

The Journey©2002
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Call of Cthulhu

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Introduction

This adventure is set in Europe in the 1920s game period. In this adventure, the investigators delve into the mysteries of the Order of the Ancient Stone and attempt to learn some of its dark and horrid secrets.

The adventure is challenging, but not overly so, and should prove suitable for a group of 3-7 moderately experienced investigators.

This adventure is intended to be a continuation of the adventure "War Buddy." However, with some suitable modifications it can easily be played as a stand-alone adventure or as part of another campaign.

Getting the Investigators Involved

This adventure is written on the assumption that the investigators have completed "War Buddy." It is also assumed that the investigators have allied themselves with Father Henesey and that they have a Shard of the Stone in their possession. If this is not the case, the Keeper will need to arrange a suitable adventure so that the investigators have an ally as well as a Shard of the Stone.

Father Henesey will tell the investigators that the Church has been engaged in a long struggle with various cults and other forces that are inimical to all that is good and holy. He himself has been involved in the struggle for some time. He will tell the investigators that in light of the previous events, it would be best if they left the country for a while. This, he will explain, is not just to help escape potential retaliation, but he has also been informed that there is evidence that additional information useful to both the investigators and himself is to be found in Scotland.

Father Henesey will mention that an old friend of his, Dr. Hiram Jones, is involved in researching cult activities in Scotland and that he has unearthed information that might prove quite useful. Dr. Jones has invited Father Henesey to Scotland and Henesey will suggest that the investigators accompany him.

The Journey

Assuming the investigators agree to accompany him, Father Henesey will book passage on the next vessel to Scotland.

Henesey will not inform the investigators, but he will intentionally allow the Ancient Order of the Stone to learn which ship they are traveling on. It is a bit of a gamble, but Henesey hopes that the cultists will send their agents on the same ship. This way, the good Father hopes, the investigators will be able to confront and defeat the cultists before reaching Scotland. This way, reasons Henesey, it will be some time before the cultists will learn what happened and be able to react. By that time, Henesey hopes, he and the investigators will be in Scotland and well into their research.

The Ship

The ship the players have booked passage on is a mid-sized vessel that carries both passengers and freight. The ship, which is British, is called the *John Harvey*. It is an older ship and makes an average of twenty knots.

The *John Harvey's* accommodations are comfortable and the cabins are well appointed, but not luxurious. The ship has a pleasant dining area and the ship's cooks are quite skilled. Passengers can amuse themselves at the ship's bar or by playing some of the shipboard games or engaging in the various recreational activities offered.

Actions Aboard Ship

Just as Henesey hopes, cultists from the Order of the Stone will be onboard the ship.

The lead cultist, Daniel West, will spend some time checking out the investigators. Once the ship is far out to sea (and out of the range of help) Daniel West and his cultists will stage an attack. West will begin the attack by activating his Shudos disk. This will disable the ship's compass and communication equipment. Once the disk has been activated, Daniel West and his followers will quietly capture some passengers and use their blood to summon Lesser Blood Vortexes. Once West has summoned the Lesser Blood Vortexes, he will turn them against the investigators and the crew.

Out at sea, with no working electronics, the investigators can expect to receive no outside help.

Conclusion

If the investigators are defeated, West will question them, then kill them. If the investigators win, they might have the chance to interrogate West.

If the investigators are able to save the ship, the passengers, crew and owners will be grateful. The investigators should also receive a modest 1D3 Sanity Award.

Assuming the investigators survive, the adventure continues in the next in the series: "The Bog."

NPCs

Father Ronald Henesey, Catholic Priest

STR: 12 CON:13 SIZ:13 INT:14 POW:15 DEX: 13 APP:12 EDU: 19 SAN: 72

HP: 13

DB:+1D4

Note: If the investigators have completed “War Buddy,” then they will already know Father Henesey. If his adventure is being run on its own, the Keeper will need to introduce him.

Description: Henesey is forty years old, but still in excellent shape. He has black hair and brown eyes. He has a thick beard and a scar on the left side of his face, from a shell fragment. Henesey is a member of a society that has been fighting against the evil and madness of cults like Blake’s for centuries.

Henesey is a brave man and is not afraid of combat, having served in the war before taking his vows.

Important Skills: Climb 55%, Cthulhu Mythos 6%, Credit Rating 34%, Dodge 37%, Fast Talk 35%, Hide 21%, History 35%, Library Use 55%, Natural History 25%, Occult 65%, Latin 55%, Persuade 55%, Rifle 55%

Spells: Create Silver Blood

Weapon: .45 Automatic 51% Damage 1D10+2 Range 15 Yards Attacks 1 Shots 7.

Items: Silver Blood in a silver flask, the Shard (if the investigators do not have it).

Daniel West, Cultist

STR: 12 **CON:** 15 **SIZ:** 14 **INT:** 15 **POW:** 17 **DEX:** 13 **APP:** 14 **EDU:** 19 **SAN:** 00 **HP:** 15

DB: +1D4

Description: West has brown hair, brown eyes and a friendly, honest-looking face. He does his best to appear as a pleasant, young American lawyer. While he is a young American lawyer, he is anything but pleasant. In actuality he is a member of the Order of the Ancient Stone who has been charged with eliminating the investigators and recovering the shard taken by Jack Meredith. West is only a junior member of the order. Hence, he only knows very little about what is going on. However, he has complete faith in (and fear of) Lance Blake and will be unwilling to tell even what little he does know, regardless of how the investigators might threaten him.

Important Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 20%, Fast Talk 56%, Hide 34%, Law 64%, Occult 55%, Persuade 55%, Sneak 42%

Spells: Summon Lesser Blood Vortex , Bind Lesser Blood Vortex

Weapon: .32 Automatic 52% Damage 1D8 Range 15 Yards Attacks 2 Shots 8

Items: Shard Ring, Shudos disk.

The Cultists, Faithful Muscle

Description: The cultists are cannon fodder for Daniel West. Three of them will have knives and one has a hidden .38. They will use better weapons should they become available. The cultists are convinced that their cult, the Brothers of the Stone, will eventually have great power. They do not know that the Brothers of the Stone is essentially a front used by the Order of the Ancient Stone to recruit gullible cannon fodder for dangerous jobs. If defeated and questioned, the cultists will give a variety of unusual answers. For example, they claim to serve the Stone God of Babylon who will drive out the God of Moses and give them the keys to the world. They know nothing of the true purposes of the Order of the Ancient Stone or even that it exists at all.

The Cultists

Characteristics	#1	#2	#3	#4
STR	13	13	16	12
CON	12	15	13	13
SIZ	12	16	16	14
INT	10	10	11	13
POW	9	9	12	11
DEX	12	11	13	14
HP	12	16	15	14
Damage Bonus	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4
Weapon	Knife 61% 1D4+2+db	Knife 55% 1D4+2+db	Knife 58% 1D4+2+db	.38 Revolver 23% 1D10 15 yard base range, 6 shots, Attacks 2.

Mythos Beings

Lesser Blood Vortex, Lesser Servitor Race

Description: Blood Vortexes are terrible beings that must be summoned through a special blood ritual (see below). In their natural state, Blood Vortexes are loci of energy and malign intelligence that dwell in the empty places of space. When summoned, they form swirling bodies from the spilled blood of the victims used in the ritual.

Blood Vortexes move by flying and are remarkably fast and agile. In combat, they slash out with pseudopodia of blood. These tendrils rip at their victims and pull blood from their veins. These attacks inflict 1D6 damage per hit. In addition, the blood can be used to strengthen a Blood Vortex. A Blood Vortex's hit points increases by one point for every two points of damage it inflicts.

Blood Vortexes are themselves resistant to most forms of physical damage (being liquid and energy). They sustain only minimal damage from physical attacks. Attacks that do damage on a large scale (like explosions) and attacks that are especially effective against liquids (such as flame-throwers) will do normal damage. At the Keeper's discretion, other forms of attacks (like high-pressure water hoses) might prove effective.

Characteristics	Rolls	Averages	#1	#2
STR	2D6	7	8	9
CON	3D6	10-11	13	12
SIZ	2D6	7	8	10
INT	3D6	7	7	6
POW	2D6	7	8	5
DEX	5D6	17	21	22
HP		10-11	14	14
Damage Bonus		0	0	0

Move: 10

Weapons: Tear 60% Damage 1D6

Armor: None, but mundane weapons inflict only minimal damage. They sustain full damage from enchanted weapons and spells. They also regenerate (see above).

Spells: None

Sanity Loss: 0/1D6 Sanity Points to see a Lesser Blood Vortex.

Spells & Items

Create Silver Blood

Knowledge of the ritual to create silver blood enables the caster to transform a mixture of mercury, iron shavings, and a small portion of his own blood into silver blood. The ritual takes three hours of mixing and tracing symbols and patterns into the fluid. The caster must expend six magic points to create enough silver blood to coat the cutting edges of about six knives, or about twenty small projectiles, such as arrowheads. There is no sanity cost for creating silver blood.

Summon/Bind Lesser Blood Vortex

This ritual requires an intelligent humanoid with blood flowing in its veins. As the ritual is cast, the caster slashes the victim's throat with a knife. As the blood gushes forth, the caster makes a rapid circular gesture with his hand which causes the blood to act very strangely. Instead of merely spilling down the victim's chest, the blood will be sucked up rapidly, float, and then spin rapidly. During this time the victim, if still living, will lose a hit point every five seconds. If the ritual succeeds, within a matter of a few minutes, a small rift will appear in the fabric of space-time and a horrid entity will enter and inform the blood, creating a Lesser Blood Vortex. The magic cost varies. For each point used, the chance of success increases by 10%. A result of 96-00 is a failure. Casting the spell also costs 1D3 Sanity points. Once bound, the Lesser Blood Vortex will obey the caster. If the binding fails, the Lesser Blood Vortex will attack the nearest living creature in search of blood.

Items

Shudos Disk: A Shudos Disk is a rare item that is designed to interfere with compasses and electronic means of communication and detection as well as magnetic compasses. The device might be a form of Mi-Go technology. A disk appears as a metallic disk with an odd oily feel to it. A disk is deeply engraved with odd symbols and has a clear stone in the center. When activated, a disk will begin to consume itself. As the disk "burns," it will disrupt compasses, radios, and similar devices within 100 kilometers. People within the area of effect will "hear" an extremely faint humming noise that is very easy to ignore. The hum stems from the effect of the disk's field on the human nervous system. A Shudos Disk is activated by holding the central stone and sending a mental command. Once activated a disk will "burn" for twelve hours, leaving behind an oily, metallic ash.

Silver Blood: Silver blood is an enchanted mixture of mercury, iron and more exotic items. It is a thick fluid which will cling tenaciously to almost every metal

except silver. It is known as silver blood because it looks like liquid silver with thin veins of red fluid (which is actually blood). When used to coat a weapon or projectile, it enables the weapon or projectile to act as an enchanted weapon. The first attack with a coated melee weapon will do full damage, the second attack half damage, and the third one quarter. After that, the silver blood will have come off the weapon. Coated projectiles can be used once. If a projectile hits, it will do full damage and the silver blood will be left in/on the target. If the projectile misses, the silver blood will most likely come off on whatever is hit. If a weapon or projectile is coated with silver blood, but it is not used within about 15 minutes, the silver blood will gradually drip from the weapon or projectile. Steps may be taken to prevent this from happening, such as pushing the silver blood back onto the weapon or projectile. The effectiveness of such methods is left up to the Keeper.

Shard of the Stone

This shard is from one of the legendary six stones. The shard appears to be made of gray slate, but it has an odd metallic sheen to it. It is cool, almost cold to the touch. If a person touches it or even gets within a few inches of the stone, strange images will gradually appear in the person's mind. The images will grow stronger the longer a person holds it. The images appear to be mathematical and geometric symbols, odd curving marks and anomalies of space-time, and brief, but horrific, manifestations of indescribable things. If a person holds the shard for longer than fifteen minutes, the images will manifest strongly enough to affect the person's mind. For every fifteen minutes the person holds the stone, the investigator must make a Sanity check. If the roll fails, the investigator loses 1 point of Sanity. A successful roll results in no sanity loss. While the stone is held, the person will receive, in addition to the maddening images, images that indicate where the full stone is located. For every fifteen minutes the shard is held, the investigator should roll 1D10 and note the results. This is the percent chance the person holding the shard will receive a useful clue to the location of the stone. The chance of receiving a useful clue is cumulative, so the longer a person holds the shard, the more likely it is that they will receive a useful clue. Of course, the person will be risking his sanity in the attempt. The effects of the shard are blocked by lead, which is why Henesey keeps the shard in a lead-lined box.

Shard Ring

A shard ring consists of a band of lead (to keep the shard from contacting the skin of the wearer) with a tiny shard of one of the six stones. In addition to producing the effects described above, a shard ring has been prepared in such a way that it can detect the stones or shards of them. The shard can detect another shard within one kilometer by creating a faint pulling sensation in the general direction of the shard. A full stone can be detected within 10 kilometers. The shard is not very specific in its indications. For example, it would not pull directly towards a person who had a shard. A shard ring can be worn and used by anyone, but unless a person knows what the ring is for and how to use it (clear their mind and hold out the hand in a relaxed manner) it will not be recognized as a special item.

Full members of the Ancient Order of the Stone are given a Shard Ring as a mark of their position and a means of finding shards and the stones themselves.