

## **Banish with Laughcraft**

First story to win me an award for contributing

Revised Version for my "My Cult of Thoolhoo"

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At first, some hints to readers who never read H.P. Lovecraft's „Shadows over Innsmouth“, August Derleths „The Star Gate“ and are unaware of Cthulhu style Role-playing Games. Lovecraft "used" his sickness to inspire the myth of evil, chthonic deities, who interacted with planet earth since it came into existence. Small groups or single individuals stumbled across the myth, went insane, suffered a horrible death or came to the shocking realization that they were part of the myth and set apart from all humanity. Main idea is that the myth cannot be understood or countered by neither science, religion nor occultism. Every insight concerning the truth is another step into madness. Please excuse my short cut version, sample is free, but without money no full version will be published. Readers shall be aware that in reality there is no evidence that I write truth about real persons in my fantasy texts. Cthulhu as role-play usually includes the following experiences: The chance to emulate a classic, one could nearly say archetypal, character of your choice. See how it develops in a (for now) loyal team. Yes, emulate, not mimic or transmute into. Role-play style happens with imagination and not like theater. That is LARP. Next, the chance to game in the era of prohibition and gangsters colliding with the unspeakable and cruel reality of myth. The summary of shock, madness and inescapable Destruction via a cosmic and tentacled nemesis and its minions.

Producing a radio audio and computer game remains among my goals. Since I made a sneak preview for my "Grunt the Vegetarian" at <http://nwwvault.ign.com> I proved that it works. Surprising how my small files would already fill a full game. Please be assured I write by my own style, I never tried to imitate Lovecraft and am aware that I lack his talent for making the reader realize what is about to happen without ever really typing it straight onto paper. I will try to learn this though for it makes for a really intense addition of reading pleasure. If you don't know my other files, be reminded that I tested difficult approaches to writing to test my petty skills. This was my first finished short story intended for publication. Be lucky you didn't have to read my early files, as those I did handwrite for a german role-play game when I was twelve. Back then I was *perfectly free of any talent at all*. Just a mindless urge and good intentions. I don't make my income by being an author, so I keep to looking for better solutions, of course. I plan anyway, to indulge into making a computer game and one of those solo-adventures for cellular phones. Playing as such is low priority to me; it becomes interesting only when it furthers my own approaches. I met several creative minds and I learned from them as best as I could under the circumstances I have to call remnants of my life.

If you don't have any of the backgrounds I mentioned above, it might help you, to scroll down to the add on info and read it before you read the story. In the German version I name here a link to a short quickstep rulebook and adventure of Cthulhu role-play. I don't know one as good in English and sadly, translating it would violate copyright and my oath of not without earning money...

This is a *FICTIONAL* e-text, inspirational file for a PC game& radio audio tale.

**I admit my translation reduced the quality, am just a prosaic German.**

### The Arkham Instigator, short summary

Today, 01.06.1923, the investigations of the police ended. The last month were filled with a nearly incomparable effort to illuminate the disappearance of the well-known persons struggling versus preternatural incursions. The small town, by the name Dunseith became the stage for an unsolved crime. The central persons: Adriano Putana, Sebastian Crowley and J.T. Presque remain missing. Few hours after the local police was alarmed the government ordered that Dunseith was to be secured by forces of the US army. The scarce evidence comes down to a torn, bloodstained coat, blood and two bullet holes of handgun caliber. Police declared that the assumption of a cult crime might be realistically. With the end of the investigations, the flags were lowered to half-mast. Arkhams greatest newspaper willingly covers all expenses of the investigation and further search for evidence.

For years, the occultist and small time actor Sebastian Crowley, the business lawyer J.T. Presque and the ex-monk and pulp writer Adriano Putana got drawn into situations, which would shatter the mind of the average citizen. The activities of obscured cults and alien entities left tracks to a horrifying truth that is confronted by inspired people. Sanity threatening discoveries of forbidden lore hint at the possibility that earth is suffering the dark plots of maniac, chthonic deities who undermined humanity for eons. The myth was detected in multiple places and again and again the survivors faced the problem of knowing the truth, while being surrounded by oblivious neighbors, tellurium energy, insane entities and their bloodthirsty minions. Anxiety and pressure of ignoring the unacceptable facts, take their toll. Yet some myth-sleuths gained special insights, which proved beneficial. One of those valiant groups operated in the light of publicity and scored admirable successes in series. They became a symbol of inspiration and prudence for entire humanity. Of course the tentacled conspirators flayed them alive before this story started. Survivor of this bunch was Adriano Putana.

After the death of his fiancé he was trying to compensate trauma by indulging in masculine fallacies. The Old Ones had other plans in mind though. In 1918 he was dismissed from the Corpo di Armato and realized gain of initiative.

Confronted by overwhelming forces he decided to deal crucial damage as long as he could. His journey on the fruitless road of retribution. He was seen gazing at a burning tarot card. The desperate assault of a single brave soldier. Illusions of heroism and glory were not for him anymore. A long termed and painful struggle against forces one couldn't defeat was his more realistically answer. Yet he was aware how many times outgunned individuals stood forthright against cults, criminals and crazed scientists. Where they succeeded they were called heroes, where they faltered they were labeled fools. The necessity of introspection was not to be overseen. In battle with horrors from beyond there was no reason to grant them further advantages due ones own mental instability. Of course such insights came the hard way in a mans younger years.

The three protagonists had their first meeting in 1922, Calcutta, India as they were drawn into a revival of the thug activities and the masterminding influence behind it. Through a lack of subterfuge in the thuggish actions, they found out about occult meaning of their vile crimes. Supposed accidents and sicknesses could be proven ritual murders of this heretic, abstract local cult of hierophants.

Deluded that the goddess Chalice asked to re-establish the cosmic balance with Shiva, there was assassinated whoever stood in the way of the vicious hierophants and their deranged plans. Crowley valiantly stepped up to face the blood magick, Putana welcomed the escape from boredom and Presque wouldn't allow a bunch of crazy, strangle-cord and knife-wielding wackos to spoil his investments in this region.

When they discovered first signs that a surprising outbreak of disease was the dirty work of these religious madmen, even the British advisors could no longer hesitate. Need of circumstance and Presque's political influence allowed them to join forces with the responsible military of the Commonwealth. Weeks passed in the draining heat and short of the breaking point they eavesdropped information about a ritual gathering and even managed to identify some thugs. They followed those cultists and discovered their hideout. Caverns in derelict parts of the country and minor camps along the roads. Duty on side of the British soldiers and grim resolve of the three made them charge into the caverns. During the first phase of infiltration they managed to rescue Dr. Derek Nail from the fangs of a dark courtesan who planned to ritually feed upon him in service to that which lurked in darkness.

Nails natural gift of seduction had blinded him, overconfidence for the price of seeing women only as sex-toys. For the three myth-snuffers it didn't matter, the cult had to be stopped and if Nail was foolish enough, he would continue to reap forbidden fruits until the consequences tore him apart. After their first case was solved they were honored by the British embassy and the society of early human culture. They had by chance not only fought the cultists, but by their raw courage alone casted a minor banishment versus the dreaded influence from beyond. Now such villains had to expect repercussions if they dared to stomp on law and humanity. Dr. Nail was brought forth to the best asylum of the western world, to purify his shredded self from the torment of his recent experiences. While the media entitled them heroes it was Colonel Fleming who earned this.

It was his tenacity and disciplined leadership that made them prevail, even when body and soul were at stake. The memories were clear enough to still shake all of them. In those dark and dreaded caverns they suffered the sight of a lower servitor, which's stench and insane chanting, full of soulpain and sorrow, haunted their minds for a long, long time. In midst of those stone carved cavern walls full of ceremonial symbols a strangling feeling hit their guts. They would never know if some incense or the alien atmosphere shocked them more. As they entered they had still believed to fight down some thugs, arrest the cults guru and go home. A notch from the truth they were.

As they charged on they encountered the abomination, which the cult worshiped. For an instance insanity kicked God himself from the throne and seemed all-consuming. A second later they had to fight for their very souls. The handful of soldiers prepared for battle while Crowley studied the painted walls. Putana, who was pretty shaken by this intense situation, realized this was no problem solved by simple firepower. Presque, influenced by this thing, was drowning in a wave of horrid self-pity and soultrash. Unable to fire his reliable handgun again, he stared like a drunken peasant who realized he just kissed his cow. Crowley focused on countering the strange rituals formula and achieved some form of banishing power.

The German-Sicilian bastardo guarded the occupied occultist, but couldn't shake free from the grasp of shock completely. As the magical effort overstretched Crowley's mental balance and the first soldiers got seriously wounded,

Putana focused his self. Mistaken to be the effect of Crowley's ritual incantation, the banishment of the horrid creature came completely surprising to all of the shocked eyes. The creature faded from flesh to ethereal, much like an overcome nightmare. In this moment of triumph it was Adriano's realism that shocked his companions. He explained that the creature was neither destroyed nor arrested, capable of returning after a short phase of recovery. While their psyches were marked by this night, they fell into a cheerful victory mood, everyone busy to rationalize these haunting moments.

The look in the eyes of Colonel Fleming was all which spoke of this chapter ever after. After they had withdrawn from the caves, short after the first full night of sleep, the next setback awaited.

Embittered they had to swallow that further investigation was impossible, cause the British army decided to detonate caves in this area to secure the local villages and avoid further spread of this wicked disease. They had saved hundreds of people and gave their very best, yet they felt like beaten dogs as they left India. Presque rapidly ventured back to the United States. An old acquaintance, by then a high-ranking diplomat had asked him to interfere with a political crisis. Gunter von Gotha had manipulated the economy to revive his dream of the German Kaiser Reich. Presque coordinated and led several executives to deal with this mundane danger. This time there were no signs of mysterious influence to be found. Aiding the USA shortly after the Great War proved valuable nonetheless.

The public was pleased and the media celebrated Presque as a defender of western culture. The Arkham Instigator entitled Presque as „a Star shining brightest“. Crowley compared this with his astrological data and made some divination concerning the destiny of JT. Putana was less euphoric and remained silent.

After they had left India some month of recovery and calmer life took place. In February 1923 the three met again, as they dared to intercept some uncommon occurrences in Japan. Work on a planned road brought forth a discovery of some strange relic, which seemingly summoned a group of spooky, pale cultists out of nowhere.

The chanting and dancing of these people irritated the workers and when the heart of a work group leader was found on some savage altar, it was no longer prejudice what spoiled the climate here. The real horror started when a small mountainside monastery was discovered to be the headquarter of some weird Asian sect. Far from the shores there was just one village close by and so the monastery was still filed as deserted in the official Japanese reports. An illusion that was falling apart, as Sgt. Koromiko arrived with a squad of soldiers.

Patient information gathering and his personal cunning made Koromiko realize a sense of weirdness about this mission. Maybe support from Iteki was seen as more appropriate then risking more Japanese soldiers. Officially the honor that Iteki like Presque were allowed to join up on this investigation is nearly inexpressible to western barbarians. Adriano was somewhat uncertain about the usefulness of Japanese infantry equipment for securing a building. This insight should prove real. Koromikos decision made them clash with the lunacy of a culture that was nearly as strange to them as the vile web of the Old Ones.

While the first monk cells still somehow resembled something human, every step towards the center made the foreboding sense of danger more intense. Dirty, degenerate and hideously desecrated was this scene.

The acumen of Crowley would be the only chance of escape for the trio, yet this was totally unknown to them at this point. Anyway, without the glorious sacrifice of the Japanese soldiers, they would have been condemned to a painful slow death. Confronted with an abomination of myth horror and battle ready thugs of this entity it should come to a tunnel fight which equaled the German- French trenches from 1914-1916 in all bitter aspects which fighting wreaks upon human existence. The scene turned into utmost torment for flesh, Ki and Do which was hardly to top. A gory skirmish through the narrow corridors of the monastery was about to begin. As the first wave ended in those tunnels, the adventurers split to support some soldiers.

Sebastian concentrated, forming an astral blade, resembling the dagger he wielded. Thereby he gained the chance to hurt the essence of ethereal beings as well. Joined by two soldiers he entered a corridor, advancing in flickering light and surrounded by nerve ripping sounds.

Close to the end of the passage he recognized an arcane symbol and while the soldiers thought of a dead end, Sebastian chanted versus the walls. Due his talent with Magick he was able to energize the symbol and opened a secret door. The soldiers were struck by surprise due to his innate abilities. Crowley expected the natural, an attack of a dark adept. The bloody dance of blades would demand toll from them. Toll that Crowley was more than willing to pay. The soldiers could fire once before it became close quarters. Meanwhile Presque led another two soldiers and marched on. The dirty gibberish at the walls left him totally unimpressed. Instinct was, what made him survive such situations. The slot eyed cultists felt so superior in their ambush, that the massive counterstrike of JT caught them unprepared.

As he had expected those degenerates never before encountered resistance. His automatic clip pistol brought death to some of them and another one was smashed down by a powerful punch even before the soldiers could fully react. Boxing, bleeding, shivering and blocking they survived this altercation. For a while the illusion of a glorious victory would offer itself. Putana stood close to Koromiko, watching. Giri and Courage couldn't make the confusion go away. This was no typical mission for soldiers. The men sensed that they wouldn't survive such a place much longer. Adriano sneaked into a corridor. Fear tried to strangle his confidence and it demanded an act of willpower. Two times his intuition made him throw grenades into sections he felt to be dreadful. The following deathcries made his doubts vanish. In his guts cramps started, this was not only fear.

This place was not part of their *via fatum*, whatever lurked here, his awareness failed to reveal anything about the deeper levels. Surprised by his own skill he perceived himself blocking the knife of a cultist and countering by a move he adapted from the few month of Wong Chen Kung Fu he once decided to practice. Calm but dedicated did he cut his gratitude into the flesh of this cultist. While Putana expressed his allergy to vice, the tables began to turn. The minions launched an organized assault and the pure strength of numbers drove them backwards. When defeat became obvious the remaining soldiers grouped, giving evidence that mere mortals are as heroic, to allow Crowley the chance to grasp through a breach of reality and save his companions.

Weeks later Crowley honored the sacrifice of the Japanese squad by a play in the Noh theater. Adriano chose silence as a suiting honor and never mentioned anything about this, except that Wakino, who translated for them in the village, escaped her shame via traditional suicide. The survivors took care that the few captured scripts and warding symbols were handed to proper instances. When the evacuation of the village was coordinated they found some weeks of time to flow with their mushien. They met a Miko and even found an ancient Kitsune scroll, which they copied and handed to a museum. While Adriano had nothing more to offer he found some emotional link to the female side of Japan. Here he learned that not all women taste like rotting fish. Crowley studied the scripts and practiced some Tantojutsu. Again their interference had cost them much and they spend month for recovery. Adriano chose to visit his place of birth, Giardini and enjoyed the Italian monastery close to Monte Casino.

Time went by and the memories where no longer so haunting to them. When Putana met tourists he couldn't ignore the self-righteous ignorance that transformed so many humans into a twisted bunch of swine. Crowley told them at the departure he would visit Egypt and indeed, Adriano received two letters. The first covered Crowley's first week in Memphis and described his attempts to teach basics of the real myth to his adepts. Unknown to Putana his brother-in-arms Crowley was busy countering the spreading of a cult of Apophis. From the moment that he stepped out of the plane Sebastian was sure that something was lurking for him here.

The atmosphere and bustling streets could no longer delude a skilled occultist from sensing the telltale signs. Sebastian asked subtle questions, observed and bribed his way to get more detailed information right away. When he finally investigated in the poorer districts, he learned to translate the lore. It was Anuthotep who had decrypted the necromantic Lore from the books of the dead into a distorted way. Unsurprisingly, even in Egypt people got angry, when some deranged fanatics dug out their ancestors, had sexual intercourse with them, and finally swallowed the remnants of their brains. By the sheer stupidity of the brain eaters one could discard the idea of gaining the wisdom of the dead through such depravity.

Fallacy, which became dangerous by the latent criminal potential of this psychopathic brotherhood. Being on his home turf Crowley made the police do their job and launched guerrilla war on the Apophis cult. Falcon and Sphinx would become fundamentals of his later works.

To Putana's astonishment the second letter arrived from the Hürtgenwald, where Germany meets France. Crowley sent some greetings and wrote he played sheep dumb tourist. Mentioning his plans to visit the US of A by the way. Sebastian's physical vessel, tool of the higher self he constantly dabbled about, needed further recovery. At that moment Adriano sensed a vague menace between those lines. Rovinato C. needed his aid, although he seemed to be yet unaware of this himself. Adriano busted his low finances to dash towards the border of Austria and purchased a train passage to Germany. Stress and forbidden knowledge could even hamstring Sebastian, part of the existential limits of a human being. The natural area of the Hürtgenwald was turning into a place of dread for in the last month several wanderers and women had been victims to a psychopathic murderer. Police was working over-shift, yet an area of this size was near impossible to cover by the dutiful cops. Putana cursed himself that they ventured so ignorant concerning retaliation from the minions or even setups from petty criminals.

Carlisle D. Wardstone, an anthropologist, had unleashed the madness as he stumbled upon scripts of the forbidden cults. Fascinated by old tales, which Germany had plenty to offer, he couldn't resist. Encouraged by his academically backers he was too stubborn to notice how much their urge to harm him was source of their advice. Even the major warning didn't even make him think: Do never conjure such, which you cannot banish or destroy, nor summon ever, what can conjure such forces, which you cannot ward yourself against.

As a man with scientific education Dr. Wardstone didn't want to admit, how much his darker impulses had clouded his brain. His triumph of superiority came in form of a ghoulish nightmare, which instantly fed on the hapless academics. The moment the last notch of common sense reached Wardstones jelly brain he started fleeing for his life, leaving his fellows and ritual trappings behind. The murders and Wardstones following suicide left the police more than a bit puzzled. The doctor had pushed his head into a coal oven after slitting his wrists. Newspaper conjured a demonic meaning into all of this and the sects of psychoanalysts wanted to establish themselves by offering their questionable help.

This time, Crowley and the cultists of the Old Ones arrived, both eager to get close to Wardstones daughter and capture the remaining notes of the deceased. This was even subtle from both parties, because none would benefit from the police finding a certain pattern in this. What he lacked in subterfuge and stealth Crowley made up with divination. Gaining the information yet caught in a cauldron of hostile adversaries all on his own.

Both Sebastian and Putana came to the conclusion that the summoning will manifest most damaging here through a human with repressed violent temper. Adriano did a desperate search for Sebastian, hoping to find him in time. Looking back, he was exhausted by the intensity of memories. He visualized the final flashbacks.

The Hürtgenwald after sunset, Putana marched along the ways, sneaked through the vegetation and stumbled under the light of the crescent moon. Fresh forest air, atmosphere, fatigue and doubts faded into oblivion the moment he heard a cry of agony from Crowley. The visualization became most lucid the moment Putana swung the axe to end the unwanted duel between Crowley and the psychotic criminal.

Weeks of hide and seek only to compensate Crowley's weakness in self preservation. Again Adriano's life didn't benefit from any of his efforts. A shine of hope struck the frowning Sicilian. Perhaps he would never again have to bury body parts at least. The departure was of a blasphemous mundanely flair this time. They send some letters to Presque and went their own ways again. In November 1924, JT had withdrawn to his Landhaus for recovery from business; news of two well-known people asking for him reached his ears. This time the news lines of the Arkham Instigator clashed brutally with those of the Miskatonic Mirror. The attention of mankind was turning towards Dunseith. The third major joint venture of the three myth snuffers was about to begin. They prepared again to resist the greedy talons of tentacle-horrors.

Putana perceived bad rumors from a coastal cluster named Dunseith. Proclaiming to work on a new novel he ventured to Washington. Adriano was busy gathering information, comparing notes and checking archives for weeks.

His natural gentleness made him get access in a smooth way, although his shock to realize that he still was able to socialize with normal people shook his emotions. The librarians whispered about his dedication while studying the dusty tomes in the stuffy atmosphere of the old buildings. Comparison of the notes made him admit that again forces from beyond were storming into human society. In the end, his introspection would make the situation clearer to him. As he lay on the bed of his cheap hotel room, he perceived mental images and began to understand some of their meaning. The haunted spot Dunseith nearly cried out the challenge to those willing to dare. Putana would conclude that an old signal tower, once built upon the place of atavistic hermits, was the source of the strange coincidences. Adriano expected another set of cavern tunnels. Emotionally shaken by his mental efforts, he took a night walk through the foggy streets delving into the autumn wind. He admired the architectural wonders for several hours, praising the spirit and skill of craftsmen and visionaries.

The architectural wonders were clad in the typical dresses of females. Hit by surprise he was later informed that Sebastian Crowley was in town. Escaping the embrace of his favorite dance girl, he started his way to the Miskatonic Residence motel. As many times before they sat in a darkened room, exchanging news and contemplating the dangerous, alienating myth. Putana watched the smoke rise from his Gimel cigarette and playfully flattened his softpack. Overwhelmed by memories and melancholia. Crowley remained silent in such moments and this was one reason for Adriano's respect.

Putana was busy wondering if his feelings were an obstacle or the longing for things he failed to establish. Crowley studied his notes and charts, muttering arcane syllables. He recovered his mental clarity when Crowley became agitated. Sebastian suspected that it wouldn't be a tunnel, but rather some alien kind of portal that they sensed. Freudian assumptions mentioned the symbol of portal as linked to the female abdomen, relating to some childhood traumatic experience of Crowley being unable to attain sex with his mother. The myth just meant a gate to another realm of existence though. Adriano worried why he could sense resonating of truth in statements while most others were seemingly oblivious to such insight. Anyway, to him the myth was a replacement of his average life.

Unlike Thoth and Crowley he was not drawn, but born into this myth. His lifestyle was similarly nemesis and sanctum to him. Without his few talents he would be just another cocaine-crazed puritan or a petty criminal. Such realizations sucked him into an emotional abyss, but today Crowley would prevent him from drowning there. A litany of encrypted chanting was intoned by Crowley and Putana was again amused how easily he could suffer this, to him totally meaningless, gibberish. While the occultist checked his equipment Adriano planned to ask for support from Presque. Ambient atmosphere of the nightly drive towards the corporate building set a new expression (to the mind of the reader and the graphic I want created for my PC game).

The choice of employees was one sign that Presque's clear, sharp-cutting mind was needed for this venture. Although Adriano couldn't deny that money and a comfortable limousine would perhaps be among his considerations, too.

The clean rooms granted a relaxing mood and while Crowley told the constellation of stars wouldn't hint at Adriano getting laid with the secretary, the Sicilian was in deep, passionate trance, his gaze transfixed to her... aura.



Back in his mind he remembered Crowley's symbolism. The sword of determination, the staff of desire, the coin of valor, and a cup full of insight. Putana wouldn't like to miss his Gimel cigarettes in all of this. Metaphoric. Nearly like stars, which were synonymous to humans in this occult dabbling. Entire libraries full of such crap should ensure that adepts were kept from the few useful insights of this studies for eternity. On the other hand was the idiocy to paint pentagrams and chant evocations in ancient languages, at secret spots of ritual meaning, a misinterpretation that begged to be punished.

For some short moments the serious threat of the surreal situation could be ignored and resembled a vacation. Even when they had any prove at all, they were forced to choose wisely whom to trust with this forbidden lore. Crowley recruited from his adepts, JT and Adriano had seen them fail, fall into despair and suffer before, though. Adriano acted on intuition, yet solitude was the better choice manifold. Putana had seen remnants of the women he loved locked away in the Arkham Asylum or buried in another dusty grave. Presque never mentioned anything since his wife was killed. Contemplation was smoothly shoved aside by the entry of Jeffrey Ronald, personal assistant of JT. The scarce evidences were discussed in absence of Ronald due to precautions taken before. JT radiated coolness, but couldn't hide his enthusiasm for long. A deathwatch, or the political less correct realization that the own survival instincts were no longer valid. Preparations were made and two days later Presque drove the impressive limousine gallantly.

Dunseith, where Gods light denies to shine, the place where unspeakable abominations crawl through shadows pursuing unexplained goals. The arrival at the outskirts of Dunseith was done. In light of street lanterns they walked towards the meeting point that they had arranged per messenger. Police found the messengers half-eaten corpse a bit too late for our protagonists' story. Dunseith was a run down, nearly rotten village. The air smelled of salt, smoke and fish. When they perceived the first dwellers their mood turned to vigilant. The inhabitants displayed certain stigmata of the insane myth and it's toll upon the human body and soul.

Fat, anxious and nervous with a dumb or piercing gaze in their eyes they weren't people they wanted to meet at all. Crowley noticed that the erratic thoughts were not concealed by their facial masque. Even the professional welcome by the villages' leader couldn't banish the foreboding sense of dread from their minds. The only tavern was used as the meeting hall and Presque started the negotiation. In this small, atmospheric setting the three stood surrounded by villagers, like heroes of old folk tales. Years later these moments were still held in memory by the people. While Adriano played Presque's advisor, JT had noticed years ago, that Putana's insights were not based on pure acumen or psychoanalysis, but strange insights into the application of the myth.

His essays and quotes were sometimes shockingly strange, yet he could score successes that none whom Presque had ever met could match. JT learned over the years to sense which of this ramblings were to be taken serious and which delved into metaphorical blasphemies. Seemingly, Adriano strived to a path that would banish the Old Ones and supply compensation for the bitter years they had to survive. Sebastian was prone to fall into a nervous glossolalia from time to time and JT would bet that Putana kept a low profile concerning occult studies in respect to Crowley. The last years repeatedly evidenced what power the ethereal beings wielded against humanity and thereby versus Presque's investments so that their skills were useful addition to the repertoire.

His employees never understood, why JT invested in a pulp writer like Adriano. Even the best among his workers couldn't deal with the smallest insights he handed to them. If JT needed a competitor crushed, he made sure that he received Adriano's less fictional writings. Presque's attention circled back to the villagers dabbling. He enjoyed the taste of his coffee and analyzed their smarter ideas with an honest smile upon his lips. When the discussion transformed into articulation of paranoid superstition JT cutted it short and arranged last minute preparations. Meanwhile Putana managed to get Crowley out of the waitress bed. They made their way across the only worn off road towards the goal of this investigation. The place itself was mundane as it could be. Nothing mystical, no bad vibrations. Short of the door to the signal tower Crowley drew out a blade with carved symbols, which remained enigmatic to JT and Putana, even after their initiation.

JT took his Automatic Clip Pistol out of its luxurious package and Adriano made himself look foolish, as he clumsily tried to handle his brass knuckle, flashlight and revolver while opening the door. The door opened and in the pale, yellow light of their flashlights they entered the conic formed room. While stairs led upwards, their senses foretold it would be here to search for another way. They started checking some chests and looking around carefully.

Thoht found a crowbar among some chests and caught a medic kit a while later. Crowley borrowed the crowbar and Adriano found a trapdoor in the floor. They took their positions and opened the door, prepared for whatever they could prepare for. The intense smell of fresh wood hit their noses. This was not what they had expected, no sense of dread, no rotten smells. Giving hand signs they coordinated their moves and Adriano sneaked downwards. He was aware that pleasant sensations could cloud ones perception, too.

He entered a room of surprising width and looked around. Short before he perceived the first creature his senses warned him of danger. It would be a fight, soon. In the light of his Taschenlampe stood a creature that he perceived like a ghoulish nightmare turned real.

The pale gray skin looked unfamiliar and metallic teeth reminded him of sharks he saw in Japan. The creature moved gentle, exuding a sense of menace. Adriano's body felt numb and he was aware that martial arts would be no good to him here. With a clumsy punch he launched the brass knuckle on his left towards the head of this creature. He had needed the few seconds to deal with adrenalin and fear and therefore couldn't yell any warning to his companions. He felt Crowley arriving and thought him outflanked by another of these ghoulish freaks. Crowley reacted like a samurai of legend, cutting a chunk out of the flesh of his aggressor before he was pushed into defense. The magus spend daily hours in physical training and contemplation, here it had just saved his life. JT was on the stairs, alerted by the sounds. He suppressed a scream of pain as a third ghoul bit his back bumpers (yes, his ass). Before pain made him stumble he shot. Two bullets precisely through the sneaky ghouls eyes.

Putana was pushed into infighting and landed blows as he took them. For an instance he thought time stands still, so he could hear the sound of his blood splashing against the walls. The unreal moment should fade back into a painful reality. Adriano launched a brutal combination of punches until he fainted in a fog of exhaustion and pain. Crowley and JT covered their backs and made the creatures pay blood.

Putana awoke the moment the metallic drums could be identified as gunshots again. He felt the shakes, pain and fear in a weird mix of perceptions. A look at the source of an unknown smell made him realize that his pocket watch and parts of his belly were bitten away. Bandaging himself while watching the bruised Sebastian shove his blade through the brain of the last ghoul and the grim Presque busy tending his wounds.

A moment of silence made Crowley bark out his theory that these creatures were manifestations of their darker aspects. Facing the threat of hearing further dabbling about Magick, JT enjoyed his cigar and Putana braced himself, faking unconsciousness. The morbid humor of perceiving the melodramatic occultist in this bloodstained room shook their egos. When pain became tolerable they stood up, used what the medical kit had to offer and thought about this situation. Mental images of unspeakable horrors, eternal torment and torture of the flesh began haunting them. Of course no angel came to save their souls. Desperation of incomparable quality invaded their minds and the onslaught of mind flaying impressions was as greedy as Ute and Carole, the village whores. The atmosphere began humming with unknown energies and a shift of energy shook their bodies.

While a simple flashlight was high tech in this time, the three were quite calm the moment that shock and despair made way to reveal a shining door. Crowley proclaimed this to be a dimensional gate and they stepped through. For an instance that seemed eternal, they struggled to gather their courage. Then advancing to the final challenge that was now part of the heroic mood, they used to subdue their common sense. For the last time their minds, like a nutshell on the stormy sea, attempted to cross the ocean of madness and nausea. Within moments the steps were done.

A single house close to the edge of a European forest was Adriano's first mundane perception after his eyes got used to the moonlight. He couldn't tell any difference to his general condition, although he was quite focused and aware. The insight that Crowley was by now within the house he looked at came as no surprise. He was too fixed upon his Magick, never willing to realize that confronting his problems would have granted him, what he longed for in this occult crap. Presque landed a few yards away and displayed himself as a mutating and degenerating ball of flesh, bone and body fluids. When he reached the state of bloody pie, the moaning and screaming ended. Finally the cosmic goat had caught him, Adriano had tolerated his flawed existence for quite some time. J.T. never wanted to accept that his compulsive sticking to normalcy caused fears and flaws that, logically, took their toll from him.

His greatest merit, machismo beats reason, had become the key to his critical failures. A pie of blood and feces, the last shine of the Presque he liked, grateful that he landed far away so Adriano didn't have to smell this. A movement along the edge of the forest made Putana look up in surprise. Astonishing, after so many years?

Whoever came from there was initiated into the myth and for the first time, Adriano met someone who also learned the practical application. Now, where the moment he wished for his entire life had become reality, his mind noticed the total lack of joy within. A silent agreement. Heinrich Kremser, ex-cop, wanted to eradicate the degenerate minions, just like Adriano. A dominant insight reached his brain, breaking through the silence like a hammer through thin wood. Adriano felt the fear and pain only long enough to enjoy the meaning. He would die here, pretty soon.

Kremser handed him a *Gimel fluffy flavor* and Putana ignored reality to allow a last onslaught of memories. Gimel, the first he smoked after the most passionate night with Verona. One of the three women he had met, who fascinated him via personality and sex appeal alike. Again a minor confusion and pain struck him. He never realized that he had found *his personal grail*, so many years ago. A tribute to the phantasm, which had made him, survive years of disgrace and suffering. Now the time to release the salts, which still bound him to this degenerate existence, was reached. Human existence had a final end. Well, the thought that some mad scientists or cultists would one day summon him back to earth made him smirk.

Sincerely, Azel, Shrub and Nylonthotep really begged to get a mental steelbrush shoved into their astral asses. With a deathly-pallor, shivering and cramped, he inhaled from his Gimel, although the lungs were filling with blood and the distaste spoiled much. Bleeding from old scars and shaking by nervous shock he finally collapsed. *This story and Adriano's life end here...*

IT'S NOT DEAD WHICH CAN THERE ETERNALLY LIE  
IN THESE STRANGEST EONS EVEN DEATH MAY DIE  
WE STRIKE DEAD OUR MASTERS ON AN ICY NIGHT  
WE CLAIM THE POWER CAUSE THE STARS R RIGHT

### ***The charade of occult fallacy found it's silent end***

Excerpts from "The Miskatonic Mirror": 01.06.1923: H. Kremser, official speaker of the police admits, that Dunseith was the place of the last chapter in a story of the by now notorious, exalted occultists. The questionable investigations of preternatural affairs, conducted by Sebastian Crowley, Adriano P. and J.T. Presque ended in a mysterious disappearance, which is suspected a staged act of the publicity-addicted neurotics. Vigilant readers will have already noticed what weird topics our journalists had to work through in the last months. We further advise all reasonable people to avoid, or use with utmost precaution, the writings of Adriano Putana. These novels have been declared upsetting and mind threatening by concerned experts of the Church and well-known Doctors of Psychoanalysis. The Mirror will collect all evidence, to prove that the only cultists of alien chthonic deities were the three unstable persons, who are by now missing. Populace of Dunseith is unharmed and police could not even find minor evidence of secret cults or *unbelievable abominations from beyond*.

Thanks to Bruce Willis in Color of Night, Last Man Standing & Sixth Sense. Not to mention experience. This is because [in this pulpy story](#) your core personality realizes that your struggle is de facto futile and that even a petty mortal can destroy preternatural critters. Ask persons (not fools) with real Post Traumatic Symptoms or such disorders if a therapy healed more than self-initiated triumph over the cause of their suffering. Don't let them eat you though.

### **Words of the author, What made me write this idea? Read this:**

Excerpts, Raymond Chandlers "The simple Art of Murder"

- "He (the author) had style, but the readers didn't know it, because it was in a language not supposed to be capable of such refinements."
- "In everything that can be called art there is a quality of redemption."

- “But down these mean streets a man must go who is not himself mean, who is neither tarnished nor afraid. He must be a man of honor by instinct, by inevitability without thought of it and certainly without saying it. He must be among the best men in his world and a good enough man for any world. I do not care much about his private life, he is neither a eunuch nor a satyr. He is a relatively poor man, or he wouldn't be a private detective at all.”
- “It wouldn't be an adventure if it wouldn't happen to a man (*or woman, I added this to the quote for equality*) fit for adventure.”

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From those lines above I started to contemplate and form my own text "Banish with Laughcraft". Many years ago, I realized that ideas that once seemed to distract me from my goals, could be used to put some real experiences into the files. Better than just wasting time on fury. Please believe me, I am frequently underestimated and I don't like it.

This file is fiction, role-playing inspired and scripted back then to inspire a radio audio tale and perhaps a pc game. I just found that my texts are readable to most, but those who share similar experiences can and shall definitely enjoy and understand them.

The points I make here can be found and contemplated in most of my files. Sometimes I miss the heroic fantasy, Warhammer Fantasy or dark stuff like KULT. Recently I moaned that I had no sex for years and the real man I crafted into J.T.P. told me he had his first sex with 28 and "with the grandma of the woman of his dreams". So I smiled, knowing that my damnation is relative.

The private investigator is for the era when they became idols, as for those who still appreciate their merits, the symbol of the adult and independent man (nowadays woman, too).

To become a private investigator means the decision to make your money legally with your own talents instead of cheek kissing the system or simplified by always being the underling/employee, the wage slave. The Private Eye confronts the truth that many others do not want to or just cannot face. It means making a stand against criminals and the vice of a society which is tainted enough to not ever dare criticizing the sleuth themselves. A sleuth to quote a role-playing term is a mix-character class, not just another specialist.

The sleuth knows the basics of fighting, of socializing and definitely always has left some sense to enjoy life, even in the presence of evils lurking. Sex is a pleasure, not a compulsion to him or her. The sleuth becomes a hero by not being heroic, for s/he is what any citizen could become, not gifted with loads of money, backup armies or special talents. S/he has some education and training and grows through experience.

Mistakenly fools reduce this to the job called private investigator but is the rich lady who discovers the plots of her "loving husband" and confronts it any less investigative, skilled or suiting the role?

The poor man finding out that a company is nothing but facade to the local gangsters and starts a crusade, knowing that it will not make him rich and that a painful death finds its way to him probably, does he lack any skills which make the Private Investigator what readers like about it? The hermetic mage who got toasted by evil magic and begins to sell his or her skills in the same manner as the classic sleuth gives a different flavor to the story, yet the core remains. The core is about confidence and independence. Standing alone against great numbers of criminals, cults or monsters yet giving it a try instead of just surrendering. For generations many males found it an acceptable life when all expenses are covered and some joy is paid, the classic symbols were cigars and whiskey.

That even in the modern times many adults appreciate one reliable mate more than a bunch of degenerate bed slaves speaks, to me, that some emotional and sexual integrity is still part of this attitude. Personally I would think even a 1922 myth investigator would be fine with a cellular phone, like the Motorola V600. The classic cars were not that powerful, but had a degree of dignity instead of lots of colors. Some words on pseudo-lore:

- Cthulhu was a unique role-playing experience and no work of H.P. Lovecraft which wasn't refined within those game evenings. If you haven't played it, you lack one key to my files or my attitude.
- KULT much darker than Cthulhu and for me redemption of the 80's dream, when stuff like risk of aids, the first violence and an overdose of normalcy made it become an nightmare turned real. The path of no return.
- Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay, for it had a degree of quality and could easily be used to play Cthulhu style, too. The character classes were less superhero and more mortal.
- 1. Growing adult. It's not a matter of confidence, not learning to say no to mom and dad. It means living your life instead of mutating back to child-mode when you run out of money. It helps clearing the mind. Understanding that changing your life means living differently every day and night, not just some big words. That's where many fail.
  2. University, checking medical files on toxicology about all those harmless drugs and what they make you become. Same on psychology and disorders.
  3. Pain, for reminding me that we are just an animated piece of flesh, not immortal creatures with eternal souls.
  4. Martial Arts, armed and unarmed. They made me realize that violence is not good for humans and that weapons are tools of destruction, not replacement for ego or dick.
  5. Making money fails with the dark files, too. Guess I might focus on the joyful moments of real life instead of wasting my ideas to "ungrateful web-whores".
- *"After my death I might be less amused to get called back from the stars when some unholy wacko collected the salts." ;-)*

**Auto correction has created some variety between the German and English version, I finally took those enforced proposals. My mentioning of people, companies and institutions as their works is no challenge to their trademark or copyright. My text deals with a long established, fictional myth for entertainment, legal money making and contemplation purposes only. Included pictures are and were never declared my property, because most, sure as hell was invented, they are not. When I do not mention who did the pictures or other included files, then I either forgot or simply don't know who created it and that there are rights reserved.**

A common exception is my retaliation against people who tried to threaten, sabotage or harm me or my works in ways which are illegal, disgusting or clearly against all facts.

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The vote I offer in “My cult of Thoolhoo” was once for real. Punished by Laughcraft may mean this little story written from the perspectives of cultists (as I define them in „My cult of Thoolhoo“) or, if it becomes possible, based on players world-wide offering their own approach. I am shaken and in truth sick of this.

### **Recommended Reading & movies:**

Checking with web-pages which mention original Lovecraft sources (i.e. The Lovecraft archive) as **Call of Cthulhu** rituals or reading the official books sure won't hurt too much. I don't delve deeply in it, for I am not certain if it would need licenses. Further the game guide who feels inspired to indulge in my cults of Thoolhoo will most probably include what he or she finds proper anyway. I would say reading “**The case Charles Dexter Ward**” with the perspective of a cultist in mind. “**WoD Antagonists**” has some interesting chapters (“The Thief” or occultists). Lovecraft's “**The horror at Red Rock**”, “**Nyarlathep**” and “**Dreams in the Witch-House (our own?)**”.

Movies: **Evil Dead, In the mouth of madness & Lord of Illusions**. Pirates of the Caribbean, parts 1 to 3 (humorous approaches), Sleepy Hollow (living with dread & guilt). The Ring 1&2 ??? **Double Vision – Five Hells** was a noteworthy Asian flavor style to me.

## My humble tradition – Fragface parade



Whoa! My first self-written story which was intended for Internet-Publication. So many years ago... Much like with my "Poison what you can't conquer.pdf" it has become difficult to instant-recognize the younger me now that I am so much older, and hopefully wiser.

I once stated that "Roleplay was the hobby of my life, and without downs & endings it wouldn't have been a complete experience.". Many years later I extended it with "The moment I attempt to use the other brain-half for role-playing, the moment I even just consider acting as the rulebook juggling pseudo-entertainer again IS the moment my burnout arises like a most-vengeful phoenix from the ashes of my wasted years..."



## **“In bed with Professor Hammersmith”**

### **FFnet Version**

Re-edited text with story-integrated inspiration facets for easier use with White Wolf's Adventure RPG.

Based on my 'Banish with Laughcraft, Version 2007'

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**At first, some hints to readers who never read H.P. Lovecrafts „Shadows over Innsmouth“, August Derleths „The Star Gate“ and are unaware of Cthulhu style Role-playing Games. Lovecraft "used" his sickness to inspire the myth of evil, chthonic deities, who interacted with planet earth since it came into existence. I wrote as Laughcraft to mock it, and to indulge my own folly. Small groups, or single individuals, stumbled across the myth, went insane, suffered a horrible death, or came to the shocking realization that they were part of the myth, and set apart from all humanity. Main idea is that the myth cannot be understood, nor countered, by neither science, religion, or occultism. A sucker-punch mostly works though. Every insight concerning the truth is another step into madness. White Wolf's "Adventure RPG" emphasizes that joy of life and courage prevail against all villains & evils though. This is FICTION.**

**“For those valiant fools who face such wicked curse,  
a handful of humans against the scum of planet earth.”**

### **The Arkham Instigator, short summary**

Today, 01.06.1925, the investigations of the police ended. The last months were filled with an nearly incomparable effort to illuminate the disappearance of the well known persons struggling versus preternatural incursions. The small town, by the name Dunstable, became the stage for an unsolved mystery-crime. The central persons: Adriano Hillenbrand, Sebastian Crowley, and J.T. Presque remain missing. Few hours after the local police was alarmed the government ordered that Dunstable was to be secured by forces of the US army. The scarce evidence comes down to a torn, bloodstained coat, blood, and two bullet holes of handgun calibre. Police declared that the assumption of a cult crime may be realistically. With the end of the investigations, the flags were lowered to half-mast. Arkhams greatest newspaper willingly covers all expenses of the investigation, and encourages further search for evidence.

For years, the occultist, and small time actor, Sebastian Crowley, the business lawyer J.T. Presque, as last-but-not-least the ex-monk, and pulp writer, Adriano Hillenbrand got drawn into situations, which would shatter the mind of the average citizen. The activities of obscured cults, and alien entities, left tracks to a horrifying truth which is confronted by inspired people. Sanity threatening discoveries of forbidden lore hint at the possibility that earth is suffering the dark plots of maniac, chthonic deities who undermined humanity for aeons. The myth was detected in multiple places, and again and again the survivors faced the problem of knowing the truth, while being surrounded by oblivious neighbours, telluric energy, insane entities, and their bloodthirsty minions.

Anxiety, and enervating pressure of ignoring the unacceptable facts, take their toll. Yet some myth-sleuths gained special insights which proved beneficial. One of those valiant groups operated in the light of publicity, and scored admirable successes in series. They became a symbol of inspiration and

hope for entire humanity. *Of course the tentacled conspirators flayed them alive before this story started.* Survivor of this bunch was Adriano Hillenbrand. After the death of his fiancé he was trying to compensate trauma by indulging masculine fallacies. The Old Ones had other plans in mind though. In 1918 he was dismissed from the Corpo di Armato, and realized new gain of initiative. Confronted by overwhelming forces he decided to deal crucial damage, as long, as he could. His journey on the fruitless road of retribution. He was seen gazing at a burning tarot card. The desperate assault of a single brave soldier. Illusions of heroism and glory were not for him any more. A long termed, and painful, struggle against forces one couldn't defeat was his more realistic answer. Yet he was aware how many times outgunned individuals stood forthright against cults, criminals, and crazed scientists. Where they succeeded they were called heroes, where they faltered they were labelled fools.

The necessity of introspection was not to be ignored. In battle with horrors from beyond there was no reason to grant them further advantages due ones own mental instability. Of course such insights came the hard way in a man's younger years. The three protagonists had their first meeting in 1922, Calcutta, India, as they were drawn into a revival of the thug activities, and the masterminding influence behind it. Through a lack of subterfuge in the thuggish actions, they found out about occult meaning of their vile crimes. Supposed accidents and sicknesses could be proven ritual murders of this heretic, abstract local cult of sycophants. Deluded that the goddess Chalice asked to re-establish the cosmic balance with Shiva, there was assassinated, whoever stood in the way of the vicious sycophants, or their deranged plans.

Crowley valiantly stepped up, to face the blood-magick, Hillenbrand welcomed the escape from boredom, and Presque wouldn't allow a bunch of crazy, knife-wielding blackouts to spoil his investments in this region. When they discovered first signs that a surprising outbreak of disease was the dirty work of these religious madmen, even the British advisers could no longer hesitate.

Need of circumstance, and Presque's political influence, allowed them to join forces with the responsible military of the Commonwealth. Weeks passed in the draining heat, and short of the breaking point they eavesdropped information about a ritual gathering, and even managed to identify some thuggees. They followed those cultists and discovered their hideout. Caverns in derelict parts of the country, and minor camps along the roads. Duty on side of the British soldiers, and grim resolve of the three, made them charge into the caverns. During the first phase of infiltration they managed to rescue Dr. Derek Nail from the fangs of a dark courtesan who had schemed to ritually feed upon him in service to Dhurga. Nails natural gift of seduction had blinded him, sexist-hubris' ignorant shadow-side, for the price of seeing women only as sex-toys. For the three myth-sniffers it didn't matter, the cult had to be stopped, and if syphilitic Nail was foolish enough, he would continue to reap forbidden fruits until the consequences tore him apart. Gentlemen treat consequence as a lady, not as a whore.

After their first case was solved they were honoured by the British embassy and the society of early human culture. They had, by chance, not only fought the cultists, but by their raw courage alone pasted a minor banishment versus the dreaded influence from beyond. Now such villains had to expect repercussions, if they dared to stomp on law and humanity. Dr. Nail was brought forth to the best asylum of the western world, to purify his shredded self from the torment of his recent experiences. While the media entitled them heroes it was Colonel Fleming who earned this.

It was his tenacity, and disciplined leadership, which made them prevail, even when body and soul were at stake. The memories were clear enough to still shake all of them. In those dark and dreaded caverns they suffered the sight of a lower servitor, which's stench and insane chanting, full of soulpain and sorrow, haunted their minds for a long, long time. In midst of those stone carved cavern walls full of ceremonial symbols a strangling feeling hit their guts. They would never know if some incense or the alien atmosphere shocked them more. As they entered they had still believed to fight down some thugs, arrest the cults guru, and go home.

A notch away from the truth of battle they were. As they charged on they encountered the abomination which the cult worshipped. *For an instance insanity seemingly kicked God himself from the throne, and seemed all-consuming.* A second later they had to fight for their very souls. The handful of soldiers prepared for battle while Crowley studied the painted walls. Hillenbrand, who was pretty shaken by this intense situation, realized this was no problem solved by simple fire-power. Presque, influenced by this thing, was drowning in a wave of horrid self-pity and soul-sucking-trash. Unable to fire his reliable handgun again, he stared like a drunken peasant who realized he had just kissed his cow. Crowley focused on countering the strange rituals formula, and achieved some form of banishing power. The German-Sicilian bastardo guarded the occupied occultist, but couldn't shake completely free from the grasp of shock. As the magical effort overstretched Crowleys mental balance, and the first soldiers got seriously wounded, Hillenbrand finally focused his self.

Mistaken to be the effect of Crowleys ritual incantation, the banishment of the horrid creature came completely surprising to all of the shocked eyes. The creature faded from flesh to ethereal, much like an overcome nightmare. In this moment of triumph it was Adriano's realism which shocked his companions. He explained that the creature was neither destroyed, nor arrested, capable of returning after a short phase of recovery. While their psyches were marked by this night, they nonetheless fell into a cheerful victory mood, everyone busy to rationalize these haunting moments. The look in the eyes of Colonel Fleming was all which spoke of this chapter ever after. After they had withdrawn from the caves, short after the first full night of sleep, the next setback awaited. Embittered they had to swallow that further investigation was impossible, cause the British army decided to detonate caves in this area to secure the local villages, and avoid further spread of this wicked disease. They had saved hundreds of people ,and did give their very best, yet they felt like beaten dogs, when they left India.

Presque rapidly ventured back to the United States. An old acquaintance, by then a high ranking diplomat, had asked him to interfere with a heavyweight political crisis. Gunter von Gotha had manipulated the economy, to revive his dream of the German Kaiser Reich. Presque coordinated, and led, several executives to deal with this mundane danger. This time there were no signs of mysterious influence to be found. Aiding the USA shortly after the great war proved valuable nonetheless. The public was pleased, and the media celebrated Presque as a defender of western culture. The Arkham Instigator entitled Presque „a Star shining brightest“. Crowley compared this with his astrological data, and made some divination concerning the destiny of Joshua. Hillenbrand was less euphoric, and remained silent.

After they had left India some month of recovery, and calmer bachelor life, took place. In February 1923 the three met again, as they dared to intercept some uncommon occurrences in Japan. Work on a planned road brought forth a discovery of some strange relic, which had seemingly summoned a group of spooky, pale cultists out of proverbial nowhere.

The chanting, and dancing, of these people irritated the workers, and when the heart of a work group leader was found on some savage altar, it was no longer prejudice that spoiled the climate here.

The real horror started, when a small mountainside monastery was discovered to be the headquarter of some weird Asian sect. Far from the shores there was just one village close by, and so the monastery was still filed as deserted in the official Japanese reports. An illusion, which was falling apart, as Sgt. Koromiko arrived with a squad of soldiers. Patient information gathering, and his personal cunning, made Koromiko realize a sense of weirdness about this mission. Maybe support from Iteki was seen as more appropriate than risking more Japanese soldiers. Officially the honour, that Iteki like Presque were allowed to join up on this investigation at all, is nearly inexpressible to western barbarians. Adriano was somewhat uncertain about the usefulness of Japanese infantry equipment for in-house-fighting.

This insight should prove real. Koromikos decision made them clash with the lunacy of a culture, which was nearly as strange to them, as the vile web of the Old Ones. While the first monk cells still somehow resembled something human, every step towards the centre made the foreboding sense of danger more intense. Dirty, degenerate, and hideously desecrated was this scene. The acumen of Crowley would be the only chance of escape for the trio, yet this was totally unknown to them at this point.

Anyway, without the glorious sacrifice of the Japanese soldiers, they would have been condemned to a painful, slow death. Confronted with an abomination of myth horror, and battle ready thugs of this entity, it should come to a tunnel-fight which equalled the German-French trenches from 1914-1916 in all bitter aspects which fighting wreaks upon human existence. The scene turned into utmost torment for flesh, Ki, and Do which was hardly to top. A gory skirmish through the narrow corridors of the monastery was about to begin. As the first wave ended in those tunnels, the adventurers split to support some soldiers. Sebastian concentrated, forming an astral blade, resembling the dagger he wielded. Thereby he gained the chance to hurt the essence of ethereal beings as well. Joined by two soldiers he entered a corridor, advancing in flickering light, and surrounded by nerve ripping sounds. Close to the end of the passage he recognized an arcane symbol, and while the soldiers thought of an dead end, Sebastian chanted versus the walls.

Due his talent with magick he was able to energize the symbol, and opened a secret door. The soldiers were struck by surprise due to his innate abilities. Crowley expected the natural, an attack of a dark adept. The bloody dance of blades would demand toll from them. Toll which Crowley was more than willing to pay. The soldiers could fire once before it became close quarters. Meanwhile Presque led another two soldiers and marched on. The dirty gibberish at the walls left him totally unimpressed. Instinct was, what made him survive such situations. The slot eyed cultists felt so superior in their ambush, that the massive counterstrike of Joshua caught them unprepared. As he had expected those degenerates never before encountered resistance. His ACP brought death to some of them, and another one was smashed down by a powerful punch, even before the soldiers could fully react. Boxing, bleeding, shivering, and blocking they survived this altercation.

For a while the illusion of a glorious victory would offer itself. Hillenbrand stood close to Koromiko, watching. Giri and Courage couldn't make the confusion go away. This was no typical mission for soldiers. The men sensed that they wouldn't survive such a place much longer. Adriano sneaked into a corridor. Fear tried to strangle his confidence, and it demanded an act of willpower. Two times his intuition made him throw grenades into sections he felt to be dreadful. The following death cries made his doubts vanish. In his guts cramps started, this was not only fear.

This place was not part of their *via fatum*, whatever lurked here, his awareness failed to reveal anything about the deeper levels. Surprised by his own skill he perceived himself blocking the knife of a cultist, and countering by a move he adapted from the few month of Weng Chen Kung Fu he once decided to practice. Calm, but dedicated, did he cut his gratitude into the flesh of this cultist. While Hillenbrand expressed his allergy to vice, the tables began to turn. The minions launched an organized assault, and the pure strength of numbers drove the soldiers backwards. When defeat became obvious the remaining soldiers grouped, giving evidence that mere mortals are no less heroic, to allow Crowley the chance to grasp through a breach of reality, and save his companions. Weeks later Crowley honoured the sacrifice of the Japanese squad by a play in the Noh theatre.

Adriano chose silence as a suiting honour, and never mentioned anything about this, except that Wakino, who translated for them in the village, escaped her shame via traditional suicide.

The survivors took care that the few captured scripts, and warding symbols, were handed to proper instances. When the evacuation of the village was coordinated they found some weeks of time to flow with their *mushien*. They met a Miko, and even found an ancient Kitsune scroll, which they copied

and handed to a museum. While Adriano had nothing more to offer he found some emotional link to the female side of Japan. Here he learned that not all women taste like rotting fish. Crowley studied the scripts, and practised some Tantojutsu. Again their interference had cost them much, and they did spend months for recovery. Adriano chose to visit his place of birth, Giardini-Naxos, and enjoyed the Italian monastery close to Monte Casino.

Time went by, and the memories were no longer so harrowing to them. When Hillenbrand met tourists he couldn't ignore the self-righteous ignorance which transformed so many humans into a twisted bunch of swine. Crowley told them at the departure he would visit Egypt, and indeed, Adriano received two letters. The first covered Crowley's first week in Memphis, and described his attempts to teach basics of the real myth to his adepts. Unknown to Hillenbrand his brother-in-arms Crowley was busy countering the spreading of a cult of Apophis. From the moment that he stepped out of the plane Sebastian was sure that something was lurking for him here. The atmosphere, and bustling streets, could no longer delude a skilled occultist from sensing the tell-tale signs. Sebastian asked subtle questions, observed, and bribed his way to get more detailed information right away. When he finally investigated in the poorer districts, he learned to translate the lore.

It was Anuth'otep who had decrypted the necromantic Lore from the books of the dead into a distorted way. Unsurprisingly, even in Egypt people got angry, when some deranged fanatics dug out their ancestors, had sexual intercourse with them, and finally swallowed the remnants of their brains.

By the sheer stupidity of the brain eaters, one could discard the idea of gaining the wisdom of the dead through such depravity. Fallacy which became dangerous by the latent criminal potential of this psychopathic brotherhood. Being on his home turf Crowley made the police do their job, and launched guerilla war on the Apophis cult. Falcon and Sphinx would become fundamentals of his later works.

To Hillenbrand's astonishment the second letter arrived from the Hürtgenwald, France bordering Germany. Crowley sent some greetings, and wrote he played sheep dumb tourist. Mentioning his plans to visit the US of A by the way. Sebastian's physical vessel, tool of the higher self he constantly dabbled about, needed further recovery. At that moment Adriano sensed a vague menace between those lines.

Rovinato C. needed his aid, although he seemed to be yet unaware of this himself. Adriano busted his low finances to dash towards the border of Austria, and purchased a train passage to Germany. Stress, and forbidden knowledge, could even hamstring Sebastian. Part of the existential limits of a human being. The natural area of the Hürtgenwald was turning into a place of dread, for in the last month several wanderers, and younger women, have been victims of a psychopathic murderer.

Police was working over shift, yet an area of this size was near impossible to cover by the dutiful cops. Hillenbrand cursed himself that they ventured so ignorant concerning retaliation from the minions, or even set-ups from petty criminals. Carlisle D. Wardstone, an anthropologist, had released the madness, as he stumbled upon scripts of the forbidden cults. Fascinated by old tales, which France & Germany had plenty to offer, he couldn't resist. Encouraged by his academical backers he was too stubborn to notice how much their urge to harm him was source of their advice. Even the major warning didn't even make him think: Do never conjure such, which you cannot banish, nor destroy, nor summon ever, what can conjure such forces, which you cannot ward yourself against. As a man of scientific education Dr. Wardstone didn't want to admit, how much his darker impulses had clouded his brain. His triumph of academical superiority came in form of a ghoulish nightmare, which fed on the hapless academics.

The moment the last notch of common sense reached Wardstone's jelly brain he started fleeing for his life, leaving his fellows, and all ritual trappings behind. The murders, and Wardstone's following suicide, left the police more than a bit puzzled. The doctor had pushed his head into a coal oven after

slitting his wrists. Newspaper conjured a demonic meaning into all of this, and the sect of psychoanalysts wanted to establish themselves by offering their questionable help. This time, Crowley, and the cultists of the Old Ones arrived, both eager to get close to Wardstones daughter, and capture the remaining notes of the deceased. This was even subtle from both parties, because no one would benefit from the police finding a certain pattern in this. What he lacked in subterfuge and stealth Crowley made up with divination. Gaining the information, yet caught in a cauldron of hostile adversaries all on his own.

Both Sebastian and Hillenbrand came to the conclusion that the summoning will manifest most damaging here through a human with repressed violent temper. Adriano did a desperate search for Sebastian, hoping to find him in time. Looking back, he was exhausted by the intensity of memories. He visualized the final flashbacks. The Hürtgenwald after sunset, Hillenbrand marched along the ways, sneaked through the vegetation, and stumbled under the light of the crescent moon.

Fresh forest air, atmosphere, fatigue, and even doubts faded into oblivion the moment he heard a cry of agony from Crowley. The visualization became most lucid the moment Hillenbrand swung the axe to end the unwanted duel between Crowley and the psychotic criminal. Weeks of hide and seek only to compensate Crowleys weakness in self preservation. Again Adriano's life didn't benefit from any of his efforts. A shine of hope struck the frowning bastard. Perhaps he would never again have to bury body parts at least. The departure was of a blasphemous mundaneness this time.

They send some letters to Presque, and went their own ways again. In November 1924, Joshua had withdrawn to his Landhaus for recovery from business, news of two well known people asking for him reached his ears. This time the newlines of the Arkham Instigator clashed brutally with those of the Miskatonic Mirror. The attention of mankind was turning towards Dunstable. The third major joint venture of the three myth sniffers was about to begin. They prepared again to resist the greedy talons of telluric horrors. Hillenbrand perceived bad rumours from a coastal cluster named Dunstable. Proclaiming to work on a new novel he ventured to Washington. Adriano was busy gathering information, comparing notes, and checking archives for weeks. His natural gentleness made him get access in a smooth way, although his shock to realize that he still was able to socialize with normal people shook his emotions. The librarians whispered about his dedication while studying the dusty tomes in the stuffy atmosphere of the old buildings. Comparison of the notes made him admit that again forces from beyond were fiendish-puppeteers storming into human society.

In the end, his introspection would make the situation clearer to him. As he lay on the bed of his cheap hotel room, he perceived mental images, and began to understand some of their meaning. *The haunted spot Dunstable nearly cried out the challenge to those willing to dare.*

Hillenbrand would conclude that an old signal tower, once build upon the place of atavistic pagan hermits, was the source of the strange coincidences. Adriano expected another set of cavern tunnels. Emotionally shaken by his mindwork, he took a night walk through the foggy streets, delving into dreams while sniffing the autumn wind. He admired the architectural wonders for several hours, praising the skill of craftsmen and visionaries. The architectural, at least plenty of them, wonders were clad in the typical dresses of females, not build concrete. Hit by surprise he was later informed that Sebastian Crowley was in town. Escaping the embrace of his favourite dance girl, he started his way to the Miskatonic Residence motel.

As many times before they sat in a darkened room, exchanging news, and contemplating the dangerous, alienating myth. Hillenbrand watched the smoke rise from his Gimel cigarette, and playfully flattened his softpack. Overwhelmed by memories and melancholia. Crowley remained silent in such moments, and this was one reason for Adriano's respect. Hillenbrand was busy wondering, if his feelings were an obstacle, or the longing for things he failed to establish. Crowley

studied his notes and charts, muttering arcane syllables. Adriano recovered his mental clarity, when Crowley became agitated. Sebastian suspected that it wouldn't be a tunnel, but rather some alien kind of portal which they sensed. Freudian assumptions mentioned the symbol of portal as linked to the female abdomen, relating to some childhood traumatic experience of Crowley being unable to attain sex with his mother. The myth just meant a gate to another realm of existence though. Adriano worried why he could sense resonance of truth in statements, while most others were seemingly oblivious to such insight. Anyway, to him the myth was a replacement of his average life. Unlike Thurston and Crowley he was not drawn, but born into this myth. His lifestyle was similarly nemesis and sanctum to him. Without his few talents he would be just another cocaine crazed puritan, or a petty criminal.

Such realizations sucked him into an emotional abyss, but today Crowley would prevent him from drowning there. A litany of encrypted chanting was intoned by Crowley, and Hillenbrand was again amused how easily he could suffer this, to him totally meaningless, gibberish. While the occultist checked his equipment Adriano planned to ask for support from Presque. Ambient atmosphere of the nightly drive towards the corporate building set a new expression (to the mind of the reader and the graphic I want created for my PC game). The choice of employees was one sign that Presque's clear, sharp cutting mind was needed for this venture. Although Adriano couldn't deny that money, and a comfortable limousine, would perhaps be among his considerations, too. The clean rooms granted a relaxing mood, and while Crowley foretold the constellation of stars wouldn't hint at Adriano getting laid with the voluptuous secretary, the double-blood was in deep, passionate trance, his gaze transfixed unto her... aura.

Back in his mind he remembered Crowleys symbolism. The sword of determination, the staff of desire, the coin of valour, and a cup full of insight. Hillenbrand wouldn't like to miss his Gimmel cigarettes in all of this. Metaphorick. Nearly like stars, which were synonymous to humans in this occult dabbling. Entire libraries full of such crap should ensure that adepts were kept from the few useful insights of these studies for eternity.

On the other hand was the idiocy to paint pentagrams, and chant evocations in ancient languages, at secret spots of ritual meaning, a misinterpretation which begged to be punished. For some short moments the serious threat of the surreal situation could be ignored, and resembled a vacation. Even, when they had any prove at all, they were forced to choose wisely whom to trust with this forbidden lore.

Crowley recruited from his adepts, Joshua and Adriano had seen them fail, fall into despair, and suffer before, though. Adriano acted on intuition, yet solitude was the better choice manifold. Hillenbrand had seen remnants of the women he loved locked away in the Arkham Asylum, or admirable female warriors buried in another dusty grave. Presque never mentioned anything since his wife was killed. Contemplation was smoothly wiped away by the entry of Jeffrey Ronald, personal assistant of Joshua. The scarce evidences were discussed in absence of Ronald due to precautions taken before. Joshua radiated coolness, but couldn't hide his enthusiasm for long. A death-wish, or the political less correct realization that the own survival instincts were no longer valid. Preparations were made, and two days later the impressive limousine was driven gallantly by Presque.

Dunstable, where Gods light denies to shine, the place where unspeakable abominations crawl through shadows pursuing incomprehensible goals. The arrival at the outskirts of Dunstable was done. In light of street lanterns they walked towards the meeting point that they had arranged per messenger. Police later found the messengers half-eaten corpse a bit too late for our protagonists story. Dunstable was a run down, nearly rotten village. The air smelled of salt, sea-weed, smoke, and fish. When they perceived the first dwellers their mood turned to vigilant. The inhabitants displayed certain stigmata of the insane myth, and it's toll upon the human body and soul. Fat, anxious, and

nervous with a dumb, or piercing, gaze in their eyes they weren't people one wanted to meet at all. Crowley noticed that the erratic thoughts were not concealed by their facial masque. Even the professional welcome by the villages leader couldn't banish the foreboding sense of dread from their minds. The only tavern was used as the meeting hall and Presque started the negotiation. In this small, atmospheric setting the three stood surrounded by villagers, like heroes of old folk tales. Years later these moments were still held in memory by the believers among people.

While Adriano played Presque's advisor, Joshua had noticed years ago that Hillenbrand's insights were not based on pure acumen, nor psychoanalysis, but strange insights into the application of the myth. His essays, and quotes, were crudely prosaic, sometimes even shockingly strange, yet he could score successes, which none whom Presque had ever met, or read about, could hope to outmatch. Joshua learned over the years to sense which of these ramblings were to be taken serious, and which delved into metaphorical blasphemies. Seemingly, Adriano strived to a path which would banish the Old Ones, and supply compensation for the bitter years they had to survive. Sebastian was prone to fall into a nervous glossolalia from time to time, and Joshua would bet that Hillenbrand kept a low profile concerning occult studies in respect to Crowley. The last years repeatedly evidenced what power the ethereal beings wielded against humanity, and thereby versus Presque's investments, so that their skills were useful exotic addition to the repertoire. His employees never grasped, why Joshua invested in a pulp writer like Adriano.

Even the best among his workers couldn't deal with the smallest insights he handed to them. If Joshua needed a competitor crushed, he made sure that he received Adriano's less fictional writings. Presque's attention circled back to the villagers' dabbling. He enjoyed the taste of his coffee, and analysed their smarter ideas with an honest smile upon his lips. When the discussion transformed into articulation of paranoid superstition Joshua brushed it off, and arranged last minute preparations. Meanwhile Hillenbrand managed to get Crowley out of the waitresses' bed. They made their way across the only worn off road towards the goal of this investigation. The place itself was as mundane, as it could be. Nothing mystical, no bad vibrations. Short of the door to the signal tower Crowley drew out a blade with carved symbols, which remained enigmatic to Joshua and Hillenbrand, even after their initiation. Joshua took his Automatic Clip Pistol out of it's luxurious package, and Adriano made himself look foolish, as he clumsily tried to handle his brass knuckle, flashlight, and revolver while opening the door. The door opened, and in the pale, yellow light of their flashlights they entered the conic formed room.

While stairs led upwards, their senses foretold it would be here to search for another way. They started checking some chests, and looking around carefully. Thurston found a crowbar among some chests and caught a medic kit a while later. Crowley borrowed the crowbar, and Adriano found a trapdoor in the floor. They took their positions and opened the door, prepared for whatever they could prepare for. The intense smell of fresh wood hit their noses. This was not what they had expected, no sense of dread, no rotten smells. Giving hand signs they coordinated their moves, and Adriano sneaked downwards. He was aware that pleasant sensations could cloud ones perception, too. He entered a room of surprising width and looked around. Short before he perceived the first creature his senses warned him of danger. It would be a fight, soon. In the light of his Taschenlampe stood a creature which he perceived like a ghoulish nightmare turned real. The pale, grey skin looked unfamiliar, and metallic teeth reminded him of sharks he'd seen in Japan. The creature moved gently, exuding a sense of menace. Adriano's body felt numb, and he was aware that martial arts would be no good to him here. With a clumsy punch he launched the brass knuckle on his left towards the head of this creature.

He had needed the few seconds to deal with adrenalin, and fear, and therefore couldn't yell any warning to his companions. He felt Crowley arriving, and thought him outflanked by another of these ghoulish freaks. Crowley reacted like a samurai of legend, cutting a chunk out of the flesh of his aggressor before he was pushed into defence. The magus spend daily hours in physical training, and



contemplation, here it had just saved his life. Joshua was on the stairs, alerted by the sounds. He suppressed a scream of pain, as a third ghoul bit his back bumpers (yes, his ass). Before pain made him stumble he shot. Two bullets precisely through the sneaky ghouls eyes. Hillenbrand was pushed into infighting, and dealt blows, just as he took them.

For an instance he thought time stands still, so he could hear the sound of his blood splashing against the walls. The unreal moment should fade back into a painful reality. Adriano launched a brutal combination of punches until he fainted in a fog of exhaustion, and pain. Crowley and Joshua covered their backs, and made the creatures pay blood. Hillenbrand awoke the moment the metallic drums could be identified as gun shots again. He felt the shakes, pain, and fear in a weird mix of perceptions. A look at the source of an unknown smell made him realize that his pocket watch, and parts of his belly, were bitten away. Bandaging himself while watching the bruised Sebastian shove his blade through the brain of the last ghoul, and the grim Presque busy tending his wounds.

A moment of silence made Crowley bark out his theory that these creatures were manifestations of their darker aspects. Facing the threat of hearing further dabbling about magick, Joshua enjoyed his cigar, and Hillenbrand braced himself, faking unconsciousness. The morbid humour of perceiving the melodramatic occultist in this bloodstained room shook their egos. When pain became tolerable they stood up, used what the medical kit had to offer, and thought about this situation. Mental images of unspeakable horrors, eternal torment, and torture of the flesh began haunting them. Of course no angel came to save their souls. A desperation of incomparable quality invaded their minds, and the onslaught of mind flaying impressions was as greedy, as Ute and Carroll, the village whores.

The atmosphere began humming with unknown energies, and a shift of energy shook their bodies. While a simple flashlight was high tech in this time, the three were quite calm the moment that shock and despair made way to reveal a shining door.

Crowley proclaimed this to be a dimensional gate, and they stepped through. For an instance that seemed eternal, they struggled to gather their courage. Then advancing to the final challenge, which was now part of the heroic mood they used to subdue their common sense. For the last time their minds, like a nutshell on the stormy sea, attempted to cross the ocean of madness and nausea. Within moments the steps were done. A single house close to the edge of a European forest was Adriano's first mundane perception after his eyes got used to the moonlight. He couldn't tell any difference to his general condition, although he was quite focused and aware. The sound of Crowley drawing his blade and Presque checking his gun reassured him that silent supervision was not their intent concerning this building.

Adriano started a howl, a weird mockery of sound, somewhere between a human imitating a werewolf and a recently castrated poodle. He decided to charge through a window. Crowley approached the side door, while Presque dared to take the front. Moving with fluid motion, once more remembering what he practised for years, he crouched, and shielded his eyes while crashing through the glass. Landing on his feet and gaining a first glimpse of the room he found himself in for now. Trouble. The first robed figure charged him, and received a brutalizing thrust kick into his, or her, guts. Adriano's leg and hip coordination gave power to this kick, so the attacker plummeted backwards, gasping, or vomiting, he was not sure, already focusing upon the second possible threat. This cultist brought the large wooden table between himself and Hillenbrand, trying to reduce the risk of receiving such a gut kick. Many people intuitively sensed Adriano's flaws, high kicks were really not in his trickster box. Sadly overconfidence has nasty consequences.

Hillenbrand moved swiftly towards the table, laying his weight into the move, and imitating a sweep he saw from a Brazilian Capoeirista. The balls of his feet hit the table while his hands secured the balance, as best, as he could. The table hammered against the knees of the second cultist with a bone-cracking sound. Adriano tried to get up from his hurting back bumpers, and prepared to grab a bowl with fruits, which lay before him.

The first cultist still choked. Robe number two fell to the ground with a painful new experience gained. A second later the cultist was freed from all worries concerning his legs, as the bowel was slammed into his face. Stylish knock-out with only minor flaws. Hillenbrand bit into an apple, and gazed the choking cultist into the realization that unconsciousness can be a blessing in certain situations.

Presque reached the front door in time to avoid a lethal surprise. Shortly after Adriano stopped being noisy someone in there decided to check, if his, or her, shotgun is loaded. The click of a closing two barrel rifle is one of the sounds he could even identify while asleep. He stepped sideways an instant before the rounds, and shrapnel-splinters, brought death towards the spot he had stood at a split second ago. Wasting no time he returned this friendliness with a head shot. Picking up a newspaper from the entrance area he made sure that no blood, nor brain parts, would waste his expensive shoes.

Crowley opened the side door, only to glimpse at a scene he never expected. A robed male person sitting at a small table, eating bread and bacon. The two stared at each other, one of those moments. Crowley drew his dagger, while the robed stranger grabbed the kitchen knife, and pushed the chair backwards, standing up in the same moment that Crowley was in fighting stance. Small blades impacted with each other while both of them proved worthy knife-fighters. Sebastian knew that a quick end was the healthier way, and launched a double-slash then stab combination to breach the defence of his adversary with lethal efficiency. The first slash was blocked, the second brought him a wound at his forearm, and the stab spoiled his clothing, penetrating his foes defences, as blood splashed out of the opened throat of his opponent. That was no shame, few could react to a Japanese knife combination which they never perceived before. Enough of the mourning he thought.

Bandaging his arm, and staring greedily at the food, he felt his mortal self. Some bites of bread, bacon, and cheese were totally free from bloodstains, and tasty for sure. A warm brandy washed his throat clear, and made him grin while investigating further. Next to the kitchen was a small storage room for cleaning stuff, which Crowley scanned before following the corridor. Presque watched his steps, and reached the door leading down to the basement. Adriano had bound the robed opposition, and appeared from another door, nearly in time to watch Presque's amusing acrobatics on newspaper in the brain-splattered entrance. Presque felt sure that this time he should check out the cellar, while Adriano and Crowley would secure upstairs. He smoothly opened the door, sneaking down the stairs. A minute later, as he came around the corner, he saw two robed freaks beating a tied up stranger in their happily unmanly way of interrogation. The good news was they had no weapons. His instincts bypassed reason. The first received two shots through the knees, and further two shots through each of his shoulder joints.

This would make him a bit more cooperative in watching the boxing match, which Presque intended to fight out with robed goon number two.

The second cultist was a bit nervous, seemingly he was not as good in receiving the pain, which he so valiantly gave to defenceless strangers. Joshua's fists cracked multiple times, and his wrists did start to hurt seriously. Presque harshly regained his control, and started to cripple the beaten cultist with a series of aimed kicks, breaking bones and making the guts dance. *Vice zero, righteous fury one.* After the stranger was searched Presque freed him, still staring at the badge identifying him as Heinrich Krimmer, police detective. The cop was too fucked up to talk right now, but Joshua would carry him upwards, waking him with a tasty brandy, and a first aid kit. The gentleman's way, interpreted by Joshua Thurston. Meanwhile Adriano collected notes from a desk in the upper room. He knew that it could be gainful, yet thought it wiser to avoid being associated with the impulsive entry they had performed here. Crowley was shaking in ecstasy, he had uncovered what he was longing for. He

checked a small room, opening a concealed door, to find himself inside a ritual chamber. The occult touchdown!

He analysed the atmosphere, and studied the symbols for quite some time. This was the language he spoke best, arcane symbols, ritual devices, and secret ingredients. Gaining deep insights into the motivation and aims of whoever used this room he finally took the tome, most important artefact, going back to meet his companions. One could always find a place of sanctuary, but it is hard to replace copies of handmade forbidden tomes. He felt proud, the first suiting task for such a gifted occultist. Sebastian's second blast of glory came when he, and only he, could activate the powerful gate that could bring them back to Dunstable. Yes, he dares calling the pressing of a hidden button a major hermetic ritual. The cellar of the signal tower vibrated with strange energies. *It really worked, the one sentence which neither Presque, nor Hillenbrand, could ever believe themselves saying about Crowley.* Keeping to their agreement the heroes sneaked out of the tower, and abandoned Presque's car. A sour nut indeed, yet a petty price for a real vacation. The power of separation already surging through their self, they marched away.

Presque faking a generous smile, knowing that just one phone call away a number of women expected him to invite them into his sanctum. Crowley dabbling nearly endlessly, how subtly he could be inspired into making their recent experiences a theatre play, and Adriano on the edge, the pure thought of spending some undisturbed nights with Jasmine! Shattering his mind, and leaving him with nothing, but sweaty hands, a problem to speak clearly, and a pondering heart. Dear reader, this is the closing of my first chapter for now. The players scribble down their experience points, the computer game should fade in such a way with some relaxing background music.

The real villains were not all discovered, nor neutralized, henceforth spend their time studying the *inspiration for villains* handbook, for if I ever can bribe Hollywood you may have to suffer "Return of the myth sniffers", too.

**NOTE:** You may treat tentacled beings and the abomination of Azelthoth, as either pulp-readers-fantasy-come-true, induced hallucinations due drugs (kind of cavern-gas), symbols for a psychological struggle, perhaps caused by a wicked mesmerism. Or simplified: Z-wave mutants.

Anyway: Adventure is not Lovecraft, so enjoy to think for yourself.

"So many times it's hope that makes me sway,  
yet other times my hope just saves the day!"

### **The charade of occult aphasia found it's silent end**

The Miskatonic Mirror: 01.06.1925; H. Krimmer, official speaker of the police admits, that Dunstable was the place of the last chapter in a story of the by now notorious, exalted occultists. The questionable investigations of preternatural affairs, which started with wild accusations about the wife of the late Dr. Hammersmith, agitated by Sebastian Crowley, Adriano Hillenbrand, and J.T. Presque ended in a mystery, which is suspected a staged act of these publicity addicted neurotics. Vigilant readers will have already noticed what weird topics our journalists had to work through in the last months. We further advise all reasonable people to avoid, or use with utmost precaution, the writings of Adriano Hillenbrand. These novels have been declared upsetting, and mind threatening, by concerned experts of the Church, and well known Doctors of Psychoanalysis. The Mirror will collect all evidence to prove that the only cultists of alien chthonic deities were the three unstable persons, who are by now missing. Populace of Dunstable is unharmed, and police could not even find minor evidence of secret cults, or abominations from beyond.

## Out of the ruins... my idea of starter-stats for the protagonists, 1922

**Adriano Hillenbrand**, Virtue: Fanatic & Vice: Hedonist

is based on a modified Beat Cop Extra, which you find on page 245 of your Adventure RPG paperback. I modified this:

**Attributes:** Dex+1, Manip+2, Charisma+1 **Abilities:** replace Brawl by martial arts, Rapport+1, add Athletics 1, Awareness 3, Style 1, Medicine 1, Resistance 1, Endurance 1, Subterfuge 2, Etiquette 1 Legerdemain 2, Stealth 1, Linguistics 1 & Academics 1;

myth lore (to suit this story) 3; Willpower +1 **Backgrounds:** Sanctum (monastery) 1, Enigma (it's as if he just popped into existence in 1918), Backing 2 (cults with myth lore >1), Gadget (write pad & Brass Knuckles) 2, Resources 2; **Equipment:** Clothing, super-science write pad & pencil, snub nose revolver, lt.& 24 bullets, his brass knuckles, Gimel softpack & lighter, a watch

***Intuitive Facet O Reflective Facet OO Destructive Facet OO*** **Knacks for this story:** Brain Skimming, Superhuman Reflexes, Brainstorm & Threat Awareness

**Sebastian "Crowley" Antonyns**, Virtue: Paragon & Vice: Jester

Is based upon the Cultist Extra, page 246 modifications:

**Attributes:** Dex+1, Wits+1, Per+1 **Abilities:** add Quick Draw (short blade) 3, Melee 2, Occultism 3, Perform 2, Academics 2, Linguistics 1, Endurance 1, Command 1, Etiquette 1, Awareness 1

Willpower +1 **Backgrounds:** Gadget (ritual dagger) 1, Sanctum 1, Reputation 2 (the one dude who never even met Binah, cabbalists should be happy now), Resources 3, Contacts 2, Backing 2 (theatre & adepts), Followers 2 (his cult in Egypt already exists and has Cipher 2 from Hillenbrand), Nemesis 3 (Sigmund Freud), Nemesis 2 ("demons" or dark magicians manifested as theatre critics) **Equipment:** his gadget, clothing, actors tools of the trade, lots of occultist paraphernalia ***Intuitive Facet OO Reflective Facet O Destructive Facet OO***

**Knacks:** Magick-crap, but to my readers: Sex Symbol, Superhuman Reflexes, Touch of the Muses & Touch of Life (Jesus Crowley)

**Joshua Thurston Presque**, Virtue: Survivor & Vice: Skeptic

Is based upon the Detective Extra, page 245 modifications:

**Abilities:** Brawl+1, add Awareness 1, Etiquette 2, Might 1, Endurance 1, Resistance 1, Linguistics 2, Academics 2, Repair 1

**Backgrounds:** Gadget (ACP, Heavy) 1, Backing 5, Kingpin, Cipher 2 (+1 by Adriano), Resources 4, Reputation 3, Followers (employees) 3, Sanctum 2, Nemesis 3 (JT does not know yet) **Equipment:** gadget, suit, cigars & lighter, trenchcoat with an ounce of opium in pocket, fedora, expensive whiskey, car, liquor, keys, lots of money, handkerchief, expensive absinth, ounce of pure cocaine, camera and replacement suit in his car, checked spare wheel, first aid kit and mechanics toolkit, address book filled with names of women

***Facets: Instinctive OO Reflective O Destructive OO***

**Knacks:** Perfect Translation, Sex Symbol, Superhuman Reflexes, Piledriver & Threat Awareness

**Names in the German and English version vary due auto-correction!**

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