



# The Sassoon Files: The Brother of Jesus

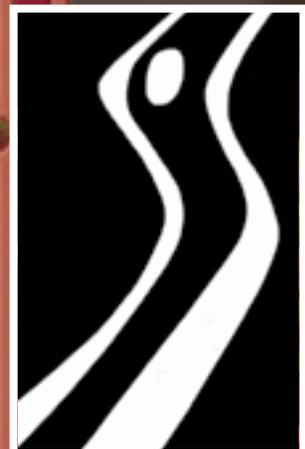


A Scenario for The Sassoon Files  
for the Call of Cthulhu and GUMSHOE Role Playing Games

ACQUARONE | CHANDLER | SHEETS

CALL OF  
CTHULHU

GUMSHOE



**The Sassoon Files:**

耶穌的弟弟

**The Brother of Jesus**

By Francis Acquarone, Patrick Chandler and Jason Sheets

## Legal and General Rights

Authors: Jason Sheets, Francis Acquarone, Jesse Covner, Patrick Chandler

Substantive Editor: Patrick Chandler

Layout: Jesse Covner

The Sassoon Files uses elements of the GUMSHOE SRD (at <http://site.pelgranepress.com/index.php/the-gumshoe-system-reference-document/>), a product of Pelgrane Press, developed, written, and edited by Robin D. Laws with additional material by Kenneth Hite, and licensed for our use under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>). GUMSHOE is a trademark of Pelgrane Press.

Approved by Chaosium Inc. Call of Cthulhu is the Registered Trademark of Chaosium Inc., and is used with the permission. Certain names, descriptions, and depictions applied to this supplement are derived from works copyrighted by and include trademarks owned by Chaosium Inc., and may not be used or reused without permission. [www.chaosium.com](http://www.chaosium.com).



All material not owned by Chaosium Inc. or under the Creative Commons Attribution license of Pelgrane Press are owned by the Sons of the Singularity LLC. The Sassoon Files are copyright of Sons of the Singularity, and all rights are reserved. Any reproduction of material without permission is strictly prohibited.



This book presents descriptions of real people, events, and places preceding the Second World War. These depictions may not be historically accurate, but are depictions of how those people, events and places might have been influenced by the Cthulhu Mythos. No offense to anyone living or dead is intended.

## Art Attribution and Rights

All art is either commissioned by Sons of the Singularity, from Public Domain, or obtained by license agreement:

The following are copyrighted works-for-hire owned by the Sons of the Singularity:

- Jingwu vs. Mythos created by the talented artist Breno Girafa.
- The Black Litany created by the talented artist Jennifer S. Lange.
- All character portraits created by the talented artist Jonathan Timoteo.
- The 4 Seas Gang portraits created by the talented artist Mario Teodosio.

The following pieces of art are available for commercial use with attribution:

- “Full view of the chinese dragons carved in stone” by Wingsancora93, CC-BY-SA4
- Bianlian, by Yongxing CC-BY-SA3

All other art found in this book resides in the Public Domain with no requirements for attribution.

Thank you to 玖羽, Zhang Hao, and Marcus Ma, who without their help this project would have never gotten off the ground.

A special thanks play testers: Jacob “the Russian” Hardin, Francis Acquarone, Patrick Chandler, Dan Bass, Aaron Cop, Alexandre Guertin, and the sharply dressed Joey Zhu.

The Sassoon Files was made with the help of friends at the KhanKon Gaming Convention in the People’s Republic of China.



# Background

The Brother of Jesus is a scenario written for the Call of Cthulhu 7th edition RPG (by Chaosium) and compatible with the GUMSHOE RPG system (by Pelgrane Press). This scenario was created with the support of Kickstarter Backers of The Sassoon Files campaign book. The Brother of Jesus may be played as part of The Sassoon Files campaign or as a stand-alone RPG.

**“In my hand I wield the Universe and the power to attack and kill” – Hong Xiuquan, Poem on Executing the Vicious and Preserving the Righteous [斬邪留正詩], 1837**

## Shanghai, June 1929

A recent article published in the North China Daily News, China's first English and widest circulated newspaper, has the investigators worried.

Harry C. Lloyd, a reputable Far East correspondent and award-winning investigative journalist, wrote an article titled “The Brother of Jesus and His Curse” exposing a string of troubling recent events that appear to be connected to a curse bestowed upon Shanghai during the Taiping rebellion dating back to the 1850s.

In the article, Lloyd recounts how Hong Xiuquan, after failing imperial examination to become a government official, fell sick and was bedridden for several days. While fighting the illness, Hong Xiuquan claimed he experienced mystical visions. A few years later, after some interaction with a western Baptist preacher, Hong declared that he now understood his past visions to be a message from God; namely, that Jesus was his older brother and that he was destined to rid China of the “devils”, including the Manchu and their corrupt Qing government. Soon after, Hong began preaching across Southern China and his followers founded the God Worshipping Society, a movement that followed Hong's own interpretation of Christianity, Daoism, Confucianism and indigenous Millenarianism.

Citing American historian Dr. Mitchel Harris, Lloyd writes that the Taiping movement, “developed into a dynamic new Chinese religion; a hybrid, heterodox religion with the trappings of both Christianity and ancient Chinese religions, a new Taiping Christianity”.

Despite the frantic efforts of the Qing Authorities, the movement grew like wildfire. Hong's preaching evolved into a doctrine of guerrilla warfare, and a widespread

civil war subsequently broke out. The God Worshipping Society gained control of hundreds of towns and villages, and declared itself the “Great Peace Heavenly Kingdom”, or “Taiping Heavenly Kingdom”.

The Taiping tried to establish diplomatic relations with western nations via their emissaries in Shanghai. Foreign powers were at first curious and somewhat friendly towards the “Christian movement”. Trade lobbyists however had other thoughts; the prolonged civil war was seen as disruptive and “bad for business”.

*This Taiping Rebellion was one of the most destructive military conflicts in human history. Total deaths during the 15 years of the rebellion ranged from 20 to 30 million civilians and soldiers. Most of the deaths were attributed to plague and famine. For a detailed account of the Taiping Rebellion, please see: Jonathan D. Spence, God's Chinese Son*

In 1853, Taiping forces captured Nanjing, making it their capital and renaming it the Heavenly Capital (i.e. “Tianjing” 天京). Since the Taiping rebels considered the Manchus to be demons, they first killed all the Manchu men, and then forced the Manchu women outside the city where they burned them alive.

In August of 1860, an army of Qing troops supported by European officers and diplomats based in Shanghai and assisted by local support (including members of the Chinese Triads) repulsed the attempt of Taiping forces to take Shanghai. This army would become known as the “Ever Victorious Army”, a well-trained Qing military force commanded by Charles George Gordon, a British Army Officer and Administrator serving in China. The army would be instrumental in the defeat of the Taiping rebels. In 1862, the Ever-Victorious Army repulsed another attack on Shanghai. The attempted advances on Shanghai proved to be the last expansion of the Taiping rebels. From this point forward, imperial Qing troops reconquered Taiping strongholds along the Yangtze River, drawing ever closer to Nanjing.

Hong Xiuquan declared that God would defend Nanjing, but in June 1864, with Qing forces approaching and famine striking, he died surrounded by his loyal followers. A few days after his death, Qing forces took the city. His body was buried in the former Ming Imperial Palace, and was later exhumed on orders of imperial troops to verify his death, and then cremated.

The Imperial Qing troops offered no quarter, and they killed and cremated all captured Taiping rebels and worshippers. The very few rebels that escaped spoke of Hong's retribution and vengeance: a curse that will strike down heretical "Christian brothers" and local supporters who betrayed the Taiping.

Fifty years later, families, businesses, organizations and descendants of ancestors who supported the Qing's "Ever Victorious Army" which defeated the Taiping are experiencing strange events. A string of recent fires, disappearances, and misfortune has taken place in Shanghai with the victims being the descendants of the Ever-Victorious Army. Considering the events and the information at hand, Lloyd concluded that recent events have a surprising correlation with the Taiping Rebellion and are not merely coincidental. Old allies have turned on each other, and no one seems to know who is behind the incidents.

According to Lloyd, all eyewitness accounts of the strange and misfortunate events mention the presence of an agitated old Chinese man known as "Lao Wang", or "Old Wang". Lao Wang was described as "beyond himself" and "possessed". He was heard shouting, "*wealth and greed defeated the Taiping...*" and "*the Foreigners are hypocritical heretics; they did not support their Chinese Christian brothers*". More troubling, Lao Wang was also spotted writing on a wall next to the famous Lempertz Auction House: "*the Trinity will avenge us; behold our curse!*"

Lao Wang's exhortations are a symptom of being infected or possessed by the remnants of a Great Old One, Yeb, and they serve as a warning of the growing threat from a trinity of Great Old Ones, Yog-Sothoth, Yeb and Nug, the "father, the son, and his older brother".

**Yog-Sothoth** is a cosmic entity, the father of Nug and Yeb, and so much more. Yog-Sothoth (which sometimes appears as a chaotic collection of iridescent, floating spheres) possesses alien and unknowable motives; it is less of a deity and more of a universal set of processes that Great Old Ones and sorcerers call on to perform tasks. Heretical Daoists sometimes confuse Yog-Sothoth with the "Primeval Dao" or the "Un-carved Block of Jade". Yog-Sothoth is most often invoked for the purposes of warping, bending and breaking space, time and matter.

**Nug and Yeb**, sometimes referred to as "the Twin Blasphemies", are described by Lovecraft as being twins, with a mythology and a cult following uniquely Tibetan in origin. In their base state, Nug and Yeb each appear spherical in shape, with a diameter of approximately 10'. This appearance, however, is deceptive to the human eye, as Nug and Yeb occupy vast space in multiple realities and times, are at times incorporeal and are capable of rapid expansion.

It is written in mad Alhazred's *Necronomicon* that a great war was fought between the Great Old One Ghatanothoa and the Twin Blasphemies ended with the exile of Nug to a citadel under the South Pacific Ocean and the destruction and dismemberment of Yeb. Despite Nug's exile and Yeb's dismemberment, the two Great Old Ones have never been short on worshipers. Human sorcerers, ghoulish priests, Tcho Tcho lotus eaters and alien intelligences from Yuggoth are among the ranks of the cults that worship Nug and Yeb, and their worship has spread far and wide.

Hong Xiuquan communed with and took instructions from Yeb, tapping into its power. It drove him mad and corrupted his sense of self-identity. Hong Xiuquan's syncretic religion is truly designed to forward Yeb's worldly interests, via the rituals and repetitive chanting of the "Black Litany of Nug and Yeb". The Black Litany of Nug and Yeb is a collection of rites dedicated to Nug and Yeb, and are said to be particularly repulsive, most often conducted in pillared temples, the like of which can be found in the lost city of Irem. Hong Xiuquan used the Black Litany of Nug and Yeb in a gambit to call upon Yog-Sothoth; a hope and prayer that Yog-Sothoth might be used to resurrect and reform Yeb out of earth and ash.

Hong Xiuquan offered his followers a corrupted version of Christianity and Daoism. His syncretic religion linked "Yin and Yang" philosophy with the worship of the twin Blasphemies, associating Nug with "Yang" and Yeb with "Yin". He further espoused the notion that Yog-Sothoth is the undivided Dao and that from Yog-Sothoth sprung forth both the bright and heavenly Nug and the dark and earthly Yeb. If father Yog-Sothoth is the apex of the trinity, then Nug is the son and Yeb the Holy Ghost.

Special Forces of the Ever Victorious Army



Accounts of Hong Xiuquan's final days are few and contradictory. The most accepted story is that Hong went mad and ordered his subjects to eat weeds from his Palace grounds, mistaking the weeds for mana, an edible substance provided by God to help the Israelites cross the deserts during the forty-year period.

The horrible truth is that Hong Xiuquan and his inner circle died while enacting the Black Litany of Nug and Yeb. The ceremony took place during an auspicious "double moon", the astrological phenomenon when the oscillating orbits of Mars and Earth bring the planets closer together, thus creating an illusion that Earth has a second moon.

Flash forward to early spring 1929, business tycoon, turned cultist, Albert Masters interested in fostering his dark arts followed the trail of an old folk legend discovered in the "Valley of Lost Souls"; a mysterious book recounting the last days of the Taiping. The book was written from the perspective of the vanquished, and is filled with Taiping prayers and their own interpretation of the Bible and its teachings.

Inside the book, Masters found interesting passages discussing the prophesized vengeance of the Taiping loyalists that escaped. Some passages tell of how the spirit of the "Loyal King" will be resurrected to avenge his brothers. The book also mentions how the survivors collected the ashes of their fallen comrades, stored them in urns and buried them by an old Taiping church. The area became known to loyalists as the Valley of Lost Souls.

Masters went to Nanjing in search of the Valley of Lost Souls. He determined that the urns were buried in a field owned by "Old Wang", a local farmer. Master paid farmer Wang to unearth the urns, and then opened one, unleashing a "Taiping Soul". The Taiping Soul, a portion of Yeb fused with the fractured spirit of a Hong loyalist, took possession of Masters, and then opened another urn thus infecting Old Wang. The Taiping Souls took control of Masters and Lao Wang's minds, wiping their consciousness and leaving behind the goal of propagating Yeb and fulfilling the Taiping curse.

Their first task was to resurrect other souls and make more "true believers" by spreading the essence of Yeb. The newly infected restored the nearby church and turned it into a site of worship to the Holy Trinity: Yog-Sothoth, Nug and Yeb.

Masters and Old Wang then brought some of the urns to Shanghai. Masters convinced the auctioneer Lempertz to organize a private session for a few wealthy and influential Shanghainese collectors. Then, during the auction, he broke a few urns while chanting the Black Litany of Nug and Yeb. Those present, are now infected by Taiping Souls.

The Taiping Souls then went on a rampage, using their contacts and influence to target and diminish the power of Shanghai's most prominent figures (including Victor Sassoon).

Over the course of the scenario, infected "Shanghailanders" and cultists will make their way to the Valley of Lost Souls, where they intend to perform the Black Litany, thus resurrecting and reforming Yeb. If Yeb is reformed, then Shanghai, modern day Sodom, will be destroyed.

## Getting the Investigators Involved

The investigators are all in some way beholden to Victor Sassoon. They have previously worked for Sassoon in Shanghai, and are aware of the mythos threat. They take the threat seriously and all have a strong drive to clear Shanghai of cosmic horrors.

**Lao Wang** is infected by Magistrate Shun Kun. Magistrate Shun Kun held prominent administrative and religious positions in the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. Born from a family of artists in Chengdu Sichuan, Shun Kun's father was a well-known Change of Mask master who toured southwest China. His son Shun Kun served as his apprentice for a number of years. Shun Kun joined the Taiping side after they took over Sichuan. He quickly rose through the ranks and became known as a great orator using his performance skills to awe crowds. Magistrate Shun Kun was by Hong's side until final days and partook in several Black Litany ceremonies.

**Albert Masters** is infected by Commander Li Xiucheng. Li Xiucheng (李秀成) was one of the most decorated and venerated Taiping military commanders. During the final days of the Taiping Rebellion, Li Xiucheng refused a bribe from Qing envoys to kill Hong Xiuquan. He fought until the end, and was finally captured by Charles George Gordon, the commander of the Ever Victorious Army. Commander Gordon confiscated Li's sword in a dramatic scene in front of hundreds of Taiping supporters; humiliating Li by removing his most important symbol of power. Li was transferred to Qing forces and subsequently tortured in 1864 (his executioners performed the "One Thousand and One Cuts ritual" over an extended period of time, and sent body parts to various regions of the kingdom as a warning). By the end of the rebellion, Taiping loyalists bestowed upon him the title of Loyal King (忠王).



**Keeper's Notes:** We make use of Lore Sheets in “The Brother of Jesus” scenario. As set out in The Sassoon Files, Lore Sheets are handouts that provide players with extra background information about their investigators, story settings, and the game world. The Lore Sheet optional rule can also be found at the back of this scenario. We provide The Sassoon Files Campaign General Lore Sheet as a hand-out to introduce the players with the settings.

## The Spine

1. Investigators Meet
2. Reporting to Sassoon
3. North China Daily News Office
4. French Police Station
5. (Optional) Shanghai Revolutionary Press
6. (Optional) Lloyd's Apartment
7. Lempertz Auction House
8. Search for the Missing Four
  - (A) Dr. Aue
  - (B) Izuku Akira
  - (C) Laszlo Hudec
  - (D) Dragon's Desire Trading Co. (Albert Masters)
9. (Optional) Funeral March
10. (Optional) Going Back to Sassoon
11. The Burlesque Show
12. Rickshaw Pursuit
13. (Optional) Gathering Information
14. Valley of Lost Souls

**Timestamp:** It will likely take two weeks of Shanghai game time to assemble enough clues and permit investigators to travel to the Taiping Church in the Valley of Lost Souls. The Keeper should allow enough “downtime” for investigators to recuperate, sleep or conduct their own separate investigation on the margins of the main plot.

# The Sassoon Files Campaign General Lore Sheet

Time: Mid to Late 1920s.  
Location: Shanghai City

At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Shanghai was a small town located in a swamp near the mouth of the Yangzi river. Then the foreigners came with their gunships to force open China. For the foreigners who sold opium and traded in the interior of China, Shanghai was a natural base. Transport ships carried raw materials and opium into the city, and finished goods and wealth out of the city.

By the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were tens of thousands of foreigners taking up residence in Shanghai, the "Pearl of Asia." The foreigners brought supporting institutions, such as schools, churches, and synagogues. They created rail and telegraph systems, newspapers, schools, hospitals, jails. They invested some of the massive wealth from the opium trade to make Shanghai into a modern city to rival the world's capitals.

The foreigners lived in Concessions where they enjoyed extra-territorial jurisdiction; the laws of China did not apply to them. In Shanghai, there was the International Settlement (controlled by the British and Americans) and the French Concession. Together with Chinese-controlled neighborhoods, these extra-judicial districts with their separate law enforcement and legal systems created an ideal environment for criminals and revolutionaries to escape from the arms of the law.

For most of his adult life, Sun Yat-sen struggled to overthrow the corrupt and degenerate Qing dynasty. After the last Emperor, 6-year old Puyi, was overthrown by a coalition of warlords in the Xinhai revolution, Sun became the first President of post-Imperial China. Soon after, however, China was split apart by warlords. Sun's protégé, Chiang Kai-shek, developed and lead the armed forces of the Kuomintang ("KMT") or "National People's Party". The KMT was heavily supported by the Soviet Union, although within its member ranks were people of many different political outlooks, unified only by an overwhelming desire for Chinese independence. Through a series of campaigns between 1926 and 1929, the KMT managed to unify China.

Sun Yat-sen passed in March of 1925. In 1927, Chiang Kai-shek, who did not trust the KMT's Soviet advisers, moved against the Communists within the KMT. In Shanghai, Chiang entered into an alliance with "Big Eared" Du Yuesheng, leader of the Green Gang, to rid the city of Communists. Together, they killed thousands in an act known as the "Shanghai Massacre". The Shanghai Massacre marks the beginning of the Chinese Civil War, which would last (on and off) until 1949. As a reward for his help, Big Ear Du was granted monopoly rights to the opium trade in all of China.

Zhou Enlai, a leader in the KMT, was an amazing recruiter for the cause. Zhou Enlai was also an excellent diplomat and extremely successful Communist labor union organizer. Zhou Enlai escaped the Shanghai Massacre to later return (with his wife), sometime in 1929. There, for the next two years, Zhou Enlai led the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) secret recruitment operations. He also came to control the Special Services (or "Te-Ke"), which performed counter-espionage operations, conducted intelligence gathering, and carried out assassination missions. In Shanghai, Zhou and his wife never slept a night in the same bed. They wore different disguises and traveled between the separate jurisdictions of the French Concession and the International Settlement every day.

During this time, the Te-Ke secretly hunted KMT officials, while the Green Gang and KMT spies hunted Communists. Meanwhile, Shanghai's foreigners and well-to-do only heard rumors of this secret war within their city. Shanghai offered the foreigners an illusory refuge and the promise of big business.

# Investigators Meet

“Shanghai. A heaven built upon a hell!” - Mu Shiyong, Shanghai Fox-trot

**Date:** June 1929

**Location:** The Long Bar of the Shanghai Club, the Bund (Shanghai International Settlement)

**Purpose:** This is a chance for investigators to meet and discuss Lloyd's article. The investigators have been summoned by Victor Sassoon to the Long Bar on the second floor of the Shanghai Club Building. While they patiently wait, they will overhear conversations and gossip linked to a recent article published by Harry C. Lloyd. The article and the evident mythos elements described by the author should alarm investigators. It is implied that the investigators know each other. Investigators will be strongly inclined to visit Sassoon once they know Sassoon cannot make the meeting.



Character sheets will be passed out, using either pre-generated investigators or any player generated investigators that are vetted for theme and style of play. Again, the setting is Shanghai in the late 20's, and all investigators must have a connection to Victor Sassoon.

Read the following to set the stage:

The Bund lies north of the old, walled city of Shanghai. The Bund's skyline is dominated by neoclassical masterpieces and other architectural masterpieces, including banks, government offices, trading firms, newspapers and hotels. The Bund serves as one of the entrance points into China, and as a result Shanghai is one of Asia's fastest growing economies.

The Quai de France is adjacent to the Bund and serves as an important dock for goods moving into and out of Shanghai.

Known as the Pearl of the East, this is Shanghai, and the year is 1929. It is a city of 3 million residents, including more than 35,000 citizens originating from Europe and the Americas. Although the minority, foreigners are heavily involved in politics, trade, law enforcement, and vice.

The divisions are quite clear amongst Shanghai's residents; the foreigners controlled all but the Old City. The foreign influence upon Shanghai is obvious: electricity, telephones, elevators, motorized vehicles are becoming more and more common. Modern, western buildings are springing up, and large foreign owned ships are moving in and out of the ports.

It is still early in the evening, and the sun has just begun to set. The Bund is still bustling. People are peddling their wares; vendors are selling all manner of exotic foods. Some foods seem edible, while others would clearly be better left untouched. The posh, pressed, and well-dressed upper-class merchants mainly ignore the beggars in rags on the street corners. This is a city of contrast. Shanghai truly seems to have it all, and have nothing at the same time.

## The Long Bar

Once people are settled, read this:

The Shanghai Club Building is a six-story Baroque Revival building, home to Shanghai's premier men's club. On the second floor of the Shanghai Club building, one can enjoy a drink at the famous Long Bar. The Long Bar, one of the main attractions for the city's elite,



contains a 111-foot-long bar, made of mahogany. The mahogany bar is a barometer of the social statuses of its patrons. Shanghai's "La crème de la crème" are seated near the windows overlooking the Huangpu River, while those of lower elite status are seated towards the other end, where the view was not as nice.

**Keeper's Notes:** There are Lore Sheets related to The Long Bar in The Sassoon Files. If a player character is related to someone here, you may want to incorporate the character into the scene.

A live Jazz band is playing in the background. "African-American Shanghai legend Teddy Weatherford is working at a breathtaking speed the ivory keys on his piano; doing his best to garner attention.

A group of British and American bankers are seated towards the window. Smoke fills the air around them as they puff on cigars and sip fine scotch. They seem agitated, pointing at the cover page of the North China Daily News placed on their table.

Closer to the center, a group of French businessmen drink Ricard and chat loudly about their business interests in South-Asia. Some voice their concerns related to the events known as the "Shanghai Massacre" or "White Terror" and recent efforts by communist sympathizers to rebuild the movement in Shanghai.

Sitting next to the French patrons, a Chinese man wearing a western style 3-piece suit and silk tie is also reading Lloyd's article. He turns towards a compatriot, a burly man with facial battle scars sitting upright at his table: "Crazy Wang.... isn't he your deranged cousin Xiao Wang?" the man laughs outload at his boss' poor joke.

With **Credit Rating** 5 or better (a **successful Credit Rating roll**), investigators will recognize H.H. Kung (Kung Hsiang-Hsi), the richest man in the early Republic of China era and husband to Soong Ai-ling.

A group of White Russians discuss the recent Bolshevik purge in the motherland in semi-hushed tones. They turn their attention to a copy of the North China Daily News on their table. One of the men translates the front page's headline.

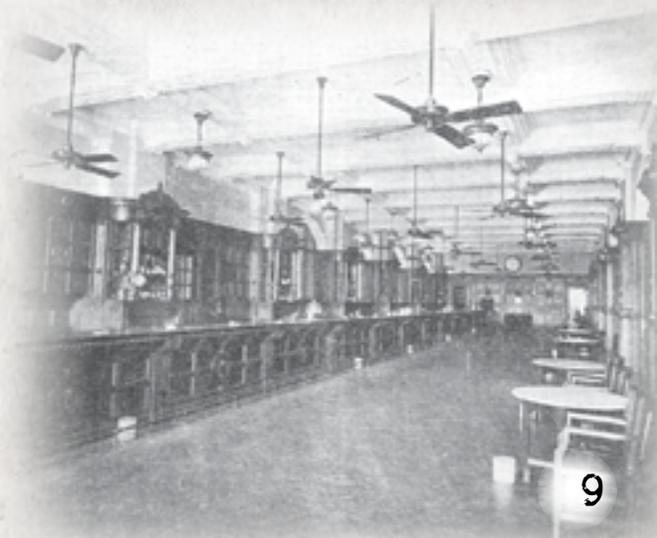
Investigators who speak **Russian** (a **successful Russian Language roll**) hear: "It's just nonsense, hocus pocus nonsense".

**CORE CLUE:** Investigators are able to obtain a copy of the Lloyd article, which was published June 16th, with minimal effort. Please pass out **The Lloyd Article Handout**, found at the back of this scenario.

**Keeper's Notes:** Give players a chance to introduce their investigators and role-play. Encourage some interaction before cutting to the purpose of the meeting.

If investigators are interested in knowing more about people present:

- At the lowest end of the Long Bar, relegated to the newcomers and those with less standing, a few Japanese and Chinese businessmen negotiate import/exports deals. If the investigators speak **Chinese** (a **successful Chinese Language roll**) and eavesdrop on the conversation, they hear the Chinese businessmen offering their condolences. A senior Japanese Consul was murdered recently.
- Streetwise** (a **successful INT roll**) provides that some of the Chinese men also sitting at the end of the bar belong to the infamous Green Gang.
- Bureaucracy or Law** (a **successful Law roll**) provides that the American gentleman near the window is Stirling Fessenden, the Chairman of the Shanghai Municipal Council. He is reading Lloyd's article and is writing notes in a small journal (a To Do list, including meeting with Lloyd and contact the French Authorities to compare notes related to events affecting both settlements).





After several minutes, investigators will receive a note from the concierge informing them that Mr. Sassoon cannot venture out of his private quarters at the Hotel Cathay this evening and regrettably asks if the investigators will instead pay him a visit at the Sassoon house.

**Lead outs:**

- Reporting to Sassoon
- North China Daily News Office

□□ **Stirling Fessenden and the Municipal Council:**

Stirling Fessenden was an American lawyer and Chairman of the Shanghai Municipal Council from 1923 to 1929. The Municipal Council directly controls the gas, water, rickshaws, police, electrical stations, and the orchestra. The government also controlled all prostitution and administered licenses to sell Opium until 1920. By 1925, The Municipal Council had seats for 5 British representatives and 2 for Americans. By 1928, this membership was expanded to include 3 Chinese and 2 Japanese representatives.

Fessenden, like my family, comes from New England; he came from Fort Fairfield, Main, and I came from Arkham. I don't know Fessenden well, but I may be able to use the family connection to see him. In previous conversations, Fessenden said he was most interested in all news concerning leaders of Chinese nationalist movements.

□□ **Libai at the Long Bar:**

The "Long Bar," on the second floor of The Shanghai Club, is the world's longest bar at this time at 39 meters in length (110 feet). The position at the bar is determined by one's place in society, with the Tai-pans and bank managers nearest the Bund and going down the social ladder from there. The club has a grand hall in the Italian fashion on the first floor with elevators going to the floors above which contain libraries, guest rooms, a smoking room and dining hall, billiards, and the other necessities of a proper men's club.

Libai (李白) is a bar-back at the Long Bar. As the Chinese "boy" who cleans up the tables for the city's elite, he is completely invisible. Many assume Libai can't even understand English. But Libai actually sees and hears everything. Libai and I are quite close. He tells me about the words passing between the rich and famous. Libai approached me the other night. He gave me a message to give out to one of his contacts who frequents a gambling den not far from the Bund.

# Reporting to Sassoon

**Location:** Sassoon House, Hotel Cathay, Shanghai, China

**Lead Ins:**

- Investigators Meet

**Purpose:** Investigators will find a troubled and perplexed Sassoon. Some of the events described in Lloyd's article have had an impact on Sassoon and his businesses. Once investigators have presented the situation to Sassoon, he will become intrigued by the possible mythos link and would encourage investigators to pursue leads and find out more on this so-called "curse". Investigators should have read the article carefully and discerned available clues prior to this scene.



Read the following to set the stage:

The Hotel Cathay is ten-story art deco masterpiece; the tenth floor is a penthouse occupied by Victor Sassoon. The building's façade facing the Bund is a distinctive pyramidal roof with steep sides.

The luxurious Hotel Cathay certainly contrasts with some of the blatant poverty that you witness outside, and it serves as a glamorous playground for wealthy foreigners and Chinese socialites. Paris style fashion shows and other sumptuous activities are organized on a nightly basis.

When investigators arrive at the property, a sign posted on the lobby main doors reads "Closed- by order of the Shanghai Municipal Department - Fire Brigade".

However, Mr. Sassoon's butler will recognize the investigators from prior dealings with Sassoon and they will be escorted to Mr. Sassoon's private quarters.

## The Boudoir

Once people are settled, read this:

You are escorted into a lavish lounge. The suite is a Mediterranean or Middle Eastern style, and features the hotel's renowned opulence, high color and fancy.

The walls are draped in a multicolor of fine linens and Persian throw-rugs.

The room is quite large with tables arranged around the four walls. These are not tall tables, but rather short, and low to the ground.

In the place of chairs are piles and piles of plush pillows, cloth of gold stitch-work on reds, yellows, and navy blues. In the very center of the room is a much larger table, also low to the ground, covered by a navy blue canopy that touches the high ceiling. In the center of the dark polished mahogany table are a decorated teapot, tiny handle-less teacups, and a large glass hookah. The room smells of fine incense and tobacco.

A set of heavy solid wooden doors open at the back of the room, and an older gentleman wearing a black tuxedo, carrying a leather binder in one hand, and using a cane in the other limps in. He's walking as fast as he can despite the limp, and is clearly anxious to meet you.

Victor apologizes for not making it to the Shanghai Club; he explains that he has been busy working to "put out a number of different fires" that have been negatively impacting his business and personal life.



“My friends, it is good to see you”, says Victor, “although I wish it would be in different circumstances”. He pauses for a few seconds; his mind wondering and proposes: “Can I tempt you with anything? Tea? Wine? Spirits? I just had some fine Egyptian-shisha brought over from Cairo. Care to smoke? There is much to be discussed.”

A discussion with Victor Sassoon reveals the following information:

#### About the Lloyd Article:

- Investigators mentioning the Lloyd article and spending a point of **Oral History** or **Occult (a successful History or Occult roll)** are given the opportunity to develop or narrate the situation based on the clues regarding the “Taiping curse”. If Investigators do not mention the Lloyd article, Sassoon will provide them with a copy of the article and ask if he should be concerned.
- The journalist, Mr. Lloyd, is well respected in his field. Victor has not met him, but certainly has contact at the North China Daily News including a friendly rivalry with the paper’s owner, Henry E. Morris, who shares Sassoon’s interest in the derby. Victor would encourage investigators to go meet with Lloyd or seek an audience with Mr. Morris.
- The newspaper office is also located on the Bund; a short walk from the Hotel Cathay.
- If questioned on Mr. Morris and a possible link with the Mythos, Victor would mention that Mr. Morris has strong business acumen; his family has been present in Shanghai for many years. He does not suspect him to have any interest in the occult.

#### About Cathay Hotel:

- Men from the fire brigade stormed the hotel yesterday. The leader, ranked Superior Fireman Cai, presented a short letter drafted by the Shanghai Municipal Council ordering him to shut down operations until all proper fire permits were secured. Thinking the incident was purely an attempt to shakedown Sassoon for money he offered to pay on the spot for the required permits. To his surprise, the firefighters were not interested in money. Sassoon is baffled by the incident. He has great contacts and friends in the Municipal Council; he does not understand the situation. Stirling Fessenden, the Chairman of the Shanghai Municipal Council, is a friend of his. (This clue may be leveraged as an example of some of the bad luck and turn of events Sassoon is facing.)

#### About Mythos elements:

- Victor recommends, in a very subtle way, to look back at the article as it may contain clues, such as the Lempertz Auction House site. Sassoon would recall this specific auction. He did receive a private invitation to participate, but he could not join based on previous engagements.
- If investigators discuss the case of “Crazy Wang” Victor Sassoon would remember hearing about an odd-looking old man escorted out of a small park on Avenue Joffre in the French Concession. He was seen eating grass and dirt and chanting in the middle of the night. He woke up the entire neighborhood according to a friend of Sassoon that lives nearby. The “gendarmes” of the French concession had to remove him; allegedly, the gendarmes just did what was easiest, so they “deported” him to the International Settlement.

With the use of **Evidence Collection (a successful Spot Hidden roll)**, a series of photos hanging on one of the entrance hall would spark curiosity. The first photo depicts Sassoon and another well-dressed man – Albert Masters – standing in front of a horse. A jockey proudly holds a trophy. Another photo features two teenaged young men standing in front of an archeological site in a desert. The two teens could be Sassoon and Masters. At the bottom of the photo, a timestamp reads Bagdad, summer 1895. These clues would later be significant when investigators later realize that Sassoon’s friend, Mr. Albert Masters, is involved with the recent incidents.

#### Lead outs:

- North China Daily News Office
- Lempertz Auction House
- French Police Station

□□ Sassoon, Victor (1881 – 1961): Sir Victor Sassoon, the 3rd Baronet of Bombay, was Shanghai’s preeminent bon vivant. Victor Sassoon was a Sephardic Jew whose descendants hailed from the Middle East and India. He inherited a fortune made on the opium trade and turned that fortune into a diversified empire. Victor, an avid fan of the Derby, owned the highly successful Eve Stables. Victor is aware of the existence of the Cthulhu Mythos. His life-purpose is to serve and protect humanity from the Mythos.

Victor Sassoon sometimes consults with me regarding Chinese antiques and curious he collects. Over the years, we have developed a friendly relationship. Victor and I have shared a bottle of wine on several occasions, in various venues such as the Racetrack Club and at restaurants on the Bund.

# North China Daily News Office

**Location:** The North China Daily News Building (字林大樓; pinyin: Zilín Dàlóu), No.17, Bund, Shanghai International Settlement

## Lead Ins:

- Investigators Meet
- Reporting to Sassoon

**Purpose:** Investigators follow-up on their initial lead. They feel a strong drive to help Sassoon and get to the bottom of this possible mythos curse.



If the investigators visit the North China Daily News in the middle of the night or the early hours of the morning before the sun rises, they will surprisingly find that the office is not closed at this time. The activities of the North China Daily are a testament to the city's important trade and business activities.

You walk through a large hall marked with a high ceiling, roman frescos and columns of neoclassical construction and decor, typical of buildings designed in the early 20th century. A series of flags decorate the right wall; they include flags from the eight occupying foreign powers and a flag of the nascent Republic of China.

## The Reception

A chubby, Chinese man, with thick gold-rimmed glasses is standing behind a counter that occupies the second half of the hall and is probably operated by half a dozen staff during the day. Several paper forms are lined up, in neat stacks on top of the counter, next to a collection of clerical stamps – some western and some Chinese. He does not look up from his newspaper.

The clerk has a nonchalant, blasé attitude. He does not bother to look at the investigators, as he is busy reading a Chinese newspaper. He is not interested in helping the investigators and will pretend to not speak English. **Assess Honesty** (a successful **Psychology** roll) reveals that the clerk is hiding the fact that he speaks English and is making an effort to ignore the clerk. If investigators use **Bribery** or **Intimidation** (a successful **Credit Rating** or **Intimidate** roll) they will be able to compel the clerk to act on their behalf. The clerk is barely willing to “lift a finger”, and he will give the bare minimum effort required to justify the bribe or avoid a violent escalation. The investigators can learn the following from the Clerk:

- Lloyd has not been seen in recent days. He filed his article about a week ago. It ran in yesterday's edition.
- Records would show that he is not on assignment and should be in Shanghai.
- They can leave their personal details to make an appointment with Lloyd.

The North China Daily News Building



## The North China Daily News Office

There is little chance that any executives or journalists would be in the office if investigators visit late at night. A colleague of Lloyd – Mr. John Gao – is working on filing a last-minute story. The printing crew would be working overnight, but they would not know the whereabouts of journalists. With **Flattery** or **Reassurance** (a successful **Charm** or **Fast Talk** roll), John Gao will confide in the investigators that Lloyd started acting rather strangely about the same time his article on the Taiping Curse was published. He recalls that Lloyd was mumbling to himself about the “the Father, the Son and Yeb” and the “Second Coming of Hong Xiuquan”. Mr. Gao does not have any other useful information, but he’s willing to lead he investigators to Harry Lloyd’s desk.

### Harry C. Lloyd’s desk

His desk is completely in disarray. Papers, memos, and newspaper reports, as well as a private journal are sitting in a jumble around the centered typewriting machine. A cup containing cold tea was knocked over and the liquid spilled on a few papers. No one has bothered to clean it up.

With the use of Evidence Collection (a successful Spot Hidden roll) the investigators find Lloyd’s Journal.

Lloyd’s apartment address is embossed in gold on the journal’s leather back cover.

Everything preceding mid-summer 1929 seems in order, several historical notes and biographies regarding the Taiping. After June 16th, the publication date his article, he has clearly gone mad. There is a list of bizarre prayers, containing a mix of Christianity and millenarianism elements. Please see the **Lloyd Journal Handout**. Reading the journal results in a 3-point **Stability** test (**Sanity** roll 0/1D3).

With the use of **Evidence Collection** (a successful **Spot Hidden** roll) the investigators find a hand drawn map of Shanghai and nearby Jiangsu and a strange drawing of a temple/church at night with what seems to be two moons glowing in the night sky. Use of Astronomy or Library Use (a successful **Natural World, Science: Astronomy, Library Use** or **INT** roll) realizes that a “double moon” is an astrological phenomenon that occurs when the oscillating orbits of Mars and Earth bring the planets closer together, thus creating an illusion that Earth has a second moon. The next double moon should be set far enough into the future to allow a full Investigation and

give the Taiping Souls sufficient time to converge on the old church In the Valley of Lost Souls; a week should suffice If this clue Is found relatively early in scenario.

With the use of **Evidence Collection** (a successful **Spot Hidden** roll) the investigators also find a hand drawing of a what could be an advertisement for a cigarette company or a night club. The words Yin & Yang are inscribed on top of the page. Please distribute **Draft Flyer Handout**.

#### Lead outs:

- French Police Station
- Lempertz Auction House
- (Optional) Lloyd’s Apartment

#### Henry Morris and The North China Daily News:

The North China Daily News started as the North China Herald in 1850. It was acquired in 1901 by Henry E, Morris Sr., a British Catholic convert of Jewish decent. In 1920, the paper passed to his son Henry Jr., and in 1924, the North China Daily News building located on the Bund opened its doors. The new building was built to accommodate both the functionality required to run a newspaper as well as the quality of life the British elite should expect in the Far East. The printing presses were tucked away in a damp basement, and unskilled workers would access their place of employment through doors at the back of the building, preventing them from mixing with the gentile on the Bund. Early editions were shipped from garage doors, also at the rear of the building. In the front of the building, one could expect a very different world. The executive editorial offices were located on the fifth floor overlooking the Huangpu River, and the top floor of the building was designed as service apartments for influential and rich subjects of the King.

I used to work for The North China Daily News as a reporter. It was just a temporary gig I took on till I could find my place in this city. I mainly covered shipping news. From my time at the paper I made contacts with other reporters as well as many people in insurance and shipping industries. I know that they are always looking for good stories; maybe I can write something “juicier” than the usual fair.

# French Concession Police Station

**Location:** Poste Central de la garde Municipal (中央捕房, 卢家湾薛华立路), French concession, Shanghai (上海法租界).

## Lead Ins:

- Reporting to Sassoon
- North China Daily News Office

**Purpose:** Investigators follow-up on a lead from the opening scene. Inspector Mazenq highly respects Sassoon and will be inclined to help the investigators. He will also reveal his thoughts on the recent incidents. He believes there is a link or resemblance with the Boxer Rebellion of 1899. He also holds important information, such as the location of the first recorded incident, the Lemperzt Auction House.



## Municipalité Française, French Concession

Read the following to set the stage:

By 1929 the French Concession is bustling with activity; a city within a city. The villas are roofed with red tile and the streets are lined with trees and dotted with cafes. You feel as though you've been transported into a provincial French town on a hot summer day.

## “La manif”

As you make your way to the entrance of the building complex, loud chants in Mandarin are audible from the end of the street.

Suddenly, protesters raise their right fists to the sky and chant in Mandarin: “Down with imperialism, Workers Unite”!

A French NCO runs past you followed by a dozen white Russian mercenaries: “Peleton, garde a vous”. Mercenaries fix bayonets to their rifles and stand firm, lining up ready for a possible assault on the compound by protesters.

A Vietnamese guard will rush you inside the building. The guards at the entrance of the building close the doors and grab their rifles.

## Enter Inspector Mazenq

A short man, wearing a three-piece suit that has seen better days hurries to meet you. He seems anxious, nervously smoking a cigarette.

## Inspectors Mazenq and his colleagues

“Quickly come inside, we don't know what these “dogs” are up to today”, shouts Inspector Mazenq a proud man from Provence, which he affectionately and often refers to as “le Midi”. He leads the team of French detectives in the Concession.

Inspector Mazenq responds best to **Cop Talk** and **Flattery** in native French (**successful Law, Charm, and French Language** rolls).

The inspector will lead the investigators passed the entrance vestibule and into a room, that probably serves dual purpose as meeting room, and interrogation room. A large Shanghai map is pinned to one of the walls. An ashtray, full, lies on the table.



Inspector Mazenq speaks in a thick French accent, and might say something like the following:

- “Why do you ask about such events? What is your motive?”
- “You are Victor’s friends? He is my good friend! I will help you in any way that I can.”

If any investigators decide to use **Oral History** or **History** (a **successful History** roll), Mazenq will that recent events remind him of the Boxer Rebellion (拳亂). Although he was not present at the time, there is certainly a resemblance with the 1899-1901 anti-foreign, anti-colonial movement.

If investigators use **Cop Talk** (a **successful Law** roll), the inspector lists aloud recent events that were reported in the article. He will then mention the death of Japanese diplomat Iziku Akira, who was stabbed in an alley a week ago. Mazenq, could also be persuaded to look at his records and find out what happened the night Crazy Wang was arrested on Avenue Joffre. Mazenq, somewhat embarrassed, would reveal that Crazy Wang was indeed escorted out of the French Concession. The gendarmes didn’t open a case, they just took him for another refugee fleeing the countryside.

If investigators use **Flattery** in native French (a **French speaker who succeeds on Charm** roll). Investigators could convince Mazenq to look at his record for the first recorded events. He might say something like:

- “Ah yes, but of course...le premier incident, ze first incident”...he pauses.... “recorded incident I mean, dates back more than a month ago at the Lempertz Auction House”.

Mazenq would also discuss the Shanghai Massacre and the events going outside, mainly unions and communist groups manifesting for labor rights and better wages. If investigators ask more questions on this matter, Mazenq would reveal that the “agitation” started strangely around the same time as the Taiping Curse related incidents.

□□ **The Apartment:** The French Concession was a privileged residential area. Foreigners from various nationalities, not just the French, settled in it. By 1929, the French concession had 434,807 inhabitants, including 12,922 foreigners, of whom 7,233 were Russians and only 1,389 were French. When the American and British enclaves merged in 1863 following the Opium war, the French government was adamant, and lobbied hard, to keep their enclave separate and independent. They left the Shanghai Municipal Council and created their own governmental apparatus including law enforcement.

I own a small apartment in the Concession, right over a quaint cafe. I’m quite familiar with my neighborhood; all of its charming nooks and crannies. And the more squalid areas as well. I get along with my neighbors. However, I can’t stop feeling like they are watching me for some reason.

□□ **The Garde Municipale.** The Garde Municipale polices the French Concession. Founded in the mid19th Century, the Garde Municipale currently employs more than 250 French officers, several dozen Chinese and French detectives, 1,800 Chinese policemen, 1,200 Vietnamese guards and a heavily armed auxiliary unit of 500 White Russian mercenaries. Unlike the Shanghai Municipal Police (SMP), the Garde Municipale is involved with the promotion of “Republican” principles. Regulating and preventing crime is of less importance than showing the superiority of French Culture. Therefore, the Garde is infamous for its corruption The Garde Municipale only operates within the French Concession.

I served as a sergeant in the Garde Municipale and was responsible for training new policemen and guards. I trained many of the Chinese policemen and Vietnamese guards who still serve, and many of them look up to me like a big brother. Unfortunately, I was dismissed from the Garde Municipale under a cloud of suspicion for bribery. I can call on those individuals whom I trained, but I try my best to avoid unnecessary interactions with the top brass, as those types of interactions are unlikely to go well.



French Municipal Council Building

# French Police Station (part 2)

**Location:** Poste Central de la garde Municipal (中央捕房, 卢家湾薛华立路)

French concession, Shanghai (上海法租界).

**Purpose:** As investigators leave the French police station and witness the chaos on the street, before encountering “Crazy Wang” for the first time.



Once investigators are outside, the investigators should have a chance to use **Sense Trouble** (a **successful Survival** or **INT** roll) to grasp the situation.

Between groups of union workers, fighting with gendarmes stands a peculiar old man shouting in Mandarin with a thick Jiangsu accent: “The Trinity will avenge us”. He seems to be holding a stack of papers or propaganda material. Strangely, other demonstrators and gendarmes don’t pay much attention to him.

**Keeper’s Notes:** If the investigators decide to give pursuit, it is recommended that “Crazy Wang” vanishes into the crowd.

If investigators succeed on a **Shadowing** test 4 (a **successful Track** roll), “Crazy Wang” drops the stack of paper, allowing him to run unhindered and blend in with the mob. The investigators may not catch “Crazy Wang”, but they are rewarded with the recovery of the flyers. The flyers say “Exterminate the heretics, destroy Sodom!” in Chinese, English and French.” Each flyer has a small printed logo and Chinese characters indicating that they were printed by the Shanghai Revolutionary Press.

If the during the riot, investigators are injured, they may want to “call it a day” and reconvene the next morning. This downtime allows investigators to pursue their own leads and/or approach personal contacts. It also allows the investigators to “refresh” their point pools.

## Lead outs:

- Lempertz Auction House.
- (Optional) Shanghai Revolutionary Press
- (Optional) Lloyd’s Apartment



# (Optional) Shanghai Revolutionary Press

**Location:** Chengyu Lane, House no.12 French Concession  
(上海法租界, 成渝路12号)

## Lead Ins:

- French Police Station

**Purpose:** Investigators may want to follow previous lead “political/Taiping Tracts” and uncover the hidden communist press. The press was recently re-opened and is used to print Taiping Tracts. It is operated by infected communist university students. Closing down the print press would prevent cultists from distributing more tracts and minimize the ongoing chaos.



Investigators with **Oral History** or **Streetwise** (a **successful INT roll** or a **Hard Law roll**) are aware that the Shanghai Revolutionary Press closed its doors after the April 12th, 1927 incident (Shanghai Massacre). KMT backed forces, including triads, were quick to forcibly close, sabotage and destroy the city’s communist apparatus.

Opened before the official foundation of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the Shanghai Revolutionary Press at its early stage was a typical underground press; housing large, obsolete printing press equipment dating back to the late stages of the industrial revolution.

The Shanghai Revolutionary press’ first publication was a Chinese translation of *The Communist Manifesto* in 1920.

Located in a humble shikumen (石库门) building on Chengyu Lane, House no.12 faces another row of houses. In summer, neighbors used the small alley between houses to cook, wash clothes, and for a morning quick rinse over a basin. Thick smoke from cooking stations fills the air between houses throughout the day. A potent mix of coal, chives and sweet bell pepper scents fill the air. A few neighbors are having mundane conversations in their distinctive raspy Shanghainese dialect punctuated with regular hawking and deep throat clearing.

Residents are certainly aware of the comings and goings of their neighbors. Depending on time of day, the alley may be full of friendly residents, willing to disclose information.

- With **Reassurance** or **Flattery** (a **successful Persuade** or **Charm roll**) some residents recall seeing a 1928 Ford model A/AA pickup truck delivering a wooden crate when the press reopened. Since then, young people, probably students, come and go with stacks of flyers. They seem to go deliver propaganda in the city’s bowels.
- Residents could mention that the press was indeed shut down a few years ago, but it has reopened just a few months back. They believe it serves once again as an underground printing house, producing regular propaganda flyers and revolutionary material.

The inside is dark, a musky smell of ink, additives and solvents fill the small room. The windows have been shut tight. A worker is placing led blocks on a platform. He seems oblivious to your presence.



With the use of **Evidence Collection** (a successful **Spot Hidden** roll), investigators will see an opened wooden crate on one of the tables. An opened urn lies next to the crate. On each side of the box, the initials DD co Ltd. are stamped.

The worker will not resist or pose any threat to the investigators unless the investigators agitate him or try to restrain him. He is preoccupied with his task, and he will only respond after physical contact breaks his trance and takes him out of his torpor. **Assess Honesty** (a successful **Psychology**) roll confirms that his responses are, to the best of his ability, truthful).

- His name Liu De Rong and he is a communist sympathizer and University student. He doesn't know how long or how he got here. There is a small cot in the corner, were Liu De Rong sleeps.
- A **Psychoanalysis** test of 4 (a successful **Psychoanalysis** roll) reveals that an old and odd man with a thick Nanjing accent lured him and a few "comrades" here. The old man said he had access to something that would help with the struggle and defeat the imperialists. He was very convincing.
- In a pulp game, **Hypnosis** (a successful **Hard Psychoanalysis** roll) would reveal a sanity bending description of how Lao Wang lured these young communists into the closed-down Shanghai Revolutionary Press, and then exposed them to the essence of Yeb by opening an urn in their presence. Listening to such an account requires a 3-point **Stability** test (**Sanity** roll 0/1D3).

**Leads Out:**

- Lempertz Auction House

**Liu De Rong, student infected with Yeb**

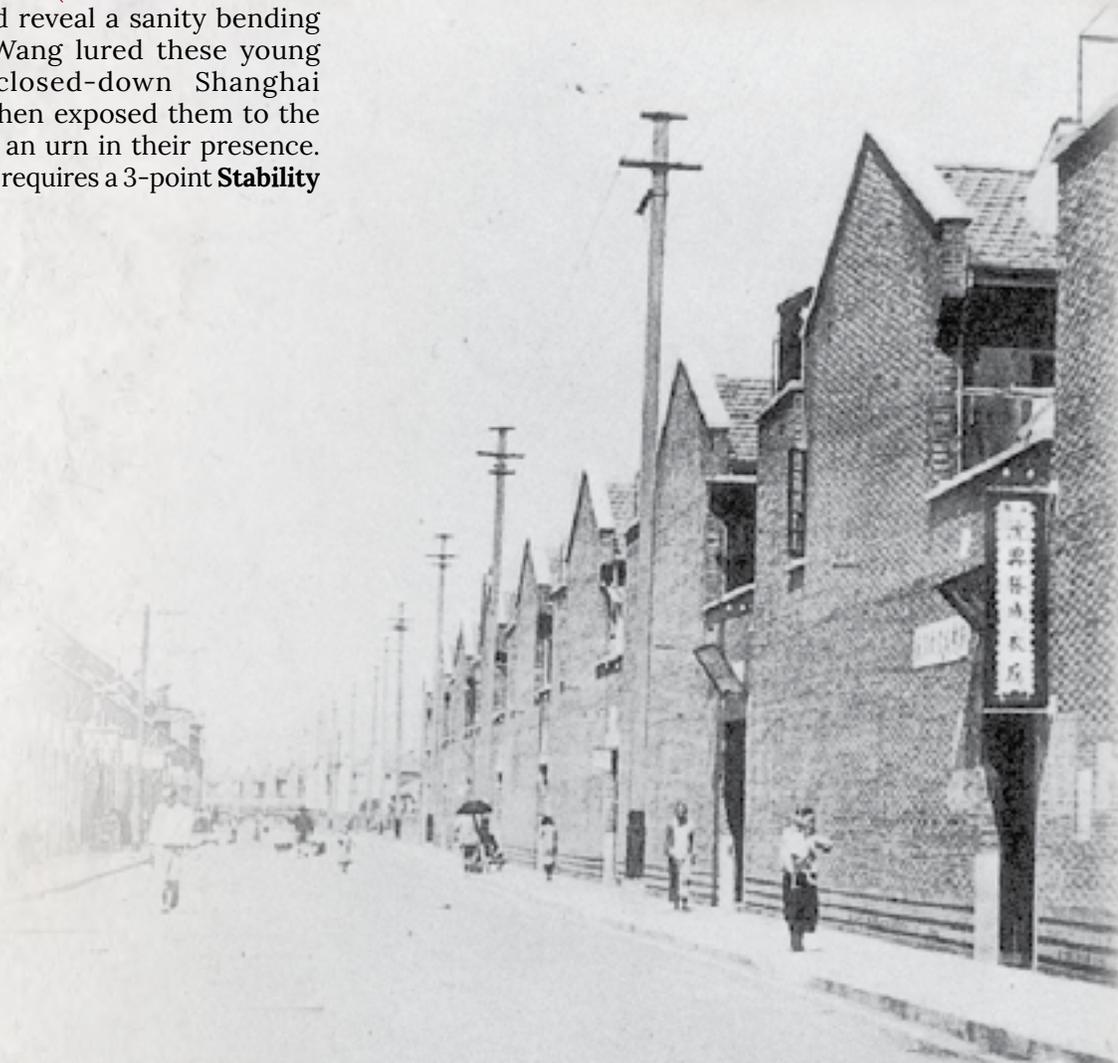
Athletics 8, Health 8, Scuffling 8  
Alertness -1  
Immune to fire  
(Kick (-2), Punch (-2))

**Liu De Rong, Student infected with Yeb**

STR 60	CON 60	SIZ 50	DEX 50	INT 50
APP 40	POW 50	EDU 50	SAN -	HP 11
DB: 0	Build: 0	Move: 8	MP 10	

Brawl: 80%, damage unarmed 1D3  
Armor: None

Immunity: Fire



# (Optional) Lloyd's Apartment

**Location:** Trest Court Apartments in the French Concession

**Lead ins:**

- North China Daily News Office
- French Police Station

**Purpose:** The investigators search Lloyd's apartment to learn that Lloyd is absent. Lloyd is currently at the Valley of Lost Souls, preparing for the performance of the Black Litany. This scene also offers hints that the those infected with Taiping Souls are congregating somewhere outside of the city. This scene may also be used to provide the Black Litany Handbill clue.



Located on Woo Foo Lane - in the heart of the French Concession, the Trest Court is a typical apartment complex featuring Western and Chinese characteristics built in the early 1920s. The 5 story brick building features high ceilinged one to two-bedroom apartments, catering to well off expatriate and nouveaux riches Shanghainese. Lloyd's apartment is a typical modern single bedroom flat, with wooden floors, dark wood trimmings and a built-in kitchen.

If the investigators visit the apartment during the day, they will be surprised with the lack of natural light inside. All drapes in the apartment are closed, and Harry Lloyd made a special point of hanging extra blankets and sheets to prevent the sun from entering.

The bedroom is in shambles; stained towels and dirty trousers litter the floor. The mosquito net on the oak

bed is open and the stripped mattress is bloodstained.

An old Chinese style writing desk, presenting a fair bit of wear and tear stands next to a makeshift bookshelf. Several papers are spread out on the desk. They appear to be early sketches of a burlesque show advertisement.

Keepers should distribute the **Draft Flyer Handout**. If the investigation is sufficiently further along, a Keeper may opt to distribute the **Black Litany Handbill Handout**.

With the use of **Evidence Collection (a successful Spot Hidden)** investigators will find traces of dirt and grass on the bed.

With the use of a point of **Forensic (a Hard Spot Hidden or Science: Forensics roll)** an investigator will determine that the blood on the mattress and bedsheets are the result of self-inflicted wounds. Mixed with the blood is dirt and grass.

**Lead outs:**

- Lempertz Auction House



# Lempertz Auction House

**Location:** Lempertz's private auction house, Shanghai International Settlement

**Lead Ins:**

- Reporting to Sassoon,
- North China Daily News Office,
- French Police Station,
- Shanghai Revolutionary Press,
- Lloyd's Apartment

**Purpose:** According to Inspector Mazenq, the Auction House is the site of the first recorded incident related to the Taiping curse. Investigators who previously visited the Auction House will be surprised to find it closed and under lock. Investigators who search the premises find a few remaining urns in the storage room. If an investigator opens an urn, one of the Taiping souls is released, taking control of an investigator's mind.



Read this to set the tone:

Investigators arrive in front of the Lempertz's Auction House, a complex surrounded by stucco walls with wrought iron spikes. A crew of municipal workers, some wearing simple peasant rags, is repainting the stucco walls white. A few red letters stand out; the word greed is still noticeable.

A large metal chain and lock keep the main gate closed. Leaves and litter have accumulated in front and behind the gate. A young municipal police officer wearing a uniform twice his size stands guard in front of the complex.

As the investigators reach the gate of the Auction House, the police officer, who's probably 16 years of age, yells: "This is closed – go away now".

Investigators with **Intimidation** or **Cop Talk** (a successful **Intimidate, Law** or **Persuade** roll with a bonus die) can either intimidate or convince the young police officer to open the gate. It clearly doesn't take much to impress the young police officer, however he doesn't have the key to the lock.

Investigators can use **Locksmith** to open the gate. Alternatively, they can decide to climb the walls, but it would be a tricky affair with the iron spikes, and thus requires an Athletics test of 4 (a successful **Climb** roll), with failure resulting in a loss of 1D6 Health (loss of 1D8 hit points).

## Inside the House

Inside the unmarked two-story house of granite, are rooms fitted out with hallways, trim and doorways crafted in a heavy classical style and filled with expensive but uncomfortable oak furniture. Most of the furniture has been covered with white drapes. Dust is visible on wooden floors and light fixtures.

Mr. Lempertz has made a living by carefully picking and choosing both suppliers and buyers of fine antiques and historical artifacts. He is a meticulous entrepreneur and keeps good records of his activities.

At the time of this scene, Herr Gunter Lempertz is missing. No one is present inside the house. It has been clearly "shut down" for a few weeks.

## The Office

As the investigators search the house and step in Herr Lempertz's office, they are struck with a foul scent, a potent smell of decay and human feces. The smell emanates from the ceiling, where someone using dirt, plants, and other unpleasant material tried to dictate a scene from the Black Litany ritual. The drawing seems to represent an organic arch, towering over four pillars. In the distance, are two moons. Investigators with **Occult** or **Psychoanalysis** (**Occult** or **Psychoanalysis** over 50%) realize the drawing is an attempt to represent an occult ritual. This realization requires such an investigator to make a 3-point **Stability** test (roll **Sanity** 0/1d3). The desk is completely empty; there are visible shoe prints on it. There are no documents, no diary available. It is clear of all contents.

Although Lempertz's desk in his office doesn't provide any clues, investigators actively searching the office find several auction sales receipts in a metal drawer. Please distribute the **Lempertz Receipt Handout**.

The receipts are in chronological order. The last entry date is from May 1929. A folder includes a list of participants and items of sale. The receipt also contains both the customer's and supplier's contact information, including last known mailing addresses.

**Keeper's Notes:** The Lempertz Receipt contains a list of buyers and the vendor, Dragon's Desire Trading Co. Dragon's Desire Trading Co is owned by Albert Masters, and it was Masters who convinced Lempertz to organize the auction.

## The Storage

Adjacent to the office, a locked door leads to a storage room. The door can be unlocked with **Locksmith** (a successful **Locksmith** roll) or forced up with a successful **Mechanical Repair** or **Athletics** test of 5 (a successful **Mechanical Repair** or **Strength** test).

Inside, investigators find two dozen artifacts neatly displayed on a wooden shelf. Each artifact has a tag identifying the piece, provenance and estimated value. A few Late Qing Funeral Urns are stored on the bottom shelf; the urns are sealed shut with clay seals.

If an investigator decides to open an urn and have a peak at its content, they find ashes. **Chemistry** (a successful **Science: Chemistry** roll) would be able to identify the ashes as organic matter. Investigators with **Anthropology** (a successful **Anthropology** roll) identify the ceramic containers as Late Qing Funeral Urns and know that the contents are likely the remains of a cremated person. An **Anthropology** or **Archaeology** spend (a success on a **Hard Anthropology** or **Archaeology** roll) is able to identify the funeral urns as having been made from clay originating in the Jiangsu province and likely containing the remains of relatively senior members of the Taiping Rebellion who, in 1864, died at the hands of the Ever Glorious.

## Infection

If an investigator opens an urn, nothing "noticeable" will occur. However, the Keeper should call for a private **Sense Trouble** roll difficulty 5 (win an opposed **POW** roll against a **POW** of 100) from the investigator opening the urn. If the investigator succeeds on the roll, the Keeper should ask subsequent investigators to make the same roll until one investigator has failed the roll or all investigators in the storage room have succeeded. When playing with a larger group of players (5-7) feel free to allow for two infected investigators.

If the investigator fails the roll, a Taiping Soul slowly takes control of the investigator's mind. The Taiping loyalist

soul will slowly wipe the investigator's consciousness, leaving behind two main goals: propagate Yeb and fulfill the Taiping curse.

The Keeper should have a private, secret conversation on the side to tell the player what happened and inform the player that their investigator is infected with a Taiping Soul that is consuming the investigator's personality and identity.

The Keeper should now give the player two options:

1. The Keeper can encourage the player to role-play the investigator's slow descent into madness. The player is essentially role-playing an NPC with new drives. Give the player the Lore Sheet / Hand Out "**Taiping Soul Lore Sheet**". If you are playing with the optional Lore Sheet Rules, this Lore Sheet is "Tap-able" and can be used in the manner described in the Lore Sheet. Of course, the player should be instructed to not tell the other players about this new Lore Sheet.

2. Create a new investigator. This method destroys immersion and suspense for game-play purposes, and is, frankly, ham-fisted. However, this method respects the player's agency and right to play an investigator with a personality and identity of their own choosing.

**Keeper's Notes:** An infected investigator is a "Judas figure" that potentially presents a "win-condition" for defeating Master Li and preventing Yeb from reforming and ultimately destroying Shanghai. A possible solution involves infected investigators infiltrating the Black Litany ceremony at the Valley of Lost Souls and slipping poison into the mana cauldron.

If the investigation stalls, Keepers may use an infected Investigator to find the Yin & Yang Club or the Valley of Lost Souls.

## (Optional) Run or fight!

The investigators may be suddenly startled by the sound of shattering glass. Investigators succeeding on a **Sense Trouble** test difficulty 4 (a successful **Listen** roll), will know that a group of at least six people have entered the building through one of the back windows.

Investigators announcing their intent to flee at this point may do so by succeeding on a **Flee** or **Athletics** test difficulty 3 (a successful **Luck** roll).

The villa's wooden floorboards creak as intruders make their way deeper into the house. If the investigators look outside the window, they will realize the work crew

has disappeared and so has the police officer. Instead, a woman wearing what appears to be a traditional Chinese uniform, black in color, with sleeves folded on the wrists to reveal inner white fabric, stands guard inside the compound. Investigators who have studied Chinese martial arts or who succeed on an **Oral History** test difficulty 4 (a successful INT roll) realize she is wearing the uniform of the Jing Wu Athletic Association. This person is Yun Xiao Xue, known as the “Everlasting Praying Mantis” in her own social circles

The group that has broken into the auction house are all members of the Jing Wu Athletic Association, and they are here to fight against the Mythos threat. For the Jing Wu Athletics Association, the recent mythos activities are linked to the foreigners, their influence and depraved lifestyle. They will do everything in their power to unmask culprits and defeat cultists. Although the Jing Wu Athletic Association has interests that are aligned with the investigators, it will be difficult to convey such a message under these tense circumstances.

At this point, any investigators who have not fled the auction house have a choice to make; confront the group of martial artists that have broken into the building, prepare an ambush, hide or attempt to parlay.

**Keeper’s Notes:** For Keeper’s interested in running this scenario as a campaign, adding a separate Faction composed of members of the Jing Wu Athletic Association is recommended.

Some Keepers may want to use this scene to introduce the pre-generated character Ling Xue to the scenario. In this case, replace Yun Xiao Xue with Ling Xue. It is also possible that some or all of the investigators are affiliated with or are members of the Jing Wu Athletic Association, in which case pass out the **Jing Wu Athletic Association** Lore Sheet accordingly. Moreover, it is possible to run this scenario (or campaign) using the Jing Wu Athletic Association as a Investigator Faction. Under these circumstances, Yun Xiao Xue would serve as the faction leader and “hook”, and the investigators could each be apprentices.

**Lead Outs:**

- Search for the Missing Four
- Buyer: Dr. Aue (Psychiatrist),
- Buyer: Izuku Akira (Consul),
- Buyer: Laszlo Hudec (Sculptor)
- Supplier: Albert Masters & the Dragon’s Desire Trading Co.

**Master Yun Xiao Xue, Everlasting Praying Mantis**  
 Athletics 10, Health 10, Scuffling 10, Weapons 6, Stealth 2, Cthulhu Mythos 1, Assess Honesty 2, Intimidation 2, Oral History 2  
 Alertness +1  
 (Kick (+0), Punch (+0))

**Master Yun Xiao Xue, Everlasting Praying Mantis**  
 STR 75 CON 70 SIZ 50 DEX 70 INT 50  
 APP 50 POW 50 EDU 60 SAN 40 HP 12  
 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 9 MP 10  
 Brawl: 85%, damage unarmed 1D3+1D4  
 Staff: 75% damage 1D8+1D4  
 Dodge: 75%  
 Armor: None  
 Skills: Climb 85%, Cthulhu Mythos: 10%, Throw 60%, Jump 80%, Intimidate 50%, Psychology: 33%, Spot Hidden 33%, Stealth 50%

□□ **Jing Wu Athletic Association:** Founded in the early 20th Century, the Jing Wu Athletic Association (Chinese: 精武; pinyin: Jing Wu) broke with traditions shrouded in secrecy, and opened its doors as one of the first public martial arts institutes in China. Jing Wu founders also had close links with Sun Yat-sen’s underground resistance movement “Tongmenhui”, which was originally established to overthrow the Qing. Master Huo Yuanjia, a co-founder of Jing Wu, is considered a national hero in China. Although it is difficult to discern fact from fiction, Master Huo gained national fame by defeating foreign fighters in public matches. Fighting in public matches after the Boxer Rebellion, Huo’s victories provided much needed national pride when Chinese sovereignty was constantly tested by foreign imperialism and the ever-growing foreign concessions.

I have been studying with a Jing Wu club for several years. Just as I have learned about building up and body and skills to protect myself against aggressors, I have learned that I must help build my China up to protect against imperialists. My brothers in the Jing Wu will help me face off against foreign oppressors, but we must be discrete. Lately, my local club leader Lao Zhou has told me that our mission goes deeper than resisting foreigners; he keeps talking about other things we must fight against. I don’t know what he means.

## □□ Taiping Soul Lore Sheet - Lei Xu

Yeb is a Great Old One that was dismembered, but not destroyed, in a cosmic battle with another Great Old One. Hong Xiuquan, the leader of the Taiping rebellion, communed with and took instructions from Yeb, tapping into its power. It drove him mad and corrupted his sense of self-identity. Hong Xiuquan advanced a syncretic religion that incorporated Yeb's dark rituals, including the "Black Litany", which may be used to reconstitute or "resurrect" Yeb. Hong Xiuquan and his inner circle died while enacting the Black Litany.

I have been infected with a "Taiping Soul". A Taiping Soul is a portion of the Great Old One Yeb fused with the fractured spirit of a Taiping loyalist. I am filled with conflicting emotions. On one hand, I have rage and hate for all people residing in and around Shanghai. This rage drives me to help other Taiping Souls complete the Black Litany. On the other hand, I know that the Black Litany is a blasphemy and Yeb must be stopped.

The "Taiping Soul" who took possession of me is Lei Xu. Lei Xu is none other than a member of Hong's inner circle who betrayed the Taiping cause by poisoning the mana used in the final Black Litany with arsenic. Although the move was motivated purely by greed - Lei Xu accepted a significant bribe from the Qing - the gesture prevented Yeb from reforming.

At the cost of a slow decent into a madness, this possession gives me strange, new abilities. First, I know that I am immune to fire. I can also "hear" other Taiping Souls over great distances. Over time, I might even be able to use this skill to locate others who have been infected.

I may find myself quoting Hong Xiuquan or other Chinese scholars, whose works may have been read by the Taiping revolutionary now sharing space in my head.

- Hong Xiuquan: "The Eye can see through and beyond the west, the north, rivers and mountains. The Ear can hear through and beyond the east, the west, the oceans and the cities."
- Lao Tzu: "Victory in war should be observed with funeral rites"
- Sun Tzu: "All warfare is based on deception."

## □□ Taiping Soul Lore Sheet - Yang Lan

Yeb is a Great Old One that was dismembered, but not destroyed, in a cosmic battle with another Great Old One. Hong Xiuquan, the leader of the Taiping rebellion, communed with and took instructions from Yeb, tapping into its power. It drove him mad and corrupted his sense of self-identity. Hong Xiuquan advanced a syncretic religion that incorporated Yeb's dark rituals, including the "Black Litany", which may be used to reconstitute or "resurrect" Yeb. Hong Xiuquan and his inner circle died while enacting the Black Litany.

I have been infected with a "Taiping Soul". A Taiping Soul is a portion of the Great Old One Yeb fused with the fractured spirit of a Taiping loyalist. My original self is struggling to repress the desires, thoughts and identity of a Taiping loyalist and an unfathomable alien intelligence.

The "Taiping Soul" who took possession of me is Yang Lan. Yang Lan made a living fishing until a Qing-backed official used his position to seize Yang Lan's boat. Yang Lan very much wants revenge and works to fulfill Hong Xiu's curse. My original self, of course, wants no part of this, but every day it gets harder and harder to repress the Taiping Soul.

At the cost of a slow decent into a madness, this possession gives me strange, new abilities. First, I know that I am immune to fire. I can also "hear" other Taiping Souls over great distances. Over time, I might even be able to use this skill to locate others who have been infected.

I may find myself quoting Hong Xiuquan or portions of the Bible:

- Hong Xiuquan: "We should prepare for the second coming. The time will soon be right, the sky will be filled with twin moons."
- Genesis 19:1 "The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening..."
- Ezekiel 16:49 "And the Heavenly King said, behold, the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and she did not strengthen the hand of the poor and needy."
- Genesis 19:24 "Then the Heavenly King rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from heaven."

# The Search for the Missing Four - Dr. Aue

**Location:** Jukin Road (瑞金路), French Concession (上海法租界).

## Leads in:

- Lempertz Auction House
- Search for the Missing Four

**Purpose:** The investigators visit Doctor Aue at St. Marie Hospital, only to find out that the good doctor is now himself a full-time patient confined to the psychiatric ward. Upon inquiry, Doctor John Gilford, Director of Pharmacy, may allow the investigators to visit Dr. Aue.



Read this to set the tone:

The St. Marie Hospital is a Catholic charity hospital and clinic located in the French concession. The red brick building is three stories tall and its modest emergency room overflows with desperate patients, day-in and day-out.

When investigators ask the general reception desk clerk to meet with Dr. Aue, clerks will look at each other uneasy. They will also mention that Dr. Aue is not available. One clerk, who seems to be the supervisor will tell investigators that Dr. Aue is on vacation.

With the use of **Assess Honesty** (a successful **Psychology roll**) investigators will realize that the clerks are lying. They may use **Flattery** or **Intimidation** (a successful **Charm or Intimidate roll**) to convince the clerks to reveal the truth: Dr. Aue has been committed since late May, when he was diagnosed with an extreme case of hysteria and schizophrenia.

## The Cell

If investigators manage to convince the clerks to be led to the psychiatric ward, read this to set the tone:

Dr. Aue is in complete isolation; he's wearing a leather straight jacket, there are marks on the wall, scratches from what are most likely fingernails, explains why hospital staff decided to put on the straight jacket.

If investigators with Evidence Collection (a successful **Spot Hidden**) inspect the scratches on the walls of the cell, they notice a scene depicting two planets or moons and a ray of light shining on a structure that resembles a church.

Dr. Aue is sitting on the floor in a corner, rocking his head back and forth. He seems to be giggling, although he's also gagged.

Not long after the investigators have gained access to Dr. Aue, Dr. Gilford will arrive and say: "This is most unexpected, who gave you access to my patient?"

## Doctor John Gilford

Doctor John Gilford, serves as the Director of Pharmacy at St. Marie's Hospital. He is the highest ranked foreign doctor when Dr. Maybell is not on site. A proud New Yorker, Gilford studied in France with the Jesuits and returned to NYC after a few years of practicing in London. Gilford is greedy, overconfident, very well connected, and highly temperamental.



**Keeper's Notes:** Doctor John Gilford is made available in this scenario as a pre-generated investigator. Keepers may elect to introduce him as an investigator or an NPC in this scene. Keepers may also elect to replace him with another NPC. Please note that Doctor John Gilford is the older brother of Doctor Julien Gilford, an Alienist pre-generated character made available in the Sassoon Files.

If asked about what happened to Dr. Aue, Doctor Gilford will say the following:

- “Well it is difficult to say, although I suspect his work consumed him....or maybe he just spent too much time with the “natives”?”
- Are we dealing with a mental breakdown? If so what was the trigger?” our medical team have not been able to establish any correlation.

If asked about the timing of the events

- “Hmmm... now that I think about it, Dr. Aue was quite excited a few months back. He mentioned an auction at Lempertz and a chance to acquire rare antiques.”

If asked about the Auction House:

- “I never understood the interest in buying Chinese relics, what is the point? They are ugly and not functional”.
- “I don't know Mr. Lempertz, he is untrustworthy if you ask me”.

If the investigators convince Dr. Gilford to interrogate or perform a psychoanalysis of Dr. Aue:

- Dr Aue's first words are: “I shall not rest until Sodom burns....Löse mich, ich muss meinen Herren dienen.... Untie me, I must serve my masters”.
- His next response to any question is: “A few nights from now, Oh was für eine Show, eine wunderbare ...Oh what a show, a wonderful burlesque show...”

With the use of **Psychoanalysis** (a **successful Psychoanalysis** roll) Dr. Aue mentions the private auction and people present and concluding with, “... then something amazing happened...he opened one”.

**Keeper's Notes:** After the investigators' visit, Dr. Aue, with the help of his fellow cultists, will escape and make his way to the Valley of Lost Souls for the ceremony. It is possible that the investigators help him check out or break out of; and if they do so, it may also be possible for the investigators to follow Dr. Aue to the Yin & Yang Club.

### Dr. Aue, alienist infected with Yeb

Health 10, Stability 6, Sanity 0  
Scuffling 5, Fire Arms 5  
Cthulhu Mythos 2, Biology 2, Language 2 (English, French, German, Chinese) Medicine 4, Occult 2, Chemistry 2, Pharmacy 4

Alertness +0  
Immune to fire  
(Kick (-2), Punch (-2))

### Dr. Aue, alienist infected with Yeb

STR 50	CON 50	SIZ 50	DEX 50	INT 80
APP 50	POW 50	EDU 80	SAN -	HP 10
DB: 0	Build: 0	Move: 8	MP 10	

Brawl: 70%, damage unarmed 1D3  
Armor: None  
Immunity: Fire

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 25, Dodge 25, Firearms (Handgun) 50, First Aid 50, Language (Own) German 80, Language (Other) English 40, Language (Other) French 40, Language (Other) Chinese 50, Medicine 70, Occult 15, Science: Biology 15, Science: Chemistry 15

### Lead Outs:

- Search for the Missing Four: Diplomat Izuku Akira
- Search for the Missing Four: Laszlo Hudec
- Search for the Missing Four: Albert Masters and the Dragon's Desire Trading Co.
- The Burlesque Show

□□ **My therapist, Dr. Aue:** Dr. Aue is a prominent figure in Shanghai medical circles. He is a well-respected psychiatrist and alienist. Some of his work, especially on psychotherapy has been published in reputable academic journals.

Originating from Switzerland, Dr. Aue could have accepted a position with any internationally renowned medical institution. He decided however, to base his practice in Shanghai. Some, including Sassoon, say that Dr. Aue spends too much time with the deranged. More worrying, his desire to understand the Mythos seems to be one of his main drives.

Dr. Aue was my therapist; he helped me deal with a case of the jitters I had after the Great War. I'm also friends with his young Chinese wife. If anything happened to him, I need to help.

# The Search for the Missing Four - Diplomat Iziku Akira

**Location:** French Concession Police Department

**Leads in:**

- Lempertz Auction House
- Search for the Missing Four

**Purpose:** Investigators know that Iziku was one of the buyers invited to the Qing funeral urn auction at the Lempertz Auction House. Investigators receive news. Investigators receive news that Iziku was found murdered in his home compound in the western portion of the French Concession. They will be invited to interview Iziku's secretary, Ms. Gao, at the French Concession Police Department. This scene may be used to point the investigation towards the Valley of Souls. It may also serve as a plot hook for introducing the Genyosha faction.



Iziku Akira, who attended Lempertz's auction of the funeral urns, sensed that something was off about the urn, and he excused himself and left before Lempertz opened one of the urns. Posing a threat to the new cultists and because of his family link to the Ever-Victorious Army, Iziku was murdered by Master Li (Masters).

A few weeks before the auction, Iziku was visited by representatives of the Genyosha, an ultra-nationalist Japanese secret society. The Genyosha are interested in buying some property just to the West of Shanghai; the site of the Valley of Lost Souls to find out the secret to the Taiping Souls so that they can replicate this magic.

Investigators are contacted by Inspector Mazenq about the death of Japanese diplomat Mr. Iziku Akira, who was found in his home with a slit throat. (Keepers may also ask the investigators how he was killed.) Mazenq has invited Iziku's secretary to the station to answer questions.

Ms. Gao is Iziku's secretary and aid. She was also Iziku's lover and confidant. She is a thin, pretty, and intelligent woman, though now she is clearly very distressed about the Iziku's murder. She is willing to meet the investigators at the French Concession police HQ, but she insists on talking "off the record". In the police office, Ms. Gao is chain smoking cigarettes and wearing mourning white. Ms. Gao can reveal the following:

When asked about Iziku's attendance to the Lempertz House auction:

•"Iziku was interested in artifacts from the period of the Taiping Rebellion. He mentioned that the Iziku family played an important role in supporting the Ever Victorious Army. If pressed on this matter: "As one of the oldest Japanese traders in Shanghai, the Iziku family acted as one of the main financiers of the army's expedition."

•"He didn't stay for the end of the auction. He left before it ended and when he got back, he seemed nervous."

If asked about other strange things that may have happened:

•About a month ago, Iziku had some visitors from Japan. They were intense and they yelled at Iziku about "going native". I took that as a criticism of their relationship with me. I thought we had kept our relationship secret, but I guess the news got out. "

•**CORE CLUE:** "After the visitors left, Iziku asked me to inquire about purchasing land to the West of Shanghai,



French Municipal Council Building



on behalf of his friends. I made some inquiries. An agent I contacted told me there was nothing on the land but an abandoned church. The land has an easement for the railroad line to Suzhou.”

- “I don’t have the address; I didn’t think much of this. Iziku was involved in many real-estate transactions. I can get it for you though. I never went to the place myself.”

**Keeper’s Notes:** Keepers should not reveal the location of the Valley of Lost Soul until after the Burlesque Show scene. This can be accomplished by having Ms. Gao disappear before she gets the address or having this scene take place after or just before the Burlesque Show scene. If Ms. Gao becomes a casualty (i.e. killed by the Genyosha or infected with a Taiping Soul), the investigators could find the location of the church in the Valley of Lost Souls by breaking into the crime scene of Iziku’s house or by following leads discussed in the Gathering Info scene.

**Keeper’s Notes:** As an optional hook, consider introducing Genyosha elements to any investigation into Izuku. The Genyosha are conducting their own investigation into the murder and may unwillingly become infected at some point over the course of the scenario.

**Lead outs:**

- Lempertz Auction House
- Search for the Missing Four:
- Dr. Aue
- Search for the Missing Four: Laszlo Hudec
- Albert Masters and the Dragon’s Desire Trading Co.
- The Burlesque Show

# The Search for the Missing Four - Albert Masters

**Location:** Masters Villa in the heart of the French Concession

**Lead Ins:**

- Lempertz Auction House
- Search for the Missing Four

**Purpose:** Investigators make their way to the home of prominent Shanghai figure and business tycoon Albert Masters. Investigators with close links to Sassoon will also know that Mr. Masters is a longtime friend of Victor. However, unknown to both the investigators and Sassoon, Mr. Masters was tainted long before the auction of the Qing urns took place.



As a shareholder of some of the more legitimate businesses owned by the 4 Seas Gang, and a close collaborator of Lao Che, Masters was initiated into worship of the Great Old Ones years ago. Lao Che quickly and enthusiastically became Masters' mentor. It was Lao Che who gave Masters the book "Valley of Lost Souls. Last Days of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom", which led to the discovery of the Taiping funeral urns.

Read this to set the tone:

The Masters' Villa is straight out of Andersen's Fairy Tales. It was designed by Masters' young daughter after dreaming about it one night. When she awoke, she drew a picture of the castle from her dreams in vivid detail. Detail so fine that one would not expect a young child to be capable of producing. Interestingly enough, it is believed that Masters was secretly dosing his daughter with opiates and other pharmaceutical

concoctions in an attempt to "open her inner eye" in the same way he had opened his own. Her dream led him to believe that her inner eye was now open, and he decreed construction of the castle in the mid-20s in celebration and gesture to his eldritch Gods.

The building seems to be empty or abandoned. There is no visible light on. However, as investigators approach the property, they notice the dim orange glow of a cigarette.

You approach further. The light is coming from the gatehouse at the edge of the property. You hear mumbling voices, slurred voices coming from within. Inside the smoke-filled gatehouse there are two guards, in their late 50's or early 60's. An empty bottle of huangjiu (rice liquor) sits on the small desk in front of them.

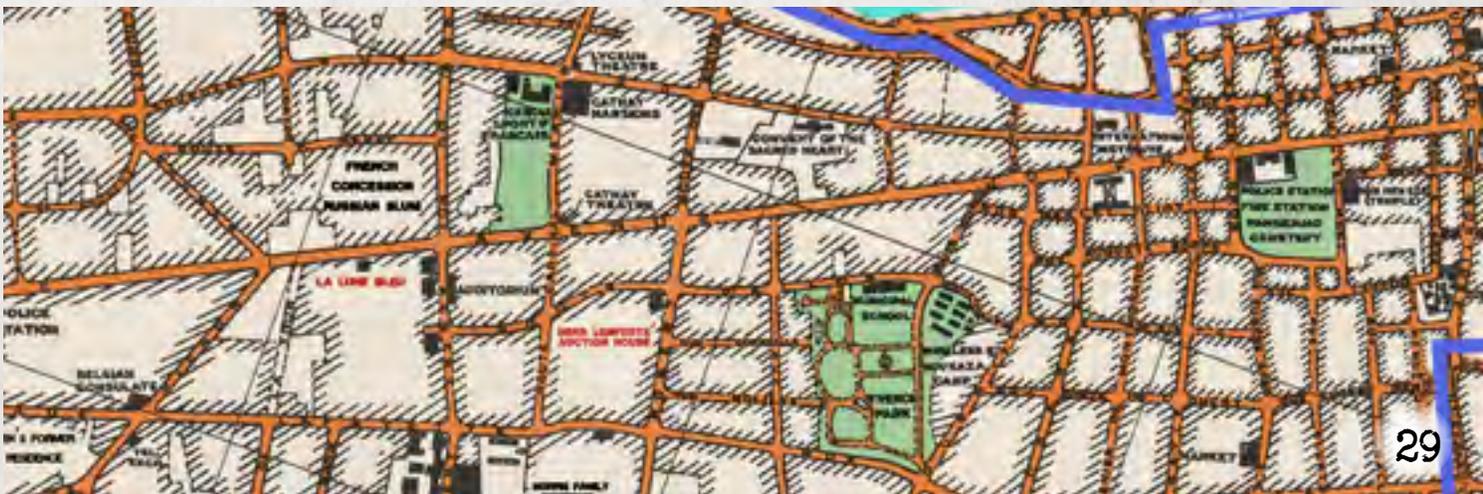
Investigators who speak Chinese will understand the conversation: "Yesterday, I saw a vampire," "No way, you are a liar." "hahaha - Really!"

The easiest method of entering the premise is through the use of **Stealth** (a successful **Stealth** roll).

The large oaken front doors of the mansion are surprisingly unlocked. They are quite heavy as you pull them open. You are hit with a strong smell of must and mildew. You enter and immediately notice another smell. Sulfur... You wonder as you take in your surroundings. The first-floor foyer would have been an amazing sight during the daytime, if the furnishing wasn't covered in white drapes and dust.

There are double-doors on each side of the room.

The double doors to the right and left are wide open; they lead to the library and then to the office. There is also a small door, at the corner in the vestibule; this door is closed and locked. This locked door leads down to the wine cellar.



## The Library and the Office

If the investigators elect to investigate the areas of the estate behind the open double doors, they will eventually stumble upon what seems to be the remnants of a library. Some books lay on the floor – a large mahogany desk occupies the center.

**CORE CLUE:** With **Evidence Collection (a successful Spot Hidden)** an investigator will notice the top of a flier half-hidden underneath a pile of paper and envelopes. The flier is an advertisement for a burlesque show; please distribute the **Black Litany Handbill Handout**.

**Keeper's Notes:** If Master's house was the first of the Missing Four the investigators look at, set the date on The Black Litany Burlesque show to occur a week later so that the investigators feel they have the time to investigate the other missing people.

Next to the flier is a leather-bound book. Although bound in a western fashion, the book is in traditional mandarin. The front cover reads: 迷失的靈魂之谷。太平天國的最後幾天。Investigators who are able to read Chinese know can translate the title of the book as, "Valley of Lost Souls. Last Days of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom."

If investigators spend a point of **Evidence Collection (a successful Spot Hidden)** they will discover inside the front cover a hand-written note. Keeper may elect to give the player limited narrative by describing what is written on the note; otherwise, the note reads, "My Dear friend, you may find the story of the Taiping lost souls fascinating...Lao Che."

The book recounts the last days of the Taiping from the perspective of the vanquished. The book is filled with Taiping prayers and their own interpretations of the Bible and its teachings. One such interpretation may be of interest. Apparently, the author of the book felt there is a correlation between the Israelites fleeing Egypt and the Taiping escaping Nanjing to the Promised Land. Of special note is a poem which was circled, in red pen. Please distribute the **Valley of Lost Souls Book Excerpts Handout**

**CORE CLUE:** Once the investigators have had a chance to peruse the book, they will also find interesting passages discussing the vengeance of Taiping loyalists that escaped. Some passages describe how loyalist spirits will be re-incarnated to avenge their brothers. The book mentions that following persecution, survivors collected the ashes of their fallen comrades to give them a Taiping burial by an old Taiping church. The area became known as the Valley of Lost Souls. This is described as located between Suzhou and Shanghai, "about a day's wagon ride from the West Gate of the Chinese City (of Shanghai)".

After working through the library's disarray, the investigators will find Masters' office. The office is in pristine condition and has been fitted with electric lamps that shine in amber hues. Directly behind the office desk is a bookshelf with a collection of old books gathered from around the world. In the very center of the bookshelf is a book with golden covers and a three-inch spine that proclaims the work to be "Occult Secrets of the Horde".

The book is filled with blank pages and pulling it from the shelf triggers a complex booby-trap that is linked all the way to the basement, where a bundle of dynamite will ignite. Once the booby trap triggers, investigators will have just a few minutes to escape. They investigators hear a faint, yet distant "ticking" sound.

## The Wine Cellar

If the investigators elect to unlock the small, closed door using **Locksmith (a successful Locksmith roll)**, they will find a spiraling metal staircase that leads downstairs.

Investigators that decide to go downstairs find themselves in a damp underground wine cellar. The walls are covered with racks of bottles, fine vintages from Europe and the Americas. There is a large wooden worktable in the very center of the room. On it are a few empty wine bottles and opioid vials.

With the use of **Evidence Collection (a successful Spot Hidden)** investigators uncover a stack of dynamite behind one of the wine racks. A fuse is attached and leads up the stone wall and through the wooden ceiling. There is enough dynamite to severely damage the building and potentially kill some or all of the investigators.

### Leads out:

- Search for the Missing Four: Dr. Aue
- Search for the Missing Four: Diplomat Izuku Akira
- Search for the Missing Four: Laszlo Hudec
- Search for the Missing Four: Albert Masters and the Dragon's Desire Trading Co.
- The Burlesque Show

# The Search for the Missing Four - Laszlo Hudec

**Location:** Hudec Studio, French Concession (上海法租界)

**Lead Ins:**

- Lempertz Auction House
- Search for the Missing Four

**Purpose:** Investigators make their way to Laszlo Hudec's studio in the French Concession. Inside his studio they find, sketches and architectural plans, as well as moldings for columns and pillars.



Hungarian sculptor László Hudec's "atelier", as he refers to is work place, is located in what was probably a former municipal stable at the edge of the original French concession territory.

His studio entrance is composed of a large sliding wooden door, big enough to fit a chariot and two horses. Outside, laid on a wooden structure, are column molds and art deco pieces of portico and metal works.

The inside is a real mess, instruments and equipment are laid out everywhere. There are more plaster molds, and sketches hanging on a few suspended strings. Investigators will find some rather strange looking molds in the back of the studio. A large plastic mold of a roman style column with what seems to be facial patterns carved into it lies on the floor. It is difficult to identify the patterns as someone seems to have poured some acid or other liquid on it, to sabotage the mold. Upon further inspection, you find pieces of white plaster smashed on the ground. It appears these pieces that could have come out of the strange large mold and could perhaps be pieced back together.

**Keeper's Notes:** The Egyptians incorporated Nug and Yeb into their religion as the Egyptian deities Nut (Goddess of the Heavens) and Geb (God of Earth and the Underworld). The worship of these Egyptian entities spread throughout the Mediterranean and the Middle East, leading to the foundation of a magnificent temple of worship in the City of Pillars, Irem, where it stood for many years before it sank beneath the sands. Keepers who are running a "global campaign" may want to incorporate this into their descriptions.

If investigators try to put the pieces of the column together, they are able to reconstitute part of a roman style column. The column has a strange design craved at mid-height. At a first glance, one can see a simple Yin and Yang pattern, but with a closer look, the design depicts a representation of Yeb in the form of Yin, and Nub in the form of Yang. Investigators who inspect the column must make a 5-point **Stability** test (**Sanity roll 1/1d10**). Investigators failing this roll will have a brief vision; read the following:

You see a flash of a night sky, filled with two moons – one is our moon and the other is a red disk. The moons hang over an old church. Chants in a strange tongue are audible. An abandoned field surrounds the church. Suddenly the sound of a train's horn resonates behind you... and you are back in the studio

This flash forward can help the investigators locate or confirm the whereabouts of "Lao Wang's field" For instance, they might recognize that the church is near a train track, which will narrow down the search.

Several papers, including architectural plans were burned in a kettle. With the use of **Sense Trouble** or **Forensics** (a successful **INT** roll), investigators realize that the atelier was ransacked; the Jing Wu Athletic Association has already been here.

**Keeper's Notes:** If the investigators did not find a flier for the Black Litany Burlesque Show at Masters' house, the Keep may plant the flier here. See **Black Litany Handbill Handout**.

**LEAD OUTS:**

- Search for the Missing Four: Dr. Aue
- Search for the Missing Four: Diplomat Izuku Akira
- Search for the Missing Four: Albert Masters and the Dragon's Desire Trading Co.
- The Burlesque Show

# The Search for the Missing Four - Dragon's Desire Trading Co.

**Location:** Boulevard de Montigny

(敏体尼荫路) Quartier, Le Quai de France, (法兰西外滩), French Concession Harbor Shanghai (上海法租界)

**Lead Ins:**

- Lempertz Auction House
- Search for the Missing Four

**Purpose:** The Lempertz auction receipt listed Dragon's Desire as the supplier of the "Late Qing Funeral Urns". Although Lao Che, a protagonist in The Sassoon Files campaign book, is not the main protagonist of this scenario, he is playing a supportive role based on his interest and drive to understand the mythos through his disciple and fellow cultist Albert Masters. Lao Che first "recruited" Mr. Masters years ago and has since encouraged him to explore and deepen his understanding of the occult. It is unclear if Masters shared his newfound wisdom with Lao Che.



Read this to set the stage:

Heavy monsoon rain has started. Located in the French quarter close to the harbor, the Dragon's Desire Trading Co is a large 2-story building protected by an 8-foot wall. Designed by French architects, it is modeled after early 20th century European factories. Upon entrance to the compound, you see large garage doors bustling with activity. Several men load boxes of soap on trucks.

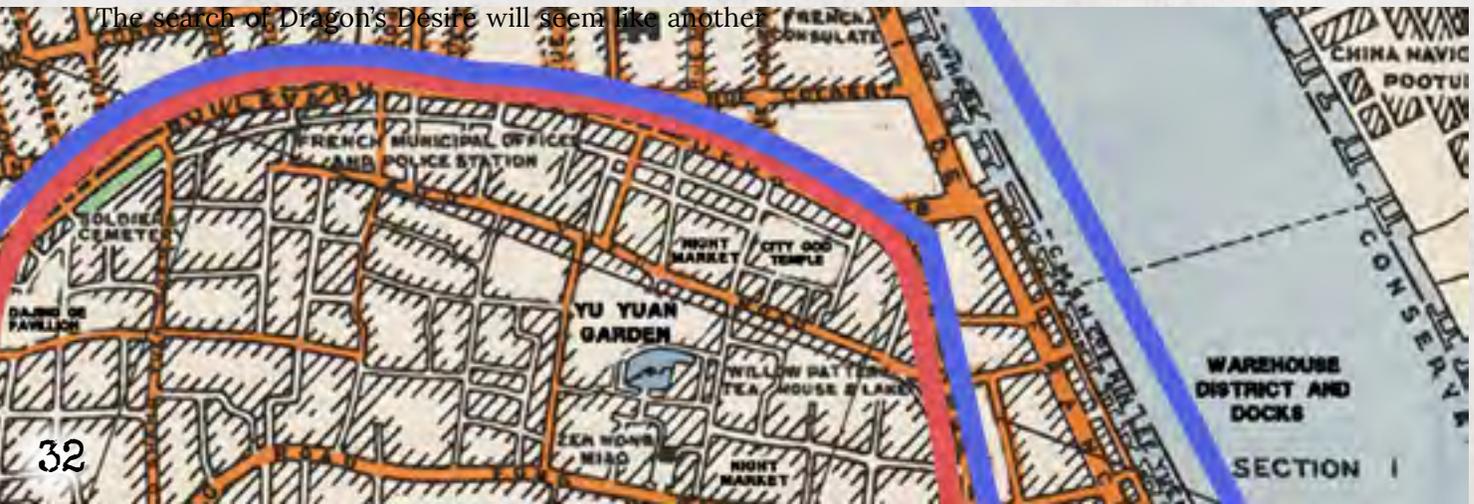
dead-end. It's a trading company that imports and exports soap, and other beauty products. The staffs on site are friendly and the General Manager will be inclined to help the investigators with the use of **Reassurance (a successful Persuade or Fast Talk roll)**. The General Manager can give the investigators access to archived waybills or delivery receipts, but investigators will not find any records of a delivery to Lempertz Auction house or a delivery coming in from Nanjing. Moreover, there is no Mr. Ma working in the company (contact name on receipt). However, investigators with **Bureaucracy or Library Use (a successful Law or Library Use roll)** are able to uncover that the shareholders of Dragon's Desire are none other than Albert Masters and Lu Xun a/k/a "Lao Che", the boss of 4 Seas Gang.

If they ask the General Manager about Masters:

- He knows Mr. Masters and has met him on multiple occasions at the factory. Mr. Masters is a shareholder of Dragon's Desire.
- The General Manager will make the association that Mr. Ma is Masters' Chinese name - Mr MA (Surname), MA Li Ke.
- Masters' last visit was just a few days before the Auction.
- Mr. Masters required a delivery truck and said he would drive to Nanjing for a special pick up. He didn't ask questions; it's dangerous to question the "boss".

Neither Mr. Masters nor Lao Che are present at Dragon's Desire, nor is Lao Che at his usual hangouts such as the Belt King Social Club. Lao Che is busy preparing an expedition to Sichuan in search of Jinsha, the Lost City of Golden Sands. Lao Che is unaware of Masters' involvement with "Crazy Wang" and has not paid any attention to the so called "Taiping Curse"

The search of Dragon's Desire will seem like another



## The Taiping Curse and the 4 Seas Gang

The Taiping Curse would apply to any local allies that in any way supported the Ever-Victorious Army. Taiping loyalists knew very well that triads operating in Shanghai were fervently against the Taiping and supported the Qing and foreign expeditions against the Taiping. The Triads opium trade, a major source of revenue, was disrupted by the ongoing civil war. The Taiping were also vocal against the use of opioids as they felt it subjugated the peasant population.

Lao Che is the leader of the 4 Seas Triad gang, and he is “guilty by association” for the Triad’s support of the Ever Victorious Army. The Keeper may want to use this as a way to explain “everything that went wrong” for Lao Che in previous scenarios.

The Keeper could also choose if Lao Che’s sons play a role with distributing the urns to key individuals holding positions of power in the city. Perhaps Masters, decided to bring a few urns to the Belt King Social Club and invited Lao Che’s sons to expand their minds and open the urns. One thing is certain though; as a necromancer, Lao Che would be able to identify the urn and would have avoided the danger of infection or would have cast a spell to avoid possession by a Taiping Soul.

If investigators decide to search the Belt King Social Club, we suggest Keeper to refer to information available in the Belt King Social Club of the scenario “There is this One Girl”.

If one of Lao Che’s sons is involved in the scenario, he may be found at the Belt King Social Club.

Leads out:

- Search for the Missing Four - Dr. Aue
- Search for the Missing Four - Diplomat Izuku Akira
- Search for the Missing Four - Laszlo Hudec
- Search for the Missing Four - Albert Masters
- The Burlesque Show
- (Optional) Funeral March
- (Optional) Going Back to Sassoon



## (Optional) Funeral March

**Location:** Outside the Dragon's Desire Trading Co. French Concession (上海法租界)

### Lead Ins:

- Search for the Missing Four

**Purpose:** As investigators exit the Dragon's Desire, they will stumble upon a funeral procession for a Master of the Jing Wu Athletic Association. Note the funeral could also be for a disciple killed recently (could even be at the hand of the investigators). There will be a possible face-off with the Municipal Police at the border of the International Settlements and The French Concession, highlighting racial tensions in the city.



Suddenly you here chants, music moving towards your position. Men and women wearing white, turn the corner. They have little gongs, drums and cymbals and bang them in a rhythmic procession. Following them, young men holding what seems to be a small, portable temple advance.

The Keeper should ask the investigators what they intend to do. While they deliberate or immediately after they announce their intended actions, tell them they hear the sounds of people approaching them from behind; the sounds of western military boots echo off the street pavement and alley walls.

Investigators see two dozen men all wearing the Shanghai International Settlement militia uniform. They have rifles and are led by a British officer who is wielding a sword. The officer, who seems straight out of a painting representing the Charge of the Light Brigade, shouts: "You are about to enter the International Settlement. The Shanghai Municipal Council has not approved this assembly. You have no rights to be here, turn back

The apparent leader of the procession retorts in Chinese: "How dare you intervene, this is a sacred procession, even foreign devils should understand".

After one of the local police officers translates the officer responds: "If you insist, we will be forced to open fire, I have my orders".

Investigators with **Streetwise** (a successful INT roll) realize that the translator is not, actually, a police officer, but a member of the Green Gang (seen at the Long Bar talking to Mr. Stirling Fessenden). Triads often supported the SMP and used similar occasions to undermine rivals such as the Jing Wu Athletic Association who were sworn enemies of Triads.

Both groups stop all movement, a chilling silence follows.

What happens next depends entirely on the actions of the investigators. Investigators may be inclined to diffuse the situation and use their negotiation skills. They may however turn on either party.

If they help the Jing Wu Athletic Association by diffusing the situation or fighting on their side, a member of the Jing Wu Athletic Association could be an interesting character replacement should one of the investigators die in this scene.

Furthermore, investigators can persuade the Jingwu Athletic Association to accompany them to the Valley of Lost Souls (providing weapons and a few disciples).

If the investigators are injured during this scene, they may want to "call it a day" and reconvene the next morning. This downtime allows investigators to pursue their own leads and/or approach personal contacts. It also allows the investigators to "refresh" their point pools.

### LEAD OUTS:

- The Burlesque Show
- (Optional) Going Back to Sassoon



## (Optional) Going Back to Sassoon

**Location:** Sassoon House, Hotel Cathay, Shanghai, China

**Purpose:** Investigators may want to report their findings to Sassoon, especially since they have found disturbing facts about Mr. Masters. Sassoon may be able to offer advice and direction. This will also show the investigators that Sassoon is under pressure and suffering from the actions of Taiping Souls acting in furtherance of the “Taiping Curse”.



The Cathay Hotel remains closed. A few peddlers have set up shop on the boardwalk in front of its main doors.

Sassoon seems agitated. Once characters have described their findings, Sassoon will ramble about the following:

“Since your last visit, I have conducted my own inquiries in parallel. It seems I have several enemies working to harm my financial enterprise. I have taken severe losses to many of my businesses, and much of what I have built is beginning to crumble. Arson, sabotage, theft, legal issues. I suspect this all to be the work of Albert Masters. In fact, I know it to be him.

What a shame, Masters and I are “havvar”. We’re the oldest of friends. We grew up together first at Harrow (private boarding school in England), then much later in Bombay living a life of luxury and decadence.

We were the children of the ruling elite. We had everything our minds desired, and more. A life of such fortune allowed us the privileges that most others did not. The biggest privilege was boredom. In our boredom, we began to develop a passion for the darker oddities of our world. We yearned for the things that our money couldn’t afford. Knowledge of the occult. Knowledge of the unknown sciences... and... not just knowledge of it, but its complete mastery.”

We also both studied the occult. The more we learned, the more addicted we became. We studied the great archaeologists and philosophers, the great priests and prophets, always delving deeper and deeper. We began to study ancient alchemy and arcane magic, and eventually... the Mythos. We became aware that

humans were not the only sentient beings on our world. We came to realize that the myths and legends actually existed in our own reality.”

While I was always able to separate myself from my studies, Albert was not. There were days when I’d see him completely haggard, unshaven, unwashed. He slept very little, and hardly ate. He had devoted himself completely to this obsession, almost to the point of death. He also began using opium and other more esoteric drugs. “It opens my inner eye and allows me to talk to the gods,” he said... Even I knew this was going too far. I reasoned with him, his family reasoned with him, all to no avail. Albert’s addictions came at a hefty price.

Through his Chinese gangster drug connections, he became intertwined with the 4 Seas Gang – an occultist group. Albert found himself spiraling out of control, in a vicious cycle of opium and demons. Albert began to resent me. He blamed me for all of his misfortune. He was a drug abuser, and in denial. I had tried to stop him! Tried to save him! Yet, he believes me responsible! But Albert is relentless and out to end me, and most likely in some grandiose gesture to his gods. That my friends, is why we must stop him...

If Investigators ask Sassoon about next course of action:

- He will reveal one of Masters’ latest projects was the patronage of an archeological dig a few days from Shanghai. This was odd and without any interest from Sassoon.
- Although he doesn’t know the location, he remembers that Masters mentioned it was close to Nanjing.

**Leads out:**

- The Search for the Missing Four
- The Burlesque Show
- Valley of Lost Souls

# (Floating) The Burlesque Show

**Date:** The burlesque show, should be scheduled for a week after investigators met at the Long Bar.

**Lead In:**

- Search for the Missing Four

**Location:** Dolphin Hotel, a low-end hotel in the Shanghai International Settlement, near the border of the French Concession.

**Purpose:** The investigators have determined that Lloyd is a frequent patron of an underground Club called the Yin and Yang Club. He had drawn a draft flyer of a burlesque show in his diary. Mr. Masters, also had a flyer on his desk. Dr. Aue also referred to the show during his interrogation.



This scene serves as a chance for Master Shun Kun (Lao Wang) and other cultists to first “gather” and secondly “herd” new converts to the final ceremony in the Valley of Lost Souls.

Even if some of the investigators are socialites and have contacts in the nightclub or underground scenes, this would be everyone’s first visit to the Yin and Yang Club. The Yin and Yang opened a few weeks after the auction of the “late Qing funeral urns”. Investigators with **Streetwise** (A successful **INT** or **Luck** roll) have heard of the Yin and Yang and know that the club is rumored to be under the protection of the 4 Seas Gang and Lao Che. Investigators will also know that the club is a “members club” with very strict rules, and a limited number of selected members.

Read the following to set the stage:

The door leading to the Yin and Yang is so inconspicuous that bystanders would walk straight by it, not knowing that this simple wooden door at the corner of the Dolphin Hotel leads to one of Shanghai’s newest and most talked about attractions.

There is no sign, no indication that you have arrived at the club, but the address on the flyer does indeed match the numbers on the brick wall next to the wooden door.

The large, heavy wooden door is locked, and there is a sizable speakeasy grill in the middle of the door.

After a few knocks, the grill slides open. A deep voice asks you in English what you want. A pair of brown bloodshot eyes stares at the investigator standing in front of the door.

The “bouncer” asks for an invitation.

If the investigators cannot produce an invitation, the bouncer will ask for an entrance password. The password is “Revival” and is written on the flier. The use of **Bargain** or a point spend in **Credit Rating** (a successful **Fast Talk** or a **Hard Credit Rating** roll) would grant them access. Otherwise, the investigators will need to find a more creative way to get inside.

A tall Indian Sikh man wearing a bright orange turban, long robes and a small dagger at his waist is standing at the top of a staircase. The poorly lit staircase and leads underground. This is certainly not, what you expected. The place reeks of mold; paint is peeling off from the side walls. The bouncer points to the bottom of the staircase and signals for you to get in. He smiles and says in broken English “enjoy evening”.



At the bottom of the stairs, investigators arrive in front of a thick black velvet drape. A man's voice is audibled from behind the curtain, there are no prominent sources of light.

"Ladies and gentlemen, mesdammes et monsieurs, Nushimen Xianshengmen, welcome to ...A Burlesque Show."

As you walk through the velvet drape a Chinese woman, most likely the maître d'hôtel, greets the investigators: "Wangshang Hao, this way please..."

She leads you down a pair of stairs to a small room occupied by only a dozen tiny round tables. Candles serve as centerpieces for the tables and provide a bit of light. The room is filled with two dozen affluent foreign and Chinese patrons.

With **Evidence Collection (successful Spot Hidden)** investigators see a small box beautifully decorated and wrapped with a red ribbon. A small tag attached to the ribbon reads "Compliments of Dragon's Desire – please open at home".

A few "white flowers", accost you as you walk in. These high-class "ladies of the nights" normally work both the French Concession and the International Settlement in search of newly arrived older diplomats and corporate tycoons in town for a short term.

A small stage stands at the end of the room. Two Chinese oil lamps on the stage floor illuminate it. A Chinese man wearing a black tuxedo is standing behind a vertical mic. To his left and right stand two strikingly beautiful tall Chinese women. The woman on the left is wearing a white qipao with embroidered black dragons, while the woman on the right is wearing a black qipao with white embroidered dragons. They are both engulfed in a strong shadow play from the oil lamps.

With **Anthropology or Occult (a successful Anthropology or Occult roll)** the investigators will know Chinese tailors do not make black qipao, black is considered bad luck.

Both women have short hair and wear silver tiaras made of what appears to be papier-mâché dragon scales.

With **Evidence Collection (a successful Spot Hidden)** investigators will see a small painted triangle with an eye in the middle of the Tiaras.

Investigators can decide to scan the place for journalist Lloyd or other buyers from the Lempertz Auction. Lloyd is not present; but Laszlo Hudec is in attendance. His eyes are glued to the stage. As the investigators decide what to do, the Emcee will announce the start of the show.

"Tonight, we are delighted to introduce Master Shun Kun and the art of face changing".

A tall man, wearing a traditional bright yellow and red silk Sichuan Opera costume, enters the stage. He bows slowly to the crowd. His face seems painted with what could be described as an animal or mythic guardian in red with traces of black and white. Similar to the two ladies, he is wearing a crown made of papier-mâché dotted with a small triangle in the middle.

The Change of Face art form originated at the end of the Ming (1368-1644) and the beginning of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). Rumors speak of ancient people painting their faces to drive away wild spirits. Entertainers from the Sichuan Opera included the ancient skill into their performances. The Pulling, or Change of Mask routine, is extremely complicated and only a few have mastered the skill. Performers are required to lightly paste onto their faces painted pieces of well-cut damask. The half dozen "faces" are all tied together with a silk thread which is fastened to a part of the performer's cloak. With a rapid flick of their cloak, the performer magically whisks away the masks one by one to accompanying music and or chants.



## Change of Face performance

Two musicians take the stage, while the Emcee and the two women leave. The musicians sit in a corner, legs crossed. One is holding a small gong and the other an instrument called a Muqin, which is similar to the Erhu.

As Master Shun Kun performs a series of fighting stunts and rhythmic movements depicting Qigong, the two ladies return to the stage wearing a costume that mimics the ancient people described as the inventors of the Change of Mask art form. Their new accoutrement is composed of a brassiere that seems to be made of green leaves and a really short skirt made of hemp or other rudimentary cloth; a sharp contrast from their previous silk qipao. Both are signing in very high-pitched voices.

Suddenly, with a brisk side step, Master Shun Kun changes his face to that of a Red Spirit. The crowd erupts in applause.

After a few changes, his masks seem to be getting darker and scarier. The chanting and music has also changed, becoming more transcending.

Master Shun Kun, turns his back to the crowd, the stage spotlights cast two round white circles on the black stage backdrop. The shadow play is an organic arch slowly growing on the backdrop and meeting in the middle forming an arch over Master Shun Kun. He turns around. This time his clothes have also changed and are replaced by what could be best described as a mix between a Chinese emperor and a western priest. Although his body has turned, his head still faces backward. It slowly turns on its own, revealing an absolute horror. A true manifestation of Yeb.

At this point, half the crowd will scream in absolute horror and the other half of the crowd will stare blankly as they are under the spell of the Black Litany. The investigators must make 5-point **Stability** check and lose 1 **Sanity** (**Sanity** roll 1/1D8+1.)

One or two patrons will stand up and run for the exit in sheer terror. A few patrons kneel to Master Shun Kun. The music and chanting of the Black Litany continue.

## Unholy Flames

The investigators may elect to flee or attack Master Shun Kun on the stage. If any of the investigators are **Shaken** (0 to -5 stability) (rendered **Temporarily Insane**) by the events witnessed, they will overturn tables and chairs in their attempt to flee. In doing so, they will knock over one of the oil lamps on the stage.

Attacking Master Shun Kun is no easy matter as he has cast an Enthrall Audience spell on all those present for the performance. Each attack on Master Shun Kun requires an investigator to first make a Stability Test, difficulty 5 (an opposed **POW** roll between the investigator and Master Shun Kun).

In the event of violence, much of the audience will stampede towards the spiral staircase. Some will knock over table candles and oil lamps, causing fire to spread quickly, if one has not already started.

Fleeing the club after fighting has been initiated requires 2 **Flee** or **Athletics** tests difficulty 4 (a successful **Dodge** or **Strength** roll), the first to make it through the crowd and to the staircase, and the second to make it up the staircase. Investigators failing a roll lose 1D2 **Health** (lose 1D3 hit points) as their bodies are crushed and trampled by other panicking patrons. Those in the general audience who do not flee (perhaps because of madness) will die in the flames or are crushed by others fleeing.

Master Shun Kun continues his routine, as do the musicians and singers. They seem oblivious to the fire. Laszlo Hudec and the two female burlesque dancers join in the defense of Master Shun Kun.

The movement and color of the flames is unnatural. Those caught in them lose 1D6+1 **Health** Points (1D8+1 hit points) per round. However, Master Shun Kun, Laszlo Hudec, the two dancers, the two musicians and anybody else possessed by a Taiping soul is impervious to fire.



**Keeper's Notes:** This scene may be used as a death trap if investigator death(s) promote the narrative. In the unlikely event Master Shun Kun meets his death in this scene, he will not be able to complete the Black Litany in the Valley of Lost Souls. If this is the case, The Loyal King, Albert Masters, will perform the Black Litany ceremony in the final scene, "The Valley of Lost Souls".

Once Investigators manage to flee the scene and arrive outside, they will see Lempertz sitting in a vehicle parked by several bicycle rickshaws laughing hard and shouting to patrons exiting the Club: "Didn't like the show?"

**Lead outs:**

- Rickshaw Pursuit
- Valley of Lost Souls

**Lao Wang, possessed by Master Shun Kun**  
 Health 12  
 Athletics 10, Cthulhu Mythos 2, Flee 10, Scuffling 6, Stealth 2, Weapons 8  
 Alertness +1  
 Immune to fire  
 Weapon: Chinese Halberd (+1)  
 Spells: Enthrall, Enthrall Audience, Black Litany

**Lao Wang, possessed by Master Shun Kun**  
 STR 80 CON 80 SIZ 50 DEX 60 INT 50  
 APP 50 POW 80 EDU 40 SAN - HP 13  
 DB: +1D4 Build: +1 Move: 9 MP: 12

Brawl: 50% damage unarmed 1D3 + DB  
 Chinese Halberd: 85% damage 1D8+2 plus DB  
 Dodge: 50%

Immunity: Fire  
 Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 20, Intimidate 50, Jump: 50, Psychology 50, Stealth 50, Throw 50.  
 Spells: Enthrall, Enthrall Audience, Black Litany

**Laszlo Hudec, architect infected with Yeb**  
 Health 10, Stability 6, Sanity 0  
 Scuffling 5, Fire Arms 5  
 Athletics 8, Architecture 8, Cthulhu Mythos 1, Language 2 (Hungarian, English, German, Chinese)  
 Alertness +0  
 Immune to fire  
 (Kick (-2), Punch (-2))

**Laszlo Hudec, architect infected with Yeb**  
 STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 50 DEX 60 INT 70  
 APP 50 POW 60 EDU 80 SAN - HP 11  
 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP 12

Brawl: 70%, damage unarmed 1D3  
 Armor: None  
 Immunity: Fire

Skills: Architecture 90, Cthulhu Mythos 15, Dodge 30, Firearms (Handgun) 50, Language (Own) Hungarian 80, Language (Other) English 40, Language (Other) German 40, Language (Other) Chinese 50, Occult 15

**Burlesque Dancer infected with Yeb**  
 Health 6, Scuffling 6, Weapons 6  
 Athletics 9  
 Alertness +0  
 Immune to fire  
 (Kick (-2), Punch (-2))

**Burlesque Dancer infected with Yeb**  
 STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 50 DEX 80 INT 50  
 APP 70 POW 50 EDU 50 SAN - HP 11  
 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP 12

Brawl: 80%, damage unarmed 1D3  
 Dodge: 75%

Armor: None  
 Immunity: Fire  
 Skills: Jump 75, Throw 50, Art: Dance 75



# Rickshaw Pursuit

**Location:** In the countryside and undeveloped suburbs  
**Location:** West of Shanghai

## Lead In:

•Burlesque Show

**Purpose:** Investigators encounter Lempertz and should give pursuit as they have very few leads; and time is of the essence.

Lempertz is in his car, parked beside several cycle rickshaws. He's laughing hysterically as patrons exit the Yin and Yang Club.

Traffic is still dense at this time of the evening; revelers are making their way to Shanghai night clubs or to makeshift food stalls for a quick snack before heading to more dubious establishments.

This part of town is a vivid contrast to the posh and clean alleyways of the French concession. Garbage and litter fill the streets. It is difficult to make out the actual façade of the buildings with all the makeshift food stalls and vendors. A strong smell of a stinky tofu is present. Young thugs scout the streets for easy prey and practice their pick pocket skills. Cheap working girls stand at the corner of the street soliciting passersby.

After a few seconds, investigators will notice a potent and funky smell emanating from nearby (outdoor) latrines.

Apart from the Yin and Yang patrons and the investigators, there are no other foreigners in this area of town. This is the real China of the 1920s; blatant poverty and overcrowded city slums.

Distraught bystanders look to the investigators, you hear in the distance: "Laowai lai le (foreigners are here)".

Lempertz suddenly points at the investigators and yells out in Mandarin 异教徒们... 领受我们的诅咒吧! pinyin: Yi jiao tu men... ling shou wo men de zu zhou ba! "Heretics....Behold our Curse!"

If investigators want to give chase they will need a series successful rolls to first cross the street running whilst avoiding peddlers and bystanders. Ideally, Lempertz will gain a head start with his car. Investigators may give pursuit by grabbing available rickshaws.

Once investigators are in pursuit, read this:

A myriad of obstacles impairs your pursuit, you are struggling and working hard to avoid people on the street. Lempertz doesn't seem to have this issue and appears to be flying through the streets and small alleyways.

## Nanjing Road

After a heated pursuit in the slums and across Suzhou Creek, Lempertz makes a right on East Nanjing Road.

In the evening, Nanjing Road is still packed with shoppers, onlookers and socialites. The street is blazing with colorful neon lights from advertisement boards. Trams, cars, bicycles, tri-cycles and pedestrians crisscross each other in a scene of pure organized chaos.

Nanjing Road is the main shopping street of old Shanghai. In the 1920s, the area was one of the world's busiest shopping districts. It is named after the capital of Jiangsu, a province neighboring Shanghai. Travelers continuing on this road will eventually reach Nanjing in about two days. Local and western merchants established hundreds of stores on both sides of the road according to strict geomancy principles, selling anything from fashion items to household wares. Some department stores, such "Xianshi" (Shanghai Fashion Company) and "Daxinyi" (Shanghai #1 Department Store) were famous nationwide brands. Young socialites across the country dreamed of visiting these stores and shopping for the latest fashion trends.

## The Warehouse

Lempertz dodges into an alley, barely missing a Japanese couple exiting a traditional Chinese medicinal shop.

After a couple of hundred meters in the alley, Lempertz abruptly turns and runs through a set of open double doors. A large wooden panel sign hanging above the door reads "Lo Pang's Curiosities and Confectionaries".

Inside, following him in, the walls are covered in dusty wooden shelving, and are laden with all sorts of porcelain vases and pots. One side of the warehouse

is empty, and there is nothing on the wall except for a few hooks. Hanging from the ceiling is a rope and pulley system, probably used to lift heavy items in the warehouse. There is no light source, except for a few rays of neon colors peering through the warehouse's high windows.

Lempertz's car rests in the middle of the warehouse, empty. Around it, a dozen open crates containing what seems to be vases or urns. A 1928 Ford model A/AA pickup truck is visible further down the room.

Suddenly you hear the crack of shattered porcelain, as if a vase was thrown or dropped on the cement floor.

Investigators will only have a few minutes to escape the warehouse. A private roll **Sense Trouble** difficulty 5 (an opposed **POW** roll against a **POW** of 100) should be made by all investigators in the warehouse. Any investigators failing the roll become possessed by a Taiping Soul.

If investigators, manage to ambush and capture Lempertz, he will not physically resist. With **Psychoanalysis** (a successful **Psychology** roll) it is clear that his mind is in shambles; he barely remembers his name. Instead he talks about Holy Hong and his divine mandate, the holy trinity, and the Black Litany. With **Psychoanalysis** or **Hypnosis** (a successful **Psychoanalysis** roll), investigators will be able to pull out of Lempertz the name of the nearest village to the Valley of Lost Souls: Liu Xi Cun.

Upon further investigation of the premises, investigators will find several empty cases.

#### Lead outs:

- Valley of Lost Souls
- (Optional) Gathering Information

## (Optional) Gathering Information

**Location:** Around Shanghai

**Purpose:** Investigators may want to consult sources that could reveal the location of the Valley of Lost Souls.

The Keeper should allow investigators free range and explore Shanghai for answers. If the investigators are having a difficult time putting together the clues necessary to lead them to the Valley of Lost Souls, they could obtain the required information from a variety of sources, including for example:

- Mr Iziku's house – A bill of sale for Lao Wang's fields.
- The Northern China Daily Archives – A news article discussing Major Charles Gordon's account and aftermath of the final battle between the Ever-Victorious Army and the Taiping Rebels.
- Government offices of the Republic of China – a list of catholic and protestant churches around Shanghai and Jiangsu, including one church listed under the protestant category as the Church of the Worshipping Society, 20km from Nanjing nearby the village of Liu Xi Cun.
- Location of Taiping churches and/or known sites of massacres of Taiping loyalists include a list of catholic and protestant churches around Shanghai and Jiangsu.
- Shanghai Municipal Government Archives - Records of battles in the area and/or site of Taiping church.

Generally speaking, successfully researching this information will require taping a Lore Sheet or utilizing **Library Use** or **Bureaucracy** (a successful **Library Use** or **Knowledge** or **Idea** roll).

#### Lead Outs:

- Valley of Lost Souls



# Valley of Lost Souls

**Location:** Church of the Worshipping Society, village of Liu Xi Cun, 20km North East from Nanjing

## Lead Ins:

- Richshaw Pursuit
- Going Back to Sassoon
- Gathering Information

**Purpose:** Investigators travel to the site of a former Taiping church adjacent to a field where Lao Wang unearthed several urns. The black litany must be performed on this specific evening when the moon is full and the stars are aligned (double moon phenomenon, see horrible truth).



Investigators should use **Preparedness** and other abilities before departing. Investigators may want to bring equipment and/or weapons.

**Keeper's Notes:** Before starting this scene, Keeper should have a private conversation with any players whose investigator(s) have become infected with a Taiping Soul. This particular investigator will gradually become focused only on getting to the Church of the Worshipping Society to participate in the Black Litany. Other parts of Yeb are calling out to the investigator. This single-minded focus will grow into a nearly overwhelming compulsion that begins to interfere with other pursuits, including for example eating, maintaining personal hygiene, etc.

Read the following to set the stage:

You board a train bound for Nanjing at Shanghai Central and push past other passengers towards an empty cabin.

The train is mainly composed of merchandise wagons. There are only two passenger coaches. The first one, labeled first class, features cabins with wooden bunks and a small table in the center.

The space is quite cramped. This will not be a pleasant ride. A horn blast and you feel the train slowly moving. Moments later you are thundering down the line into outcomes unknown. Although less than 400km away, the ride will take a good 7 hours.

Investigators should be exhausted at this point, both mentally and physically. Some may decide to get some rest if they fail a **Health** test of 4. They will drift off to sleep to the hypnotic rhythms of blurred passing landscapes and wheels clacking on track.

Your senses come alive in silence. The train is no longer moving forward. It is dark outside, save for the flickering lights of the carriageway. There seems to be some sort of surge or power outage. Through the window, in the distance, torches are flickering against what looks like a stand-alone building towering on a hill a few miles away. The train has stopped on a bridge in a middle of a small valley surrounded by low rolling hills.

Investigators with **Preparedness** (a successful **Luck** or **Survival** roll) decided to bring binoculars, they will be able to discern the building standing in the horizon. It resembles a church although there is no cross visible on its spire.

If investigators ask the train conductor where they have stopped, he will hesitate, consult a program and mention, they are 20km or so from Nanjing, close to the village of Liu Xi Cun.

At this stage, investigators with **Sense Trouble** (a successful **Idea** roll) would be inclined to ask why they have stopped here? Is it pure coincidence or perhaps sabotage? Have they been followed? Is "Crazy Wang" on this train.

The investigator, infected with the Taiping Soul, will start to get agitated and reveals that they see a strange scene unfolding before them, two moons gliding over the church. Other investigators should make a 4-point **Stability** check (a **Sanity** roll 0/1d3); if they fail, they might be inclined to corroborate the story.

Investigators instincts and drives should take over. They will be interested to venture out towards the church.

Not far from the train tracks, a soybean field begins. It has not been attended to for a while, and wild flowers and weeds have taken over. A loud thunderous roar disrupts the silent night. Thunder clouds roll in with electricity building in them. The soil won't remain hard and dry for long. A heavy, sudden downpour begins.

Progression becomes much harder now that the field has turned to mud. Feet sink deeper and deeper in to the earth. Lightning strikes and flashes, provide intermittent light in the dark night.

Suddenly, one of the investigators feet will sink and hit a harder surface buried beneath the soil. It's definitely not a rock. It's an urn. Any brisk movement can lead to the urn cracking open. Investigators must make a successful 4 point **Athletics** or **Flee** test (a **successful Dodge, Jump or Dexterity** roll) to walk away safely. Investigators should realize that not all the urns were unearthed, there are probably a dozen or maybe even hundreds more. Investigators will now be challenged with figuring out a way to get out of this quagmire while minimizing their exposure to the Taiping lost souls.

Lightning flashes and for an instant they see a figure standing in the middle of the field.

### Depiction of Taiping soldiers

Lightning fills the sky again, and the soldier is gone. Disappeared. Behind the group, another flash of lightning provides a chance to glimpse another Taiping loyalist, his face is burned, decaying.

The visions require the investigators to make another 4-point **Stability** test (a **Sanity** roll, 0/1d3). Any investigator infected with Yeb and failing this test yell out in a Jiangsu dialect "Brothers!"

In the distance, behind, the train, starts to move again and departs, leaving the investigators in the mud and rain. In the other direction, perhaps 100 yards away, stands a modest, white church. Its doors are open; a sickly yellow light shines out.

As another lightning bolt descends after thunderous roar, you hear laughter, a familiar laughter behind you. Lao Wang is standing a few meters from you, in his field, behind him a couple of Taiping ghosts are visible. He raises both hands towards the sky as if he was inviting you to come closer.

Investigators may be inclined to either make a mad dash for the church or to confront Lao Wang/Master Shun Kun and a couple of Disembodied Taiping Souls. If the investigators attempt to confront Lao Wang/Master Shun Kun, then the Disembodied Taiping Souls attack, while Lao Wang/Master Shun Kun makes a break for the Church.

### Lao Wang, possessed by Master Shun Kun

Health 12

Athletics 10, Cthulhu Mythos 2, Flee 10, Scuffling 6, Stealth 2, Weapons 8

Alertness +1

Immune to fire

Weapon: Chinese Halberd (+1)

Spells: Entrhall, Entrhall Audience, Black Litany

### Lao Wang, possessed by Master Shun Kun

STR 80 CON 80 SIZ 50 DEX 60 INT 50

APP 50 POW 80 EDU 40 SAN - HP 13

DB: +1D4 Build: +1 Move: 9 MP: 12

Brawl: 50% damage unarmed 1D3 + DB

Chinese Halberd: 85% damage 1D8+2 plus DB

Dodge: 50%

Immunity: Fire

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 20, Intimidate 50, Jump: 50, Psychology 50, Stealth 50, Throw 50.

Spells: Entrhall, Entrhall Audience, Black Litany

### Disembodied Taiping Soul

Special power: When the Taiping Soul attacks a target investigator, said investigator may avoid the attack by succeeding on a 5-point Athletics or Flee test. As this happens, the Taiping Soul is seen to be attacking the target with ghostly swords. Investigators failing this test must make a 5-point Stability test. The Taiping Soul dissipates after any investigator successfully passes the required Stability test.

### Disembodied Taiping Soul

INT 40 POW 40

Move: 7

Special power: When the Taiping Soul attacks a target investigator, said investigator may avoid the attack with a successful Dodge roll. Otherwise, the investigator must make an opposed POW roll. As this happens, the Taiping Soul is seen to be attacking the target with ghostly swords. If the target investigator fails the opposed POW roll, the investigator permanently loses 2D10 POW, Investigators succeeding on the opposed POW roll inflict 2D10 POW on the Taiping Soul, which dissipates if it reaches 0 POW.

Sanity Loss: 1/1D4

## Church of the Worshipping Society

Muffled chanting and Chinese gongs sounds are audible as investigators get closer to the church. Dim light emanates from torches inside the building through the broken rice paper windows (It is a Western style church with Chinese characteristics).

What is striking about this supposedly Taiping church is that it went through numerous transformations over the years as it changed purpose.

The practice was not uncommon for Taiping loyalists to convert temples or churches to a Taiping place of worship. They would keep some of the building's features, but adapt the surroundings to more traditional Tai

Through holes in the rice paper windows or the open doors, investigators can see two rows of cultists facing the center of the church. The building itself has been emptied of all previous furniture, seats, altar, etc. What has replaced the furnishings is striking. In center, standing tall are 4 white Roman pillars. All seem to have additional and strange designs carved on them.

Facing the pillars on either side of the room, two rows of worshipers are kneeling and chanting. One side is dressed in black robes and the opposite side in white. It is difficult from the outside to distinguish the worshipers, but they seemed to be a mix of foreigners and local.

Along the walls, sprucing from up from the ground are roots and vines attached to the side walls. They form in the middle of the church's cathedral ceiling an esoteric structure above the pillars, as if they were connected somehow. An old Chinese cauldron stands in the middle of the pillars

Suddenly, a man wearing long robes appears in the middle of the pillars. How appeared there remains a mystery. Investigators recognize Albert Masters.

He signals for the crowd to be silent. In a deep voice he says: "the Trinity is pleased, the essence of Yeb is among us. Magistrate Shun Kun, are your final recruits ready?"

If Lao Wang is present, he answers: "yes master Li, they will be here soon...." In either event, Albert Masters, possessed by the Taiping spirit Master Li, says, "then let us begin...." Each worshiper brings out a small knife and slices open their arms or legs. Blood drips to the floor, and begins flowing, navigating the ground, all the way to the roots, up along the building walls to the top of the structure. Once blood has collected, a reddish light seems to glow from or beyond the roots. A triangle with an eye appears in the middle of the wooden structure, the eye opens and blood mixed with a greenish paste gushes out and spills into the cauldron in the middle of room.

The chanting starts again. One row of worshippers pulls weeds that have grown from the floor around them. They stand up and one by one walk towards the cauldron and dip the weeds in the bloody substance. Master Li then draws a triangle with his own bloody index finger as if he was giving them communion.

At some point, investigators will likely decide to intervene. The Keeper should reveal that other NPCs are present, such as Lempertz (if he escaped the pursuit), Hudoc (if he escaped the Burlesque show), Dr. Aue, Harry Lloyd and possibly members of the Genyosha (with links to Izuku Akira).



## Defeating Master Li

If the investigators storm the church, Master Li could say something such as, "We have been expecting you, we will now complete the Black Litany and awake Yeb."

Obviously, the odds and numbers are not in the investigators favor. It is possible that investigators convinced the Jing Wu to provide disciples and weapons. A battle could ensue, but it might not prevent Yeb from reforming.

If the investigators pretend to join the Black Litany, the infected investigator may be able to poison the cauldron provided he or she has the necessary means to do so. The investigator should remember that the Taiping Soul possessing them prevented Yeb from reforming in 1864 by poisoning the mana.

Ultimately Investigators need to prevent cultists from consuming the mana and complete the ceremony.

### Albert Masters, possessed by Master Li

Health 16

Athletics 10, Cthulhu Mythos 2, Explosives 2, Scuffling 8, Weapons 8

Alertness +1

Immune to fire

Weapon: Chinese Broadsword (+1)

Spells: Black Litany, Shrivelling

### Albert Masters, possessed by Master Li

STR 80 CON 150 SIZ 50 DEX 60 INT 80

APP 50 POW 80 EDU 80 SAN - HP 20

DB: +1D4 Build: +1 Move: 9 MP: 12

Brawl: 90% damage unarmed 1D3 + DB

Chinese Broadsword: 90% damage 1D8+2 + DB

Dodge: 30%

Immunity: Fire

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 30, Demolitions 50

Spells: Black Litany, Shrivelling

### Typical cultist infected with Yeb

Health 5, Scuffling 4, Weapons 4

Alertness +0

Immune to fire

(Kick (-2), Punch (-2))

### Typical cultist infected with Yeb

STR 50 CON 50 SIZ 50 DEX 50 INT 50

APP 50 POW 50 EDU 50 SAN - HP 10

DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP 12

Brawl: 50%, damage unarmed 1D3

Armor: None

Immunity: Fire

**Conclusion:** If the investigators defeat Master Li...as they walk out of the church, at sunrise, Lao Wang works his field, they turn, look back, and he is gone. A Taiping Tract drifts through the air and lands at their feet.

# Optional: The Destruction of Shanghai - The Battle of Songhu (淞滬會戰)

**“The rise or fall of Shanghai means the birth or death of the whole nation.” - Chiang Kai-shek**

**Date:** 1937

Following the Marco Polo Bridge Incident on the outskirts of Beijing, the Imperial Japanese Army launched a series of major offensives against key strategic positions and cities held by the National Revolutionary Army of the Republic of China.

Shanghai was vital as the economic heartland of modern industrial China; but also as the road to the capital, Nanjing. On August 13<sup>th</sup>, the Imperial Japanese Army Shanghai Expeditionary Force, supported by naval bombardments from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Fleet, moved on the city.

The bloody three-month battle often described as the Stalingrad on the Yangtze was one of the fiercest battles of the Second Sino-Japanese War. Close to one million troops were involved and casualties mounted on both sides. Over 300,000 troops were reported killed or wounded in 3 months.

## **A dark twist - the eradication of Shanghai**

Although Chiang Kai-shek, the Republic Army Generalissimo pulled his remaining troops out of the city, Shanghai could have suffered a much different fate. Similar to Stalingrad and other European cities that were

“wiped off the map” during WWII, combat could have continued for many more weeks. In face of strong and heroic defenses, the Japanese Imperial Army could have decided to bomb the city from both air and sea until no stone remained intact. The Japanese High Command Sanko Seisaku policy, the ‘Three Alls’ Policy: Kill All, Burn All, Loot All was a step in that direction.

Thus, fulfilling the Curse of the Taiping.

Two other God Worshipers claimed to possess the ability to speak as members of the Holy Trinity; Yang Xiuqing, referred to as the East King claimed to speak with God the Father and Xi claimed to speak with Jesus Christ.

The East King, Yang Xiuqing died in 1856 at the hands of Hong Xiuquan during a purge.



# Handouts

## The Lloyd Article Handout: Is Shanghai Doomed?

*The Brother of Jesus and His Curse*

Dating back to the Shanghai massacre, more than two years ago, and continuing up to this point, "Shanghailanders" have witnessed a trail of destruction and violence happening in our fair city. Several business owners, foreign or local, have had friends, or families afflicted. We have all heard of a string of unexplained murders, disappearances, arson, and vandalism.

One could make the argument that these recent disturbing and troubling events are not purely coincidental, and are in fact linked. Linked to an old curse, set upon Shanghai around the time of the Taiping Rebellion in the 1860s.

Of course, to those not versed in darker ways, these events will seem more happenstance than anything, but undoubtedly there are people who must be aware of the true nature of these happenings, and would seek benefit and opportunity from them.

In order for us to fully understand this curse, and the darkness that now surrounds our city, we must first look to the past – to the common link.

In 1837 Hong Xiuquan, after failing his imperial examination to become a government official fell ill and suffered a severe fever and depression. During that time, he claimed to have mystical visions of the beyond. Years later he would come to realize and believe that his visions were in fact from God, and that he was the younger brother of Jesus Christ.

Hong began preaching his gospel, and it quickly spread. He claimed his relation to Jesus, and his followers believed every word. He convinced them that they would throw the Manchu and the Qing Dynasty "devils" out of China. His number of supporters grew, and they began a movement called the God Worshipping Society.

The movement followed Hong's own preaching and interpretation of Christianity. American historian Dr. Mitchel Harris claimed that, "it developed into a new Chinese religion; a hybrid heterodox religion with the trappings of both Christianity and ancient Chinese religions."

In 1860, the Taiping forces led an assault on Shanghai, but were ultimately defeated by an army of Qing troops with

the support of Foreign officers as well as local Chinese Triads. The army was led by Charles George Gordon, a British Army Officer and Administrator serving in China. This army would later be instrumental in the ultimate defeat of the Taiping in 1862, and would become known as the "Ever Victorious Army".

The Ever Victorious Army began reconquering Taiping strongholds along the Yangtze River, making its way closer to Nanjing, the Taiping's capital. Hong Xiuquan declared that God would defend Nanjing from approaching Qing forces, but in June of 1864, Hong died surrounded by his loyal supporters. Days later the Ever Victorious Army took the city, and Hong's body was buried in the former Ming Imperial Palace, only to be later exhumed to verify his death, and then subsequently cremated.

The troops of the Ever Victorious Army were match to their task, and offered no quarter, killing all the Taiping supporters they were able to capture. They few that managed to escape spoke of Hong's retribution and vengeance. A curse would befall all who betrayed the Taiping, and strike down the heretics as well as "Christians" who abandoned their beliefs to pursue greed and commercial interests, ultimately responsible for Hong's death and the death of the Taiping movement.

In present day Shanghai, we are now beginning to witness this curse unfold. The arsons, vandalisms, and murders all share a common link. The Taiping's destruction, and the Ever Victorious Army. All of these incidents seem to be happening to people who may be considered "guilty by association" in the viewpoint of a curse. These unfortunate events are happening to the institutions that would have sided with the Imperial Qing's Ever Victorious Army, and are now paying the price for choosing that side.

Of strange note, and in support of this theory, an elderly man, known to locals as "Lao Wang" has been seen ranting and raving around town. Eyewitnesses have put him at a number of locations and quoted him as ranting about "wealth and greed defeated the Taiping" and "foreigners did not support their Chinese Christian brothers". Most recently Lao Wang was placed at Lempertz Auction House, vandalizing the exterior wall. On the wall he left solemn words: "The Trinity will avenge us; behold our curse!"

Take notice my fellow Shanghailanders. The writing is on the wall both literally and figuratively. You too may be "guilty", and may find yourself on the wrong side of the Taiping Curse. If we don't act now, all of us are doomed...

Lloyd's Journal Handout:

Valley of Lost Souls Book Excerpt Handout:

June 16th

As I entered the club, I hear them shouting (“第二次即将到来”) – pinyin: di er ci the Second coming is near. All heretic ji jiang dao lai) s will burn in Sodom and Gomorrah

I will burn them to the ground and a new kingdom of God on Earth will be established.

June 17th

I hear a repetition of nonsensical sounds and grunts.

They talk about prostrations before pillars and “stones which stand”.

Master Shun Kun says that I should be involved in partaking in the body of Yeb, which means eating grass and earth.

Others chant and drink the blood of Yeb, from self-inflicted wounds.

They invoke the name of the Father, Yog-Sothoth...

By day in a cloud

By night in a pillar of fire

The True God

In person saved them

He caused the Red Sea

Water to part in two;

To stand like walls

That they might flee

And when their food was all gone

The Great God

Bade them not to be afraid

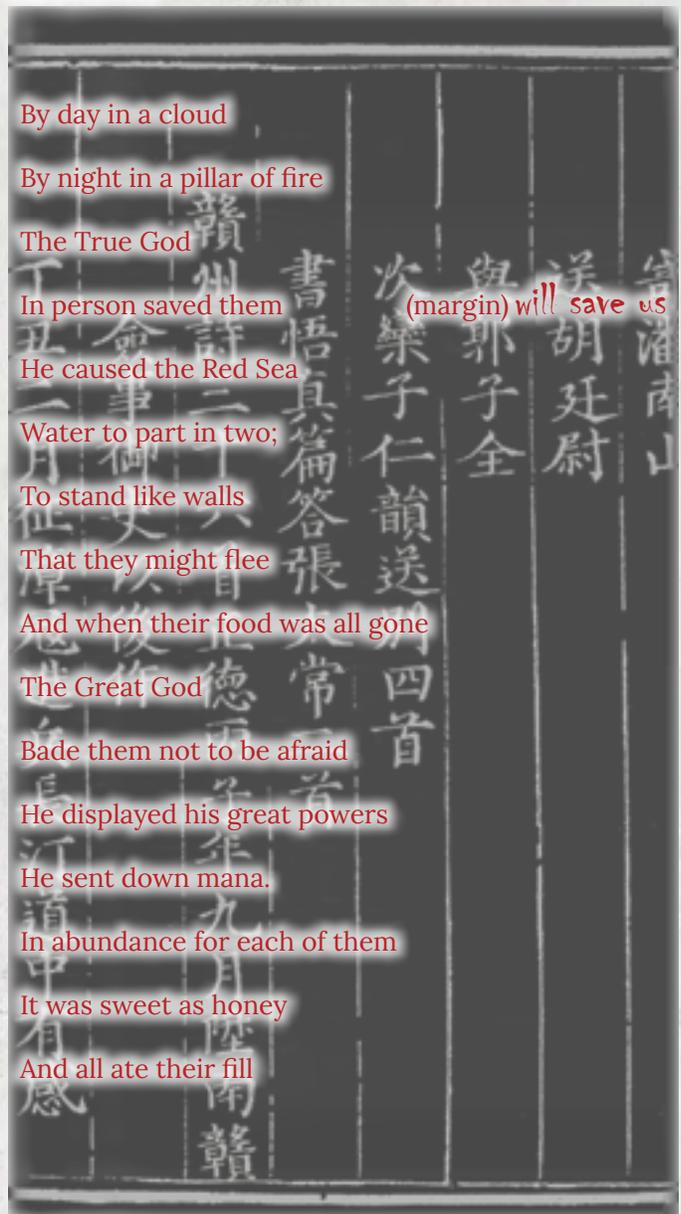
He displayed his great powers

He sent down mana.

In abundance for each of them

It was sweet as honey

And all ate their fill



Lempertz Auction Receipt Handout:

LEMPERTZ AUCTIONS  
LICENSED AUCTIONEER

Vendor/ Supplier: Dragon's Desire Trading Co.  
Delivery: May 4th, 1929  
Number: 55-785  
Contact name: Mr. Ma

Address: Boulevard de Montigny (敏体尼荫路). Quartier, Le Quai de France, (法兰西外滩), French Concession Harbor Shanghai (上海法租界)

Lot No.	QTY	Good Ref Description	Unit Cos	Amount
421	12	Late Qing Funeral Urns	\$15	\$180

Note: Value of items moderate, some historical significance.

Potential buyers to invite:

Sir Victor Sassoon, Cathay Hotel, Bund  
Mr. Laszlo Hudec, French Concession  
Consul Izuku Akira, Japanese Consulate  
Dr. Aue, St. Marie Hospital, French Concession

\*\* Items to be sold on the premises.



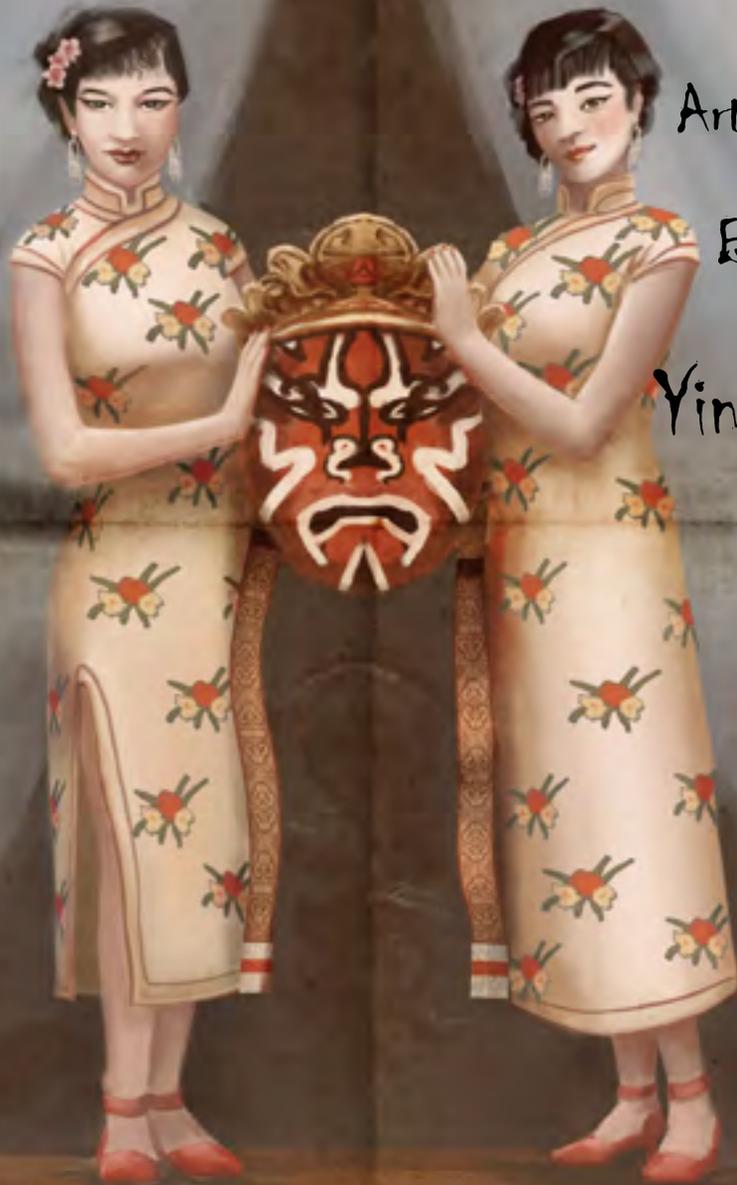
Next Page: The Black Litany Handout:

# THE BLACK LITANY BURLESQUE SHOW



在  
阴  
阳  
俱  
乐  
部  
中  
见  
证  
变  
脸  
艺  
术  
和  
漂  
亮  
的  
舞  
者  
们

Witness the  
Art of Face Changing  
and  
Beautiful Dancers  
at the  
Yin & Yang Club



*Revival*



## John Gilford

Doctor John Gilford, serves as the Director of Pharmacy at St. Marie's Hospital. He is the highest ranked foreign doctor when Dr. Maybell is not on site. A proud New Yorker, Gilford studied in France with the Jesuits and returned to NYC after a few years of practicing in London. Some say his hastily departure from Europe was due to suspicious activities linked with a significant theft of certain drugs difficult to procure.

Upon his return in the Big Apple, Gilford established a generic drug empire. A close friend of the Rockefeller, he was instrumental in obtaining a contract to supply all drugs to the Pekin Union Medical College.

He was promised by the Rockefellers a monopoly in China which he thought he could run from the comfort of his NYC office. After learning that the expansion of his drug empire to Shanghai was facing all sort of difficulties, against his better judgement, but lured by more profits, Gilford started to expand his network to ensure successful outcomes to his endeavor.

John's younger brother, Julien, had already relocated to Shanghai to pursue a career as an Alienist. John doesn't believe in the fledging "science of the mind" and he views his brother as having wasted his potential by joining the ranks of other quacks. He loves his brother, though, and believed that if he could arrange to relocate to Shanghai, he could pursue business interests while keeping a watchful eye on Julien.

Huang Jinrong, aka Pockmarked, heard of his ability to get pharmaceuticals into the country and the gang invited him over to China from NYC with a promise of great riches. With Huang's close ties with the French police (and connections in France) he secured the Director of Pharmacy position at St. Marie's where he can begin to control the pharma goods coming in and out of Shanghai.

With riches gained, Gilford anonymously opened a luxurious hospital, the Country Hospital in the French Concession, serving the foreign elite. He fretted to do so publicly, it might piss off and threaten the Rockefeller who were notoriously protective. He also didn't want to arouse suspicion of helping the gang, a silent investor in the project, and being on the wrong side of the law.



**Occupation:**  
Doctor / Doctor

**Drive / Trait:**  
Greed and Arrogance / Gilford is greedy, racist, overconfident, very well connected and highly temperamental.

**Pillars of Sanity / Ideology:**

- Money is power
- The ends justify the means

**Source of Stability / Significant People:**

- "Pockmark" Huang Jin Rong (Green Gang boss)
- Huang Chu Jiu (Pharma magnate and owner of the Great World Amusement Arcade)
- Julien Gilford (Younger brother)

## John Gilford

Occupational Benefits: By using Medicine or Reassurance, you have access to medical records and hospital wards generally off limits to the public. If you are affiliated with a hospital, sanitarium, or other facility, you can automatically use Reassurance to talk your way into any part of your institution from the drug locker to the deep freeze. When you use First Aid, each point spent heals 3 Health points rather than 2. (You gain 2 Health points rather than 1 for each First Aid point you spend to heal yourself.) You can stabilize the conditions of a seriously wounded victim by spending only 1 First Aid point, rather than 2.

**Sanity: 10 Stability: 10 Health: 10**

### Investigative Abilities

#### Academic Abilities

Accounting: 4  
Biology: 2  
Language: 2 (English, Latin, French, German)  
Medicine: 8

#### Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty: 2  
Bargain: 3  
Credit Rating: 6  
Intimidation: 6  
Reassurance: 2

#### Technical Abilities

Forensics: 2  
Pharmacy: 8

### General Abilities

Athletics: 8  
Driving: 6  
Filch: 1  
First Aid: 4  
Scuffling: 8  
Shadowing: 6  
Stealth: 1

## John Gilford

**HP: (10) Sanity: (50) Luck: (50) MP: (10)**

STR 50      DEX 50      INT 70  
CON 50      APP 60      POW 50  
SIZ 50      EDU 80      Move 8

### Skills:

Accounting 50  
Appraise 17  
Credit Rating 60  
Dodge 25  
Driving 50  
Fighting (Brawl) 60  
First Aid 50  
Intimidate 60  
Language (Own) English 80  
Language (Other) French 40  
Language (Other) German 20  
Language (Other) Latin 20  
Medicine 80  
Persuade 25  
Psychology 25  
Science: Chemistry 50  
Spot Hidden 30  
Stealth 50

**DMG Bonus: none Dodge: 25 Build: 0**

Expensive tailored suit  
Light blue cotton long-sleeved shirt  
Gold cufflinks  
Oxford loafers  
Attaché  
Note pad, pencils  
Eye dropper, Cocaine

**Cash: \$300      Spending Level: \$50      Assets: \$30,000**

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	60	30	12	1d3+db	-	1	-	-



## Simon Barr

Occupational Benefits: Private Eyes with point pools in Disguise or Shadowing may spend points after rolling the die for a test. For every 2 points you spend after rolling the die, you increase the die result by 1. This only applies if you are undistracted and not directly observed. It never applies during a contest. You must describe the thing that almost went wrong and how you caught it barely in time or succeeded through sheer luck.

**Sanity: 10 Stability: 10 Health: 10**

### Investigative Abilities

#### Academic Abilities

Accounting: 2  
 Languages: 2 (Chinese, Shanghainese, English, French)  
 Law: 2

#### Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty: 8  
 Credit Rating: 2  
 Oral History: 8  
 Reassurance: 8  
 Streetwise: 2

#### Technical Abilities

Evidence Collection: 6  
 Locksmith 4  
 Photography: 2

### General Abilities

Athletics: 8  
 Disguise: 4  
 Preparedness: 4  
 Scuffling: 10  
 Shadowing: 6  
 Stealth: 5

## Simon Barr

**HP: (10) Sanity: (10) Luck: (50) MP: (10)**

STR 50      DEX 50      INT 70  
 CON 55      APP 80      POW 50  
 SIZ 45      EDU 60      Move 9

### Skills:

Accounting 10  
 Charm 50  
 Credit Rating 15  
 Dodge 50  
 Fighting (Brawl) 80  
 Language (Own) English 60  
 Language (Other) Chinese 60  
 Language (Other) French 30  
 Language (Other) Shanghainese 30  
 Listen 50  
 Lore: Streetwise 50  
 Persuade 50  
 Psychology 80  
 Spot Hidden 50  
 Stealth 50  
 Track 20

Tailored Western Suit  
 Bat wing bow tie  
 Overcoat  
 Oxford loafers  
 Electric torch  
 Camera

**Cash:      Spending Level:      Assets:**  
**\$30      \$10      \$750**

**DMG Bonus: none Dodge: 50 Build: +0**

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	80	49	16	1d3+db	-	1	-	-



## Zhu Hai Tao ("Joey")

Occupational Benefits: Private Eyes with point pools in Disguise or Shadowing may spend points after rolling the die for a test. For every 2 points you spend after rolling the die, you increase the die result by 1. This only applies if you are undistracted and not directly observed. It never applies during a contest. You must describe the thing that almost went wrong and how you caught it barely in time or succeeded through sheer luck.

**Sanity: 10 Stability: 9 Health: 10**

### Investigative Abilities

#### Academic Abilities

Languages: 2 (Chinese, Shanghainese, English, French)

Law: 2

#### Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty: 6

Cop Talk: 4

Credit Rating: 3

Intimidation: 4

Military Talk: 1

Streetwise: 6

#### Technical Abilities

Evidence Collection: 6

Locksmith 4

### General Abilities

Athletics: 8

Firearms: 10

Preparedness: 2

Scuffling: 10

Sense Trouble: 4

Shadowing: 6

Stealth: 2

## Zhu Hai Tao ("Joey")

**HP: (10) Sanity: (10) Luck: (50) MP: (8)**

STR 50      DEX 75      INT 60  
CON 50      APP 50      POW 50  
SIZ 50      EDU 75      Move 8

### Skills:

Credit Rating 30  
Dodge 27  
Fast Talk 80  
Fighting (Brawl) 75  
Firearms (Handgun) 75  
Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) 30  
Intimidate 25  
Language (Own) Shanghainese 75  
Language (Other) Chinese 75  
Language (Other) English 30  
Language (Other) French 30  
Law 20  
Lore: Streetwise 60  
Psychology 30  
Spot Hidden 75  
Stealth 30  
Track 50

**DMG Bonus: +1d4 Dodge: 27 Build: +1**

### Tailored Western Suit

Overcoat

Oxford loafers

Shoulder holster

.45 revolver

Electric torch

Note pad, pencils

"Lucky Strike" Cigarettes, matches

**Cash: \$60      Spending Level: \$10      Assets: \$1,500**

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	75	37	15	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
.45 revolver	66	33	13	1d10+2	100	1(3)	6	100



## Ling Xue

Occupational Benefits: You are a member of the Jing Wu Athletic Association. You can use Sense Trouble and Streetwise to identify other martial art practitioners. You can use Streetwise to activate fellow Jing Wu Athletic Association members who practice a variety of Chinese martial arts, including for example Eagle Claw, Praying Mantis, and Northern Shaolin styles.

**Sanity: 10 Stability: 10 Health: 10**

### Investigative Abilities

#### Academic Abilities

Language: 1 (Chinese, English)

Occult: 1

#### Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty: 2

Bargain: 2

Credit Rating: 0

Flattery: 2

Intimidation: 2

Oral History: 3

Streetwise: 6

#### Technical Abilities

Outdoorsman: 4

Pharmacy: 1

### General Abilities

Athletics: 12

Filch: 2

First Aid: 3

Scuffling: 12

Sense Trouble: 8

Stealth: 6

Weapons: 12

## Ling Xue

**HP: (10) Sanity: (50) Luck: (50) MP: (9)**

STR 80      DEX 50      INT 60  
 CON 55      APP 50      POW 50  
 SIZ 45      EDU 70      Move 9

### Skills:

Charm 50  
 Credit Rating 9  
 Dodge 50  
 Fighting (Brawl) 90  
 First Aid 50  
 History 20  
 Intimidate 50  
 Jump 50  
 Language (Own) Chinese 70  
 Language (Other) English: 35  
 Lore: Streetwise 50  
 Occult 25  
 Sleight of Hand 26  
 Spot Hidden 50  
 Stealth 50  
 Survival 50

Peasant clothes

**Cash:      Spending Level:      Assets:**  
**\$9      \$2      \$90**

**DMG Bonus: +1d4 Dodge: 50 Build: +1**

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	90	45	18	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
Chinese Broad Sword	90	45	18	1d8+2+db	-	1	-	-

# Lore Sheets

Lore Sheets are handouts that provide players with extra background information about their investigators, story settings and the game world. The Sassoon Files also provides optional rules that allow Investigators can gain “mechanical” advantages through the use of a Lore Sheet.

Here is an example of a Lore Sheet:

□□ **“My father is Huang Jinrong”**: My father is Huang Jinrong, former leader of the Green Gang and one of the most powerful crime figures in China. Huang Jinrong (“Pockmarked Huang”) learned his trade in his father’s Shanghai tea house, where he overheard the conversations of schemers, gangsters, con-men, and others on the make. In 1892, and at the age of 24, Huang Jinrong left his father’s tea house to work for the French Concession police as a detective. He was an excellent detective, able to solve many cases because of his connections from his father’s tea house. Pockmarked Huang was also a leader of the Green Gang.

I’m the scion of one of Huang’s mistresses. Huang has accepted me as his prodigy and I will be a virtuous son. Therefore, I’m also loyal to the Green Gang. However, no one else knows about this relationship nor my allegiance; not even other members of the Green Gang. I must secretly report back to my father about anything that should be of interest to him.

In the above example, the character would have a secret role related to a faction (the Green Gang). Working with the Keeper, players can modify and personalize this Lore Sheet. Note that the Lore Sheet also provides some settings information, so that players can better understand what is happening in the world of The Sassoon Files. This is one of the main benefits of using Lore Sheets with The Sassoon Files campaign setting; Lore Sheets give small pieces of information to players to help them understand this time and place.

One benefit of Lore Sheets is that complex information about the setting can be distributed quickly and without the need for including a tedious history lesson as part of the game. This optional rule is best used when playing an extended campaign, where the Keeper and the players are comfortable with investigators pursuing “secret goals” as part of the campaign gameplay. If you do not want to use this Optional Rule, please consider all Lore Sheets in this book as handouts, which the Keeper may handout when appropriate.

## How to Use Lore Sheets

The Lore Sheet mechanic here is adopted from the “Rational Magic” RPG for use in both GUMSHOE and Call of Cthulhu systems.

In GUMSHOE, Lore Sheets act exactly like investigator Abilities, with a level equal to the number of □. In the above example, an investigator may use the Lore Sheet to make a point-spend to hire a Green Gang clean-up crew. Or use it to narrate about a Green Gang safe-house he has heard about. This can be used to influence gang members, pay bribes to police, and access weapons through gang contacts.

In the Call of Cthulhu system, spending a point from a Lore Sheet can be used to add a Bonus Die to a roll which is directly related to something on the Lore Sheet. Players need to describe or narrate the special skills, knowledge, or relationship that is utilized by the point-spend.

The Lore Sheet points are refreshed at the end of each game session.



## Giving Out Lore Sheets

As Keeper, first, you should decide with your table if this is a mechanic you wish to use. We advise that you use this if your table is unfamiliar with modern Chinese history or if you would like to include some secret roles and goals into the campaign. A Keeper may also use Lore Sheets as a means of introducing inter-party conflict or player-versus-player (“PvP conflict”) into the campaign.

Lore Sheets should be handed out secretly. However, each player must be able to independently decide whether or not to accept and use a Lore Sheet. Lore Sheets should not be forced upon a player, EXCEPT for Lore Sheets that are added to a pre-made investigator prior to being taken on by a player. Therefore, this mechanic is best utilized when there is a “Session 0” and the Keeper can communicate with players in private before the campaign officially starts. At the very least, the Keeper will need the ability to have a private conversation with each player.

Feel free to copy, cut out and use any Lore Sheet provided in The Sassoon Files. When you are ready to talk with players one-on-one, select a Lore Sheet to generally describe to the player; it is important to explicitly alert the player to any faction allegiance described in the Lore Sheet. However, feel free to obfuscate specific details. Ask the player if they would like to take on this additional secret role which comes with additional details about the campaign settings.

If a player does not like a Lore Sheet – or does not like any Lore Sheets – you can work with them to write their own. But be sure that any newly created Lore Sheets are in some way related to campaign background information and settings. In some cases, additional research may be required prior to writing the Lore Sheet.

Once a player has selected a Lore Sheet, have them staple it to their character sheet. Remind them that there may be consequences of sharing the contents of the Lore Sheet with other players.

Included in The Sassoon Files are “Campaign Lore Sheets”. These Lore Sheets do not have check-boxes (☐). They contain background settings information that may be

handed to players. In this game, Campaign Lore Sheets have no “mechanical” value and the Keeper may give them out to all players. Or, if the Keeper wishes, the Keeper can be selective about which player receives which Campaign Lore Sheet. This might encourage the players to talk about their knowledge and share notes while reducing the amount of time spent silently reading the settings material.

## Changing Lore Sheets

Each Lore Sheet included in this book has a “Resolve” condition; a portion of text that is underlined. If the player manages to accomplish what is described as the Resolve condition, they gain a reward.

In Call of Cthulhu, investigators resolving a Lore Sheet may check the box next to a skill during the development phase, even if the character never successfully used the skill during play. Only 1 “free” box may be checked in this way per game session.

In GUMSHOE, investigators resolving three Lore Sheets gain a Build Point. However, only 1 Build Point may be given out at the end of a session.

Keepers should speak with the players about updating Lore Sheets to reflect current relationships and goals after any scenario in which a Lore Sheet is Resolved. Here, players can describe the motivations of their investigators and other human NPCs described in a Lore Sheet.

Keepers may offer new Lore Sheets any time after a Lore Sheet is Resolved. These Lore Sheets can be pre-generated and provided as part of this book or they may be written by the Keeper with input from the player.





# Factions

The base scenarios included in The Sassoon Files assume that players take on the role of investigators who fight against Mythos threats introduced to them by Sir Victor Sassoon. However, there are other ways to approach these scenarios. For example, you may run the same scenarios from the viewpoint of members of the Communist or Green Gang factions.

With the Investigator Factions Optional Rule, you can potentially run multiple player groups simultaneously, with each group existing in the same “world-space”. These Investigator Factions also allow you to explore more of the non-Mythos stories existing in 1920s Shanghai.

## Jing Wu Athletic Association - Investigator Faction

The Jing Wu Athletic Association (精武体育会) was founded in Shanghai on July 7th, 1910 by martial artist Huo Yuanjian, Chen Qimei and other co-founders with close links to Sun Yet-sen’s underground resistance movement “Tongmenhui”, which was originally established to overthrow the Qing. Over time, the Jing Wu Athletic Association would become a force of resistance against foreign imperial powers.

The Jing Wu Athletic Association broke with traditions shrouded in secrecy and opened its doors as one of the first public martial arts institutes in China. This break from tradition was intended to keep other secret traditions alive, and it served as a means of recruiting and passing knowledge to would-be street soldiers who could protect Chinese nationalist interests.

The Jing Wu became very popular among the Chinese seeking to improve their health, living conditions and community, and the Jing Wu spread like wildfire. By the 1920’s, the Jing Wu had expanded their areas of operation

through China and beyond its borders. The Jing Wu sent teachers abroad to places like Vietnam, Malaysia, Korea and Japan.

Masters with many different art forms were brought on board to teach and the curriculum included many different styles of Wu Shu. Disciples were required to learn a broad, basic curriculum before being encouraged to pursue other specializations, including the pursuit of esoteric forms that would have otherwise been secret and unavailable.

While pursuing the study of secret martial arts, Masters occasionally bump into practices and methods backed by dark occult traditions and the Mythos. Jing Wu founders took these threats to humanity seriously, and they resolved to fight back when and where possible.

The Jing Wu Athletic Association Faction fights against triads, such as the 4 Seas Gang and the Green Gang. It is also antagonistic to the Genyosha. Investigators joining this faction are called “Disciples”, when they join. The faction heads are collectively “Masters” of the association, which runs on relatively democratic principles.

Possible real-life personalities that can be played as investigators include the likes of:

- Zhao Lianhe (趙連和), a master of the Northern Shaolin
- Chen Zizheng (陳子正) Eagle Claw master;
- Luo Guangyu (羅光玉) Seven Star Praying Mantis master;
- Geng Jishan (耿繼善) Xingyi master;
- Wu Jianquan, founder of Wu-style taijiquan

