

## CREDITS

Thank you to the usual gang as well as the people who purchases Volume 1 and took the time to send me a message letting me know that they enjoyed it! Also, thank you again to Simon Bray and Thomas Raley for use of their artwork. Also, thanks to Thom Raley, Ford Fitch, Mick Swann, Jerry Bryant, David Gassaway and Jason Melnichok for playtesting (whether they knew it or not) The Faunus !Finally, since I forgot last time, a second thank you to Jef Wilkins for his invaluable services in previewing and edits to the original texts!

*“Wherever you go, there you are.”*  
Buckaroo Banzai

*Call of Cthulhu* is a Trademark of Chaosium Inc. and is used with their permission via the OBS Community Content program.  
For more information please visit Chaosium's website: [www.chaosium.com](http://www.chaosium.com)  
The *Miskatonic Repository Logo* is used under license.

## INTRODUCTION FROM THE AUTHOR

Ahh summer. Some look forward to it from the first fallen leaf till the last bud of spring bursts forth from the ground. Me, well, I've always been more of an autumn guy. Summer has an odd vibe. It's hot, humid at times, and the night, well, the night is weird. So many strange noises. Things in the underbrush, things flitting about, moths, oh don't get me started about how creepy moths are. Then again, I like weird.

Find following three more quick stories for use in your Call of Cthulhu gaming circles. All take place in and around the summer months, I mean months. I do like to call them stories because they are tales of mine that I give to you to retell, but also re-invent as you see fit, add to, embellish, make it your own. I encourage you to do that.

Please note that these are intended to be used with the most recent version of the CoC RPG at the time of original publishing, the 7<sup>th</sup> edition. You will note that I have provided very few stats for use. This is not out of laziness so much as it is intended that you take the time to prepare for your game and gauge the NPCs and assorted nasties to your players. Also there are no character sheets. As a player I have always found that it is best to roll your own. A GM can massage the results or suggest a player do certain things with their character, but rolling stats and assigning personal preferences is part of the whole experience.

The first scenario is entitled **The Faunus**. It is set in the future, in 2120, on an international moon base and an interplanetary transport ship on transit to Mars. The crew has been tasked with transporting general supplies to an orbiting station around the planet and a somewhat mysterious scientific mission to the northern pole of Mars. Note this scenario was run as a one-shot, one evening filler game on *In to the Darkness* (Call of Cthulhu RPG). You can watch it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YCfkS6zxHMU>

The second mini-scenario is **Firewatch**, set in 1965 in the fictional Grove State Park, Oregon. Ranger Gordon has pulled fire watch the week of the Fourth of July. It's dry, really dry. He has brought along a few junior rangers for the weekend. They've brought board games, cards, food and are ready for a long few days watching the forest from the peak. Late at night however they see what might be a party in a remote part of the park that is set aside for nature conservation and not to be used by campers. Reluctantly, they set out to investigate.

The last adventure, another mini, mini scenario, is called **Missing** and takes place in 1983 in and around Boston, Mass. Five young children have vanished the afternoon of the Fourth of July from a local park. Parents, helpful citizens and a few police officers have banded together to search before it becomes dark!

This is volume two of four in the series entitled, *Trouble in Threes*. I hope you enjoy them!

Sean Liddle  
Summer, 2019

## BREAKDOWN OF THE HOW THE SCENARIO SECTIONS WORK FOR THE GM.

### TITLE

*The name of the adventure/story*

### BACKGROUND FOR GM

*Basic information for the GM to assist in preparing to run the game.*

*Year: Year the story takes place. Although some game specifics may only make sense in the year provided, there are always opportunities for you to make modifications for an adventure to fit into an existing campaign.*

*Location: The main locations of the story. These can be cities, an island, a home or building or very generic such as "Northern Canada". Feel free to change or embellish especially if these are used to supplement an existing or planned campaign*

### Summary

*A few paragraphs that detail the story from beginning (pre-gaming prep, background, introduction, gameplay) to the very end. It is intended that this allow the GM to prepare any fleshing out they may wish to make. A GM should take this info and make notes of any changes, any areas they wish to expand upon, note any handouts you may wish to prepare that have not been provided etc.*

### Briefing for all Players

*This section is what is to be read to or sent to the players in advance of the game. I prefer to send such to them by email as a group, followed by separate emails to each regarding player/specific backgrounds, character generation etc. It should allow them enough information to create/generate their characters and prepare them for the game to come.*

### Characters

#### Name

*A brief description of each character that must be played/created, their specific background as it relates to the game and the other characters. The content should be reviewed and edited as needed by the GM in advance and relayed to each*

*player as part of their plater specific emails or discussions. The information should allow them enough detail to generate and modify their character as needed to best suit their playing style and the game.*

### Timeline

*A breakdown of all planned events in the scenario.*

*This is important for successful game management. It is useful for keeping things on track, for seeing what was completed and what was not yet, if something important was missed and can be rolled back into gameplay.*

*Especially useful if you are someone who plays according to actual timelines, i.e. you play online and record the game, and wish to set the adventure as something to be completed in a set number of sessions or fixed timelines. Each of these sections can be estimated in terms of how long they will take. Helpful if the team dithers or goes off track you can best determine when to push them along.*

### SPECIAL NOTES

*Notes that are, well, special! For the GM generally.*

## THE FAUNUS

### BACKGROUND FOR GM

Year: 2120

Location: Moon Base Chao, space freighter The Faunus and empty space between the Moon and Mars

### Summary for Players

(Intended to be shared prior to gaming and character creation).

*“You are all playing the crew of the space freighter The Faunus. You work for Orbus NGO Transportation, a top notch deliverer of goods across the solar system to bases and stations from Venus to Neptune. It is the first day after a long break to retrofit The Faunus with new engines and you meet up on your way to the offices for your briefing.*

### SUMMARY FOR GM:

The makeup of the crew should be at the decision of the players to roll and run however they need to have someone that acts as a pilot and a second as a copilot. These characters can have dual roles if desired i.e. copilot/doctor. Other crew can be scientists being ferried as passengers to the station orbiting mars, general astronaut labor or other company employees. If however you wish you can streamline things and prepare some pre-gens.

The crew enter the game on their way to a meeting with a military officer, Colonel Sun and their company supervisor, Danny McNair. They are instructed to prepare to leave in one day for a quick turnaround mission to Mars Station Beta (space based, geostationary orbit over Olympus Mons) to drop off supplies for the crew and then proceed to the Northern polar region where they will be releasing a series of three experimental terraforming pods from orbit. These will re-enter the atmosphere and land under their own control. The reason that the officer is present at the briefing is to discuss new experimental engines.

The engines are new QuanBio design from Audi/ESA and promise to cut the travel time to Mars to fifteen days. The engine rooms are sealed and not to be entered due to the nature of the mechanics. They can observe remotely and control ship like normal, but all maintenance will be remote and automatic. The pod release also is 100% remotely controlled, the crew need only leave dock at the space station and proceed to a pre-provided geostationary orbit around an area in the North Polar Region and await instructions.

The liftoff and travel is smooth and rapid. No issues with the cargo or the new engines is detected by the players and all seems fairly uneventful. If they decide to do some research they can determine that the engines are essentially giant growing vats of algae that is somehow turned into an almost limitless supply of nuclear fuel. It is a bit of a red herring in that they may spend an inordinate amount of time thinking the engines are the threat.

On the way to Mars, they are asked to detour ever so slightly to send a small probe out to collect samples of a strange comet that has entered the solar system unexpectedly. They approach and find it to be oddly blocky with a visible mineral crystalline structure. The probe collects a fair sized chunk of the comet and returns automatically to the cargo hold.

The crew after a few days begins to suffer from nightmares and the computer has difficulty maintaining the proper temperature and relative humidity levels. At the suggestion of both the computer and the corporate base persons, the entire ship is rebooted. During this short one minute period, a seal is broken in one of the pods and some of the contents, nanobots connected to shoggoth tissue, exit the pod and come in contact with the probe. The shoggoths utilizing the energy from the sample are able to overcome the control of the nanobots over a period of a few days and break free.

The team is awakened days later as they prepare to enter Mars orbit as the shoggoth in one of the pods breaks free and begins to destroy the other pods and the door to the main ship from the hold.

The team will have to fight the shoggoth(s) and/or exit the ship via a maintenance hatch, travel to the rear of the vessel and manually initiate a purge of the hold.

If they survive, the mission ends with them being stopped at the base orbiting Mars for an indefinite time while the investigation takes hold.

If the GM wishes, this adventure could be utilized as they starting point for a series of other adventures.

- Perhaps the terraforming has already begun and the shoggoths have populated the north. Are they all under control?
- Travel back to Earth and investigate
- Wait for corporate to arrive and attempt to assassinate them

## BRIEFING FOR ALL PLAYERS

*“You are the crew of the space freighter The Faunus. You work for Orbus NGO Transportation, a top notch deliverer of goods across the solar system to bases and stations from Venus to Neptune. You have all returned from a three month rest break on earth after a long haul to Europa and have been asked to attend a mission meeting tomorrow morning at the Central Transport Offices with a Colonel Sun. Odd. A military person directly talking with mere transport folks, but whatever, work is work. You can see the Faunus from the walkway as you head to your meeting. You know it’s being refitted with new engines but they are also loading some weird metal pods into the hold. Quiet down the meeting is about to start...”*

## CHARACTERS

### TIMELINE

**(Note: Player/Character specific introductions should occur one on one between GM and player prior to game if applicable.)**

### In Game Background (for all)

GM reads the “Briefing for All Players” and answers any questions.

### PART 1: Orbus Office Briefing

Characters arrive at ORBUS central transport office for pre-flight briefing. On the way they can see their ship The Faunus (owned by ORBUS but they consider it theirs) in the hanger being worked on by crew through thick Aluminum/plastiglas shielding.

They enter the boardroom as they would normally, joking, excited to be back in the saddle and see their director up front standing talking to a very stern looking military person. They know he’s military or at least Earth government because he is wearing a tie. On the moon, this never happens. His visitor badge says Colonel Sun. After preliminary introductions and a request to shut the door, the discussion is taken over by the Colonel.

“Folks, we need you to deliver supplies per normal to the station at Mars and then air drop three containers of Primogentus Anima (PA) to the northern pole region. This will cause a delay of a mere 6 hours to trip. Self-contained pods, all high tech, pre-programmed, just push a button and they will release from depressurized bay #3. Oh and a bonus of 2000 credits to each crew member for this little jaunt, but we require you to keep it quiet and sign these Non-Disclosure forms.”

If asked, PA pods contain newly developed organics intended to feed off of carbon dioxide in air and soil, self-replicate, spread, absorb light (they are very dark) and as a result warm the poles slowly over time. They have been combined with micro nanotech bots to control them and to if/when needed destroy them. Another ship already in geosynchronous orbit (The Willow 867) will assume control of drop as soon as the pods leave ship. Other ship and pods property of Orbus NGO.

The pilot is then provided with a key card that contains the kill code which will “destroy the Anima”. It is to only be used if approved/directed by Earth control.

Characters are then told to show back up the next day at 8:00 for the usual pre-flight ceremonial breakfast. They are told to bring standard gear and that when all is done they will be given a few days at Olympus Mons base. The players can then choose what they take with them however no weapons are allowed or explosives or flammable materials with the exception of personal use size only (1.5 liters for a two week trip per person) of low grade (below 37%) alcohol. They are then briefed on the “no drinking on duty, no flames on ship, no fighting, pilot has right to seclude someone in their cabin as needed, etc.” rules.

## PART 2: Launch

### *The Faunus*

The Faunus is a twenty year old ship, originally designed as a fast picket ship to deliver supplies to the moon and back from Earth. Over the years it became a workhorse of the company and constantly updated for different missions. For the past seven years, it has primarily been used for Earth – Mars runs. It has also been used many times for experimentation of new technology given its upgradeability not often found in freighter craft. It is unarmed but does have multiple hard points should external equipment be needed to be installed including weaponry. The Faunus and has always been painted a bright forest green given its name. The name and logo of the corporation that owns it is proudly painted across its hull in orange reflective letters along with its freighter license number, 90-35768-S. The interior is white and gray plastic walls and ceiling with dark gray magnetic traction flooring. Rooms have blank walls save for the occasional control panel or TV screen or personal decorations in living quarters. Lighting is subdued but suitable to the work conditions as well as dimmable or color changeable (i.e. red for emergencies). All furnishings are comfortable and new after the recent upgrade. The crew love their ship. It is home.

Prior to launch the crew arrives for breakfast. Their supervisor is unable to attend but sends along his personal assistant, a beautiful Swedish woman named Maja in his stead. She knows nothing about the flight and can only assist with basic issues should they ask.

If someone wishes they can perform a psychology roll and if successful they will detect that she is definitely being coy if the flight is discussed but will not divulge any information unless a successful persuade is rolled. If this is the case, and only one person may check if they ask, she will only say that she has heard bits and pieces of the mission being discussed and finds the whole issue around “the lifeform” being creepy. They will not be able to determine if she is talking about the QuanBio engine fuel or the PA and the GM should allow this confusion to fester.

The crew will suit up, enter the craft, perform initial checks, strap in and launch. The ship will loop around earth and the moon twice as it increases speed then lock on to its projected path to mars, increasing speed smoothly over the space of three hours. At the end of that time they will be moving faster than they have in previous flights. They will note that even near the engine room the engines only softly hum.

The crew will go to their assigned quarters, perform duties as makes sense for their job, and entertain themselves etc. throughout the flight. However, it is noted that they will have NO access to cargo bay 3 where the pods are located, it being locked out by Earth control. Furthermore the engine rooms are also now fully inaccessible.

## PART 3: Flight Days 1-10 and Comet

If the GM wishes to role play the initial flight days it should be emphasized that the flight is really, really boring. This will provide them with time and incentive to snoop. Under no circumstances can they gain access to Bay 3 or the engine rooms. They can of course use cameras to examine both. Nothing exciting will be seen.

Personal issues may occur over time

No issues with food or other things of importance

Three days in, the pilot and other ships crew will notice difficulty keeping ship cool. Diagnostics believe it's due to cooling needs in Bay 3. The pods give off heat at a manageable but odd rate. The computer controls can easily be modified to increase coolness but it is noted that it will result in the engines output being reduced by 0.0001%. Negligible but of course the control back at Earth will be highly interested but secretive.

If anyone in the crew decides to research the engines or the PA, they will find limited available information apart from the following:

*QuanBio engines developed by ESA and Audi in response to a contest to develop sustainable propulsion systems sponsored by Orbus NGO. Fuel is living creature that is self-replicating under controlled circumstances. “Nuclear in nature” but proprietary*

*PA is mysteriously not mentioned online however if they search diligently enough, three successful library rolls, they will find mention of the name ONLY in one document on a Russian server noting some form of nanotech development involved in proposed terraforming and that it is related to old 20<sup>th</sup> century research in the Antarctic.*

Six days in, Random crew members will report having nightmares. Hearing voices or sounds when they are trying to react.

Seven days in, request for diversion to photograph a small comet that just appeared on earth sat systems, only a 5 hour delay to do so on Day 10

The GM can either facilitate internal role play for the days 7-10 or skip ahead. The comet is beautiful as they approach it. The Comet is a roundish pile of snowy rock but it is iridescent, likely due to high mineral content says the computer. It predicts that the minerals were "likely formed on larger planet that suffered an impact event, the pieces ejected into space and coalescing into a cometary body over time".

Multiple hundreds of photographs are taken by the computer systems, scans are made. There is no tail yet due to the current distance from sun and the orbit prediction shows no projected impact issues for earth, moon, mars, other stations or populated areas in the system.

The crew are prompted to send out probe to collect samples by the computer which includes some minor checks of the cameras to verify that the hatch beneath cargo bay 1 which contains the probe and two other probes in a sterile state.

Upon return, the probe and samples are stowed in secure cargo bay 5. For interest, bays 2 and 6 are filled with supplies for mars station, bay 3 contains the anime pods, and bay 4 is currently being used to store miscellaneous equipment including firefighting supplies for the orbiting base to transfer to the surface of mars. This includes axes, fire retardant chemicals and fire retardant suits. All crew will know of the contents of all bays. All bays are self-locked but can be opened as required except for the secure/sterile probe bay and the bay the PA pods are stored in. Each bay is connected by a (closed) door to adjacent bays. The area surrounding the bays is also open and empty.

## **PART 4: Awakening (Day 11)**

Mars is now a fully visible ball with definable features. The issues surrounding cooling are increasing again. Bay 3 and 5 cameras have shut down due to condensation problems.

It will likely be determined that someone must physically inspect Bay 3 and 5 to determine what the problem is. Earth control is staying silent and only sending messages asking the crew to maintain course and plans and reallocate to cool the bays. After one day of issue management the computer alerts them to a full breach of door between 3 and 5. A brief flash of camera use shows that one pod has burst open and the door between both bays has been ripped open like a sardine can lid. A black substance is moving between both bays. The camera then goes black.

The computer recommends that both pods be vented to space. Only way to do this is to manually exit the ship in an EVA suit and manually crank the ejection door open. This will take 45 minutes. The airlock hatch is at the center of the ship. There are two EVA suits and two tool kit packs.

As soon as the two crew members exit the ship and begin the long process of work, the computer alerts the remaining crew that the pod bay 3 has opened to the main cargo bay. Camera shows a door half ripped open from the inside.

Plans have now changed. The computer indicates that the main cargo bay and both bays 3 and 5 need to be vented to space manually by the EVA crew. The camera in bay 5 turns on briefly and shows the black goo covering the sample return probe.

The goo (a shoggoth) is absorbing energy from the minerals that were collected by the probe and using its newfound strength to control the nanobots thus giving it newfound strength. Within three turns, the shoggoth turns its attention to the doors from both bays 3 and 5 to be able to enter the main cargo hold. If allowed to do this, within three more rounds it will begin attempting to exit the cargo bay and enter the main ship hallway.

### **Part 5. Battle!**

The crew must now accomplish a series of things. Some options below they may come up with themselves, be prompted to do or stumble across through Idea rolls the GM may allow.

- a) Slow the shoggoth from exiting the cargo bay long enough to manually eject the bay(s) and hold. This can be performed by entering the bay, fighting the creature manually.
- b) Inject cold gas fire suppressant into the cargo hold and venting the atmosphere (not locked out by Earth command) which will make it uninhabitable and make the shoggoth(s) slow then freeze over time. Attacks will slow to 25% normal speed and strength after two rounds. A successful HARD idea roll will give them this choice should they not ask about something similar of the GM.
- c) Do something decisive and suicidal like blow up the ship.

d) Something more creative they come up with!

Weapons available to use: tools, bars, pipes, drills, flares (DANGEROUS), eating utensils, furniture, brute force, rope gun and three claw clamp, electrical wiring, (axes, fire extinguishers (CO2). Also there is one single TASER like weapon the pilot remembers exists in the sealed cabin medical kit. It will / can stun the creature for two rounds with a successful hit.

Other successful idea rolls will result in the following ideas: venting bays and flooding them with moisture (cleaning program) then venting the air this freezing shoggoth, kill code (works on one pod only, the second as yet unopened/affected, oops).

If the EVA crew successfully manages to open them annual cranks outside the ship (MULTIPLE dexterity rolls, strength rolls and anything else the GM wishes to throw at them), a panel will light up beside the final of three cranks. They must select cargo bay as well as pods 3 and 5 to vent them all. There will be a thirty second countdown. Anything not out of the bay by that time will be vented to space.

## PART 5: Epilogue

The game can be ended at this point. The GM may wish to use this as a stepping off point to a new campaign of associated game!

## SPECIAL NOTES

The shoggoth are being used to colonize the planet, melt ice and drive snow to surface as water in conjunction with other pre-existing terraforming means. The comet was source of energy that the #1 shoggoth drew from to escape. The #2 shoggoth MAY be set free by the initial one, however unless left alone with the comet sample for a long period of time it will simply be non-reactive to humans, the nanobots controlling it. IF however it is allowed to be lead to the sample by the initial shoggoth, it will over 10 rounds become self-aware and overcome control of the nanos. The third would be set free and follow the same path however by that time it is likely the ship would be deserted or destroyed.

## SHOGGOTH (3)

### WITH NANOBOT INFUSED GOODNESS!

STR 110 CON 80 SIZ 75 DEX 25 INT 35

POW 70 HP 50

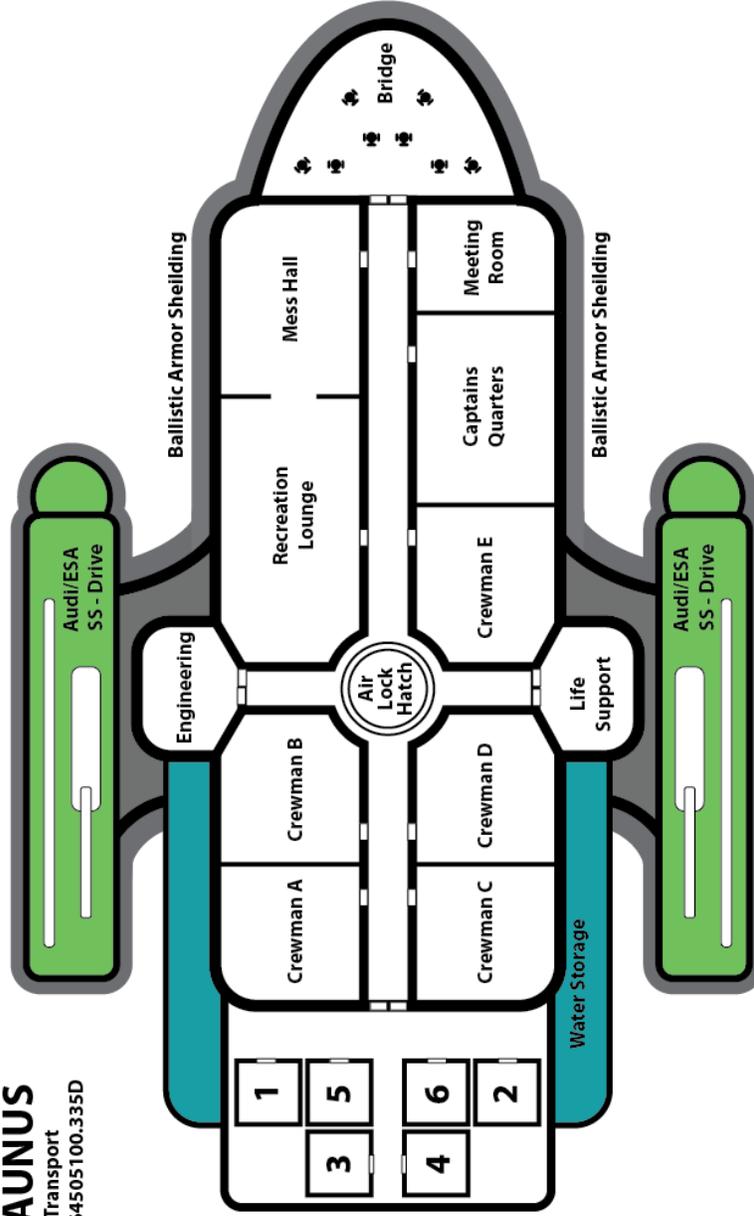
Move: 8

The nanobots supported shoggoth(s) will regenerate 3 hp/round

First sight of shoggoth will result in immediate san check. Fail 1 D6, hard fail 1 D20

Only one shoggoth will attack initially, it being the one that has overcome the control of the nanobots. Should the party dither and allow it to roam freely it will after a few rounds open a second pod, then eventually a third, exposing them one at a time to the energy from the comet sample. Note: The original pod that contained Shoggoth number one had a section of panel not fully closed which allowed the energy to enter pod and begin the process.

**THE FAUNUS**  
Class 3 Transport  
SN: 654-87964505100.335D



## FIREWATCH

### BACKGROUND FOR GM/ Summary

Year: 1965

Location: Pine Grove State Park, Oregon

Two or three junior rangers spend a night in a cabin on top of the highest point of elevation in a state park with a senior ranger. A storm picks up which is well received due to a few months drought leaving the park dry as a bone. No rain falls but thunder is rumbling in the clouds. All four begin a night long fire watch in case of lightning strike. Near midnight, lights are seen in an area of the park where no campers are known to be present. The storm still raging above, concerns of fire are top of the mind when they see what looks like multiple campfires off in the distance. The junior rangers are sent off to investigate and issue tickets to the campers.

When they arrive at the general location of the sightings, they realize that they are being stalked by creatures that are making strange hissing noises. These are the Rhygntu, small alien reptile like creatures that worship Yomagn'tho, a great old one. They have recently come to the park from elsewhere and due to the dry conditions and lack of humans have decided to occupy the lands and prepare for the summoning of Yomagn'tho. They have dug a network of tunnels in a low-lying section of beneath the park and the lights seen by the rangers were simply they operating at night and occasionally using spells to prepare areas for the summoning. The Rhygntu will be cautious at first but when the characters approach the summoning area they will attack. The junior rangers are armed with shotguns and/or rifles and must fight back and escape the small valley they have wandered into. They will not be pursued.

After the escape, they will run into a man who is carrying a large backpack who will initially try to run from them, but when he sees the uniforms he will stop. He will frantically explain to them that he is a biologist who was working in the park on drought related studies of animal deaths. He discovered the creatures, the Rhygntu. He found their network of tunnels and watched them carefully, discovering that they are up to something, even performing magic and somehow related to the localized drought. They are working on something and he is unsure what, but it will occur tomorrow. He is heading to a nearby redirected river to destroy a dam and flood the valley and the creature's tunnels. The man will provide notes and evidence and will sway the team to join him. He professes that the dam destruction can be easily repaired and the flooding of the valley would be beneficial to the drought ridden land of the valley.

Assuming they don't arrest the man, they work together to destroy the wood timber dam, the valley is flooded in time to prevent the summoning to take place and the world is saved.

If they instead decide to stop the man, then the creatures attack and he runs off to do the job alone. He dies in the attempt however is able to detonate the bag of dynamite and flood the valley with the same result however the characters must try to escape the raging torrent.

NOTE: players must roll up individual junior ranger characters. All should be under twenty-five years old and focus on applicable knowledge for the job. All should have firearms ability.

### Briefing for all Players

The year is 1965. You are all junior rangers assigned to assist Gordon Keleghan, Senior Ranger, with fire watch after months of localized drought at the Pine Grove State Park in Oregon (fictional). You have all had to date fairly cushy park jobs revolving around managing campers, sport fishermen and the occasional bear. This is the first job with a sense of danger to it. A large storm is looming and everyone is worried about lightning strikes and forest fires. It is dinner time, before sunset. You are in the ranger cabin at the top of Widower Peak, beside the tall fire watch tower that overlooks the entire park including a small dry valley that cuts down its middle and the redirected river that once flowed through the park.

### Timeline

#### Dinner

Senior ranger will brief the juniors on fire watching, the weather concerns and the plans for the night. After dinner, the dishes are dealt with and with the sun slowly setting, the watch will begin.

#### Firewatch

After dinner all parties head up to the top of the tower and begin fire watch. Storm is brewing in the east and heading their way

The junior rangers can be given as much detail as the GM wishes. A description is below of the view. Of specific interest is the old riverbed, the redirected river and the wood log frame dam that was constructed by the Army Corps of Engineers ten years previous. It is a landmark travelled to by hikers every year. Water behind the dam is low but still sufficient to be over 30 feet deep.

*The wind whips across the trees below as you stand on the raised wooden platform. You scan the forest and gaze upon the beauty of the park. To the northeast the cliffs leading up to Mount Cranberry glow orange with the remains of sunset that find their way through the storm clouds. Before you is the*

*Clintok River, flowing westward along the man made redirected river that leads toward Lake Opechney. The former path of the river is now a valley, lined with small trees and shrubs, dried and brown due to the drought. Distant west is the lake, wide and dark as the sky. South rounding to the mountain is nothing but trees and the rising glow of Simpsons Cross. Wilderness, dry wilderness, surrounds you.*

## Fire in the Woods

At the GM's discretion, the senior ranger can fill some of the time talking about strange things they have seen in the woods to set the mood.

See appendix for a suggested short story or make your own!

After a while, after dark sets in and the team begins a long haul of watching waiting and quiet talking. One team member sees a flash of light in the valley. Then another. Orange, like fire. It looks like fire but even though the storm is looming, no lightning strikes have been seen or thunder, well, nearby thunder, has been heard. The senior ranger, let's give him a name, Gord. Ranger Gord (Keleghan), is convinced that some campers are breaking the "no fires" rule and are setting up camps in the valley. He suggests the junior rangers go on a little enforcement expedition and bring rifles and shotguns in case of bears or pumas. Animals are hungry because of the drought.

Team climbs down stairs and heads out into woods / valley. After a short while they reach the area seen from the tower and locate strange burn marks on stumps and rocks and stranger markings in the soil, almost like Norse runes.

## Giant Lizards!

After investigating the scorches and the runes, the team will find themselves face to face with a pair of eyes glowing in the dark that seems as surprised as they are. In their flashlights they will see it to be a five foot tall gila monster that walks on its hind legs. It is carrying scraps of wood and a flopping fish that it drops in surprise. If they shoot at it, it will run into the woods immediately disappearing from view near instantly but two more will appear to their left and right armed with wooden spears. They attack.

Rhygntu attack immediately the three from different directions.

## Rhygnyu Stats.

STR 65    CON 65    SIZ 40    DEX 65    INT 45  
 POW 55    HP 10  
 DB: 0    Build: 0    Move: 8    MP: 9    Luck: N/A

Rhygntu are lizard creatures. They think and act like lizards. Cold, focused, hungry for success among other things. Their main priority is to summon Yomagn'tho. They will be strategic and fight to the end.

After the combat ends, the team will find that these lizard creatures have rudimentary pieces of clothing, tools and writing materials. All team members must at this information take a low level sanity check. Failure gives all characters a -20% on all rolls for five rounds until they come to terms with the existence of alien lizard creatures!

The team then discovers tunnel entrances. Not large enough for humans to safely enter.

The team invariably will head back to the fire watch tower but will run into a man trying to hide from them, Dr. Darnell Johnson, Biologist. He will at first be coy but eventually, especially if they mention the lizards, break down, as stressed and anxious as he is, and explain what he knows and suspects.

If the team shows belief in his statements he will express his belief that the valley must be flooded to kill off the lizards. If the team shows a lack of belief in his plan, he will run off into the woods. He is an avid runner, hiker and outdoorsman. His physical abilities will prevent their catching him as he runs the distance to the dam, however they will have to fight off six more lizard creatures who have arrived with spears.

If however they choose to follow him the combat will take place at the dam. Either way he will set the charges, and the dam will be blown after 15 rounds. The river will be redirected and flood the valley and the tunnels and the lizards will be killed.

The End.

## Epilogue

Players will have to explain actions and decide whether to blame such on lightning or crazy man with dynamite. Then the potential exists to use the events to turn it into a campaign searching out the Rhygntu elsewhere in the west!

## MISSING

### BACKGROUND FOR GM

Year: 1983

Location: Newbury, Mass

This is another starter game for new players intended to introduce them to the concepts of searching, and sanity checks.

It is the Fourth of July and families have gathered at the local municipal park to barbecue, play games and prepare for fireworks. Five children between the ages of 11 and 13 have wandered off as a group and parents have become worried. As dinner time approaches and passes, the panic ensues and they have gathered about twenty people and three police officers. This is when the game begins. They will split up and hunt for the children in the nearby marshlands.

The children however have been doing quite different things than the adults. They had wandered off to play lawndarts and saw a creature crash to the ground in the distance. They found it, and two children promptly ran off screaming into the fen. The parents will find them first and they will be mostly incoherent, rambling and crying about a hurt animal. With much persuasion they determine that the other children will be in a distant copse of trees

### Briefing for all Players

You are a group of parents and assorted townspeople enjoying a day or picnics, barbecue and freedom on Independence Day in Newbury Massachusetts. Fireworks are in a few hours and you hear someone crying desperately for a Maggie. When you notice that it seems serious and frantic, you walk over quickly to the source of the panic. It is a twenty something mother.

### Characters

Characters can be anyone from the town. At least one must be a police officer who has access to a pistol and possibly a shotgun in their cruiser, but the shotgun is not to be removed from the vehicle unless of dire emergency. You just don't do that kind of thing, walking around a crowded Fourth of July with a shotgun in Newbury!

### Timeline

#### 6:00 pm

Characters and others in town converge on Marilee Price whose daughter Maggie is missing.

Townfolk begin rushing around calling for Maggie. It is soon determined that five children including little Maggie were wandering around together and went off to play lawndarts over toward the marsh as it was a big clear area. When people arrive there, a successful tracking or spot hidden will show that they went off (quickly) into the long grasses. If it is a spot hidden, they find two lawndarts missing from the game at the edge of the grasses beside a visible path recently made through the dry grass.

#### 6:30 – 6:45

Parents now broken into groups of 5 or so (including the party) begin to search. Run the search as you will, the players using what skills they have. Eventually they come across Bill and Mary Prescott hiding in a small area of bushes crying. They explain what happened and point the parents in the direction of a thicker part of the marsh where a raised area exists that the local kids call "Black Island"

#### 7:00

Party arrives and finds an area where something has crashed into the ground, ripping up bushes and breaking a few small trees. They follow an area of dragging to a clearing where the remaining three kids, Maggie, Mark Doyle and Cathy Archer are tending to the wounds on a STRANGE BARREL SHAPED CREATURE. It is a young, very young elder thing. It is awake and aware and calm, but upon seeing the adults it begins to screech, frightening the children. It pulls itself back toward the trees and begins to wave about its arms/tentacles. It's screeching is foreign and alarming, sounding like pipes and metal dragging across metal.

The screeching will draw in the Elder Thing's parent figure. The party have less than five minutes to determine what to do, however they all will have to make SAN checks. A serious failure will result in the party member fleeing briefly into the swamp. A standard failure will result in fear and loathing and a die roll chance (50/50) of grabbing a child and retreating or attacking the creature with sticks, rocks or in the case of the police officer, the pistol they carry.

Passes mean a standard san loss and the ability to quickly chat with non-fleeing / attacking persons and determine what to do.

#### 7:10

The parental figure Elder Thing will arrive. Depending on what the party are doing it may do one of the following:

Defend the Elder Thing Young if being attacked

Place itself between the party and the young creature and look as menacing as possible

Carefully, cautiously collect the Elder Thing young and begin to fly away.

In all cases the party can choose what to do. Initiate combat or let it flee.

If the party attacks the child, it will be easily killed and will result in the parent attacking the party when it arrives. Shake your head silently and look up the stats in the GM guide and make it all seem like a very bad idea on their part.

## **SPECIAL NOTES**

This is an introductory scenario to educate players in skills as well as determining what repercussions their actions may result in. If they attack they may not survive. If they let the creature go, they will. This can also be utilized to begin a new campaign or a self-created scenario around an elder thing family camp in the marshlands of the area!

Hope you enjoy the scenarios. More to come.

Please send any questions or comments to:

Gortrix2@sympatico.ca

Sean Liddle  
Anti-Photon Publishing  
Summer, 2019

•