

Above And Beyond

A Call Of Cthulhu Adventure

On Saturday, April 24, 1926, Daredevil Owen the Fearless fell to his death while atop an airplane. The tragedy occurred when the pilot refused to land the plane despite quickly moving dark clouds forming as he worked the craft into the sky.

The Scenario: This can be a good adventure to start a campaign off with, or use as a one night game. It is fairly straight forward and the solution is almost predictable. That isn't where the challenge lies in this game. Executing the plan to destroy the Hunting Horror and closing the gate will be the true test of the player's sanity and courage. This adventure can give first time players a memorable and exciting experience. A good Keeper will be able to create great sense of excitement and danger to the players.

Background: On Saturday, April 24, 1926, Daredevil Owen the Fearless fell to his death while atop an airplane. The tragedy occurred when the pilot refused to land the plane despite quickly moving dark clouds forming as he worked the craft into the sky. The plane entered a large dark cloud formation and never exited. The crowd witnessed a black burst of energy, then Owen falling to his death. What is not known to the public is that Owen was found in two pieces, bitten in half. Since the tragedy, the dark clouds and terrible weather have huddled in a five mile circumference over parts of the Miskatonic Valley, with the air station at the epicenter. Air station meteorologist, Dr. Benjamin Orr, who runs the Miskatonic Valley Meteorological Station here, is absolutely stumped. As the days pass, the fortunes of the air station, and the area, begin to worsen.

What Is Going On: The plane took off into a bright, sunny April Saturday. The two seater Avro 504K, a well known, dependable barnstorming craft carried a pilot, co-pilot, and on the wing Owen the Fearless. Owen showed up late, and a little drunk, and was not weighed in. The pilot had a bit of trouble getting the plane to its necessary altitude for the stunt, and had to circle the field in a criss-cross pattern several times before really ascending.

An incredible synchronicity was taking place. The pattern which the plane made over the runway and its eight orange painted stone markers, in conjunction with the time and alignment of the planets, created the perfect conditions, and a gate began to open up in the heavens; a non-somatic spell had been cast.

Quickly the blackest clouds rushed in and hovered right over the air station, where the gate was now open. Foolishly, the plane kept ascending, despite this wholly unique natural phenomenon. The observers on the ground never knew how lucky they were that they could not see the plane. A Hunting Horror had come through the gate, and found its first meal. The plane was knocked into the gate by the tail of the beast, and sucked into the cosmos. The beast then took a bite out of Owen the Brave before he fell, already dead.

The gate remains open, but thus far only the Hunting Horror has exited. A heavy set of clouds remain in a five mile radius, actually pouring out of the opening to the other side, with its epicenter directly over the airport. Flights coming in and out will not see the gate. It is but a heavy swirl of dark and electrically charged clouds, which only the greatest fool would dare fly into. It will not suck anything into itself, therefore, most planes are safe from this plight unless directly flying into it. Presently only the Hunting Horror has emerged. Keepers may want to keep it this way, since allowing other beings into the world can turn the game into a cheesy monster show.

Timeline and Player Insertion: The Keeper can insert the players at any point in this timeline, depending on the character. Perhaps the players are pilots; maybe they witnessed Owen's death. If they are reporters, they could be investigating the death, or the recent bizarre weather. They could also be

professors or students from Miskatonic.

April 24, 1926, Saturday: Daredevil Owen the Fearless dies in a bizarre accident. Plane and crew are never found.

April 25, 1926, Sunday: Intense rains and very dark clouds.

April 26, 1926, Monday: Rains keep aero-station closed.

April 27, 1926, Tuesday: Very dark, only mail planes fly out.

April 28, 1926, Wednesday: More terrible weather. Ford 4-At, returning from Cuba, is attacked by the Hunting Horror, has a wing ripped off and fuselage punctured. Plane crashes one mile outside aero-station, 13 passengers, 3 crew die, 1 survivor in coma.

April 29, 1926, Thursday: Aero-station closed due to intense rains.

April 30, 1926, Friday: Very dark, all flights leave, arrive safely.

May 1, 1926, Saturday: Air show, all flights, canceled due to extreme rain and lightning.

May 2, 1926, Sunday: Weather station roof ripped off by something in early a.m.

May 3, 1926, Monday: Very dark day. Mail plane attacked during arrival right above the airport. Pilot radios in about "Great dragon!" before the crash. Both pilot and co-pilot killed.

Miskatonic Valley Aero-Station: The Miskatonic Valley Aero-Station is a new, and quite successful addition to the Miskatonic Valley. Built in 1923 as a place for air and barnstorming shows, the station was awarded a government contract in 1924 to host and house four US Postal Service planes. This has been a cash cow for the station. Added in 1925 was a small terminal, and flights during the week to New York, Chicago, Florida, Washington DC, and every other week, to Cuba. A good majority of the station's business comes from its aero-taxi services. The station employs 65 people, and has increased businesses in local restaurants and shops.

The full layout of the compound consists of six criss-crossed dirt runways, a dirt and grass boarding area, a terminal to wait in, (magazines, coffee and sandwiches sold within), parking field, bleachers for air show attendants, A large hangar, (with a tiny pilot's lounge), communications building, mail warehouse, a fueling area and a small one story building which houses the offices. There is a 500 foot field between the hangar and a lot of 10 cottages where pilots, stewardesses, navigators, daredevils, other employees, may crash for a night or three, for a dollar a night. The meteorological station sits on a hill over-looking the cottages.

In the hangar rests:

4 US Postal planes

2 Ford 4-AT Trimotors

2 Fokker F.VII/3m

4 Avro 504K

2 Sopwith 7f.1 Snipe

Outside of the hangar a small dirigible, crew 4, passengers max. 20.

The aero-station has also helped keep the valley flowing in booze. Arkham kingpin Danny O'Bannion receives shipments from Chicago here almost daily. Marijuana is also being brought in from New York and Cuba. Pilot Jim Wuzzel does most of the flying in of the booze. He is a nice enough guy, but prefers to keep a low profile. He has also made a few thousand dollars getting some of O'Bannion's associates in and out of the area in a hurry and without being spotted. Most of the people employed at the station know who to go to if they want vices filled, but say nothing. One person who has no idea of the illegal activities here is Rupert Boyle, owner of the airport.

Rupert Boyle: An affable and kind man, Boyle saw the potential of an airport and invested over \$200,000 of his own money into its creation and maintenance. He has seven other silent partners, rich Boston lawyers, who invested a total of \$150,000. He is trying to keep cool during this period of crisis, but knows too well the government contract and the future of the airport, as well as many jobs, are on the verge of collapsing under these bizarre circumstances. He has most of his money riding on this project, and is also truly concerned about laying people off. In the works are contracts with the National Forest

Service and US Mapping Service. Both quite lucrative deals are now on the line.

What Can Be Done: Depending on who the character is will determine how much interaction he has within the aero-station. Reporters will be left more on the outside than professors or other pilots. Rupert Boyle will realize something bizarre is taking place. He will meet with Professor Benjamin Orr and his assistants, then with the pilots and other helpful personnel. He will reason that a team should go up into the cloud mass and try to take some photos. It will be agreed that a Fokker F.VIIA/3m will be taken up with a crew of 2 plus Dr. Orr, his two assistants, and anyone else who can help. The plane holds up to ten passengers. Everyone will be issued and told to wear a parachute. Those not knowing how to use a parachute, will be given instructions. The flight will take place on Tuesday, May 4.

Tuesday, May 4, 1926: The plane takes off with pilots Rex Lewis and Bannister Denning (qv - stats) as the crew. If one of the players is a pilot, they may take the NPCs place. Both are carrying their guns. The plane is given clearance at 9:45 am, on this dark, damp day. The pilot will circle several times before climbing to the cloud's altitude, (1,100 feet). Once inside the formation, Dr. Orr will begin to talk excitedly about this "natural phenomenon," and he will have, "never, ever seen anything like this before in my life."

The flight will be a bit rough, but steady. the visibility here is about 100 feet, very poor for pilots. After ten or so uneventful minutes, the pilots will agree to begin descending, as turbulence and head wind is becoming very strong. As they begin their descent, they see it. The Hunting Horror will fly pass the right side of the plane in view. It will disappear for a few seconds, then emerge head on with the plane, a mere fifty feet away and closing. Sanity rolls will be needed all around. Should the pilot's go insane, real problems could occur. Before the pilots can begin a quick descent, the beast attacks the plane, flying above and whipping the top of the passenger cabin. The cabin has an armor of 4 points, and a total of 150 hps. Critical hits require a roll on the table below.

Critical Hit Chart

- 1.) Pilot Cabin Punctured. Make pilots roll for luck. A failure indicates he or she has been injured. Keeper's option on damage: broken glass, tail of monster, bashed head. Pressure drop.
- 2.) Passenger Cabin Punctured. Pressure Drop
- 3.) Fuselage Punctured
- 4.) Left wing top motor ripped off. Immediate pilot roll needed to avoid tailspin.
- 5.) Right wing top motor ripped off. See above.
- 6.) Left wing bottom motor torn off. See above.
- 7.) Right wing bottom motor torn off. See above.
- 8.) Baggage cabin punctured. Pressure drop.
- 9.) Window smashed. Possible damage if anyone was in the seat. Assign all ten windows a number, then roll a d.10. This will determine which window is busted. Work out damage. Pressure drop.
- 10.) Window smashed. See above.

See the section on Piloting in the 1920s (qv) on how to work out the events.

The Attack on the Plane: The pilot can try to get out of the cloud formation by racing five miles north, leaving the cloud formation, or drop down below the clouds. The beast will attack, and has a move of 11 while flying. An individual can open the roof hatch and climb to the roof. There are handles on the side, leading to the wings. Any attempt to shoot the creature should carry a percentage loss of the Keeper's ruling. It is windy, loud, and dangerous. If the player is brave enough, (or stupid enough, there's very little difference), to climb onto a wing, a climb roll or two should be ordered by the Keeper, with a luck roll every few rounds. If the Hunting Horror begins to become nicked up, it will take off for the time being. Its ultimate goal here is to knock the people out of the plane and see if a meal can be grabbed. People using a flash of a camera or an extremely bright light within 5 feet of the beast will scare it away for a few hours. This could give the players some ideas on the monster's vulnerability to light.

After the Attack: Should the plane return from the ground safely, insanity should manifest itself for those who lost more than 20% of their total sanity points. Dr. Orr, or if he is dead, one of his assistants, will recommend contact with Dr. Henry Armitage at Miskatonic University. He is known to have a great deal of knowledge on many esoteric topics. If the creature is shot down and killed, it will hit the ground and begin disintegrating almost immediately. The body will be gone within ten minutes. The gate will remain open and the terrible weather remains. Dr. Armitage may still be a good person to speak with about what has just transpired. It is up to the Keeper whether to let more creatures now enter into the world through the gate.

Dr. Henry Armitage: This is the pre-Dunwich Horror Armitage who is still quite unaware of the Cthulhu Mythos. When he is contacted, he states he will do some research on mythical flying beasts, but does not trust airplanes. He will never go in one for any reason save to keep his life, and will not go to the airport. If you have a character who can take the place of Armitage, all the better for continuity of play.

The Next Two Days: The next two days see terrible weather, and no news from Armitage. All flights have been canceled due to the constant lightning storms above. Five miles here in either direction, the weather is bright and everything is blooming. All foliage under the clouds have been pounded off by the hard rains. Players will now have time to possibly go up in the plane again, or do some research. Keepers, let the players lead the game for the time being, seeing what their thoughts are. The real reason the creature appeared may never be discovered, but a good word is on the way.

"This may be it": Dr. Armitage calls one of the surviving NPCs on the morning of Friday, May 7. "This may be it," Armitage states, then reads a passage from "an old book." The receiver of the call will write it down verbatim: "Flying creatures of night darken skies and choke the day Forever living in the death night but bring it into the bright light and it shall perish. Perish it and close the door to the other side, keeping man safe for another day. This has been played for thousands of years."

The Heroine Appears: Working for the aero-station, and following the previous events closely, is pilot Alysa Haugh. She is the only female pilot in the state, and the only female blimp pilot in New England. Many of the other pilots secretly feel she is a poor flyer, but she has enough support from certain senior pilots that no one speaks openly about her. She is a capable plane pilot, and an excellent blimp captain. She will later in life take a job with United Dirigibles in New York.

Alysa has heard from the pipeline that bright light may solve all there problems. She will approach investigators about her plan: Strapping an incendiary device atop the blimp and exploding it near the epicenter. Crew could be evacuated onto an airplane below. The blimp would be destroyed, but it would be better to lose that, than the airport.

Alysa can be left out of the scenario if you want players to try and figure this problem out for themselves. She can also be brought in if the players are really stuck or want to use the blimp.

Alysa the Brave: Alysa lost her husband years ago in the war and suffers from such great depression that death isn't seeming that bad. She dreams of an opportunity to prove her bravery, something which drives her. She is headstrong, but intelligent; fearless and uncaring about her own well being. Deeper still, is the wish to die.

Alysa the hero or fool?: Players may come up with their own solutions, but little less than an intense blast of bright light will seal the gate shut, and cease production of the dark and land drenching clouds. If Alysa's plan is agreed upon, she will tell them the steps to her plan. 1.) A minimal crew of two people board the blimp with the bomb aboard. 2.) A Vokker follows below them. 3.) An Avro comes to run

interference and shoot at anything up there. 3.) They all go up, and near the darkest clouds, Alysa will climb up and place to bomb atop the blimp via the crawlway to the top. She will tell everyone the bomb should not be placed there until the proper height has been reached, as it is too dangerous. This is not really true, but she wants this to be dangerous.

Evacuation: A ladder from the control booth will be lowered, and investigators need to make a climb roll, with any modifications the Keeper would like to put, to make it to the wing of the Vokker. A dexterity roll on a d.20 is needed to see if the cabin is reached safely. If not, allow players to make a luck roll. Success signifies the adventurer has grabbed onto a part of the wing, and now holding on for life. Have the pilot make a roll to keep the plane steady at this critical time. If the Luck roll fails, the player falls. Smart players will have donned parachutes. A Luck roll signifies the shoot opens and a safe landing will occur. A failure results in the character becoming one with the earth.

Alysa will not exit the blimp. She will remain at the opening with the bomb. The pilot should not wait, and any NPC pilot will get the plane away. Within a minute a huge explosion will be heard, with a blast of bright white light. Alysa will be remembered a hero. Any pilot foolish enough to keep a plane directly below the blimp waiting for Alysa is blown out of the sky.

Aftermath: Before the plane touches down, the sky is clearing. Clouds are being sucked into themselves, with everything pulling right into the blast. By touchdown, the sky will be bright and the ominous clouds gone. Alysa will be remembered by her peers for her bravery. The waiting station will be renamed for her.

Players involved in saving the aero-station, and all that money, will be rewarded by a \$1,000 check a piece. They will also be granted free passage on any of their flights for life by Boyle. The other investors, mostly rich Boston lawyers, will offer to give free or reduced legal services to investigators in a jam. Having an exceptional lawyer for little cost may be a great boon for those seeking out the truth of the Mythos.

Piloting in the Twenties: Later this year Congress will pass the Air Commerce Act of 1926. The aero-station is almost up to code without knowing it. The one violation would be that the orange wind strips are located atop the meteorology building. All pilots here are very skilled, and would have no problem securing a pilot's license. Most have experience from the Great War, but the younger fly-boys have been taught by one of the veterans.

Pressure Drop: Should a there become a puncture in a cabin or broken window, a pressure drop will occur. This may not be as bad as it seems. Most planes flying short routes often had pilot windows open, so a quick change of atmosphere is not as serious as it is today with pressurized cabins. The quick take in of air and moisture can affect the plane immensely however. Two successful pilot rolls are needed to keep the plane steady. If there is success, the plane is cold, windy and noisy, but passengers can still breathe. Anyone not wearing a seat belt needs to make a resistance roll of SIZ/15. If failure occurs, the person is sucked at the window, and is jammed. Pulling the individual in requires a STR(s)/25. Many tries can be made, but heavy pulling can cause internal injuries to the person.

If pilot rolls fail, the plane will either spin or nose dive.

Nose Dive: Something has caused the plane to head straight down. A pilot roll must be made at -30 to pull the craft up and level it off. Pilot may make one roll for every 1000 feet of a drop. Add -20% more to each roll. The second roll will be at -50%, the third -70%, the fourth -90%, the fifth - well.... A fifth roll, an automatic failure, indicates unconsciousness of all on board and a quite smashing end.

Spins: There are two types of spins: the standard, (wing-over-wing), and the tail-spin, (end over end). Make the pilot roll for Luck. Success indicates a standard spin. Failure equals a tail-spin.

Standard spins: Successful pilot roll gets the plane back in balance. A failure indicates another spin. Another roll is needed at -20%. Subtract twenty more percent up to four total rolls. Four failed rolls indicate the plane is out of control and gone into a nose dive.

Tail spin: A body-over-tail-tail-over-body is a very dangerous predicament. A pilot must make two successful rolls, the first at -20% and the second at -30%. If failure occurs, the next pilot may take his rolls. Both failures indicate the plane is in a nose dive.

Principle Characters:

Rex Lewis

Occupation: Pilot Sex: M Age: 27
Birthplace: Boston, MA

ST: 13 DEX: 15 INT: 13 IDEA: 65
CON: 15 APP: 11 POW: 15 LUCK: 75
SIZ: 13 SAN: 75 EDU: 13 KNOW: 65
Sanity points: 75 Magic Points: 15 Hit Points: 14

Skills: Accounting: 10 Climb: 55 Conceal: 77 Dodge: 43 Drive Auto: 50
Electrical Repair: 40 First Aid: 47 Hide: 50 Jump: 43 Listen: 77 Navigate:
79 Pilot Airplane: 79 Ride: 68 Spot Hidden: 78 Firearms: Handgun: 65
Machine Gun: 45 Rifle: 55 Shotgun: 30 Submachine Gun: 52 Hand-To-Hand:
Fist/punch: 48 Head Butt: 25 Kick: 25 Grapple: 33
Carries a 9mm semi-automatic in coat at all times.

Bannister Denning

Occupation: Pilot Sex: M Age: 46
Birthplace: Haverhill, MA

ST: 12 DEX: 13 INT: 15 IDEA: 75
CON: 14 APP: 11 POW: 17 LUCK: 85
SIZ: 12 SAN: 85 EDU: 14 KNOW: 70
Sanity Points: 85 Magic Points: 85 Hit Points: 13

Skills: Dodge: 31 Drive Auto: 74 Electrical Repair: 50 First Aid: 58
Listen: 21 Mechanical Repair: 65 Navigate: 84 Pilot Aircraft: 86 Spot
Hidden: 66 Firearms: Handgun: 75 Machine Gun: 50 Rifle: 59 Shotgun: 44
Submachine Gun: 35 Hand-To-Hand: Fist/punch: 45 Head Butt: 79 Kick: 25
Grapple: 40
Carries a 9mm semi-automatic in coat at all times.

Alysa Haugh

Occupation: Pilot Sex: F Age: 29
Birthplace: Boston, MA

ST: 9 DEX: 15 INT: 13 IDEA: 65
CON: 17 APP: 14 POW: 13 LUCK: 65
SIZ: 9 SAN: 65 EDU: 11 KNOW: 55
Sanity points: 65 Magic Points: 13 Hit Points: 14

Skills: Drive Auto: 65 Electrical Repair: 25 Listen: 50 Mechanical Repair:
43 Navigate: 75 Persuade: 66 Pilot Airplane: 66 Pilot Blimp: 85 Spot
Hidden: 69 Firearms: Handgun: 35 Machine Gun: 30 Rifle: 20 Shotgun: 25
Submachine Gun: 15 Hand-To-Hand: Fist/Punch: 25 Head Butt: 15 Kick: 45
Grapple: 15