

# The Rocky Vale Horror

©2003 John R. Harford

“...Strange rivals seek items which weave black spells of ancient Egypt. Through an horrid Halloween murder and strange sightings at an University the investigators are lured into the conflict. In the ruins of a demon-haunted asylum the characters uncover the remnants of forgotten plots...”

## Introduction

This adventure was written for, and played during, Halloween weekend 2003. Having a largely virgin group of CoC players, I sought to enhance the sense of distorted reality that should accompany any CoC oriented game. Therefore the game was set in a familiar (modern) and chronologically synchronous timeframe and on the campus of Syracuse University (many of the players are students or Alumni of S.U.). This story could easily be tailored to any era by adjusting dates, locations and timeline details. The mortality rate and sanity loss is designed to be fairly moderate and largely contingent on player choice. The entire scenario should take between 6 and 10 hours to complete. I have intentionally left out NPC and monster statistics for now so Keepers may adjust adversaries to their own personal style and favorite system. Though I used the Chaosium rules, D20 or any other mechanics should suit this story well.

This scenario should work best with 3-6 player characters.

The mood and motifs in this tale are meant to cross a brooding X-Files atmosphere with the loved elements of traditional Call of Cthulhu: insane asylums, shadowy terrors, ancient religion and of course - forbidden knowledge.

## Keeper Information

The back plot deals with contemporary followers of ancient Egyptian gods. How these beings and their followers interact within a specific campaign setting is up to that Keeper. I mulled over several ways to interface the plot with the Mythos and have included all options here:

### 1) Full On Mythos Involvement:

Forever weaving his pattern of chaos, The Black Pharaoh appears in two separate guises to two different adepts. Both resemble ancient spirits: Anubis and Set respectively. His unfathomable machinations cause humans to dance like string puppets.

### 2) Semi-Mythos Option:

Anpu is an outer god separate from the mythos. He has his own agenda, having taken many related forms through out the ages to interact with humanity. His seeming opposition to Nyarlathotep (through his cultist, Cindy Matari) is incidental - and has nothing to do with a greater conflict against the Great Old Ones. Anpu's desire here is to enrich the personal power of a follower (and thus itself). This is the option I elected to allow the Mythos to blend with my own interest in “dead” religions.

### 3) Non Mythos Option:

Both ancient Egyptian gods are separate entities from the Mythos, and rival each other in this particular instance. The resemblance of the avatar of Set to a Hunting Horror is circumstantial. I don't favor this approach but it may work for some gamemasters.

### 4) Insanity Plea:

Cindy Matari is insane. She went insane investigating the Mythos and has never genuinely

encountered any form of Anubis. Her interest in the artifacts and knowledge of the “Dog Man” ritual is a side effect of her studies. She has learned of Kent and his plans through a remote viewing or dreaming experience, and has decided it is the will of Anubis that he must be stopped.

I was particularly surprised to see some parallels to the motifs used in Thoth’s Dagger - an early Chaosium adventure (see *Curse of the Cthonians*, Chaosium 1984). Not only do the obvious Egyptian elements echo this scenario but so does the appearance of “dog faced beasts”. I think that this adventure could be a reasonable predecessor to Thoth’s Dagger or Masks of Nyarlathotep.

## **The Opposing Forces**

### **The Cult of The Serpent**

Sam Kent - A manager of a telemarketing company (Bright Aids home medical and rehabilitation supplies) and current high priest of the Soot- Phty Society (a “gentleman’s cult” dedicated to Sutekh) is working feverishly towards a date of November 5 (estimated day, in the old Calendar in which Set slew Osiris). This day will be right for powerful spells associated with Set. Kent's determination will culminate in a ritual through which he has been promised “a great gift” by Set. Unfortunately for him and anyone else around him, success will give him the gift of relative immortality and supernatural power. Unbeknownst to Kent - he and all other participants of this ritual will be changed into “shadow stalkers”.

To achieve this ritual The Soot-Phty is attempting to track down several individuals who may have texts relating to Sutekh. Kent, through magical and mundane research has been informed that at least one copy of the text was owned by a bygone cult member. This person had ended up as an inmate in a sanitarium somewhere in upstate New York, and had been presumed missing after an inmate uprising. At the start of the adventure Kent is unsure exactly where this cult member, Lavu, had been imprisoned.

The cultists have also become vaguely aware of the Dog Headed men and the involvement of an enemy cult. They are now working furiously to cover their tracks and find the artifacts before the November 5 date.

### **The Shadow Stalker**

This being is a hulking semi-substantial humanoid Hunting Horror. Shadow Stalkers also possess the capability to move from one area of shadow to another as if stepping through a tiny wormhole. The creature is however helpless in the light and destroyed by sunlight. A slave to the will of the Black Pharaoh, they are possessed with malevolence and will pervert all good will and humanity into the desire to do harm. A person who has become a Shadow Stalker would retain enough faculties to be considered intelligent but filled with so much chaotic darkness, that they would become cruel, cunning, and predatory. Shadow Stalkers attack by draining heat and essence from living beings.

### **Soot- Phty (translates from “Strength of Set”)**

Secretive and elusive - the Soot- Phty is a cult of affluence. They meet twice a year at a location determined a couple of months before the meet. Dates are set years in advance. Until 1944 it was known as the Typhon Club - having been founded in the 1800’s by archeologist Brett McPhar and wife Betty after returning to England from Egypt. They had been inspired by one of their finds - a collection of papyrus reputed to contain “magic calligraphic hieroglyphs” that invoke the “Hunter of the Dark”. In fact these scrolls were hieroglyphic code detailing worship of Sutekh and

Hymns to Toth in ancient Egypt. Most academic investigation determined this claim and the texts to be gibberish. Fabrication and chicanery were assumed. A few - including the McPhairs - did realize that these glyphs were perversions of Arabic, Egyptian, Hebrew and languages far...more ancient. Very few complete copies of these scrolls still exist. Despite derision, Brett and Betty began their "social club" and soon it spread among the European and British Empire elite. A similar cult can be found among the Italian and Spanish upper class during the Renaissance: perhaps an earlier fragment of the text was brought there by Crusaders. Researching Betty and Brett McPhar will reveal their founding of the Typhon Club. Characters hearing about either the McPhars or the Typhon Club may make an occult knowledge check to see if they have heard any of the history pertaining to the cult.

Period copies of the founding texts are rare - with most being held by cult members. Even these copies don't contain all the rituals and footnotes of McPhair's originals (which have been lost). Most occult book collectors have not personally seen the scrolls or translated manuscript copies...but will likely have various references to the find and its contents. Information on the actual organization - particularly concrete data on current activities - remains elusive.

The vast numbers of the club's 300 worldwide members believe they are part of an elite clique that employs the trappings of ancient ritual. Only a handful of them realize that they are in fact in contact with supernatural powers.

Members of the club, who pay **heavily** for entry, find themselves gifted with uncanny business, financial, and sexual fortune. All of course in trade for debauchurous sacrifices, rituals to reaffirm "power", and bits of sanity.

A climactic cult meeting will occur on November 5, 2003 at Blackbury Estates - the cult's ancestral house west of London.

## The Cult of the Jackal

Cindy Matari is a fairly reclusive yet well-known scholar on man's canine companions. She has extensive academic background in dog evolution, history, and has written a text entitled "Prehistory of the Hound" - tracing the dog's biological origins and development alongside man. It also delves into the folklore aspects of dogs as guardians against evil. Cindy runs a famous kennel and Pharaoh hound rescue - Cindy's Canines. It has an amazing adoption rate and a spotless reputation. Background checks on Matari reveal her to be a fairly clean living and unobtrusive member of society. Matari, by her own estimation, is half Indonesian, and blooded with lineage from the now fairly scare race of Cynocephali. As a child these genes flared up periodically and she became "obsessed" by Anpu (Anubis) and has since been compelled to worship and assist the god. He began manifesting in her dreams around the age of 15 and has "guided" her ever since.

Anubis recently gifted her with a ritual that allows the construction of "dog headed men" from the remains of humans and dogs. It involves a lengthy magical process of chanting, sacrifice, and mummifying the two corpses together. Though far closer to the side of humanity than Kent and the Soot- Phty Society she - following a god of the underworld who has shown her how to magically cross dogs and people - has also gone completely insane.

She will only reveal this ritual or any of her other magic knowledge to a person who swears allegiance to Anubis, and undergoes a very dangerous astral "underworld journey" with her to meet the Jackal Headed god (The Keeper can fill in all the details here if they choose to allow players access at all. Sanity cost should be high for both the underworld journey and the knowledge of how to magically breed half-living dog people).

Though not looking to kill "innocent" people in her attempts to stop Kent (she doesn't know the

Soot-Phty by their proper name), she will gladly order her dog-men to do so if necessary. Her main estate and the accompanying kennel are in the upstate New York countryside outside of Glen Aubrey. It is protected by, of course, many guard dogs, top notch electronic security, and a small private guard force.

### **Dog Headed Men**

They appear as just that: men with the head of a dog. They are not true racial Cynocephali as appear in mythology but instead modern supernatural constructs that resemble this species. They have all of the dog's senses, speed, and ferocity plus if the ritual is performed properly (and the human's sanity remains intact) the human consciousness and intellect is retained through out and after the ritual. There is sometimes a conflict between human logic and feral instinct. If appropriate this may be simulated through some sort of test of personal will. The creator of a Dog Headed Man (men are traditionally used in this ritual - dog headed women are not usually reported) can understand the vocalizations of the beasts they create. Dog Headed Men can understand humans and communicate with each other and regular canines (regular dogs shun Dog Headed Men).

Even though technically undead, the Dog Headed Men appear very animate, move very quickly, are very strong, and are quite capable in combat. They rely mainly on speed and ferocity with stamina varying from individual to individual. Folklore also assumes that they are not fully corporeal and may have powers or know spells that simulate this effect. The semblance to werewolves may be played up to further confuse/muddle player conceptions. They are not however lycanthropes.

### **Terror in the Hallowed Halls**

The first signs of something amiss occurs on an University Campus, Thursday the 29th, 2003 - and is followed up over 2 or 3 days by anomalous sightings of the dog headed men and a mysterious murder.

In the playing of this scenario, I had all characters in some way affiliated with Syracuse University. This allowed them to become roped into the scenario through intrusions into "their" areas of interest by the supernatural happenings. Character involvement should begin with the sighting of a Dog Headed Man by a player character. The first such appearance should happen on 10/28. The other events will occur on the subsequent nights, culminating with the attack on Dr. Goldstein on Halloween night.

A rough timeline of suggested events follows:

- 1) One of the PC's spots a dog headed man is seen slinking across a parking lot late at night - towards a building that houses something of linguistic/archeological significance. Something is found to be disturbed or violated in the morning.
- 2) A corpse is found with the telltale marks of an animal bite wound to the neck. The positioning of the corpse, the angle of the bite marks, and other evidence may indicate that the creature would have to be at least as tall as the victim and attack from an angle atypical of a quadruped. This corpse may be of a security guard, a cultist of Set who also had been searching for important documents, etc...
- 3) Ancient tablets or scrolls which detail Egyptian mummification practices are stolen. That same night there is a sighting of a dog headed man on the roof/fire-escape of the hall that houses the Archeology department.

All sightings of the dog-headed men should resound with unreality. The locations should be otherwise quiet, empty and full of shadows. Though having the potential to seem goofy, the

events should be very apparition-like: the impression should be that these creatures are not fully part of our physical reality (which indeed they are not) and seem to slip in and out. The dog headed men will generally try to move about undetected and avoid direct brawls if at all possible. If pursued they stick to shadows and duck into doorways and alleys - vanishing. The players and their characters should be unsure of exactly what it is they have seen. Light may be playing tricks on investigator's eyes. If the scenario takes place close to Halloween, characters may convince themselves that they are involved in some elaborate Halloween prank. An unerring look at a dog headed man should cause sanity loss appropriate to the circumstances.

Part of the first three days of the scenario should involve trying to locate motive for and evidence of the strange sightings. If careful investigation is undertaken near sighting points appropriate die rolls around could yield a strange dog hair, oddly human yet not quite right finger prints, a musty animal like odor, etc.

If blasé about their encounters the investigators should be asked to help look into this odd mystery (such as by a department supervisor or a friend on campus). They may look for other sightings and histories of the Dog Headed Men: finding the historical references to Cynocephali, werewolves, Anubis, the dog men of English folklore, etc... They may be parceled out the information in the appropriate player hand-outs (internet articles, postings, and a library book entry) as the Keeper sees fit.

Any investigation into Pharaoh hounds, modern dog folklorists, or modernization of the Anubis myth may yield Matari's name and contact info (at least an email) if the players show a stunning success. But the investigators should not be allowed to meet with Matari until after Halloween night (she will be out of town). If several investigators are working on the task, each should get bits of info so that they can all pull together. The campus and local community will be abuzz with rumors of werewolves, Halloween pranks, and sightings of "chupacabra", "Sasquatch", "Ghosts" and other mass hysterical reactions to odd events around Halloween time.

Halloween night however, appropriately, is when the true Horror will reveal itself.

## **All Hallow's Horror**

### **Victim Number One: Robert Goldstein**

Hapless Robert Goldstein is a senior psychology professor at Syracuse University. In addition to having once been a practicing psychiatrist, he is a known expert on the history of mental medicine. Of particular interest to him are the quickly diminishing antique sanitariums both in vogue and forlorn that dotted the American countryside from the turn of the century through the 1940's. He has recently been researching and investigating Rocky Vale Sanitarium in upstate New York. Having been approached by Cindy Matari through the internet, he has been corresponding with her about his research. She is claiming to be an author working on "new age" occultism and classic spiritualism, and how these things are tied into notions of insanity. He has agreed to let her peruse the case study files and photographs once he has completed an upcoming investigation of the ruins of Rocky Vale. It so happens, this was the sanitarium at which the Soot-Phty cultist was formerly housed. And The Society has just discovered that Dr. Goldstein could have knowledge that is either helpful or harmful to the cult. For dramatic effect one or more of the characters could have interacted with Robert Goldstein - a polite and gentlemanly professional with a wry sense of humor - earlier in the scenario.

At some point on Halloween night the investigators should be together near the hall which houses Psychology (at Syracuse U, this is in the Maxwell complex of halls). By now the characters should have met and compared notes about the strange goings on. There should be some need for them to assemble near the Psychology department offices (a college faculty party at one of the annexes, staking out a clue left by a previous encounter, a guest lecturer, etc...). One or

more of the investigators should spot a dog headed man sneaking into the building, through a side or back entrance, window, etc... It is assumed they will follow him and find a stairwell door creaking shut just after the creature heads upstairs.

As the characters ascend the stair well all the lights in the place will go out with an unwholesome inky blackness. Radiance will seem to suck upward and away from the PCs as a strange, palpable, sulphurous breeze fills the halls. An Hunting Horror is gating into the upper floor corridors and expanding its dark girth into physical space.

It is headed towards the office of Robert Goldstein's office - a freight train of darkness filling the hallways; it is under the control of Sam Kent and been instructed to bring the doctor to the cult headquarters in England. Unfortunately for the cult, Hunting Horrors, while effective are not particularly subtle or crafty about searching rooms. It will kidnap the doctor (even if it has to kill several investigators to do so), but will fail to retrieve the few crucial documents that the doctor had collected and massed around his office.

The Horror will first encounter the Dog Headed Man intent on protecting Matari's contact. The Dog Headed Man will be easily dispatched. Dr. Goldstein will be grabbed in its inky mass before investigators barge into the room.

Anyone managing to rush to the office will see the doctor's feet being sucked through the window by a shifting, tenebrous mass of tentacles and tissue (1/d6 san). A great electrified windstorm will knock over bystanders, shatter glass, knock out street lights, and cause general confusion. From outside may be seen the body of Goldstein quickly speeding off into the night sky, seeming to fold in on itself within the strangely serpentine black cloud. All reports on subsequent days will report a freak tornadic and electrical event that coincides with the disappearance of one of the College's professors.

The characters will have about 10 minutes to search the office before campus security (and then state police, rescue and the fire department) arrive. Several important clues can be found in the doctor's office:

- 1) The body of one dog man: a weird, shimmering amalgamation of a hairless, strangely humanly fleshed pharaoh hound/rottweiler mix. Over the next hour it will become entirely dog corpse, emaciated nearly skeletal...mummified, and a few days beyond that it will become dust.
- 2) Pre-History of the Hound, signed copy by Cindy Matari plus notes in the column written by the doctor. Some notes indicate hallucinations of patients who spot "wolf men" and the correlation between these sightings and "dog men" of folklore.
- 3) On his computer a CD-RW that has been recently used as hard drive back up. Several case files appear to be about 50 years old from Rocky Vale Sanitarium - located near Christianfeld, NY - half hour northwest of Watertown. There is one foot-noted document regarding "field research" planned to be conducted there by the doctor and a team of graduate students.

## **Unusual Suspects**

It is assumed that the characters will soon investigate either the Rocky Vale Sanitarium or Cindy Matari. If they are at all conspicuous in their research they will be stalked and watched by Dog Headed Men. This will intensify and end up in abduction if worse comes to worse. If balking at research, Dr. Tyler Churchill - head of the anthropology department will ask for the help of the PCs in determining the nature of these recent strange events (particularly if the investigators already have a reputation for being knowledgeable in the occult). He may also provide the items from Doctor Goldstein's office if they characters failed to find it.

Investigators should try to find out more about Matari before traipsing off to the sanitarium. This is encouraged but not absolutely necessary. A meeting with her may however provide characters some additional clues and research sources before they confront the horrors of the sanitarium.

Research on Cindy Matari will produce clues pointing to her interest in Dog Headed Men, Anubis, Egypt, etc... and even the info needed to contact her (by email) or her publisher (by phone). She will return contact within 36 hours. If contacted in a polite fashion she will offer to have the characters either come to her estate in a group no greater than 3, or meet mutually at a public place. She is surprisingly accessible and open about her interest in "ancient myth".

Optionally, the Keeper may have her contact the characters before they go to Rocky Vale if they do not attempt to find her. In the worse case scenario (for the characters), the dog headed men may attack and abduct (but not kill) the characters and bring them to Matari if they appear to "know too much" and make this fact available.

## Visiting Matari

Assuming that she is visited on amiable terms, Cindy Matari is a down to earth sort. She dresses stylish country with minimal effort to make-up and hair. She is slightly plump, attractive, intelligent without being overly wordy. At first she will talk little and listen much. If the discussion turns towards the occult - and the investigators seem genuinely interested - she offers them a visit to her personal library of Egyptian books. There she will slowly let on that she has always felt "guided" towards certain Egyptian deities, and feels a "connection" to them in a new-age priestess on a talk show kind of way. Should the characters demonstrate any tangible evidence of their involvement in the occult (spell use, magic tomes, etc...) Then she will let on that she is in fact involved in the situation at the University. She will be quick to point out though that her intent is not to harm anyone, she feels she must stop "the worshipers of Set". She will also point out that despite her affinity for him, Anubis is not a beneficial or altruistic deity. All but his most devout disciples should expect only his indifference. She will also point out that Set's followers are likely aware of the characters if they were anywhere near the doctor's office on the night he vanished. The characters will be informed that they will likely not waltz away unmolested.

She knows little about Set's cult aside from their name translating to something like "Set's Strength". It is also rumored in occult circles that they have magic to summon the "hunter of the shadows" and possibly Set himself - but otherwise has no information on their numbers, capabilities, etc... She can also impart that a businessman named Sam Kent is somehow involved, but she has not been able to track down concrete information on him.

She is completely unaware of and likely very reluctant to believe in the Mythos. Particularly if presented with the prospect that Anubis is anything other than a jackal headed god/spirit. Though unorthodox, her religious devotion to Anubis is complete. If perusing her library the characters will find various texts - mostly on Ancient Egypt. Spending considerable time in the library (which should not happen during the scenario itself) can yield a bonus to ancient history, occult, ancient language and similar skills. It may also add a minimal amount of Cthulhu Mythos **if** the characters already have some correlation between the ancient Egyptian gods and the mythos beings. They will also risk appropriate sanity loss.

Should the characters attempt to harm, harass, or invade the home of Matari, they should be captured or seriously hurt (possibly killed) by Dog Headed Men and trained dogs. At that point the encounter may go very differently with the characters being forced to help her in exchange for their lives. She may even change one of the characters into a Dog Headed Man (automatic D20 sanity loss and the ritual will take several days to complete). The character can then be played as a Dog Headed Person completely under Matari's control (but willing to help the characters at

her behest), unable to speak to them except in yips and growls, but still able to function otherwise.

Matari is interested in events at Rocky Vale Sanitarium and will indicate that Professor Goldstein had cited some “unusual” occurrences there. She will herself decline to go but may, at the keeper’s option send a Dog Headed Man to assist the characters. If this happens the creature should be a loner, vanish at inopportune moments, refuse to go into populated areas with characters, be impossible to communicate directly with, etc...

### **...Meanwhile...**

Samual Kent receives the broken and gibbering remnants of Dr. Goldstein from the hunting horror. Through mystic questioning (psychic or necromantic at the keeper’s option) - Kent will determine the location of Rocky Vale sanitarium and upon some cursory inspection by a cult member - will learn that an odd affinity to The Crawling Chaos has sprung up among the local townspeople.

## **Researching Rocky Vale**

At this point in the scenario, characters should begin to research Rocky Vale. Investigation into the sanitarium will reveal a series of clues outlined here, and detailed in the player hand outs:

Research on Rocky Vale sanitarium will produce the following clues:

- 1) Rocky Vale was founded by Thomas Witteker 1859 as a “health reservation”.
- 2) It was an active and thriving Sanitarium catering to the wealthy up until about 1930. At that time the ailing economy forced Rocky Vale to also start housing common populace inmates.
- 3) Around 1950 allegations of abuse and misconduct arose, causing a state police investigation. Though suspicions of abuse were targeted at head nurse Melba Winchester (from the local town of Christianfeld) - no arrests were ever made.
  - a) A rumor was circulated that there were “experiments” going on there illegally, and Melba oversaw them for the head doctor Klaus Richoffen.
  - b) Some locals allege black magic as part of these “experiments”
- 4) 1956 several patient deaths again draw suspicion to Rocky Vale
  - a) Melba mysteriously vanished one night after one of these “experiments” (false) . Melba still has kin alive in the Christianfeld (true, a son - Milford). She’s buried in town after dying of alcoholism related complications.
- 5) 1957 - Hand out news clipping on the Patient Uprising: “Festival of Blood”).
  - a) Characters will also glean less known reports that indicate the “patient uprising” was actually some sort of mass murder.
  - b) The carnage was so chaotic that police were never actually able to pin down whom killed whom with what. Many patients had vanished and remain unaccounted for.
  - c) Dr. Richoffen had also vanished and presumably gone to Central America to live with family.
- 6) Hand Out Clipping 2 (the “Rocky Vale Horror”). Keeper’s note: the students had the bad luck to be near the sanitarium when an Hunting Horror used the secret chamber as a gate.

## **Christianfeld**



Originally Christianfeld was a Mennonite community of about 300. Now it is a demoralized parody of tiny town America. The majority of the town works in local trades (lumber, salt, lake fishing). Two last names are prominent in the town - Beezer and Wilcox. There are also a few Turners and Winchesters in the local cemetery and among the 400 or so living townsfolk. The main street consists of Brody's Inn (Owned by Brody Turner )- mostly frequented by locals, a tiny gas station (BP), the old Wilcox Church (founded in 1900 by Malachi Wilcox). Locals will be highly suspicious of most interlopers. They know of the interest in the local ruins but don't talk much about them. None will go there as a "guide". Like all places touched by the ancient gods, a few members of the local populace (mostly those living on the east side of the town - further into the woods), show evidence of corruption.

### **Interesting Folks:**

*Bruin Turner* - middle aged hobo looking sort who wears flannels, a straw hat, and smokes a big long pipe. Known to have "fries and roasts" of strangely delicious (and pork like) eel that he raises in troughs in his backyard. The smell emanating from this barbecue is strangely alluring. He shows them, in a psychopathic child kind of way, to willing visitors. They have a thin coat of bluish fur and vestigial flippers. And poke their heads from the troughs and make odd croaking noises. (1/1-3 SAN)

*Mare Wilcox* and her three daughters - Rootie, Rosie, and Iris. All live together in a large house on the north edge of town. Most avoid these local "witches". They have a reputation for strange introversion. Rumors of incest and missing husbands abound. The truth is actually far more dangerous to the investigators. Mare is one of the townspeople consciously aware of something powerful in the old ruins. As a child in the 60's she played around in the area and underwent some...mental transformations while there.

After receiving "gifts" from The Crawling Chaos in "dreams", she's been made aware of Zoot Phty. She will contact the cult for help to "protect her special place" if folks are nosing around the old asylum. She will house any visiting cult members in her run down plantation style mansion. These visitors only move about under cover of darkness. Her two nephews - Blair and Tommy (who appear to be slightly Mongoloid) are very strong young farmboys who will assist her in "catching" anyone that seems to be a threat to their "aunt" (which means, investigators who are too conspicuous). Iris, a pretty blonde, works at the local pub and has been told to keep a look out for strangers ever since the college students investigated the Sanitarium.

*Harold Wilcox* - Harold, the gas station attendant, has been having "dreams" of riding a giant black snake. He is growing increasingly anxious about them (perceiving them to be a mighty revelation) and **may** open up to investigators if promised some great reward in the end. He knows they have something to do with bloody events at the sanitarium years ago but are unsure exactly how.

*The New Prophecy House* - On the way into town, the characters will spot the New Prophecy House of the One Pentecost: a barn converted into a church. On the outside of the barn is painted in large black letters:

"Any deadly thing it shall not hurt them." - Mark 16

The complete quote reads... "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; any deadly thing shall not hurt them."

The preacher here, Marcus Aurelius Olsen is a born again conversion to the snake handling One Pentecost. He is one of the few aware of the power pulsing within the old sanitarium. He however believes it is one of the snakes that is spoken of in Mark 16 - a manifestation of Satan, and that he of faith can stand against it. He's seen the winged serpent in the sky headed from the West to the East, and has followed it to the sanitarium gates - but not ventured inside.

Marcus has hoped that others seeking to fight evil would come to town and **may** try to aid characters if approached. But in the end his maniacal babbling and loud sermonizing will likely annoy, distract or endanger those around him. If the characters can tolerate Marcus, they'll find he's not bad with a shotgun and won't hesitate to give "evildoers" a righteous dose of buckshot. He sermonizes to a wayward congregation of 5-7 people every weekend, complete with handling "bessy" - his 6' long timber rattler. He's been bitten and survived.

## **The Ruins of Rockyvale**

Rocky Vale is a blocky structure that echoes the efficiency and security associated with turn of the century mental hospitals. The original frame - a wooden house-like edifice - was replaced in 1935 in favor of this more institutional look. The large wire fence around the perimeter has long since dilapidated and is easily crossed. With a bit of research, an old overgrown road that leads two miles back to the sanitarium can be found through the woods on the east side of Christianfeld. The place once housed nearly 100 residents.

The building's eroded gray and red brick gives the appearance of a sore-scabbed corpse. It looks mishappen and out of place - seeming to rise suddenly out of the woods in the middle of a tree lined clearing. The closer that characters get to the structure, the more the normal sounds of the forest seem to fade away. Here, miles from even the village of Christianfeld, the sounds of civilization are gone - leaving interlopers with the sensation of having stepped back in time...perhaps to a time when a real life horror drama was played out within the sanitarium's chambers.

## **The Real Rocky Vale Horror**

A patient named Martin Lavu arrived at Rocky Vale in the early 1940's. He came from a well known family of Dutch oil entrepreneurs (their holdings in Africa disrupted by the second world war); his incarceration was a hot bit of gossip in European business circles. Rumors of an obsession with the occult and a violent personality disorder surfaced.

In fact he had been introduced to the Typhon Society years previously by a great uncle who had known McPhar at the cult's inception. Seeing the transformation of his uncle's corpse into a worm-like winged slug - and realizing all the 'affirmations' of the years that he himself had taken, were more than just club rhetoric - drove him completely insane. His family had him locked away on the second floor, north hall. This was partially for his "own good" but also to ensure their dark family secret was rendered incredulous. But Lavu was allowed his books, and managed to write and read enough occult lore that he eventually stumbled on a way to directly contact his "masters". His intent was to further pledge power in an attempt to placate the underworld horrors and (so he thought) stave off his own demise. The Crawling Chaos answered his prayers, and gave him mental control and minor servitors to assist him in the spread of further insanity.

Lavu began to manipulate the other inmates, then the staff, and finally Doctor Richter. He eventually coerced enough of the population to aid him...insisting that by sacrificing some of their own...the remaining would be "set free". With the help of the brainwashed Melba Winchester he began to lobotomize or incapacitate the least noticed patients, and had them walled up alive within one of the second floor group therapy rooms. As he performed this and other rituals of sacrifice, his power grew.

He was eventually in control of most of the inmate population and several members of the staff. Enough sacrifices - willing and unwilling - were amassed to enact the creation of the "void sliver" (performed in Richoffen's office - after the head doctor was sacrificed and his blood employed). Lavu contacted the elder gods several times in the tiny void beyond the gate, learning to travel distances through the darkness, and hiding some of his favorite possessions there. This

continued for nearly a year until of course his luck ran out. On one trip into the void, he awoke the attention of The Guardian of the Key and The Gate. Upon Lavu's consumption by Yog-Sothoth the previously sedate Crawling Chaos loosed itself. The asylum broke into an explosion of mass murder. By the time a few lucid staff and inmates escaped and contacted the police, most of the inmate population lay dead. The police ruled it an inmate uprising by the criminally insane. And on the surface, that is exactly what it appeared to be.

### **Exploring The Ruins**

Entrance may be gained through the place's front door (on the building's south side). This is an uninviting arrangement of dense, dusty glass and grimy steel bars. A thick padlock which once secured the front door now dangles broken on an heavy chain. This way in is unbarred.

There is one metal access door in the northeast corner of the building, which opens into a small hall near the lift. This door has long been rusted shut and would have to be violently opened.

The mood of the asylum should be one of complete abandonment - a skeletal victim left to die after a horrible murder. It is strangely void of animal life, except for some odd looking black beetles that scuttle in the shadows. Except on the upper floors, where barred windows allow sunlight to stream into a few of the cells, it is a very dark, claustrophobic and dusty place. No signs of partying teenagers are visible. There isn't any hint of the film students from SUNY - or even the police - which briefly looked through the place in search of them.

The place is stout cube with two upper levels, the floor level, and the basement. Any layout may be used or sketched off the cuff by the keeper. The bulk of the place is of little interest to the story. Several quality web sites contain old sanitarium maps and photographs; these may be accessed for visual aids throughout this section of the adventure.

The lower level contains the hydrotherapy chamber, shock therapy room, a very unsanitary looking operating stable with a grisly assortment of antique surgical, and the morgue.

The floor level consists of a reception area, offices, storage supply closets, waiting rooms, a chapel and a spacious but windowless visitor's room (which the front door opens into). Very few of the rooms here on this floor have windows. Those windows which are present are barred.

Two stairwells wind up the northeast and southwest corners of the building, with an antiquated and dysfunctional lift at the end of the main corridor.

The majority of the rooms on the second and third floor are small (12x10) single bunk rooms. Most are in a state of abandoned disrepair with many showing signs of violence. The windows are all barred with no visible fire escapes.

In addition to the cells, several group therapy and recreation rooms are located on each of the two upper floors. Grisly signs of terror such as broken and oddly stained billiard cues and skeletal fragments may be unearthed here.

### **Artifacts of Madness**

Characters spending the night in the asylum will have nightmares - taunted by shadows filled with hissing things and corpses in hospital robes. Faces press against a glasslike surface - begging for release and forgiveness. The extremely realistic (to the point of tangible) nature of the dreams will cause a sanity check upon waking (0/1D2 points) and leave the PCs with the impression that the place is filled with horrifyingly tortured souls.

Most of the interior walls are smeared with stains, bloody hand prints, scrawling which seem irrational, and random. Anyone studying the place long enough however begins to see patterns:

a hint to some greater mathematics resolved within the scrabbling. If studied intensively for more than 3 hours, the collection of words, symbols and numbers will start to make sense as some sort of celestial/planar (+5% Mythos, d4 sanity) chart or map which indicate dates through out history. Some of these are momentous (example: one of the passes of Haley's comet, the Great Fire of London, etc...) and others are mundane (at least to most of the world). The keeper may employ this calendar of madness to feed players dates important within their own chronicle.

### **Areas of Interest**

*Remnants of a Crime* - A successful spot or search roll in one of the second floor therapy rooms will reveal that the east wall is obviously much newer brickwork than the rest of the place. If examined closely, the placement of the wall compared to neighboring rooms reveals that it likely hides about 3 feet of space beyond it. Checking from the outside will also reveal a series of barred windows along the exterior where that solid brick wall is located within the sanitarium. Should the characters be willing to take the time to bore/blast through the brick, they will find 6 skeletal remains of the sacrificed patients (which should pop from any opened areas cinematically, as if they were still clawing for escape after decades of imprisonment. Their jaws are grimacing, wrenched and seem to shriek even now. (0/d2 san loss if they surprise the characters in a particularly sincere manner)

*The Warlock's Room* - On the second floor, one room is orderly - almost pristine. On one wall is a series of letters and numerals drawn so that they make up an obelisk like shape. This is Lavu's chamber. The writing is a coded/corrupted Latin. Success on a particularly difficult languages roll (or cryptography) is required to read it. A partial success or high raw skill may reveal a few words or a fragmented sentence of this invocation:

"With the blood around the stone, drawn from a beating vein. Ia Ia Lord Typhon of the Underworld. Ia Guardian of the Key and Opener of the Gate. Bring me sanctuary into the void. Let the silhouette of red trace the path through the darkness. Let it illuminate the burning star of the opened way".

This references the entrance to the void sliver found in Richoffen's office. It was the "working draft" of the incantation Lavu meditated upon while gathering his power.

*The Gate Room* - Upon searching Richoffen's office - the characters will find several things of interest. The desk is stained with the blood and a deeply gash. It looks like someone was brutally slaughtered on it a long time ago. The wall behind the desk is smeared with rusty brown streaks. Careful inspection reveals the outline of an obelisk shape drawn in blood. It appears to match the size and shape of the drawing in Lavu's old room on the second floor.

Around it are remnants of barely visible script long ago inked onto the wall. This writing is identical to the corrupted Latin from Lavu's office.

If the monolith outline is retraced exactly in human blood (but not necessarily the blood of a dead victim), the entire wall will transform into a glowing, shifting curtain of black light (1/D3 sanity). It can be stepped through. Those stepping through it will seem to quickly out of physical existence.

The space Beyond is a gift of the Crawling Chaos. It is a place of shifting physical dimension and complete blackness - only occasionally tinged with the buzzing of unknown insects in the distant darkness. What should be a closet sized compartment opens into a sliver of The Void.

No technology works efficiently in the space: IR/Night Vision goggles are equally blind, matches sputter and are immediately consumed by the blackness before any light is produced. Cellphones and walkie-talkies produce screeching static pitches and weird, grunting, chanting tones.

Once inside, the doorway back to the physical world looks like a tiny, distant window and seems

to take impossibly long to return to. A distorted “fish eye” vision of Richoffen’s office is visible from within the dark space.

One hour in the void is 6 hours of external earth time. Every hour spent in the void sliver, characters will feel sensory disconnection and a growing feeling that the outside world is fading and ghostly. This incurs a D3 sanity loss if failing a check. If rolling 99-00 on their sanity check they are gifted with a glimpse of The Guardian and the Key and incur an additional D20 sanity loss plus may at Keeper’s discretion draw the attention of Yog-Sothoth.

The Hunting Horror may use this space as a gate to arrive in Christianfeld. Perhaps sensing some living movement within the space, its arrival may be hastened for dramatic effect. Characters within the void would hear its slithering shuffle and accompanying weird static breeze as it winds its way from somewhere in the void...getting closer as the characters move deeper into the darkness. It is particularly effective if the buzzing wind and sulphurous stench of the creature’s approach begins to slowly mount as the characters are closer to finding Lavu’s bundle. They may glimpse the three-lobed red eye approaching at first - slowly - like the distant light of an oncoming car. The sounds and sensations intensify as the glaring orb threatens to fill their entire vision. Fleeing out into the sanitarium’s hall, the creature’s bulk spills out behind them as they run for daylight beyond the place’s ancient walls.

The gate closes on the sunrise or sunset after which it was opened. Creatures of the mythos may open it from within the void as well as know the way in through the sanitarium walls. If the characters are within the space when the gate closes, they are trapped in the void until it is reopened from the outside. If they walk deeper and deeper into the darkness they will slowly become aware of faint lights occasionally dancing in the distant darkness, an occasional stray sound filtering past their ears, something large moving past them in the darkness. The void can go where ever the keeper wishes: to oblivion, to other times and places, to Hades, or to the ruins of Sarnath.

### **Lavu’s Bundle**

Characters should stumble around in the dark space- and if succeeding in a very challenging search attempt - should find a cloth wrapped bundle. In it are some of Lavu’s notes - written in the same coded Latin, and his uncle’s books. Lavu hid these in his “safe” place where he finally met his own demise. These notes describe both his own, and his uncle’s contact with Nyralthotep as Set, the history of the Soot-Pthy, and other information on cult activities and his own take over of the asylum up until the 1957.

Two additional texts are of immediate interest to the investigators (and the cult). First is The New Age of Typhon, by Brett McPhar. This is essentially a cult etiquette manual. Within may be found 1-2 minor luck or appearance altering spells).

The other book is a bound, complete copy of original Egyptian papyrus found by McPhar. This material if translated from the Egyptian - reveals several key ritual components necessary to effect the shadow-stalker transformation (called “*Gift of the Shadows*”). Reading the text costs d3/d6 sanity and grants mythos score. Optionally it may be a more potent tome, with more spells, and a greater sanity loss attached.

### **...Meanwhile...**

On the night of November 4<sup>th</sup>, around 10:00 pm a cultist will arrive with Christianfeld - and along with Mare Wilcox and her nephews - go to retrieve the items from the sanitarium. It will only take them an hour to retrieve the objects, and the investigators could be too late if they have dawdled or botched in an earlier part of the scenario. The cultists will arrive sooner (within a day) if the investigators make a scene of themselves in town.

If the characters are known to the cult, the hunting horror and cultists will converge on the place in an attempt to locate and destroy the investigators. The team will likely consist of two to four thugs captained by a cultist with some mystic ability. This may be adjusted to suit the character number and aptitude.

## Scenario Completion

It is assumed that the characters will find the books before the cult does. If so, the story may technically end here and be called a success. If the characters keep a low profile and don't leave obvious evidence of their passing, they should have at least a month of peace before the cult catches up with them. The ritual will have at least been delayed for another year. Any follow up will be based entirely on the character's actions and the degree to which the storyteller wants to continue this scenario.

Should the cultists secure the books before the investigators - word can be trickled to the PCs that the objects in question were found and the ritual will be taking place. If they profess an interest in stopping the ritual, they may be allowed another research attempt to find the Blackbury estate. Cindy Matari also can, if called upon, expedite this process through some kind of divination.

Should the characters retrieve the books and leave some significant sign of their involvement, someone from the Soot-Phty will approach them within a few nights. The cult will offer a very generous sum for the books. If the investigators refuse - coercion commences, family members will be held, legal and financially hassles ensue, etc... The cult will attempt to operate in a mundane fashion until it is obvious that it won't work. If the November 5, 2003 date is close at hand - or the cult has exhausted less supernatural means of coercion - they will simply attempt to dispose of everyone they know to be involved in breaching the sanitarium in an attempt to locate the missing items.

If the cult has the necessary items, the ritual concludes at 11:00 pm November 5, 2003

If the Keeper and Players decide to extend the scenario and pursue Kent and the rest of the cult, the Keeper will have to judge how, where and when this is possible. If discovering the Blackbury estate, the characters may attempt to go there to stop the ritual. It is a heavily secured, privately guarded place a few miles west of London. Investigators will have to be very sneaky to gain entrance. Successfully posing as police, deliverymen, caterers, etc.. may work if handled very smoothly by the players. Stealthy intrusion may also work if the characters are very thorough in dismantling security devices, waylaying guards silently, etc... Brute force will likely end up with all of the investigators arrested or dead. Local police will be highly reluctant to get involved in "upsetting" an affluent and established estate on the grounds of "cult activity". Some appreciable physical evidence of criminal doings is needed to galvanize the authorities.

The ritual begins at 7:30 pm. Before that time, most cult members will seem like ordinary socialites enjoying an exclusive cocktail party.

If breaching the estate, the characters will find the place to seem relatively normal. They will meet appropriate resistance from servants or guards, but under most circumstances the cult will not be expecting any kind of disruption. Players with some wits should be able to guide their characters down into the basement ceremonial area.

The ceremonial chamber is a large finished basement. Most of the gathering will be a congregation in tuxedos and evening dresses who read chants from a formal looking meeting program (some of the text excerpted from the cult manuals). Kent and a few other participant

cultists lead the candle light chants in ritual garb at the front of the room (opposite the stairway entrance). The total attendance will be about 70 people. If allowed to finish the ritual, at 11:00 pm Kent will turn into the shadowy, translucent, shambling entity and proceed to begin attacking the nearest cult members (by draining heat and energy from living bodies).

As cultists wither and die, their flesh boils down to thick smokey shadow, and they too become voracious shadow stalkers (d3/d10 sanity for witnessing this spectacle). In the candle-light, the creatures begin to instinctively meld into the shadows - only to reappear and strike targets from shadowy spots elsewhere in the room. The effect should be of a mass of living, squirming darkness attempting to devour any light and heat nearby. Obviously the characters need to run from this scene if at all possible. Escaping in the confusion should not be too difficult provided the characters are not too deep within the chamber...or hiding in the shadows along the wall.

The only way to successfully halt the ritual is to get there well before the final magic is in place (by 9 pm, November 5, 2003) - and disrupt the events through one of the many creative means players usually devise. Even if Kent is killed or disabled, but the 9 pm deadline has passed, he (even as a corpse) will still transform into a shadow stalker within 2 hours. However due to the incomplete ritual, his mind will be completely gone and this stalker will be quite out of control. The initial magic is all that is necessary for the ritual to be effective. The last two hours of the ceremony are partially meaningless trappings, and partially a binding of the shadowy powers. Without this end time the stalkers are completely feral.

If the characters arrive at the estate but fail to completely stop the ritual, it is fully plausible that the remainder of the cult and the shadowy stalkers will return to haunt them in the future.

## **PLAYER HANDOUTS**

Player Handout, from Syracuse University News:

### **Real Rocky Vale Horror Continues**

Syracuse, NY - Their story began with an inspiration from the famous Blair Witch Project movie. Now life imitates art and 3 SUNY film students are missing. Donna Wyatt, Pete Keating and Lyndon Smith left the New Paltz campus of SUNY last Thursday morning with video and audio recording equipment. They were on their way to the site of Rocky Vale Sanitarium, near Christianfeld, New York to begin shooting their senior project. It was to be a "docudrama" similar to their favorite movie, Blair Witch Project, which captured and terrified audiences 2 years ago. "It isn't like Blair Witch," Pete had said in a school paper interview a month ago. "That was totally made up. There is a history of a curse up there (Rocky Vale), and we want to shoot a story about trying to uncover the forces there. That is what 'Horror of Rocky Vale' is all about." After not returning on Monday with the borrowed school equipment, the campus security office called state police. Monday night the van containing most of the equipment was found parked on the sanitarium grounds.

No sign of the students has been found. Authorities are at this time assuming foul play though no evidence has been uncovered. The only clue, police said, is a recording left on the DAT (digital audio tape) recorder which police describe as "unusual". Rocky Vale sanitarium's dark history includes the tragic inmate uprising in 1957, in which an estimated 75 people are thought to have died. Christianfeld residents were reluctant to talk to police or reporters. One town's person said, "We told those kids to stay away from that place." The families and police are continuing their

search for the missing students. Anyone with information is urged to contact police immediately. A \$25,000 reward has been offered for leads that result in solving this disappearance.

#### Player Handout

From Watertown Press, available in most major (University, Town) Newspaper repositories on microfiche:

“...Festival of Blood!”

Watertown, NY - Police today answered an emergency call to Rocky Vale, the famous asylum for the insane. Upon arriving at the scene officers found what they could only describe as a “Festival of Blood”. Many of the inmates lay dead or dying. Most of the staff had fled or been killed in what is now being called by state police detectives - an 'inmate uprising'. 'The walls were painted with blood,' said one rookie called to the remote New York countryside hospital. A staff member who managed flight made his way to the nearby village of Christianfeld and used the town phone to call authorities. The hospital, once a mental health recovery retreat for the wealthy of Europe, now stands empty. It is expected to remain closed until further notice. - May 12, 1957

©2003 John R. Harford

Player Handout (as the characters enter Christianfeld):

Seen painted in streaky letters on the side of a barn in Christenfeld, New York.

"Any deadly thing it shall not hurt them."

- Mark 16

Player Handout: Dog Headed Men Search Result

Keeper Note: this thread has been taken, with minimal alteration from the Fortean Times message board at [www.forteanimes.com](http://www.forteanimes.com). The thread, “Dog Headed Men”, can be found under the “It Happened To Me!” section. This content is copyrighted 2003 Fortean Times and may be reproduced only for personal game use.

Fortean Times <sup>TM</sup> Message Board:

The Doghead Men



Carla Randle

In the late 60s we lived in Station Street, Crewe, which we left when the whole area was to be slum-cleared. The houses were old fashioned, very basic terraced ones opening directly onto the street, and as everyone knew everyone else it was safe to 'play out' quite late at night. One evening, Mark (aged about 9) was walking along the wide pavement when he saw some characters coming toward him. There were 3 I think, and they were somewhat taller than people. They were dressed as men in suits, but had very large DOGS' HEADS!! These heads swayed widely from side to side as the creatures walked. Mark was absolutely terrified as they approached, but they seemed not to notice him and he passed them safely. He ran all the way home and only told me about the 'Big Dogs' as he called them some time later. I laughed my head off, thinking he was trying to scare me. When it became obvious that he was really scared, I tried to figure out what he'd seen. My 10-year old brain could only come up with ghosts or aliens, neither of which seemed to fit the bill.

Mark's experience came to mind when I read 'The Thing on the Doorstep

<<http://www.forteantimes.com/happened/camelthing.shtml>>' on these pages. Could a camel's head and a dog's look alike? Did Joshua see the same critter as did Mark? I seem to remember that Mark saw the Big Dogs again but will have to pick the time to ask him about it.

Carla Randle

Replies:

From: Evilsprout

Registered: Jul 2001

Location: Wherever evil lurks...

OK, am I going mad or was there a second dog-headed man report posted here about the critters stalking the meanstreets of England, or did I dream it? And can anyone remember who the author was of the missing message?

From: Crafty Barnado

Registered: May 2002

Location: Sheffield

In yorkshire folklore, they were called leather heads, due to the fact that from a distance they looked like they were wearing leather flaps when it was actually their ears.

Always caused a nuisance when they turned up, upsetting people and generally causing problems, my Grandfather used to tell me about them as a lad.

From: Hermes

Registered: Sep 2001

Location: Kent (UK)

Reminds me of the following report:

Location: Jenin to Dotan road (Israel)

Date/Time: [not specified].

A resident of the Arab town of Jenin was driving one evening towards Dotan and picked up a hitch-hiker, who who sat in the passenger seat beside him. After a while he noticed his companion's face had transformed into that of a one-eyed dog. Stopping the car, he ran away from it and fainted.

Debate in Jenin and the neighbouring towns interpreted the figure variously as a demon, or 'the blind liar' - an evil figure that is to spread evil abroad before the coming of the Messiah.

Source(s): Daily Maariv (Israel) 14 October 1996; 'Chillers on the road' (Fortean Times, issue uncertain).

From: Smudge  
Registered: Jan 2003  
Location: Australia

Do you guys accept that people see these creatures be they real or just an apparition. I think I'd really struggle with reality if I saw one of these things. Are there any tales of these men attacking anyone? Good God I'm losing sleep.

From: Si Fuller  
Registered: May 2003  
Location: Sydney, Australia

My flatmate once claimed that his brother, while on some kind of military practice in the middle of nowhere, late at night, came across a large bull. The bull turned as they passed by, and they saw that it had a human head. They all freaked out and didn't talk about it for a very long time.

It would be a very strange story to invent, but should be taken with a pinch of salt.

From: St. Stevens  
Registered: Aug 2001  
Location: 13 Cemetery Road  
Yikes, I've just been on the Living TV 'Most Haunted' site and read some personal accounts of apparitions.  
One person reckons their family have been repeatedly visited by tall, black-cloaked figures with dog-like features, which speak to them and have even put a young child to bed!  
Sounds very like the original dogheaded men.

From AMPHIARAUS  
Registered: Jun 2003  
Location: The Stygian shores

Great thread.

These dog headed guys feel familiar, kind of like the stag headed god (herne?) Some medieval legends give St. Christopher a dogs head. All a bit Jung.  
Archetypal protector, escort etc?

Love to see one, especially wearing a suit.

From: -Oracle-  
Registered: Jul 2001  
Location: Beverley, East Yorkshire, England

Anubis?  
In Egypt, the Jackal headed God, Anubis, is an urban legend. He has been seen in physical presence and in shadow. He is the guardian of the underworld and guides spirits to Abydos. He has often been seen shortly after or before a person's death.  
I'm not saying that this is what you saw but a Dog Headed man and Anubis are pretty much anatomically identical in my book...

From: Not Quite Yeti

Registered: Jun 2003

Location: On an abstract plane

I have been reading up on the Cynocephali this week and the possible links to the werewolf. The Cynocephali were a race of dog headed men whose origin seems to come from somewhere between India and Thailand. There were many reputable reports from early travellers of this race, commenting on their ability to use spears and bows in hunting and their barking language and fierceness.

Apparently St Christopher was a Cynocephali who abhorred the savage ways of his people and prayed to God to be given the gift of human speech. Thereafter he was able to preach the word of God.

There are even beatific religious paintings portraying the dog headed saint in robes of the church. I don't think the dog headed men were actually therianthropes but a race unto themselves.

Interesting if not useless

From: smudge

Registered: Jan 2003

Location: Australia

Hi Folks,

a friend of mine claimed to have been paced by one along Kings Norton Green park in Birmingham a number of years ago. He said he thought it was a man in fancy dress at first but realised the motion was too fluid to be someone with a dogs mask on. He also saw breath coming from the end of its snout. He said it was late at night, the creature was very tall, approx 7 to 8 feet tall. Mark (my friend) said it never looked at him or approached him but kept a straight parallel course and when he ran the creature ran too but again on a parallel course level with my friend. It really freaked him and to my knowledge I'm the only person he ever told (he knew I was into weird experiences!). I never walked accross the park at night after that and have often wondered what it might be or mean. Of course one can never rule out drugs or alcohol but he was a pretty straight guy and not one for tall (geddit?) stories.

From: JerryB

Registered: Apr 2002

Location: London

Altho' not strictly dog-related, an American friend I had whilst at poly' many moons ago told me a pretty weird story that had been told to him by his girlfriend (who was of Native American descent). According to this story, her grandfather had seen and shot at several creatures that looked like wolves, only that they were walking on their hind legs. More distinct details escape me, but IIRC she did say that such creatures were part of the local Wisconsin folklore.

From Evilsprout

Registered: Jul 2001

Location: Wherever evil lurks...

good point about the Madagascar case. Lemurs are, or course, famous for having decidedly vulpine heads.

All this dog-headed men business is pretty freaky... an Egyptian god on the prowl in Manchester and Crewe?! The local London rags also just ran a report of these things being seen out around the city on an old estate. Sounds like a party to me!

There are so many weird creatures documented in Fortean history (Mothman, Owlman, Jersey Devil, Dover Demon, Chupacabras) that are so much weirder than the relatively normal cryptids such as Bigfoot (big ape!) and Nessie (big sea reptile!). What if there's some very regular sighted creatures like these dog-men, who just aren't documented cos people feel stupid giving reports of them because a) they're completely ridiculous sounding, and b) they're seen in areas where weird creatures like this just can't be conceived exist, like the middle of busy cities.

From: Matari  
Registered: Mar 2002  
Location: I live in USA.

Ahh....Anubis. my favorite.

He was the Greek version of Egyptian Anpu.

Anubis was the son of Nephthys. By some traditions, the father was Set (Set was often depicted with a jackal's head too) by others, Osiris. (And by still other traditions his mother was Isis.) Anubis was depicted as a jackal, or as a jackal-headed man; in primitive times he was probably simply the jackal god.

Probably because of the jackal's tendency to prowl around tombs, he became associated with the dead, and by the Old Kingdom, Anubis was worshipped as the inventor of embalming, who had embalmed the dead Osiris, thus helping preserve him in order to live again. His task became to glorify and preserve all the dead.

Anubis was also worshipped under the form Upuaut ("Opener of the Ways"), sometimes with a rabbit's head, who conducted the souls of the dead to their judgement, and who monitored the Scales of Truth to protect the dead from the second death in the underworld.

I can't seem to find a decent picture of him.

<http://www.philae.nu/perankh/perankhA.html#Anubis>

<<http://www.philae.nu/perankh/perankhA.html>>

I will try to find more info of him for ya'll...

From: Chapelwaite  
Registered: Jan 2001  
Location: London

Is this the Cindy Matari?

Player Handout:

Relevant web search result for Cynocephali/Dog Headed Men:

73.01.21.1840 rev 03k <http://www.angelfire.com/id/panicstricken/news.html>

More escapes from the hollow earth

Cynocephali are making more appearances, thanks to disruptions in the magnetic fields that have previously kept them contained within cracks and fissures of the hollow Earth for the past millenium.

Cynocephali are dog-headed humans, renowned for their savagery and taste for raw human flesh. Contemporary mythology portrays them as werewolves, but we know better than that.

In past centuries bands of Cynocephali would escape their underground kingdom through caves in the mountains of India, according to Pliny, to ravage and terrorize the countryside. Marco Polo, secretly an agent of beings from the brightest star in the constellation of Piscus Austrinus, used advanced technology to seal them in their own dominion, but now, almost 700 years later, the mechanisms are wearing out. Fluctuations along the magnetic meridians cause brief outages in

the containment fields allowing cynocephali to escape.

Cynocephali are not inherently evil. They are another genus of human, much like neanderthals were. The best known cynocephalus is Saint Christopher, the patron saint of travelers and seafarers, and originally called Reprobis.

Player Handout:

Library search result 1 for Cynocephali:

Cynocephali (from Roger's History of the Strange Folk, pp35-37, © Arkham Publishing, 1909)

These breed of creatures were widely reported in the Middle Ages by historians like Pliny, the Elder, Sir John Mandeville and Saint Isidore of Seville.

They were a race of dog-headed creatures that are extremely smart and brutal and their anthropophagous tendency makes them a menace to man-kind. Even the Venetian traveller Marco Polo writes that these dog-headed tribes were found on the island of Andaman, about a thousand miles East of Ceylon which was then known as Taprobana in medieval maps.

In the Liber Monstrorum, an eight-century text on monsters, describe the Cynocephali as living off the edges of the civilised world who actually communicated by barking at each other which obviously betrays them as uncivilised beasts even though they were able to walk up-right.

Interestingly, sources revealed these dog-headed race retained an unusual position in Christian teachings and writings. Werewolves were commonly perceived as the descendants of Cain or a monstrosity that is a result of co-habiting with the devil.

It is said that Christianity and their teachings had pacify these brutal beasts and allowed them to control their savagery and even though in very rare case allowed inter-marriage between humans and the Cynocephali. The offsprings that resulted in this union were very much human except for the fact that they were also bestial from within and when they are unable to oppress this bestial nature or have forsaken their believes in Christianity and get tempted by the demon within; the animal hidden inside them burst forth tranforming them into a monster.

Legend has it that Saint Christopher, the patron saint of the travellers and sea-farers was also Cynocephali-convert. Born a pagen dog-head known as Reprobis; he oppose savagery and hated the brutality committed by his race. He was overjoyed when a accidental acquaintance with a prient introduced him to Christianity. He then forsaken his bestial nature by focusing and concentrating on this teachings and eventually he was able to pacify his Cynocephali nature.

In Christian literature; that portion of St. Christopher being a Cynbocephali was silently removed; and over time it was slowly forgotten and people even dissociate the legends of werewolves from the Cynocephali.

Player Handout:

Library search result 2 for Cynocephali/Dog Headed Men:

Dog Headed Men, from Burnarr's Mythology, editor Christie Naples, NYU Press, 1979

There were many reports of dog-headed tribes in the Middle Ages. According to Marco Polo, they

were found on the island of Andaman, about 1000 miles east of Ceylon. (also called Taprobana <Places/taprobana.htm>) He says: "You may take it for a fact that all the men of the island have heads like dogs, and teeth and eyes like dogs; for I assure you that the whole aspect of their faces is that of big mastiffs. They are a very cruel race: whenever they can get a hold of a man who is not one of their kind, they devour him." (Latham, 1958)

*Player Handout:*

Library search result 2 for Cynocephali/Dog Headed Men:

**Dog Headed Men, from *Burnarr's Mythology*, editor Christie Naples, NYU Press, 1979**

There were many reports of dog-headed tribes in the Middle Ages. According to Marco Polo, they were found on the island of Andaman, about 1000 miles east of Ceylon. (also called [Taprobana](#)) He says: "*You may take it for a fact that all the men of the island have heads like dogs, and teeth and eyes like dogs; for I assure you that the whole aspect of their faces is that of big mastiffs. They are a very cruel race: whenever they can get a hold of a man who is not one of their kind, they devour him.*" (Latham, 1958)

Player Handout:

Relevant web search result for Cynocephali/Dog Headed Men:

**73.01.21.1840** rev 03k <http://www.angelfire.com/id/panicstricken/news.html>

**More escapes from the hollow earth**

Cynocephali are making more appearances, thanks to disruptions in the magnetic fields that have previously kept them contained within cracks and fissures of the hollow Earth for the past millenium.

Cynocephali are dog-headed humans, renowned for their savagery and taste for raw human flesh. Contemporary mythology portrays them as werewolves, but we know better than that. In past centuries bands of Cynocephali would escape their underground kingdom through caves in the mountains of India, according to Pliny, to ravage and terrorize the countryside. Marco Polo, secretly an agent of beings from the brightest star in the constellation of Piscus Austrinus, used advanced technology to seal them in their own dominion, but now, almost 700 years later, the mechanisms are wearing out. Fluctuations along the magnetic meridians cause brief outages in the containment fields allowing cynocephali to escape.

Cynocephali are not inherently evil. They are another genus of human, much like neanderthals were. The best known cynocephalus is Saint Christopher, the patron saint of travelers and seafarers, and originally called Reprobus.