. They took our minds, you see, and took them into the past. Whoosh! Our minds were put into their bodies. They were aliens, you see, conical and leathery. Took some while getting used to, which was why my handwriting was so awful for the first few letters. Sorry about that. Some of them sent their minds forward into our bodies, too. Whoosh again!

So there you have it. I died some years ago: several million, to be exact. It wasn't a bad life, while it lasted. One grew used to being a bloody great cone. I read, too, and talked to others about the future.

Which reminds me! Your future. I've talked to others (I can't tell you who) who know what will happen. You must go to Blackpool. Can't say too much, but you must stop an invasion.

Now, I realise you'll be inclined to ignore this. After all, basing decisions on the advice of prehistoric relatives who thought they were conical aliens? Perhaps not a sound plan. But do it anyway, there's my girl. It's bloody important. Seriously. Go there. Stop invasion. Important.

And, with that, I must be going. Been a pleasure. And I know you'll find these letters, because I spoke to someone who said you would.

Bye then!

THE ABDUCTEE

Have the Investigators realised that one of them is possessed? If not, they must realise now.

Ideally, they will realise from the plan of the desks. After all, it contains the

Affliction Points

Both the abducted Investigator and the Investigator with a plant in their arm gain an Affliction Point at the end of the scenario.

abducted Investigator's name. That implies the Investigator's mind was taken into prehistoric times. And *that* implies that the thing pretending to be that Investigator must be something else.

Failing that, prompt the abducted Investigator to reveal themselves. They have observed enough. No further concealment is needed.

The alien, in the form of the Investigator, answers questions honestly and may reveal the clues given on the instruction sheet. When the Investigators have no more to ask, the alien leaves the Investigator's body. The original Investigator returns, with no memory of what has happened since Dover.

EPILOGUE

The Investigators leave the granite city and head north to Blackpool. As they drive, the flowers line the roads, as if watching them.





Sandgrown

The Investigators travel north to Blackpool, only knowing that they must prevent an invasion.

What they discover leads them to an impossible choice: they must choose who will conquer Britain. And even that choice will require a sacrifice.

THE HOOK

The Investigators are sent to Blackpool to prevent an invasion.

THE QUESTION

How can they prevent the invasion?

THE HORRIBLE TRUTH

Off the coast of Blackpool, stretching out towards Dublin, lies the undersea city of Shk'hrnwr, where the Deep Ones live. Until now, they have kept hidden, fearing the human military.

Now, the humans are gone, and Shk'hrnwr will rise from the sea. The Deep Ones will swarm over the land, turning England into a stinking mire, fit for their home.

Already, the Deep Ones have bred with the humans of Blackpool. The Garth family are Deep One hybrids: the eldest, Wilfred Garth, is already changing into his true form. His son, Jack, does not suspect his true ancestry, although he knows something is wrong with Wilfred. The grandson, Martin, is blissfully ignorant.

THE SPINE

The Investigators arrive in Blackpool, where they meet the Garth family, who take them to the Metropole Hotel. There, they meet a small and friendly community.

When questioned about the invasion, the Blackpudlians take the Investigators to a quarry, full of Deep One bodies. All are covered with white flowers.

The corpses, the Investigators discover, resemble Wilfred Garth, who lives (and is imprisoned) in nearby Lytham St Annes. He is barely human, almost completely transformed into his Deep One form. He tells the Investigators that only at the heart of Shk'hrnwr can they stop the invasion. And then Shk'hrnwr rises from the sea, dark, dripping and stinking.

The Investigators walk over the mire, and then descend into Shk'hrnwr. There, they find a strange carving, half-ritual, half-board game, which describes how the world will be destroyed.

From this game, the Investigators learn that they have a choice. If one Investigator remains within Shk'hrnwr, with white flowers growing on them, then the flowers will destroy the Deep Ones. The invasion will fail and the white flowers will conquer Britain. Otherwise, the Deep Ones will conquer Britain themselves.

THE PLEASURE BEACH

Blackpool lies on the West Coast, six hours from London and four from Bristle. As the Investigators journey north, the white flowers become scarcer. Eventually, the Investigators see only occasional white flecks in the dark green countryside.

As most Investigators will know, Blackpool is a working-class holiday resort. Any Investigators from the north of England will probably have visited. Those Investigators will know its main attractions: Blackpool Tower, a smaller version of Paris' Eiffel Tower; the Pleasure Beach, a child's paradise of rollercoasters; and the Illuminations, a parade of lights that line the promenade each autumn.

Travelling from London, the Investigators passed many towns and villages. All were dark and silent. Yet, as they enter Blackpool, they see a white light, blazing in the darkness.

It comes from the Promenade, the road which runs along the seafront. There, the Investigators find the Illuminations on.

Stranger still, the rollercoasters in the Pleasure Beach are running.

Give the Investigators a moment to react. The Promenade is deserted, yet alive with electricity. In the ocean, they dimly see the monsters that destroyed Dover, standing sentry. Suddenly, there is an approaching rumbling: it is the Grand National, the rollercoaster that famously opened earlier in the year. On it are a woman and a child.

These are Martha and Martin Garth. Martin's father, Jack, is operating the Grand National from the ground. As the Investigators approach, Martha and Martin finish their ride and, laughing, dismount the rollercoaster. Jack gives Martin a stick of candy floss (that is, to readers in the United States, "cotton candy").

Jack then turns to the Investigators, speaking bluntly but without hostility. Who are they? And what do they want here?

Despite his bluntness, he is friendly and glad to see other survivors. His family survived, he explained, because they drank from a water butt in their garden. Later, while scavenging for food and water, they found some electric generators. At Martin's suggestion, they hooked these up to the Illuminations and the Grand National.

They had hoped the Illuminations would act as a beacon, bringing other survivors to them. Clearly, this has worked, since the Investigators are here.

Yet there was another reason for reviving the Illuminations. They wanted to see the old world, one last time. Martin wanted a final ride on the Grand National. Jack wanted to see the lights.

Jack wants to know what the Investigators can do. What are their skills? Can they drive? Can they repair motors or electrical equipment? If they are willing to work, they are welcome to stay. Survivors, after all, must stick together.

With that said, he invites them to the Metropole Hotel, where the survivors are gathered.



The Dead White World

THE METROPOLE

Although cheaply built, the Metropole affects a cheerful grandeur. There are bright blue carpets, brass lamp fittings and immense glass chandeliers. Thanks to Jack's generators, it is brightly lit. It keeps people's spirits up, says Jack.

Each Investigator gets a clean and airy room. The rooms look over the steely sea, where distant monsters stride through the waves. Hot water is available only when meals are cooked, although pleasantly lukewarm baths are always available. Compared to elsewhere, this is luxury.

Tea, the evening meal, is served at six-thirty in the dining hall. The Investigators queue with other residents to receive a steak pie, a mound of chips and a slice of buttered bread. Pots of strong tea are placed on every table to accompany the food. Some Blackpudlians sit with the Investigators. They are friendly,

especially to working class Investigators. To anyone who appears wealthy or posh, they sarcastically apologise for the food (*"Not what you're used to, I'll bet"*) and tea (*"It's not Earl Grey, you know"*).

After eating, the residents gather in the hotel's ballroom, where they take turns singing with a piano. The Investigators, too, are expected to sing. Meanwhile, the bar is open, serving excellent beer and little else. Other residents, including Jack, play chess.

During the entertainment or afterwards, the Investigators may question the hotel's residents. They do not know about an invasion, but will reveal the following clues.

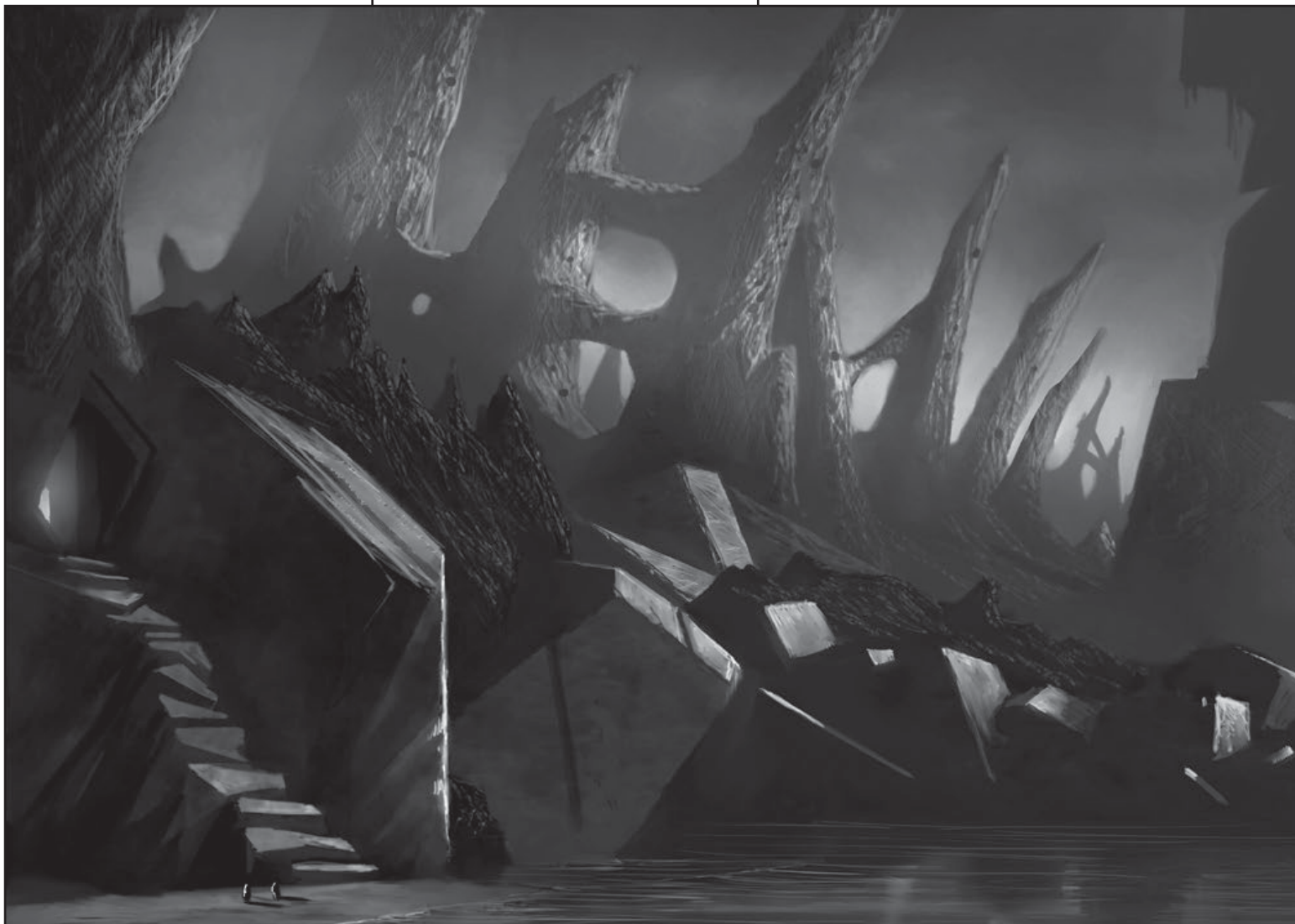
If you are using *The Apocalypse Machine* rules, the Metropole survivors will be friendly to Outdoorsmen (and women), Farmers and Nurses. They will be sarcastic to Socialites, Scientists, Journalists, Artists and Antiquarians.

Get Them Comfortable

Make the Blackpool survivors friendly. Make them seem sane. After all, they are hospitable, practical and well-organised.

These are not the Fanham's Hall set, living on smoked salmon and champagne. Neither are they like Bill Shakespeare, content with his letters and tinned food. These are serious-minded survivors. If anyone can survive the apocalypse, these people can.

So make them welcoming. Make the Investigators want to stay. Then, just when they get comfortable, they Investigators will discover the leader is a Deep One Hybrid and the community will be destroyed.





Sandgrown

Make Yourself Useful

The Blackpudlians expect the Investigators to work. Unless they offer, Jack tells them to scavenge for food, fuel and other necessities.

Give any Investigator a **Scavenging** roll, Difficulty 3, to find food, water or fuel. If they get 7 or more, they find a warehouse or other large source of supplies. Investigative abilities, especially **Navigation**, might also work.

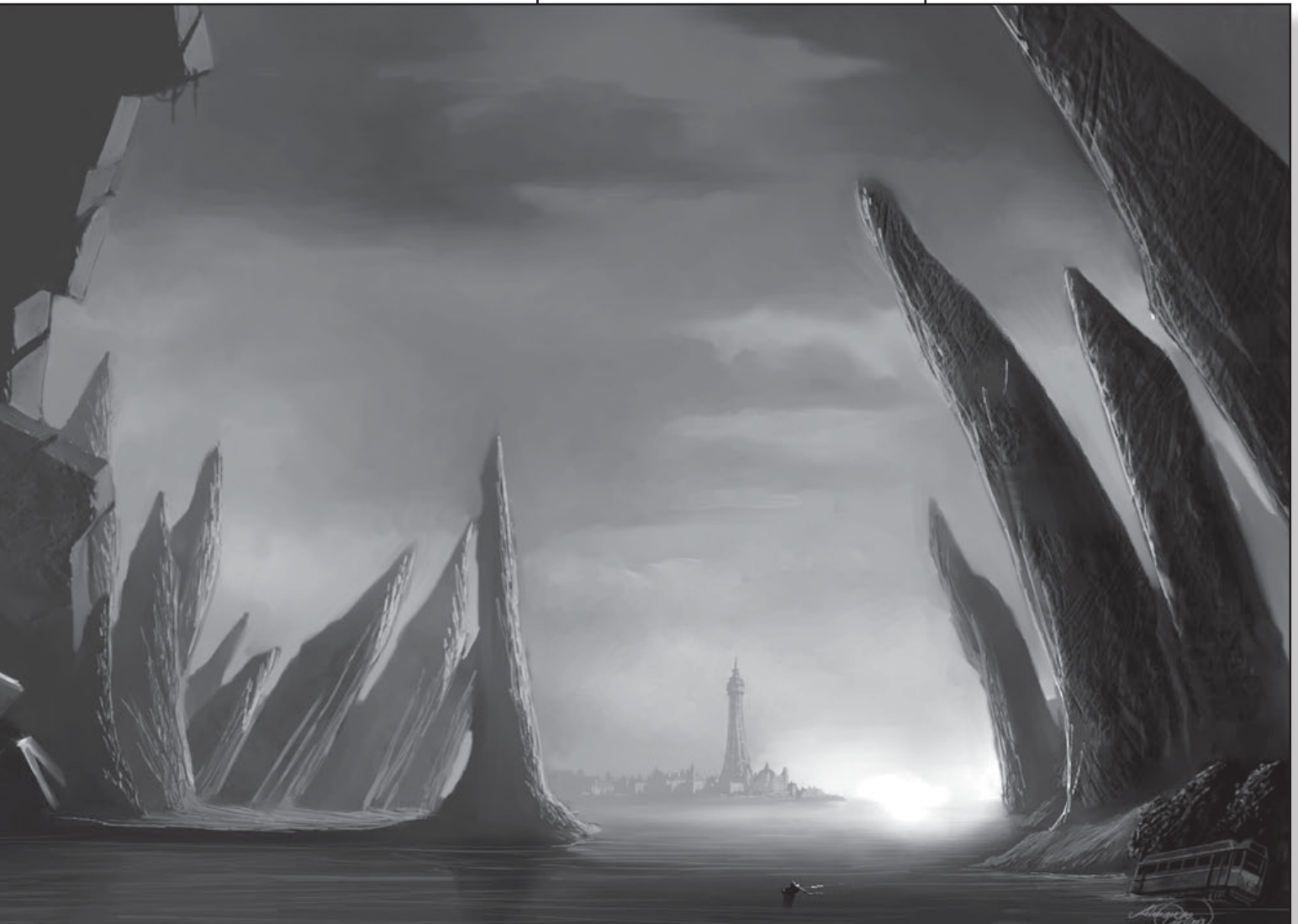
This work gives the Investigators no particular benefit, beyond food, accommodation and goodwill. For narrative purposes, however, it lets them meet the survivors.

1. Jack has done a grand job putting this place together.

- **Anthropology:** The people here look up to Jack and seem contented. Indeed, they talk about him in glowing terms. Clearly, he has done an excellent job of leading this community.
- **Leadership:** The more you question the residents, the more impressed you are. Jack has organised these people well.
- **Oral History:** With a couple of drinks inside her, Agatha holds forth on how the community got together. Jack did it, she says. He found the survivors and gathered them here. If it wasn't for him, they wouldn't be alive.

2. **Core Clue:** The Investigators should visit a quarry.

- **Flattery:** You flirt relentlessly with Winifred, a sixty-year-old grandmother with dyed blond hair. Eventually, you bring up the topic of an invasion. She relates various anecdotes of the Great War, and then mentions a nearby quarry. Having mentioned it, she becomes quiet, telling you to see it for yourself.
- **Geology:** One of the older residents, George, is a former miner and something of a rock enthusiast. You chat pleasantly about the local geology. When you ask about quarries, however, he suddenly falls silent. There is a quarry, he says. You would have to see that for yourself.





The Dead White World

- **Oral History:** You listen to Perry's post-apocalyptic stories: in the few days since the world ended, he has gathered many. He never touches tap water, he says, and regales you with descriptions of the white flowers. Sounding mysterious, he also mentions a quarry.
- Perry offers to take the Investigators to the quarry. If they meet him by his truck, tomorrow morning, he will show them.

THE QUARRY

At first light, Perry starts his truck, waking sleepy Investigators. Unless they arrive promptly, he sounds his horn loudly, then stands by the truck to wait for them.

After driving east for half an hour, the Investigators see the quarry: an ugly gash in the rugged countryside. Perry's truck winds down a dirt road, halting on a gravel patch. He turns off the engine, dismounts and lights his pipe. *There you are, he says. See for yourself.*

As the Investigators approach the quarry, they notice the flowers in the surrounding countryside. On the drive to Blackpool, they had seemed scarce. Now, the white sprinkling over the fields is thicker. Strangely, it seems thickest around the quarry itself.

Give the Investigators a **Sense Trouble roll**, Difficulty 5. If they succeed, they

suspect they are being watched. At first, they imagine it is the flowers. Then they realise there is something in the back of the truck. It is Martin Garth. He stowed away. He wanted to see what was happening.

Suddenly, the wind changes direction. There is a foul stink, like rotten fish. From his position near the truck, Perry looks at the Investigators and smiles. When the Investigators reach the lip of the quarry, they see the source. The quarry is filled with corpses.

There are hundreds of them, apparently naked. Perry continues smiling, motioning with his pipe. Go down, he says. If the Investigators descend, the stench becomes all-pervasive. Eventually, they see why: the corpses appear half-fish, half-human.

The creatures are in various stages of decay. In some, the dead, bulging eyeballs are intact, although turning black. In others, the eye socket gapes. Some are missing limbs; some have cavities in their torsos, as though they have been eaten away.

In all of them, the white flowers bloom. Other flowers line the edge of the quarry, as if watching the Investigators.

Perry draws contentedly on his pipe and explains. After the apocalypse, these creatures were washed up on Blackpool's beaches. They had white flowers growing in them. To get the corpses away from the children, they loaded them into trucks and dumped them here.

Martin wants to see the corpses. Unless the Investigators prevent him, he watches from the lip of the quarry.

From Martin, Perry or the corpses, the Investigators can get the following clues.

1. The corpses are largely alien, but share an evolutionary root with humans.
 - **Biology:** The anatomy resembles no earthly animal. Only in the parts of the anatomy that are evolutionarily ancient do you find anything resembling human biology. You hypothesise that the two species share a common evolutionary ancestor.
 - **Flattery:** You praise Perry for having brought you here. How

fascinating, you say. Could he explain a little more? He indicates parts of the creatures' anatomy. Look here, he says. This looks human. These might be aliens, but, millions of years ago, we were the same species.

- **Medicine:** Much of the biology is unfamiliar. However, some anatomical features are shared with humans: these features are, evolutionarily speaking, older. This might suggest an evolutionary connection with humans.

2. Some corpses are clearly hybrids between humans and the fish-creatures, while some are pure fish-creatures.

- **Biology:** You look at another corpse. If you are right, this is a hybrid between a human and the fish-creature: for example, the stomach appears entirely human. This implies that humans and the creatures are inter-fertile.
- **Medicine:** On closer examination, some corpses have definite features of human anatomy. You believe they are hybrids between the fish-creatures and humans.
- **Reassurance:** Keeping your voice calm, you invite Martin down to look at the creatures. Soon, he finds something that he wants to show you. These corpses are different, he says. Some are pure alien, while others look as though they have been crossed with humans.

3. The creatures were killed by the flowers.

- **Forensics:** If you had to guess, you would say the flowers killed these creatures. That would explain the cavities, where the plants have eaten the flesh away. Oddly, the plants seem to have concentrated on weak spots, as if they deliberately attacked the creatures.
- **Intuition:** However impossible it may seem, the plants deliberately killed these creatures.

The Blackpudlians

The community includes Jack, Martha and Martin Garth. There is also Perry, the pipe-smoking truck driver who takes the Investigators to the quarry.

These people aside, invent members of the community freely. The above clues describe Agatha and Winifred. Feel free to add more.

To allow the Investigators to meet the Blackpudlians, wait before giving the Core Clue, which will take the Investigators to the quarry.



Sandgrown

- **Oral History:** Sharing a cigarette with Perry, you question him about the discovery of the corpses. A new detail emerges: one creature was still alive when found. It writhed, grabbing at the flowers in its eye socket. Perry believes the flowers killed the creatures. He believes they attacked the creatures.
4. The creatures are even more susceptible to the flowers than humans.
- **Leadership:** You instruct Perry to tell you what else he knows. Well, he says, look how the plants grow in the flesh. The flowers might be deadly to humans, but they are even more deadly to these creatures.
 - **Outdoorsman:** You've seen piles of corpses before: poisoned rabbits, anthrax-ridden livestock. The flowers, you think, harm these creatures even more than they harm humans.
 - **Reassurance:** You coax Martin down from the lip of the quarry. Playing among the corpses, he eventually finds something. Sometimes, he says, a plant seed from the air catches in a creature's flesh. They don't do that with humans. These creatures must hate the flowers. The flowers would kill them in seconds.
5. **Core Clue:** The creatures' skin looks like that of Martin's grandfather, who lives in Lytham St Annes.
- **Assess Honesty:** Martin looks upset as he gets closer to the corpses. What is wrong, you ask? He tells you he is fine, but he is clearly lying. The skin, he says. They have the same disease as my grandfather.
 - **Bargain:** If Perry agrees to look closer at the corpses, you say, you will drive to a warehouse later. He acquiesces. After clambering down, he looks bemused and repelled. Their skin looks

diseased, he says, like that disease that Wilfred Garth has.

- **Intimidation:** Martin runs his fingers along the creature's skin. What is it, you demand? He refuses to tell you. You grab him by the collar. It's nothing, he says. It's the skin. It's like my grandfather's skin.

THE FLOWERS

When the Investigators arrived in Blackpool, there were few white flowers. But the longer they stay, the more flowers appear. Strangely, the flowers cluster wherever the Investigators go: the hotel, the quarry, Wilfred Garth's house.

If the Investigators stay at the Metropole, the flowers appear there. First, they grow in the Investigators' rooms: perhaps, one morning, an Investigator wakes beside a newly-grown flower. Next, they appear in the corridors. This terrifies the Blackpudlians: the flowers had never entered the hotel before.

Stranger still, the flowers are now making noise. Try telling the Investigators, early in the scenario, that they can hear birds: the cooing of pigeons, the shriek of rooks, the sound of a woodpecker. Later in the scene, give them a **Sense Trouble** roll, Difficulty 4. That is no woodpecker. That noise is coming from the plants.

By studying the flowers, the following clues are available.

1. The flowers are following the Investigators.
 - **Botany:** The growth patterns of the flowers are odd. Rather than breeding normally, they almost appear to be following you.
 - **Reassurance:** Something is worrying Martin. Sitting him down on the Metropole's staircase, you ask what is wrong. Haven't you noticed, he asks? The flowers are following you. At first, you laugh. Then you look down. There is a plant growing by your hand.

- **Strategy:** The flowers grow in a familiar pattern. It is, you realise, a military containment pattern. The longer you watch them, the surer you become. They are following you and boxing you in.

2. The clicking is a sophisticated form of communication.

- **Biology:** Sometimes, you hear a pattern of clicks that is echoed by a distant plant. Once you notice this, you hear it everywhere. The plants are communicating with each other, sending messages over long distances.
- **Cryptography:** There are patterns in the clicking, which remind you of Morse code. Although the pattern is too complex for you to decipher, you believe the plants are communicating with each other.
- **Intimidation:** You tell Martin that, if he does not tell you what is going on, you will tell his father that he went to the quarry. Martin looks scared. They are talking, he says. Listen to the clicking. They are talking to each other.

3. The flowers are more intelligent than the Investigators.

- **Anthropology:** The way these things are distributed, with clusters and connecting arteries, reminds you of a society. You become convinced they possess intelligence and culture. Almost certainly, they are more intelligent than humans.
- **Biology:** The plants' growth patterns remind you of brain pathways. You believe and fear there is a vast, distributed intelligence in these creatures. If so, they are vastly more intelligent than humans.
- **Intuition:** From the way the plants communicate and follow you, it is clear they are far, far more intelligent than you.



The Dead White World

Recognising the Taint

By spending a point of **Biology** or **Medicine**, an Investigator may learn to recognise the “Innsmouth taint”. That is, they can identify a Deep One Hybrid by looking at them.

There are three hybrids living in Blackpool: Wilfred, Jack and Martin Garth.

The plants’ communication is too complex and alien for the Investigators to decipher. Certainly, the Investigators cannot take the ability “Languages: Alien Plant”. At your discretion, **Cryptography** might allow basic interpretation of the communication: for example, inferring that the plants are observing, holding back or massing to attack. This interpretation, however, is simplistic and unreliable.

Have fun with the flowers. Whenever the Investigators stand or sit still, let them see a flower, which has taken root near them. When the Investigators arrive somewhere, tell them there are no plants. Later, describe plants in growing numbers.

Best of all, imitate the plants’ clicking sound with your fingernails. Try tapping two fingers, with a varying rhythm, on the table. Get your players to dread that sound.

LYTHAM ST ANNES

Wilfred Garth lives in Lytham St Annes, an upmarket seaside resort north of Blackpool. For years, he has remained, concealed and trapped, in his isolated seafront house. Once a day, Jack brings his food and fuel, ensuring he is not followed.

Thus, Wilfred is hidden, and to find him within Lytham St Annes, the Investigators must investigate.

1. **Core Clue:** Wilfred Garth lives in an isolated seafront house.

- **Anthropology:** Judging from the shops and cafes, the older residents of Lytham St Annes live around the seafront. You drive around until you find a shuttered house with an untended garden.

- **Leadership:** Finding Martha at the Metropole, you demand to know where Wilfred Garth lives. This is important, you say. People will die if she doesn’t tell you. She looks scared. He has a house, she says, on the seafront.
- **Stealth** (used as an Investigative skill): You wait by the road into Lytham St Annes until Jack approaches, and then follow him. You nearly lose him, but eventually see him entering an isolated house, on the seafront.

WILFRED GARTH’S HOUSE

When the Investigators find the house, they notice its doors and shutters bolted from the outside. Clearly, someone wants to keep Wilfred Garth hidden.

Inside the house, the same stink that the Investigators smelt at the quarry hangs in the air. The house appears deserted. Dried slime covers the carpets. Thick dust cakes every surface. Insane scribbles cover walls and abandoned scraps of paper.

At the back of the house is Wilfred’s study, which initially appears empty. However, as the Investigators’ eyes acclimatize, they perceive a figure sitting at a chessboard. Beside him is a teacup, containing murky water. This is Wilfred Garth.

As he greets them, there is a guttural and unnatural grumbling, deep within his voice. He seems distracted, perhaps senile, and insists he is waiting for Jack. Occasionally, a bubbling sound forces itself through his gut. He is, the Investigators realise, monstrous. His eyes bulge, his skin is scaly, his neck is developing gills.

Yet he is disconcertingly friendly. When he talks of the sea creatures, he speaks with utter love. The following clues are available.

1. There are millions of fish creatures under the sea.
 - **Art:** Many of the scribbles are of fish creatures emerging from the sea. Strikingly, however, they are all different. Wilfred must

believe there are thousands, even millions, of these creatures under the sea.

- **Intimidation:** You take away Wilfred’s water, demanding he tell you about the monsters. There are millions of them, he says, his voice becoming dry as he speaks. They swarm under the sea.
- **Oral History:** Wilfred talks, with relish, of beautiful cities where his family live. At first, you wonder whether he refers to Blackpool. Later, you realise he is talking about an undersea civilisation. He describes millions of the creatures.

2. Wilfred expects to join the creatures soon.

- **Biology:** Wilfred is beginning to look more fish-like than human. You suspect that, shortly, he will find it difficult to survive on land. When he talks of “joining his family”, then, you believe he expects to live under the sea.
- **Evidence Collection:** In an upstairs room, you find deranged scribbles, which you presume are Wilfred’s work. He writes of soon joining the creatures under the sea.
- **Reassurance:** Wilfred is barely able to contain his excitement, but you speak calmly to him. He talks about joining his family. Gradually, it becomes clear that he means the creatures under the sea.

3. The fish-creatures are afraid of the flowers.

- **Assess Honesty:** You ask Wilfred about the flowers. They are nothing, he says, just little flowers. He thinks they are pretty, he says. Yet something about his voice tells you he is lying. He is deeply, deeply scared of the plants.
- **Intimidation:** You bring a flower close to Wilfred, but he



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shrinks away. When you bring it close again, he screams. Take it away, he says. He cannot bear it. Keep it away from his brothers in the sea.

- **Library Use:** After sorting through Wilfred's scribbling, you notice a strange pattern: many show fish-creatures destroying the flowers. Judging from the ferocity with which they are drawn, you suspect this is an expression of fear, rather than confidence. Wilfred and his kin are deeply afraid of the flowers.
4. The creatures will invade England and submerge it into mire. By doing this, they will sacrifice many of their number, but they will destroy the plants and claim the land for themselves.
- **Cryptography:** In the front room, you find a map of Britain. On it, Wilfred has drawn strange and cryptic symbols. After much study, you begin to make sense of them. This is a map of a military advance: it shows the creatures invading England and sacrificing many of their number. They intend, you believe, to destroy the plants and submerge Britain into mire.
 - **Flattery:** You feign excitement at Wilfred's descriptions. How exciting, you say. How wonderful these creatures must be. He grows sad. Yes, he says, but to save themselves, they must invade England and destroy the plants. When they do, many will die.
 - **Strategy:** From Wilfred's ramblings, you piece together the creatures' strategy. They will invade England. Although it will kill many of them, it will destroy all the plants.
5. **Core Clue:** The city of Shk'hrnwr will rise from the sea. The only way to stop the invasion is to go to the heart of the city.
- **History:** From the map in the front room, you build a picture of the intended invasion. It

reminds you of Thermopylae. If there is a way to prevent this, it lies in mounting a defence at a bottleneck. If there is a bottleneck, it lies at the heart of Shk'hrnwr.

- **Oral History:** Wilfred becomes triumphant. Soon, he says, his family will reach the surface and it will be too late. From these disjointed facts, you begin to understand how to fight the invasion. You must stop them before they reach the surface. You must go to Shk'hrnwr.
- **Reassurance:** It becomes harder and harder for Wilfred to contain his excitement. He mentions a word, which you cannot pronounce: when you give him paper, he writes "Shk'hrnwr". It is the city, he says. It will rise. You can only stop the invasion by going to its heart.
- **Strategy:** The invasion will come from the city, he says, which will rise from the sea. Perhaps this is your chance, you think. If there is any way to mount a defence, with your limited numbers, it will be at a bottleneck. Perhaps the city is that bottleneck.

And, when the Investigators get that Core Clue, Shk'hrnwr rises from the sea.

SHK'HRNWR RISES

Wilfred's house shakes. Something is rising. When the Investigators go outside, the land is transforming.

Great pointed monoliths break through the earth, at strange angles, rising tens of feet into the sky. At their bases, stinking black silt oozes upwards. Some monoliths break through houses, which list and crumble.

In the sea, Shk'hrnwr is rising. First, monoliths rise above the waves, while the sea churns blackly. Then the seabed comes to the surface. An odour of dead fish and rotting mud hits the Investigators like a physical force.

Then, after the destruction, everything is silent. The sea is gone. In its place is a dark mire, punctuated by the monoliths. About a mile from the coast is Shk'hrnwr itself. It gleams in the sunlight, beautiful

and terrible: a flurry of gleaming arches, dripping with the dark mire. Further out, the immense sea-monsters wade in the risen seabed.

If the Investigators return to Blackpool, they find the Metropole destroyed by the monoliths. The community has descended into anarchy: Perry attempts to escape in his truck, alone, while Jack and Martha rescue Martin from the half-fallen ballroom. The others flee through the Blackpool ruins.

If the Investigators attack Jack or Martin (who are, after all, monsters), their statistics are:

Jack Garth

Firearms (Shotgun) 10
Health 10
Athletics 10

Martin Garth

Scuffling 5
Health 5

INSIDE SHK'HRNWR

The Investigators wade through the black silt towards Shk'hrnwr. After a mile, they find themselves among the monoliths, where geometry becomes confused: often, the monoliths seem vertical, while the horizon slants.

A staircase of slimy rock leads upwards. From this elevated position, they see risen Shk'hrnwr around them, glinting as the sunlight fades. At the top is a great, open door.

Inside, a dark tunnel leads down. It seems more organic than manufactured, like the intestine of a large animal. As the Investigators descend, its odour changes, from rotting fish to fresh blood.

In the walls, the Investigators notice alcoves, each with a semi-circular seat surrounding a central surface. This surface is curiously and deliberately scratched with a warped network of curved grooves. Water runs within the grooves, while pieces of moss, shell and flesh, jammed into them, stop the water's flow. Each alcove has a different grooved pattern.



The Dead White World

From studying these grooves, the following clues are available.

1. The grooves form a game board. The game appears to be both a teaching tool and an occult ritual.

- **Anthropology:** You are intrigued by the function of these grooves. They resemble a game board, yet there is also a sense of ritualism about them. They might be a religious teaching tool.
- **Archaeology:** This reminds you of a medieval game board you once saw in the British Museum. Like that game board, it is not merely a game, but a learning tool. There is also a religious element.
- **Occult:** This is a ritual, you realise, but also something more. It is a strategic game and perhaps a teaching tool.

2. The game is an ancient predecessor of chess.

- **History:** At first, you think the game is a variation of chess. However, you realise that chess is a variation of this game. Certainly, the game is very, very old.
- **Occult:** Similar game boards have been found scratched into cathedral walls. However, those boards seemed to be variants of chess. This, however, seems like an earlier game, a predecessor of chess.
- **Strategy:** This is clearly a strategic simulation, but it is oddly familiar. It is, you realise, related to chess. Yet it is not a chess variant. You suspect this is a precursor to chess.

THE DEEP GAME

Further downwards, miles under the surface, is an immense hall: from end to end, it measures approximately two miles. On its silty floor, grooves are scratched. These form a vast pattern, as though every game board from the alcoves above had

been knitted together. It is, you realise, an impossibly complex game.

In distant corners, great vertical shafts lead deeper into the Earth. Nauseating guttural noises echo from within them. Yet the shaft walls are smooth, making descent impossible. Whatever the Investigators must accomplish, they must accomplish within this hall. If there is a bottleneck where they can fight the invasion, it is here.

And they can accomplish much, by learning the Game of the Deep Ones. The game is a military, historical and mystical simulation: understanding it grants understanding of the past and future.

To learn the game, the Investigators must study the game boards, both here and in the alcoves. The more they learn about the game, the more its geometries and mathematics embed themselves in their minds.

Since the game is ancient, strategic, physical and religious, any of the following abilities (or others you decide) will reveal the game's basics.

- **Anthropology:** to realise that the game models how societies function.
- **Archaeology:** to understand it through reference to ancient board games.
- **Craft:** to learn the game by understanding how it was constructed.
- **Cryptography:** to comprehend what the patterns mean.
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** to understand the dark mathematics behind the game.
- **Intuition:** To see through the details and perceive the true meaning.
- **Mechanical Repair:** to understand where the water will flow when you remove something from the groove.
- **Occult:** to understand the strange ritual behind the game.
- **Strategy:** To work out the strategy behind the game.

- **Theology:** to understand the game's religious symbolism.

The basics, which you should reveal to the players as they learn the game, are these. The game board, on which the Investigators stand, is a telescoped map of the world. Nearby locations are represented in the centre of the board, while distant ones are around the edges of the hall.

Thus, the game board's centre represents the hall where the Investigators are now. Around that is Shk'hrnwr and then Blackpool. Further out, from the centre of the game board, is Britain, with London and Dover visible. At the edges of the board, the United States is represented, along with the rest of the world.

The water, moss and flesh, within the game board's grooves, are playing pieces. Water represents the Deep Ones; moss represents the white flowers; flesh represents humans. There are other pieces, too, evidently representing other alien races.

Marked on the board is the current state of play. Indeed, it is the current state of the world. The plants occupy Britain. The Deep Ones, within Shk'hrnwr, are massing for an attack. The humans are scattered and hopeless.

From this board, then, the Investigators can tell how the invasion will happen, who will conquer Britain and, indeed, what the future of the Earth will be. By understanding the game, in its mystical complexity, they can glimpse how reality will change.

Thus, by spending any of the abilities above, the Investigators can reveal any of the following clues. They also gain a point of **Cthulhu Mythos**, per clue, to a maximum of three.

Affliction Points

Any Investigators that learned to play the Game of the Deep Ones gain an Affliction Point.



Sandgrown

1. The human race is doomed.

- **Strategy:** As you understand the game, you realise that the human race cannot survive. There are so few pieces on the board, so badly arranged. The flowers will kill them or the Deep Ones will kill them, but the human race cannot survive.

2. The plants have a leader.

- **Anthropology:** As you learn the game, you are fascinated by the structure of the pieces representing the plants. They are, indeed, a distributed society. There is also a large piece, representing their leader, although its exact location is unclear: the board position on which it rests does not seem to represent a single physical location.

3. The board will be destroyed.

- **Occult:** In the later stages of the game, you believe the board itself gets destroyed, as the grooves become blocked. The world, as represented on the game board, is no more.

4. The playing pieces marked by shells have a special move within the game.

- **Archaeology:** You recognise the shell pieces from an ancient Persian game you once researched. You remember particularly that they have a special “move” available: they can “take over” the human pieces, controlling them.

5. The Great Race is not on the board.

- **Craft:** Curiously, the Great Race of Yith is not represented on this board. Does this mean the game is an inaccurate representation? Is there, perhaps, hope for the human race?

6. **Core Clue:** The humans have one move available to them. This hall, where the game is located, represents a crucial square on the board. The Investigators can stop the Deep Ones invading, by leaving a human within this hall, with a flower growing in them. If they do, the white flowers will destroy the Deep Ones, within this hall, and later conquer Britain. If they do not, the Deep Ones will invade Britain, destroying the flowers.

This, then, is the final choice available to the Investigators. If they leave a human here, with a white flower growing in them, they will stop the invasion. They can achieve this in various ways. Perhaps they could infect someone with the flowers. Perhaps, alternatively, the Investigator with the shoot in their arm could sacrifice themselves.

Thus, as the Investigators suspected, the hall is a bottleneck. Because the Deep Ones must pass it, they will all be infected if a white flower is here. However, the white flower cannot survive here on its own. It needs something to grow in. It needs a human.

If the Investigators do this, then the white flowers conquer Britain. If not, the Deep Ones do. The humans cannot win, but as their final act, they can choose who will destroy their land.

EPILOGUE

As the Investigators escape Blackpool, they see their choice being enacted. If they sacrificed someone in Shk’hrnwr, the white flowers are spreading, flooding over the fields. If not, the Deep Ones are invading and Britain is sinking into mire.

Either way, Britain has been conquered. The reign of the human race is over.





Sacred Waters

A mountain lake promises hope amid the ruins of the dead white world.

For additional guidance, consult the Water and Barbarism sections of *The Apocalypse Machine*.

THE HOOK

Searching for uncontaminated water, the Investigators find a small mountain lake that appears free of the Mythos taint.

THE QUESTION

What protects the lake?

THE HORRIBLE TRUTH

The lake isn't protected or pure – it's just that the corruption hasn't reached here yet.

THE SPINE

The waters of England are tainted. If the Flowers are the Creatures, then the rivers and lakes run white with countless microscopic spores, ready to sprout where they find suitable purchase. Survivors avoid dying of thirst by collecting rainwater (and consuming it before the seed-bursts taint it), by boiling water (which usually, but

not always, kills the seeds) or by relying on increasingly scarce bottled or canned drinks.

If the Deep Ones are the Creatures, then the sea level has risen, and every river and body of water has swollen up and broken its banks. The whole of England, apart from the highest, rockiest hills and mountains, has become a weed-choked fen.

The Investigators learn of a mountain lake that's still pure. How?

- **Flattery:** A trader sells you several sealed canisters of drinkable water. You persuade him to tell you where he obtained such treasure.





Sacred Waters

- **Intuition:** When the wind blows from the north-east, you smell something fresh and pure. There's clean water out there.
- **Oral History:** Stories from the handful of survivors you've encountered speak of a river that's still untainted. At first, you dismissed these stories as wishful thinking, as the seeds of a new myth, but there are too many tales from different sources to be ignored. It's worth investigating.
- **Outdoorsman:** On one of your long expeditions, you saw a mountain stream in the distance, and it wasn't milky-white or choked with seaweed.

Examining the Waterfall

Cautious players may correctly suspect that the waterfall is connected to the river's anomalous purity. Analysing the waters with **Biology** or **Botany** confirms that the further up the waterfall you go, the purer the waters – but that the lower reaches of the waterfall are partially tainted. The corruption of the Creatures is slowly making its way up the river. The waterfall is only a temporary barrier, and soon all the river will be corrupted too.

Alternatively, the Investigators might learn this through Affliction – one Investigator might discover a psychic connection to the Flowers (**Intuition**), sense a change in weather patterns that will one day rain seeds down on the lake (**Outdoorsman**) or detect that the river is starting to flow, impossibly, *uphill* as the flood waters rise (**Geology**).

FOLLOWING THE STREAM

For most of its course, the river is just like all the other tainted waterways of England. It is

only in the upper reaches, where it cascades down a waterfall, that the river changes.

There are many waterfalls (often called 'forces' in the local dialect) in the Lake District and the Pennines, north and east of Blackpool





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respectively. You don't need to be bound by geography, though, as the earthquakes of the apocalypse might have caused the landscape to change and created wild new waterfalls. The important thing is that there is a discontinuity between two sections of the river.

There's a van parked near the bottom of the waterfall. It obviously hasn't been here long — other vehicles are weed-choked or flower-covered and useless, but this one is well maintained. The engine is still warm, but there are no keys in the ignition.

- **Mechanical Repair:** The van's been kept running by someone who knows what they're doing. Improvised rubber seals and gaskets keep out the worst of the weeds.
- **1-point Navigation spend:** You notice that there are some coordinates scribbled on the back of one map — this is the location of Boscove's listening post (see below), and the Investigators can scavenge a portable generator and radio equipment from there.
- **Simple Search:** Inside the back of the truck are a dozen milk churns, looted, you guess, from a nearby dairy. They're empty.
- **Strategy:** You suspect that whoever's driving this van is a soldier. The maps in the glove compartment, the degree of preparation, the neat way everything inside is stowed — it speaks of military discipline.

There's no way to drive the van any further up the hillside — it's too steep and rocky. To get higher, the Investigators must climb on foot. It's a difficult climb, but there's no need to call for Athletics tests unless the players specifically say they're trying to overtake the driver of the van or are otherwise racing up the hillside.

Mists curl around the hillside, sometimes blocking the view of the valley below. The Investigators glimpse strange, unsettling things in the distance, but the babbling of the fresh, clean water in the nearby river lifts their spirits.

The Soldier

As the Investigators climb, they encounter **Lieutenant Henry Boscove**, the driver of the van. He hails the Investigators from a distance, shouting '*don't come any closer!*' and firing a warning shot if they move. He keeps his rifle aimed at them until he's sure they're human and (relatively) sane. **Reassurance** or **Leadership** convinces him that the Investigators can be trusted; **Assess Honesty** suggests he's wary and suspicious, but is looking for an excuse to lower his weapon.

Boscove explains that he was stationed at a secret military radio listening post, high in the hills of the Lake District, and survived because he had advance warning of the Flowers' spread across England thanks to desperate radio transmissions from other military bases. He believes that there's still some remnant of the British government or army out there, and is trying to find it. (If none of your players have **Cryptography**, then Boscove might have intercepted the transmissions from *HMS Hood* — see pages 120 and 144).

Like the Investigators, he noticed this apparently untainted river, and decided to replenish his supplies. He suggests that they work together to investigate the river and then, if necessary, carry the heavy milk churns up the hillside to pure water.

THE CHURCH BY THE LAKE

Beyond the waterfall, the Investigators come upon a small wooden church, obviously built in the time since the Apocalypse. It's a crude structure — little more than a shed with a low spire topped with a cross. It stands on the banks of a mountain lake.

A dozen people have taken shelter here, under the protection of **Keeper Jones**. These survivors are all clearly shell-shocked and terrified by their experiences during the Apocalypse; **Agriculture** suggests they're all malnourished, and might not make it through the winter without better access to food. The only thing this place offers is clean water, and while that's a rare treasure, it's not enough to sustain them.

Lieutenant Henry Boscove

If it comes up, he's got Athletics 8, Health 6, Shadowing 8, Shooting 8 and Scuffling 6. His Drive is Self-Preservation — he thinks he's a good man, a good soldier who's just trying to keep things together until he makes contact with a superior officer, but that's how he justifies his actions to himself. He's willing to kill other survivors — including player characters — if they don't do what he says.

He's armed with a rifle and a revolver, and has plenty of ammunition for both.

Keeper Jones

Jones is an old man with wild white hair, who wades across the lake to greet the Investigators. He's dressed in a muddy robe that was once a dressing gown. Unlike Boscove, Jones does not hesitate to welcome the strangers to his community — to this sanctuary, as he calls it. This place, he claims, is blessed by God. Just as Noah rode out the biblical Flood in a place of safety, so too will he. This lake and this church are his ark, and the Apocalypse has washed the world clean of sin and perversion. One day soon, the flood waters in the valley below will recede (or the weird white Flowers will perish) and he and his followers will build a new Eden in the ruins of England.

He's clearly in the grips of a religious mania, but seems otherwise harmless.

- **Anthropology:** The other dozen or so survivors all appear listless and easily led. Jones dominates them because of the force of his belief. Their near-starvation doubtless contributes to their lack of initiative.
- **Negotiation:** Jones assumes that the Investigators and Boscove are here to join his little community. The Lord is their shepherd — they have climbed out of the valley of



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the shadow of death, and here are the green pastures and still waters that were promised. He won't *force* anyone to stay, but he won't let them draw water from God's lake either. The lake is a gift from the Lord, and must not be profaned.

- **Theology:** Jones isn't a theologian or a vicar – his knowledge of Christian belief is rudimentary at best. If challenged, he admits that he was a drunk who escaped the Apocalypse by sheer chance, but he 'found God in the desolation.'

Jones invites the Investigators and Boscove to stay – the faithful have only a little food, but there is clean water to drink, and faith will sustain them until this second Flood ends.

TAKING THE WATERS

Boscove takes one or more of the player characters aside – he chooses fellow soldiers, or those who seem like they can handle a fight. This Jones fellow is clearly a madman, and these idiots seem determined to starve to death on the mountainside. He suggests that this source of clean water is too valuable to be left in their hands. If the Investigators help him secure it, they can use his van to ship plenty of water to the Refuge or some other more suitable place to live. (Even if the Investigators have discovered that the mountain lake won't stay pure forever, then Boscove is still determined to take a van-load of fresh water before the taint reaches the lake.)

For his part, Jones will try to stop anyone from taking the 'holy waters'. While he is insane, he has some justification for his belief – the more people tramping up and down the hillside, the greater the chance of accidental contamination. One Flower-seed could destroy the lake in an instant.

So, what do the Investigators do?

- **Destroy the Lake:** The lake is the source of contention between Boscove and Jones; removing it means no-one has to die. The Investigators could poison the lake, or just discover that it will soon be tainted and announce this to the community of survivors – a **Leadership**, **Intimidation** or **Cthulhu Mythos** spend is enough to convince them of the horrible truth.
- **Kill Jones:** This is Boscove's preferred solution, although he won't broach the subject of murder unless the Investigators do so first – he'd prefer for Jones to "force" Boscove to shoot him. If Jones dies, what happens to his followers? Do the Investigators leave them to starve on the hillside, or do they take charge of them? Spending **Leadership** lets them inspire the survivors to action; for his part, Boscove is more than willing to let them die here.

- **Side with Jones:** His little community is unsustainable – **Agriculture** or **Outdoorsman** suggests they won't last the winter in their present state. Given plenty of time, the Investigators could possibly convince Jones to listen to them, and either move the survivors to somewhere less exposed or trade with them, exchanging food and supplies for access to the fresh water. However, Boscove doesn't have the patience for such a strategy – the Investigators must kill him or drive him away, or he'll try to take the lake by force.
- **Steal the Waters:** The Investigators could creep up and down the mountainside, lugging the heavy churns. Doing so requires both an **Athletics** test and a **Stealth** test, both Difficulty 4. Failing the Athletics test means that the churn spills and the journey is wasted; failing the Stealth test means that one of Jones' followers spots the theft and raises the alarm.

If someone gets murdered, it might be dramatically fitting for them to fall into the lake, and a Flower spore hidden in their clothing germinates and taints the once-pure waters.





Goddess of the Soil

As humanity vanishes from England, the Investigators find traces of resurgent cults.

For additional guidance, consult the Soil sections of *The Apocalypse Machine*.

THE HOOK

The land around an ancient barrow seems strangely free of the Creatures.

THE QUESTION

What's in the barrow?

THE HORRIBLE TRUTH

Shub-Niggurath is rising from the Earth's core. The relic in the barrow is sacred to Her.

THE SPINE

The Investigators find woodland that appears unaffected by the transformation of the rest of England. If they are travelling across the Dead White World, then they simply come across this strange forest in the course of their journey. If they have already established a sanctuary, then they learn of it through **Oral History**.

THE FOREST

The forest is dark and unwholesome. There are no paths through it. The thick canopy of intertwining branches swallows the light, forcing travellers to feel their way through the trees, hands rubbing against the roughness of the bark, the sudden sickening softness of moss or fungus, the scuttling of insects. Cobwebs and vines hang down from the trees, making it hard to see more than a few feet. Despite this, the forest is not unwelcoming – it's strangely like coming home.

The Investigators discover:





Goddess of the Soil

1. The forest is impossibly old.

- **Archaeology:** There are potsherds and other debris around the roots of some of the ancient trees. They're at least medieval, possibly older. Possibly, much older. The fact they're on the surface surprises you – if you didn't know better, you'd swear these old, old trees sprouted through the ground overnight, carrying a surge of debris out of the soil.
- **Botany:** This is ancient woodland – it's older than human settlement in England. You thought you knew where all the extant examples of such forests were.
- **History:** You can't remember any records of a forest like this around here.

2. There's something in the middle of the forest.

- **Navigation:** The ground slopes up towards the centre of the woods. You can't tell for certain, but you think there's some sort of structure or landscape feature there.
- **Outdoorsman:** You find a gushing stream of clear water running through the wood. It's running downhill; the source must be somewhere near the centre of the wood.

3. The forest could be useful to them.

- **Agriculture:** This woodland is somehow resisting the Creatures. The soil here is rich and fruitful – clear away the trees, and you could grow plenty of food here.

- **Leadership:** A shelter like this isn't going to stay unoccupied for long. Other survivors are going to gather here.
- **Strategy:** This looks like a good place to take shelter from the Creatures. Something here stops them from invading the woods.

If the Investigators plunge straight into the woods, you can skip *The Settlers* for now. If not, then the Investigators get to benefit from the discovery of the woodlands. They can cut down trees for firewood or building materials, collect fresh water, and harvest fruit and berries.

THE SETTLERS

A group of other survivors also discover the forest. These survivors number about twenty, and are led by a nun, **Sister Martha**. She gathered these survivors





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and led them out of Manchester when it was overrun by the Creatures; they've been wandering ever since. None of these survivors are armed or in any way violent. Indeed, **Medicine** suggests that many of them are exhausted and sick.

Several of Martha's followers are former farm workers, and they also suggest that clearing some of the forest to plant crops would be wise. If the Investigators have already cut down some of the forest, then Martha offers (**Bargaining**) to trade the food her followers will grow in exchange for the right to plant on the cleared land.

Assess Honesty confirms that Martha is wholly genuine — she just wants to find some place to shelter from the ruin of the world outside, and if that means returning to the woods, so be it.

THE MOUND

When they finally enter the forest, emphasise the warmth, the damp, the all-pervading life around them. They must wade through thick, squelching leaf-rot; they must cut through thick, juicy vines; they must push through tangled undergrowth. The smells and tastes are rich and overpowering: dark loam, bitter plant juices, an intense sweetness like honey. At times, the Investigators feel that they are being watched, or that things are moving in the darkness in the depths of the forest. At times, they know with a strange certainty that they are the only animal things in this wild, wild, wood.

There is no danger here. The forest draws them in.

In the centre of the forest is a huge mound of black earth, covered with a thin growth of scraggly green grass. Thirteen carved stones, each twice the height of the tallest Investigator, lie against the flanks of the mound, equidistantly spaced except for two that lie almost side-by-side, with only a narrow gap between them. The mound is plainly an artificial structure.

- **Anthropology:** You're sure that humans raised this mound, not

the Creatures. It looks like other Neolithic earthworks you've seen before — but how could a prehistoric site of such size go undiscovered?

- **Archaeology:** This looks more like a passage tomb than a burial mound to you, but the entrance has been sealed with earth. You suspect that the entrance is between those two stones.
- **Astronomy:** Some of the marks on the carved stones remind you of constellations, but they're not the constellations in the sky above. They've drifted, as if those marks depict the night sky of thousands of years ago — or thousands of years hence.
- **Cryptography:** Examining the carvings on the stones, you manage to decode some of the messages on them. This is the 'tomb of the heroes' and the 'cauldron' is kept here. Other carvings are too weather-worn to be deciphered.
- **Intuition:** Ever since you found the mound, you've felt this pressure in your skull, like something taking root. You know — but don't know how you know — that this is a... pregnant time. It's like the game board in the sunken city. Your decisions here will change things.

INSIDE THE MOUND

The Investigators penetrate the mound by breaking down the earthen wall to reveal a long, narrow, muddy passageway through the wet clay. It's so narrow that there is no space to turn; it's scarcely wider than the width of an Investigator's shoulders.

Spaced along the walls of the passageway are more carved stones. These ones were protected from the elements, so more of the carvings can be discerned. To read the stones, though, an Investigator must crawl into the passageway and shine a light on the carvings, one by one.

With **Archaeology**, **Cryptology**, **Intuition** or **Cthulhu Mythos**, the Investigator in the tunnel interprets the series of carved stones as follows.

1. The first stone depicts a sort of a spiral, although it could also be some sort of many-legged creature. In the heart of the spiral is what might be a bowl or cup. A glyph above the spiral/creature shows the moon above some sort of oval shape, like a lens or eye.
2. The second stone shows a number of figures (equal to the number of player characters) entering a dark place underground. While the carvings are both primitive and heavily weathered, the figures do bear a disturbing resemblance to the player characters. This stone, though, must be thousands of years old.
3. The figures descend into the earth and retrieve the cup from where it waits.
4. They emerge from the dark place into a forest — at least, that's what it looks like, although the 'trees' are very stylized and seem to have the suggestion of hooves.
5. They bring the cup to a crowd of people, and there is great joy and feasting, and good times. The cup brings health and prosperity and fertility and growth.
6. The people of the cup are fruitful, and their tribe grows. Those heroes who retrieved the cup never die, but take on strange new forms.
7. The next stone appears out of sequence — it shows another pattern of constellations, like the stone outside.
8. The seventh stone is a repeat of the first stone — the spiral/many-legged thing, holding/containing/incubating a cup, beneath a moon and an oval.

The seventh stone can be lifted. Beneath it, in a muddy depression in the living soil, is a black bowl made of rubbery wood. Worms and insects spill out of it, struggling and drowning in the milky, muddy water that fills it.



Goddess of the Soil

The first Investigator to touch the bowl gains three Affliction Points immediately, one of which must be spent to buy Dreaming (p. 48). That Investigator *knows* that there is a monster – or a mother – deep beneath the soil of England, and this bowl is sacred to her. It is the power of this bowl that preserves the wood, and it can preserve the people who dwell in the wood too.

The shape of the bowl appears to precisely match the shape of the mound.

OUT OF THE MOUND

When the Investigators emerge from the mound, the forest has changed. Strange, ropy things loom out of the trees. They do not approach or attack – they just stand guard, waiting for the Investigators to decide what to do.

So, what do they do?

- **Destroy the Cup:** Doing so breaks Shub-Niggurath's connection to this place. The mound cracks and collapses in on itself. Almost immediately, the Creatures start to encroach on the forest – some or all of Sister

Martha's settlers perish in this initial incursion. Within a month, the forest is either a jungle of lethal white flowers, or a swamp of rotting dead trees.

- **Drink Deep from the Cup:** The character suddenly develops an overwhelming thirst for water corrupted by the Flowers, and rushes off in search of the nearest source. When the character drinks the water, though, he or she does not die like everyone else – instead, the Investigator transforms into something strange and new, a thing half-way between white Flower and human, with pearly-white skin, hair like blossoms, and no eyes. The creature is no longer capable of communicating with humans, and vanishes into the Dead White World.
- **Give the Cup to Sister Martha:** She and her followers just want to live in peace in this forest sanctuary. As long as they don't drink from the cup, they can do so — but they will turn inevitably to the worship of Shub-Niggurath. In an earlier time, before the Apocalypse,

that would have been a horrific and unthinkable choice – but now, with the mores and morals of the earlier world washed away, who are the Investigators to judge?

- **Leave the Cup in the Mound:** They can do this, but any Investigators with Dreaming dream about it every night as long as they stay in or near the forest. Each dream saps the Investigators' Sanity — the group will have to move on or take some more definite action.
- **Sip from the Cup:** Gain one die's worth of Affliction Points — again, at least one point must be spent to buy Dreaming.
- **Take the Cup Away:** The cup's power diminishes as it moves away from the mound – this has the same effect as breaking the cup, as the forest soon dies away. However, if the Investigators keep the cup with them, then as they approach Brichester (p. 160), they notice the cup's power growing again as it responds to the Mother's call.



Slaves of the Mother





Introduction

These three scenarios complete the destruction of England in the *Cthulhu Apocalypse* campaign. The adventures pick up three years after the final part of *The Dead White World*.

It is now the summer of 1939. The decision that the characters made in the alien city of Shk'hrnwr continues to haunt England (see *The Creatures*, page 121). Horrors now stalk the empty and overgrown streets of the civilisation that once existed here. The passage of three long, strange years has transformed the world into an unrecognisable landscape of horrors. There are a few survivors, living in the ruins of the past, but under the unfathomable pressure of the Mythos, their humanity is slipping away, cracking and moulting in the process of becoming something new.

THREE YEARS GONE...

What has happened to the player characters in the last three years? Presumably, they are all still alive (though if any of the players wish to retire their previous characters and create replacements, let them) and have found some place of refuge. This refuge must have:

- A source of fresh water, untainted by the Flowers
- Easy access to scavenged canned food (or some other food source)
- A place to hide from the Creatures.

Optionally,

- Several other people beyond the player characters live there
- The existence of the refuge is a mystery — there is no clear reason why the Creatures rarely come here

- The refuge is a well-known landmark, perhaps a former police station, country house or hotel

Even if other people live at the refuge, the player characters are the leaders and defenders of the settlement.

The refuge should not be:

- Mobile
 - Underground
 - Impregnable
- or
- Pleasant

Do not spend too much time detailing the refuge. It won't last long (and let the players know that).

Alternatively, it is possible that there is no refuge. The characters might survive for years as scavengers and nomads, criss-crossing the wreck of England as they strive to avoid the ever-present Creatures.

It is worth reviewing *The Decaying Earth* section of *The Apocalypse Machine* for ideas on presenting the crumbling remains of human civilisation.

DOWNTIME

Ask the players what transpired in the last three years. Did they run from the rise of the Deep Ones at Blackpool and flee to higher ground in the Yorkshire Dales? Perhaps they wandered in terror until they found a miraculous place of safety, or were scattered and travelled separately until they met up again recently.

Optionally, allow the players to each spend up to three points from Investigative Abilities of their choice, representing

their characters' activities and efforts during these three years. Benefits for spending these points are noted below. If a skill is not listed, then we couldn't think of a suitable benefit — maybe you or your players can, though!

Skills marked with a * give one Affliction point if a character invests time in them.

- **Agriculture:** You were able to grow food even under these harsh conditions. For each point spent, one character may permanently increase his Health by 1.
- **Anthropology:** You've studied how human society has changed under the pressure of the Mythos, and heard rumours about other settlements and sanctuaries across England. A 1-point spend lets the character find out about the 'safe zone' in Brighton; a 2-point spend picks up rumours about a secret military project preparing to fight back against the Creatures. A 3-point spend gets the characters a rumour about another settlement of your choice.
- **Archaeology:** You put your expertise in excavating ancient civilisations to work in recovering the remains of your own. For each point spent, the character gains a temporary 2-point pool of Scavenging.
- **Architecture:** You have learned to find hiding places and safe areas in the ruins where the Creatures rarely go. For each point spent, you may nominate a safe place in an urban area where you can rest and recuperate.



Slaves of the Mother

- **Art:** You've channelled your horrific experiences into your art. You may increase your maximum Sanity by 1 for each point of Art spent. However, anyone who looks at your art must make a Sanity test at a Difficulty of 2+the number of points of Art spent.
- **Assess Honesty:** If you were part of a refuge, you were responsible for vetting newcomers. For each point spent, you may describe a suitably reliable and stalwart member of your refuge.
- **Astronomy*:** You've watched the stars twist and change as the years passed by. For each point spent, the character gains a temporary 1-point pool of Cthulhu Mythos.
- **Bargain:** You traded with other survivors and amassed a stockpile of useful items. For every point of Bargain invested, the character gains a temporary 2-point pool of Preparedness.
- **Biology*:** You've studied the Creatures, and know more than most about how they kill — and how to kill them! For each point spent, you gain a +2 bonus to one General Ability roll to avoid danger or inflict damage. For example, you could invoke your Biology studies when making a Sense Trouble roll that involves the Flowers, or say that you know where to shoot a Deep One with Firearms. This bonus applies only once, but if you've got multiple bonuses, you can stack them or split them between rolls.
- **Botany:** You've made a study of the Flowers. This works just like Biology, above, but only applies to the Flowers. The bonus per point spent is increased to +3.
- **Bureaucracy:** You've collated records and made notes about places where you are likely to find supplies, such as old military bases, canning factories, warehouses and the like. For each point spent, the character gains a temporary 2-point pool of Scavenging.
- **Craft:** You spent your time fortifying your Refuge. For each point invested, you may describe an improvement to the Refuge's defences or amenities.
- **Cryptography*:** You managed to salvage a working radio, and spent many sleepless nights listening to the strange squeal of radio messages passing through the ether. With a 1-point spend, the character hears horrible messages of the destruction of Copenhagen from a babbling madman in Vanløse; huge tentacles rose out of the ocean and pulled much of the city into the water. A 2-point spend lets the character detect and decode the ramblings of the keeper of a lighthouse off the coast of Wales, whose fevered transmissions speak of mysterious black ships, possibly some sort of refugee transport, travelling west. A 3-point spend means the character catches the tail end of a transmission from *HMS Hood*, a British warship that was in Portsmouth when the apocalypse struck. Apparently, the ship survived and is in communication with someone called Cavendish. The radio transmission confirms that some cargo from the ship was successfully delivered to this Cavendish.
- **Forensics*:** You spent several years studying the victims of the Creatures, and now know a great deal about the curious natures of their deaths. For each point spent, the character gains a 3-point pool in First Aid that can be applied only to injuries caused by the Creatures.
- **Geology:** You surveyed the land around your Refuge, and identified useful geographical features. A 1-point spend allows the character to describe a cave nearby to hide in; a 2-point spend discovers an underground spring uninfected by the Flowers; a 3-point spend lets the character find signs of a vast sigil drawn across the whole country in the folds of hills and valleys. This troubling revelation is worth a 3-point Sanity test.
- **History:** You have invested time and energy in preserving the culture and learning of a rapidly vanishing age. For each point invested, you may gain 1 point of Sanity. You also gain the Pillar of Sanity "Preservation of Learning".
- **Leadership:** You became the leader of your little band of survivors. For each point of Leadership invested, you allow another character to invest an extra point in downtime activities.
- **Medicine:** You have observed the changes in humanity. A 1-point spend means the Investigator noticed a sharp rise in human and animal fertility. A 2-point spend means the Investigator has studied the Flowers, and can treat those infected by their seeds. A 3-point spend gives a temporary 2-point pool of First Aid.
- **Navigation:** You mapped the region around your Refuge. For each point invested, you gain a temporary pool of 2 points in Stealth when moving around the immediate area.
- **Oral History:** You've picked up various useful rumours. A 1-point spend lets the character find out about the 'safe zone' in Brighton; a 2-point spend picks up rumours about a secret military project preparing to fight back against the Creatures. A 3-point spend gets the characters a rumour about another settlement of your choice.
- **Outdoorsman*:** You've learned how to survive in this strange new world. For each point invested, you may increase



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your Stealth, Preparedness or Fleeing rating by 1.

- **Pharmacy:** You've stockpiled medical supplies and other useful drugs by ransacking pharmacies. For each point invested, you gain a 2-point pool that can be applied to Preparedness, First Aid or Scavenging rolls related to drugs.
- **Physics:** You have studied how the fundamental laws of physics have changed since the Apocalypse. Gain 1 point of Cthulhu Mythos for every two points of Physics spent (rounding down).

Sources of Stability, Pillars of Sanity & Drives

Optionally, player characters who lost Sources of Stability in the Apocalypse may choose to switch to new, living Sources in the form of other survivors. Any such non-player character Sources of Stability should not be on a par with Investigators — they may be able to survive in this strange new world, but they cannot find clues or take an active part in these scenarios.

Similarly, player characters may choose to replace lost or meaningless Pillars of Sanity with new ones more suited to the post-Apocalyptic environment. For example, a character whose Pillar was "England Prevails" might change it to "England Can Be Reclaimed"; one who formerly valued God might lose her faith and become focussed on her own personal survival.

Finally, Drives that no longer fit a character can be exchanged for something else. See *The Apocalypse Machine* for post-Apocalyptic Drives.

THE CREATURES

Depending on what the players chose at the end of *Sandgrown*, England is overrun either with the strange white Flowers that blossomed across the country, or half-drowned by the Deep Ones. In either case, some outposts of the other horror remain. There are either a few patches of flowers still growing on high ground, or else the Deep Ones continue to lurk off the coast, coming ashore on high tide on certain moonless nights.

Throughout the rest of this book, the dominant entities are referred to as the Creatures. Their diminished rivals are termed the Others. In sections where the Flowers are the Creatures, you will see this symbol:



In sections where the Deep Ones are the Creatures, you will see this symbol:



The Flowers as the Creatures

The Flowers continue to spread, obscenely and blindly, obeying nothing but their own genetic commandments to be fruitful and multiply. The Flowers are thinnest on dry, stony soil and rocks, thicker along rivers and other waterways, and grow thickest of all in the ruins of cities, where they sprout from the charnel piles of the dead. Each morning, their petals unfurl and vast milky clouds of seeds belch skywards. The skies of England are a sinister pale pink-white now from dawn until mid-afternoon.

The seeds float on the breeze until they come to earth. They can germinate only in water or damp soil. Rains, therefore, result in frenzied new growth that stains the land white. Anyone who drinks water containing the seeds perishes. The vast seed-bursts can also be perilous — an unfortunate victim who is exposed to millions of hungry seeds may germinate flowers in his eyes or mucous membranes.

Animals are unaffected by the seed-tainted water, but cannot gain any nourishment from eating the strange plants. Therefore, most animals have starved to death as the seeds crowd out native flora.

The Flowers keep growing steadily, so the oldest Flowers are now gigantic in size. Eight-foot-tall Flowers are not uncommon, and some of those near Dover are said to be bigger than churches.

Unnatural Fecundity

Slowly, over the three years, a strange phenomenon swept across the country — a rise in fertility across all species. The Creatures, of course, derived the greatest benefit from this, but it also affects plants, animals and humans. The Investigators may or may not notice this rise, depending on how they invested their points during Downtime. Female Investigators may, if they wish, have children during the intervening period — the rise in fertility ensures that conception and childbirth are both free of complications or problems.

It is as though the world responds to the millions of deaths during the Apocalypse by bringing forth a bounty of new life. In truth, this wave of unnatural fecundity is the first of the signs heralding the approach of the Mother.

Terrain

Seen from the air — if there were any aircraft left to fly — England now looks like a milky-white carpet, except for a few regions of bare rock and the last dying forests. The flowers grow everywhere, like a shroud. It has become increasingly difficult to recognise landmarks and to tell one sort of terrain from another, when everything is shin-deep in delicate white flowers.

Strange Sights

- Huge swaying growths looming over ruined buildings. These towering plants resemble white delphiniums, but are the size of oak trees. They are disconcertingly supple, and leave caustic pollen-stains on anything that touches them.
- One of the characters awakens to find a furze of bone-white moss has grown around them overnight. This moss coats every



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surface in the room other than the character's bed.

- The plants are attracted to complex machinery and to vibrations. Anything that creates repetitive sounds — a millwheel, for example, or an engine — is soon covered with a thick growth as seeds cluster there.
- The characters find a glasshouse, miraculously still intact. Inside, they see the shocking red of ripe tomatoes, the vibrant green of natural plants. However, the instant they breach the sanctity of the glasshouse, the Flowers start sprouting inside, choking out the other plants.
- The characters pass a famous body of water (a river such as the Thames, or perhaps Lake Windermere, or the Bristol Channel) and see that it has turned milky-white. As they stare, a huge scaly creature heaves itself out of the waters and strides past and over them, scattering droplets of white all over them. The titanic creature ignores the characters entirely. It moves to another part of the waters, and then sinks back down.
- Sometimes, the Flowers seem to almost besiege the survivors. If they cannot penetrate a shelter, then they gather there, sprouting in vast numbers on and around the offending structure until the sheer weight of them crushes it. The characters find a former shelter — a farmhouse, a cave, a hospital, an army base — that is drowned by gigantic snowdrifts of Flowers. The plants have used their incalculable numbers to swamp any opposition.
- The Flowers evolve in a Lamarckian fashion, where changes to the parent entity are passed onto the offspring. That means the Flowers can change radically in a short time. Most of the Flowers encountered by the characters are identical to the snowdrop-like plant they

encountered three years ago in Dover, but some have become truly bizarre aberrations.

Human Survivors

Water is the key to survival in the Dead White World. 99% of the water supply is tainted with the seeds, and drinking it is therefore invariably fatal. Survivors rely on boiling water (although even this is risky), bottled drinks (what few remain after three years of anarchy) or water supplies that remain unaffected (such as a few mountain streams, underground aquifers or emergency tanks).

Horrific Fate Table

1. **Smothered by a mass of Flowers.**

The victim clearly struggled, and does not appear to have any of the Flowers in her stomach. Instead, the Flowers choked off her mouth and nose, sprouting furiously quickly in any moist crevices until she suffocated.

2. **Accidentally consumed a seed, and died when the Flower burst through his stomach.**

Nearby is a battered old saucepan lying near the embers of a fire. The water in the saucepan is nearly — but not quite — entirely clear. It is only when the light catches it just right that the characters can see tiny white specks floating in it.

3. **Murdered.**

The victim was hung by the wrists from a makeshift gallows. There are two huge gashes, one at the top of each thigh, and the legs are covered in dried blood. A close examination shows that most of the victim's blood was deliberately drained out of his body and collected.

4. **Suicide by Flower.**

The victim sits or lies in a comfortable position, with a single flower growing from the wreckage of his head. It is clear that the victim placed a seed on his tongue, like the Communion wafer in a Catholic mass, and waited for it to grow and kill him.

5. **Unknown.**

The trail of footprints runs into a thick patch of Flowers, and then stops abruptly as if the victim was carried off by a flying monster, or vanished on the spot. As the characters watch, new Flowers begin

to grow from the compacted earth of the footprints; in a few minutes, the trail will be gone and nothing at all will remain.

6. **Drowned.** What appeared to be a patch of Flowers was actually a deep hole covered by a thin mesh of plants. The victim fell in and was smothered by the plants.



The Flowers as the Others

Three years ago, a strange yellowish scum floated to the surface of the ocean and began to wash onshore with the tides. This yellow scum proved lethal to the Flowers. Soon afterwards, stinging yellow-tinged acid rain fell across the south of England, wiping out most of the Flowers. Now, they can germinate and spread only in a few regions deep inland that escaped the Deep One's chemical purge.

Today, the Flowers are forgotten by most survivors, remembered only as part of the chaotic, horrific days that marked the end of the old world. There are still outbreaks and infections, but the survivors have learned that drinking a purgative potion of yellowish sea-water can stop the Flowers from growing and killing. The characters may glimpse the occasional fading Flower as they travel, a patch of tranquil white amid the thrashing horror of the drowned world, but the Flowers are not a major threat as the Others.



The Deep Ones as the Creatures

Humanity lived and died in the shadow of another civilisation infinitely greater and older than ours. For millions of years, the Deep Ones lurked in the cold and dark of the abyssal plain between the continental shelves, waiting for the time to rise. Now they are here, and they have inherited the Earth.

All of Europe is like Innsmouth now.

Terrain

The water level rose steadily for nearly a year after the Apocalypse. Strangely, this rise was not evenly distributed. In some places, the coastline is unchanged; in others, waves roll many miles inland.



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The rising waters paid little heed to gradient or geography. One valley might be drowned, while the next valley left untouched, even though both are the same height above the old sea level. Streets and roads were especially flooded, as though the sea was an eager commuter rushing to some midlands town. The sea entwined England like the tentacles of a kraken.

Most of the country is now either flooded or marshy and waterlogged. Travel is virtually impossible, as all the easy routes run uncomfortably close to bodies of water. The water itself is dark and fouled with seaweed. Mysterious shapes move under the surface.

Strange Sights

- A bizarre procession of creatures moves along one of the half-flooded roads. In this hurly-burly mob the characters see some figures that are almost human save for their bulbous eyes and scaly skins, but the

others are a fever-dream. Fish-like monsters that shamble and bellow, writhing blobs of protoplasm, stumbling insect-shapes dragging bloated egg-sacs behind them, yowling horrors with burning yellow eyes, twisted dragon-things and other indescribable creatures. This column of nightmares races along the road with great haste, as if chasing some prey. When the water grows deeper, they sink beneath the surface and vanish.

- A trio of Deep Ones, who hop and crawl over a boggy landscape like overgrown frogs. The three appear to be searching for something — they probe the mud with their spears and bellow instructions to each other. After some time, they show mounting frustration before finally giving up. If the characters search the area, they find what seems to be a token of some sort buried in

the mud. It is made from greenish glass, and depicts a many-legged sea creature like an octopus. Keeping this token is worth one Affliction point, if you're using those rules.

- The characters come across a broken-down bus, standing in waist-deep water. The bus is crowded with human survivors — every seat is full, and dozens of people stand in the aisle. All these passengers wear clothing made from an unfamiliar rubber-like substance, and all have purplish bruises or scars on their limbs and necks. They have the hollow, despairing eyes of people who have lost all hope. The passengers refuse to leave the bus; they can be dragged off, but just lie where the characters leave them.
- A half-sunken town, where flood waters and marshland have swallowed the lower half of the buildings. It appears that





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the town sank in a matter of minutes, as the characters find the buried remains of swallowed victims in the mud-logged rooms. Huge white earthworms squirm through the soil, feeding on the buried victims.

- The characters come upon a black market in stolen Deep One relics, such as gold jewellery and strangely shaped pieces of coral. Some merchants trade in lumps of pale blue-green flesh that quiver on silver plates — these are said to pieces of Deep One flesh. Crazed survivors come here in the hopes of finding a way to become Deep Ones themselves, believing the only way to survive in the wreck of England is to join the Mythos.

Human Survivors

The Deep Ones are less inimical to human life than the Flowers. They mostly ignore the few survivors, although any gathering of more than a handful of survivors draws retribution. The creatures are bizarrely well informed about the movements of human

survivors, and the characters may come to suspect that the Deep Ones can watch them through the eyes of the small silver fish that swim through the muddy pools. Rumours persist of coastal communities where chosen humans are inducted into the worship of Dagon and are allowed to survive in exchange for mating with the sea-creatures.

Horrific Fate Table

1. **Torn apart by something with tremendous strength.** The victim was ripped limb from limb, and most of the bones in her body shattered. Notably, the left femur appears to have been gnawed on by wickedly sharp teeth.
2. **The victim drowned.** His lungs are full of silty salt water, although the rest of the body is quite dry other than some wet patches on his legs and chest. It is as though the water crawled up his body and nested in his lungs.
3. **Suicide by shotgun.** A close examination reveals that the victim had developed the Innsmouth look.
4. **The victim's head is missing.** Whatever removed it made an incredibly

clean cut; the top of the neck is sliced neatly, and the exposed muscle glistens strangely. There is very little blood.

5. **The victim died due to blood loss and infection from a botched surgical procedure with improvised tools.** Those with **Medicine** recognise the signs of an attempted late-term abortion.
6. **Little evidence remains of the cause of death.** The body was attacked after death by a swarm of silvery slugs, which devoured every scrap of flesh. The bones are picked clean.



The Deep Ones as the Others

Driving the Deep Ones back into the ocean merely continues the status quo. The Deep Ones still have their cities off the coast, and may still menace coastal communities. Indeed, with the collapse of human civilisation, the Deep Ones grow bolder and more active. They even protect some isolated coastal settlements from the Flowers to maintain a breeding stock of humans.





Bright Futures

The seaside town of Brighton is an unlikely sanctuary for the ragged remnants of humanity. As the Creatures close in, they force the Investigators to travel to Brighton and seek safety there. There, the Investigators meet with the criminal gang who rule the town, and must find decide whether safety is worth submitting to tyranny.

THE HOOK

The Creatures surround Brighton, but they leave the town alone. It's the best place for the characters to take shelter.

THE QUESTION

Why is Brighton safe?

THE HORRIBLE TRUTH

The citizens of Brighton have entered into a horrible bargain with the Creatures. Taking advantage of the unnatural fecundity of all living things in this strange new world, they sacrifice the one asset they have — children.

THE SPINE

The adventure begins at the Investigator's refuge. Soon after hearing rumours of how Brighton is safe, the Investigators realise their own refuge is no longer secure. They travel across the ruins of England to Brighton. En route, they meet other refugees seeking safety, including a woman named Rose and her young son Toby.

Brighton has fallen under the control of a gang of criminals, but they permit the characters to enter — at a price.

After living in Brighton, for some weeks, Rose comes to the Investigators for help — Toby has vanished. In fact, a neighbour kidnapped the child to offer him in lieu of his own son.

Investigations lead the characters to the Queen's Hotel. These investigations may be aided by Ida Arnold. After finding the missing child, the Investigators go to the hospital and then the racetrack where the sacrifices take place.

At this point, the characters have a choice to condone or sabotage this policy of sacrifice.

BRIGHTON

Brighton is a seaside town in the south of England, about an hour south of London. It came to prominence as a tourist destination in the 1780s under the patronage of the Prince Regent, who built a palace there called the Royal Pavilion. Throughout the 19th century, the town prospered as a resort for wealthy Londoners, and drew many fashionable visitors. The construction of a railway line brought the resort within reach of the lower classes. By the 1930s, Brighton was no longer the place to be seen, but was still a popular tourist destination. Any investigators from a wealthy or even middle-class background have probably visited Brighton at some point.

Notable locations in Brighton include:

- **The Piers:** These two piers were mainstays of the tourist district along the beach. The Palace Pier was filled with amusement arcades and other tourist attractions, while the West Pier was better known for its concert hall.
- **Queen's Hotel:** Queen's Hotel is located between the two piers. It is a large and well-appointed hotel, built in 1846.
- **The Royal Pavilion:** This curious building was built in the Indo-Saracenic style — an architectural style that combines Islamic and Indian elements with the Gothic and Neo-classical styles from Europe. Inside, the pavilion was richly decorated.

Apocalyptic Brighton

The Apocalypse wiped out virtually the entire population in a matter of hours. The two main groups of survivors were the regulars in the Crown pub — it was Harry's birthday, they'd celebrated into the small hours, and no one was drinking water that night — and a gang of criminals. The leader of the gang, an intelligent and dangerous young man nicknamed Pinkie, spotted the early symptoms of the Flowers and intuited what was going on. Within two weeks, he and his gang were the de facto government in Brighton.



Brighton After The Flowers:

The centre of Brighton is free of the Flowers. They don't grow in sand, so the beach and the well-maintained streets around the Queen's Hotel are safe. Rainwater buttes collect drinking water, and everyone is careful to check their water for traces of the seeds before taking a sip. There are even a few vegetable gardens, but most of the town's food comes from looted tins or from the sea —

Bring the Horror Closer

The non-player characters Rose and Toby are just plot devices to hook the characters into the mystery of the vanishing children in Brighton. If any of the player characters have children, or if you have already established non-player characters who fit these roles, you should use them in place of Toby and Rose.



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ever since the Deep Ones rose and retreated, the sea has been thronged with fish. Fishing vessels dock with the Palace Pier.



Brighton-on-R'lyeh: The rising waters have, strangely, left Brighton mostly intact. The outskirts of the town are flooded, and the nearby town of Hove to the west is a waterlogged memory, but as long as one avoids basement flats, Brighton itself is liveable. The Deep Ones and their servants are never seen, although sometimes there are tracks in the wet sand left by no earthly creature, and the tides wash up unidentifiable things encrusted with muck of the ocean floor.

Notable locations include:

- **The Crown Pub:** The Crown is a pub close to Ship Street that is

still in operation. Most residents of Brighton visit the Crown in the evenings. Sometimes, it's possible to close your eyes and just inhale the smell of spilled beer and human odour, to listen to the gossip and the singing, and to forget that the outside world is a hellish post-human abomination.

- **The Promenade:** The Brighton Promenade runs along the beachfront. It is still the main thoroughfare for most foot traffic.
- **Queen's Hotel:** Now it is commonly referred to as 'Pinkie's palace' (although not when any of Pinkie's gang could overhear.) The leader holds court in the grand ballroom of the hotel, and trusted gang members are permitted to live in the hotel suites. Pinkie himself lives in the penthouse, and he has a harem of girls on the floor below.

- **Ship Street:** A street lined with fine townhouses, now one of the areas controlled by Pinkie's gang. Most of the inhabitants of Brighton live here or in one of the adjoining streets or squares.
- **The Walls:** The Walls refer to the barricades built by Pinkie's gang, blocking the approaches to the 'safe' region around the Queen's Hotel. All able-bodied men are expected to take their shift manning the Walls, to watch danger. As Pinkie's bargain keeps the creatures away, the main threat is intruders and scavengers from the north.

The Bargain

It began with a man named Andrew Hale. Pinkie had a grudge against him, and even as the world fell apart and the Flowers killed millions, the boy pursued Hale through the chaotic streets of Brighton. He murdered Hale by shoving his head into a barrel of



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Flower-tainted rainwater and holding him there until the alien plants took hold. In the moment of Hale's death, Pinkie noticed an eerie thrill run through him — and the Flowers around him. It was as though they accepted this sacrifice. He watched, and saw that no new Flowers grew in that grubby alleyway.

In the coldly furious machine of Pinkie's mind, he realized that this could be a sort of truce with the Creatures. He understood the language of violence and suffering — they would have their turf, and he his.

Children's deaths were better than grown-up deaths, and baby's deaths best of all. The calculus made sense to him; a child was less useful, less productive than a man, and a baby less useful still — and he was careful to baptize them all first, anyway. If there was a Christian God, then the souls of Pinkie's sacrifices would logically be almost perfectly innocent, with only original sin holding them back from Heaven.

Once he controlled Brighton, Pinkie established a fair system — fair by his lights, anyway — for procuring sacrifices. He and his gang have a harem of girls who are kept pregnant. As long as they continue to produce children, they are exempt from all other work. Most of the necessary sacrifices come from these women, who are kept on the upper floors of the Queen's Hotel and rarely leave. Only a few people in Brighton know about them.

If extra sacrifices are needed, then Pinkie selects a child at random from the town. The child's family are told that they can either give up the child willingly, or the child will be taken from them by force and they will be thrown out of Brighton. They're not told what will happen to the child.

Not everyone in Brighton knows about the sacrifices, and most of those who do know wish they didn't, and are too ashamed to talk about it. It's a horrible thing to go to sleep knowing that your safety was bought by murdering children — but at least you're alive, and not out there with the Creatures.

Rumours of Safety

The characters may already know about Brighton from their downtime activities

(see page 119). In fact, if they choose to travel to Brighton without being prompted by a danger to their refuge, run with that instead of deploying The Threat.

If they do not know about Brighton, then they are visited by **Bill Shakespeare**, the postman they previously encountered in the ruins of London (see *Letters from Ghosts* in *The Dead White World*). In the last three years, Bill has continued to bring messages and supplies between different groups of survivors. His trusty van no longer works, so he now travels on a heavy black bicycle. Somehow, Bill has maintained his cheery outlook, even though his rounds of survivors grow ever smaller as communities succumb to the Creatures or to despair.

- **Oral History** gets the **Core Clue** — Bill tells the characters that lately, he's heard a lot about Brighton. The story goes that it's safe from the Creatures, and that they're welcoming survivors who join them. It's a dangerous trek down there, but Bill knows several other survivors who decided it was worth the risk. He hopes they made it.

Spending points of **Oral History** or **Streetwise** gets some more details out of Bill (one item per point spent):

- No-one knows why the Creatures leave Brighton alone.
- Some people believe that Brighton is under the control of the Royal Navy. The rumour claims that a British warship survived the initial chaos and is now docked at Brighton pier. A **Strategy** spend or knowledge of the military suggests this is a false rumour.
- Only survivors with useful skills are wanted in Brighton. Some stories claim that a few refugees were turned away from the town, but other stories contradict this, and say that anyone can find a home there.
- Bill himself is considering making the trip south. He has fond memories of courting his late wife, Dorothy, on the promenade one bright summer.

After spending the night in the safety of the Refuge, Bill departs. Describe the incongruous sight of a man in a faded post office uniform atop a black Roadster bicycle, tottering down the road surrounded by the eerie white Flowers (or stagnant green-scummed water), outlined against a sky that glows with unnameable colours.

THE THREAT

Some days after Bill's visit, the Investigator's Refuge comes under threat. The nature of this threat obviously depends on what sort of Creature exists, as well as the Refuge itself. Whatever the threat is, it should not immediately destroy the Refuge (although since you will be blowing it up in a later adventure anyway, feel free to wreak premature havoc if you wish), but should instead make staying in the Refuge feel unsafe, and make a journey to Brighton more appealing.

1. The **Core Clue** in this scene is the necessity to leave.

- **Intuition:** You know that this place of safety cannot endure. You have to leave.
- **Leadership:** The other people at the refuge look to you for guidance. You can't lie to them any longer — it's time to go.
- **Oral History:** Some of the other people living in the refuge come to you and ask you to escort them to Brighton. They no longer feel safe here.
- **Strategy:** This Refuge is no longer secure. It may hold out for a few months with a lot of luck, but the characters need to find a safer place to live. Brighton may be their only hope.

Some possibilities:

The Flowers as Creatures:



A forest of gargantuan Flowers grows up nearby. It starts to expand, and within a short few weeks will engulf the Refuge. These Flowers are the size of oak trees; they smash through rock and concrete with ease.



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Mobile Flowers besiege the Refuge. These plants stand roughly eight feet tall, and move by slow undulations of their roots. They attack by spraying bursts of seeds in the faces of any humans they encounter. These seeds germinate in the eyes or mouth of the victim.



A strange white moss sprouts inside the Refuge. The characters can easily wipe this moss away, but it soon grows back thicker and stronger, forcing them to spend more and more time fighting the furze. Left unchecked, it would swiftly engulf the whole building.

The Deep Ones as Creatures:



One of the titanic shambling things heaves itself out of the ocean, dripping with the primordial muck of a million years of sediment, and begins to stumble across the countryside. It moves slowly, no more than a mile every day, but it exudes a poisonous miasma that kills everything nearby — and it is on a path directly towards the Refuge.



The characters hear tales of packs of Deep Ones ravaging across the countryside, hunting survivors. Strange things like headless skinned dogs guide them to their prey.



The water level at the Refuge begins to rise. Chill black water wells up through the foundations. This rising water has no discernable source, nor can the characters channel it away. The Refuge starts sinking into the growing mire.

THE ROAD

Depending on where the Refuge is, the Investigators may face a long trek across the country. Three years after the Apocalypse, few roads are still passable — most have either been swallowed up by the Flowers, drowned by the rising seas, or just fallen into disrepair. Functional vehicles are also

hard to find, so the characters will likely have to hike across the country.

Any character with **Navigation** can find the way to Brighton, even if they have to stay off the main roads. This is a Core Clue.

They do not encounter any immediate threats on their journey, as long as they stay away from known dangers (unless you wish to use the optional rules on pages 121-124). Any character with **Outdoorsman** or **Cthulhu Mythos** (or who listens to their **Intuition**) knows to avoid that peculiar white-tinged forest, and can tell not to go too close to those mirror-black lakes that reflect no Earthly skies. The characters should see signs of the creatures — Deep One footprints, the acidic snail-slime of shoggoths, the dawn seed-bursts from the Flowers — but do not see any of them directly. They only spy traces of the horror.

They also find a few traces of survivors. 99% of the population — in England, anyway — died within a few hours of the *Lysenko* incident — and the Flowers consumed those bodies years ago. They do see signs of more recent survivors, such as the ashes of a campfire, graffiti on the side of a ruined house or a path hacked through the undergrowth. For the most part, though, they see nothing but the slow tide of nature reclaiming the land.

The Other Travellers

South of London, the Investigators cross the trail of another party. They spot signs of at least two other people ahead of them.

- **Evidence Collection:** You find a discarded children's history book. The owner has 'updated' it in crayon, drawing white flowers over the faces of all the people and scribbling out the buildings.
- **Outdoorsman:** Judging by the footprints, there's one small adult and one child ahead. They're moving slowly and uncertainly.

The next day, the Investigators spot Rose and her son Toby, resolutely marching across the white fields of Sussex.

- **Reassurance** assures the pair that the Investigators are not dangerous.

- Rose explains that she was a waitress in London before the Creatures came. Toby's father was out working, and she never found out what happened to him.
- She lived with another small band of survivors until they were all killed — they uncovered something in the cellars of a house that gobbled them all up. She didn't see it.
- A one-point **Intuition** or **Assess Honesty** spend reveals that Rose is lying to herself. She did see whatever killed the others, but is desperately suppressing the memory.
- It's strange — she nearly moved to Brighton four years ago, before all this changed. Now she's fleeing there because it's the only safe place left in England.

Playing Rose:

- Hunch your shoulders nervously.
- Agree to any suggestions put to you. Never lead.

Her son Toby was four when the Apocalypse began. He doesn't know anything except this strange new world.

- **Psychoanalysis:** Children can be surprisingly resilient. Toby seems better-adjusted than his mother.
- Toby has an active interest in the world before the Creatures. He'll happily babble to the Investigators about how many people used to live in London, and how there were once these wonderful machines called trains that whisked people between London and Brighton. He saw a train once, but it wasn't moving and everyone in it was dead.

Playing Toby:

- Be absolutely matter-of-fact about the horrors around you. To you, checking water to avoid flower seeds or dodging Deep Ones is utterly mundane.



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- Enthuse about the mythic, vanished past.
- Look up at the players. Make sure your eye level is well beneath theirs.

Both Rose and Toby are weaponless and undernourished. They gratefully accept any aid proffered by the player characters.

After another few days' travel, the characters see the outskirts of Brighton.

END OF THE ROAD

Entry to Brighton is controlled by Pinkie's gang. The characters' first introduction to Brighton is not a promising one — a big thug emerges from a dilapidated shop and stands in the middle of the road, blocking the characters' path. He carries a nasty blackthorn club in one meaty paw.

- **Architecture** or **Strategy**: There's a pair of men armed with rifles on the rooftop overlooking the street. One wrong move, and someone's going to get shot.
- **Intimidation**: This thug is trying to intimidate the characters. He's clearly under orders to turn away anyone who threatens the powers that be in Brighton.

The thug's name is Cubitt; big, red-haired, a little slow, loyal to his friends but capable of shocking violence.

"More mouths to feed," he mutters, "like bloody stray dogs." To get into Brighton, the Investigators need to get past the thug. Cubitt demands to know what the characters can offer — any of them doctors, or mechanics, or fighting men, or anything useful like that? This reminds the Investigators of their arrival in Blackpool (see *Sandgown* in *The Dead White World*), although the Brighton survivors seem harsher and more competent than the previous group.

1. **Core Clue**: To win entry to Brighton, a character must have one of the following:

- Agriculture
- Craft
- Electrical Repair 4+
- Firearms 4+
- Intimidation
- Mechanical Repair 4+
- Medicine
- Outdoorsman
- Streetwise

Spending an extra point (2 points, for the General Abilities) from any of these 'useful' abilities lets one character 'cover' another by vouching for his usefulness.

Spending two points from any of these 'useful' skills means the character impresses Cubitt enough that he decides that the Boss should meet with this newcomer. He tells the character to come to the Queen's Hotel after they are settled in Ship Street.

Alternatively, spending a point of **Bargain** for a bribe or **Flattery** or **Seduction** convinces Cubitt to let the characters in.

LIVING IN BRIGHTON

Most of the town is abandoned and falling into ruin, so at first glance it seems like there are plenty of houses to choose from. However, Pinkie's gang dictates that, "for safety", everyone must live within a short distance of the Queen's Hotel. The characters, as well as Rose and Toby, are shown to Number 6, a large townhouse on Ship Street. The survivors divided the house into six flats, of which three are

occupied. Rose and Toby are given one flat; the characters may share one, or split themselves between two, or take those two flats and some rooms in an adjoining house once next door is cleaned out.

The rooms are furnished in a manner that might generously be described as 'eclectically', or more accurately described as 'looted from the rest of Brighton'. Everything smells of industrial cleaning chemicals (Pinkie is fastidious about infection from outside, so all items brought to his petty kingdom get bleached).

The other residents of Number 6 are:

- **Nichlas Matikainen**, a rake-thin man from Helsinki. He speaks with a distinct accent and comes across as rather detached and eccentric. He came to Brighton several years ago to recuperate and recover from a mental breakdown. He was a portrait painter, but found himself compelled to paint scenes of alien landscapes and things rising from the depths of the ocean. He now suspects that this weird compulsion was a glimpse of the future, as many of the horrors he painted in the past have now come to pass, including the destruction of his beloved home city by the Flowers. He continues to work feverishly, painting by night, but refuses to show anyone his canvasses. He shares rooms on the top floor with...

Sneaking In?

The characters can try sneaking around the checkpoint to get into Brighton without being seen, although Rose will refuse to go with them. Sneaking in requires a Difficulty 6 **Stealth** test. Failure means the character is spotted by one of the snipers — unless the character surrenders, he'll be shot at. Success means the characters get into Brighton unnoticed.

While skulking around Brighton, they run into Ida Arnold (page 136) who realises they got in without Pinkie's permission and offers them shelter. She then confides her worries about the missing children to them.



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- **Oliver Kermit White**, a former lecturer in history and politics. He peers owlishly out from behind thick glasses, and wears a stained bowtie even when labouring in the fields. He considers himself the ‘intellectual opposition’ to Pinkie, and even tried advising the gang leader on ‘proper government’; that won him a sound thrashing at Cubitt’s hands. White is ultimately ineffectual, but can put the player characters in touch with others who oppose Pinkie — including **Ida Arnold** (page 136).
- **Ronald Garvey**, his wife **Maureen**, and their children **Albert** (8) and **Nigel** (3). Ronald and Maureen were on a day trip to Brighton with young Albert when the Flowers came. They have settled into life here in Brighton, and do their best to welcome newcomers to the town. Ronald is a plumber by trade, and his skills are in high demand. Maureen takes care of the square’s children while their parents or guardians are at work. She is convinced (correctly) that Brighton is the safest place left in England, and counts herself extremely lucky that she ended up here. She impresses this opinion onto everyone she meets — Brighton is a blessed sanctuary, so don’t rock the boat. Her sons are utterly unlike. Young Nigel is a quiet and well-behaved child, but Albert is a terror and a bully. They have a flat on the middle level.
- **Andrew Somerset** lives on the ground floor, sharing his rooms with a woman named **Georgie**, who is pregnant. No-one is quite sure what their relationship is, especially as Georgie is often visited by Dallow, another member of Pinkie’s mob. Somerset is a grey-faced man, aged beyond his years by what he has seen. He owns a rifle, and works for Pinkie in an obscure but clearly

violent role. Most of the other tenants are glad to have some protection in the house, and so do not pry into the strange affairs of the bottom flat.

Everyday Life

It’s all doggedly, determinedly ordinary. Everyone tries their best to ignore the outside world. Life continues, even if the rest of the country is dead. Men get up and go to work — they never talk about what they do, but most people in Brighton labour in food production in the fields around the town (if the Deep Ones are the Creatures) or fishing at sea (if the Flowers control the countryside). Others go on scavenging expeditions to the ruins of nearby towns, although increasingly they return empty-handed. Still, there’s food on the table and necessities like soap and sugar in the shops. At night, everyone crowds into the Crown or the Queen’s Hotel for home-brewed ale or wine stolen from the cellars of London.

- **Anthropology** or **Oral History**: You try talking to the other residents, and they’re friendly enough, but sometimes they become suddenly guarded or change the topic. You can’t quite work out what the trigger is. It’s not just you, either — there are definitely cliques and groups among the survivors, and you keep seeing conversations suddenly stop when someone who isn’t in the know walks by. Maybe you’re just being paranoid.
 - With a 1-point **Assess Honesty** spend, you can tell that these people — the ones who won’t talk — are deeply scared and ashamed. Some sort of survivor’s guilt, you guess, and there’s plenty of that going around.
- **Medicine**: The unnatural fertility that you may have noted at the Refuge is even more pronounced here. Everywhere you look, there are rounded bellies and expectant mothers. Twins and multiple births are

much more common than they were before the Apocalypse, and all the pregnancies seem to be proceeding unusually smoothly, with little in the way of complications or miscarriages.

- With a 1-point **Intuition** spend, you realise that while a great many women here are pregnant, there aren’t quite as many young children as there should be. Perhaps this alien fecundity only extends to birth, and the newborns fail to thrive in these harsh conditions?
- **Oral History**: No-one’s willing to talk about Pinkie’s gang at length. Those who tried to argue with the gang met with unfortunate fates, and most people value the security offered by Pinkie over any ideals about justice or the rule of law.
 - A 1-point **Oral History** spend convinces a drunken man to mention Ida, who he refers to as a ‘saucy girl, but she’s always complainin’ about Pinkie and castin’ aspersions about him’.
- **Streetwise**: You’re being watched. Oh, there are the obvious gang members standing on street corners, clearly monitoring the newcomers, but there are also hungry-eyed men and women in the pubs and fields. Back before the end, they’d have been police informants and fifth columnists; now they’re probably reporting back to Pinkie.

If any of the characters impressed Cubitt, then they can meet Pinkie — see *An Audience with Pinkie*, page 135. Other characters can demand a meeting with their new master by spending **Intimidation** or **Bargain**.

Characters who demonstrated knowledge of a useful skill get assigned to a suitable job. Those without useful skills get put on cleaning duty, clearing out new buildings adjoining the inhabited section of Brighton. Pinkie is apparently fastidious about cleanliness, and if there’s a single speck of



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dirt where a Flower might sprout, he won't be happy, and an unhappy Pinkie makes other people very unhappy.

This scene lasts as long as the players are willing to indulge in domestic slice-of-life roleplaying (albeit life after the end of the world under a sinister regime). To hurry things along, then elide over the intervening time by saying “*after several uneventful weeks in Brighton...*” and then run *A Mother's Plea*. For a more leisurely approach, there are several subplots that can be explored and developed before jumping into the investigation proper. (It is even possible that the characters start investigating the reasons behind Brighton's strange protection from the Creatures, in which case you do not have to use Toby's disappearance to motivate them — just skip straight to *Ida Arnold* or *The Horror in the Hotel*)

Working with the Gang

A character who was inducted into Pinkie's gang has his loyalty tested when he is ordered to do something distasteful.

- Perhaps he is put on duty at the entrance to Brighton, and one day a group of three desperate-looking survivors show up looking for shelter. They appear to be rough sorts, but they're clearly desperate and starving. They have a brief altercation with Cubitt, who tips his cap to signal the player character and the other sniper to fire. Does the character shoot?
 - If the character holds his fire, then Cubitt draws his own pistol and shoots one of the trio, while the other sniper shoots a second. The third runs off down an alleyway. Cubitt follows him like a dog chasing a rat, there's a gunshot, and then Cubitt comes out and strides towards the player character, face black with fury. If the character cannot explain his hesitation, then he's reassigned to drudge work.
 - If he does fire, then one of the three gets hit in the abdomen by a stray shot. The wounded survivor runs off and hides

in an alleyway. Cubitt hands the player character a pistol and sends him to finish off the intruder. It's easy to find the wounded man — just follow the trail of blood and the smell of the punctured bowels.

- Alternatively, maybe the character is ordered to search for a cache of stolen food. Pinkie suspects one of the families in Ship Street is hoarding food. This suspicion is correct — the Garveys have hidden cans of food in a water-tight bag hidden in the house cistern. They nearly starved before finding shelter in Brighton, and it's hard to forget that hunger. They beg the character not to report them to Pinkie.
 - They offer the character a bribe — what does he want to look the other way?
 - Pinkie's gang maintain an iron grip on food production and distribution, but it works — no-one in Brighton goes hungry, although supplies are running low lately. A cache of food like that could keep the Garveys alive for weeks, or it could help the whole community when there's a bad harvest.

Nichlas' Paintings

If a character befriends the troubled artist, he may show them some of his paintings. A spend of **Art** or **Reassurance** is needed to convince him to share his art. Ask each player whose character sees the paintings to describe their impressions and the images they discern, and then try to work those images into future encounters.

- **Forensics:** The red colours in the painting are a distinctive rusty-red. In fact, it's dried human blood. Where is Nichlas getting his pigments from?
 - In fact, he's draining the blood from Oliver Kermit White when his flatmate is asleep. Nichlas believes that the vitality of human blood is

necessary to evoke the essence of the images he has to depict.

- Spending too long staring at those paintings can give an Affliction point and a temporary 3-point pool of either **Dreaming** or **Premonitions**.

Romance by the Shore

Optionally, you can introduce an attraction between a player character and an NPC. As the characters are now living in a place of apparent safety, their minds may turn to the future and to families.

Befriending Ned

One of the more approachable members of Pinkie's gang is a middle-aged fellow who introduces himself as Ned. He doesn't talk much, so much so that many people assume him to be mute. When he does speak, he has a habit of putting his foot in it. He is clearly from an upper-class background, but refuses to talk about his past. He watches women hungrily, but never approaches them inappropriately.

If a character befriends Ned, then he may learn Ned's unlikely secret. “Ned” is actually King Edward VIII. He is the uncrowned king of England. Before the Apocalypse, he was engaged in political disputes with the government over his relationship with a divorced American woman, Wallis Simpson. Dear Wallis is dead now, and so is Edward's brother Albert and the Prime Minister and all the rest. He doesn't know why he was spared; he wandered from Windsor to Brighton in search of somewhere safe to hide. He sometimes wonders if there was something he could have done for the country, but suspects not.

- **Strategy:** Ned does remember one thing that may be of use, though. Just before the end, he remembers being told about some top-secret military think-tank that was working on some new weapon. He doesn't remember the details, but believes that it was absolutely revolutionary, some sort of atomic weapon — this new physics is quite beyond him. Maybe that could help. This new weapon is described in *The Nation Set Free*, starting on page 144.



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A MOTHER'S PLEA

One evening, after the characters have returned from work but before they have had a chance to relax or even change out of their soiled clothes, Rose knocks at their door. Usually, her knock is a hesitant, quiet one, as if she barely has the courage to disturb the characters, but this time it's frantic, fists hammering on the door. When invited in, she is obviously upset; **Reassurance** calms her down enough to get a coherent story out of her.

She can't find Toby anywhere.

She left him with Maureen Garvey this morning, as usual, and Maureen says that Toby went upstairs, but she can't find him.

Something's happened to him. She knows it has. She just knows.

1. The core clue for this scene is to visit the Queen's Hotel (see *The Horror in the Hotel*) in search of Toby (or, optionally, to speak to *Ida Arnold*).

Searching the common areas of Number 6 reveals no signs of the boy — he's not hiding in any of the empty rooms or closets, or in the cellar or attic. So, either he's in one of the inhabited flats, or he's not in the building. Outside, the characters see darkness falling across Brighton — there's no electricity, and only a few families are allocated lamps. The only light is the blazing illumination of the Queen's Hotel. If the characters are

going to search outside, they need to make the most of the dwindling twilight.

- **Evidence Collection:** You find a discarded child's treasure — a book on trains. When you show it to Rose, she breaks down in tears. It is Toby's favourite book, and he would never leave it behind willingly.
- **Streetwise:** Questioning some locals on their way to the Crown, you learn they saw Ronald Garvey heading east down the Promenade with a young boy in tow. They assumed it was young Nigel Garvey. They were heading in the direction of the Queen's Hotel.

The Other Tenants

Questioning the other tenants is the obvious line of inquiry.

- **Nichlas Matikainen:** Which boy? The one from downstairs? No, I have not seen him. At least, not in the waking world. Some nights, I dream I am being born again. Maybe I dream of him, yes?
 - **Assess Honesty** suggests he's telling the truth.
 - **Premonitions** or **Dreaming:** When you examine one of Nichlas' recent paintings, you realise that one figure might be Toby. In the picture, the boy looks like a roast pig, with an apple in his mouth. He's the main course in a ghoulish banquet for a party of shadowy figures. It's impossible to make out any facial features, but the fine cutlery and lace tablecloths remind you of the Queen's Hotel.
- **Oliver Kermit White:** Why ask me about this? What are you implying?
 - **Intuition** suggests he's terrified — he suspects that Dallow was snooping around Ship Street to spy on him.

- A one-point **Intimidation** or **Reassurance** spend gets him to talk about Dallow and White's own fraught relationship with the gang. If Dallow's part of Pinkie's gang, then maybe he has something to do with Toby's disappearance, in which case the characters should investigate the hotel.
- **Ronald Garvey** is not at home.
 - If asked about her husband's whereabouts, then Maureen admits that Dallow came to talk to him yesterday. Maybe Pinkie wants some work done at the Queen's?
 - **Interrogation:** If walked through the events of the evening, then Maureen remembers the order of events. First Ronald came home, then Toby went upstairs, then Ronald left unexpectedly without saying where he was going.
 - It's clear that Maureen dislikes Pinkie and whatever goes on at the Queen's Hotel, and is unhappy about her husband going there.
- **Maureen Garvey:** Toby? He was here all day, nattering about some book of trains he found. He went upstairs when his mother came home. I can't imagine where he is.
 - **Assess Honesty** confirms she's not lying.
 - **Leadership** or **Reassurance:** Maureen suggests asking Ida Arnold for help. She's always poking around, and knows all the hiding places in Brighton.
 - Young **Albert Garvey** gets aggressive if the Investigators hint that his father is involved in Toby's disappearance. The boy can be vicious when provoked.

What Happened to Toby?

The lottery picked the Garvey family for a sacrifice. Pinkie's lieutenant contacted Ronald Garvey and told him that his son Nigel had been selected. If the boy was not handed over promptly, the whole Garvey family would be thrown out. Garvey panicked and kidnapped Toby instead. His rather confused plan is to offer Toby as a substitute for his own son.



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- His three-year-old brother **Nigel** has been upset all day. If the characters talk to him with **Reassurance**, he tells a disjointed story about how sad Father was last night, and how he smelled funny. Father promised that everything would be all right, and that they would never take Nigel away.
- **Andrew Somerset & Georgie:** are not at home.
 - Actually, thinking about it, you haven't seen them much at all recently. They've been strangely secretive and evasive.
 - Breaking into their flat with a 1-point **Locksmith** spend is easy. Looking around, it appears that they intend to be gone for some time — the pantry is bare, and they have clearly packed clothes and toiletries into suitcases.

- **Pharmacy** finds an empty bottle of sleeping pills on one shelf. The label says that it came from Brighton General Hospital — which is outside the Walls. As far as you know, the Hospital was cleared of any salvageable items months ago. Following this clue brings the characters to The Abandoned Hospital.

THE HORROR IN THE HOTEL

Those expecting the Queen's Hotel to look like some lurid fantasy of criminal kingpins, with scantily-clad floozies and rooms piled high with plundered wealth will be disappointed — the lobby looks like a post office that got moved to a temporary venue. Pinkie keeps his little kingdom running by the book. There are two clerks on the front desk who deal with the administration of Brighton, and

three or four other residents waiting for an audience with Pinkie or one of his subordinates.

Lounging by the (non-functional) elevator is a pair of Pinkie's henchmen, watching the stairs.

Bureaucracy suggests that reporting the missing child to the clerks is pointless — they are clearly there to keep Pinkie's gang from being bothered with trivial matters, and have no real power. If the characters ask the clerks or the local residents about Garvey, they get blank looks and shrugs — no-one saw him or Toby recently. It is clear that the characters need to talk to someone in Pinkie's gang directly, and that means getting upstairs.

Walking In

'Upstairs is private' growls one of the two thugs. The other flashes you a grin that's supposed to be apologetic, but comes across as entirely insincere.



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Characters who are members of Pinkie's gang can just go straight up. The guards block other characters from going up. Spending points from some suitable ability is needed to bypass this obstacle.

- 1 or 2-point **Bargain** spend: If these two are stuck guarding the door, they can't have much influence in the gang and don't get a big share of the loot. What do you offer them to let you through? The size of the spend depends on the value of the item offered in trade.
- 2-point **Flattery** spend: You convince the guards that you've got important business with Pinkie, and that he will want to talk to you. What do you claim this business is?
- 2-point **Intimidation** spend: You glare at the guards, and they back down.
- 1-point **Seduction** spend: You've heard the rumours about Pinkie's harem on the upper floors, and hint suggestively that the boss is waiting for you.

Alternatively, anyone with **Architecture** can tell there must be a back stairs to this place, so the characters could try sneaking in.

Sneaking In

The two guards watch the front stairs and the lobby, but there are many other ways into the Queen's Hotel, like back doors and service entrances. A relatively easy (Difficulty 4) **Stealth** test gets the Investigators in via the back door when one of the cooks leaves the kitchen unattended. Alternatively, a 1-point **Locksmith** spend pops open a locked side door.

Once the characters get upstairs, they can either *Explore the Hotel* or head to the ballroom for *An Audience with Pinkie*.

Exploring the Hotel

Despite the lurid tales told in the Crown about Pinkie's harem and the debaucheries, the upper floors of the Queen's seem quite ordinary and homely. Apparently, Pinkie's trusted lieutenants live only slightly better

than the rest of Brighton. They've got electricity for a few hours each evening, it's warmer and dryer and they get the pick of the food, but it is not exactly the sybaritic carnival of sin that rumour claimed.

Most of Pinkie's followers are out watching the Walls or on other business, or sleeping. Optionally, the characters can run into Ned (see page 144) here; otherwise, they can sneak about freely. Call for the occasional **Stealth** test to raise tension.

- **Seduction** or **Streetwise**: Stories about Pinkie's harem appear to be wildly exaggerated. You catch a glimpse of some things that suggest there are a few young women living here, but not as many as the stories suggest. There is something tawdry and melancholic about discarded showgirl outfits and dried-out makeup. Where are the missing women?

The Empty Office

One of the first rooms the Investigators come across is a bedroom that has been converted into a makeshift office. On the desk are a big black ledger and, strangely, a bingo machine from the Palace Pier.

- **Bureaucracy**: The book mostly contains names and dates. Most of the names are those of women, but there are a few male names in there too.
- **Cryptography**: The names that only have one date next to them are all the names of children from Brighton.
- **Evidence Collection**: Instead of bingo balls, the machine contains dozens of scraps of paper, all of which have names written on them. You recognise the names — they are the children of Brighton.
- Nigel Garvey's name is the most recent entry. The date marked is today.
- Georgie's name is in the ledger too. Her date is in two weeks' time.

You Shouldn't Be in Here

While the Investigators examine these clues, they hear footsteps coming along the corridor. If they wish to hide, they can do so with successful **Stealth** rolls (Difficulty 5). There are several places to hide — under the bed, in the adjoining bathroom, behind the heavy velvet curtains and so on.

If they hide successfully, then they see Dallow and Ned enter the room and consult the ledger. The two talk about how there is 'a gap' and 'Garvey had better come through'. Dallow has Ned 'check the figures', suggesting that Ned's grasp of whatever mathematics are involved in those dates is superior to Dallow's. Both appear very concerned.

- 1-point **Intuition** spend: Dallow appears worried but resolute. He reminds you of a soldier on the way to the front.
- 1-point **Intuition** spend: Ned seems disgusted and fretful, as if he cannot quite believe that he is involved in whatever is going on.

Otherwise, they can *Confront Dallow* when they are discovered.

Confronting Dallow

Dallow is Pinkie's second-in-command, and has rooms in the hotel. As the Investigators know that Dallow visited the house on Ship Street earlier, they can find and confront him either in the office or in his rooms.

Dallow is a stout, muscular man in his mid-thirties; a broken nose set badly speaks of his violent past. He was loyal to Pinkie before everything changed, but his loyalty has now changed to something closer to religious devotion. Pinkie is the only one who understands this new world, the only one who can keep Hell outside the Walls.

Playing Dallow:

- Think of a dog; a big, nasty fighting dog that's stupidly devoted to its master.



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Alarms!

If the alarm is raised, then the Investigators are in trouble. Pinkie has half-a-dozen armed men in the hotel. The Investigators may either flee to the streets (where they will run into *Ida Arnold*, page 136), or surrender (in which case, they're dragged before Pinkie).

- Ball your fists. Be aggressive. Barely contain your violence.
- These people talking to you are nobodies. Little people. If they disrespect you, hurt them. If they confuse you, send them to Pinkie.

What tack do the characters take when talking to Darrow?

Polite Questioning: Darrow is immediately annoyed at being confronted, so someone needs to spend a point of **Flattery** to calm him down. He tells the Investigators that they should not be meddling in matters that do not concern them, and that Pinkie will punish them if they get in the way. He asks if they have seen Garvey — they too are looking for him.

- **Streetwise:** Dallow glances at his wristwatch as he does so, suggesting that there is some time limit on finding Garvey and Toby.
- **Strategy:** If the gang is also looking for Garvey, then perhaps they can work together to find him and Toby. Suggesting this convinces Dallow to bring the Investigators to Pinkie.

Aggressive Questioning: Unless one of the Investigators is capable of cowing Dallow (requiring either a 3-point **Intimidation** spend or a 6-point **Scuffling** spend), then Dallow responds angrily and shouts for help. The characters

can try restraining him to prevent him from crying out by beating him in a **Scuffling** contest.

Once restrained, the characters can force Dallow to talk with **Interrogation**. He admits that he visited Garvey, but it had nothing to do with Toby. The boss wants Nigel Garvey, Ronald Garvey's son. If pressed on this topic, he tells the Investigators that Pinkie can explain.

Ned: If Ned is present, then applying **Intimidation** to him works; he immediately blurts out that the lottery picked Nigel Garvey, and that Ronald's done something stupid. Pinkie's going to murder Garvey once he finds him.

An Audience with Pinkie

Pinkie meets with the characters in a room that once overlooked Brighton from the top of the Queen's Hotel. Now, all the windows are shrouded in thick drapes. Other than a few chairs, a table and a drinks cabinet, the room is bare.

The master of Brighton is an eerily young man in his early twenties. The Boy has cold, slate-grey eyes, old eyes that sit incongruously with his almost innocent face. A tick pulls at the muscles of his cheek when he is angry or nervous. Sometimes, he fondles a glass bottle that he keeps in his pocket.

- **Cthulhu Mythos:** Looking into Pinkie's eyes is like looking into the unutterable depths of the cosmos, or staring into the cold batrachian eyes of a Deep One. No pity, no mercy, no human emotion at all, just endless starving hateful emptiness.
- **Intuition or Psychoanalysis:** A qualified alienist could probably diagnose Pinkie as a sociopath. A sensitive soul can tell almost instantly that there is something terribly broken inside the boy's mind.
- **Theology:** He has a St. Christopher's medal hanging from the breast pocket of his suit, suggesting he is a Roman Catholic. St. Christopher is the patron saint of travellers.

Playing Pinkie:

- You don't feel pleasure, or comfort, or any tender emotion. You're a hard shell of control over a blazing core of rage and frustration. You're determined to survive at all costs
- You don't believe in Heaven, but you do believe in Hell. Hell is outside the walls. Your actions keep Hell at bay. You've saved everyone in Brighton, which means you are a good person. Anyone who crosses you is therefore evil, and can be destroyed without hesitation.
- The unnatural fecundity of England is proof that you are doing the right thing. God helps those who help themselves — and so God provides all those squalling brats as sacrifices. If someone has a problem with how you have handled this situation, then tell them it's God's fault, not yours.
- Stay in control of yourself at all times. Never betray any emotion. When you look at one of the players, think about how easy it would be to leap across the table and tear their throat out with your teeth.

Depending on how the Investigators arrive here — as supplicants, as prisoners or introduced by Dallow or another gang member, then the players may choose to use interpersonal abilities like **Flattery** or **Intimidation**, both of which are equally futile. The only thing that gets under Pinkie's skin is **Theology**.

Likely questions and answers:

- **Where's Toby?** *I don't know, but I'll wager Garvey's got him.*
- Pinkie is irritated by Garvey's failure. If Garvey had just turned over young Nigel as arranged, then the status quo would have been maintained and everyone could have slept



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soundly at night. Now, Pinkie fears he will have to throw the Garveys out of Brighton as punishment, and station Cubitt at the gates with a flaming sword set at the gates of Paradise.

- **Strategy (Core Clue):** If the characters suggest that they can help find Garvey, then Pinkie agrees — see *Hunting Garvey* on page 137.
- **Has he seen Ronald Garvey?** *Mr. Garvey's late for an appointment, and I don't think he's coming. My men are going to look for him, and we're going to find him, and we're going to put manners on him.*
- **What's going on?** *You don't want to know.*

- **Assess Honesty:** He actually means this. Pinkie assumes — correctly — that most people in Brighton don't want to know what he does to ensure their safety. They don't want to know the horrible truth, they just want to get on with their sheltered little lives.

- **Yes, we do.** *I'm keeping you all safe, all right. I'm doing what has to be done, what no-one else has the stomach to manage.*

- If questioned on this point (or needled with **Theology**), then Pinkie grows angry, and declares that he will show the Investigators what he means

and what he has done for them — but only after they help him find Garvey.

If the characters agree to help Pinkie's men find Garvey, then Dallow tells them to be at the entrance to the Palace Pier in half an hour. If they do not agree, then he orders them to return home to Ship Street and wait.

IDA ARNOLD

Ida Arnold is an unlikely nemesis for Pinkie's regime. A lifelong resident of Brighton, Ida was remarkable only for her strong will and her interest in spiritualism before the Apocalypse and Pinkie's rise to power. The Apocalypse and the deaths of her many friends drove her to the brink of sanity. She now lives by scavenging and odd jobs. She is convinced that Pinkie is involved in something ghastly and utterly wrong, and is determined to put a stop to it.

The Investigators could meet Ida Arnold at the Crown, or be directed to her by Maureen Garvey or another NPC. Alternatively, she flags one of the Investigators down after they leave the Queen's Hotel, or else she meets them when they are out looking for Ronald Garvey.

Ida was a plump, handsome woman, but several years of near-starvation and sorrow have left her thin and etched many lines on her skin. She has bright eyes and a charming disposition, although she can have an unsettling intensity when excited.

Her faith — always fragile — was shattered by the Apocalypse. She knows there is no afterlife, no Heaven with fluffy clouds or blissful oneness with the cosmos (that always sounded boring to her, anyway; life is sex and laughter and friends down the pub, and all anyone really wants is more of that). She still believes in ghosts, and carries an Ouija board in her grimy bundle of meagre belongings. If anything, the ghosts have gotten stronger since the world changed.

Most of all, though, Ida believes in right and wrong. She knows that what Pinkie's doing isn't right. Just because the world changed, that doesn't mean that right and wrong changed too, does it?



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Playing Ida:

- Be relentless, practical and forthright. Let nothing faze you.
- Smile, make jokes, touch the players. Be charming or motherly.
- Look people right in the eye when you talk to them.

Ida & the Player Characters

The characters may encounter Ida at any point in the first half of *Bright Futures*. She appears out of a side alley and beckons the Investigators to follow her, then leads them through alleys near Ship Street and up into an unused tenement where they can speak privately.

Ida explains that she is convinced that Pinkie is a monster. She knew him before the world changed, and remembers him as a hateful, monstrous boy. There's something rotten in Brighton. She's been watching Pinkie's men for months, and knows that they take young women and children out beyond the Walls every few weeks. Ida wants the Investigators' aid in exposing what Pinkie's up to.

- **Oral History (Core Clue):** Ida saw Garvey only a short time ago, and knows where he's hiding. There is a warren of flats and houses over on Carlton Hill where Garvey goes to salvage parts and pipes. He's in that area.

Ronald is a good man in her eyes. Maybe he did take Toby, but it could be for the boy's own good. In any event, they have to find him before Pinkie's men do. She knows all the hiding places in Brighton, and can help them find Ronald — but only if they agree to do the right thing by protecting Ronald from Pinkie, and then helping her investigate Pinkie's scheme.

Likely questions and answers:

- **What do you think Pinkie's doing with the women?** *I don't honestly know, but I've heard screams and crying at night. It's something awful. I crept as close as I could down Eastern Road, and the sounds were heart-breaking.*

- **Cthulhu Mythos:** If the Creatures are the Deep Ones, then the character remembers stories about bestial acts and vile urges. Could Pinkie have bought Brighton's safety in such a ghastly manner?
- **Medicine or Navigation:** The location Ida describes is the General Hospital.

- **Why haven't you investigated it yourself?** *It's on the far side of the Wall, out beyond the Eastern Road. There's things out there, and I'm not a young woman any more. I don't have a gun neither.*

- **Strategy:** It is possible to cross through that no-man's land, but it wouldn't be safe. The fact that Pinkie's established this second outpost outside the Walls suggests he doesn't want the other residents of Brighton to know what he is doing.

- **Why haven't you told anyone else?** *Who's going to listen to me? And who's going to do anything about it? No, no-one will do anything until we make them see.*
- **Why should we protect Garvey?** *Because it's the right thing to do. Pinkie doesn't care about right and wrong — he'll just punish Garvey for standing up to him. And because I'm asking you to protect him.*

HUNTING GARVEY

Pinkie's hunting party consists of Pinkie, Dallow and one other gang member per Investigator. If the Investigators agreed to aid Pinkie, then they meet with the other searchers at the entrance to the Palace Pier. If the Investigators are not part of Pinkie's group, then **Streetwise** spots the gangsters as they gather in the fog. It's obvious that Pinkie is trying to keep the whole affair quiet.

Garvey was last seen making his way along East Street, so Pinkie's hunters start there, sweeping through empty buildings and knocking on the doors of inhabited ones. They do not check every door — some

people are more reliable than others, and would never dare cross Pinkie by harbouring a troublemaker. If the characters are part of this hunting party, then Dallow tells them to check the ruined buildings along Black Lion Street.

If the characters have Ida's help, then they know where Garvey is hiding. They may choose to lead Pinkie's men straight there, or sneak off alone.

Thick fog rolls in off the churning seas as night falls. The crumbling buildings loom over the Investigators like outcrops of some alien city. The only light comes from the sickly moon and the bobbling lights of the hunters' lamps. Sometimes, the characters catch sight of the reflection of the lamps in the cracked glass windows of shops. Pinkie's men leer out of the fog, the half-light turning their features to those of monstrous gargoyles. They mutter and shout to each other, and their voices seem oddly bestial.

Avoiding Pinkie's Men

If the Investigators wish to avoid detection, then play up the tension as they dodge behind rusted cars and sneak down alleyways. Choose the three or four Investigators present with the lowest Stealth pools and present them with challenges like:

- The Investigator has to cross the street without being spotted by darting across when Pinkie's men look the other way. This calls for a **Shadowing** test at Difficulty 6.
- The Investigator takes refuge in an alleyway to wait for Pinkie's men to pass by — but then he hears movement at the far end. He is trapped between two groups of armed gang members. How does he escape? An **Architecture** spend could spot a drainpipe to shimmy up, **Locksmith** could be spent to open a locked door, or the character could just try hiding with **Stealth**.
- One of Pinkie's men spots movement and takes a pot-shot in the direction of the hidden



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Investigator. The character needs to make a **Fleeing** test (Difficulty 6) to dodge into cover in time.

- To stay ahead of the gangsters, the Investigator needs to dodge through a building that may be infested by the Creatures. There may be green shoots of Flowers poking from between the floorboards, or maybe sinister shapes lurk in the murky water. Dodging through that building is worth a 2-point **Stability** test.

At any point, the Investigators may stop hiding and present themselves to Pinkie. Doing so abandons any hope of finding Garvey before Pinkie gets to him.

Finding Garvey

If the characters know where Garvey is thanks to Ida, then they can go straight there after bypassing Pinkie's men (or they may choose to lead Pinkie there). Otherwise, they must find his trail.

- **Oral History:** You remember talking to Garvey one night in the Crown about his work, and he told you that he'd been scavenging material from the houses along Carlton Hill.
- **Outdoorsman:** You spot a footprint in the mud. It's fresh. There's another one! The trail heads towards the Carlton Hill region, just this side of the Wall.
- **Strategy:** You're nearly at the Wall. Garvey wasn't assigned to Wall duty, and was terrified of the Creatures. If he wants to get away from Pinkie, but stay within the safe zone of the Wall, then his path would take him into Carlton Hill.

The characters eventually find Garvey sitting at the bottom of the Wall with his head in his hands. Toby lies next to him, blissfully asleep after all the excitement. As the Investigators approach, Garvey looks up. He's obviously terrified and exhausted. **Reassurance** makes him confess.

- Dallow came to Garvey and told him to bring his son Nigel to the Queen's Hotel, and that if

he didn't, then everyone would suffer. He couldn't let that happen to Nigel — he's a good boy, he's Garvey's son — and he panicked.

- He admits that he took Toby. His plan, such as it was, was to give them Toby instead of Nigel, but he couldn't bring himself to do it. He hid here while he tried to work out what to do.
- He knows that Pinkie and his men do something with the children they take, and the women too — always pregnant women. It's something to do with the old hospital out near the cemetery. He doesn't know how they get there — it's on the far side of the Wall.
- He's desperately sorry. He just wants to keep Nigel safe.

If the characters brought Pinkie's men here, or if they argue for too long about what to do with Garvey, then run *Vitriol*. Otherwise, the Investigators must now decide what to do with Garvey. Do they go back to Ship Street with Garvey and Toby? Do they hand Garvey over to Pinkie? Do they take Toby and let Garvey go? Garvey is terrified — quite reasonably so — at the thought of going 'back out there'. At best, he could try to survive on the streets.

Vitriol

If Pinkie's gang catch Garvey, then Pinkie orders Dallow and Cubitt (or a player character) to drag Garvey up to the top of the Wall. Garvey pleads as they carry him up the barricade of rubble and broken furniture, begging them not to hand him over to them. He saw things out there that he never wants to see again, please, take Toby, take Nigel, take Maureen even, but don't send him back outside with those things! He can't bear to see them again!

"Oh, but you won't see them again", says the Boy, and he produces a glass bottle of vitriol from his pocket. He holds Garvey's ruddy, tear-streaked face in one gloved hand, and then pours the acid over his eyes and nose. The stench of burning, melting flesh fills the night air. Pinkie then shoves the blind Garvey down the barricade on the far side.

Looking over the barricade, the characters can dimly make out the shapes of moving Creatures.



If the Flowers are the Creatures, then Garvey stumbles blindly into a bed of white flowers. There's a puff of pollen, and he shrieks. He crawls into the darkness, coughing, and as the Investigators listen, his coughs grow weaker and more congested, as if things were already sprouting in his wet lungs.



If the Deep Ones are the Creatures, then the water is waist-deep on the far side. Garvey pulls himself up out of the mire, staggering as he blindly searches for a foot-hold — and then something drags him under, and he's gone.

The Stability Loss for this scene is 3 points, +1 if the Investigators are directly culpable for Garvey's death, and +1 if they promised Ida they would protect him.

"Is that it?" asks Dallow. *"Will that do?"*

"Don't go milky on me," snaps Pinkie in response, *"you know he's too old."* Pinkie then stares out over the Wall, as if trying to sense something from the Creatures.

- A 1-point **Intuition** or **Cthulhu Mythos** spend gives the Investigator a brief moment of strange empathy with the Creatures. They hunger for something the Investigator cannot name, and Garvey was not enough, not nearly enough.

THE SACRIFICE

Pinkie needs to make another offering to the Creatures to preserve Brighton, and time is running out. Normally, he would use a newborn child, but the next woman to give birth is Georgie, and she is not due for another two weeks. He intended to fill the gap with a lottery-chosen child — Nigel Garvey — but Toby will do just as well.



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If the Investigators can be induced to hand Toby over, then Pinkie takes Toby and tells them to go home. If they refuse, then he has his men chase them off while he and Dallow take Toby and head for *The Tunnel*.

However, if Pinkie cannot find Toby in time, then Ned will arrive, carrying Nigel Garvey. Ned looks sick to his stomach, but is unwilling to disobey Pinkie's commands. He hands the boy over to Dallow. Again, the two head for *The Tunnel*.

Challenging Pinkie: Some players may choose to challenge Pinkie at this point, perhaps by accusing him of abusing children or worshipping the Creatures. Pinkie responds to any such challenge with scornful fury. Should the Investigator provoke Pinkie sufficiently with **Intimidation** or another suitable ability, then Pinkie angrily declares that the Investigators should follow him and see the sort of sacrifices he has made. He then leads them to the tunnel.

The Violent Option

Should the players wish to put an end to Pinkie right now, they can try attacking the gang. This is rather unwise — the Investigators are outnumbered and almost certainly outgunned. Don't bother running this as a full combat. One Investigator may shoot and kill Pinkie, but that Investigator will then be shot and killed by the gangsters, at which point a stricken and terrified Dallow calls for both sides to stop shooting.

Dallow lacks the nerve to make the necessary offerings, so unless one of the Investigators takes Pinkie's responsibility and completes the sacrifice, then Brighton will be overrun (see page 142).

The Tunnel

1. The **Core Clue** here is the existence of a tunnel leading to the abandoned hospital.

- **Architecture:** You recall stories about Regency-era tunnels running under parts of Brighton. This must be how Pinkie is able to cross the dangerous territory outside the Walls.
- **Evidence Collection:** You find footprints in the dust leading down into the cellar of this pub. Searching around, you find what must once have been a concealed entrance to a passageway.
- **Leadership:** Ida Arnold steps out of the shadows. "I followed you," she admits. "You've got a good heart. You can sort out this mess." She points into the darkness of the tunnel. "They went through there."



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- **Pharmacy:** You spot something incongruous outside an abandoned pub — a box of medical supplies. It looks as though someone carried them out of the pub as part of a large load of salvage, and then dropped them. The box is stamped with the words 'BRIGHTON GENERAL HOSPITAL' — there must be a way through the pub to the hospital.
- The Investigators may be able to use **Streetwise** to follow Pinkie at a distance, and watch him as he enters the cellar of a former public house.

Alternatively, Pinkie may force the characters to accompany him down the tunnel.

The tunnel plunges into the darkness. The floor underfoot is slippery; the walls are made of crumbling brick covered with slime. The Investigators glimpse graffiti and even some strange symbols scribbled on the walls, but there is no time to stop and examine it.

Half-way along the tunnel, something monstrous — a gigantic Creature, perhaps — slithers across the ground above the Investigators' heads, causing the earth to shake and slime droplets to fall from the ceiling. The noise and sudden feeling of crushing terror is worth a 3-point **Stability** test.

- If the Investigators are shadowing Pinkie, then they may need to douse their lamps and find their way along the tunnel by feel. What do they brush against?
- If the Investigators are accompanying Pinkie, then he forcibly drags them onwards, angrily determined to prove the virtue of his actions. His intensity is unnerving, and the Investigators feel like they are propelled not by the Boy's wiry physical strength, but by the power of his loathing and fury.
- If the Investigators found the tunnel independently, then they may wonder who built it? Some Regency-era rake, who built a tunnel to the old workhouse

that became Brighton General Hospital? Some 19th-century smuggler? Or is the tunnel older than that, much older, with its mysterious carvings and slime-drenched walls that seem to perversely reveal hints of larger occult inscriptions?

Instead of using the tunnel, the Investigators may cross the perilous zone between the Wall and the hospital on the surface. This involves climbing over the wall (possibly near where Ronald Garvey vanished) and then making their way across the region claimed by the Creatures. The Investigators have spent the last few weeks or months in the safety of Brighton, so returning to the horrific environment of the Dead White World (or Dead Watery World) may be traumatic (1-point **Sanity** loss).

The Investigators must navigate hazards like:



A tall building (formerly a bank) now covered in Flowers. The slightest movement nearby causes the Flowers to disgorge a cloud of seeds. To get past without, the Investigators must succeed at a Difficulty 6 **Stealth** test; failure means exposure to the seeds. Alternatively, an **Architecture** spend lets an Investigator lead the group through ruined buildings on the far side of the street.



A bank of Flowers begins clacking in an almost angry way as the Investigators draw near. Beyond the Flowers, the Investigators see a strange light. A ruined building hides the source of this light, but it shines around the corners and reflects oddly off the white petals. The light is a bluish-white in colour. Call for **Sense Trouble** rolls (Difficulty 6). Those who fail stray too close to the light and lose 1d6+1 points of Health from surface burns. Alternatively, a **Physics** spend lets the Investigator identify the light source as being hugely radioactive. Any Investigator foolish enough to go around the corner glimpses a blindingly

bright sphere of white light hovering above a circle of Flowers before losing another 1d6+1 points of Health from exposure.



A mobile Flower shambles down the street towards the Investigators. The plant is eight feet tall, and its white head sways back and forth. The Investigators cannot see how the plant moves; it seems to pull itself forward on its roots, but there is some other movement or action amid the roots that provides the bulk of the forward motion. It is disconcertingly like this Flower is just the tip of some unimaginably larger entity, like a probing tendril reaching up from deep underground. There are many other smaller Flowers in this area, and the Investigators suspect (with **Botany** or a similar ability) that if they make a wrong move like attacking, these smaller Flowers will blanket the area in seeds.

The Flower picks one of the Investigators and moves directly towards him. That Investigator may either: lead the mobile Flower away from the rest (with a successful **Fleeing** or **Athletics** test at Difficulty 6), or else stand still and let the Flower interact with him. If the Flower catches the Investigator, it brushes its stamen across him. The Investigator feels oddly like the Flower whispers something to him in that moment, and from now on, that Investigator has the same strange blessing as Pinkie — he may offer suitable sacrifices to the Flowers to create temporary 'safe zones'. If the Investigator ran before being caught, the Flower may also choose to rend his flesh for 1d6+1 points of Health loss.



A sucking mire that has engulfed much of eastern Brighton. Crossing it without getting stuck in the mud requires a successful **Athletics** test (Difficulty 6) or an **Outdoorsman** spend; those trapped in the mud cannot move unless another player character rescues them (or Ida Arnold, if by some mischance all the Investigators get stuck).



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A pack of Deep Ones rises from the waters (see the *Trail of Cthulhu* rulebook, page 129) and pursues the Investigators. The Investigators must **Flee** (Difficulty 6) or be caught by the monsters. The Investigator (or Investigators) who fail by the widest margin are caught and dragged into the ocean, never to be seen again.



Call for a **Sense Trouble** roll (Difficulty 6) from the lead Investigator. If this roll fails, the Investigator blunders into what looked like a pool of water, but is actually awash with something like frogspawn. The spawn are as carnivorous and hungry as any piranha, and strip the flesh from the Investigator's bones. The Investigator loses 1d6+1 points of Health and must make an **Athletics** test (Difficulty 6) to climb back out; each failed test means more damage. Alternatively, someone with **Biology** may spot the spawn and recognise it in time to shout a warning.

THE ABANDONED HOSPITAL

The tunnel ends in the basement of Brighton General Hospital. This building was once a workhouse for the poor before being converted into a hospital. During the final, chaotic days of the old world, the dying and the terrified crowded in here, and vast snowdrifts of white Flowers blossomed from their corpses.

Most of the hospital is unusable and abandoned, but Pinkie's gang has reopened one ward and some associated rooms.

Exploring the Hospital

The Investigators learn the following:

1. The gang keeps pregnant women in the hospital.
 - **Locksmith:** You pick open a locked door, and find yourself in a room with four

unconscious women. They do not even stir when you enter — are they drugged? All four are heavily pregnant.

- **Reassurance:** You find Georgie, the woman from the basement flat. Her dressing gown struggles to hide her swollen belly. She is alarmed to see you here, but you assure her that everything is under control. She tells you that Andrew Somerset brought her here to have her baby.
 - **Scavenging:** A storeroom contains a large amount of food and fresh water, as well as medical supplies including clothing for newborn children.
2. Newborn children are taken and used by the gang for some horrible ritual.
 - **Anthropology:** You've read accounts of child sacrifice, but the scale of this abomination is staggering. They have taken advantage of the weird fertility to harvest children on an industrial scale.
 - **Bureaucracy:** Some diligent soul has kept hospital records

even after the Apocalypse. Dozens of children have been born here in the last three years, but there are only a few children back in the inhabited part of Brighton. Where are the rest?

- **Theology:** You find an empty crib. Next to it on the table is a Catholic book of prayer and a small bowl of stagnant water. One part of the book is especially well thumbed — a version of the Baptismal rite used for newborn children who are not expected to survive.
3. The ritual takes place in the racecourse across the road from the hospital. They should go there.
 - **Cthulhu Mythos:** Some irresistible force calls you. It's close at hand. The time is now. Come and see.
 - **Evidence Collection:** Pinkie tracked mud up from the tunnel, and the trail of footprints leads out the main doors to the street outside. Following, you see Pinkie entering the gates of the old racecourse across the way.

Recruiting Andrew Somerset

If the players intend to thwart Pinkie's plan, and need help, then you can bring Andrew Somerset in to assist them. Somerset obeyed Pinkie's instructions to bring Georgie here, and understands that Pinkie's scheme of repeated human sacrifice is the only way to keep Brighton safe — but he can barely stomach the thought of Georgie's newborn child being sacrificed, and does not know what he will do when that dreadful moment actually arrives. The Investigators find him sitting in a corridor of the hospital, rifle in hand, as he contemplates suicide. Any suitable argument against Pinkie's plan convinces him to aid the Investigators:

- **Intuition:** *You know this is wrong, Andrew. You can help stop it.*
- **Leadership:** *You can take action, man! It's not too late to stop this madness!*
- **Theology:** *You've always struck me as a decent man. Don't be deluded by Pinkie. Stand up for what's right.*

Stats

Athletics 4, Firearms 6, Health 6, Scuffling 5. Weapon: +1 (rifle)



Slaves of the Mother

- **Intuition:** This hospital is a ruined hulk, with only a few rooms still usable — but someone has carefully put heavy blinds over all the windows facing south. What are they trying to stop people seeing?

The Guided Tour

If Pinkie is with the characters, then he leads them through the hospital, justifying himself to them as he goes. See *Good and Evil, Right and Wrong* for more details.

NECESSARY EVILS

The final confrontation of this scenario takes place on the old racetrack. Pinkie, Dallow and their sacrifice (probably either Toby or Nigel) wait under the race-stand where the gamblers and socialites of Brighton once gathered. Now, it's empty, a skeletal witness to repeated atrocities.

Here is what happens if the player characters do not intervene: a gigantic Creature shambles out of the darkness, Pinkie presents the child, and the Creature accepts this death as an offering.

Good & Evil, Right & Wrong

As there is no point in concealing the sacrifices from the Investigators, Pinkie explains how the whole process works.

- He learned that the Creatures can be bargained with. A death willingly offered up to them creates a safe area for a few days. That is why Brighton is spared destruction — as long as the sacrifices keep happening, the town endures.
- Any death will do. Sacrificing children makes the most sense to Pinkie — they're useless mouths to feed, and don't do any useful work. Enough children will be born naturally in Brighton to maintain the population — it's this unnatural fertility that makes all this possible. Maybe it's all part of God's plan; be fruitful and multiply, and give the excess children to the things from Hell.

- Most people in town aren't stupid. They know the price paid for their security. They may not admit it to themselves, but they know.
- If the sacrifices stop, then Brighton will be overrun. There aren't any other safe places in England. Maybe there aren't any other safe places in the whole world. He's saved the human race.

Assess Honesty or **Cthulhu Mythos** confirms that Pinkie is not lying. His sacrifices really are all that stands between Brighton and destruction.

Likely questions from the player characters:

- **How can you do this?** Pinkie is genuinely confused by this question. How can he *not* do this? What alternative is there?
- **Why not sacrifice someone else?** Who do the characters suggest? A random lottery might kill Pinkie. As for sacrificing the elderly, well — have the Investigators seen any old people in Brighton?
- **Don't you see that this is wrong?** *"You cannot conceive, nor can I, of the appalling strangeness of the love of God"* snarls Pinkie.

The Sacrifice

The Creature approaches. The Investigators do not see it directly — it comes from the far side of the racecourse, so its approach is hidden by the stand. They hear it, they smell it, they *sense* it. It is old and unimaginably powerful, a shambling god-thing.

If it is a Flower, then it may be:



A manifestation of their collective intelligence, appearing as a blazing sphere of radiation that sears the ground and hums eerily as it floats.



A titanic mass of white Flowers that flows and bubbles and writhes like a floral shoggoth.



A figure that looks at first glance like a marble statue of a woman, but is actually made of Flowers — her 'skin' is a closely compacted mass of blossoms.



Not physical at all, but a gathering of *attention*. There's a chorus of clacking, and all the Flowers nearby turn to look at a particular point, like natural plants tracking the movement of the sun. This point of terrible attention moves towards the bandstand, and the Investigators instinctively know they will be unable to withstand the psychic pressure if it reaches them.

If it is a Deep One, then it may be:



A single huge Deep One — perhaps Dagon or Hydra.



A ravening pack of hundreds of the monsters, loping and howling in the moonlight.



A bubbling, shrieking shoggoth.



Not a creature at all; instead, the ground suddenly falls away and black water wells up from the rents in the earth. The sacrifice must be drowned in this pool.

Either way, hearing the approach of the horror is worth a 3-point Stability test. Witnessing it directly is a 7-point test.

The Decision

What do the characters do?

If they do nothing, then Pinkie takes the sacrifice and steps forward to stand before the creature. The Investigators hear the child cry out in terror, and then the sound

Dead Pinkie?

If Pinkie is dead, then Dallow may try to complete the sacrifice. However, he lacks Pinkie's nerve and fails to complete it unless the player characters do it for him.



Bright Futures

stops suddenly. Pinkie returns, shaken and angry. The sacrifice is done for another few weeks.

If they try to stop Pinkie in a half-hearted way — say, by trying to grab the child and run, or by restraining him — then he fights back. He will break free unless the Investigators kill him.

If they mortally wound Pinkie (say, by having Somerset shoot him), then Pinkie staggers out and is consumed by the Creatures. He may have deliberately sacrificed himself, or wandered randomly into the horror's path. Either way, the child is safe.

ENDGAME

What becomes of Brighton?

If the sacrifices continue, then life continues as it has done for the last three years. A few more survivors find their way to this last refuge, bringing with them tales of worsening conditions elsewhere in England. Pinkie's regime continues. Ida Arnold vanishes — perhaps killed by Pinkie as a punishment, or maybe some other fate befell her. In any event, the player characters have accepted Pinkie's utilitarian solution to the Apocalypse.

If the characters stopped the sacrifices, then Brighton exists on borrowed time.

The town's defences begin to crumble immediately. For the first time in three years, Flowers begin to sprout within the walls. Within a week, it is clear that life here is not sustainable, and the survivors must find somewhere else to live. The thought of going back out into the Dead White World is horrifying to those who have become used to the safety of Pinkie's regime. Some commit suicide, preferring a quick death amid the preserved remains of human civilization instead of a slow death out there in an alien world. Ida Arnold remains hopeful that they will find somewhere better to live. Where there's life, there's hope, she says even as the Creatures break down the Walls.





The Nation Set Free

THE HOOK

The Investigators learn of a top-secret military program to develop a new weapon. This bomb could be used to destroy the Creatures.

THE SPINE

The Investigators discover that the program, code-named TUBE ALLOYS, was based at the Cavendish Laboratory in Cambridge. There, they learn that the program aimed at the creation of an atomic weapon, and find evidence that the program may still be in operation.

They then visit the home of a scientist named Holsten, who was a key figure in TUBE ALLOYS. He hints that the project has driven the researchers insane, but admits that the research still continues at a secret Royal Air Force facility at Fort Halstead, outside London. Although he fears returning to the project, Holsten continued his mathematical research and has cracked a key problem that has stalled the completion of the bomb. He entrusts this research to the Investigators.

The Investigators visit this facility, where they meet Ernest Rutherford, the head of the TUBE ALLOYS project. He insists that completing the bomb will wipe out the Creatures and save England from being overrun, and asks for the Investigators help in completing it.

Finally, the Investigators have the choice to use the bomb, or give up on their last chance to defeat the Creatures.

THE HORRIBLE TRUTH

The TUBE ALLOYS project is infested by the alien brain parasites called the Shan. These insectoids worship the dread god Azathoth. An element in Earth's atmosphere keeps them trapped here, so they intend to free themselves by manipulating the humans into creating a

gate to Azathoth's realm, burning a hole in Earth's atmosphere with seething nuclear chaos. The Shan will then depart our world in their temple-ships, leaving their blind idiot god to gnaw on the very matter of the world.

THE LAST TRUMP

In this scene, the Investigators learn of the existence of the mysterious TUBE ALLOYS project. After the events in Brighton, the Investigators should either be without a safe refuge, or facing the imminent destruction of their last hiding place. Either way, they need to take immediate action if they are to survive.

There are multiple ways for the Investigators to learn of TUBE ALLOYS.

Ned

The gangster 'Ned' is actually King Edward VIII. He learned about the project while he was Prince of Wales. It was all very hush-hush and the whole affair was quite beyond him, but he recalls it had something to do with Cambridge.

- **Interrogation:** Through careful questioning, you help Ned remember more details. The research took place at the Cavendish Laboratory.
- **Library Use:** He probably means the well-respected Cavendish Laboratory at Cambridge University.
- **Physics:** Cambridge... military research... that rings a bell. You remember a scientist of your acquaintance named Holsten. A brilliant fellow. Before the Apocalypse, he went away to work on something that he refused to talk about at Cambridge.

Another Survivor

The Investigators encounter a madman, an unfortunate fellow who lost his mind

to the horrors of recent years. They learn that he was once a porter at Cambridge University, and that the university weathered the Apocalypse better than other places.

- **Evidence Collection:** The next morning, you find the man dead of fright. Going through his pockets, you find a crumpled memorandum printed on notepaper from the Cavendish Laboratory. It describes a well-thought-out and comprehensive safety protocol for dealing with the Flowers. Someone at Cambridge knew how to deal with these monsters, so there may still be survivors there.
- **Physics:** Most of the madman's ramblings are incomprehensible, but he mentions a few names you recognise — they're all lecturers and researchers at Cambridge University. *"They're going to build it",* he moans, *"They're going to save us all."* Then he laughs so hard he starts to bleed.
- **Reassurance:** Your calming presence lets the poor man fight off his demons for a few brief moments of lucidity. *"The scientists",* he pleads, *"they had a plan. They can stop this. Cavendish. Cavendish."*

Intercepted Transmissions

If the characters have access to a radio set and **Cryptography**, they may be able to intercept transmissions from *HMS Hood*, as described in the Introduction page 120. This second transmission is a desperate one. In it, *HMS Hood* tries repeatedly to establish contact with 'Cavendish', but there is no response. The radio operator begins the transmission in a professional tone, asking Cavendish to respond in a way that suggests he expects orders to



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come from there. As the hours go by, he clearly loses hope. The characters may guess that the operator is the only person left alive on *HMS Hood*.

The Military Lorry

The Investigators come across a military lorry in the middle of the road. Most vehicles in England have been moribund for years, ever since the Flowers choked their engines. This one was clearly working up until a few weeks ago.

- **Forensics:** The driver was killed by the Creatures. It appears that the lorry's engine finally succumbed to the hostile environment (clogged by seeds or rusted solid), and that he died when he tried to cross the country on foot.
- **Geology:** The lorry's cargo consists of several heavy metal crates, all of which contain ore. You identify it as pitchblende, a rock rich in uranium. It's quite radioactive.

- **Mechanical Repair:** This lorry is the sort used by the Royal Navy. Maybe it was on a ship? There are signs of seawater corrosion on parts of the chassis.
- **Navigation:** You find a map in the driver's compartment. He was heading for a location outside Cambridge.

Psychic Visions

An Investigator afflicted with some psychic ability might be drawn to Cambridge.

- **Dreaming:** You have a recurring dream of serious men in white coats moving through dark rooms, talking of things beyond your comprehension. In the dream, you are very small, and they are titans. You remember watching the chalk-dust fall as they drew diagrams and equations on the blackboard, and seeing it form into strange shapes

like flying insects or demons. Recently, the dream changed. In the new dream, one of the scientists picks you up and brings you to a concrete vault where something beautiful and terrible slumbers. You cannot bear to look at it, and always wake up at that moment with the word 'Cavendish' on your lips.

- **Premonitions:** At some point in your future, you will go to Cambridge. You will walk through the grounds of the university, treading the Flowers underfoot. There will be a locked door, and you won't want to open it, but you have to. You'll read the word 'Cavendish' on a plaque near the door.
- **Telepathy:** Sometimes, like a badly tuned radio, you pick up the thoughts of distant strangers. For an instant, your mind filled with equations and numbers, and





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you knew there was a terrible and wonderful secret concealed within them, a solution that solved... everything. And then it felt like your face exploded with agony, and you blacked out. When you woke up, you were bleeding from your eyes and had forgotten all of those glorious equations — everything except the name ‘Cavendish’.

CAVENDISH LABORATORY

The Cavendish Laboratory was founded in 1874, and is located in a gothic building on Free School Street in the heart of Cambridge. The laboratory is one of the most respected centres for physics research in the world.

1. Cambridge is overrun by the Creatures.



The whole town is covered in a white blanket of Flowers, and a trio of especially gigantic specimens grow in the grounds of Christ's College. There is no sound other than the gentle clacking of the plants. It appears that there is no-one else alive in Cambridge.



Much of the town has sunk into the mire, leaving spires and tall buildings poking out of the ooze. The river Cam has burst its banks, creating a much wider expanse of water. There does not seem to be any immediate danger, although the Investigators can hear monsters in the distance bellowing to each other like wading whales.

2. The Cavendish Laboratory was used until recently as a refuge.

- **Agriculture:** You notice that several of the parks and greens near the Laboratory were

converted into farmland. Many people could have survived here for some time.

- **Architecture:** The building was fortified and reinforced. There's a filtered rainwater collection system on the roof, many of the windows are boarded up, and there are sandbags everywhere.
- **Scavenging:** The laboratory is untouched. The player characters are the first people to visit here since it was abandoned.
- **Strategy:** Machine gun emplacements, barricades, lines of fire... this was a military operation.

The Investigators must now break into the laboratory. The doors are locked and secured with heavy chains, requiring **Locksmith** and **Scavenging** to find the necessary tools to cut through them.

Things in the Laboratory

- Blackboards covered in scrawled equations. Someone has hastily erased the material on some boards, leaving only a few scattered surviving symbols.
- Laboratories stripped of equipment and supplies — empty cabinets, desks scattered with leftovers and debris.
- Cryptic half-built machines.
- Beakers of leaden glass.
- Scribbled notes.
- Strange moulds growing out of petri dishes.
- Playful sketches and caricatures covered in splattered blood.
- A ticking clock that the Investigators cannot find.

Warning from a Dead Man

A large stone strikes the ground near one of the Investigators. Looking up, they see a wild-haired man crouched on a nearby rooftop. “Get away!” he hisses. “There’s nothing here for you!” He glances around, then turns and runs.

This is Reese Beulay, an American who was working in London as a delivery driver. After the Apocalypse, he escaped the city and after a series of misadventures ended up working for the military at Fort Halstead. He had a gift for keeping vehicles working even in the challenging conditions of the present day. When the military moved TUBE ALLOYS from the Cavendish Laboratory to the fort, he drove one of the trucks.

He glimpsed the Shan, and fled the laboratory. He has hidden in the ruins of Cambridge ever since. Up until now, he was irrelevant to the Shan, but now he may impede the Investigators from reaching the laboratory. The Shan can tell that some of the Investigators have keen intellects, so they act to remove Beulay. A Shan insect swoops in, attacks his brain, and then scurries off again. (It then follows the Investigators, ready to play its part in *The Truth*. Optionally, call for the occasional **Sense Trouble** roll to hear the rustling and meeping of the lurking Shan).

Should the Investigators climb up to where they saw Beulay (requiring a perilous ascent of a rusty drainpipe with an **Athletics** test), they find him lying on the ground, staring sightlessly at the sky.

The following clues are available here:

- **Cryptography:** You find a notebook in the man's pocket. His handwriting is poor and the notes are disjointed, but he seems convinced that “THEY” are watching the laboratory for some sinister purpose, and that he must stop anyone from getting too close. He worries about “Holsten”, but appears reassured by the idea that this Holsten will “die out there”. Strangely, the notebook is full of dead insects, which he's crushed between the pages like pressed flowers.



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- **Medicine:** This man seems to have had a stroke. You don't think he will ever recover. He isn't dead, but he seems completely paralysed and non-responsive. It reminds you of curare poisoning.

- 1-point **Medicine** spend: Beulay can still control his eyes, like a victim of locked-in syndrome. A 4-point **Reassurance** spend lets the Investigators 'question' Beulay once they establish a system of coded blinks, but there is no cure for his condition.

- **Photography:** He has a canvas bag with a looted camera in it. Developing the photos, you learn that he kept the Cavendish Laboratory under surveillance. Most of the photos just show the exterior of the building, but there are some exceptions. For example, one photo shows a strange figure leaving the building. He is wearing some sort of pallid mask, or else his face is horribly misshapen. Another set of photos are all weirdly distorted, as if there was a stain on the lens. Most of these distorted photographs have clouds or Flower-garlanded rooftops in the background.

Furthermore, a 2-point **Evidence Collection** spend lets the Investigators find a key. This key does not match the padlock on the door of the laboratory — it is the key to a nearby garage, where they find a working car repaired by Beulay. A **Mechanical Repair** test at Difficulty 4 is required each day to keep it operational.

Inside the Laboratory

Inside, the laboratory is a warren of lecture theatres, offices, laboratories and storerooms. The Investigators find camp beds and other signs that the lab was in use by a number of people for some time. It looks like they were living in the building. A number of clues are available. You may wish to break up the investigation with descriptions of the abandoned laboratory (see the sidebar).

1. The laboratory was abandoned within the last year. They left quickly, but

not hastily. Most of their equipment and notes was carefully moved or destroyed — the Investigators are picking through the remnants accidentally left behind.

- **Astronomy:** You find a telescope — someone here was an astronomer. They left notes on their observations. Working back, you calculate the last observations were made around nine months ago. Glancing idly through the telescope, you catch a glimpse of movement on an adjoining rooftop, but when you look back, there is no sign of anyone.
- **Bureaucracy:** In the kitchen, you find an inventory of food supplies, including dates of spoilage. It looks like they left between a year and nine months ago.
- **Outdoorsman:** Judging by the autumnal leaves caught in this drain, this place has not been maintained in the past year, but was inhabited up until that point.

2. There was some sort of accident or attack. The Investigators stumble across several bodies wrapped in tarpaulins.

- **Chemistry:** You step into a room that was once a laboratory. The blackened walls and shattered equipment tell of an explosion. You assume it was an accident, but there is no way to be sure.
- **Evidence Collection:** There are bullet holes in the walls, but no sign of any damage to the doors. It must have been an internal dispute. It's strange to think that these people were once as closely-knit as you and the other Investigators — before they turned on each other.
- **Forensics:** You unwrap one of the corpses and examine it as best you can. The body was wrapped tightly, preventing any Flowers from getting in, though not insects and bacteria. There is no obvious cause of death like an injury, but the decayed state of

the body makes a fuller autopsy pointless. (These people were killed by the Shan.)

3. The research related to nuclear physics, and was codenamed TUBE ALLOYS.

- **Chemistry:** The formulae on the blackboard are partially erased, but it definitely involves uranium and high explosive.
- **Cryptography:** These references to tube alloys aren't anything to do with metallurgy — it's a code name. This is definitely a military project.
- **Explosives:** This is unlike any conventional weapon design you know of. It's something new — and unimaginably powerful.
- **Physics:** When this place was abandoned, the researchers took most of their work with them. Even if they hadn't, you suspect it would all be beyond you — the finest minds in Europe worked here. As far as you can piece together, they were trying to develop an atomic bomb. You'd heard that some theoretical work had been done in this field, but it appears that they were very close to constructing a usable weapon.

4. There's lots of gold dust here.

- **Chemistry:** You find several beakers with a residue of elemental gold at the bottom. Presumably, some sort of chemical reaction precipitated the gold out of a solution — but what were they doing with so much gold? And why did they leave it behind? They took the light bulbs, but left thousands of pounds worth of precious metals.
- **Evidence Collection:** The dust in the labs glitters when you shine a light on it. There's some sort of shiny metallic power mixed in with ordinary dirt. My word — it looks like gold!



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5. There's something disturbing about the research.

- **Art:** For some reason, you are reminded of musical notation when you examine these equations. You could swear you can hear the sound of a distant flute or pipe.
- **Chemistry:** You find a copy of the periodic table with several new elements drawn on it. These elements are in a separate section, and are marked as 'degenerative elements'. One such element is called 'carolinium' and appears to have been the focus of their research.
- **Occult:** Various alchemical symbols and astrological conjunctions are worked into the equations, but that has to be a joke. What sort of bomb cares whether or not it is Walpurgisnacht?
- **Physics:** You try to puzzle through the equations, but can't make them work. The mathematics is wrong. Energy can't be conjured from nothing like that.

6. There was a second research facility.

- **Evidence Collection:** A handwritten note from one researcher to another mentions the 'move to the new laboratory' and how it will affect their work.
- **Library Use:** Digging through the archives, there are plenty of records mentioning a 'second site', but any reference to its location has been erased.
- **Strategy:** These people left with intent. They were going somewhere — and they didn't want to be followed.

7. One researcher, Holsten, was injured. He lived outside Cambridge. This is the **Core Clue** for the scene.

- **Cryptography:** In the infirmary, you find a sheet of paper pinned to the wall with a seemingly random series of letters on it. You quickly puzzle it out — some of the letters are actually chemical symbols, and if you take that element's atomic weight and apply it as a Caesar cypher to the next six letters... aha. "CANNOT FOLLOW YOU SOUTH. GONE TO MY FARM AT FEN DRAYTON. FIND ME THERE. HOLSTEN."

- **Library Use:** Checking the records, you find a list of everyone at the laboratory, including their addresses. Most are noted as 'RESIDENT', suggesting they lived in and around the laboratory buildings, but some have addresses nearby in Cambridge. One address is a farm outside Cambridge.

- **Medicine:** You wander into a room that was once used as an infirmary, although all the medical supplies have been removed. You do find the medical chart belonging to a researcher named Holsten, who was injured in an accident shortly before they left. His address is in his file — he lived outside Cambridge, on a small farm.

THE TRUTH

At this point in the adventure, place an envelope containing The Instructions on the table in front of the players. Tell the players that if they want to know exactly what is going on and what they should do, all one of them needs to do is open the envelope and read the instructions inside.

The Instructions

An insect just nested inside your head. You can feel it scrabbling through your brain, its claws picking through the folds of your grey matter, its feather wings brushing lightly against the inside of your skull. As it merges with you, alien memories flood your mind.

- The creature is called a Shan. It and the rest of its swarm came to Earth long ago in their temple-ship, folding space in a way you cannot comprehend.
- Some element in Earth's atmosphere trapped them here. Their ship can no longer teleport.
- The Shan planned to wait until they found a way to correct this problem, but can no longer afford to do so. This world is doomed. They have to leave soon.
- The humans were already on the path to completing the holy rite that summons the god Azathoth — you cannot hold the Shan equation-name for Him in your primitive mind. The Shan assisted them, pushed them onwards.
- There is a problem. The same element that stops teleportation also interferes with the Shan ritual. Only a human can solve this problem. It is an Earth-problem, so only an Earth-brain can work on it.
- Once this problem is solved, the ritual (or the bomb, from your limited perspective) will be ready. Then the Shan can leave.
- The Shan control the military project codenamed TUBE ALLOYS. Many of the scientists there, including Rutherford, have Shan in their brains. These scientists cannot solve the problem.
- Another scientist, Holsten, left the project after an accident. The Shan do not control him — they are deliberately leaving him alone in the hopes he solves the problem.

For the rest of this adventure, your Investigator is under the control of the Shan. Your tasks are:

- To look for a way to solve the problem and complete the bomb. If all else fails, bring the other Investigators to the TUBE ALLOYS project at Ford Halstead.



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- Protect the Shan and their temple-ship. Conceal their existence from the uncontrolled humans.

Your Investigator is otherwise unchanged. The Shan cannot control your every action, but can influence and plant suggestions. They can also kill you. You may, if you wish, blurt out a few words of warning to the other Investigators, but you will die a moment later.

As the handout notes, that Investigator is then possessed by a Shan parasite and acts to further the inhuman goals of the insects.

THE FARM

Professor Holsten owns a small cottage and some farmland outside Cambridge. The cottage is in a sheltered valley. The

Investigators notice immediately that this valley is strangely untouched by the Creatures. There are very few Flowers growing here, or the ground is relatively dry and solid compared to the mire along the nearby River Ouze. Smoke rises from the chimney of the little cottage.

- **Agriculture:** The place is well-supplied and well-maintained. Really blessed, in fact — whatever kept the Creatures at bay makes this little valley a good place to grow crops. The apples in those orchards look scrumptious.
- **Strategy:** This place is alarmingly exposed. Holsten should be dead. Everywhere else in England, the Creatures have killed everyone. Why did they spare this place?

Silent Sentinels

As the Investigators enter the valley, call for **Sense Trouble** rolls (Difficulty 6). Those who succeed have a definite uneasy feeling when they look at the scattered trees that line the edge of the valley. These trees are actually Beings from Xiclotl, the monstrous tree-like slaves of the Shan. The Beings are Holsten's guardians, and will not interfere with the Investigators unless they try to kill Holsten, or if the Investigators meddle with the Beings themselves.

The Bandaged Man

Holsten was acclaimed as one of the most brilliant chemists in the world. He became interested in phosphorescence at a young age when on holiday with his parents in Italy. He watched the fireflies dancing amid the trees near the villa, and was so intrigued he captured some of





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the insects and dissected them to learn how they shone. This insatiable curiosity about the fundamental nature of matter and energy led him to study physics. His contributions to the TUBE ALLOYS work at Cavendish were invaluable, although Holsten was convinced that the ultimate purpose of his synthetic ‘carolinium’ would be to provide limitless atomic power for all mankind.

While experimenting with a tiny amount of carolinium produced using a cyclotron, there was an accident. The sample exploded, blowing up the machine and severely burning Holsten. He quit the project and moved to this farm. The accident left him disfigured and half-blind — Holsten now wears bandages over his face at all times, and carries a small pair of opera glasses.

He greets the Investigators warmly — they are the first survivors he has seen in months. He asks immediately if they are from the Ministry of Supply (the government department that oversaw TUBE ALLOYS).

Inside, the cottage is warm and comfortable, if rather messy. Holsten potters around and pulls armfuls of books off chairs so the Investigators can sit down. He even digs into his precious supply of tea to give them a hot drink, and there is wine under the sink for later. He seems delirious, even manic, at the thought of guests.

Playing Holsten

- Consider your words carefully.
- Hold your body awkwardly.
- Squint and frown (or mask your face somehow, with a scarf or bandage perhaps).

Holsten’s Story

When prompted by the Investigators (**Interrogation**, **Flattery** or **Oral History** are all plausible options, although straight **Physics** works best), Holsten describes the work performed at the Cavendish Laboratory. Initially, he is hesitant to reveal state secrets, but once the Investigators get past that barrier, he talks freely.

1. It was a government project to develop a new type of bomb, an atomic bomb. The weapon was designed to eclipse every other explosive developed to date.

- **Bureaucracy:** You drop enough official-sounding legalese to convince Holsten that you are cleared to know about TUBE ALLOYS.
 - **Leadership:** The old world is dead, you tell him. There’s no government, no higher authority. He’s not breaking his word.
 - **Physics:** You draw him out with talk of synthetic elements and degenerative radiation. Soon, he’s forgotten that it’s supposed to be a top secret project and is drawing diagrams on the tablecloth.
2. After the Apocalypse, the scientists banded together to survive. Work on the bomb was abandoned for a while — they had more pressing concerns. He shudders behind his bandages, recalling the horrific days.
 - **Assess Honesty:** He falls silent, but you don’t think he’s hiding anything. He just doesn’t want to talk about that period. He doesn’t want to relive those memories.
 - **Interrogation:** You know when to stay silent, and when to prompt. You gently push him to keep going.
 - **Reassurance:** You tell him that you too remember the dead, and the Flowers sprouting everywhere. It’s all right, go on.
 3. Some weeks later, the mood at the Laboratory changed. Many of the scientists were seized by a strange belief that the bomb could save the world. They redoubled their efforts to complete the project. Holsten describes how weirdly certain it felt. He knew the bomb was the answer!
 - **Anthropology:** Sounds like some sort of mass delusion. You ask how it started, and Holsten tells you that the lead scientist, the great Rutherford from New Zealand, led the effort to finish the bomb.

- **Assess Honesty:** Holsten sounds uncertain, as if he doubts himself. He has clearly lost that strange certainty.
 - **Theology:** The way Holsten describes it, you cannot help but be reminded of the Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles and inspired them.
4. Things changed. It was as though the laws of physics themselves were adrift. They kept working, but the bomb was something different now. He cannot articulate this change, but they glimpsed parts of some vast structure beneath the skin of reality.
 - **Cthulhu Mythos:** You cannot help yourself — a strange impulse seizes you. You grab the flute from the table and start playing it, blowing the same three notes over and over in a monotonous piping. Holsten looks at you with sudden alarm, and then nods. He’s heard that same music in his dreams.
 - **Occult:** Some of Holsten’s diagrams remind you of drawings you saw in certain occult books in the restricted section of the college library. You shudder, for those drawings depicted the rites of the witch-cult.
 - **Physics:** Holsten shows you some notes dating from that time. You can hardly believe it, but the nature of reality has shifted from what it was, as if the whole universe cracked. Another group of equations point to the involvement of a mathematical singularity, like a black hole.
 5. The project ran into difficulty. They couldn’t work out the right design for the bomb casing needed to implode the carolinium into a critical mass. The bomb needs a precisely arranged configuration of explosives to push the carolinium inwards.



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- **Assess Honesty:** When he mentions this topic, Holsten glances over at a cabinet on the far side of the room. There's something in there...
- **Intuition:** That does seem to be a thorny problem, but Holsten strikes you as the sort of person who would be unable to let it go. You'd wager that he's kept working on it ever since he left the laboratory. His notes must be hidden somewhere in the cottage.

Physics: From the scribbled notes on the counter, you suspect that Holsten has continued to work on the problem. The solution is hidden somewhere in this cottage.

6. There was an accident that severely wounded Holsten. He spent weeks drifting in and out of a morphine-induced haze. He remembers telling Rutherford that he wanted to quit the TUBE ALLOYS project — he lost his strange faith in the project's importance.

- **Occult:** You recall an account of a 17th century highwayman. He was a clergyman who suddenly turned to a life of crime, and became infamous for his cruelty and depraved deeds. Then he was wounded when his flintlock exploded in his hand, and suddenly his personality changed completely. He begged for forgiveness all the way up to the gallows.
- **Medicine:** He must have been terribly badly injured — you would diagnose a severely fractured skull and first-degree burns, as well as possible brain damage. The latter would explain his sudden change in attitude to his work.

7. He doesn't know what happened in the laboratory after that. He was unconscious for days — he contracted an infection, and was delirious with fever — and awoke to find the place abandoned and dead men in bags on the floor. He can only assume that the other scientists were forced to leave suddenly, and he was overlooked in the confusion.

- **Assess Honesty:** A note of anger and confusion enters

Holsten's voice at this point — he's obviously annoyed at being abandoned like a forgotten suitcase at a railway station.

- **Bureaucracy:** Wait a moment — the laboratory was carefully stripped of all useful equipment. They did not leave in a hurry, which means that Holsten was not accidentally left behind.

8. The other scientists went to Fort Halstead. He decided it was too risky to try making the long journey alone, so he came here.

- **Assess Honesty:** Holsten knows where they went. You look him right in the eye and ask him where they went, and he admits they went to Fort Halstead.
- **Interrogation:** Holsten tries to prevaricate, but you push him when he mentioned the 'other site'. They went to Fort Halstead.
- **Strategy:** The evacuation of the Cavendish Laboratory was a military operation. They must have gone to a military base. You press Holsten and he tells you where — Fort Halstead.

Fort Halstead is on the far side of London. It is a large military base, used for weapons testing and experiments.

The Solution

Holsten's perfected design for the explosive part of the bomb casing is in the cabinet. The Investigators must find this document and bring it to Fort Halstead.

If they ask Holsten about his work, he admits that he solved the problem. He no longer believes that the bomb is the solution, but he could not let the puzzle go. He offers the papers to the Investigators if they say that they intend to go to Fort Halstead — someone else there will solve the problem eventually, so there is no point in him concealing his work. He says that it is up to the Investigators whether or not they wish to hasten completion of the bomb.

The bomb design in the notes resembles

the multi-faceted eyeball of an insect. Each facet is a lozenge of conventional explosive surrounding the burning carolinium core.

Beneath the Bandages

Beneath Holsten's gauzy mask is a ruined face. Notably (**Medicine** or **Forensics**), there is a gaping crack in his skull. It was hastily repaired, but there was almost certainly brain damage from this accidental trepanation.

THE CROWDING TREES

While Holsten talks to the Investigators, the Beings from Xiclotl creep closer and closer. Under cover of darkness, they crawl down the hillsides and stride across the little farm. They press themselves close to the stone walls of the cottage, a sudden metal grove hemming in on all sides.

When they reach Holsten's pigpens and chicken coops, they can no longer contain their hungers. They scoop up the animals and tip them into their oval gullets, feasting on terrestrial matter as they slither by. Call for **Sense Trouble** rolls (Difficulty 5) at this point to hear the terrified grunts of the pigs as the Beings eat them.

The atmospheric 'indirect approach' is greatly preferable to the blatant 'direct approach' described below, but one cannot always rely on the co-operation of players.

The Indirect Approach

If the Investigators take Holsten's notes and leave the next day, then you can just describe the farm as feeling rather odd the next morning. The ground has been churned up, there are strange tracks in the mud, the pigs are missing, and the Investigators are struck by the thought that those trees seemed further away yesterday.

The Direct Approach

Once the Investigators have Holsten's notes, the Beings no longer need Holsten himself. Conversely, if the Investigators have not taken Holsten's notes, then the Beings force the issue. Metallic tentacles smash down on the slate roof, shattering through and ripping out century-old oak beams. The slaving Beings relentlessly rip away at the walls. Holsten is grabbed and hoisted into the air to be eaten. He screams an incoherent



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warning as he rises, pointing at the cabinet and screaming “Tell them! Fort Halstead!”

If any Investigator is possessed by a Shan, then the Beings are careful not to endanger their slave-master. Other Investigators are fair game for the creatures’ hungers, although they are under instructions to leave at least some of the humans alive so they can bring the vital solution to Fort Halstead. The Beings will therefore ‘herd’ the Investigators towards an escape route.

FORT HALSTEAD

In the 1890s, the British government built a ring of forts around London. Fort Halstead never saw battle, but in 1935 it became the headquarters of the Ministry of Supply, a government department whose brief was to ensure that the military had the resources and weapons needed to fight the coming wars. They were responsible for purchasing the mysterious seeds that came ashore on the *Lysenko*, and were also in charge of the TUBE ALLOYS project to create an atomic bomb.

The fort stands on a hill outside London. The hill and the surrounding land are wreathed in barbed wire and protected by land mines — this is a heavily fortified area.

West of the hill is Halstead Forest, a thicket of oaks and thorn-trees. The approach road to the fort runs by the side of the forest, and the Investigators hear huge wasps buzzing in the darkness beneath the trees.

- **Intuition:** There is something unwholesome about that forest.

The Checkpoint

Blocking the road up ahead is a military checkpoint manned by six soldiers. All are armed; two of them carry flamethrowers. The leader of the soldiers is **Captain John Post**. He examines and interrogates the Investigators to ensure that they are not Bolsheviks or madmen. Assuming the Investigators are not obviously hostile, he deems them safe to enter the Fort, although he cautions them that civilians will be obliged to contribute to the war effort through manual labour.

Captain Post’s role at Fort Halstead is to analyse reports about the Creatures.

Completing the bomb is only part of the plan — they also need a target. They plan to find the Creatures’ leader or headquarters or capital or something similar. They will cut the head from the dragon with a sword of fire.

Playing Captain Post

- Imagine you’re carrying a heavy weight. Be burdened by your responsibilities.
- Occasionally, look off into the distance or seem distracted. Apologise when this happens, and ask the Investigators to repeat what they just said.
- Keep a stiff upper lip.

If the Investigators impress Captain Post, or show him Holsten’s notes, then he brings them down to the bunker to meet Rutherford immediately.

- **Leadership:** You impress the Captain with your military bearing and obvious leadership skills. He asks if you have military experience, and suggests that the head of the project may wish to speak with you personally.
- **Physics:** The Captain appears pleased to have another boffin on board. He sends you downstairs to speak with the head of the project.
- **Strategy:** You discuss the Fort’s defences with Captain Post, and he is impressed by your perceptiveness. You’ll clearly be a fine addition to the Fort staff in his eyes. He tells you to head straight downstairs to talk to the head of the project.

If the Investigators have gathered information on the Creatures (perhaps through investigative point spends before *Bright Futures*), then Post interviews them one by one to discuss their findings. See *Captain Post’s Interview*.

The Surface Fort

The surface level of the fort is a military encampment. Armed guards walk to and fro, guarding canvas tents full of crates

and supplies. A Cruiser Mark I tank sits in the middle of the courtyard, its guns trained on the main gate. There are around three dozen people at Fort Halstead, split evenly between scientists, soldiers, and civilian survivors.

The following clues are available.

1. The fort is in contact with an aircraft.

- **Chemistry:** Those large barrels contain aviation fuel. They must have an aircraft close by.
- **Cryptography:** There’s a radio tower atop the fort, and it’s still in use. Who are they talking to?
- **Photography:** You spot one soldier carrying a sheaf of aerial photographs. They were taken recently. They must still have an aircraft in the sky.
- **Piloting:** Standing on the wall of the fort, you spot a makeshift airstrip about half a mile away, near that forest.

2. The military are conducting a survey of the Creatures.

- **Cthulhu Mythos:** My God — you’ve seen that map before. The military have a map of England, tracking Creature movements and sightings, and you’ve seen it before. You saw that same configuration on that game-board in that alien city by Blackpool.
- **Occult:** That map of the United Kingdom shows ley-lines, you’d swear to it. The lines seem to be intersecting in the Severn Valley.
- **Photography:** Several photographs — the details are mercifully obscured — show large columns of the Creatures moving... or migrating. From the surrounding terrain, you’d guess it is in the Severn Valley.
- **Strategy:** That command post over there is abuzz with activity. You see soldiers looking at maps and charts, collating reports, and planning



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military operations. They seem to be trying to find the centre of Creature activity, which appears to be somewhere in the Severn Valley.

- **Streetwise:** You can tell that all the action's happening in that building over there, and you sidle up to spy through a window. They're planning something, and it all seems to be centred on the Severn Valley.
 - Alternatively, if the Investigators go through *Captain Post's Interview*, then the captain sends them up here after he is done with them to add their reports to the work done in the command post.
3. The staff here act strangely. They are distracted, haunted, jumpy.
- **Assess Honesty:** *"You're safe here, sir",* says one of the soldiers, *"those things haven't tried to break in here in years."* His tone is meant to be reassuring, but then he smiles, and it's like the jagged edge of a tin can
 - **Intuition:** The scientist's attention keeps jumping off you, like a record skipping a groove. His eyes are fixed on a point just behind your left shoulder, but when you look, there is nothing there.
 - **Oral History:** You chat to one of the soldiers when he takes a break for a cigarette, asking about trivial things — his life before the Apocalypse, how the base feeds itself, the weather and so on. Disturbingly, he cannot always answer simple questions. It is as though he is only partially there, flickering in and out of his own consciousness.

Should any of the Investigators have a psychic ability, they may have an unwelcome revelation here:

- **Aura Reading:** The soldier's aura is oddly doubled. There are the warm human colours, and beyond them, something that hurts your mind's eye.
- **Mind Reading:** Tendrils of an alien mind brush against yours. For an instant, you feel as though your skin is being flayed, as though your bones are being ground to dust, as though every nerve is wrapped around a needle of pure agony. Suffering beyond measure pours through you — and then, from every mind around you, you sense hunger and joy.

Captain Post's Interview

The captain brings the Investigator to an interrogation room (ideally, take each player to a private room and question them individually). Choose topics to unsettle the players. Ask questions like:

- Which of the other Investigators do you distrust? Why?
- We have encountered creatures that can control or influence human behaviour. Have you encountered any such phenomena? Are you sure?
- Are any of the other Investigators unstable? What makes you think this?
- What happened in Blackpool? What did you see there? What did you decide?
- What happened in Brighton? Why was that city safe for so long? Is it still safe?
- What is the worst thing you have seen?
- What do the Creatures want?
- Why is this happening?

If the Investigators have not revealed that they possess Holsten's notes, then Post will question them about their meeting with the scientist.

- What did Holsten say to you?
- What did Holsten give you?
- Can you remember anything about Holsten's work?

Note that even if the Investigators have destroyed Holsten's work, then they can still remember the rough shape of the casing schematic, and that's enough for Post's engineers to make the final assembly.

Captain Post's interrogation becomes more intense for each subsequent Investigator as his Shan parasite becomes more aroused. So, if you question three Investigators, be pleasant and helpful to the first one, neutral to the second, and hostile and sadistic to the third. He may use drugs or physical coercion to make the Investigators answer his questions. The last Investigator to be questioned may learn a clue here.

1. Captain Post is under the influence of some alien force.

- **Assess Honesty:** Post snarls at you when he asks his questions. He's not interested in the answers. This is pure sadism — and you're struck by the sudden conviction that it's not him. He's in some sort of fugue, and some external force dictates his actions.
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** You may be hallucinating, but you think you just saw a huge insect crawl into Captain Post's ear.
- **Evidence Collection:** You hesitate when answering one question, and Post hisses at you. Suddenly, agony blazes along your arm. You could swear that you saw a strand of pale light lash out from Post's mouth to whip your flesh.
- **Interrogation:** The interrogation is more like torture. As he questions you, the mask slips and you see something



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inhuman staring out at you from behind Post's glassy eyes.

- **Intuition:** You glance sidelong at Captain Post, and there is something terribly awkward about him. His face resembles a waxen mask, and he holds himself very strangely, as if his human form was an ill-fitting suit.
- **Pharmacy:** Post threatens to inject you with a 'truth serum', but it's not a drug you've ever heard of, and those syringes fluoresce with an eerie light.

THE BUNKER

To reach the bunker, one must go into the cellars of the surface fort, and then pass through a huge set of reinforced steel doors to reach an elevator shaft

that descends deep underground to a concrete-lined chamber. Here is the new home of the TUBE ALLOYS project. The room is dominated by scaffolding surrounding two half-assembled atomic bombs. These bombs lack the vital carolinium core and the explosive lenses needed to trigger a continuous explosion, so they are currently harmless. The work on designing the casing goes on around the bombs. The whole place has the air of a temple, and the bombs are like a pair of man-made gods waiting for a sacrifice.

Sneaking In

There is no easy way to sneak in. The Investigators' best options are

- Succeeding in a Difficulty 8 **Disguise** test to steal uniforms and sneaking in

or

- Succeeding in a Difficulty 8 **Filch** test to steal keys

Suitable investigative ability spends (like **Seduction** to distract a guard, or **Architecture** to find a good ambush site) can decrease the difficulty.

Exploring the Bunker

If the Investigators are allowed to down here, then Professor Rutherford gives them a guided tour. Otherwise, they must **Sneak** around. Either way, the following clues are available.

1. The bombs are nearly ready.

- **Bureaucracy:** You spot a project timeline. Everything appears to be in readiness — those earth-shattering bombs are nearly ready to go.





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- **Chemistry:** According to this report, they've got more than enough carolinium to create two critical masses. Both bombs are nearly ready.
 - **Craft:** All the components for the bombs are in place. Only final assembly — and the right configuration for the explosive casing — is needed.
 - **Locksmith:** At the back of the bunker is a massive door, like the entrance to a bank vault. You catch a glimpse of the vault when one scientist goes in there to get a sample of carolinium. They have synthesised many pounds of the explosive substance — more than enough for those two bombs.
 - **Physics:** You stare in wonder at those slumbering stars. A cold fury rises up in you — how could the end have come now, just as mankind was about to harness the power of the atom?
2. Everyone is convinced that these bombs will save humanity.
- **Intuition:** There's an air of excitement and hope in the bunker. You haven't seen such optimism in many years.
 - **Oral History:** You overhear two scientists speculating about how quickly England can be rebuilt after the Creatures are destroyed.
 - **Strategy:** You spot a report detailing how the Americans are believed to have detonated a similar bomb, and that it prevented the seeds from spreading beyond the eastern seaboard. While no-one has had any contact with the United States in years, it does suggest that the bomb is effective against the Creatures.
 - **Streetwise:** There's a crate of champagne over there. Someone's planning a celebration.
3. The bomb will affect the atmosphere.
- **Astronomy:** You find a chart of spectroscopic observations. Why so much interest in the trace elements of Earth's atmosphere?
 - **Flattery:** You chat to one of the scientists, and he eagerly shows you some of his calculations. "*It will burn a hole right through the atmosphere,*" he says.
 - **Geology:** You spot a copy of a familiar scientific paper, a work on the chemical composition of the atmosphere in prehistoric times. Why is the breakdown of elements in our atmosphere before the coming of mankind relevant to a bomb project? Do they expect something to change?
 - **Reassurance:** "*Don't worry,*" says one of the scientists. "*There's very little chance it will set the sky on fire. The Americans set one of these off three years ago. Ours is a little different, though.*" So what will it do to the sky?
 - **Theology:** You have a dreadful headache, and words and images from the Bible assail your brain like birds hammering against a windowpane. Why do you keep thinking of the destruction of Sodom, the pillar of fire and Enoch's fiery chariot, all juxtaposed with the ungodly clinical work of these bomb-makers?
4. These scientists are acting strangely.
- **Assess Honesty:** "*The bomb will save us all!*" says one scientist, and he speaks with the conviction of a fanatic.
 - **Intuition:** All of them are driven to complete the bomb, but some of them have an unsettling intensity. They cast sidelong looks in your direction, and you feel like a fly trapped in an invisible web.
- **Languages:** You catch sight of a scientist's notes, and they're scrawled in no human language that you can recognise.
 - 1-point **Archaeology** or **Languages** spend: Wait a moment — you have seen those glyphs before. There are stones in the Severn Valley associated with the witch-cult that bore identical markings.
 - **Outdoorsman:** You can hear the buzzing of wasps or hornets — but that's impossible. There aren't any insects down here, it's a hermetically sealed bunker.
 - **Physics:** On one blackboard, you see a series of equations and diagrams. They're clearly trying to solve the problem of the bomb casing that Holsten described, but they're making elementary mistakes that you can spot in an instant. These people are brilliant scientists, yet they're forgetting basic laws of physics.
 - 1-point **Physics** spend: Specifically, their calculations seem to assume that two solid objects can move through one another if they approach from the right angle. It is as though they are unable to conceive of Euclidian space.

Baron Rutherford

The head of TUBE ALLOYS is the distinguished Ernest Rutherford, made Baron Rutherford in 1931 in acknowledgement of his sterling work in nuclear physics and his directorship of the Cavendish laboratory. He discovered alpha, beta and gamma radiation, created the first standard model of the atom with its dense nucleus surrounded by a cloud of electrons, and successfully transmuted nitrogen into oxygen.

Any Investigator with **Physics** or **Chemistry** knows Rutherford by reputation as a brilliant scientist with an outgoing, bombastic personality.



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Rutherford greets the new visitors warmly, and shows them around the laboratory. If they present him with Holsten's notes, or give him the clues he needs to complete the bomb design, then he shouts with delight and hurries to put the final touches to the bomb.

Likely questions and answers:

1. What happened with Holsten and the Cavendish Laboratory?

There was a disagreement, shall we say, about the direction of our research. We had to leave the laboratory in haste. Holsten had already made his desire to leave the project clear, so, um, we decided to leave him. And you tell me he was alive and well on that farm, so we made the right decision.

- **Assess Honesty:** He's not lying, exactly, but he doesn't seem sure of his own answer. He cannot quite fathom why he left Holsten behind, and is trying to cover his own confusion with bluster.

2. The physics behind the bomb are very strange. How does it work?

What will it do? Yes, well, things are certainly very different now. In layman's terms, the bomb is a continuous explosion with a half-life of seventeen hours. That means in the first seventeen minutes, half the carolinium will degenerate energetically, then half the remaining matter in the seventeen minutes after that, and so on. The explosion will never stop, not for many centuries, but it will become less intense. We needed Holsten's design for the focussing lenses that implode the carolinium core, but now that we have those, the way is clear!

- **Agriculture:** That implies that a large section of England will be uninhabitable for centuries.
- **Physics:** That does track, more or less, with the equations you saw in the Cavendish laboratory. Still, you worry about the possibility that Rutherford is wrong. Some of the work you saw suggests that the bomb could draw energy from some other dimension.

3. Where will you drop the bomb?

The army chaps have a working aeroplane, with reserve fuel tanks that give it tremendous range. For the last few months, they've been

surveying England, trying to find the best place to deploy the weapon. The biggest concentration of the Creatures is near Brichester. That's the primary target.

- **Cthulhu Mythos:** You flash back to that game board in the sunken city. Rutherford is talking about knocking the Creature's king off the board with a single stroke.
- **History or Occult:** Brichester has its share of strange events and unpleasant histories. It feels right that the Creatures should gather there.
- **Strategy:** They don't seem to have a back-up plan. What happens if they don't have access to a working aeroplane? Would some doomed hero have to walk into the very mouth of hell dragging the bomb with him?

4. What happens now?

Final assembly should only take a few minutes. We shall signal the plane to return. Then we drop the bomb and... and... Rutherford appears to lose his train of thought. If prompted by a player character, he looks around in con-

fusion. My word, I'm terribly sorry. I was just struck by an idea. I must write it down. Ah, you asked me about the next step. Yes yes yes, drop the bomb, kill the monsters, save the nation. Details, details. He scribbles some notes and diagrams on a piece of scrap paper.

- **Archaeology:** You've seen Rutherford's diagrams before — there was an expedition to Antarctica that claimed to find pre-human ruins, and some of the photographs they took of bas-reliefs resemble those twisted lines.
- **Intuition:** Rutherford appears extremely distracted and confused. That is... not exactly reassuring, considering the fact that he is about to drop an untested atomic bomb on England.
- **Occult:** That diagram that Rutherford drew — you saw it in a book about 16th century witch cults. They called it the Devil's Gate, and claimed it was how the devil climbed out of Hell!

Uncooperative Investigators

The final scenes assume that the Investigators bring Holsten's notes to the Fort, help complete the bomb, slowly realise the Shan presence, stop the bomb from detonating, and then flee. However, if the players mistrust the TUBE ALLOYS staff, or object to the plan to use an atomic weapon based on disturbing alien science, then they may come into conflict with the military soon after arriving at Fort Halstead.

First, Captain Post will interrogate the Investigators and try to force them to reveal what they know about Holsten's work (or get them to admit they met Holsten, if the Investigators are being *that* secretive). This is a 2-point **Stability** test; an Investigator who attempts the test and fails cracks under the pressure.

If that fails, then Captain Post may try torturing the Investigators using Shan neural whips. This calls for a 6-point **Stability** test, as above. If all else fails, then the Shan call for Beings from Xiclotl to creep up to the edge of the fort by night. The Investigators will be handed over to the Beings and dragged into the woods to the Shan pyramid-ship. That is likely the end of the Investigators and the campaign, as they will be dissected and have the secrets of Holsten's bomb design dredged out of their dying brains.

The Investigators will certainly try to escape. Any plausible escape attempt should work (using **Locksmith**, **Intimidation**, **Seduction** or some other ability). At that point, **Strategy** warns them that Fort Halstead is certainly doomed and the Investigators should flee.



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- **Physics:** Rutherford's notes aren't anything to do with the bomb. It seems to be a theory on how the curved structure of space-time can be folded and twisted with the right mathematics. It hurts your brain when you try to follow it.

Rutherford suggests that the Investigators return upstairs and have Captain Post radio the aeroplane and call it back to base. Soon, the bomb will be ready...

TUBE ALLOYS

Several things happen in a short period of time in this scene. Unless the Investigators split up, then they may not be aware of everything that happens until events overtake them. These events happen in roughly the following order around sunset.

Contacting the Aeroplane

Captain Post orders the radio operator to contact the aeroplane. Currently, the aircraft is circling above the target zone near Brichester. Static partially occludes the connection, but the Investigators overhear the conversation between Post and the pilot. Post calls for the aeroplane to return, and the pilot acknowledges the order. He then runs into difficulty. The transmission keeps breaking up, so the Investigators hear only fragments.

<STATIC> buffeted by winds <STATIC> to climb, but <STATIC> my God, it's moving, the whole <STATIC> all alive, all alive<STATIC> have to land, there's an airfield near<STATIC> side Brichester<STATIC>

This gives the Investigators a **Core Clue**:

1. The aeroplane is near Brichester.

- **Cryptography:** You're good at putting fragmentary communications together. The aeroplane is going to land near Brichester.
- **Evidence Collection:** Searching the radio room, you find a logbook. The last transmission from the aeroplane suggested it ran into difficulty, and has landed somewhere near Brichester.

- **Outdoorsman:** It sounds like the pilot intends to land the plane somewhere near Brichester.
- **Piloting:** There are several small airfields near Brichester. If you found that aeroplane, you're confident you could fly it.

Captain Post continues to try to contact the aircraft until *The Shan Depart*.

Completing the Bomb

Down in the bunker, Baron Rutherford and the other scientists complete the bomb assembly. If the Investigators wish to assist, they can do so by spending points of **Chemistry, Craft, Electrical Repair, Explosives, Mechanical Repair, or Physics**. They have enough material for two bombs, but Rutherford only completes one device. They leave the other bomb in the cradle.

Once the bomb is complete, Rutherford orders two soldiers to close the doors to the bunker. He then activates the bomb timer.

- A successful **Sense Trouble** roll (Difficulty 6) lets an Investigator spot a change in Rutherford's demeanour just as the bomb is completed. He goes from excitement and enthusiasm to a strange detachment in an instant — and then starts to arm the bomb.

Lights in the Forest

Next, an eerie pale light appears in the forest outside Fort Halstead. The light does not shine in straight lines, it oozes and coils around the trees and seeps like a luminescent mist across the land. As the light grows brighter, the Investigators can make out a pyramidal shape rising through the trees. The stars above the pyramid ripple and flare.

- **Architecture:** No human built that pyramid. It's not made of any terrestrial metal.
- **Astronomy:** Those stars are not any constellation you recognise. It is as though there is a hole in space above that pyramid.

Sabotaging the Bomb

Should an Investigator wish to sabotage the bomb, they can do so with a successful **Stealth** or **Filch** test at Difficulty 8. Should they arrange a distraction, reduce the difficulty of the test. Sabotaging the bomb requires a 3-point spend from one of **Chemistry, Craft or Physics**, or a 9-point spend of **Electrical Repair, Explosives or Mechanical Repair**. A full spend allow the Investigator to dictate what happens to the bomb — does it go off early, does it not detonate at all, or is it a squib that destroys the bomb without setting off the carolinium core? A smaller spend means the Keeper decides whether or not the sabotage has its intended effect.

Destroying the bomb is easier — a Difficulty 5 **Explosives** or **Mechanical Repair** test can destroy it beyond repair.

- **Intuition:** The pyramid strains against the bonds of gravity. It yearns to leap into the sky and vanish, but it is held back by some force.

Seeing the pyramid is worth a 3-point **Stability** test.

The Shan Depart

As one, the Insects from Shaggai abandon their host bodies. The discarded humans crumple to the ground, seemingly dead.

- **Biology:** That insect just crawled out of Baron Rutherford's face and flew through a wall. Agh!
- **Medicine:** They are not dead, but appear completely paralysed.
 - 1-point **Medicine** spend (or free if the Investigators examined Beulay in Cambridge): They're also suffering from locked-in syndrome like Beulay. They are still alive, but completely paralysed.



Slaves of the Mother



Capturing the Shan

One of the Investigators spots an Insect pulling itself out of a nearby victim. Normally, the Shan can flit through normal matter as easily as a human moves through the air, but this Shan's legs are caught on the victim's dental fillings, which are made of a dense amalgam. If the Investigator reacts quickly, he can attack or trap the Shan. He might use **Scuffling** to grab the insect, or **Scavenging** or **Preparedness** to grab a dense lead-lined container off a laboratory counter to hold the insect. Otherwise, the Shan pulls itself free and escapes.

The Investigators cannot communicate with the trapped Shan, except in one way — an Investigator could deliberately merge with the Shan, gaining access to the information in The Instructions.

COUNTDOWN

So, by this point in the adventure, the Investigators are likely the only non-

paralysed individuals in Fort Halstead. They may be trapped in the locked bunker with a ticking atomic bomb, or locked out of the bunker watching the temple-ship prepare to depart. There are several options available to them at this point:

- **Break in or out of the bunker:** Breaking out of the bunker requires either a 2-point **Locksmith** spend or a Difficulty 6 **Scavenging** test (to find the key) or **Explosives** to blow the lock.
- **Disarming the bomb:** So, the Investigators wish to disarm a ticking atomic bomb? Good luck. This requires a Difficulty 6 **Explosives** test (or Difficulty 10(!) if the Investigator wishes to wait until all the other Investigators are clear of the immediate blast zone). Spends of suitable investigative abilities like **Physics** can reduce the Difficulty.

- **Helping the Survivors:** The other victims of the Shan will never recover. The Investigators can at best prolong their suffering.
- **Run Away:** The Investigators flee the fort, either on foot or in a stolen motor vehicle. The Shan have no interest in stopping them.

Under normal circumstances, the bomb blast would kill them, but the underground detonation saves their lives. Behind them, they see Fort Halstead crumble from within as the bomb hollows out a vast glassy cavern under the surface. The sky catches fire with a weird aurora borealis, and the temple-ship leaps into the air and vanishes in a direction the Investigators cannot name or recognise.

Should any Investigator return to the explosion site, they look down into an unimaginably deep pit to see the seething nuclear fire of Azathoth writhing far below.



The Nation Set Free

The bomb is still exploding — it will keep exploding forever, gnawing away at the world like a hungry worm of fire, never sated, never stopping. This crater will keep growing until the fire consumes all the world.

- **Stealing the bomb:** Once the immediate danger of being vapourised by an atomic blast

Possessed Investigators

When a Shan abandons an Investigator, that Investigator must make an 8-point Stability test and a Difficulty 8 Health test. If the Health test fails, the Investigator is permanently paralysed by the departure of the Shan. The Investigator is still conscious and aware, but cannot move in any way other than moving his eyes.

The Shan Temple-Ship

Especially brave Investigators may essay an attack on the Shan vessel. Describe their passage through the dark woods, how they have to plunge through the trees, how the branches claw their faces. The eerie mist engulfs the Investigators, glowing brightly as if marking their position. It seeps into their lungs, and they taste something vile and chemical that burns their throats.

Finally, they come to the heart of the woods and see the pyramidal temple-ship as it folds space and time. Through the widening portal, they see the unimaginable gulfs between the stars, and the horrors that throng there. **Fleeing** is the only safe course of action; anything else means instant death for the Investigators (a generous Keeper, or one steeped in pulp action, might allow the Investigators to bring the ticking bomb to the pyramid just before it explodes, thus saving the world from being eaten by Azathoth. The temple-ship is unaffected by the atomic blast.)

(or devoured by Azathoth, which amounts to much the same thing) is removed, the Investigators may easily salvage what they need from Fort Halstead. With the protective aegis of the Shan gone, the Creatures will soon swarm the fort and destroy it.

- **Stealing the second bomb:** The second atomic weapon is unassembled, but can be salvaged if any of the characters have **Craft** or make a successful **Mechanical Repair** test against Difficulty 6. Assembling the bomb under pressure of time requires a 2-point **Craft** spend or a Difficulty 10 **Mechanical Repair** test. Spends of suitable investigative abilities like **Physics**, **Craft** or **Chemistry** can reduce the Difficulty. The results of failing in

an attempt to assemble an atomic bomb are left to the player as an exercise to discover.

THE NATION SET FREE

The last vestige of the British government — the Ministry of Supply and the TUBE ALLOYS project — is gone.

If the Investigators were able to salvage one of the bombs, then they have a potential weapon against the Creatures. If they go to Brichester, they could exact some measure of retribution on the Creatures.

Even if they failed to recover a bomb, they know that there is still a working aeroplane in England, and that it waits somewhere near Brichester.

And so does the ultimate horror behind the Creatures.

Beings from Xiclotl

Following the destruction of their homeworld, the Insects from Shaggai travelled to several other planets before arriving on Earth. On one of these worlds, they enslaved the native creatures and brought them to Earth. The Beings from Xiclotl resemble metallic trees from a distance — until their tentacles unfurl and the fang-lined maw opens.

The Beings are immensely strong and tough, but are simple-minded. Strange instincts drive them. They are always hungry for meat, and were compelled to sacrifice themselves to the plant-gods they worshipped back on Xiclotl. Now, they are controlled by the Shan, who use their nerve whips to keep the slaves in line.

Game Statistics

Abilities: Athletics 6, Health 40, Scuffling 20

Hit Threshold: 3 (sixteen-feet tall and slow-moving)

Stealth Modifier: -1 (when moving) or +4 (when pretending to be a tree)

Weapon: +3 Smash, +5 Bite. A Being may make up to three Smash attacks or one Bite attack in an round.

Armour: -5 vs any (hide)

Stability Loss: +0
Investigation

- **Agriculture (or Outdoorsman):** Those trees look a little like birches, but there isn't a birch-wood in these parts. Were they there last night? I don't remember driving past them...
- **Forensics:** He must have been caught in some sort of industrial accident, poor devil, and got pulped by the machinery. They pulled what was left out and dumped the body in these woods. Those tooth-marks? I'd guess a big dog got to the body before we found it. What else could it be?
- **Oral History:** The locals call it the Witch-Grove. They say the witches held their blasphemous Sabbats there, surrounded by swaying trees.



Slaves of the Mother

As the last vestiges of the world the Investigators once knew are washed away, the source of all these horrors, the primal, unbegotten Mother, rises to claim her new dominion. The Investigators are drawn back to Brichester, where they may grab one last chance to strike back, one last chance to escape — or where they finally succumb to defeat and despair.

THE HOOK

The Investigators know that the Creatures are gathering somewhere in the Severn Valley, and that there is a working aircraft there.

THE SPINE

The Investigators travel to Brichester in search of the Mother — or, perhaps, a way to escape this doomed land. On the way, they come across the trail of a mysterious gardener named Grundig, who they come to suspect is an agent of the Great Race of Yith.

They visit Brichester Library, where a few survivors try to preserve all human knowledge. Unfortunately, some books contain knowledge that predates humanity, and they have unleashed the horror of Y'gononac.

Clues in the library lead the Investigators to the Goatswood, where they learn that the Mother was worshipped in this place in ancient times — and that her worship has continued to this very day. Grundig reveals that the Great Race of Yith believes that the Apocalypse can be averted, but he requires their assistance. They may go with him to confront the Mother, or flee to the airfield.

THE HORRIBLE TRUTH

England is doomed. The Creatures are *reclaiming* what was always theirs. Humanity was the trespasser, the infestation, and now we are being washed away.

The climax of this adventure involves the Investigators struggling against despair. They literally have to find something to hang on to, or they will succumb to the Tugging and leap to their deaths. Ideally, not all the Investigators will pass this test. Try to hammer away at the Investigator's Pillars of Sanity throughout this adventure, so when the final horror comes, at least one of them chooses to die rather than keep fighting. One or two failures will make the heroism of the others stand out more.

THE BLOOMING LAND

The land is changing. Everywhere the Investigators look, they see signs of this change. The nature of the change depends on their previous actions.

The Blight - The Bomb Was Detonated

- The change begins in the region around the bomb (so, around Fort Halstead). As the continuous explosion continues to gnaw away at the planet's crust, the radiation destroys the signs of the Creatures. Flowers wither and die, or the murky flood waters recede and the land dries out.
- Familiar plants and animals return with startling speed. Once again, the countryside is covered in green grass and oak trees. Foxes and hares dart out of the undergrowth.
- All these returning plants and animals exhibit unnatural strength and vitality. The trees

grow so big that they topple under the weight of their own branches. Animals grow fat too quickly, and then fall apart. Their meat is flaky, grey-coloured, and inedible.

- These regions of unnatural growth radiate out from the detonation site like rays. Between the 'rays', the landscape is unchanged.
- The largest and most intense of these rays points towards the Severn Valley.

New Eden



The Flowers begin to bloom. Where once there were only white flowers, all identical like snowdrops, the alien plants suddenly diversify into a myriad new forms. Flowers grow in riotous colours the Investigators cannot name, and take on strange new shapes. Alien forests sprout, and these forests are strangely reminiscent of the previous landscapes. It is as though the Flowers are mimicking the plants they drove out.



In places, the Flowers seem to mimic their human victims. The Investigators spot what could be familiar faces made from leaves and branches, or see plants that look disturbingly like jumbled copies of human anatomy.



An Investigator might see what appears to be a deceased Source of Stability in a grove of Flowers, only to discover that it was an illusion — that particular configuration of many-coloured flowers happened to bear an uncanny resemblance to the dead friend.



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An Investigator dreams of his mother — and awakens to find himself outside, lying amid the Flowers. His mouth is wet, as though he drank from the Flower-tainted stream nearby in his sleep.



The heart of this new growth is in the Severn Valley.

A Sea-Change



The drowning of England continues. Most low-lying areas are now entirely flooded. Crossing England requires the use of boats or rafts, or else taking circuitous routes over hills and through marchlands.



The weather changes. Titanic storm-clouds gather over England, leading to biblical downpours that last for weeks. Conversations about the weather become strained and desperate in the face of these never-ending torrents.

The Investigators spot the outlines of huge creatures moving through the clouds, although they never see them clearly.



Strange coral structures grow around the centres of activity of the Deep Ones. These structures remind the Investigators of the architecture of the sunken city they glimpsed off Blackpool.

The Surge of Life

Even in places so far unaffected by the Creatures, there is a sudden surge of new life.

- Wounded Investigators recover Health abnormally quickly.
- When searching an abandoned house for supplies, the Investigators hear a familiar but unexpected sound — the ticking of a grandfather clock. Despite damage to the mechanism, this clock has come back to life.

- The Investigators find that their garden or farmland is suddenly overrun with fruiting vines and crops ready for the harvest.
- The Investigators see numerous wild animals, including species they have not seen in several years.
- Nature rapidly reclaims abandoned buildings and cities not overrun by the Creatures, packing the work of hundreds of years of erosion and growth into a few short weeks. England becomes a landscape of picturesque ruins, as though the world were trying to accomplish hundreds of years' worth of reclamation overnight.

The Aircraft

During the events of *The Nation Set Free*, the Investigators learned that the Ministry of Supply operated a working aircraft with reserve fuel tanks, and that this plane landed somewhere near Brichester. If they find this plane, they can escape England.





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It is possible that the Investigators failed to learn about the aeroplane. In that case, here are some other ways for them to learn about it.

- **Cryptography:** You intercept a radio transmission from a military aircraft. It was forced to land near Brichester.
- **Evidence Collection:** Documents salvaged from Fort Halstead include transcripts of radio transmissions from the aeroplane. In the last transmission, it landed near Brichester.
- **Interrogation:** You encounter a survivor from Fort Halstead. His experiences have driven him mad, but before he smashes his own skull open by running head-first into a brick wall, he tells you about a military aircraft that was last seen near Brichester.

The Bomb

If the Investigators salvaged the bomb from Fort Halstead, they may intend to deploy it as a weapon against the Creatures. Baron Rutherford's plan to use the bomb to kill the mysterious master of the Creatures may still work, if the Investigators can transport the bomb to Brichester.

With **Scavenging**, the Investigators find a way of moving the bomb, such as a working van or just a horse and cart.

The Tugging

The Investigators may not be immediately aware of it, but a force draws them to Brichester. Even if they discount the stories about Creature activity there, even if they do not try to use the bomb, even if they discount the possibility of escape on the airplane — they will still come to Brichester as the Mother calls them home. This psychic call is referred to as the Tugging.

More likely, though, the Investigators will follow their Drives or the various Clues that lead them to Brichester, and never experience the Tugging directly. Nonetheless, it calls them towards the dark place underground. Over the course of the adventure, they may come to realise that their reasons for going to Brichester are hollow and meaningless, and are really justifications for the underlying

Optional Scene: Contamination

If the bomb went off in Fort Halstead, but you still want to the Investigators to have the means to strike back at the Creatures, then you can run this scene. It works best if the Investigators did not sacrifice one of their number in the *Sandgrown* scenario in *The Dead WhiteWorld*.

One of the Investigators becomes contaminated by the weird radiation from the bomb. Anyone with **Biology**, **Medicine** or **Physics** (or **Cthulhu Mythos**) can guess that the Investigator's cells have been infected with the synthetic element carolinium. There is no cure.

Over the course of this scenario, the Investigator's unnatural vitality grows. He gains one point each in **Athletics** and **Health** per day; his body swells and his blood thickens until it is like reddish-grey syrup. He no longer sleeps. It is

clear that the Investigator is going to fall apart or even explode under the pressure of this alien life force.

The contaminated Investigator loses one point of **Sanity** per day. When reduced to 2 Sanity, he loses his original Drive and gains Self-Preservation instead (see *The Apocalypse Machine*). The Investigator believes that he is transforming into something glorious — a living god, perhaps, or a creature that can survive on this blighted world. He sees dreams and visions of the Court of Azathoth.

At the end of the adventure, the Investigator reaches a critical mass of carolinium and explodes. The other Investigators may be able to turn their former friend into a weapon against the Mother, but this will not be a heroic moment of self-sacrifice. They will have to kill him themselves to 'detonate' him at the right moment.

cause — they cannot help go where the Tugging brings them.

Various non-player characters may question the Investigators' reasons for going to Brichester. If doubt creeps into the Investigator's minds, they may be able to obtain the following clues with an appropriate spend.

- **1-point Cthulhu Mythos spend:** You can feel something tugging at your mind, reeling you in. There's no escape from it. The only way out is through.
- **1-point Intuition spend:** You have a moment of clarity — you are lying to yourself. You are not going to Brichester — you are being drawn there.
- **1-point Strategy spend:** You have deep misgivings about this course of action. All the survival instincts and caution you and your group learned over the last three years has been abandoned in this headlong rush towards Brichester.

The Green Man or The Lurker

The Investigators may also perceive the Tugging indirectly, in the form of the Green Man (if the Flowers are the Creatures) or the Lurker (in the case of the Deep Ones). At times, one of the Investigators should spot a strange entity watching them. This entity appears to only one Investigator at a time, and only when that Investigator is alone or the others are distracted.



The Green Man is a frightfully thin man with a leering face, who hides amid the branches of trees or in the shadows. The Investigator might also see him perched on the edge of a building like a gargoyle, or peering in through a window, or standing on a distant hilltop. He is absolutely filthy with the leaf-mould and debris of the forest floor; in certain lights, it almost looks like he is made of twigs and moss. He carries a small animal, perhaps a bird or a rat, in the hollow of his chest and whispers to it. He never interacts directly with the Investigators, but sometimes leaves signs that he was there, such as little arrangements of twigs and twine or dead



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vermin. (Of course, since the Green Man is the manifestation of the Tugging, it may be that the Investigators are unconsciously arranging twigs and murdering small animals, then finding their own creations.)



His counterpart is the Lurker. Unlike the Green Man, the Lurker is never seen directly. It is a *presence* in certain bodies of water. The Investigator who sees the Lurker sees only a dark shape moving under the surface, roughly ovoid with trailing tentacles. The Lurker is able to change its size — sometimes, it might be human-sized, and sometimes it might slither into a small puddle, or grow to fill a wide lake. The stench of rotting seaweed heralds the approach of the Lurker.

THE CHANGED WORLD

As the Investigators travel across England to Brichester, they explore the changing world. Several potential encounters for the Investigators are described below. The Keeper is encouraged to tailor these encounters to the Investigator's Drives and Investigative Abilities. For example, give an Investigator with the Drive of Duty a chance to choose between their Duty and safety — perhaps the Abandoned House becomes an Abandoned Hospital for a nurse. Give an Investigator with lots of points in Architecture a chance to navigate a maze of ruined buildings, or one with Seduction a chance to mingle at the festival.

The Graveyard

The Investigators pass a small country graveyard. The adjoining church collapsed under the weight of ivy and moss growing on its green roof, leaving only a tilted spire and a pile of debris. The graveyard, though, is still in use. The old gravedigger emerges from his little hut and greets the Investigators. He inquires if they would like to be buried 'to avoid the rush'. He appears quite convinced that the end is close at hand, and the final extinction of humanity is only days away.

- **Anthropology:** My word, what an ugly chap this gravedigger is. His features are unlike any you've seen before; animalistic, almost wolfish. Some congenital deformation, perhaps. Unsettling. And as for the smell!

- **Bargain:** You politely decline the gravedigger's offer to bury you, and instead trade some excess supplies for a hot meal. He cooks a tasty haunch of fresh pork for you, and offers you beer to wash it down. Afterwards, you feel refreshed and invigorated. He even gives you direction to Brichester that are worth a 3-point pool for any spends or tests made while travelling.
- **History:** The old gravedigger is surprisingly well informed about local history, and speaks as though he had personal experience of events in Brichester's history. He talks about the witch cults who worshipped strange gods in the caves under the forest, but cannot recall exactly where. *"Those who were called to 'em could find 'em, and the king's men never could."*
- **Intimidation:** This villain has obviously murdered and buried other passers-by. You threaten him and demand that he show you the recent burials. He brings you over to a trio of recently dug graves, and you can indeed hear muffled knocking from below! You hastily open these graves, and successfully rescue one of the three men who are buried alive here. The fellow introduces himself as **Ivan Brackenbury**. Before the Apocalypse, he was a stage performer and occultist. He survived for several years, but has become convinced that further struggle is futile. He claims that his interment will allow him to enter into psychic communion with the vegetable essences of the world.
 - **Psychoanalysis:** He seems quite stable for a man who wishes to be buried alive. Obviously, his delusions are deep-seated.
 - **Intuition:** Something in Brackenbury *wants* to be buried alive. His nonsense about vegetable essences and

psychic powers are just his way of justifying his actions to himself.

The Abandoned House

The Investigators see lights burning in the distance. As they draw closer, they see these lights are candles, burning in the windows of a well-appointed country house that stands alone on a small rise. The farmhouse and the land surrounding it are oddly unaffected by the Creatures, in a manner reminiscent of the area around Holsten's cottage (in *The Nation Set Free*).

The front door of the house is ajar. Inside, the Investigators find themselves in a well-equipped refuge. Heavy cabinets contain stacks of canned food and preserves, as well as other useful supplies. Cords of firewood near the hearth suggest preparations for the winter. Upstairs, there are four bedrooms, one of which shows clear signs of recent occupation.

- **Agriculture:** The garden outside is exceptionally well cared-for — apart from the boot-prints that stomp across it, heedlessly trampling the fragile plants. The boot-prints go in a straight line. Oddly, you spot the same boot-prints around the edges of the garden, suggesting the booted man was the careful gardener.
 - 1-point **Navigation** spend: Those footprints head towards Brichester.
 - 1-point **Evidence Collection** spend: You find a recently dug hole in one corner of the garden. It's quite deep. At the bottom, you find a square-shaped depression, suggesting something was removed.
- **Archaeology:** There are relatively few books in the house, but one catches your eye and you pick it up. It is a slim monograph entitled *Bones of Granite* on the archaeology of Brichester by Chester Crispin — the fellow who discovered the Yithian letters in *Letters from Ghosts*. The book itself is of little interest, although Crispin does mention work done



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by other writers, notably an obscure Supremus Press book entitled *Prehistoric Habitation and Ritual Sites of the Severn Region* that may be more useful.

- **Library Use:** There's a bookplate in the monograph — it came from Brichester Library.
- **Chemistry:** In the kitchen, you find a strange collection of chemicals, probably looted from some school laboratory or university. You can't make head or tail of what was wanted from them, but there are very obscure and dangerous chemicals here.
- **Evidence Collection:** The house was abandoned recently — there are still candles burning in the windows, but they're nearly drowned in puddles of wax. The apples in the bowl are still fresh, but the stew in the pot is cold and congealed. You'd guess the owner left a few hours ago in haste.
- **Languages:** You find a diary. From it, you discover that you are in the home of Edward Grundig. He was the gardener for this house, and moved in when the family who lived here died in the Apocalypse. The first part of the diary was clearly an attempt to stay sane when everyone around him died. The middle part is mostly observations on the weather and the harvests, and is rather dull. In the third section, he complains of 'being watched' and strange dreams about caves, interspersed with nightmares about being back at school. Towards the end, he complains about blackouts and missing time.
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** Yithian possession? Shan infestation? Or simple madness?
- **Occult:** You find a curious book, wrapped for some reason in grease-proof paper. It's entitled *Les Clavicules des côtes de glace* by Dave Desgagnes,

and is about the Piri Reis map that purported to depict the coastline of Antarctica under the ice. Curiously, there are hand-written annotations in a language you don't recognize, as if whoever owned the book knows what the continent should look like without its coat of ice.

The Gibbering Ravine

Some tremendous force ripped up the land south of Brichester, tearing through the countryside outside Gloucester like a wrathful titan and hacking out gaping ravines. These steep-sided ravines make travel difficult, as the Investigators must either sidetrack around them or climb down into each ravine and up the other side.

- **Biology:** Some of the markings on the rocks remind you of striations left by burrowing worms or fossil trilobites.
- **Geology:** These 'ravines' are actually collapsed tunnels. In some places, the tunnel came close enough to the surface to become exposed to the open air when the roof collapsed, but elsewhere, the tunnel dove underground and is now choked with fallen stones. Some of the rocks are partially melted, as though exposed to great heat.

Crossing the ravine-torn region takes several hours. Towards the end of this journey, the Investigators hear grunts, running footsteps, the clamour of a crowd. They come to the lip of one ravine, and look down to see a huge group of people running through the ravine. There must be at least two hundred people down there, closely packed together, all dressed in rags, all thin and pasty-pale. They howl and gibber, chanting in no known human tongue. In an eye blink, they are gone — the bizarre crowd vanishes into a tunnel entrance at the end of the ravine.

Should the Investigators pursue, their path is blocked when the tunnel entrance collapses. Hundreds of tons of rock fall at the north-east end of the ravine, completely engulfing the tunnel mouth. Pressing their

ears to the ground, the Investigators can still hear the mad whooping and chanting of the crowd as they run blindly into the depths of the earth.

The Houseboat

The Investigators' path runs alongside a canal for some time. Ahead, through the dank mists, they see a lantern-light approaching, and soon a curious grey canal-boat comes into view. The captain of this boat greets the Investigators. He claims that he retired to this house-boat just before the Apocalypse, and that he quite enjoys the quiet and the solitude that comes with the end of the world. In the last three years, he traded supplies between several communities of survivors, but they are all gone now. The Investigators are the first people he has seen in months.

The barge looks safe and secure, and could be a good way to travel. Inside the cabin, the Investigators see the Captain's collection of glass bottles. Inside in each bottle is a lead pendulum that raps, seemingly at random, against the glass.

- **Bargain:** You offer some supplies you can spare in exchange for passage, and the captain welcomes you on board.
- **Occult:** Something about those lead bottles reminds you of stories about trapped ghosts and necromancers.
- **Streetwise:** You heard rumours about a captain on a barge. He had a dangerous reputation, and you remember something about ghosts in bottles and strange powers.



One night, the Captain gets drunk and takes out one of his glass bottles. He shakes the bottle, listens to the rattle, then laughs and points at one of the Investigators. "That one? Really?" The Captain believes that the ghost trapped in the bottle is a person known to the Investigator — perhaps a loved one, or a Source of Stability, or a deceased Player Character. Should the Investigators convince the Captain to show them how to communicate with the dead (with a **Bargain**, **Flattery**, **Occult** or **Seduction** spend), then they may 'speak' with the ghost in the bottle. This is a chance



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for the Investigators to ask any unresolved questions, to recover Stability, or to reminisce about their previous adventures before the end.



The Investigators are in danger. Like Pinkie in Brighton, the Captain made a dread bargain with the Deep Ones to ensure his own safety. He takes passengers on his barge, and then sacrifices them to the Deep Ones. Some of the beds in the barge are located above concealed trapdoors. In the dead of night, the Captain creeps up with a billhook on a rope. He hooks the sleeping victim, and then opens the trapdoor. The victim ends up trailing underneath the barge, bleeding like a stuck pig, and drowning. Soon, once the thrashing stops, the Deep Ones come. A dozen partial skeletons dangle from rusting hooks beneath the keel of the barge, all tooth-marked and torn.

- **Assess Honesty:** The Captain's demeanour worries you. He's hiding something.
- **Bargain:** Looking through the Captain's trade goods, you find a bag containing women's clothing, ammunition, medical supplies and other personal items. He's clearly looted these from some dead traveller.
- **Forensics:** You find a rusty, blood-stained hook on the deck. There's a lot of blood on it — this is a murder weapon. And why are there so many small fish following the boat?
- **Mechanical Repair:** The design of the barge's hull is odd. You wonder if it has a hidden compartment underneath or something similar.
- **Outdoorsman:** You are impressed that that the Captain was able to keep his boat intact despite the rise of the Deep Ones. When you ask him how he managed it, he mutters something about hard work, and then changes the subject.

The Festival

Near the outskirts of Brichester, the Investigators encounter a small village. There were clearly people living here until recently — the village is surrounded by bountiful farmland, and the houses are in good repair and show signs of habitation, but there is no sign of anyone here now. In the middle of the village is a bizarre structure — either a sort of altar with a maypole rising from it (for the Flowers as Creatures), or a huge brass cauldron filled with salt water (for the Deep Ones).

- **Agriculture:** They clearly just brought the harvest in. This must be some sort of harvest celebration.
- **Forensics:** Examining the altar, you find scraps of flesh in the grass nearby, as if some sacrificial animal was torn to shreds.
- **Occult:** This looks like a harvest festival. What powers do they venerate?
- **Outdoorsman:** Looking at the muddy tracks around the village green, it looks like everyone left together. The trail of footprints leads into Goatswood. You try to follow it, but some huge animal has torn up the earth and dragged itself across the trail, obscuring it completely.

Searching the village, the Investigators find a small Catholic church. The doors are barred from the inside. The church is home to **Father Thomas Shea**, the parish priest. He watched his congregation turn from Christianity to an older, darker faith. He remonstrated with them, and they turned on him. Fr. Shea is dying, even if it is not immediately obvious.



They forced him to eat communion wafers impregnated with the Seeds. Even now, the Flowers germinate within the priest's vital organs. Soon, the alien plants will force their way up his windpipe, suffocating him so they can feed on his tissue.



The Mother visited the ritual site, and Fr. Shea glimpsed Her in her terrible glory. When the Investigators arrive, he's sipping cyanide-laced wine from the holy cup.

The Investigators may force the door with **Locksmith** or brute force, or persuade the priest to open the door with **Reassurance**. Inside, they find the priest sitting on the foremost pew. An Investigator with **Medicine** can immediately tell that he is terribly sick. Fr. Shea rambles in a melancholy way, describing the events of the past few years.

- The initial disaster mostly spared this little village of Camside — their water supply comes from a mountain spring that rises from a dark cleft, and avoided contamination by the Flowers. Nearly two dozen people survived, and more survivors joined them over the years.
- The Creatures rarely troubled them.
- They traded food and supplies with another community of survivors at Brichester Library.
- The winter of two years ago was terribly hard. Some of the villagers took refuge in Goatswood, and returned strangely changed. They spread the veneration of the Mother among the other villagers.
- The next harvest was astoundingly plentiful, and more of the other villagers joined in worship of the Mother.
- In the end, they committed 'abominable acts'. Fr. Shea refuses to describe what happened, muttering to himself about such things as 'the limp, crawling light', 'the call of the mother', 'the carven stones', and 'the black pit'.
- He doesn't know where the villagers went. He intends to go to Brichester Library, and help Dr. Cotter there.



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- At this point, he struggles to his feet, but his strength fails and he falls back down, convulsing and dying.

BRICHESTER LIBRARY

A cataclysmic storm breaks over Brichester as the Investigators arrive. Fat droplets of caustic rain batter the crumbling, weed-wrapped town. The Investigators have to wade through partially flooded streets in search of shelter.

Brichester Library is a large three-storey granite building in the middle of the town, looming like a grey monolith over the high street. The Investigators hear the distinctive staccato of a diesel generator at the back of the building, and see the glimmer of electric lights by night. This place is still inhabited.

Drawing closer, they see the lobby of the building is crammed with boxes and piles of books. A narrow path winds through the tottering towers of paper, like a trail gnawed by a mouse. Following this path, the Investigators find themselves in the main library, where owlsh librarians scuttle back and forth between the stacks.

The Librarian

Head Librarian **Dr. Lewis Cotter** challenges the Investigators when they arrive. He peers at them through cracked half-moon glasses. He survived the Apocalypse by mischance — he accidentally locked himself in the library cellar for several hours, and emerged into a changed dead world. He felt that there was no hope of humanity surviving in these new conditions, so he dedicated himself to the quixotic goal of preserving human knowledge. Over the last three years, he has

gathered a small band of fellow librarians to aid him in salvaging books from shops and other libraries.

The Investigators need to show they are trustworthy.

- **Bargain (or Scavenging):** Look, we've got these rare books for you, you say, pressing some salvaged books into his hands. He lays them reverently on a teetering pile.
- **Library Use:** Cotter's eyes light up behind his glasses. *Ah! A fellow adept. If you could lend a hand, then that would be most welcome.*
- **Reassurance:** You assure the librarian that you are no danger to him, his followers, or to his work.





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Playing Cotter

- Keep your voice quiet and even. Don't get excited.
- Have a book or a pair of glasses to hand.
- Concern yourself with niggling details and small matters. Avoid acknowledging the outside world.

In the Library

Several important clues are available in the stacks of books.

1. The researchers have salvaged books and documents from across the country. You could find almost anything here.

- **Bargain:** You offer the librarians some books you picked up along the way, and they are almost pathetically grateful. They cradle the books like children.
- **Library Use:** Looking through the pile, you find books from libraries, from universities and from private collections. There hasn't been time to organise them properly, and you help out for a few hours, winning the gratitude of the Brichester librarians.
- **Reassurance:** Once you show them that you are not going to murder them — and, more importantly, that you can keep quiet — the librarians welcome you. They scurry around you, carrying bundles of documents and books.
- **Scavenging:** You overhear two of the librarians talking about mounting an expedition to Oxford to raid the collections there. You discuss the prospects for salvaging that material, and convince them that Oxford is too dangerous to be of use. They thank you for your insight.

2. They intend to preserve knowledge for the future. Humanity may go extinct, but our knowledge will live on to be inherited by some future race.

- **Biology:** You pass a librarian painting a copy of *On The Origin*

Of Species with some resinous goop. He explains that the chemical will preserve the paper indefinitely. You discuss evolution, and wonder if some other intelligent race will arise in millennia to come. The librarian expresses the hope that these inheritors will find the library and translate the collected knowledge of humanity. In these books, humanity will live on.

- **Chemistry:** There's a strong chemical smell at the back of the library. Exploring, you find a curious laboratory full of vats of bubbling chemicals. Two librarians methodically process a stack of books — each page is 'painted' with a chemical preservative. The fumes make your head spin. You question the librarians, and they explain that they are preserving the books forever

- **Evidence Collection:** Some of the books feel strange to the touch. Experimenting, you discover that you are unable to tear or mark the paper, no matter how hard you try. These books will last forever.

- 1-point **Evidence Collection** spend: You have seen this before! The letters that Bill Shakespeare brought had a similar texture!

- **Oral History:** You idly chat with two librarians on a tea break, and they explain the purpose of the library. They believe that it is their final duty to preserve all human knowledge. They have a liquid that makes paper indestructible, and intend to preserve key books for future generations. Generations of what, they cannot guess.

3. They obtained the preservative from Edward Grundig.

- **Agriculture:** You find a bag of apples of the same sort that you saw in the abandoned house — and nearby, a walking stick.

Edward Grundig came here. You ask one of the librarians, and he confirms that Grundig was a regular visitor to the library.

- **Bureaucracy:** Consulting a list of borrowers, you spot Grundig's name. He recently consulted some books found in the basement of the library.

- **Chemistry:** You recognise the chemicals they use. This is the same experiment that Grundig carried out in the abandoned house. You confirm your suspicions — Grundig was here. Apparently, he had an interest in certain occult books in the basement.

- **Interrogation:** You subject one of the librarians to a barrage of quick-fire questions. How did they discover this formula? Who gave them the idea to preserve all human knowledge? What contact do they have with the outside world? He stammers out an answer — a stranger called Edward Grundig visited them several times in the last few months, and he showed them how to make the preservative. On his last visit, Grundig then consulted some occult books, and then went into Goatswood.

4. One of the researchers is acting strangely.

- **Anthropology:** You can read a situation and spot trouble, and these librarians are worried about something underground. There's a stairs down to the basement over there — maybe you should check it out.

- **Forensics:** You idly pick up one book, and discover that the pages have been chewed — and those are human tooth-marks! You ask a librarian, and he snatches the book from you and insists that it is none of your business. He shoots a worried glance towards the stairs leading down to the basement.



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- **Intuition:** Dr. Cotter seems worried. You ask him what concerns him, and he admits that one of his staff, Ms. Moore, is acting strangely and refuses to come out of the basement.
 - **Streetwise:** You eavesdrop on two librarians. They're talking about one of their colleagues, Ms. Moore. Apparently, she's become eccentric and won't leave the basement.
5. **Core Clue.** The occult books are kept in the basement of the library.

- **Archaeology:** You look around for more of Chester Crispin's books, but can't find any. They must have been moved to the basement.
- **Intuition:** You have a gnawing feeling that you're missing something vital. It must be here somewhere — perhaps in the basement.
- **Library Use:** Wandering through the stacks, you notice a distinct lack of books on certain topics — nothing on the occult, nothing on military science, nothing on local history. Maybe they've been moved. The basement is the obvious place to check — there are more stacks down there.
- **Navigation or Strategy:** You find a cache of military documents and papers, and look for a map that might show the location of an airfield where that scout aircraft might have landed. Some of the documents are missing — maybe they've been filed elsewhere? You resolve to check the basement.
- **Occult:** There are no books on the occult. You ask a librarian for a copy of *Cutting the Puppeteer's Strings*, an infamous book that links bomb-throwing anarchists to supernatural forces, and he refers you to the basement.

THE PAPER LABYRINTH

The basement of Brichester Library makes the upper levels look like models of cleanliness and order. The cramped stone cellars are packed floor-to-ceiling with books. In years past, the library kept damaged or obscure books down here, and in the last three years, they used the basement to store extra copies of books they had already preserved, as well as books deemed too poor or erroneous to be added to the preserved corpus of human knowledge. Now it is a maze of overflowing shelves, lit by a handful of flickering electric lights.

The custodian of this mess is — or was — Lillian Moore, a poetry student from America who was stranded in England when the world fell apart. She volunteered to go through these books in case the other librarians accidentally misfiled something of importance. In the course of her work, she came across a sinister book entitled *The Revelations of Glaaki*, and became possessed by Y'gononac. The other librarians — pallid, bloodless gnomes — are of no interest to Y'gononac. The Investigators, on the other hand...

When the Investigators come down to the basement, there is no immediate sign of Ms. Moore. They are confronted by a maze of bookshelves, and she is somewhere in the maze. She hears them coming down the stairs, though, and calls out to them: "*Hello, who's there?*"

She then guides the Investigators into the maze of books ("*oh, you're looking for Crispin's works. Yes, they're here near me. Just turn left and keep going — I'll show you where to go*"). As the Investigators wander through the maze, they realise that something terrible surrounds them.

- **Architecture:** This is impossible — the library basement cannot be this big. Either they broke into some other underground complex, or some force is warping the very space around you.
- **Assess Honesty:** "Left... now straight on...you're almost there." Ms. Moore is your Ariadne, guiding you through the labyrinth

of books — but you cannot trust her. There's a hunger in her voice that disturbs you.

- **Biology:** You step into one corridor of books that resembles the inside of a wasp's nest. Someone has chewed the pages and regurgitated the papery mulch along the walls. You spot books and maps embedded in the mess.
- **Chemistry:** The smell of chemicals is strong down here. Many of these books were treated with the same preservative resin. Examining the stacks of books, you discover that whole sections of books have been glued together with the indestructible compound. This isn't a library, it's a prison.
- **Library Use:** These books are not arranged according to any sane system, but they are not stacked randomly. You feel that if you press on, you might be able to understand the purpose behind them.
- **Navigation:** You try to keep track of the twists and turns, and quickly realise that this maze is spatially impossible. Along one corridor, for example, taking the entrance on the left or the entrance on the right leads to the same book-lined vault.
- **Outdoorsman:** The hairs rise on the back of your neck. Something big is in this maze, and it's hunting you.

At a suitable juncture, the lights go out. If the Investigators have no light sources, they must blunder in the dark. If they do (perhaps with **Preparedness**), then when they fumble for their torches and get them lit, they discover that the walls of the maze have moved and they are separated.

All the Investigators are struck by a sudden feeling of terror (a 3-point Stability test). They hear something huge and monstrous, like a bull, thundering through the maze in pursuit. They may now engage in a contest of **Fleeing**. The *losing* Investigator gets to meet with Y'gononac in *The Hands of Y'gononac*. One of the Investigators must also pick up a clue pointing them *To Goatswood*.



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To Goatswood

This **Core Clue** can be dropped in at any point during the exploration of the maze. It can be found by the Investigator who runs into Y'gonolac, or by another, luckier character. You may use all the different versions of this clue if you wish — there are multiple reasons for the Investigators to travel to Goatswood. The Tugging takes many forms.

- **Agriculture:** You find a book describing the trees of Goatswood. Flipping through it, you find a letter that someone used as a bookmark. It's written on headed notepaper from the Ministry of Supply, and discusses possible sites for a secret airfield. You know where the plane must have landed.
- **Archaeology or Library Use:** You find the remains of a book entitled *Prehistoric Habitation & Ritual Sites in the Severn Region*. Some vandal unpicked the binding and trampled the book's yellowed pages and printed plates into the ground. Still, you recover a handful of pages describing archaeological evidence of a ritual site in the wood. With a thrill, you realise that this site is close to the caves where you found the Yithian relics.
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** You don't know what you saw in that maze of paper, but you stumbled out with fragmentary memories of looming trees and a cyclopean shape gnawing and slithering towards the surface. It's in Goatswood. You have to go there.
- **Evidence Collection:** You rifle through a collection of ordnance survey maps, and find one showing Goatswood. Someone has made notes in pencil, and you recognize the handwriting — Edward Grundig.
- **Strategy:** You find a military document half-stuck to one stack of files. It notes the location of a secret airfield in the forests near Brichester. That must be where the Ministry of Supply airplane landed.

The Hands of Y'gonolac

The unlucky Investigator blunders into the heart of the maze. Suddenly, there is no sound of pursuit, no hellish breath on his neck from the rampaging monster.

They find themselves in a small room. The brick walls are lined with bookshelves. There's a camp-bed and a lantern. Sitting on the bed is Lillian Moore, an attractive young woman. She holds a heavy leather-bound book in her lap. Smiling brightly, she wonders why the Investigator had such trouble following her directions, and then offers the book to the Investigator to read.

The book is *The Revelations of Glaaki* — reading it will open the Investigator to Y'gonolac.

- **Assess Honesty:** “Read this”, she whispers, “it can save us all!” She sounds excited, but her eyes are cold and watchful. There's no emotion in them at all.
- **Forensics:** In the flickering light of the lantern, you see scar tissue at the base of her neck and on her hands. She must have nearly been decapitated at some point, judging by those old wounds.
- **Occult:** You recognize the book — it is the dread *Revelations of Glaaki*. Legend holds that those who read this book are cursed.
- **Seduction:** Lillian leans forward invitingly as she offers you the book. She's trying to seduce you, but there's something very wrong here. It's too polished, too cynical for what you know of her.

Alternatively, Lillian may try to seduce a receptive Investigator. Technically, this is exactly the same as reading the book — Lillian, the book and Y'gonolac are all aspects of the same entity.

I Read The Book!

Should an Investigator read the book in the presence of an avatar of Y'gonolac, he must make a Stability test against Difficulty 5 immediately. If the test fails, the Investigator becomes attuned to the influence of Y'gonolac. At the next opportunity, he commits some ghastly act

of lechery or decadence, at which point he must make another Stability test, again at Difficulty 5. If this test also fails, then the Investigator may become possessed by Y'gonolac just like Moore.

The one benefit of this is that the Investigator is now immune to the Tugging, which may be of use in the final scene (see page 173).

After reading the book, the Investigator faints. When he recovers, Lillian and the book are gone.

I Don't Read the Book!

Lillian undergoes a bizarre transformation. She stands, and her head *melts* like wax, flesh and bone running in rivulets down her torso. Her body swells obscenely, forcing the Investigator back against the wall. Her hands reach for the Investigator, and ruby-red lips part in the palms as the mouths open. **READ** she says, and the voice comes from her hands and from deep underground. That's a 7-point **Stability** test right there.

The Investigator now has several options:

- Fainting and submitting to Y'gonolac's perverse whims
- Grabbing and throwing the oil lamp to set the paper maze on fire. This destroys the *Revelations of Glaaki* and banishes Y'gonolac, but also traps the Investigator in a blazing inferno (+1 damage every few rounds until the Investigator escapes). The fire will spread to the rest of the maze, possibly endangering the other Investigators and definitely endangering the library upstairs (although the preserved books are fireproof).
- Reading the book.
- Running away — this requires a **Fleeing** test at Difficulty 6.

INTO GOATSWOOD

The Investigators visited this region once before, in search of Crispin's letters. This time, they enter the woods further to the north. The unnatural fecundity is especially strong here — the woods are



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positively Jurassic. Trees have swollen to ten times their normal size, the underbrush is so thick that machetes are needed to cut through it, and huge swarms of insects buzz amid the clammy mists. It is hard to shake the conviction that the Investigators have entered some prehistoric realm — they feel like tiny animals slipping through the undergrowth in a land of dinosaurs.

As they push through the forest, the Investigators come upon carved stones and the remains of structures poking out of the black, life-rich loam. They also find decayed bones and other grave goods spilling out of the soil, in concentrations that suggest that thousands of people were buried here over the centuries.

- **Archaeology:** These are the remains of some ancient settlement — or perhaps a temple. Picking through the artefacts, you realise there are whole strata of archaeology here. That stonework over there, for example, is clearly Roman, but that squat fertility figurine resembles those Venus figures found in prehistoric caves in France, and those clay pots you'd guess as Bronze age. There's continuity right through to the present day — Victorian coins and discarded tin cans suggest there were people here recently.
- **Forensics:** Examining the bones, you find tell-tale scrapes and breakages suggesting violent deaths. Decay suggests that the bones range in age from only a few weeks to... well, this boggy forest floor could preserve human remains for centuries. The sheer quantity means some subterranean mass grave has vomited up its contents.
- **Geology:** It's uncanny, but you think that this whole region is undergoing a massive shift. The ground beneath you is rising up incredibly quickly, geologically speaking. These ruins and bones were somehow pushed up by something coming up from below. It doesn't seem to be volcanic in

origin — there's no shaking of the earth, no steam, or anything like that. It is as though something was burrowing up from below.

- **Outdoorsman:** Tracks — recent tracks — go through this area. A single, heavy-set man moving at a steady pace. They're fresh.

THE YITHIAN

Sitting in a clearing strewn with ancient bones and gap-toothed ruins, the Investigators come upon Edward Grundig. The gardener sits on the trunk of a fallen tree, and is clearly waiting for them to arrive. He has a rope and other climbing gear slung over his shoulder. His eyes glimmer with an alien intelligence, which the Investigators recognise as a sign of possession by the Great Race of Yith.

Grundig knows who the player characters are. If any of the Investigators are especially suspicious of him, then he produces a letter from a Yithian-abducted **Source of Stability** as a means of introduction. The letter asks the Investigator to trust Grundig — in his own way, he too is a brave Investigator, and needs the player characters' help.

- **Cryptography:** This letter was written before the final letters discovered earlier in the Yithian vaults.

In millennia to come, the best minds of the Yithians will leap from the bodies they inhabit in the distant past to other forms — to the coleopteran species destined to conquer Earth long after the extinction of humanity. The fate of humanity is of little interest to the Great Race, except as a scientific curiosity. Their own security, though, is a matter of paramount concern. They must ensure that the destiny of the insect race remains intact.

- **Assess Honesty:** It's hard to read Grundig — the alien mind inhabiting his body does not act as like a human — but you think he's broadly telling the truth.

The granite city visited by the Investigators was — among other things — a monitoring station, established to keep watch on a slumbering entity

that dwelt deep within the Earth. The Creatures serve or worship this entity. Now, that entity is rising, which concerns the Yithians. Grundig's task is to retrieve the records from the Yithian monitoring devices located nearby.

What About Our Bomb?

If the Investigators have the atomic bomb with them, then Grundig expresses misgivings about using it. The bomb's detonation may be responsible for the discrepancy between the Yithians' calculations and what is actually going on. However, the decision is ultimately up to the Investigators — the Yithians' chief concern now is ensuring that their own future remains intact.

(If one of the Investigators is contaminated, then Grundig can explain the changes, and recommends to the other Investigators that they kill their friend "from a safe distance" before the transformation is complete.)

The Airfield

Grundig leads the Investigators through the forest to the top of a hill. From here, through a gap in the trees, the Investigators can see a gash in the forest, a cleared area containing a strip of concrete and a few weathered prefabricated buildings. Parked on the runway is a de Havilland Dragon aircraft. From this distance, the Investigators cannot tell if it is intact and functional. Grundig says that there is an entrance to the underworld close to the airfield.

Exploring the airfield, the Investigators discover the following clues.

1. The airfield is intact, but abandoned.

- **Architecture:** Prefabricated buildings, tin huts — this is a military base. There's no sign of anyone alive here.
- **Bureaucracy:** In a drawer upstairs you find a sheaf of papers. This airbase was established by the Ministry of Supply as part of a network of refuelling stations for cargo planes. You even find a docket mentioning the *Lysenko*, the cargo ship that landed at Dover. Apparently, the Ministry intended to transport those seeds via the air at some point.



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- **Evidence Collection:** You quickly search the barracks and tower, and find no-one alive here. This place is undamaged but abandoned.
 - **Forensics:** You find some decayed remains. It appears that the staff of this airbase were all killed by the Flowers years ago. The base seems to have gone undisturbed ever since.
2. **(Core Clue)** The airplane from Fort Halstead landed here. The airplane is still working, and can easily be made ready to fly. With luck and a good tailwind, it has the range to reach the United States.
- **Botany:** You minutely examine the machinery of the airplane's engine. Most complex machines were clogged and destroyed by the seeds, but this plane is free of such problems. It's ready to fly.
 - **Mechanical Repair or Piloting:** The airplane is nearly ready to fly, and there are drums of fuel nearby to fill its external fuel tanks. Everything seems to be in order.
 - **Navigation:** On the plane, you find maps and charts, including a course plotted across the Atlantic to the United States. Apparently, the pilot planned to travel to the United States.
3. The pilot went underground.

- **Evidence Collection:** You find a few scribbled notes stashed inside the airplane. A storm forced the pilot to land for several days to repair his airplane. He reports seeing 'strange, mad people' and 'walking trees' at night. It is clear that he loses his grip on sanity over time. He describes how he kept dreaming of a cave. The last entry notes that he is 'going for a walk in the woods.'
- **Intuition:** In the back of the plane, you find the pilot's bed. There's a rope tied around it, suggesting that he was tying himself down at night, like a madman who suffers

from night terrors. Scratched into the paint near the bed are crude drawing of trees and what appears to be a cave.

- **Photography:** The airplane is equipped with a powerful aerial camera. Developing the last photos, you see that there are many caves beneath the forest. There is an entrance nearby, and the aircraft circled it several times as if the pilot was unwilling to fly away from it. You suddenly wonder if the pilot went to that cave.

INTO THE PIT

The Investigators plunge deeper into the forest. The trees here are black, leafless and thickly intertwined. Their rubbery branches form an almost impenetrable canopy overhead, so the Investigators must use torches to light their way through the shadowed region. They pass more chunks of carved stone and cryptic ruined structures. Bones crunch underfoot.

They come to a cave entrance. The cave slopes steeply downwards, and the cave floor is slick with greenish slime. A short distance in, they come to a dizzyingly deep shaft, a cyclopean well that plunges straight down for miles. The beams from their torches can only barely reach the far side of the well, and come nowhere near reaching the bottom. They make out more tunnels entering the well from other directions, suggesting that all the tunnels under Goatswood meet here.



The 'lid' of the well is a silvery glass-like object, hundreds of feet across and shaped like a huge lens or eye. Strange beams of light like moonlight shine from this lens, plunging into the depths as if signalling or calling to something far below.



The walls of the well are covered in a furze of white Flowers. Their clacking echoes around the well.



The Investigators can hear huge things moving through the other

tunnels parallel to the one they are in. They sometimes glimpse black tentacles writhing in the tunnel mouths.



The well is mostly flooded with foul-smelling dark water.



Water cascades down the walls of the well, pouring out of some of the other tunnels.



The Investigators can see humanoid shapes moving in and out of the water far below. It is impossible to tell at this distance if they are human or something else.

Should the Investigators choose to flee any point, run *The Mother of All Horrors*.

Grundig's Mission

Grundig attaches his rope to a convenient rock and tells the Investigators to wait while he retrieves the Yithian records. He rappels down the rock face, heading for another tunnel entrance about fifty feet further down the well, then vanishes into the darkness, leaving the Investigators alone. (If an Investigator is foolhardy enough to accompany Grundig, then have the Mother rise before they get to the Yithian 'monitoring machines'.)

From far below, the Investigators sense something rising up the well, faster and faster, like an onrushing freight train. The Mother is rising, and She calls her slaves to attend her. The Investigators spot movement in other tunnels.

- A crowd of people arrive at the mouth of one tunnel. They pause for a moment, and then start jumping down the well, plummeting into the depths. The fall is undoubtedly lethal, but they keep jumping.
- Something slimy and many-eyed slithers out of a nearby tunnel and crawls along the wall of the well. It's approaching the Investigator's tunnel. It looks like a ghastly iridescent slug, but those eyes are eerily human — and must be the size of footballs to be visible at this distance.



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- The Investigators hear movement in their own tunnel, from behind them. It could be someone on the surface, or it could be some horrible monster that is now between them and their only route of escape.

All this is worth a 5-point **Stability** test.

After an agonizingly long wait, Grundig emerges from the lower tunnel carrying a notebook. He starts to climb back up, but is interrupted by the rising of the Mother. He throws the notebook to the Investigators before one of the Mother's outstretched limbs snatches him and dashes him against the rock wall, killing him instantly.

THE MOTHER OF ALL HORRORS

The Mother is the source and the wellspring of the Creatures. They are born from her, and worship her. Depending on the Creatures, she may take one of two equally ghastly forms.



She is Shub-Niggurath, the Black Goat of the Woods. The Flowers are her adopted Young — they were created by humans, but as their vegetable consciousness grew, they came to worship the primordial source of growth and reproduction, and called the Mother out of the Depths.

Shub-Niggurath does not rise — she *manifests*. The Moon-Lens in the roof of the well flares into life, flooding the chamber with an alien light, and that light precipitates Her out of the ether. Suddenly, She is there, Her numinous tentacles and hooves congealing into being. Her hide reflects the moonlight, so She shines darkly. For a moment, She looks like a gigantic Flower, fed on the rich humus of all those human sacrifices and pregnant with a trillion trillion seeds.



The Mother is Hydra, the consort of Dagon. Dive into the coldest reaches of the ocean, into the lightless depths, and there are yet deeper shafts that lead into subterranean seas undreamt-of by humanity. One such ocean lies directly beneath England. The



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Dropping the Bomb

Should the Investigators succeed in bringing the atomic bomb from Fort Halstead to the well, they can detonate it when the Mother arrives. There is not enough time for all the Investigators to escape the blast radius — some will have to stay behind to set off the bomb while the others escape in the plane.

Alternatively, if one of the Investigators is contaminated, killing him in this confined space channels the blast right into the maw of the Mother.

The nuclear explosion is powerful enough to collapse the well and the warren of tunnels under Goatswood. Even if the Mother is not destroyed by the blast, She is certainly buried and all her worshippers destroyed. The Investigators have inflicted a mortal blow on the Creatures, although at the cost of loosing Azathoth upon the world.

well plunges down for miles to empty out into this nameless ocean, and it is from those stygian depths that She arises.

Hydra resembles a titanic Deep One. She dwells not only in the deepest oceans, but in the reptilian hindbrain. She is the primordial mating instinct, the first female. The waters are the source of life, and She is the mother of that life. It is through Her that humanity and Deep Ones can interbreed; the hybrids are Her special children. Those who look upon her are seized by the desire to offer themselves to the Deep Ones.

Seeing the Mother in either form is worth an 8-point **Stability** test, with a +3 **Sanity** point loss, and minimum losses of 2 Stability and 2 Sanity.

Fleeing the Mother

If the Investigators do not flee, they will perish. However, they are subject to the Tugging — the same instinctive drive that brought all the other slaves of the Mother also holds them in thrall. They may wish to turn and run, but cannot. Every instinct screams at them to throw themselves into the well and join in the orgiastic oblivion of the Mother.

So, why do they run? Each Investigator must state why they want to live. They may choose to invoke a Drive, or a Source of Stability, or a Pillar of Sanity. What do they have left to believe in? Those who find a reason to live may flee up the tunnel. Optionally, if

there are lots of surviving Investigators, call for a **Fleeing** contest and have the Mother devour the hindmost.

The Aeroplane

The Investigators' only remaining route of escape is on the waiting aircraft. Piling into the aircraft, they accelerate down the makeshift runway as the concrete cracks and buckles. They take off in the nick of time as the Mother emerges from below. England is hers now, lost to the Creatures forever.

- **Navigation (Core Clue):** Judging by rumours and reports, all of Europe is equally ruined. The only hope is to head west, across the Atlantic, and seek safety in America.

The Investigators' aerial flight marks the end of this phase of the *Cthulhu Apocalypse* campaign. The world the Investigators knew is gone. What awaits them in America?

THE NEW WORLD

Unlike England, no single catastrophe may be big enough to wipe out the whole of the United States. The Investigators face a range of horrors. Use the mechanisms of *The Apocalypse Machine* to generate and explore different catastrophes, visiting myriad ghastly fates upon various parts of the ruined United States. Several sample such adventures are described below. Continue

until the Investigators perish, or the campaign comes to a suitable end, or until you decide to come full circle by running *The Elder Patmos* on page 195.

When the Flowers spread to the east coast of the United States, President Roosevelt ordered the use of an experimental atomic bomb. This weapon proved far more destructive than anticipated. Howling atomic winds destroyed much of the eastern seaboard immediately, and the devastation has since advanced across the continent. Deprived of any central government or authority, and under attack by numerous threats (both natural and supernatural, if such a distinction still has meaning), the United States has since collapsed into any number of small enclaves. The largest number of survivors are in the deep South; what happened to the west coast is a mystery for your players to investigate (perhaps some horror rose from the Pacific, or the Flowers consumed all of Asia and crossed the icy Bering Strait and hence down through Canada). The devastation in the mid-west and north can be as complete or partial as you wish — if you want your players to explore the apocalyptic aftermath of 'Lovecraft country', then perhaps the atomic winds spared parts of Boston and New England, and Arkham yet endures.

Grundig's notebook could be translated with **Cryptography** and **Cthulhu Mythos**. The curvilinear glyphs used are the same as the ones the Investigators saw in the alien vaults under Brichester. Perhaps the Yithians hinted at a way to change time and avert the apocalypse, or maybe the Investigators can escape the horrors of the present and join their loved ones in rugose, conical bodies millions of years ago.

Alternatively, you can conclude the campaign here. The Investigators are the last humans alive; that little aircraft is all that remains of human civilization. It doesn't have the range to cross the Atlantic — the only consolation is that the Investigators get to die like humans, plummeting into the icy oblivion of the ocean instead of an unnatural death on the Mythos-tainted land.



In Requiem

A haunting song echoes through the streets of a dying city. Shapes move beneath a limpid lake. Who mourns for the death of humanity?

APOCALYPSE MACHINE

Disasters: Floods/Monsters

THE HOOK

The Investigators are ambushed by monsters, but just before they are torn apart, the monsters hear a song and flee. What drove them away?

THE QUESTION

Who is singing the song?

THE HORRIBLE TRUTH

The singer is a young woman, Susie Goodheart. The survivors in Minneapolis keep her in a gilded cage, as only her song keeps the monsters from the lake at bay.

THE SPINE

Minneapolis was a city of lakes before the Apocalypse. Then, a storm blew down from the north, and it rained for months. Today, the city is half-submerged; the city centre rises like the spine of some drowned beasts from the stagnant, murky waters of this new great lake. Still, there are a few survivors in Minneapolis.

Some need — hunger, shelter, fuel, supplies, or some other errand — brings the Investigators to the ruins of Minneapolis. As they wade through the flooded streets, they realise they are not alone — something stalks them. They see movement under the water, glimpse scaly backs and limbs, notice yellow eyes like glowing lamps staring at them. The creatures herd the Investigators towards

deeper water, so the Investigators find themselves swimming instead of wading. One Investigator, then another and another gets dragged underwater and savaged by fangs.

Suddenly, the Investigators hear beautiful singing in some unknown tongue. The creatures sink back into the depths and vanish.

- **Architecture:** It came from that bank over there.
- **Languages:** That was a human voice, but it wasn't any human language.

THE BANK

Investigating the bank, the Investigators meet **Nicholas Andrews**, one of the leaders of the local community. He was a practicing psychologist, so he was forewarned of the coming Apocalypse. If only he had read the signs, he might have correlated all the patients complaining of strange dreams with the other weird portents, but he foolishly assumed that all the tales of monsters were just the products of diseased minds. Now, too late, he knows better, and is more determined than ever to protect the few survivors left in Minneapolis.

Andrews cautions the Investigators not to stay in Minneapolis. The town does not welcome outsiders. Once the flood waters recede a little and the road is somewhat passable, they can be on their way.

- **Intuition:** Andrews is blustering to hide his worries. He wants the Investigators to stay away from Susie.
- **Strategy:** The bank is guarded. In addition to Andrews, there are two armed men at the front door and another on the roof.

- **Streetwise:** While most of Minneapolis is a soggy ruin, this area is moderately secure; no wonder the locals have stayed here, despite the threat of those things from the lake.

The singer is **Susie Goodheart**, a singer who worked at a local jazz club before the Apocalypse. She is a slim, dark-eyed young woman with a curious cast to her features. She has a curious gold talisman hanging from a necklace.

Andrews explains that nearly a hundred survivors cluster into the buildings surrounding the bank. The city was overrun in the early days of the Apocalypse, but Susie's singing keeps the monsters away. No-one knows why her song has power over the creatures.

- **Art History:** That necklace — it's unlike anything the Investigator has seen before. It looks almost like the skeleton of some sea creature, only transmuted into gold. Susie claims that the necklace was around her neck when she was found.
- **Oral History:** Susie tells the characters that she was a foundling, an orphan. She was found as a baby on the edge of White Bear Lake, and raised in an orphanage. She does not know where she came from.
- **Reassurance:** Casting a wary glance at Andrews, Susie asks the Investigators to help her. Her friend **Cornelius Rix** is missing. He'd gone back to the jazz club where they both worked before the Apocalypse. Andrews says there's been no sign of him, but... could the Investigators look for him?



In Requiem

Spending points of **Oral History** or **Reassurance** gets some background details. Rix was a drummer in a jazz band; he and Susie were lovers, but when the Apocalypse came and she discovered the strange powers of her voice, she felt she had to stay until the locals abandoned Minneapolis. She and Rix planned to flee north; she's heard there's safety there.

If the Investigators agree to help, call for **Sense Trouble** rolls (Difficulty 5); those who succeed realise that the locals are watching them. Going in search of Cornelius Rix means meddling in something that the locals want to keep quiet.

The Jazz Club

Reaching the jazz club safely is tricky. Susie's voice can keep the creatures off the streets, but if she sings for the Investigators, the locals realise that the Investigators are looking for Rix and try to stop them. If they don't ask Susie to sing, then they need to sneak past the creatures in the water.

The jazz club was in a basement, and is now underwater.

- **Evidence Collection:** There's a discarded bullet casing near the door.

As the characters search the flooded basement, they sense movement in the water. One of the creatures is in there with them, slithering through the dark muck. This creature does not attack; instead, it swims over to one corner, where the water begins to churn. It dredges up a rotten corpse and deposits it on the little stage where Susie once sang.

- **Evidence Collection:** Clutched in the corpse's hand is a diamond engagement ring.
- **Forensics:** Rix was shot several times in the back and legs. From the state of the corpse, you'd guess he was trapped down in the basement for several hours, maybe even days, before he died of blood loss and dehydration.
- **Intuition:** Rix wanted to marry Susie and take her away from Minneapolis, but without Susie,

the creatures would overwhelm the little pocket of survivors. The locals killed Rix to keep Susie in their thrall.

No Fury

Revealing the truth to Susie drives her mad with grief. She thought she was a heroine for protecting the settlement; now, she realizes they were just using her. A strange fey mood floods through her. She stands, her joints unfolding in a way no human should move. She raises her voice and sings a different song, and as she does, she begins to *change*.

- **Cthulhu Mythos:** Susie's a hybrid of a human and one of those lake creatures — and now she's embracing her inhuman side. *Run*.

The waters rise, and the creatures rise with them, drawn by their sister's song. Unless the Investigators flee immediately, they'll be devoured or drowned along with the rest of the survivors.





Beasts of Men

Lost in a strange new world, the characters find signs of civilization and safety near the ruins of Lexington. The Apocalypse has driven everyone insane — but what is the price of retaining one's humanity in the face of cosmic truth?

APOCALYPSE MACHINE

Disasters: Barbarism/Monsters

THE HOOK

Some of the characters are captured by degenerate horse-riding barbarians.

THE QUESTION

What do the barbarians want with their captives?

THE HORRIBLE TRUTH

Both the academics of the university and the survivors of the ruined city have reached their own accommodation with the Mythos, and both groups have sacrificed their humanity. The barbarians possess a drug that reduces their intelligence, making them blissfully ignorant of the implications of the Mythos. The academics have, rationally and logically, become worshippers of Yog-Sothoth and conduct ghastly rites in his honour.

THE SPINE

The characters learn of a safe place near Lexington. They might pick up a radio transmission, or meet some other survivor, or come across a message scrawled on a wall, but they all promise the same thing — safety and protection from the horrors that stalk the United States.

The refuge is in the remains of Transylvania University, a small college outside Lexington. A small forest surrounds the university. As the characters approach the trees, they spot a number of riders on

horseback approaching. These riders are human, but are dressed in rags and tattered furs like some Dark Age raiders, instead of men from 1939. The riders charge towards the characters, and try to capture them with nets. Ideally, at least half the Investigators are captured by the riders, while the rest manage to flee into the safety of the trees.

Run scenes with one group of characters, then the other, until the Investigators are reunited.

Those who escaped the riders meet another survivor in the forest — **Sir Hugo Deepings**, an English aristocrat. Sir Hugo came to Lexington with his friend Donald Herring to buy racehorses. They were accompanied by Herring's valet, **Henry Slingsby**. Poor Donald was murdered early several years ago, but Sir Hugo and Slingsby managed to survive. They too heard there was a sanctuary at the university, and were on their way there when Slingsby was captured by those barbarous brutes. Sir Hugo isn't sure whether to press on to the university or to try to rescue Slingsby.

- **Assess Honesty:** Sir Hugo's hiding something about Herring's death. It wasn't murder — it was something much more horrific.
- **Strategy** (if using *Cthulhu Apocalypse*) or **Outdoorsman:** Going after the captives will be risky — the barbarians seemed well-armed and dangerous. Maybe the characters can find help at the university?

The barbarians drag the captured Investigators through the streets of ruined Lexington. Bones and corpses litter the streets; some places have melted in some weird way — it is as though the buildings themselves are intact, but *space* has become warped and degraded in those zones, so the laws of geometry no longer hold true. The

barbarians treat their captives roughly but not cruelly; they are restrained but not hurt.

- Examining the barbarians with **Anthropology** suggests they are driven by base impulses, and are little more than animals. They communicate through grunts and gestures, they have little in the way of social order, and have no ability to make plans. They are like a Stone Age tribe, scavenging in the ruins of a greater civilization.
- **Pharmacy** notes that the lips of the barbarians are stained with something bluish-green. They all carry bottles and flasks with them — could they be addicted to some narcotic?

The Investigators find the university to be eerily calm, although there are curious alien structures dotted around the campus. There are around fifty people living here, mostly former students and academics. Their leader is **Martin Bollivar**, a historian. The academics elected him their leader in acknowledgement of his work in translating certain stone carvings discovered in the Amazon basin. He welcomes the Investigators, and is sympathetic to their requests for help, but the security of the refuge cannot be risked for a hopeless rescue mission. He will, he says, consider it.

- **Anthropology:** The people of the refuge sometimes slip into a sort of fugue state, in which they speak some alien language and behave as if controlled by some alien intelligence.

At the barbarian camp, the prisoners meet the bedraggled **Henry Slingsby**. The former valet lies huddled in the corner of the cellar. **Reassurance** gets him to talk.

Slingsby describes how he and his employer, **Richard Herring**, encountered a horror in the woods. They were within sight of



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the university, when this unholy bubbling mass of luminescent spheres descended from the stars. Herring was... not killed... transfigured, remade, contorting through time and space, and Slingsby saw... Oh God, do not make him remember!

Afterwards, the thing returned to the university. Slingsby fled and was captured by the barbarians. He wishes he could forget. He would give anything to forget.

The next morning, Bollivar returns to the Investigators. He has considered their request, and is willing to help. In exchange, the Investigators must submit to the rite that protects the university.

After the Apocalypse, Bollivar explains, the doors at the Earth's poles opened, and certain things from Outside could come in. He contacted one such entity through his translations. The rite opens the third eye and invites the alien god into the recipient's soul. Bollivar and all the other people here are *part* of the god, subordinate to its divine will. The god does not merely control them when it wishes — it *is* them, their higher

consciousness. Union with the god is a terrible bliss, as it reveals the true nature of existence.

Sir Hugo agrees to undergo the rite — he doesn't believe all this nonsense about gods and magic, but the university is an island of safety compared to the things out there. Bollivar shows him into a small room, and a moment later, the Investigators hear the sound of a gunshot. Hugo shot himself. Bollivar sighs; Sir Hugo's human weakness prevented him from accepting the god.

No matter — which of the Investigators is next?

Should all the Investigators refuse, then Bollivar and all the other worshippers of the god freeze in place and start chanting. The sky above the university begins to boil...

The barbarian chieftain — a towering brute of a man — enters the cellar. He carries a tin stew pot, filled with a foul-smelling blue liquid. He gestures to it and calls it *soma*. With a great effort of will, he remembers a few words of human language. "Drink", he says, "drink and forget".

- **Pharmacy:** This is definitely a drug that affects the higher functions of the brain. These people have chemically lobotomized themselves.

The chieftain does not force anyone to drink the *soma*. Slingsby takes the drug willingly — better to become an animal than to remember the thing he saw in the forest. Characters who join him in oblivion become non-player characters, join the tribe, and live out their days in simply idiocy, the burden of caring or worrying or remembering lifted from them.

Those who refuse the drug may leave, and should do so quickly. While the barbarians instinctively offer the gift of oblivion to strangers, they may decide that the Investigators who refuse are animals to be hunted and eaten instead.

- **Bargain or Flattery:** With an appropriate spend, the Investigator convinces the chieftain to help rescue the other Investigators from the university before Yog-Sothoth arrives to devour them.





Cold Feet

Exploring the frozen remains of Calgary, the Investigators learn of the last days of that doomed city. Will the same fate befall them?

APOCALYPSE MACHINE

Disaster: Cold

THE HOOK

The city of Calgary survived the Apocalypse better than anywhere else the Investigators have visited, but is completely abandoned.

THE QUESTION

Where did everyone go?

THE HORRIBLE TRUTH

The god-thing Ithaqua dwells atop an impossible mountain nearby. He carried off the inhabitants of the city, and will carry off the Investigators if they linger too long.

THE SPINE

Rumours (through **Bargain**, **Oral History** or **Streetwise**) claim that the city of Calgary in Canada survived the Apocalypse wholly intact. It's a place of safety — or at least, an excellent place to scavenge for supplies.

As the characters approach Calgary from the east, they are struck by the mountain range that looms over the city. Calgary lies on the shoulder of the Canadian Rockies, but the mountains behind the city now are much, much taller than they once were. Thick whitish mists surround the snow-laden peaks.

- **Geology:** Those mountains cannot be a natural phenomenon. The smallest of them makes Everest look like a hillock.

EXPLORING THE CITY

The city certainly seems intact, although there are several feet of snow on every surface.

- **Library Use:** The *Calgary Herald* continued for two years after the Apocalypse. The early issues are a litany of horrors, mixed with quiet relief that none of the disasters reached Alberta. The province was spared the blight of the Flowers, the rising tide of the oceans, and the weird effects of the experimental atomic bombs detonated on the eastern seaboard. No horrific creatures slithered out of the dark places of the earth to inhabit the ruins.

1. The newspaper records stop abruptly fourteen months ago.

- 1-point **Library Use** spend: Weirdly, there is no mention whatsoever of the new mountain range that sprang up in the north-west.
- **Occult:** The Investigator discovers a diary written by another refugee from Europe. The nameless narrator was a native of Helsinki. The cold weather slowed the growth of the Flowers, sparing most of the population from that horrible fate. The survivors huddled together in the city as the world outside grew strange and horrible. Then, one night, the skies blazed with an aurora of incredible intensity and nameless colours. The next day, everyone (except,

apparently, the narrator) went mad and started worshipping 'The One From Beyond' and talking about ghost cities at Earth's poles where the gods dwelt. The diarist fled Helsinki in a stolen yacht before this spontaneous cult could catch him.

- **Streetwise:** Other scavengers have been here before, but the place seems deserted now. There is still plenty to salvage.

There is something strange about the snow in the city. It clings and clumps strangely.

- **Physics:** The snow sometimes behaves as though the temperature was changing. It flows as though it were slush, then compresses down to rock-hard ice.

The Scavengers

The Investigators are not the only people exploring the city. They encounter a pair of survivors, a former explorer and guide named **Hank Davis** and his friend, a Native American named **Punk**. Davis explains that he and Punk live out in the wilderness, far from the shadow of 'them cursed mountains', but they needed supplies like whiskey and ammunition from Calgary, so they came here. Davis suggests that the two groups work together.

- **Assess Honesty:** The pair seem oddly gleeful to meet other scavengers in Calgary. They cast avaricious glances at the Investigators' equipment.
- **Craft:** Both of them are dressed in tattered clothes — but their boots are new.
- **Scavenging** is easy in Calgary; all difficulties to find items are reduced by 2.



Cold Feet

- **Sense Trouble:** Something about the pair worries the Investigator. They're dangerous men.
- **Streetwise:** Hank keeps asking questions about the Investigators' supplies.

The Field of Snow

Punk leads the characters to a wide, open area — a snow-cloaked park — to show them 'the drawings'. Indeed, someone has incised curious lines into the smooth blanket of snow.

- **Navigation:** These lines are designed to be seen from above, like landing lights at an airport. They would be clearly visible from the mountains.

- **Occult:** These lines remind the Investigator of the Nazca lines of Peru.
- **Streetwise:** There's something very out of place, here — over by that wall, there, are some long poles with hooks on the end. What are those for?

Punk urges the characters to examine the lines more closely; if they refuse, he tries to push them into the snow.

If anyone steps onto the snow, it freezes around their feet, trapping them in place. Breaking free is almost impossible; it requires a successful **Athletics** test against Difficulty 15. Failing the test costs 1d6 points of Health. Cutting away or melting the snow (perhaps using **Craft** or **Preparedness**) can reduce the Difficulty,

as can help from another Investigator — but anyone who steps into the part also risks being frozen in place.

- **Evidence Collection:** Clearing away the snow leads to a horrific discovery — a pair of frozen feet. Something tore the rest of the body away, leaving the feet locked in place in the snow. Everywhere the Investigators brush away the snow, they find feet and more feet. Adult feet, child feet, feet in boots, feet in shoes, bare feet, black feet, white feet — all frozen solid.

The Investigators hear a howling wind descend from the mountains to the west. The Windwalker is coming.





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The Coming of Ithaqua

Punk and Davis retreat as soon as they hear the howling wind. They intend for Ithaqua to kill the Investigators; they will then scavenge the Investigator's supplies, using the long-handled hooks to retrieve any items from the snowy field. They encountered the Windwalker themselves, long ago, and have

no desire to repeat the encounter, only to make offerings to it.

Give the Investigators a few minutes to try to escape before the Windwalker arrives. If they can come up with a cunning plan to break the ice-hard snow (or, failing that, if they wish to cut off their own feet with

a bone saw and crawl to safety), they may survive. Otherwise, the Investigators lucky enough to avoid the snow-field may flee before the god flies down and carries away their friends — ripping their legs from their ankle joints and leaving the frozen feet behind as a grisly memento.





Resonance

A brilliant inventor holds back the Apocalypse — for a time.

APOCALYPSE MACHINE

Disaster: Technology

Casualty: Reality

THE HOOK

The Investigators discover a small American town that hasn't suffered the Apocalypse.

THE QUESTION

What's going on?

THE HORRIBLE TRUTH

The inventor's machine crosses into a parallel timeline — but it's breaking down.

THE SPINE

While travelling across the blasted, radiation-scarred wasteland of post-Apocalypse America, the Investigators find a truly strange site — a small town that is wholly intact. According to maps or street signs, this is the town of Middleboro.

Even weirder, there seems to be some sort of discontinuity running all around the edge of the town. For example:

- On one side of the line, the highway is melted and scarred. On the other, it's bright and smooth.
- On one side are the ruins of buildings; on the other, everything's intact.
- On one side, the sky is choked with dust and ash; on the other, it's cold but sunny, like a crisp winter morning.

Telegraph lines run right up to the discontinuity and vanish. It's like a window into another reality.

Looking through the discontinuity, the Investigators can see the inhabitants of the town, going about their lives. The townsfolk appear to be unable to see the Investigators. If one of the townsfolk crosses the dividing line, they vanish.

Exploring, the Investigators find that the afflicted area is roughly hemispherical. **Navigation** or **Astronomy** lets the Investigators calculate that the effect is centred on an apparently unremarkable townhouse — the home of the Inventor.

Through the Curtain

Stepping through the curtain makes the Investigators' skin and clothing feel strangely warm, but has no immediate ill effects. The Investigator is now in the impossibly preserved Middleboro. Depending on where the Investigator chose to step through, his sudden materialisation may cause shock and alarm, or he may be mistaken for a hobo or vagrant.

If the Investigator steps back through the curtain, he returns to the apocalyptic wasteland environment. Again, there's the same rush of heat.

The Investigators can deduce the following through experimentation over the course of the scenario.

1. The discontinuity is a gap between timelines
 - **Assess Honesty:** Everything about these people strikes you as wholly genuine. They're ordinary people, not... monsters in human form, or under some sort of mental coercion or delusion.
 - **Oral History:** Talking to the townsfolk confirms that they know nothing about the

Flowers, or any other monsters, or about the detonation of the bomb on the American east coast. It's like they've lived through an entirely different version of the last few years.

- **Physics:** The undeniable difference between the two sides of the divide, combined with the lack of any sort of physical barrier, implies very strongly that you're looking at some sort of discontinuity in space-time.

2. Objects from one timeline tend to stay in that timeline

- **Evidence Collection:** The dust on your shoes doesn't vanish when you cross. You're still carrying everything from that other, broken America. You're just visiting this timeline.
- **Navigation:** Middleboro might be in the middle of nowhere, but cars and even trains pass through here. This isn't an island of preserved space-time — it's a door between two worlds.
- **Outdoorsman:** Even the weather patterns are different here. The winds blowing on one side of the divide aren't necessarily the same ones blowing on the other. It's especially strange when it rains — the droplets vanish as they cross the threshold.

3. You can carry objects across, but it's dangerous.

If a visitor from the Apocalypse timeline is touching an object (or even a person) when they cross the threshold, that object is yanked over, but its internal temperature decreases proportionately to its mass. So, small objects merely get cooler; a human



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suffers +2 damage; a large object like a car is severely damaged or even destroyed. Unstable substances like gunpowder may be destroyed by this transition.

Chemistry: The photographic plates in your pocket show tell-tale radiation scarring.

Evidence Collection: Your feet get really cold whenever you cross back. It's like ice forms on the dust on your boots.

Physics: It makes a strange sort of sense — you're adding matter to the universe, so to keep the balance, energy must be destroyed. Obviously, there must be some sort of compensation — if bringing an object over removed an equivalent amount of heat to that object's value when converted to energy... well, you doubt anything would survive.

4. The discontinuity is somehow connected to the machines dotted around town.

- **Oral History:** "Those? Oh, they belong to Mr. Pittman. Part of his experiment. He's got permission from the city council, so don't go meddling with his important research. It's a matter of great civic pride to have such an inventor as part of the community."

- **Physics:** While the principles underlying this machine are beyond your comprehension, you notice its lights flicker when anyone passes through the discontinuity.

- **Streetwise:** Something's out of place here. Following a buzzing noise, you find a strange machine about the size of a trashcan. It looks like trash too — wires, crystals, rods.

5. The machines are breaking down.

- **Intuition:** Something tells you that this state of affairs cannot be maintained indefinitely. There's a tension in the air, like the static charge before a thunderstorm.

- **Mechanics:** The lights on the machines get a little dimmer every time someone crosses over.

- **Physics:** You know that the laws of physics have changed in the Apocalypse timeline — Holsten proved that to you. But these machines are on the other side, the unchanged side. They cannot endure.





Resonance

Actions in Town

How do the Investigators respond to the strangely preserved town?

- **Attempt to Explain Themselves:** How, exactly, do they propose to do that? Most people will assume that the Investigators are lunatics, and call a policeman or doctor to take them away. A **Reassurance** spend might result in someone suggesting they consult the Inventor. If the Investigators are arrested or detained, that results in a bigger problem — the town jail and the nearest hospital are both outside the limits of the machines, so the Investigators might ‘vanish’ from the back of a police van and find themselves back in the ruins of another part

of Middleboro when they pass through the discontinuity.

- **Blend In:** **Disguise** tests, coupled with **Reassurance**, **Streetwise** or **Bureaucracy** spends, are enough for the Investigators to pose as completely ordinary strangers who did not wander in from a parallel reality. Fortunately, the area of the time-discontinuity includes a boarding house and several apartments for rent, so the Investigators could conceivably make a new life for themselves in this reality. Of course, they’ll be unable to leave the few blocks encompassed by the time-discontinuity, but other people have lived normal lives without leaving their home town — maybe the Investigators can hope to do the same.

6. However, the presence of the Investigators in the ‘wrong’ timeline disrupts the functioning of the machine, so the Inventor will come looking for them after a few weeks of peace.

Investigate: Their investigations lead them to the Inventor.

Raid: Desperate, amoral or less than wholly sane Investigators could take advantage of the situation by stealing what they need from Middleboro. For the inhabitants of the town, this is effectively a horror scenario from the other side — they’re suddenly beset by mysterious feral monsters who appear out of nowhere, grab what they want, and then vanish without a trace. **Strategy** lets them optimize their hit-and-run attacks and stay ahead of the Middleboro police for as long as possible.

- **Scavenge:** Middleboro is obviously an excellent opportunity to steal (or barter





Slaves of the Mother

for) items now unavailable in the world of the apocalypse. The items available, though, are limited by the range of the machines. The Investigators cannot, for example, go to New York to obtain supplies, because the instant they step through the discontinuity, they're back in the world of the apocalypse. They can, however, make do with what's available in the small slice of town they can access, or hire natives of the other timeline as agents on their behalf. **Bargain, Filch** or **Scavenging** can be used to obtain vitally needed supplies. If the Investigators try stealing, they'll run into the town's police; if they try bartering, they'll need to disguise themselves.

THE INVENTOR

At the centre of the time distortion field is the home of Kennelly Pittman, a retired professor of mathematics, and his wife Susan. Everyone in town attributes the machines to Professor Pittman, although there are various theories on what they are — a new method of weather prediction, some say, or a way of calculating eclipses, or a secret project for the military, or even an inexhaustible power source. (Although, if the Investigators alarm the townsfolk, then Pittman's machines get blamed for the mysterious attacks and an angry mob smashes them, closing the rift in time and space.)

The truth is far more horrific.

Professor Pittman has been expecting the Investigators, or someone like them. As soon as he learns they come from an alternate timeline, he urges them to leave. If they refuse, he agrees to explain what he understands of what's going on.

Some years ago, his wife Susan Pittman suffered a bizarre seizure. She collapsed, and when she awoke her personality was very different. She tried to hide it, but she had changed — she was much colder, much more manipulative, and possessed of an inhuman intellect. She accompanied him to scientific conferences and visits to other universities, where she simply

sat and listened, sphinx-like, observing the state of human knowledge. Then she collapsed again — and when she woke up, she was his Susan again.

At least, what was left of her. The experience shattered her sanity. She remembered events yet to happen, and could recall fragments of alien mathematics and technologies which were aeons ahead of humanity's understanding of the cosmos. She became obsessed by a particular date — November 2nd, 1936, the day of the Apocalypse. They had to be ready for then.

She designed the machines that Pittman distributed around town. Nothing happened when they were activated. Nothing at all — but she believes, and Pittman agrees, that they managed to 'jump' to another timeline. A little fraction of Middleboro escaped the Apocalypse.

If the Investigators spend **Reassurance** or show him Grundig's diary, he agrees to introduce them to Susan.

The Visionary

Susan Pittman now lives in the basement. The walls crawl with strange mathematical glyphs and symbols. Wires and crackling electric cables snake down the walls and across the floor into another, bigger machine. Next to it are Susan's camp bed and other necessities — **Intuition** or **Psychoanalysis** guesses that she's terrified of leaving the machine's area of effect, so she's staying as close to the generator as possible.

If the Investigators tell her that they're from the alternate timeline, she panics and begs them to leave — their presence here puts added pressure on her machine! They must leave before it breaks down! If they refuse, she becomes pathetically murderous, feebly stabbing at them in a desperate attempt to drive them away. She then collapses in terror, waiting for the end of the world to finally catch up with her.

Mentioning the Investigators' original **Sources of Stability** (see *Letters from Ghosts*) has a profound effect on Mrs. Pittman. Why, she knows those names! They are friends of hers, close friends. She knew them for... a very long time. She may pass on personal messages or reminiscences of the vanished loved ones, restoring the Investigators' Stability. She still asks the Investigators to leave, but does so politely and gently, telling

them that their destiny lies elsewhere, beyond this little island of safety.

If the Investigators show her Grundig's notebook from *Slaves of the Mother*, she reads it in a panic. She can't translate all the glyphs, but... no, this says that the timeline they jumped into isn't safe either. Nor is that one, or that one. She has to find a safe place!

Mrs. Pittman starts to adjust the machine. It hums and whines, and the lights flicker. There's a sudden sense of movement, even though the Investigators are standing still. Looking outside, they see that while they're not moving, Middleboro is — she's jumping from one reality to the next, faster and faster. The little island of stability around the machine is unaffected, but beyond the discontinuity...

- The Flowers take root and blossom across the wide prairies of the American continent
- The skies boil away as hideous red stars descend to devour the Earth
- Suicide booths appear on the streets, and yellow banners hang from every lamppost, proclaiming the coming of the heir to the Imperial Dynasty of America
- Atomic winds howl across a scarred wasteland
- The planet Earth vanishes, consumed by our grotesquely swollen red sun
- ... or there's nothing but the empty vacuum of space where Earth once orbited
- Slimy monsters like tremendous slugs consume all organic matter on the face of the land
- The ground has collapsed, fallen into the measureless caverns below
- And on, and on, a thousand thousand stranger endings for the world.

The machine screams as it is pushed beyond its limits. It's not going to last long, and who knows what will happen then?



Resonance

Closing Time

The Investigators have several options.

- **Flee:** Running through the streets, they come to the discontinuity once more. When they leap through it, will they jump back to their original timeline, or end up in some other version of the Apocalypse?
- **Stay in Middleboro:** If they don't intervene, then the Machine rips itself to pieces. In this scenario, Middleboro is forcibly integrated into the

Dead White World. Suddenly, there is a small town in the middle of the apocalyptic wasteland that wasn't there before — and the Investigators just became responsible for the fate of the thousand or so people caught in the collapsing time rift.

- **Take Control of the Machine:** First, they must kill or incapacitate Mrs. Pittman. Then they must undo what she did with a Difficulty 7 **Mechanical Repair** test. A

kind Keeper might allow the spending of **Cthulhu Mythos** or **Physics** to decrease the difficulty. If successful, the Investigators bring the Machine back to its original settings, and they can continue to cross between Middleboro and the Dead White World for another few days before the Machine finally breaks down. When it shuts off, the discontinuity vanishes and the 'correct' version of Middleboro — a ruined wasteland — appears in its place.





Thicker Than Water

THE HOOK

Raiders on the Great Lakes take a strange interest in the player characters.

THE QUESTION

What do the raiders want?

THE HORRIBLE TRUTH

The raiders are in league with Deep Ones, who dreamed of the Investigators' involvement in the events of *Sandgrown*.

THE SPINE

This scenario takes place near any large body of water in the United States. The default assumption uses Lake Michigan and the ruins of Chicago, but it can be transplanted to, say, the Mississippi or some other large lake or river easily.

In 1928, a United States Navy submarine discharged torpedoes off Devil's Reef, after the infamous raid on Innsmouth and the discovery of the horrors in that isolated town. The Deep Ones retreated to the depths, confident that no human weapon could threaten them in sunken Y'ha-nthlei.

They were wrong.

In 1937, President Wilson ordered the use of an experimental atomic weapon to stem the spread of the lethal white seeds. The blast reduced New York to cinders, seared the ground from Washington to Boston, and unleashed terrible burning windstorms and poisonous dust clouds across the continent. Innsmouth was incinerated, and the seas above the sunken city flashed to steam. Y'ha-nthlei survived, but over the months since then, surface poisons filtered down into the waters.

The older Deep Ones descended into the cold, lightless depths beyond the abyssal plain, to await the rise of Great Cthulhu, but their younger kin, those not yet fully adapted

to life in the ocean, set out west. They swam up rivers, along canals, and sometimes even darted across the wasted lands.

As they travelled, some of them shared the same strange dream — of the city of Shk'hrnwr, of the great game, and of the humans who made themselves fulcrums of a shifting fate.

THE GOOSE ISLAND GANG

In the chaos of the post-apocalyptic world, gangs and strong leaders impose their own cruel order. The Investigators saw this in Brighton, where people submitted to Pinkie's ghastly rule in exchange for a measure of safety. In the ruins of Chicago (or whenever you're setting this scenario), the **Goose Island Gang** enforce that order. As their name suggests, they're based out of Goose Island, which they've fortified against any rivals.

The leader of the Goose Island Gang is **Gilbert Marsh**, a Deep One hybrid from Innsmouth. Several of the other gang members are also hybrids, at varying stages of their transformation; out in the waters of Lake Michigan are dozens of older Deep Ones who can no longer pass for human.

His chief lieutenant is the ambitious **Alvin Crane**, a former bank robber and bootlegger. Crane wants to seize control of the gang.

The Gang keep the survivors in the city 'safe', and control the supply of fish from Lake Michigan (which have become weirdly plentiful since they arrived). In exchange, they demand that scavengers bring them the pick of the salvage from the burnt-out ruins of the city; they have also begun the rites of Dagon once more, and will soon begin to breed the elder Deep Ones with the human survivors.

The rites of Dagon are celebrated at a house on the shore by **Phyllis Wash**, another hybrid and a seer of the Esoteric Order. She walks in the dreams of Great Cthulhu, and glimpsed the Investigators at Shk'hrnwr. She believes that the Investigators can be used to secure the ascendancy of the Deep Ones over the ruins of the United States. Gilbert Marsh considers Wash to be a threat to his rule over the ruined city; in his bulging yellowed eyes, she's a dangerous mystic clinging to a bygone age. The upper-earth men destroyed Y'ha-nthlei, so the old certainties cannot be relied upon.

He is, despite his Innsmouth taint, far more human than she is, and cannot understand the powers that may be summoned from the deeps.

RUMOURS ON THE WATER MARGIN

The scenario may begin with the Investigators learning that there is a criminal gang in Chicago asking questions about them.

- **Interrogation:** After a little persuasion, a thug admits that the Goose Island Gang have a bounty on you. They're offering money in exchange for your capture.
- **Oral History:** A trader tells you that members of the Goose Island Gang in the nearby city asked her if she'd seen anyone matching your description. The description is odd, almost dreamlike, mentioning clothes you haven't worn since the days just after the apocalypse.
- **Streetwise:** You're being watched. Someone's looking for you. The Goose Island Gang have set a price on your heads.



Thicker Than Water

The Raid

Alternatively, it begins when the Investigators are ambushed and attacked by a band of armed thugs. The thugs threaten the Investigators with shotguns and rifles, and demand that they surrender. The thugs aren't willing to kill the Investigators, but will beat them into unconsciousness if that's an option. They may also threaten to kill NPC allies of the Investigators (*'the boss didn't say anything about the rest of them'*).

- **Craft:** Most of their weapons are poorly maintained and non-functional. They're trying to intimidate you into surrendering.
- **Intimidation:** You can tell they're holding back — and that makes them weak. You don't hold back: you charge, and they break.
- **Strategy:** The thugs seem determined to take you alive. If you push them, they'll have to retreat.

If the PCs are captured or surrender, skip onto The Gang Stronghold.

In The Broken City

Visiting the city, the Investigators learn the following:

- **Agriculture:** Fish are unnaturally plentiful here.
- **Oral History:** The Goose Island gang runs the city. Their leader, Gilbert Marsh, and his brutes showed up a few years ago, after the end of the world. They took over.
- **Reassurance:** The woman sobs and tells you that the gang kidnapped her daughter. She doesn't know what happened to her, but fears the worst.
- **Strategy:** The gang's stronghold on Goose Island is virtually impregnable — they've stockpiled weapons and fortified the place. Attacking it would be a mistake. If you want to

interrogate a member of the gang, it'd be wise to capture one outside Goose Island.

- **Streetwise:** Gilbert Marsh is bad, but his lieutenant Alvin Crane is worse. Back before the world ended, he was a notorious gangster and criminal kingpin. Now, he's playing second fiddle to some freak from the east coast.

A suitable test (**Shadowing, Disguise**) or some other clever plan lets the Investigators discover the gang's second locus of activity, the house on the shore that's been turned into a temple to Dagon.

THE GANG STRONGHOLD

If brought here as captives, then the Investigators are searched for weapons, then taken to meet Gilbert Marsh. He interrogates the Investigators, trying to work out who they are and why Phyllis Wash has such an interest in them. Use this scene to remind the players about their experiences in Shk'hrnwr and the decision they made there.

- **Assess Honesty:** Marsh is a cruel monster, but he's not lying to you — it's clear that he has no idea what's going on. He may be the one who put the price on your head, but he's not the person who's looking for you.
- **Biology:** Marsh reminds you of the Garth family you met in Blackpool — he's a Deep One.
- **Intuition:** Somehow, someone saw you — or maybe had a vision of you — playing the Game in Shk'hrnwr. Your decisions there are coming back to haunt you.

Optionally, with a spend of **Disguise** or **Streetwise**, the Investigators could convince Marsh that he's got the wrong people, while **Flattery** or **Leadership** might prompt him to defy Phyllis Wash (*'I'm running this town, not her'*). Otherwise, the Investigators are imprisoned in a cellar until nightfall.

If visiting, then a suitable **Disguise** is required to get into the camp. **Strategy**

or **Streetwise** lets them identify Crane and Gilbert Marsh. They also spot a locked cellar where prisoners are kept before they are transported to the house on the shore for the rites of Dagon.

Crane's Offer

Alvin Crane wants to take over the Goose Island Gang and the city. He can't do so as long as Gilbert Marsh has the backing of the 'lake monsters'. If the Investigators can get rid of Marsh, or discredit him in the eyes of the other Deep Ones, then Crane will reward them.

Crane tells the Investigators that prisoners are taken to a house on the shore, where the Deep Ones conduct weird rites. He can smuggle in a crate of working firearms and explosives along with the other supplies for the rites; it'll be up to the Investigators to make best use of it. Crane will have his best men waiting by the shore, ready to join in the fray, but he'll wait for the Investigators to kill as many of the older Deep Ones as possible first before committing himself.

Alternatively, if the Investigators can come up with a way to ruin Marsh without risking a pitched battle, he's willing to listen.

The Choice in Blackpool

What did the players choose in the sunken city? Did they let the Deep Ones or the Flowers conquer England? Their decision determines how Phyllis Wash treats them. If they chose the Flowers, then she sees them as heretics and monsters, who must be forced to undo their vile choice. If they chose the Deep Ones, then she believes they must be long-lost kinfolk who have strayed, and who can be brought back to the Cult of Dagon and the path into the sea.



Slaves of the Mother

THE HOUSE ON THE SHORE

Phyllis Wash uses a former mansion on the lakeshore as the new temple to Dagon. She lives here with a few other priests of the cult. Ceremonies are conducted in the partially flooded basement, which is open to the rising lake waters.

After she dreamt of the Investigators, she constructed a game board just like the one in Shk'hrnwr. That board now awaits a second move.

If brought here as prisoners, then the Investigators are dragged into the darkness of the water-logged basement by fish-smelling brutes. As the moon rises over the lake, it begins to glow with an eerie luminescence, and dozens more Deep Ones emerge from the depths to bear witness to the rites.

If brought here as guests, then Phyllis Wash tries to convince the Investigators that they are her kin. She insists that if they stay on the road they have already started down, and continue to favour the Deep Ones, they will come to know the truth about themselves.

If sneaking in, then the Investigators must evade the other priests as they follow the screams and moans of the other prisoners down into the basement.

A Second Turn

The board resembles the one at Shk'hrnwr. It is divided into channels and hollows, some of which are occupied by patches of moss (representing the Flowers), rotten meat (representing humanity) and other substances (ice, for example, corresponds to the realm of Ithaqua). Whole sections of the board are clogged with ash, suggesting they have been seared by the atomic blast.

Examining the board, the Investigators can see that humanity has completely lost the game. There are only a few scant chunks of meat left, and all of them are rotted and decaying. (Optionally, if you wish to foreshadow *Pioneers*, one of them might be twitching slightly). The section of the board corresponding to the city is mostly blackened, but if the Investigators remove that rotten bit of meat, the waters — the Deep Ones — will rush in and claim it.

- **Craft:** The game board itself is much more fragile than the one in the city. A really solid blow — or better yet, explosives — could destroy it.
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** Something ancient stirs within you. You realize you have always dreamt of the ocean, and the things within it that call to you, but you never remembered those dreams upon waking — until now...
- **Intuition:** You know that it's not enough to just move the piece on the game board. You have to sanctify your move, perform some corresponding action — or have it performed on you.
- **Strategy:** Humanity has clearly lost. You can't see a winning move from this position.

What do the Investigators do?

- Defy the Deep Ones
- Let the waters in
- Shatter the board

If the Investigators Defy the Deep Ones

If the Investigators made a bargain with Alvin Crane, then they can grab a conveniently placed box of weapons and counter-attack. The box contains several tommy-guns (one per player character) along with sticks of dynamite. They have one round in which they take the Deep Ones by surprise. Opposing the Investigators are Phyllis Wash, Gilbert Marsh, one priest or guard per player character, and one Deep One per two player characters. If the Investigators survive for at least four rounds, then Alvin Crane and the other gangsters arrive on the shore of the lake and open fire, driving the remaining Deep Ones back into the waters.

Crane's goons pour precious gasoline over the house on the shore, burning it down. The Investigators can flee through the burning building, or swim out via the lake — Crane has no interest in leaving them alive.

If the Investigators Let the Waters In

The Deep Ones in the water bellow with triumph. Phyllis Wash raises her hands and chants '*ia ia Dagon! Ia Cthulhu! Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn!*'"

The Investigator(s) with the highest number of Affliction Points, or perhaps the one who actually made the deciding move, begins to turn into a Deep One. He or she wades into the lake waters to be welcomed by the other monsters. The other Investigators also feel a primal urge to dive into the black waters, to sink into oblivion or transcendence. They can embrace or defy this desire as they wish.

The other Deep Ones sink away, and the Investigators are free to leave if they wish. Phyllis Wash promises that Gilbert Marsh will give them whatever supplies or weapons the gang can spare. She also hints that the Investigators may survive long enough to witness the rise of Great Cthulhu, and he shall teach them new ways to live.

If the Investigators Shatter the Board

Smashing the board ends this phase of the great game. The game board symbolises the world — and the world is breaking. The earth shakes. The lake waters suddenly ebb away, flowing backwards. The Investigators suddenly realise that they have opened up a titanic rift in the Earth's crust, a chasm much larger and deeper than any that has previously existed. The lake pours away in a terrible cascade, falling into the measureless caves of N'kai that lie beneath America.

Titanic things, formless and ghastly, rise from the rent in the face of the planet. They grope blindly, like the fingers of some shambling god, shattering the city in their fumbling. The earth shakes again, and again, and again as more distant rents open across the planet.

The Great Old Ones are rising. The time is come for the surface to be cleaned of its myriad infestations of terrestrial matter, and in this second apocalypse, there is no distinction between the Deep Ones or the humans, between the upper-earth people and the lower. The end is coming, and the Investigators have only a few scant weeks before nameless horrors crush them beneath their cyclopean bulk.



Pioneers

THE HOOK

Medical experiments offer a way for humanity to survive in the Dead White World.

THE QUESTION

What's going on in the hospital?

THE HORRIBLE TRUTH

Using a variation of the serum invented by Herbert West, the staff intend to resurrect humanity as reanimated cadavers.

THE SPINE

In the distance, the Investigators spot a small aircraft — probably the first flying machine they've seen since they crossed the Atlantic. Anyone with **Agriculture** or **Piloting** recognises it as a crop duster. It circles ahead of the Investigators, spraying some sort of chemical into the air.

If the Investigators do not attract the plane's attention, it turns back. **Navigation** or **Piloting** lets them track its course and correlate it with maps of the area — it's heading for a nearby airfield.

On the other hand, if the Investigators do signal to the plane, perhaps by shouting and waving, or setting off a flare, then it flies towards them and circles directly above. The pilot shouts some message at them, but his voice cannot be heard over the roar of the propellers. He points towards the airfield.

The plane continues to spray chemicals while circling over the Investigators, so unless they immediately take shelter, they'll be covered with the chemical mist. Anyone touched by the mist immediately gains 3 Affliction Points.

- **Agriculture:** It's definitely not any crop spray you've ever heard of, and the pilot's doing it all wrong anyway — he's just dusting everything instead of a specific field or type of crops.

- **Pharmacy:** The smell reminds you of something medicinal. There's definitely formaldehyde in the mix — it's quite probably toxic!

THE FARMHOUSE

Later, either before they reach the airfield, or if they decide to take a different course to avoid the area dusted by the airplane, the Investigators come upon a small isolated farmhouse. The fields around the farm are blighted and ruined (either by the atomic blast, or some other horror previously encountered in your Apocalypse), but there are lights burning in the windows and the place is clearly occupied.

The farmhouse is the home of **Adam Smith** and his wife **Rebecca**, as well as three other survivors who took refuge

there — **Matt Fuller**, **Edith Jacobs** and **Arnold Cook**. All of them are emaciated to the point of starvation with the exception of Edith, whose belly is swollen and whose limbs, while thin, are not quite as skeletal as the rest. Despite their condition, they all appear vigorous and bright-eyed, and enthusiastically welcome the Investigators.

Although the welcome is warm, it's clear that something strange is going on here.

1. They don't have any food.

- **Agriculture:** These fields are completely dead, and there are no signs of any animals. You spot a few storerooms where some supplies might be cached, but not enough to keep five adults going for long.

Dying Investigators

For the rest of this scenario — or even the rest of the campaign — the Investigators' bodily tissues are permeated with the revivification serum. If an Investigator dies while under the effects of the serum, he or she returns as one of the living dead — or revived, as they prefer to call themselves.

Revived characters have the following attributes:

- They do not need to make Consciousness rolls, are never Seriously Wounded, and are not killed when reduced to -12.
- They cannot regain Health except through **First Aid**; it costs 2 points of **First Aid** per point of Health to restore
- Being revived is an 8-point **Stability** test; however, after being revived, all Stability losses are reduced by 4, reflecting the revived's detachment from conventional emotion.
- Revived characters do not need to eat or drink, and are immune to most environmental hazards. They suffer half damage from all weapons, and only one point of damage from firearms, but gain no special resistance to scuffling.

Dead Investigators

If any Investigators perished earlier in your campaign, then they might appear among the revived at the hospital, or among the Guardians if they died messily.



Slaves of the Mother

- **Bargain:** Adam is happy to trade for supplies, but doesn't offer any food or drink, and doesn't want any either. He recommends the nearby town as a good place to scavenge.
 - **Evidence Collection:** Edith's the only one still eating food — she has a little tinned food left, no more than three or four days' worth.
2. Edith is pregnant by Matt Fuller.
- **Leadership:** Matt Fuller comes to you for advice — he knows there isn't enough food at the farm to sustain Edith and their child, and they have to leave. Should they set off into the unknown lands, or head for the nearby town with its sinister hospital?
 - **Medicine:** She's about seven months pregnant. From what you can determine, the baby is currently healthy despite the mother's malnourished state. You don't give much for their chances of survival in this barren land though.
 - **Theology or Occult:** Edith confesses that she's had a strange conviction ever since becoming pregnant — that her child would be the last of the human race. She doesn't know why she thinks such an awful thing, but she cannot deny the sense of terrible certainty.
3. They recently changed.
- **Craft:** More repairs have been made to the farm and its outbuildings in the last few days than in the previous year.
 - **Oral History:** Adam says that this area wasn't as badly affected as most when things changed. They got by for a while, and took in the other three when they came out of the wilderness. Then the crops died, and food got scarce. They gave what they could to Edith, seeing as she's with child and such, but then one day they all woke up and didn't feel hungry any more. Why, none of them except Edith has eaten for days and it hasn't

affected them any. They've never felt fitter.

- **Reassurance:** Edith's worried. There was a horrible night about a week ago when she was convinced that everyone else in the house has died of thirst, but then she heard this strange sound overhead, like the passing of the Angel of Death from the Bible. The next morning, everyone else in the house felt better.

4. They're dead. They're all dead, except Edith.

- **Chemistry or Pharmacy:** The only explanation you can conceive of, and it's monstrous, is that the chemical spray from the plane somehow... revived the dead.
- **Forensics:** It took you a while to recognise the smell, but Adam and the others smell like preserved cadavers in an anatomy lab.
- **Medicine:** They're breathing, and their heartbeats are regular as a metronome — except when they fall asleep. They don't breathe or have any other signs of life when asleep. The only conclusion is that, for them, breathing is a habit.

Revealing the Truth

The Investigators can keep this revelation to themselves, or they can tell the inhabitants of the farmhouse that they are dead. If they tell the truth, then Adam and his wife take it surprisingly well — as far as they are concerned, they are in the hands of a loving God, and He provides for them in His own way. Edith and her lover Matt are too shocked to fully comprehend what the revelation means; Arnold Cook, however, becomes furious, and blames "the scientists at the hospital" for his "condition".

If the Investigators share (or pretend to share) Cook's anger (**Flattery, Intimidation or Leadership**) then he tells them that there's a large and still-functional hospital in the nearby town, and that he's heard rumours that the scientists

there were experimenting on corpses. He's determined to march off and exact bloody revenge on them.

THE GUARDIANS

Approaching the Airfield or the Hospital, the Investigators come across traces of something strange.

- **Biology:** You come across the remains of a monstrous creature that was torn apart by whatever left these tracks. The men in this crowd must have been ungodly strong.
- Optionally, if any Investigators died in early mysteries set in the United States, then **Evidence Collection** might find some personal item they once carried, like a wristwatch or necklace.
- **Forensics:** Some of the people in the crowd were limping; others crawling. It was a host of the lame and limbless.
- **Outdoorsman:** A crowd of people passed this way recently. They must have been in a tightly-knit mob — there are hundreds of footprints packed into a very small trail.

The Guardians

The statistics below represent the massed horde of shambling dead; use Zombie stats (p. 159 of *Trail of Cthulhu*) for individuals.

Abilities: Athletics 8, Health 20, Scuffling 14

Hit Threshold: 3

Alertness Modifier: -1

Weapon: +2 (dismembering horde). The Guardians may attack up to three different foes at once.

Armour: None, but all weapons do half damage, and firearms only do one point of damage.

Stability Loss: +2



Pioneers

These tracks were left by the Guardians, a hideous mob of incomplete but reanimated corpses. Heads without bodies, limbs without torsos, sewn-together patchwork monsters. A few of them — the more recently reanimated — retain much of their human intellect, and serve as captains to the more mindless undead. The Guardians patrol the area around the Airfield and the Hospital by night; by day, they wait in the basement of the Hospital.

If the Investigators approach the Airfield or the Hospital openly during the day, the Guardians will not trouble them. If they try to sneak in, or approach at night, or are obviously belligerent (say, by having Arnold Cook accompany them), then the Guardians tumble and slither and limp and shudder out of the darkness to capture the Investigators. Those who resist are attacked and may be killed (and then either reanimated in the Hospital, or made to join the Guardians if too badly damaged); those who surrender are carried off to the Hospital.

THE AIRFIELD

The small airfield shows signs of being recently repaired. There are three crop-duster planes waiting in a hangar, and another two such aircraft are in the process of being rebuilt in a nearby workshop. All the crop-dusters have been adjusted to spray the same weird chemical compound.

The only person in sight must be one of the pilots — even though he's on the ground, he's wearing a pilot's cap, goggles and a scarf wrapped around his face, hiding his features. He's busy adjusting the engine of one of the planes.

- **Medicine:** It's hard to tell through the mummy-like wrappings, but he's also dead, just like the people at the farmhouse. If questioned, he admits that he died six months ago in a plane crash — he was pursued by a horrible flying monster, and lost control when it slashed at him. He was revived from the dead by the invention of the doctors at the hospital. He prefers not to remove his

protective clothing, to avoid upsetting others. His injuries were... considerable. If they have further questions, the doctors can answer them better than he can.

- **Oral History or Piloting:** The pilot introduces himself as **Art Hannigan**. He recognizes them if he saw them from the air; otherwise, he greets them and congratulates them on finding their way to the one good place left in all the world. The doctors here are working miracles — the Investigators should go to the hospital and lend a hand if they can, because the work that's being done here is going to save the world. He's just proud he can play a small part in it.

He's spraying all the surrounding countryside with the chemical compound. He knows that it reanimates the dead — but don't put it like that. He's not *dead*, just alive through artificial means. Would you call a man kept alive by an iron lung dead? Of course not!

This is only the first part of the plan to save the world. The doctors know more.

The Hospital

The hospital is inhabited almost entirely by the living dead. Some died comparatively peacefully, by the standards of the post-apocalyptic nightmare the world has become. They starved, they thirsted, or they perished from some disease. Some even took their own lives, either deliberately or because they knew they would rise again. These living dead can barely be distinguished from ordinary humans. Others died through violence, through gory accident, or through some supernatural means. Those still intact enough to pass for human are also welcome in the hospital. Those who are not are invited to join the Guardians (or end their second existence painlessly, as the doctors have a drug that counter-acts the effects of the reanimation serum.)

The Doctor

The hospital's administrator and chief researcher is **Dr. Alexis Carrel**. No doubt

the Investigators have questions, or are already suspicious of what's going on here — the good doctor is here to set their minds at ease. Play Carrel as confident, rational and grimly determined — like a doctor doing triage on the entire human race. He's in his late 60s; his native French accent is barely noticeable, as he's lived in the United States since 1903.

- **Anthropology:** You are familiar with the opinions of Dr. Carrel; certainly, before the Apocalypse, he was a strong advocate for eugenics, even suggesting that criminals and 'deviants' be euthanized.
- **Assess Honesty:** Carrel isn't being completely forthcoming, but he's not lying to you — or to himself. You guess he prides himself on his honesty and rationality.
- **Biology:** Dr. Carrel is a pioneer in transplants and thoracic surgery — why, he won the Noble Prize for Medicine in 1912! You recall that he was on the faculty of the Rockefeller Institute of Medical Research in New York — what a stroke of good fortune that he was not there when the bomb hit!
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** This is the triumph of human science, not Mythos sorcery — or perhaps this is where they start to become indistinguishable.
- **Medicine:** Dr. Carrel is still alive.
 - A 1-point **Intimidation** or **Theology** spend forces the doctor to admit he's not willing to subject himself to the revivification process until he's sure it won't affect his thought processes.
- **Theology:** Dr. Carrel is a devout Catholic — and it appears that his faith has been strengthened by the apocalypse. You see in his eyes the determination of a man who knows he is doing God's work.

He reveals the following without the players needing to spend any points or employ any investigative abilities. You can deliver it as a mad-scientist monologue if you wish, or as a conversation with the players.



Slaves of the Mother

1. Dr. Carrel and his associate, Dr. Carington, stumbled upon the formula in the notes of an obscure and reviled medical researcher, Herbert West of Arkham. They secretly carried out some of their own experiments in revivification in the early 1930s, but stopped out of... moral concerns. Also, the initial formula often failed to correctly preserve brain function, turning the revived into violent, vengeful monsters.
2. Then, when the apocalypse struck and wiped out so many millions, they started their work again. They believed that within a few years, the damage inflicted on the Earth by the bombs and monsters would render the human race extinct, and have seen nothing to alter this conviction. Humanity as it was is doomed — the few survivors, like the Investigators, can at best hope to last only another few years before they are overcome.
3. Humanity as it was is doomed — but humanity can be revived! Through their experiments, they perfected West's original formula. Now, the minds of the revived are usually preserved intact. The compound can be sprayed from a height, instead of being injected into a fresh corpse.
4. Being revived carries with it many advantages. The revived do not need to sleep, to eat, or to breathe. They are much harder than they were originally, and more resistant to the poisons and other perils of the changed world. He suspects, but cannot prove, that they are effectively immortal, and will never age. The process also lends clarity and calm to the mind — it silences the clamour of the subconscious, leaving only the purity of the higher mind.
5. There is still much to be learned. Ideally, the compound would be targeted to only revive those who remain relatively whole and functional. Currently, it can restore life to disassociated body parts, which is distressing and distasteful. Other revived subjects, while free of the murderous rages that plagued the initial test subjects, return to animation with alarmingly reduced mental capabilities. With more experimentation and testing, Dr. Carrel believes he can eliminate these defects. Until then, the dismembered and the mindless can still be put to productive work as Guardians, protecting the hospital and the growing chemical works from marauding monsters.
6. When they are ready, they will remake the world. The doctor envisages fleets of airplanes sweeping across the United States and beyond, the compound falling like manna from heaven, and the new breed of humanity springing from the soil in response.





Pioneers

The players may have questions about this grand design.

- **What happened to Dr. Carrington?** There was a regrettable accident early in the second phase of their experiments, and Dr. Carrington was killed. She was revived, of course, but they had to use an early version of the serum, and there were complications.
- **What about the living?** To be blunt, they are no longer a priority. The dead outnumber the living more than a hundred to one. He has set up a ward where living visitors to the hospital may be painlessly transitioned to their new existence, but that is the extent of his interest in the topic. He won't force anyone to be

revived, but their fate is inevitable in the long term. Allocating resources to scavenging food, reclaiming land for agriculture or medical treatment for the living is ultimately a waste.

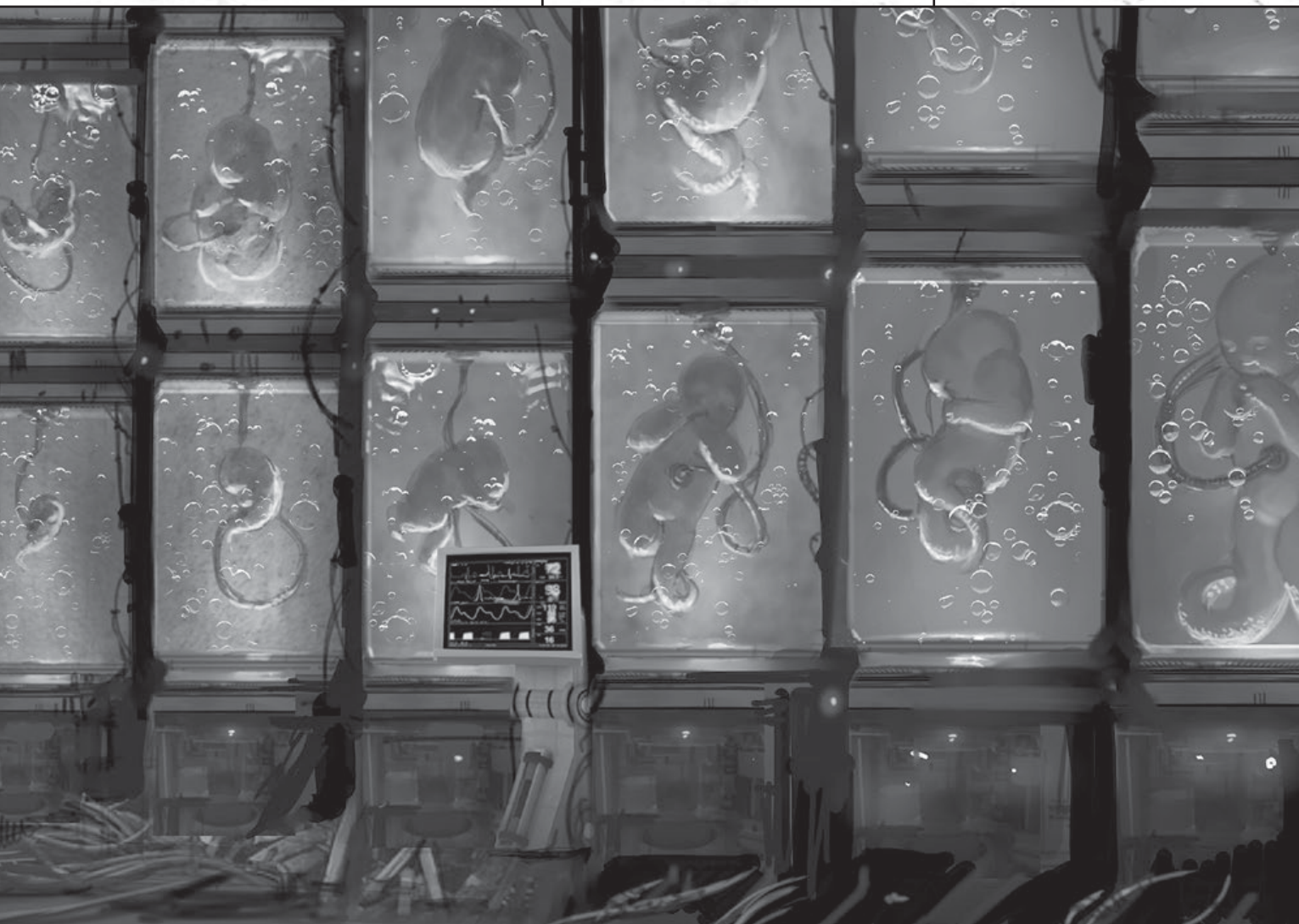
- **What about those who don't want to be brought back to life?** Please, the correct term is 'revived.' For those unwilling to accept the inevitable, or those too badly damaged to function, a painless injection of a counter-agent developed by Dr. Carrington reverses the revivification process.
- **What about the propagation of the species?** Well, if the revived are unaging, that is less of an issue. Nonetheless, a solution is being worked on. The future of the human race is secure.

- **Can they help Edith Jacobs and her unborn child?** Without wishing to be cruel — one child is meaningless. They can provide her with a safe place to give birth, they can give her some of their stored food, but nothing more. It is time to look to the future.

Investigators with points in **Biology**, **Chemistry** or **Medicine** — especially those with Afflictions in those fields — may be approached by Dr. Carrel for assistance in his work. He needs brilliant minds to build the new tomorrow.

Exploring the Hospital

The Investigators can explore most of the hospital freely. Wards no longer needed for the treatment of the injured have become homes for the living dead. The revived





Slaves of the Mother

may not physically need to sleep, but most are still in the habit of doing so. They could live outside the hospital, but most of the nearby city is still dangerous, so it's safer to stay within the area protected by the Guardians.

One small ward is given over to the living who have yet to transition. Here, they are given a little food and water, and access to lethal drugs. Player characters who have given into despair or who accept Dr. Carrel's bleak vision may wish to avail themselves of this opportunity.

Other areas of the hospital are more secure. During the day, the living dead have little to do other than gossip and observe others. At night, the ghastly swarm of Guardians patrol the halls. Sneaking around requires a **Stealth** test (Difficulty 4) to reach any of the secure areas.

The Chemical Works

Formerly the hospital kitchens, this is where Dr. Carrel's assistants brew up the revivification compound on an industrial scale, for delivery to the crop duster planes at the airfield. A **Chemistry** or **Pharmacy** spend also allows the Investigators to find a supply of the lethal counter-agent if they wish.

The Basement

The hospital basement is where the Guardians wait during the day, staying out of sight of the other living dead so they do not remind them of what they are. They whisper to one another in the dark, while those lacking mouths tap out messages in spasmodic tapping on the stone floor.

Some are fanatical believers in Dr. Carrel's plans for humanity, even though they know they will never share in the rebirth of the species. They are content to be shepherds of a future they will never see.

Others serve in the hope they will eventually be given the counter-agent, and released from the horrors of their grotesque existence.

The Secure Ward

This ward was once the hospital's psychiatric wing, where dangerous patients were kept in restraints. Later, the two doctors used it to hold their early

experiments in revivification. Now, there is only one prisoner left — the revived **Dr. Carrington**. She's chained to a bed and gagged. Gaping wounds in her chest expose her still-beating heart and left lung, as well as the shattered ruin of her ribcage. She wheezes and rattles when she talks.

If allowed to speak, she claims that Carrel murdered her when Carrington objected to her partner's plans. She also takes credit for perfecting the West formula. The latter is true; the former, though, is a product of Carrington's insanity — she was killed by a mindless revival, and then brought back herself to finish the work. In her madness, Carrington might accuse Carrel of adding a poison to the sprayed compound, forcibly converting the living to the revived, or of being in league with the Mythos. She urges the Investigators to get hold of the counter-agent and use it to destroy Carrel's empire of the living dead.

The New Breed

The other secure area of the hospital is the children's ward. Here, as promised, Carrel has secured the future for something almost human. The dead cannot procreate as the living do, but even dead cells retain some of their instincts for growth and specialisation. In huge tanks filled with a glowing liquid, a concentrated form of the revivification serum, Dr. Carrel has convinced mixtures of human cells to grow much as they would in the womb.

These, then, are the children of the future, the children of the dead. Their hairless skin is transparent in places, milky grey in others. Their eyes never open, but they have no need of vision to perceive the world around them. They eat only to grow, and can consume any organic material, no matter how foul or toxic. They communicate with one another in a strange private language that spontaneously arose amongst them, as if they knew it before they emerged from the birthing tanks.

- **Cthulhu Mythos:** You catch the names of certain dread Gods in the whispered speech of these monstrous children; they speak of Shub-Niggurath, and Azathoth, and Yog-Sothoth.

Dr. Carrel is confident that, given time and proper study — and perhaps, an adjustment to the mix of chemicals in the tanks — he can socialise and educate the children. They will continue the human race even after all the revived succumb to entropy and crumble to dust.

PIONEERS

The discovery of the hospital and the revived offers a potential end to your *Cthulhu Apocalypse* campaign. Humanity is doomed, but thanks to the malignant science of Herbert West and Dr. Carrel, a new race is born from the ruins. The things that humanity becomes after the Apocalypse are monsters by the standards of any sane mind — but as the doctor points out, the Investigators must look to the future. Is abandoning the lingering morality and sanity of the previous world the price that must be paid to survive in this new one?

Alternatively, the Investigators might decide to struggle against Dr. Carrel's vision. The existence of the counter-agent offers a way to kill the living dead and stop this ghastly mass resurrection, but getting it will not be easy, as long as Carrel has the support of the Guardians.

The fates of the other survivors from the farmhouse may be illustrative.

- Adam & Rebecca Smith accept Carrel's new world, buoyed by their simple faith. The Bible promised that the dead would rise up on the last day — and now this miracle has been accomplished.
- Arnold Cook's fury at being revived leads him to a second demise at the many hands, claws and other flailing limbs of the Guardians.
- Matt Fuller and Edith Jacobs, and their newborn child, set off into the wastes in search of another sanctuary. They will not find it. The Earth is dead, and the dead shall inherit it.



The Elder Patmos

This scenario is an optional coda to the *Cthulhu Apocalypse* campaign. It offers the Investigators a chance to avert the Apocalypse, to unwrite their own histories and save the world — or, at least, exchange one catastrophe for another.

THE HOOK

The Investigators are abducted by the Great Race of Yith.

THE QUESTION

Can the Investigators travel back in time and stop the Flowers from spreading?

THE HORRIBLE TRUTH

Humanity's fate is sealed. One apocalypse or another is inevitable.

THE SPINE

The Investigators are drawn back in time by the Great Race of Yith, who wish to recover the information found in Grundig's notebook. They find themselves in new bodies hundreds of millions of years ago. The Yithians can be persuaded to return the characters to November of 1936, just before the *Lysenko* crashed in Dover and released the seeds. From there, the Investigators must rush to Dover and stop the seeds from being released.

PRISONERS OF THE GREAT RACE

The Investigators fall asleep, or die, or otherwise lose consciousness. When they wake up, they are not where they were. All the Investigators have the same sensations — they cannot move, and cannot feel their legs. Their fingers are numb. Their stomachs churn. All of them have some clamp attached to the back of their heads, so they cannot look around; all they can do is look at a blank stone wall.

A voice — electronically distorted, but familiar to one or more of the Investigators — comes from somewhere behind them. It's the voice of the Source of Stability who was abducted by the Yithians back in *Letters from Ghosts*. The Source urges that Investigator to remain calm, and insists that he is safe here, that there is nothing to worry about any more — but that the Investigator must be ready for some surprising changes. These changes were necessary to bring the Investigator to this place of safety. “*Are you ready? I’m going to remove the clamp now.*”

The Investigator hears a slimy, slithering noise, like the sound a slug makes only much, much louder. Then the clamp holding his head — or, more accurately, his eye-stalk — is removed, and the Investigator can look around. He is in a stone chamber with several cone-shaped beings. Several of the cones (one per other Investigator, obviously) are clamped in place. Another one of the cone-things stands next to the Investigator, clawed-tentacles wide in a gesture of welcome. From a machine strapped to its alien form, the thing produces a familiar voice.

“Welcome. I’m so glad you could join us. Our hosts will want to talk to you.”

- If an Investigator was abducted during *Letters from Ghosts*, he suddenly remembers his entire experience here in the distant past. He spent many years here, learning to use his new body. The Yithians made him record all his impressions and experiences of the Apocalypse.

Guests of the Yithians

Once all the Investigators have had a chance to speak with their lost Sources of Stability, and have learned the basic motor functions of their new conical bodies, they are led through an arch to another, larger chamber lit by glowing globes. There, surrounded by machines composed of rods and glassy tubes, is another Yithian. This elder specimen is clearly possessed by its original mind — it moves with a cruel certainty and grace that the human-inhabited Yithian bodies can never achieve. It gestures towards a nearby pedestal, where the

Investigators see a huge book with metallic-foil pages and some sort of writing implement.

The Yithians normally communicate through clicking and claw-gestures, but this one also has a mechanical device for producing human speech. “*Which of you saw the readings from the observation device in the Pit?*” it demands, referring to Grundig's notebook. The Elder Yithian is capable of telepathy, so trying to deceive it is futile.

Once one of the Investigators volunteers, the Yithian uses a form of mechanical hypnosis generated by one of its machines. This gives the Investigator perfect recall, allowing him to precisely transcribe Grundig's notes. The Yithian then dismisses the Investigators.

Their Sources of Stability lead them to a garden terrace overlooking the weird city of the Great Race. Jungles of titanic ferns grow under the hot sun of three hundred million years ago. Strange cyclopean buildings with barred windows loom out of the jungle. In the distance, the characters can see even taller towers, but these ones are made of basalt. None of the windows face in that direction, and the Sources of Stability explain that the Yithians do not like to think about those towers.

After several days — the Yithian bodies do not require sleep, and there is an ample supply of the vegetable slurry they consume for nourishment — the characters are escorted back to the central chamber and the Elder Yithian.

The Choice

“Many millennia after your time,” explains the Elder, “we shall transfer our minds forward *en masse*, to inhabit the insect race that inherits the Earth after humanity's demise. That is certain. It must happen. However, the... interregnum in which your species evolved and died is more fluid. Time can be altered. We iterate through your endings, searching for the one that best suits our purposes.”

It gestures to the book. “We have analysed this information. It is permissible to return you to a time before your civilization was destroyed, if you wish. But there is a cost.”



Slaves of the Mother

- The Yithians can send the characters back to before the train crash that began this weird adventure, back to November of 1936.
- However, as the minds of the Sources of Stability come from *after* that point, they will not be part of the changed timeline. They will be erased — as will any Investigators who remain behind. In the new timeline, these minds will not exist. Their bodies will be present, but left empty.
- Even if the Investigators manage to stop the release of the Flowers, that does not guarantee the survival of humanity. The Apocalypse will occur in some other form, but the time of that Armageddon cannot be known in advance. The world might end in 1937 instead of 1936, or it might continue for thousands more centuries before humanity finally goes extinct.

The Investigators must decide whether or not to take this offer. The Sources of Stability may counsel them one way or another, depending on their personalities. They have all lived in the Yithian city for many, many years, and are comfortable and happy here. If the Investigators do return to 1936, they condemn their friends and relatives to non-existence. Is averting the Apocalypse worth this sacrifice?

Alternatively, the Investigators are welcome to remain with the Yithians. They will be treated as honoured guests, as long as they are willing to relive and transcribe their experiences over and over again. The Yithians wish to know as much as they can about the human experience of Apocalypse, in preparation for their own inevitable destruction when the Flying Polyps emerge from underground.

Choosing to remain in the Yithian city ends the campaign on a tranquil, resigned note. The Investigators have escaped the horrors of the end times by fleeing to a primordial scientific Eden, ruled by hideous conical scholars.

THE JOURNEY

Assuming the Investigators agree to the Yithian offer, the Yithians prepare the transfer machines. To avoid certain consequences that the Great Race are unwilling to discuss,

there is only a small window in which the transfer can be made. The Investigators will be returned to their original bodies on the 1st of November, 1936, giving them only a few hours to stop the wreck of the *Lysenko*.

For a third time, the Investigators are brought to the chamber of the Elder Yithian. It does not address the Investigators, but clacks a message to its subordinates in the curious claw-speech of the Great Race.

- **Languages:** It said “*and with strange aeons even death may die*”.

The machines activate, and the Investigators’ minds flit through three hundred thousand millennia. For a moment, they are outside time, and can see the whole span of Earth’s history passing before them. *There* is when the Earth congealed and cooled; *there* is when the star-headed Elder Things filtered down from the sky, and left their footprints on archaic rocks; there is the birth of terrestrial life, billions of years of single-celled organisms that suddenly give rise to a brief riot of multicellular life. Hideous tentacled horrors led by a nightmarish priest descend upon our planet, reign for a time, and then sink beneath the waves to slumber fitfully. Civilisations rise and fall. The Earth, from this perspective, is like some rotten fruit, gnawed by vile worms and infested with fungus and crawling things.

Then there is an eye blink, a flash in which something moves fitfully over the face of the Earth. In comparison to the races that come before and after, the time of humanity is pathetically brief and limited; mankind never delves into the stygian depths of the world that the Investigators can perceive from their extra-temporal perspective, nor do any of mankind’s works last for more than an instant. Humanity’s existence lasts but an instant before it is blotted out by some amorphous, unnameable darkness. The Yithian time-machines send the Investigators to the far end of that brief span...

And then the god-like perspective fades, the Investigators rotate back to linear time, and find themselves in London.

The Wedding Party

It is the evening of the 1st of November, 1936. All the Investigators are in London. In the original timeline, they took a train to Dover early the next morning, by which time the *Lysenko* had already crashed and released its deadly cargo. For the Investigators to

succeed, they must race to Victoria station to catch the last evening train to Dover.

Emphasise the crowded streets, the press of humanity, and the unutterable strangeness of the mundane. For the Investigators who have spent years surviving in the chaos of the post-apocalyptic world, London is a shock worthy of a 4-point **Stability** test.

The train races through the gloomy November evening. Around the Investigators, people talk of trivial things — the American election, the launch of the new television service, the terrible weather. Rain splatters against the windows as a storm blows in from the east. As the train approaches its destination, it rattles and bumps over a particularly sharp bend. Why, if the driver were asleep or dead, that could derail the train.

At five minutes to midnight, the train arrives in Dover.

The Lysenko

The Russian freighter *Lysenko* is docked at the port of Dover. She is moored at the end of one of the long wharves, alongside several other freighters. In the original timeline, a mysterious earthquake jolted the *Lysenko*, sending it smashing into the dock and breaking open her sealed cargo deck, releasing the Flowers. That earthquake will happen again soon.

The *Lysenko* is under the aegis of the Ministry of War. The sailors on board are armed.

The Investigators may discern the following.

1. They need to move the *Lysenko* quickly.

- **Geology:** You sense faint tremors in the earth, and the waves lap against the quays with added intensity. The quake is building.
- **History:** From what you recall, the *Lysenko* was — will be! — damaged sometime within the next few hours. You should get to her quickly.
- **Interrogation:** When you interrogated the Russian — either tomorrow, or many years ago, depending on how you look at it — he said that the ship was damaged by a freak wave caused by an earthquake during the night. That might happen at any moment.
- **Intuition:** That ship carries the seeds. You need to get there immediately.



The Elder Patmos

2. The ship is guarded.

- **Evidence Collection:** As you watch the ship, you catch sight of a sudden glimmer of red light — someone's standing on the stern of the ship, smoking.
- **Locksmith:** The fence blocking access to the jetty has a simple lock, but as you open it, you spot someone walking back and forth on the deck of the *Lysenko*.
- **Strategy:** The Ministry of War brought the cargo of this ship from Russia. They're obviously trying to keep it secret, but you also suspect it's guarded.

3. There are several ways onto the ship.

- **Architecture:** You spot a rusty ladder leading to the roof of a nearby warehouse. From there, you pick your way across the rooftops until you can climb down close to the ship.
- **Bureaucracy:** You met several Ministry men in the future, and recall some of their names and codewords. You convince the guards that you are inspectors from London, and bluff your way onto the ship.
- **Outdoorsman:** Swimming in this cold night would be unwise, but there's a little rowboat moored at the pier over there. You steal that, row over, and then climb up onto the *Lysenko*.

Alternatively, the characters can just walk up to the guards and explain who they are and why they need to move the *Lysenko*. Mentioning the seeds in the cargo bay is enough for the guards to take the characters seriously and escort them at gunpoint to the captain.

MOVING THE SHIP

Once the Investigators are on the *Lysenko*, they need to move it away from Dover before the earthquake.

Covertly

If they can sneak past the guards (with a successful **Stealth** roll against Difficulty 5), then the Investigators may make their

way to the engine room and start the ship's engines with **Mechanical Repair** or **Piloting**.

Seizing the Ship

The *Lysenko* has a skeleton crew of six, including the Russian (see *The Dead White World*, page 85) and the Captain. All are armed with handguns or rifles. The crew have Health scores of 4 and Firearms and Scuffling scores of 6, with the exception of the Captain and the Russian, who have scores of 10 in all three abilities. To seize the ship, the Investigators need to sneak up on the guards or otherwise surprise them, then spend **Intimidation** to cow them.

Speaking to the Captain

The Captain of the *Lysenko* is an Englishman, although he lived in Russia for many years. He was a former agent of the Ministry who defected, and now hopes to buy his way back into the Crown's good graces with the seeds. To convince him that they are not saboteurs or anarchists, the Investigators need to use **Leadership** or **Intimidation**. The Captain felt the small earthquakes earlier, so suggesting that the ship is in danger if it remains at the pier convinces him to move.

Captured by the Guards

If the Investigators surrender or are captured by the guards, they are marched to the captain. Spending **Reassurance** or **Flattery** convinces the captain to listen to them; from that point, they can work on getting the ship away from the jetty.

From Below

The *Lysenko* casts off from the Dover docks, wallowing in the water as her engines struggle to pull the laden freighter away into deeper sea. The lights of Dover dwindle as she pulls out into the English Channel.

Far below, in the lightless noisome depths of the sea, things stir. The hideous sea-creatures that the Investigators glimpsed coming ashore in *The Dead White World* are on the march. The fall of their cyclopean hooves shakes the bedrock, causing the unnatural earth tremors felt on the surface. One of the creatures now approaches the *Lysenko* from below. It clammers up an underwater ridge and breaks through the waves a few hundred metres astern of the slow-moving freighter.

Call for **Sense Trouble** tests at Difficulty 4 (or the spend of a **Cthulhu Mythos** point) at this point. Those who succeed see a ghastly shape rising from the water behind the ship.

Ramming Speed

If the characters spot the monster and act in time, then they can turn the ship around (with a 2-point **Leadership** or **Navigation** spend) and turn the engines to full power, sending the *Lysenko* ploughing through the creature. Doing so damages the creature enough to send it back into the depths. The *Lysenko* takes the impact on her prow and keel — the two strongest parts of the ship. The crash rattles everyone on board, and cripples the ship forever, but the cargo hold is mercifully undamaged.

Stopping the Seeds

If the characters do not act in time, or do not see the monster rising, then the creature's rugose hide brushes against the *Lysenko*'s hull. The ship lurches; metal tears and buckles, and the characters hear the cargo containers breaking free of their restraints and rolling across the hold. The seeds are loose, but have not yet germinated. As soon as the water sloshing in through the damaged hull touches them, though, the seeds will germinate and spread, and soon the Flowers will consume all of England again.

Sinking the ship at this point is no good, as the seeds must be kept out of the water at all costs. **Intuition** or **Strategy** points to only one solution — fire. The *Lysenko* must burn. **Explosives** or **Mechanical Repair** can turn the ship's diesel fuel tanks into an effective bomb. Give the Investigators a choice — if one of them remains behind to ensure everything works correctly, there is no chance of the seeds escaping the explosion. If they all flee in lifeboats before the blast, then it is likely but not certain that all the seeds are burnt before they can spread.

AFTERMATH

The Great Race iterates through apocalypses. The Elder Yithian hinted to the Investigators that even if they stopped the seeds from spreading, some other doom would one day overtake mankind. The Investigators have seen too much to ever sleep soundly again. Everything is tainted, made abhorrent by the knowledge that it will all inevitably be destroyed.

Apocalypse, after all, is the revelation of hidden truths, and the Investigators can never escape this knowledge.



Appendices

DEAD WHITE WORLD

The Flowery Death Table

To describe particularly grisly deaths, particularly of **Sources of Stability**, use the following table. If necessary, convert the description to fit gender roles: for example, in description number 2, a gentleman might be freshly shaved, rather than made-up.

Alternatively, use these descriptions as inspiration for your own death scenes.

1. Sitting in an armchair, beside an empty bottle of well-chosen Scotch. Has died from the plants growing inside. Perhaps the Scotch was to suppress the pain.
2. Sitting in front of a dressing table, fully made-up and dressed to kill. There is an empty pill bottle beside them.
3. Naked and in bed with a stranger. Empty bottles of champagne sit on the bedside tables. They have died in each other's arms, as the plants grew inside them.

4. When the Investigator enters the room, it is empty. It is cold and draughty: suddenly, they realise the window is open. Outside is a body. The person jumped to their death.
5. Lying in bed, wearing nightwear. Beside them is an empty bottle of pills. They look peaceful.
6. Sitting at a table, formally dressed, although slumped forward. A revolver has dropped on to the floor beside them. They have shot themselves in the temple.

The Flowery Survival Table

Roll or choose to see how someone survived the flowers. Alternatively, invent your own, using these as inspiration.

1. Last night, they drunk only alcoholic drinks. Today, they were so hungover that they slept all day. When they awoke, the water was white and everyone was dead.

2. They only drink milk. They don't like water. (This works best for a child)
3. Above their house is a large, enclosed tank, which supplies all their drinking water.
4. As part of a health diet, they have only been drinking bottled orange juice.
5. They filled the kettle last night, before the water was polluted. This morning, as was their habit, they drank only tea. When they turned the taps on to fill the kettle, the water was white.
6. They have been ill. They slept for many hours, with bottled tonic water beside their bed. Eventually, they became curious why nobody had checked on them, and rose to investigate.





Letters from Ghosts – The Plan of the Desks

THE PLAN OF THE DESKS

The Investigators find this plan carved into a desk or wall. It shows who sat at which desk.

Write the following names on it, one at each desk:

- The names of the two **Sources of Stability** who were abducted.
- The name of the Investigator who was abducted.
- Edward Grundig

- Susan Pittman
- Other assorted names.

Give this plan to the players. Let them discover it early, as soon as they find the writing area, so it remains on the table as they investigate.



Letters from Ghosts - Set 1

My dear,

Do not worry. I have been taken, but I am safe. If I had not been taken, I would have died, and for that deliverance I am thankful.

You believe the world has ended. Believe me, though, you must not fear. There is yet hope and I will guide you towards that hope.

Although the human race is doomed, life goes on.

You must go, now, to find my body. Again, my dear, do not worry. I will write soon.

Yours ever,

OLD GAL,

THIS IS A TURN-UP, ISN'T IT? I BET YOU THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER HEAR FROM ME AGAIN. YOU MUST BE DREADFULLY SHOCKED, POOR THING. POOR DOVER, TOO.

NEVERTHELESS, STIFF UPPER LIP AND SO FORTH. NOW, THIS WILL COME AS A SHOCK, BUT YOU WILL FIND MY BODY SOON. DON'T WORRY! I AM SAFE.

FROM WHERE I AM NOW, I CAN WRITE AND GIVE YOU A BIT OF ADVICE.

FOR THE MOMENT, KEEP SOLDIERING ON. YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS YOU, NOT TO MENTION THE REST OF THE BALLY WORLD! I'LL DROP YOU ANOTHER LINE BEFORE LONG.

A QUICK REQUEST, BEFORE I GO. WHEN YOU FIND MY BODY, IT WILL HAVE THOSE DAMNABLE PLANTS GROWING IN IT. GET RID OF THEM. I HARDLY CARE WHAT YOU DO WITH THE CORPSE.

BE OFF WITH YOU, NOW! GOOD LUCK!

Letters from Ghosts - Set 2

My dear,

I wanted to let you know how well you are doing and how much I love you. Perhaps, indeed, my deliverance has granted me a blessing. After all, when I lived, there was never the time to tell you I loved you. Now that I must write, my communication becomes more thoughtful.

I have been here a good while, now, and often think of you. One might think that the memories would fade, but they do not. After the initial shock, I have learned to be happy here. There are others here, with whom I converse. Life continues, differently from before, but nevertheless it continues, and I am thankful for that.

Have you found my body yet? Do not fret if so. I am very, very proud, both of who you are and of what you are doing.

Yours ever,



OLD GAL,

WELL, DASH ME, IT'S ANOTHER LETTER. HERE WE GO AGAIN.

I HOPE YOU WON'T MIND IF I GET A LITTLE PHILOSOPHICAL. PERHAPS IT IS THE OLD AGE. I WANTED TO LET YOU KNOW HOW FOND I AM OF YOU. ALWAYS WAS. YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN SPECIAL TO ME AND, RIGHT NOW, YOU MAKE ME VERY, VERY PROUD.

NOW, I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING, BUT NO! I AM NOT DRUNK. MERELY BEING AFFECTIONATE AND, PERHAPS, A LITTLE NOSTALGIC. NO NEED TO WORRY, OLD GAL. THINGS HERE ARE TICKETY-BOO, BY WHICH I MEAN PLEASANT AND NOT A LITTLE FASCINATING. IT WAS STRANGE AT FIRST, BUT I'M PERFECTLY HAPPY THESE DAYS.

STILL, WHAT AM I DOING, WAFFLING ON, WHEN YOU HAVE WORK TO DO? ONWARDS, NOW, TO BATTERSEA! SO MUCH TO DO!





Letters from Ghosts - Set 3

My dear,

This is my very final letter to you. This is where I spent my remaining days, in a body that was not my own, but in the company of many others. Our captors were kind to me: I read and travelled much while I stayed here.

Perhaps, indeed, captors is too strong a word. They rescued me. When the apocalypse came, they took me from our bodies and brought into the past. Some of them sent their minds forward into our bodies, too. This is where I spent my final days.

As I said, I have read much and communicated with people who lived after I did. From this, I know the path the world will take, and I can give you one warning.

You must go to Blackpool. There will be an invasion, shortly, which you must prevent. I cannot tell you more, because I do not know more and because I fear that our captors would destroy this letter if I told you too much. Nevertheless, the warning is genuine. Go to Blackpool and stop the invasion.

Yours ever,

OLD GAL,

AND HERE YOU ARE! THIS WAS WHERE I SPENT MY FINAL DAYS. WHAT DO YOU THINK, EH? IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE MUCH, BUT I WAS RATHER HAPPY. HAPPIER THAN I WOULD HAVE BEEN WITH PLANTS GROWING INSIDE ME, ANYWAY.

THE ODDEST THING WAS MY BODY. THEY TOOK OUR MINDS, YOU SEE, AND TOOK THEM INTO THE PAST. WHOOSH! OUR MINDS WERE PUT INTO THEIR BODIES. THEY WERE ALIENS, YOU SEE, CONICAL AND LEATHERY. TOOK SOME WHILE GETTING USED TO, WHICH WAS WHY MY HANDWRITING WAS SO BLOODY AWFUL FOR THE FIRST FEW LETTERS. SORRY ABOUT THAT. SOME OF THEM SENT THEIR MINDS FORWARD INTO OUR BODIES, TOO. WHOOSH AGAIN!

SO THERE YOU HAVE IT. I DIED SOME YEARS AGO: SEVERAL MILLION, TO BE EXACT. IT WASN'T A BAD LIFE, WHILE IT LASTED. ONE GREW USED TO BEING A BLOODY GREAT CONE. I READ, TOO, AND TALKED TO OTHERS ABOUT THE FUTURE.

WAK4 REMINDS ME! YOUR FUTURE. I'VE TALKED TO OTHERS (I CAN'T TELL YOU WHO) WHO KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN. YOU MUST GO TO BLACKPOOL. CAN'T SAY TOO MUCH, BUT YOU MUST STOP AN INVASION. NOW, I REALISE YOU'LL BE INCLINED TO IGNORE THIS. AFTER ALL, BASING DECISIONS ON THE ADVICE OF PREHISTORIC RELATIVES WHO THOUGHT THEY WERE CONICAL ALIENS? PERHAPS NOT A SOUND PLAN. BUT DO IT ANYWAY, THERE'S MY GIRL. IT'S BLOODY IMPORTANT. SERIOUSLY. GO THERE. STOP INVASION. IMPORTANT.



Letters from Ghosts - The Instructions

Instructions I

There are no specific instructions for you.

However, please act as if you have been given detailed instructions. To assist you, here is a block of text to read.

"Toward the end of the year 1920 the Government of the United States had practically completed the programme, adopted during the last months of President Winthrop's administration. The country was apparently tranquil. Everybody knows how the Tariff and Labour questions were

settled. The war with Germany, incident on that country's seizure of the Samoan Islands, had left no visible scars upon the republic, and the temporary occupation of Norfolk by the invading army had been forgotten in the joy over repeated naval victories, and the subsequent ridiculous plight of General Von Gartenlaube's forces in the State of New Jersey. The Cuban and Hawaiian investments had paid one hundred per cent and the territory of Samoa was well worth its cost as a coaling station. The

country was in a superb state of defense. Every coast city had been well supplied with land fortifications; the army under the parental eye of the General Staff, organized according to the Prussian system, had been increased to 300,000 men, with a territorial reserve of a million; and six magnificent squadrons of cruisers and battle-ships patrolled the six stations of the navigable seas, leaving a steam reserve amply fitted to control home waters."



Letters from Ghosts - The Instructions

Instructions 2

When the monsters rose from the sea, you were taken from your body. Your Investigator is now occupied by an alien, whom you will play in this scenario.

You are one of the Great Race of Yith. Your race learns about other species by taking their minds from their bodies. The abducted minds are placed in a Yithian body, where they write details about their life. Meanwhile, a member of your Race occupies the original body.

This transfer takes place across time. Hence, your original Investigator is now in prehistoric times, in an alien body, writing about their life at a large granite table. You now play the alien that inhabits your Investigator's body. Continue acting normally: you do not want to reveal your identity yet.

However, you remember nothing that happened before the creatures rose from the sea. Thus, you do not remember the train crash, nor the Russian sailor, nor the creatures rising from the sea. In conversation, you are strangely distant. Finally, your knowledge of humans is learned from

books. This means, for example, that you cannot tell the time, from a clock, unless you pause to calculate it.

Keep rolling for Stability and Sanity and tracking their scores, so that other players do not get suspicious. However, these scores do not matter: you will suffer no ill-effects for low scores. Keep track of your Health as before. This score does matter: you can still fall unconscious or be killed.

Later, the other Investigators may discover your true identity. Indeed, towards the end of the scenario, you should make your alien nature more obvious. Ideally, they will unmask you right at the end.

If the other Investigators discover who you are, reveal the following clues. Give them one at a time, when someone uses a plausible skill:

- You are one of the Great Race of Yith, who learn about other species by taking them from their bodies. You are fascinated by humans' reaction to the apocalypse. In particular, you are enjoying

observing how the Investigators cope with their dying world.

- One day, your race will face its own apocalypse. You, then, must learn whatever you can from the human apocalypse.
- The Investigators' Sources of Stability are safe. They are in prehistoric times, writing about their lives.
- The Great Race could change history and avert the apocalypse. You could, for example, transplant the Investigators' minds into their bodies before the apocalypse. Then, knowing what they know now, they could stop the world ending. But you will not do this. Instead, you will continue observing, learning from the destruction of the human race.

Once this last clue is revealed, the alien leaves your body and your original Investigator returns.



Instructions 3

In your arm is a small green growth, resembling the shoots of a plant.

Instructions 4

There are no specific instructions for you.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

CTHULHU APOCALYPSE™

Player Name:

Sanity¹

0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

Hit Threshold³

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: Agnes Bartlett

Drive: Arrogance

Occupation:² Author

Sources of Stability: Major Tom Bartlett, my father. Jane Partridge, my mother. Mrs Handy, my next door neighbour.

Pillars of Sanity: Nature can be tamed. People have inner strength. The countryside.

Academic Abilities

Anthropology 1

Architecture 1

Biology¹⁰ 1

History 2

Languages^{6, 10} 2

Library Use^{6, 10} 2

Theology 1

Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty 2

Bargain 1

Intimidation 1

Reassurance 1

Technical Abilities

Craft¹⁰ 1

Evidence Collection¹⁰ 2

Outdoorsman 2

General Abilities

Athletics¹⁰ 10

Driving¹⁰ 10

Electrical Repair^{(1), 10} 5

Firearms^{5, 10} 6

Health^{9, 10} 10

Mechanical Repair^{(1), 10} 5

Riding¹⁰ 5

Sanity⁹ 10

Stability⁹ 10

Psychic Abilities^{10, 11}

- Dreaming
- Medium
- Premonitions
- Psychic Scream
- Remote Viewing
- Telepathy
- Mind Reading
- Aura Reading
- Control
- Emotion Projection

In the quiet Cotswolds, you write romantic novels. Over the years, you have built a fan base, and your work involves writing to the formula they like. You watch sheep in the neighbouring fields, while writing tales of young love.

It is not a love that you have experienced yourself. Your love for your husband is built, not on passion, but practicality: he is amiable, useful and your daily routines fit well together. Sometimes, friends ask you whether your novels are an outlet for a hidden passion, but they are not. You are perfectly content.

In your marriage, you are the practical one. You find physical labour a useful break from your writing and enjoy making minor repairs about the house. Recently, you even built a small outhouse, teaching yourself bricklaying. Richard, on the other hand, is happiest in the kitchen and enjoys cooking your meals.

Thus, you fit together rather well. Today, you are travelling to the wedding of a less well-fitting couple. Jackie Golightly, a flighty girl, is marrying Frederick Grant, a pleasant boy from a family you know. Your father, Major Bartlett, knows the boy from the army and is also invited.

It will undoubtedly be a pleasant day. You are particularly looking forward to the train journey, which you habitually pass by staring out of the window, occasionally writing your thoughts in a notebook. Richard has packed you both a lunch of bottled orange juice and sandwiches from yesterday's chicken. It will be a pleasure.

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.

¹⁰ Ability can be Afflicted. See p. 46 of *Cthulhu Apocalypse: The Apocalypse Machine*

¹¹ Abilities new to Cthulhu Apocalypse

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

CTHULHU

APOCALYPSE™

Player Name:

Sanity¹

0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

Hit Threshold³

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

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

⁴ 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.

¹⁰Ability can be Afflicted. See p. 46 of *Cthulhu Apocalypse: The Apocalypse Machine*

¹¹ Abilities new to Cthulhu Apocalypse

Investigator Name: Richard Bartlett

Drive: Follower

Occupation:² Dilettante

Sources of Stability: Major Bartlett, my father-in-law. Sir Edward North, my father. Mrs Handy, my neighbour.

Pillars of Sanity: You can always rely on your money. You can trust plants. There is nothing that a good night's sleep won't cure.

Academic Abilities

Archaeology 1

Biology¹⁰ 2

Geology¹⁰ 1

History 1

Languages^{6, 10} 2

Library Use 2

Medicine 1

Theology 2

Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty 1

Bureaucracy 1

Flattery 2

Oral History 1

Reassurance 1

Technical Abilities

Art 1

Outdoorsman 2

General Abilities

Athletics¹⁰ 5

Driving¹⁰ 5

First Aid¹⁰ 10

Health^{9, 10} 10

Riding¹⁰ 10

Sanity⁹ 10

Stability⁹ 10

Scuffling¹⁰ 5

Sense Trouble¹⁰ 5

Psychic Abilities^{10, 11}

- Dreaming
- Medium
- Premonitions
- Psychic Scream
- Remote Viewing
- Telepathy
- Mind Reading
- Aura Reading
- Control
- Emotion Projection

If you are honest, your farm does not make much money. Some years, especially recent years, it even loses money. Yet you still love farming, in the traditional way your learned from your father, even if more modern techniques would be more profitable.

In fact, your love of plants has become your obsession. You have taught yourself botany, through practical experience and hugely expensive books. You frequently travel to the British Museum Library to read botanical journals and are well-known at Kew Gardens.

Fortunately, you have a fortune to rely on. There is also your wife, Agnes, who writes rather silly novels. You are, as your friends tell you, something of a kept man. You are devoted to Agnes: you would, to be frank, follow her anywhere. She is your rock, the one constant in your life.

Agnes is off to a wedding in Dover, so naturally you are going too. You enjoy your days out with Agnes, passing them mostly in companionable silence and occasionally in gentle conversation. The journey promises to be pleasant.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

CTHULHU APOCALYPSE™

Player Name:

Sanity¹

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: Mark Golightly

Drive: Duty

Occupation:² Journalist

Sources of Stability: Jacqueline Golightly, my soon-to-be-married sister. Major Golightly, my father. Richard Dimpleby, a colleague at BBC radio.

Pillars of Sanity: The truth must be reported. Humanity will get through this. There must be a rational explanation.

Academic Abilities

Anthropology 1

History 1

Languages^{6, 10} 2

Library Use^{6, 10} 2

Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty 2

Bureaucracy 2

Flattery 1

Reassurance 2

Technical Abilities

Art 1

Evidence Collection¹⁰ 2

Outdoorsman 1

Photography 2

General Abilities

Athletics¹⁰ 10

Driving¹⁰ 10

Firearms^{5, 10} 5

First Aid¹⁰ 5

Health^{9, 10} 10

Sanity⁹ 10

Stability⁹ 10

Scuffling¹⁰ 6

Sense Trouble¹⁰ 5

Psychic Abilities^{10, 11}

- Dreaming
- Medium
- Premonitions
- Psychic Scream
- Remote Viewing
- Telepathy
- Mind Reading
- Aura Reading
- Control
- Emotion Projection

You were born in 1901, the year that Marconi first broadcast radio across the Atlantic. Throughout your childhood, you were fascinated by radio, tinkering with electrical circuits until you could send a signal.

Once you reached adulthood, however, you put your love of radio aside and followed your father's career as a journalist. A friend got you a job on the South Wales Echo, but Cardiff was too rainy for your taste, and you quickly transferred to the Evening Post in Nottingham. After several long and happy years, you were asked to join the BBC as a radio reporter.

Here, finally, was an opportunity to combine your passions for journalism and radio. Journalism, you have always believed, was not merely a profession but a calling: you have a duty to tell people what is happening. So, at the beginning of this year, you took up the post. Your family, especially your sister, regularly tuned into the BBC Regional Programme to hear your voice.

Today is your first day off since you started the job. You have been given leave to attend your sister's wedding in Dover. To pass the journey, you have made a flask of coffee: in fact, if you are honest, you reheated last night's coffee in a pan. Although the train is late and you are sad to be away from the microphone, you look forward to the event with happy anticipation.

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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

⁴ 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.

¹⁰ Ability can be Afflicted. See p. 46 of *Cthulhu Apocalypse: The Apocalypse Machine*

¹¹ Abilities new to Cthulhu Apocalypse

CTHULHU TRAIL OF CTHULHU APOCALYPSE™

Player Name:

Sanity¹

0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

Hit Threshold³

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

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⁶ In a Pulp game If your Firearms rating is 5 you can fire two pistols at once (see p. 42)

⁷ Assign one language per point, during play. Record them here.

⁸ Any Fleeing rating above twice your Athletics rating costs one point for two.

⁹ Only Alienists and Parapsychologists can buy Hypnosis, and only in a Pulp game

¹⁰ You start with 4 free Sanity points, 1 Health and 1 Stability point.

¹¹ Ability can be Afflicted. See p. 46 of *Cthulhu Apocalypse: The ApocalypseMachine*

¹² Abilities new to Cthulhu Apocalypse

Investigator Name: Irene Midgeley

Drive: Curiosity

Occupation:² Doctor

Sources of Stability: Jemima Midgeley, my mother. Professor Elizabeth Derringer, who trained me at the Royal Free Hospital.

Dr Jason Travis, my fiancé.

Pillars of Sanity: Keeping people alive is what counts. If you work hard enough, you can achieve anything Women can do anything as well as men.

Academic Abilities

Anthropology 2

Biology¹⁰ 2

Languages^{6, 10} 2

Library Use 1

Medicine 4

Theology 1

Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty 2

Bargain 1

Bureaucracy 1

Oral History 1

Reassurance 2

Streetwise 1

Technical Abilities

Astronomy¹⁰ 1

Forensics 2

Pharmacy 2

General Abilities

Driving¹⁰ 10

First Aid¹⁰ 10

Fleeing^{7, 10} 10

Health^{9, 10} 8

Mechanical Repair^{10, 10} 3

Preparedness 10

Sanity⁹ 10

Stability⁹ 10

Sense Trouble¹⁰ 10

Psychic Abilities^{10, 11}

- Dreaming
- Medium
- Premonitions
- Psychic Scream
- Remote Viewing
- Telepathy
- Mind Reading
- Aura Reading
- Control
- Emotion Projection

You are used to people not believing you are a doctor. You would prefer, however, that they didn't assume you were a nurse, especially when they then ask where the doctor is.

Getting trained as a doctor was difficult, especially given your middle-class upbringing: it would have been easier if your parents were landowners, but they were teachers. Nevertheless, you fought your way into training at the Royal Free, then talked your way into a job at the London Child Guidance Clinic. Children wouldn't be your first choice of patients, but you cannot complain.

You met Jason, a junior doctor at the Royal Free, during your training. He amused with his overgentlemanly solicitations: was it really necessary, for example, for him to send you flowers before asking you to dinner? You are surprised he didn't ask your father first.

Surprisingly, you have been invited to a wedding in Dover. You went to school with the bride, Jackie Golightly. You were good friends at the time, although you are surprised she still remembers you. Nevertheless, it will be a pleasant change from the clinic.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

CTHULHU APOCALYPSE™

Player Name:

Sanity¹

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: Edith Peel

Drive: Antiquarianism

Occupation:² Archaeologist

Sources of Stability: Patience Peel, your aging mother. Harriet Chalmers Adams, your rival. Martha Peel, your younger sister.

Pillars of Sanity: If you can shoot it, it can't hurt you. Nothing can compete with the dangers you saw in Africa. Ignore the pain and it will go away.

Academic Abilities

Anthropology 1
 Archaeology¹⁰ 2
 Architecture 1
 Biology¹⁰ 2
 Geology¹⁰ 1
 History 2
 Library Use 2
 Medicine 2
 Occult 1

Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty 1
 Bargain 1
 Flattery 1
 Oral History 1
 Technical Abilities
 Chemistry¹⁰ 1
 Outdoorsman 1
 Photography 1

General Abilities

Athletics¹⁰ 10
 Driving¹⁰ 10
 Explosives¹⁰ 1
 Firearms⁵ 10
 Health⁹ 10
 Sanity⁹ 10
 Stability⁹ 10
 Scuffling¹⁰ 10
 Weapons¹⁰ 5

Psychic Abilities^{10, 11}

- Dreaming
- Medium
- Premonitions
- Psychic Scream
- Remote Viewing
- Telepathy
- Mind Reading
- Aura Reading
- Control
- Emotion Projection

You have just returned from Africa, where you unearthed ancient and strange cities in dense forests. While there, you were attacked by a lion and survived. Having coped with that, you feel nothing could scare you.

For the last week, you have been with your elderly mother in Chelsea, an affluent part of London. These visits are becoming longer, you find, since her memory is not what it was. When you arrived, she did not recognise you: the first time this has happened. You wonder what will happen to her: will you be expected to abandon your travels and look after her?

Perhaps it was this thought that prompted you to leave. An invitation arrived to speak in Paris and you jumped at the chance. You threw some things in a suitcase, including your water bottle: you never trust the local water, however irrational it may be in this country.

This morning, you took the first train from London to Dover. As is typical with British trains, it was severely delayed for an unknown reason. Now, however, the train is moving again.

In fact, the invitation is not for another week. However, by a happy coincidence, your old friend Frederick is getting married in Dover. You had declined the invitation as a matter of course, but fate obviously wants you to go. You have not seen Freddie for ten years. It will be a memorable occasion.

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

⁴ 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.

¹⁰ Ability can be Afflicted. See p. 46 of *Cthulhu Apocalypse: The Apocalypse Machine*

¹¹ Abilities new to Cthulhu Apocalypse

The Nation Set Free – The Instructions

An insect just nested inside your head. You can feel it scrabbling through your brain, its claws picking through the folds of your grey matter, its feather wings brushing lightly against the inside of your skull. As it merges with you, alien memories flood your mind.

- The creature is called a Shan. It and the rest of its swarm came to Earth long ago in their temple-ship, folding space in a way you cannot comprehend.
- Some element in Earth's atmosphere trapped them here. Their ship can no longer teleport.
- The Shan planned to wait until they found a way to correct this problem, but can no longer afford to do so. This world is doomed. They have to leave soon.
- The humans were already on the path to completing the holy rite that summons the god Azathoth you cannot hold the Shan equation-name for Him in your primitive mind. The Shan assisted them, pushed them onwards.
- There is a problem. The same element that stops teleportation also interferes with the Shan ritual. Only a human can solve this problem. It is an Earth-problem, so only an Earth-brain can work on it.
- Once this problem is solved, the ritual (or the bomb, from your limited perspective) will be ready. Then the Shan can leave.
- The Shan control the military project codenamed TUBE ALLOYS. Many of the scientists there, including Rutherford, have Shan in their brains. These scientists cannot solve the problem.
- Another scientist, Holsten, left the project after an accident. The Shan do not control him they are deliberately leaving him alone in the hopes he solves the problem.

For the rest of this adventure, your Investigator is under the control of the Shan. Your tasks are:

- To look for a way to solve the problem and complete the bomb. If all else fails, bring the other Investigators to the TUBE ALLOYS project at Ford Halstead.
- Protect the Shan and their temple-ship. Conceal their existence from the uncontrolled humans.

Your Investigator is otherwise unchanged. The Shan cannot control your every action, but can influence and plant suggestions. They can also kill you. You may, if you wish, blurt out a few words of warning to the other Investigators, but you will die a moment later.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

CTHULHU APOCALYPSE™

Player Name:

Sanity¹

0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

Hit Threshold³

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

Occupational Benefits:

Pillars of Sanity:

Build Points:

Academic Abilities	Interpersonal Abilities	General Abilities
Agriculture	Assess Honesty	Athletics ¹⁰
Anthropology	Bargain	Conceal
Archaeology ¹⁰	Bureaucracy	Disguise ^{(1), 10}
Architecture	Flattery	Driving ¹⁰
Biology ¹⁰	Interrogation	Electrical Repair ^{(1), 10}
Botany	Intimidation	Explosives ^{(1), 10}
Cthulhu Mythos ⁴	Intuition	Filch ¹⁰
Cryptography ¹⁰	Oral History	Firearms ^{5, 10}
Geology ¹⁰	Reassurance	First Aid ¹⁰
History	Seduction	Fleeing ^{7, 10}
Languages ^{6, 10}	Streetwise	Health ^{9, 10}
		Hypnosis ⁸
		Mechanical Repair ^{(1), 10}
		Piloting ¹⁰
	Technical Abilities	Preparedness
Library Use	Art	Psychoanalysis
Medicine	Astronomy ¹⁰	Riding ¹⁰
Occult	Chemistry ¹⁰	Sanity ⁹
Physics ¹⁰	Craft ¹⁰	Stability ⁹
Strategy	Evidence Collection ¹⁰	Scavenging ^{10, 11}
Theology	Forensics	Scuffling
	Locksmith ¹⁰	Sense Trouble ¹⁰
	Navigation	Shadowing
	Outdoorsman	Stealth ¹⁰
	Pharmacy	Weapons ¹⁰
	Photography	

SOURCES OF STABILITY:

PSYCHIC ABILITIES^{10, 11}

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dreaming • Medium • Premonitions • Psychic Scream • Remote Viewing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telepathy • Mind Reading • Aura Reading • Control • Emotion Projection |
|--|--|

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

⁴ These General abilities double up as Investigative abilities

⁵ Usually, you can't start with Cthulhu Mythos. Sanity is limited to 10-Cthulhu Mythos.

⁶ In a Pulp game If your Firearms rating is 5 you can fire two pistols at once (see p. 42)

⁷ Assign one language per point, during play. Record them here.

⁸ Any Fleeing rating above twice your Athletics rating costs one point for two.

⁹ Only Alienists and Parapsychologists can buy Hypnosis, and only in a Pulp game

¹⁰ You start with 4 free Sanity points, 1 Health and 1 Stability point.

¹¹ Ability can be Afflicted. See p. 46 of *Cthulhu Apocalypse: The Apocalypse Machine*

¹² Abilities new to Cthulhu Apocalypse



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