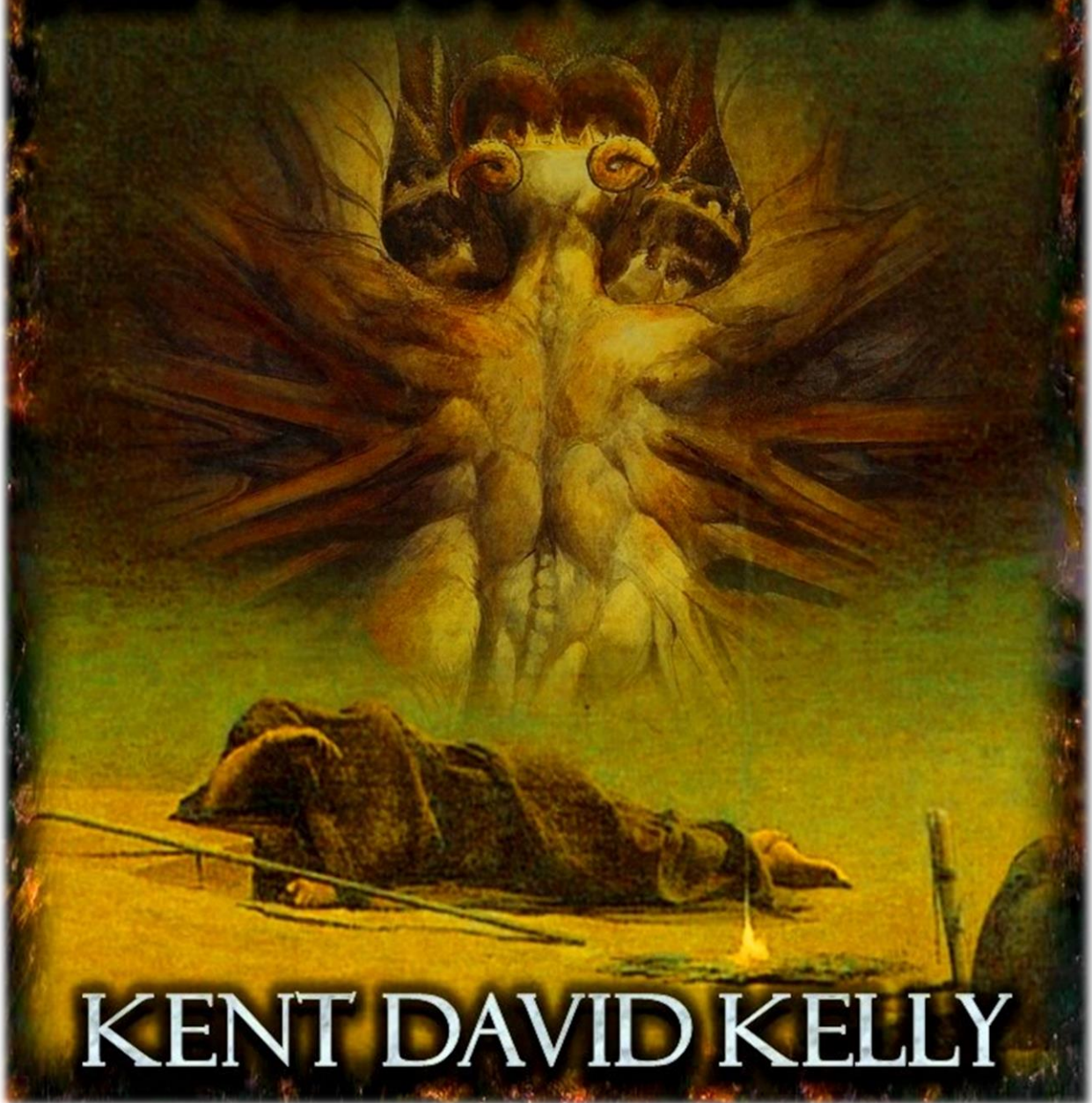
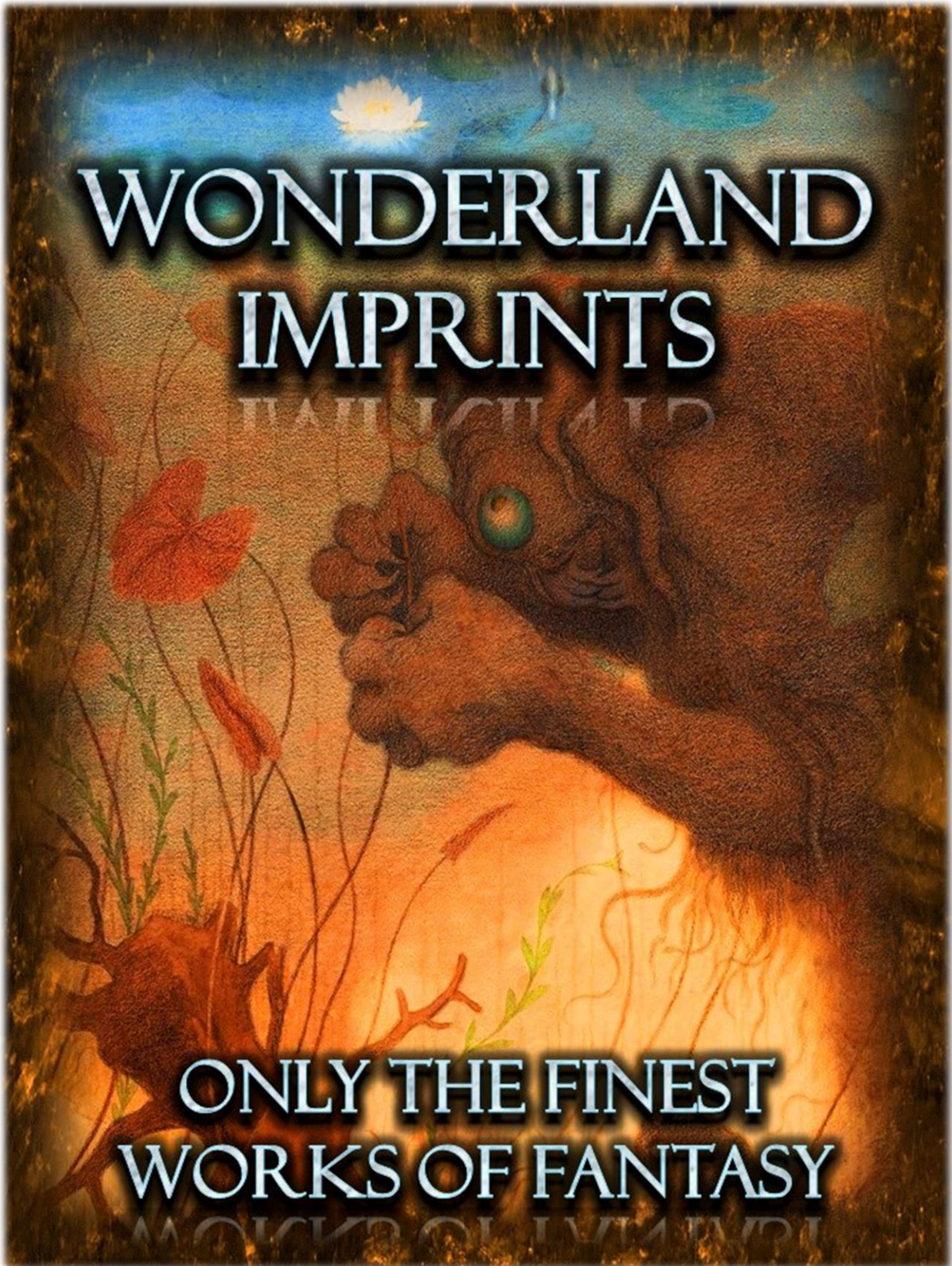


THE OLDSKULL NECRONOMICON



KENT DAVID KELLY



CASTLE OLDSKULL

FANTASY ROLE-PLAYING SUPPLEMENT

LOVI

THE OLDSKULL NECRONOMICON

BY

KENT DAVID KELLY

(DARKSERAPHIM)

THE NECRONOMICON SERIES (I ~ III)

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WONDERLAND IMPRINTS
2017

ONLY THE FINEST
WORKS OF FANTASY

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O S R

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Please feel welcome to contact the author at shadowed_sky@hotmail.com with comments, questions, requests, recommendations and greetings. And thank you for reading!

“Only the Finest Works of Fantasy”

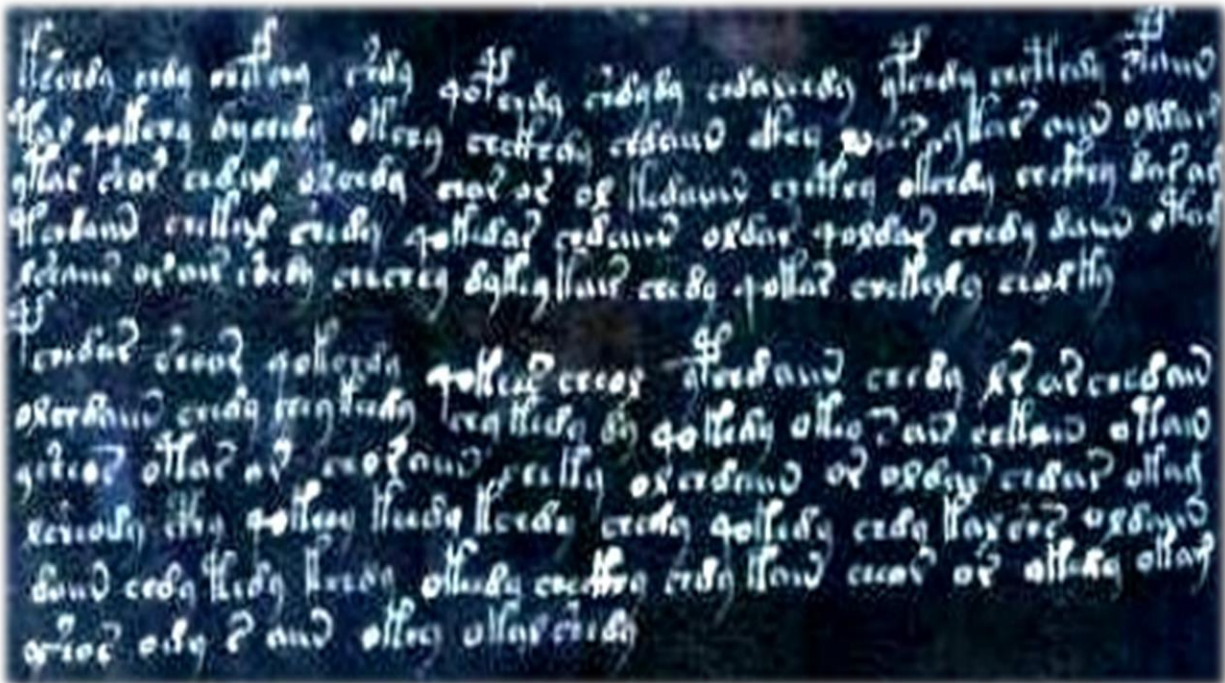
HIC SVNT DRACONES

HERE THERE BE DRAGONS

CASTLE OLDSKULL ("Old School") is a well-regarded, system neutral line of supplements designed for use in Fantasy Role-Playing Games (FRPGs). Available formats include PDF, paperback, and Kindle e-book.

Ideas are presented in such a way that they can be used or customized for any edition game, from the 1970s to the present day. These volumes exemplify the iconic "sandbox," do-it-yourself, and free-form ideals established by the original Lake Geneva campaigns, c. 1972-1979. Respected sources of inspiration include Arneson, Barker, Bledsaw, Burroughs, Dunsany, Gygas, Holmes, Howard, Kask, Kuntz, Leiber, Lovecraft, Merritt, Moldvay, Moorcock, Sutherland, Tolkien, Trampier, Vance and Ward.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the memory of the great classic dungeon and fantasy milieu designers who are no longer with us:

*David Lance Arneson,
M.A.R. Barker,
Bob Bledsaw,
E. Gary Gygax,
Dr. John Eric Holmes,
Tom Moldvay,
and David Trampier.*

It is also dedicated to the great fantasists who inspired them, some of whom are fortunately still with us today:

*Poul William Anderson,
Edgar Rice Burroughs,
L. Sprague de Camp,
Robert E. Howard,
Fritz Leiber,
Howard Phillips Lovecraft,
Michael Moorcock,
J.R.R. Tolkien,
and Jack Vance.*

In the spirit of creating wonders with which to inspire others to write their own unique works of enchantment, the author salutes you.

EMPOWERING YOUR IMAGINATION: WHAT THIS BOOK IS, AND WHAT IT IS NOT

Attention e-reader, video and computer gamers!

This book is *not* a game in and of itself. If you bought this book thinking it was a complete game you could read and play, you should probably return this book now.

This is a book to help you create your own adventures for Fantasy Role-Playing Games. This is a fantasy adventure toolbox, an imagination engine.

If you enjoy creating stories with your friends, envisioning netherworlds filled with dragons and treasure and designing fantasy worlds all your own, then you will find that this book is an ideal Game Master (GM) tool. This book will help you to create and improve dungeon adventures, featuring more intriguing locales, more mysterious histories, and more surprising twists and turns than ever before.

This is not a complete game. Your dedication and creativity are required.

DESCRIPTION

That is not dead which can eternal lie,

And with strange aeons, even Death may die.

(Al Azif, Necronomicon, Scroll 50, fin.)

THE GREATEST NECROMANCER of H. P. Lovecraft's Cthulhu Mythos, Abdul Alhazred, comes to vivid and haunting life in this compelling first codex from the most fabled and infamous grimoire of black magic that the world has ever known: THE NECRONOMICON.

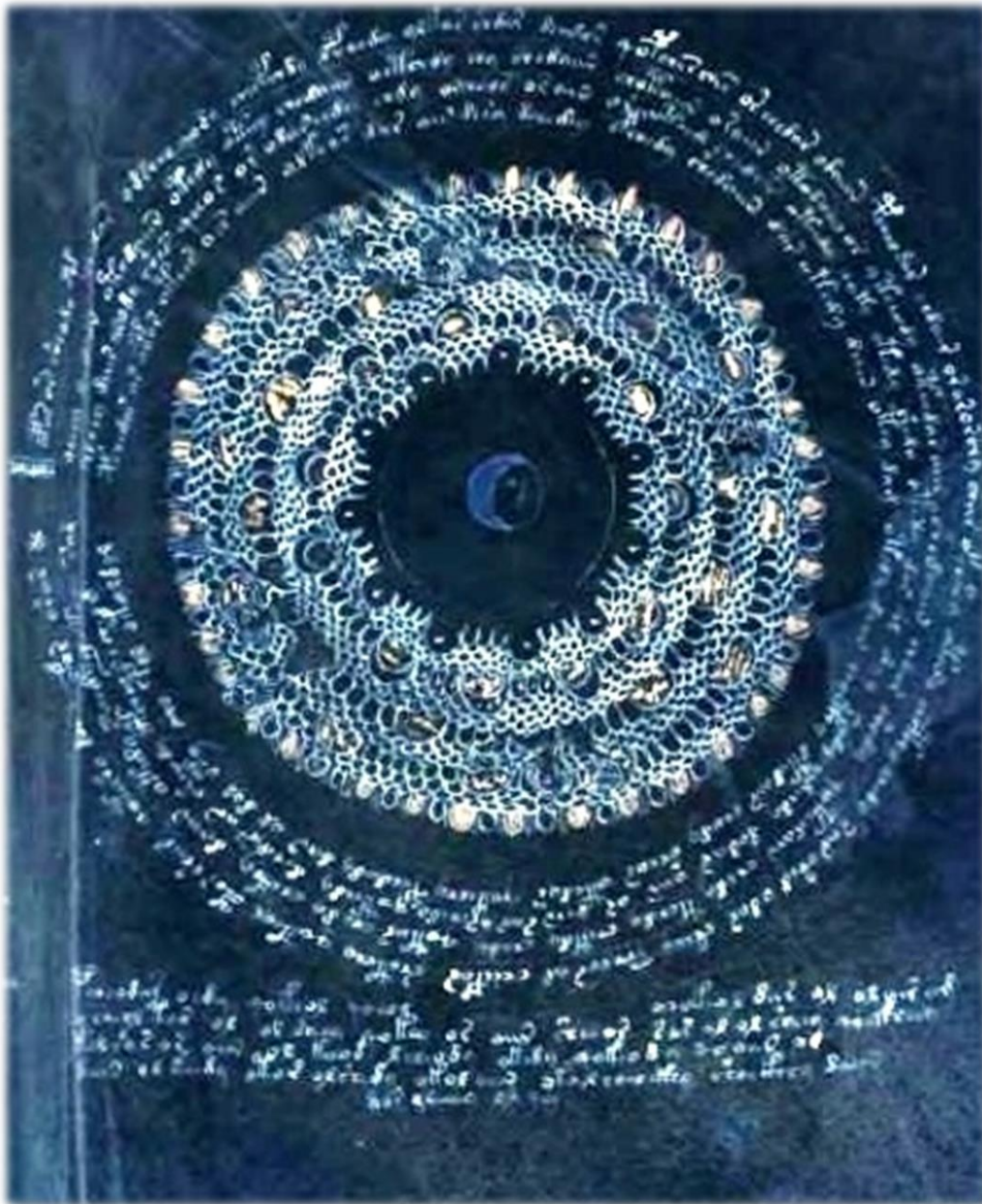
This book is a treasure trove for any Game Master who wants to embrace the old school of Fantasy Role-Playing Games. Herein lie the terrible secrets of Great Cthulhu and his cult, of the sunken city of R'lyeh, of Alhazred's necromantic incantations, of the Nameless City, of Nyarlathotep, and the horrible cannibalistic Ghuls who stalk the storm-wrought wastelands of Yemen and Arabia. But know this: where horrors stride from between the spheres, there rises beauty as well. Experience the wonders of the life of Alhazred: the spice caravans, the Tower of Babel, the Hanging Gardens, the unearthly paradise of doomed Sarnath within the Dreamlands, and share in his dark adventures as he seeks to resurrect his lost beloved, the murdered Adaya. What is the horrible secret of Adaya's second life, and how did Alhazred come to be the death-sworn enemy of the Cult of Cthulhu? All of the answers are to be found in The Oldskull Necronomicon.

Part epic horror, part dark fantasy, and part tomb-delving adventure, this book is not just an FRPG supplement. (Although it is that, first and foremost, and designed to fully support the Castle Oldskull line of releases.) Further, it is a vast and ambitious chronicle, the first of an epic series of tales exploring the revelations of the Cthulhu Mythos, meticulously researched as never before. It's all here, structured as a fascinating tale which will entertain and move you as it inspires you to use the worlds of H. P. Lovecraft, Robert E. Howard, and the World of Oldskull in your own old school FRPG campaign.

(49,500 words, 240 pages.)

Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn ~

In his house at R'lyeh, dead Cthulhu waits dreaming.



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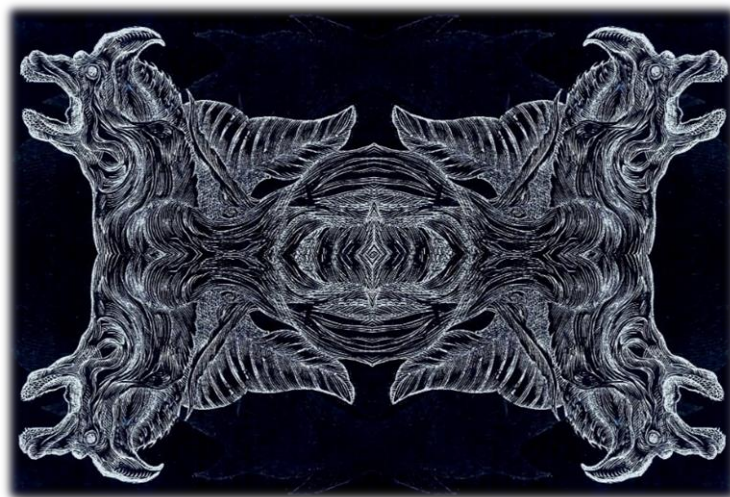
INTRODUCTION



A REVERIE: CONCERNING THE TRANSLATION AND RELEASE OF ALHAZRED'S NECRONOMICON

"As for ... the *Necronomicon* — I wish I had the energy and ingenuity to do it. I fear it would be quite a job in view of the very diverse passages and intimations ... I might, though, issue an abridged *Necronomicon* ... When von Juntz's *Black Book* and the poems of Justin Geoffrey are on the market, I shall certainly have to think about the immortalization of old Abdul."

— Howard Philips Lovecraft,
in a letter to Robert E. Howard,
written May 7, 1932.



MASKS OF MADNESS: THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE NECRONOMICON

By Professor Kent David Kelly

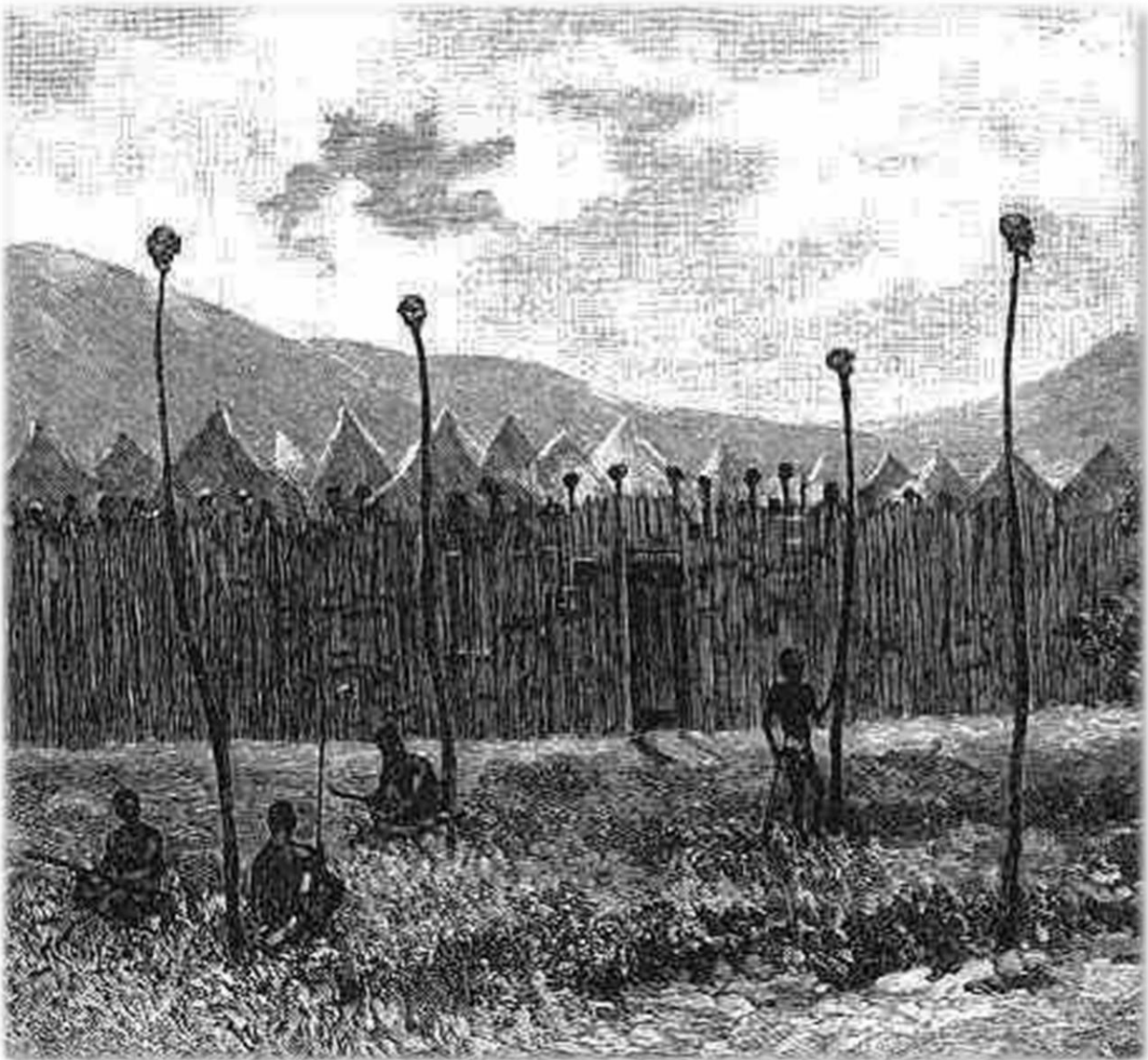
(Librarian and Keeper, reader must present Emeritus-IV Miskatonic University Authorization to proceed beyond this page. There shall be no exceptions, most especially including anyone who appears to be myself. ~K)



The original title of the work which has become known to us as the *Necronomicon* is *Al Azif*. *Azif*, in Arabic, can be vaguely interpreted as “sibilance,” or “cries which insects make in the night.” It can also mean “the howling of the Jinn.” This sound was believed in ancient times to be the howling of *ghuls* (corpse eaters), *jinn* (genies), or *dao* (demons) as they rose up from beneath the desert sands to feed on mortal flesh.

Al Azif was written by Abd Al-Azrad, known more commonly and incorrectly (in the approximated transliteration rendered by H. P. Lovecraft) as Abdul Alhazred. Al-Azrad, then known to his rivals and audiences as “the mad one who sings,” was a Yemenese poet and chanter who lived in the city of Sana’a during the Umayyad Caliphate, flourishing perhaps around the year 700 A.D.

His wanderings were many and legendary. Seeking the truth behind the dementia-induced visions he frequently suffered from, Al-Azrad visited the ruins of Babylon and the necropoli beneath the Egyptian city of Memphis. He journeyed through many other lost lands, from Sumer to the fabled spice-land of Punt and even further beyond, into Africa and elsewhere.



For a full decade (a time during which he was declared dead and his fortune forsaken), he traveled alone through the Rub' al Khali itself. The Rub' al Khali of Arabia is still known to this age as the “Great Emptiness,” one of the vastest and most deadly deserts in all the world.

To this day, tribal superstitions hold that the Khali desert is the sacred domain of the *jinn*, the *rabisu* (leaping demon), *Pazuzu* (perhaps made most familiar through the movie *The Exorcist*), and the vampiric *lamia*. When Al-Azrad — isolate, shattered, revelatory and

thoroughly insane — emerged from the Khali after ten years of wanderings, he was deemed by the many to be “reborn,” a man who had been dragged down into the netherworld by the spirits and gifted with a second “blackest life.” Indeed, in Jerusalem and the Holy Land, he was then to become known in some heretical sects (circa 730 A.D.) as the Second Coming of Lazarus.

(As a deeper heresy, some Apocryphal scrolls which were burned after the Second Council of Nicaea in 787 A.D. went so far as to name Al-Azrad as a prophet and even “the second rising of Jesual,” or Jesus. Such records have been savagely suppressed and incinerated by the Church in every century, to the point that the last known allusive quoting of such material was lost to fire in 1932, to be recorded only in the secret diaries of Lovecraft.)

Al-Azrad’s life remains an enigma. Although the intrigued, nocturnal audiences for his babbled “poetry of visions” and “songs of the *Azif*” grew ever larger with his newfound infamy and return from the Khali, Al-Azrad had been irreversibly scarred and aged by his trials in the wasteland. In the end, spurned as a “*rabisu*” himself and refused solace by the very astrologers whom he had enriched with his many written prophecies, Al-Azrad dwelt alone as a starveling and vagabond in the alleyways of Damascus. He is said to have died in 738 A.D., perhaps at the age of seventy, although his face was told “to bear the cast of centuries, and the curses of a thousand dying worlds.”

His death is a matter of some confusion. Some sources record that he died of the “crumbling disease” (leprosy) or seizures of madness, while others speak strictly of murder. All of these early accounts save one are regarded as (and indeed, are confessed by their authors to be) unreliable hearsay of the second- or third-hand. However, his primary and only reliable biographer — the scholar of Egypt and Aleppo, Shams Ibn Khallikan — wrote of Al-Azrad in his *Wafayat al-a’yan wa-anba’ abna’ az-zaman* (*Deaths of Eminent Men and History of the Sons of the Epoch*), which was first released as a single handwritten scroll in 1264 A.D.

Khallikan’s original, untainted account declares that Al-Azrad:



“... was seized by the claws of a Beast whose face and flesh could not be seen, in the high light of the Seventh Sun Before the Bells. He was butchered over the Yellow Market of the *Qafila al-Bedouin* (caravan of the wanderers). There in the seventh light, the great Lord of Songs was devoured bodily, and his thrashing limbs were seen to be torn apart in the very air, and swallowed by a Nothingness. Indeed, as the sky-held fragments of the Second and Sacred (Al-Azrad) gushed with gouts of blood, the blood itself gave shape to the Beast around him, filling the air with veins. Two hundred and more are the souls who beheld his fate. So sayeth the fragment of the Alexandrian scroll before me.”



Unsurprisingly, this passage was expurgated from all editions of the *Wafayat* which were published after 1274 A.D., and the majority of Ibn Khallikan's works were burned soon after his own death in October of 1282.

Of Al-Azrad's own "holy demon" (his internal voice of madness), many more things are told. Al-Azrad insisted "through the Voice" that he had beheld Irem, the City of Pillars, which to this day lies lost in the region of Iobaritae (Ubar). Indeed, he brought back crystallized "violet frankincense," a curious spice which was said to send anyone who breathed its smoke into a revelatory frenzy.

Until Al-Azrad revealed his cache of this crystal, the substance had not been seen in Yemen in over seven hundred years.

In the labyrinths beneath another wasteland ruin, which is known only as the Nameless City, he is said to have discovered the secret of the Sheshak'ul'thrai: the *thu-baan'i*, or "serpent-walkers." The *thu-baan'i*, he insisted, were a race of "viper-striders," who descended from an age of "dragons in the flesh" (dinosaurs?) and whose origins predated humanity itself. There too, in the mazes of the Nameless, Al-Azrad is said to have deciphered unrecoverable petroglyphs which revealed the terrible secrets of the sinister elder Dragon Age.

His ramblings were seen by many as sacred, despite his own irreligious nature. As a Yemeni free spirit, Al-Azrad was not regarded as either a *Sufi* or a holy man who held rigidly to any of the known world's religions. Rather, he confessed (in his *Al Azif*) to worshipping two great entities, or gods, one of which he called 'Umr at-Tawil, or Yog-Sothoth. The other he called the Great Cthulhu. Translation of the full *Al Azif* also reveals that for a time he served the Lord in Ebon, Nyarlathotep. His worship of these entwined and timeless powers, he insisted, was a fatal sacrifice which he made willingly in the name of Man.

It appears (and this is highly arguable due to his ranting, conflicting accounts and refutations at various times in his life) that Al-Azrad believed that by worshipping these "un-gods," he was silencing them in his mind, and thereby prolonging the time in which he was still in control of his own flesh and capable of writing down the secrets of the Elder Age, so that "the Men of tomorrow might avert the Great Dying for a moon, if not for an aeon." Whatever the truth of this matter, it seems that he did not worship (or pretend to worship) either Yog-Sothoth or Cthulhu until late in his life. Indeed, more

partial and fragmentary translations of the *Necronomicon* than this current volume omit the crucial coded pages referring directly to Al-Azrad's duplicitous practices in such dark worship of the un-gods.

Due to the man's infamy, his constantly-proven predictions coming to pass, and the grisly tales told of his death, Al-Azrad's writings were still well known among the scholars and mystics of later centuries. Versions of *Al Azif* therefore passed into the Byzantine Empire, and even to Constantinople itself (and perhaps so far as the fabled Scholomance of Romania, where legend tells us that Vlad Tepes later learned the unholy blood rituals of *Al Azif*, and so became known as the Son of the Dragon, or "Dracula"). By 920 A.D., Al-Azrad's work was well-enough known in Occidental and alchemical circles that it came to be regarded as "a vile blasphemy, awash with the blackest of lies" by the Holy Church (specifically, by Johannes, Pope John X of Romagna). We are left to wonder if any of the heretical scrolls which named Al-Azrad as a second "Lazarus" or "Jesual" were in the possession of the Church of Constantinople at that time as well.

By circa 950 A.D., a monk of the Eastern Orthodox Church — one Theodorus Philetas, whose name means "beloved gift of God" — dared to translate *Al Azif* into Greek, re-titling it as the *Nekronomikon*. Despite violent suppression of the work (and the rumored torture and slow Mithraditic poisoning of Philetas himself), the *Nekronomikon* was further copied and found in the libraries of several European alchemists during the 10th and 11th centuries. This clandestine dissemination came to an abrupt end in 1050 A.D., when the Patriarch Michael Keroularios (I) of Constantinople issued a decree for the work's "universal and manifest collection, with all immediacy." In other words, he demanded that all copies of the work be seized for clandestine destruction.

Records are fragmentary, but it is said that several dozen copies of the work (most of them hand-copied) were unearthed by Michael's inquisitors, then summarily taken and burned. There is certainly reason to believe that the original Arabic manuscript of Al-Azrad, the singular scroll-bundle entitled *Al Azif*, perished in these flames as well; but the author of this work has reason to doubt and refute this assertion.

Surely, some few copies of the tome did survive the purge, but this ominous declaration of Christian hatred for the work and its ideas sent a grim and certain message to the remaining holders of the *Nekronomikon* in 1050 and beyond. Until the 13th century, whispers of its existence (and oblique quotations from its rituals) were fragmentary and so cryptic as to be unrecognizable by any but the most obsessive of knowing scholars. It

can be argued that much of the art-veiled cryptology which was developed by alchemists and artists in the 11th through 16th centuries was a reaction not only against the Inquisition, but also as a means of coding the *Nekronomikon*'s survival into other works.

It is only in 1228 A.D. that the writings of Al-Azrad bloomed and scattered into Europe's philosophical *esoterica* once again. An obscure antiquarian (and Dominican monk?) by the name of Olaus Wormius — not to be confused with the famous Danish physician Wormius of the later 1600s — dared to produce a new translation, the *Necronomicon*, in Latin. Wormius is said to have been strappadoed to death for revealing this blasphemy. His single hand-scribed *Necronomicon* was never discovered by the Church (and he died in torture while refusing to betray its location), and scribal copies derived from his edition would come to light in Mainz and Iberia as early as 1231.

(*Note bene:* It should be understood that in a prefatory passage of his own Al-Azrad translation, Wormius implied that he was working from the Philetas *Nekronomikon*, and that the Yemenese *Al Azif* had been entirely lost. If this *is* true — and this author, for one, contests this account — it therefore stands to reason that the earliest and most authentic surviving tomes still remaining today would be found to be written in Byzantine Greek. Whatever the truth of *Al Azif*'s survival may be, the last known extant original Greek copy was burned in Salem, Massachusetts during the witch hysteria of 1692.)

The Wormius edition (along with any surviving Greek editions, should they someday be found) was declared heretical by Ugolino di Conti — known to history as Pope Gregory IX — in 1232, prior to his own fearful refuge at Anagni. Indeed, it is very likely that his founding of the Papal Inquisition in 1231 was a direct yet secret response to the *Necronomicon*'s (re)discovery. An unknown number of copies were burned, as were many heretics at the stake; and references to the whispers of Al-Azrad are almost entirely absent from even the most secret and encrypted European histories written during the years 1233 to 1450. Indeed, this is the first age of in which we can discern the phenomenon of “encrypted artwork,” which would later bloom into a wave of widespread occult symbolism, with secret messages being embedded in many of the artistic works created during the Renaissance.

Despite widespread suppression, the masterwork *Necronomicon* itself lived on. Following soon after that famed pre-industrial miracle — the invention of Johannes Gutenberg's printing press, in either 1449 or 1450 — certain “black letter” German editions of the Wormius *Necronomicon* began to appear in Mainz, and then throughout

continental Europe, in the mid-15th century. (This author has reason to believe that this “black” edition of Al-Azrad’s words was prepared circa 1452-1455 A.D. However, the quizzical line of inquiry which led me to this hypothesis is tenuous, and beyond the scope of the current work.) At some point in the 17th century, another even more haphazard copy of this edition was released in an “anonymous squall” somewhere in Spain.

“Black” *Necronomicons* from these two printings are entirely uncredited, for the publishers certainly knew quite well the ends to which the unfortunate Phileas and Wormius had come. Typographical evidence points unreliably toward either a Madrid or Lisbon release for the 17th century edition, and a once-tentative Mainz sourcing for the earlier German “black” is now a matter of certainty. As a curiosity, it should also be noted that a far less-known printing of the Greek Phileas *Nekronomikon* was published in either Florence or Milan circa 1525 A.D. This “Italian” edition is partial, shoddy and improperly collated, yet still priceless due to its own partial preservation of the first direct translation.

Unsurprisingly considering the Church’s violent reaction to *all* editions of the *Necronomicon*, the work was never translated into English until the late 1500s by the Doctor John Dee. Dee’s unique work in this regard was certainly further copied by several learned gentlemen (including my own ancestor, Sir Edward Kell[e]y), but the Dee *Necronomicon*, or *Sibillance*, was never officially published. A uniquely transcribed and handwritten partial derivative of Dee’s work surfaced much later through the Whateley family of Dunwich.

Dee’s own original text was believed to have been lost (save for in quoted fragments), but the existence of this electronic edition of his work shall constitute sufficient evidence that the Dee manuscript did indeed survive in its damaged entirety. The majority of the encoded Dee manuscript, supplemented by several Al-Azrad scrolls discovered in Syria, is currently in the possession of this author. Originally, the Dee manuscript was owned by one Clarice Whateley of Cambridge, Massachusetts. Sourcing the document to earlier owners with any degree of certainty has proven to be problematic.

The challenges we face now are in deciphering the *Necronomicon*’s encrypted passages; in organizing the “scrolls,” or originally-directed chapters; and in finding, purchasing, curating and decrypting those Apocryphal sections which have sadly gone missing from museum and university collections in recent decades.

It must be noted that the few other confirmed copies of the *Necronomicon* are exceedingly difficult to access. One damaged German “black” exists in the special Culpeper Collection, locked away in the inaccessible sub-archives beneath the British Museum. Another near-pristine, but wildly annotated, Iberian “black” is said to lie in a bulletproof glass case among the Strozier-derivative special collection of the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris. One more (Iberian?) copy is certainly located in the secure memorial collection of the Widener Library at Harvard, and the nonesuch (English and Latin?) “Whateley” derivative still resides in the Miskatonic University at Arkham. Another, perhaps Italian, example is said to be held by the University of Buenos Aires. Other reports of the book in private collections are rampant, but in the end amount more to rumor, lie and speculation than actual fact. The number of accessible copies of this work — for 99.999% of humanity, at least — has remained at zero, until now.

The last “public” person who is known to have read and used the *Necronomicon* is Robert W. Chambers, who alluded to several of its otherwise unpublished passages in his “fictional” work *The King in Yellow* in 1895. He is believed to have somehow stumbled across a fragmentary “black” in the antiquarian side-shops of Soho in the early 1890s. Of course, textual evidence points firmly at another secret owner of the *Necronomicon* being Howard Philips Lovecraft of Providence, Rhode Island. Lovecraft certainly built his decades-long writing career upon the tome’s many revelations, brilliantly disguised as epistolary fiction. What may have happened to his (actually, his grandfather’s) copy of the book following Howard’s death in 1937, however, will likely never be known.

Despite all of these losses, resurgences and suppressions over 1,300 years, the *Necronomicon* lives on.

And so has the mad voice of Al-Azrad — defying all attempts at annihilation — paradoxically ensured both his obscurity and his immortality. The tale of the *Necronomicon*’s creation, publication and survival is one of the most convoluted in lexicographical history, yet this fractional sketch should suffice to “lay the dark land” for the curious reader to explore. There is much more of the *Necronomicon*’s history to be learned, and regrettably there is much that has come to light which I cannot yet reveal. Thus ends my cursory history of the *Necronomicon*. Further evidentiary details in this author’s possession, of course — concerning my own possession of the Dee *Necronomicon*, and its former acquisition by one Clarice Whateley — must remain secret at this time in the name of my *own* survival. Forgive.

Seek the truth, treading lightly. May the sibilliance speak to you.

Kent David Kelly

Samhain, 2017.



THE SECRET TOME OF DR. JOHN DEE

(The inner cover of the John Dee Necronomicon reads thusly:)

KITAB AL AZIF

The Codex of the Sibillance,

Being Known to Olaus Wormius

As the NECRONOMICON,

(Or, Rather)

The Paths and Images of Death,

In Dreaming

Being a Second Translation

Of the Remnants Most Fragmentary

Of the Death-Scroll Confessions of One

Abd Al-Azrad

Ex Libris

Dr. John Dee,

Translator Secundus

Ever the Servant to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth,
Anno MDLXXXVI



A CURIOUS INSCRIPTION

(The following inscription was discovered between the two glued-together parchments at the beginning of Dr. John Dee's Necronomicon, scrawled in cipher and in his own faded hand. This sealed text was discovered and read with a backlit camera flash; the pages themselves still remain sealed, for any attempt to physically split the pages would surely cause them to crumble into dust. The good Doctor's deciphered words read as follows:)



Be it known, this sole tome is mine elemental translation of that black *grimoire* of Sana'a, which I did find beneath the undercrofts of the great cathedral library of Prague. In serendipity, turned by the immortal hand of Fate, this black book I did descry and so unearth only through the spiritual guidance of mine own seer and speaker unto the Fallen and the Glorious Angels, Edward Kelley, a labor we did begin in the cold of the year MDLXXXVI.

By the guidance of Kelley and the tongue of the guardian spirit, despite my own seer's betrayal in years hence; in all my own years' bitter fadings, I alone have toiled under this, the ever-recursive translation of the Blood-Song of the Mad One. From not only the Latin of Wormius but too, from the tongues of Araby, the Aklo and the Naacal, verily have I rendered every scroll's own riddling passage to the utmost of my prowess — feeble though it has proven — and into the Queen's Own Language.

And yet, those most heretical of the Mad One's confessions (for they are many) have been encrypted by mine own hand into the Enochian tongue, as it was gloriously revealed to me through Kelley my vaunted sage. Too, the most blasphemous passages of all have been encrypted and locked by myself with the *Key of Enoch and of God*.

You who do receive this writing, who darest in the manner of your searching: as you have done this in the name of thine own will, and not in the name of God; in finding this blackest glory, you too know well where you shall find the *One Key* which I have rendered, that which shall unlock and translate all.





(Note: This editor has reason to believe that Clarice Whateley received the sole manuscript of this decoding work, this Enochian Key of One, through private and select agreement via Sotheby's London in 1986. Further, there is reason to believe that the text of the Key itself had originally been stolen by an "archaeologist" of questionable background, a gentleman by the name of Iacob Tillinghast, who is recorded as a dig assistant to the international team which disinterred the remains of Dee at Mortlake, Richmond in 1892. K.)



And so is all that follows mine own humble translation of the confessions of the Mad Sage of Yemen, the *Kitab Al Azif* of Al-Azrad, rendered so the *Sibilance*, entitled by the heretic-priests among the Romans as *NECRONOMICON*.

I remain beyond all Inquisition.

O Father, O Majesty,

I have done as I am commanded by mine will. Forgive me.

— Mortlake,

XIII Septembre, MDCVIII.

007

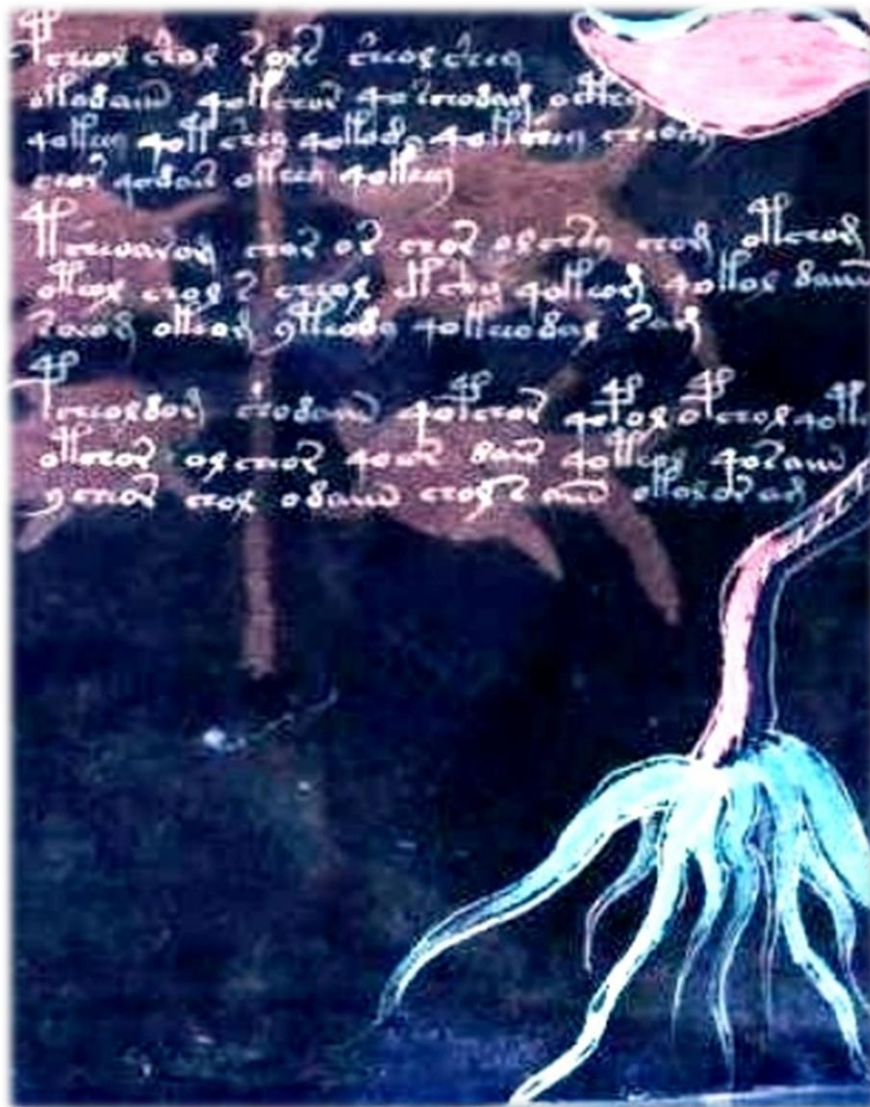
GATHERING THE FIRST:

SANA'A AND THE IDEAL

11

SCROLL I

OF THE KEYING OF MINDS:
AND SO SHALL YE BECOME THE BEHOLDER
OF GREAT CTHULHU'S RISING



(The text of the Kitab Al Azif of Abd Al-Azrad, translated and encrypted by Doctor John Dee, decoded by Kent David Kelly, begins thusly, with a warning of the reader's possession by Al-Azrad:)



FOOL AND DREAMER, you who in a slaughterer's delight unbury this, you who set eyes upon this accursed scroll, I, Al-Azrad, ask of you:

Before which of the untrue Gods have you fallen, to beg upon your knee in sin? By whose King have you been cursed to this cruelest end? To read this is to be caged in revelation, and now you shall forevermore be my slave.

For only the untouchable shall read of these words; for only the dead, eternal, shall inscribe the final cantus unto this, *Kitab Al Azif*, the chronicle of the Many, so the Sibillance which shall never be as one.

By God and too, by King, in certainty you are forsaken, compelled to set your mind within this skin, this undying flesh of the one who now inscribes you, here within the first of all worlds' ending; these are the meditations and confessions of your master,

Abd Al-Azrad.

In suffering, your silence shall be the testament of my years, these words the merest remnant of my love, my shame, my death which is soon to come: a blessing, all in ending. Read herein of all my suffering, fool and dreamer. In oblivion, be one with me. Judge me, delight and know thy pleasure only through me, forever hereafter.



You shall be the vessel, and I the mind. Live through me unto the End. Read and walk where I have walked, whisper my incantations and so bring forth the madness, that which I have suffered in the name of the unreachable, eternity.

Love as I have loved.

To entwine with my slain beloved is to know the ice-ebb of the Worm, her kiss upon thy tongue. To linger as a thrill over my shame is to live thine own life accursed, as my own heart has lived and begged to beat no longer.

Feast, prideful one who readeth me. Taste deeply of my grief.

To behold the incantations locked herein is to know the eye of oblivion, to gaze upon these secrets is to by Them, forever, be seen. To deny my truth and the truth of Chaos is to bear the mark of death which now sets upon me.



And so, the mark of the hunt is now the unfelt blood upon thy brow. As you are now the vessel of myself, so They shall hunt you in turn. In ending me, so shall They pursue you. By my inscriptions you are scented, in my annihilation are you beheld. In delighting in my sorrows, you now beckon Them to find you.

In the ritual of veils, in the keying of minds, your immolation shall be Their gateway.



'Umr at-Tawil, the All in One, Yog-Sothoth is one with the eye inside the gate. Yog-Sothoth is the key which unlocks the prey, Yog-Sothoth is the guardian whose shadow shall coil and constrict the heart of thee. Lock unto gate, gate unto key, past after present and so to future, all minds and ages are ever one, in the eye of *'Umr at-Tawil*.

Let the soul trapped inside you gaze into me: the dream of black R'lyeh rises, and never again your dreaming shall be your own.



Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn,

In his palace in high R'lyeh, dead Cthulhu waits in dreaming.



Through thy last rapture, destine, in the name of Nephren-Ka, thrall to Nitocris, you who believe you stand shall kneel before the one Black Pharaoh in adoration. You who believe yourself unchained must now take up the hand that is licked by beasts. You who believe you shall stride alone, as one isolate truth amongst the real, shall become as one within, one with all our Legion, we the swallowed, we the Crawling of the Chaos.

To the very stars unto the end of time, you, fool and friend, shall scribe your name beneath mine own, into the Blackened Codex of Azathoth.



Beguiled, to Him you shall descend, overturned and so ascending. For the root of the gate is the rind of Sana'a. Far beneath the earth, you will stand upon the peak of the abyss, that deep height which the unlit lords raised as a mantle over the highest spires of the netherworld.

The seven hundred steps you shall tread into tomorrow. So shall you walk the stairs, unto the Gates of Deeper Slumber.

The Eden-lost, the wondrous forest beyond the opening shall be thy hunting ground. Soon you will find thine own prey, the hunted ones shall answer to your name. For in dreaming — the Other Real beyond the world — the single dreamer becomes the many. Reflections of your desires shall give birth to other selves within your mind. You will hunt yourselves unto the End, all the selves of the elder you who fled yourself in revelation.

So shall you — in seeking the escape of an awakening — find only the brim of the Endless Stair, and so down to the height of the deepest netherworld shall you swim and so find the Abzu, the sea eternal which, in your drowning, swallows you into Them.

So in slumber shall your life — the Lie, which yet believes eternity — become as one before the Truth of death. For in the death-dreams of Cthulhu, we are all but the illusion, the un-reflections who needle beneath the feasting of the Sleeper.



The ocean's whorl shall be thy revelation,

O Yog-Sothoth.

Yog-Sothoth beholds the fractures of the sphere, the sea where all the fractures and their reflectors lie entombed, the silver of all seas' blackness, where They once sundered through. And, through you and I, in rising, so shall we become reflections in the Eye.



They shall come, as stars They all shall fall to hunt us in their delight, They shall sunder through once more. In hunting you, even now They stalk amongst the ruins; still within the wastelands there They tread, unknowing to Themselves, a many-shadow without a caster, an un-light which no seeker can behold.

They walk behind the rows, They filter down through the stars, They give as one a voice to the mouths of men, Their voice is the sibilance of the locusts upon the wasteland. So riseth the song of the desert cries, the howling of the Jinn, *Al Azif*.

In Their feasting, They are hollowed. In dying, They live again.

They are teathed in turn by men, the flesh upon which They feed, a unity of the devoured and that which feasts. As merely a swarm of flies do They behold us, and as flies of the dust, we are swept before Them.

Hope, unbeliever, is the name which only fools give unto the One's unopened door, behind which now unveils His eye. Waiting within, behind the door, lie your other selves. As you must sleep, the Others rise in waking; all are one, oblivion. In opening, in reflecting yourselves to unity once more, the door is one with madness.

Embrace these truths not as thy curse, nor warning, but as thy blessing. Do not flee as the defiant, for I have flown to the ends of the utter earth, through the wasteland of the locust, unto the deepest chasm, to know only the hopeless chill of the viper's kiss. In fleeing, the soul is nothing. Hope is thy mirage, to pursue it and to touch upon its veil is to know only the serenity of its fading.

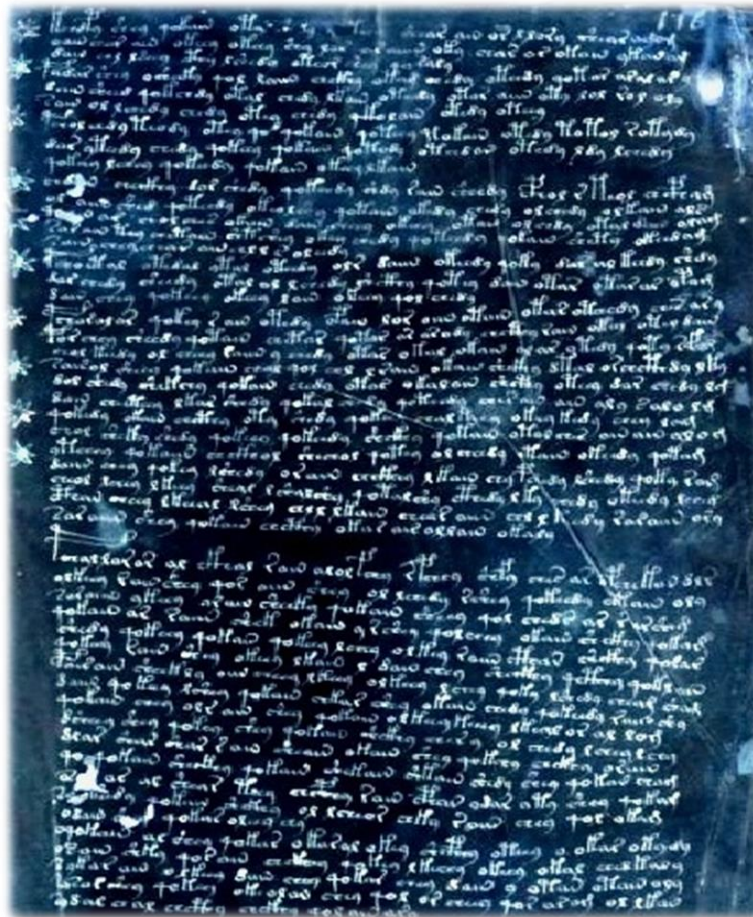


For They cannot be thwarted, escape is an illusion. Your flight leadeth only as a circling of tracks upon the ever-coiling sphere, an aging, an unforgetting unto the crueler tortures of oblivion. There is no hunter as merciless as memory.

BOOK

In seeking to readeth of my confessions, you shall know my love, my Adaya.

Alone, even in the forgetting of They who fall, you will remember only her. My beloved shall be yours, her death shall be thy delight, and so thine ending. The mark of love destroyed will be your own soul in echoing, Adaya in eternity.



From outside of all remembrance, throughout the resonation of the worlds, from the love you bore, to that which your senses cannot untouch, so will she fall prey to your other selves, they who reign only when you the one are lost to slumber. Her betrayal will be wrought by you alone. From love — that which you believe to be immortal, for such is my heart of hearts and you are mine — there shall never be an escape.

And so am I the innocent, and you are now made her murderer. In judgment of this one sin, Nephren-Ka will come. When the Black Pharaoh doth rise, when he speaketh unto you and so giveth voice to my name, submit to him.

O beloved, unbeliever, it is far greater a glory to atone on hand and knee, to be forgiven by the Pharaoh's tongue, to know the *nepenthe*, than to know only hope and pride and so be cursed with understanding. Slave to me and reader of this scroll, believe in me.

For if, unto the End of Days, you are known only to madness, if to yourself you are a stranger, such shall be thy only mercy in Their coming. For all will be slaughtered, all souls shall be as one in the wild feast, the writhing mass to greet Cthulhu's rising.

The gift of madness, the *nepenthe* I offer you shall be thy only true immortality. To you who would deny these truths: past, present, future, all are one, the triad-soul of the single ever-moment, the universes poised within the un-time.

Even now you are lost unto yourself, you wander amongst the desert-selves beyond your own convictions.



I now give birth to the sole you who is true, the vessel of myself.

And so your nothingness,

And so my rising.

Through you I return,

Death now itself shall die.

For I remain:

Abd Al-Azrad,

Son of no one, beloved of the forsaken, the brideless of Adaya.

So it is written, so let it be done in the name of the final prophet, in this Year of the Palest Moon, one hundred and eleven, Damascus.

1-2

SCROLL II

THE SONG OF SANA'A: BEING A REVELATION OF YOUTH, THE SHORN AGE OF SIMPLICITY

(Scroll I is believed to have been written among the last of Al-Azrad's works, in 738 A.D. In contrast, the following scroll (II) begins the oldest section of the Necronomicon, circa 730 A.D., wherein Al-Azrad writes of his childhood.)

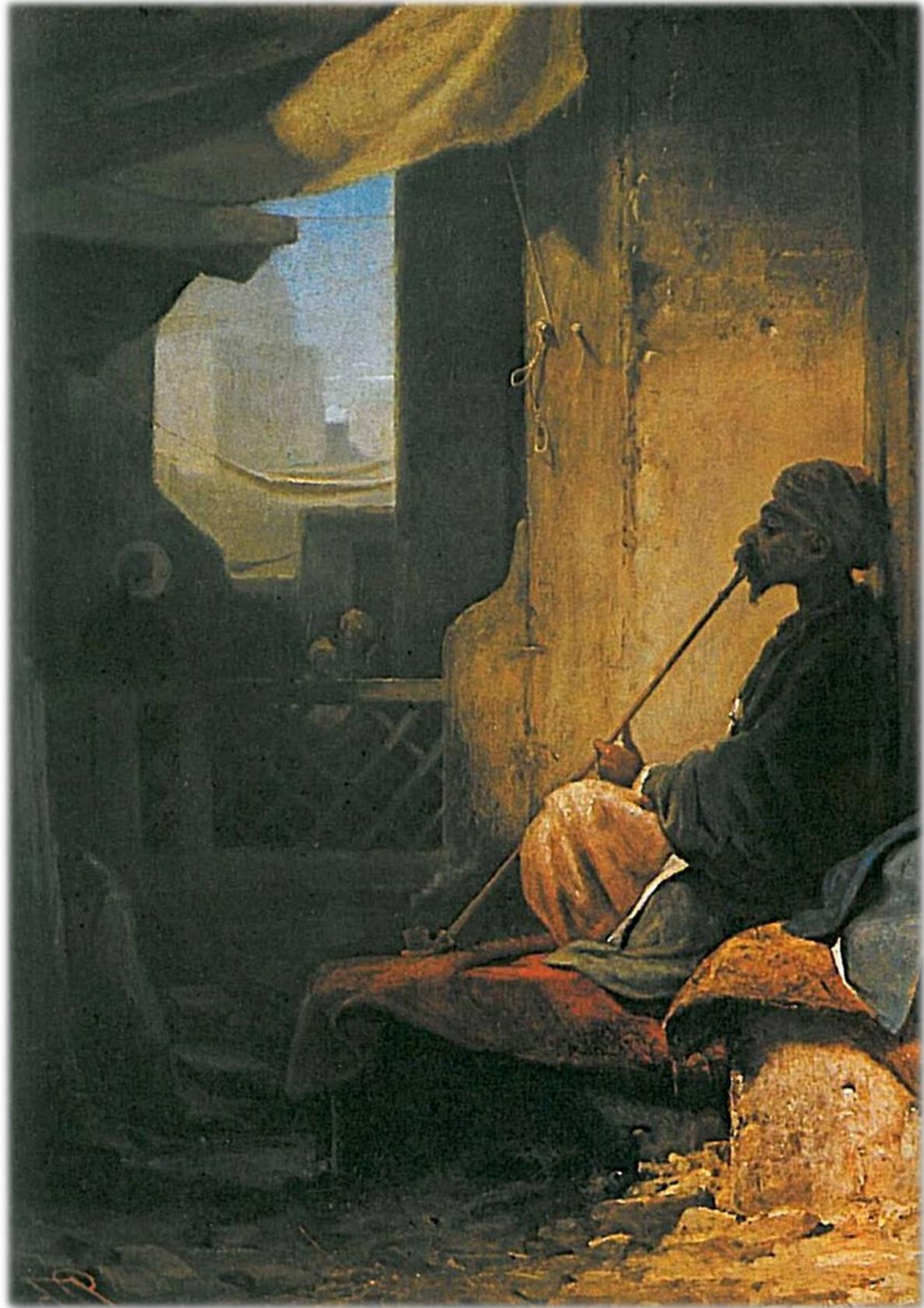


I AM THE KEEPER of the coldest flame, I am the Tayr al Ramad, O Phoenix of the Ashes, that which burns to nothing, and am thus created. I am Abd, the servant, Al-Azrad, of the devourer. I am the one servitor to myself, the spirit of the feeding.

I am the one blinded of the innermost, that which turns in horror away from all truth, the eye of the unbeliever; I am the dreaming dream which whispers, thrice-fold, the bitterest tongue, the silence, in sepia Pharaonis (*Dee annotation: ink of the Cuttlefish*); I am the word inscribed in an ageless voice, ever manifold, never to be spoken.



In these, the pale shades of my elder moons in Damascus, city of manna and veil and treachery, I write of my selves' unity: yet neither in the name of reverence, nor with a song of glory shall I entreat thee.



CASTLE OLDSKULL ~ LOVI

KENT DAVID KELLY

I etch these words solely in my lone belief, thus: the body shall be no palace for the soul. For the flesh of the mind is all, the soul is nothing. Thus am I eternal through my confession.

Should I die hunted, bait of the slaughter, immortal shall be the *jambiya*, dagger of my reflections. For the scroll needeth not the surge of blood, the stain of sepia needeth not the breath: the voice of the mind remains.

Such is the cry of the locust, such is *Kitab Al Azif*.

Should fell corruption, the revelation of all my wisdom lead only into oblivion, this laying of these sigils upon the tays-skin (*Dee annotation: Tays, a male goat; skin, thusly, the vellum of the goat*) shall remain my only entirety. High on and through the sandstorm-path, unto the eye of mine own death, echoes fading as footprints before the claw-path of the Ghul, O spirit of Adaya, may the dark radiance of these words yet find you.



So the song of the untold: let the lay be pure, simplicity.

As first unto the world, we all are children, and through a child's nightmare shall the lens of the moon-glow find me, remembering. So I write these words in Ramadan of the anno Hijra, one one one. (*Dee: anno Domini DCCXXX?*)

(*Note: Al-Azrad speaks here of the 111th year of the Muslim calendar, dating to the Prophet's Hegira into Medina. In his own Elizabethan translation, John Dee has printed here his "anno Domini DCCXXX?," which corresponds in Latin to the year 730 A.D. K.*)



And so the mortal's slaughter is the circle. Azrael — Singer of the Black Angels of All Ending — cruelly hath given birth to all the living. My own youth frailed so long ago, from a dawning of such innocence, that beneath this moon it seems that I foretell the tale

of another man who is yet to come: one bolder than myself, more in love, and more believing.

For as the child is elder to the ancient one, so too is Truth the destroyer of our hope.

In aging, I am Al-Azrad the Terrible and the Mad, so named the feared and fearing, the doomed and the forsaken. Yet still I whisper her name in each of the mansions of the night, my beloved, my Adaya.

And forever I shall believe that all of my adorations, in never-end, are the only chains to keep my will in iron bound. Despite the revelations of Klocha, regardless of the ice-encrusted secret of Nephren-Ka, mortal I remain, ever human in light of all the blasphemies I now know.

For the love of my dead Adaya, I endure.



1-3
SCROLL III
OF THE LOCUST,
AND A CHILD IN EXILE

IN THE BEGINNING, I was nothing.

I know not my age. My father, a warrior who wielded a sword of flame beneath the Crescent, died glorious in the service of the Caliph Muawiyah. My mother, a slave and spoil of war, was nameless, never giving father her one secret, known to the betrothed — and to her child — only as the Shepherdess.

Of her, I remember only kohl-black eyes, lit with love and tears, a chant beloved of the moon and the youngest star, and the scent of amber swirled upon long fingers.

To her I was born in the Rub' al Khali, the desert wastes of the emptiness, and to that desolation, in my heart I hold.

So are my years unknown to me, yet still I believe I was born on the cusp of the wind of *sharqi* (*Dee: the easterly*), between anno Hijra forty-two at the eldest, the Year of the Bowing Serpent ... or anno Hijra forty-six at the youngest, the Year of the Twisted Waters.

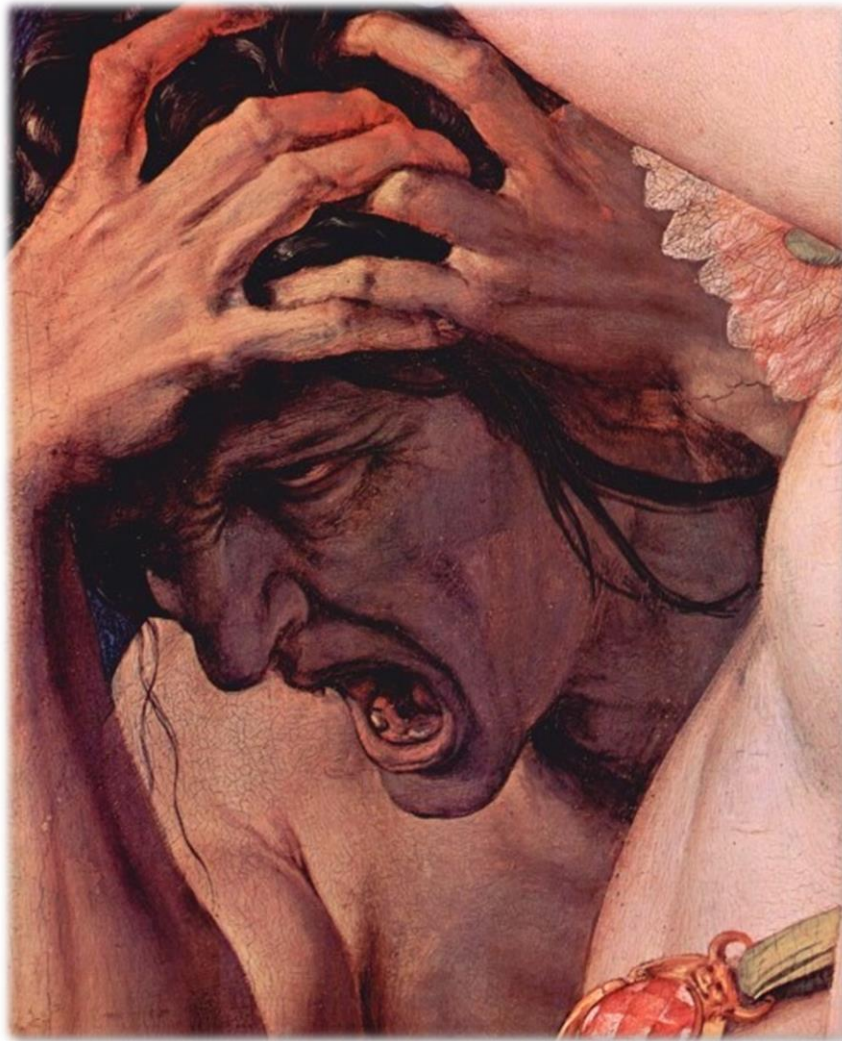
(Clarice Whateley annotation: 666 A.D.?)

(Note: Here the anno Hijra, or anno Hegirae, is again a Latin reference pertaining to the Islamic lunar calendar. The years 42 to 46 equate to, approximately, 663 to 667 A.D. Here in the annotated manuscript of Scroll III, Ms. Whateley speculates that the year of Al-Azrad's birth was 666, perhaps referring to the Number of the Beast, which is detailed in the Book of Revelation. There is, as far as this researcher can determine, no certainty to such speculation. K.)

The Shepherdess it was who gave her own life standing over me, her blood before my own, until she was taken from me utterly. That black tale I shall never tell.

In all but my eldest memories, I stand fatherless, motherless, a dust-rat in the gold-spun streets of old Sana'a, raised only by the crone Ghanara, most ancient of the *badawi* (*Dee: Bedouin*) in their exile.

For it is said in the deepest desert, to curse a *badawi* woman with that one Fate before which Death himself grows pale, that a dune-malik (*Dee annotation: Malik, a chieftain, a petty king*), a chieftain of the sands, one needs only exile the Daughter of the Desert to the City of Man. Such, in my youth, remained the crone Ghanara.



(It appears that Al-Azrad is implying that his father exiled his mother the Shepherdess to Jerusalem, and that she either settled in Sana'a and perished there, leaving her son an orphan; or,

she sold her son into slavery and he was taken to Sana'a by his new mistress, Ghanara. Al-Azrad's implication that his mother died defending him from someone makes it likely that he was orphaned, but the treatise of Ibn Khallikan implies enslavement. Whatever the truth, the old woman named Ghanara seems to have raised and exploited him. K.)

I know only that Ghanara who took me in was not of my kith and kindred. She had shamed her brood, a murderess in all but name, and so did tremble the hand that cared for me. For me alone, she cast the tongue, the strap, the gaze of the brilliant serpent. Ghanara was the first soul to believe my dreams required stricture, my nightmares focus, and so did raise her trembling hand to me.

Ghanara it is — through cruelty — who taught me how to pretend my own escape, and so to dream.

Thus did I endure, until I grew taller than the slump of her brittle shoulders, and a fear of me overtook her. Guile-rich Ghanara used me well for thieving, for the reaping of secrets, and so by the time I believed myself to be seven summers eld (*Clarice: 672-3 A.D.?*), I used her in my turn.

Through a blossoming fire of defiance, through my conviction that I would be worthy in doing Ghanara harm, my earliest vision came to me. The vision may well mean nothing to anyone. But in my life, it was the first dawning of my own will, and so the birthing of my freedom despite my slavery.



The vision, as I beheld it:



There came a night, moonless, wherein I beheld a locust, perched upon one driftwood pole which held on high the tent-stall of Ghanara, a skeleton of silk and rag teetering in the wind beneath the south wall of Sana'a. A vigil I held as the locust shared its secrets, and by first light of dawn a water-gift was revealed to me. I beheld the locust scraping

the dew from its thorny legs, drinking; I watched it crawling deeper into the shadow, to feast upon a dried vanilla husk, crumbling in a basket of twisted reed.

I heard it sing to the night alone, uncared for, adored only by myself and the fading stars, and so I heard in an ocean-voice which rose inside of me, the oneness of myself:

'The locust, it is my heart.'

The first of all my visions, *ai*.

And so did I come to understand: the voices of the insects and the *jinn*, the uncared-for and the unseen, would become the one Voice that would sing to the heart within me.

And so in that night, beholding the revelation of the locust, I listened and became myself.

My destiny would be to hear the Voices of the desert, *Al Azif*.



And so it was I learned upon that night of the locust Voice: between the weighing of black hearts, of Ghanara and of mine, mine was the one beating ever stronger. She was eld and I was young; I would live and she would die.

But her death would not come from my own hand, for I thought it crueler that she should understand this, my rising and her falling; understand and so be powerless to deny my rising glory.

In living, I wanted her to fear me.

That dawn I stole her silver, for it was mine, made by my sweet voice and cunning dances. I salved my strap-wounds with Ghanara's finest honeys, and drifted into the streets alone, as my own for the very first.

The locust sang within me.

Too, I stole Ghanara's obsidian-edged *jambiya*: not for what it would mean to me, but for what its absence would mean to her.

That night, I did name myself Abd Al-Azrad.

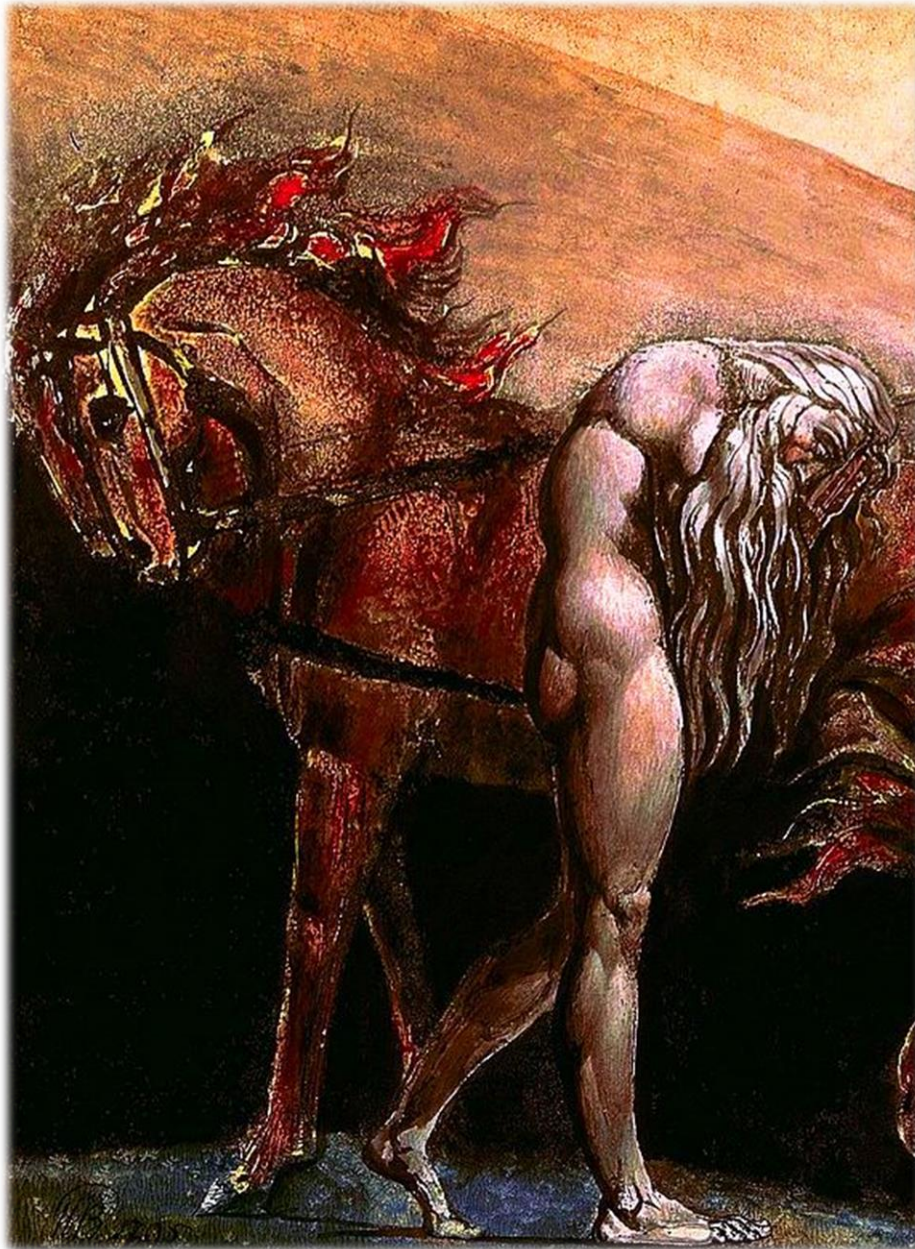
Only rarely in all the years thereafter did the eyes of Al-Azrad, the self-named, and the eyes of Ghanara meet again. She beheld me in hatred and in fear, and so faded away behind me. The threat of her lost *jambiya* at my belt stayed within her eyes as she fled away. From that twilight on, I served a proven wisdom: my only master was the locust, never again the crone.



14

SCROLL IV

THREE, THE CHILDREN OF THE DREAMING



FOR TWO HANDFULS of ageless seasons (*Clarice: 674-5 A.D.?*), I sang and I did dwell in every sand-etched alley of Sana'a, shadowing and avoiding the Caliph's bladesmen, stealing figs, partaking of the rare gifts of praise or the dancers' palmsful of offered waters. By the lords of the northern caravans, and those who deigned to feed me, I although a starveling was yet admired for my grace and for my visions, for my songs and the poetry from out of my shadowed mind.

Young and alone, I was weak among the hierarchies of the storytellers. Never could I craft the desired tales, the haunted journeys, nor sing the desert songs with truest bliss or the certainty of experience; yet I could remember all I heard, and feign the conviction of any tale's sincerest speaker. In mimicking the songbirds of the sands, I could sing any tale with sincerity. I could become in voice a scarred and lusty mercenary of the caravans, or the sly and jovial changer of the silver, or the whispering, hesitant daughter of the water seeker, who proved to be the wisest of them all.

For songs are never sung as a glory of their own creation; songs are sung to be an echo of life's unveilings. There is no song of songs, no sole triumphant Oneness to the art, for lives are many and every sufferer has a tale which can be cast upon threads of beauty by the voice and the voice alone.

In learning the secrets of song, I too learned that mortals *burn*, forever divided by their desires, a breed in twain: men speak of the horrors of death and the blade's bloodletting, the rapture of the kill; but only women see truly the horrors beneath life's being, the moments of profundity, the blood-shadows which swim beneath the Fates inside the hearts of all. Men see; women understand.

The tales of men when sung did bring me meager silver, yet this secret of the women was ever in my own heart's burning. As I grew older, I sang of the women's truth alone. My songs were then not only heard, they were felt. I was one string, and my listeners did resonate with me, finding themselves to be in tiding with the lyric of my pain. Together, I and my audience became an instrument. And so, more than any of the other singers who did envy me, the dearer palmings of smile and silver came to me alone.



By the time I believed my summers to be nine (*Whateley has scribbled here: 675 A.D.?*), I was tall, my dagger whetted, and my voice was sweeter still. The urchins who I ran with, daughters and sons of whores, were jackals of lovely face and fickle claw. These orphans were stronger-burning stars than I, yet less radiant, and so the more courageous in their fall. These nameless ones protected me, shielded me from bladesmen and from thieves. Where I did wisely fear adults, the “giant ones” and their ways, the other street children stood forth defiant in my name. I should have died, but my songs brought forth a sympathy of hearts.

The children were bitter and full of fire, living only for the day, sucking the vibrancy of each moment in desperation and casting the husks aside. From day to day and night to night, these children would forget themselves. Yet I, Al-Azrad, I was their rememberer. I was the beholder of merchants’ eyes which reflected the secrets of the thief; I was the speculator of hearts, ere lovers would spurn and wound one another and return to the arms of another; I was the navigator of dung-pits and empty cisterns.

I braved little, I remembered everything. I won all. In becoming one with shadow, in dwelling in every alley, many of the whispers told throughout the city’s heart echoed in their course inside of me.

So did I become the youngest of the loremasters of Sana’a. For when one whispers of lust or murder or betrayal, who would suspect that of all who are near, it is the child who is listening, who is remembering?

I echoed with every secret, unsuspected. I told much, I ended others’ trust in the unworthy with revelations. Those “giant ones” I informed were ever grateful for my words. I gained trust, I spoke of others’ treachery. Lies revealed carry a dear price. More silver and even gold found me at every turn.

The other street children revered me. I was the jackal’s shadow, the night-pack’s will. My voice was the more beguiling, I was taller, if not stronger; and quicker. My arms were longer. When figs or scraps of *kubaneh*-bread were thrown, the jackals snapped beneath me, but the lion’s share was mine. So did the singing one, I the locust-born, grow ever greater in their eyes.



Of those countless orphans, two became my family, unified by the secret of our dreaming. We shared one thing only in common, the nightmare of R'lyeh. Of this I will tell you, (*) yet ...



(A break in the text is here, the scroll torn apart and re-mended.)



The first of my soul-kindred was named Akram, then my dearest friend ... Akram, the boy-giant, a nearly-deafened brute with a clefted brow and ever-smile. Between us stood the girl, with fingers as long as those of the Shepherdess, and laughter of sweet waters: Adaya, of Judaea (*Clarice: the Jew?*), the sin-daughter, my beloved.

We three — circling through the nights, sheltering together around our shared revelation of the nightmare — became as one in heart and yielding. So did these two become not only my friends, but my family. For those few years, until the night of the eclipse, I did not feel as if I were alone.



(The older scroll's passage resumes here.)

(*) Have I not spoken of the One, of Great Cthulhu? We three did dream, we three did dream in unity.

From birth's breath on, as elder as I remember, the nightmare murmured of by my father was ever with me. The nightmare, from the first, is this and this alone:

I dream of a city crushed by the ocean, Cyclopean, Ghul-sculpted, labyrinthine, of obelisks who soar up through the waters' darkness, tear-stained with ichor and with resins bled of emerald. The etchings of unearthly sigils stand clawed upon every wall, every pillar.

From this sunken city rises a blackest majesty, the one unhallowed spire which surmounts all else in terror, a graven needle which would make even a mountain's shadow shrivel from its reach. This spire, it sings in the deepest voice without a tongue, a purest shiver of lightning's silence, speaking thusly:

'Cthulhu ftaghn.'





As a child of the Khali, before Sana'a, every night I dreamt of the sunken city. My father forsook me, for I was the echo of his own dreaming; my mother the Shepherdess could not hold away her tears. In years after, cruel Ghanara would — in my waking nightmares — seduce me with all her hatred into silence. It was only in speaking to other

children, the blackest jackals of Sana'a, that I found two other dreamers, two only who would confess:

They too saw the spire in their sleep, they heard the voice of the thundering silence. Only Akram and Adaya dreamed as I did dream. In their slumber, they too beheld the horror of the sunken city, heard the voiceless chanting, '*Cthulhu ftaghn.*'

So did I trust Akram and Adaya above all. This nightmare we all beheld seemed fated, a sharing of impossibility, a promise misunderstood, speaking only to we three.



And too, in Sana'a with my own friends, the dream was the deepest of all that which united us. When I once awakened screaming, asleep in an alley, it is Akram who woke and held me. And to him, I confessed everything. And it was Adaya, who in pretending to sleep had overheard us, who told us that she too knew the nightmare, and for this reason the other children feared for her.

From that night on, we held our nightmare's secret away from every stranger, and so nearer to one another: Abd, Akram, Adaya. It is not until the night of Najeed, and my brazen confrontation, that the threefold pact of silence was betrayed.

I was the one who foolishly sung our secret to the winds. In having done so, I am guilty of Akram's death, and that of Adaya as well. Of this I have much to say:



(The same narrative appears to course uninterrupted into Scroll V.)

15

SCROLL V

A NIGHTMARE MADE OF GOLD

UNIFIED BY THE NIGHTMARE, we three confided everything to one another. The older orphans, once my protectors, did fear and then forsake me. My times with Akram and Adaya became all.

I shared my silver and my food with them, and they revealed to me the places of hiding, the rooftops of escape, the cisterns of shade and sleeping.

I continued in my songs and the selling of secrets, but there was a wondrous darkness upon me. In finding that these two other children had suffered the same nightmare of R'lyeh, I did not despair; rather, I delighted as one liberated. I spun my songs more boldly, weaving them with images of the Sleeper Beneath the Sea. Turning away from me in the night and yet unable to quell my voice the other children came to regard my shadow as the *rabisu*, the leaping demon who terrifies dreamers with his illusions in the night.

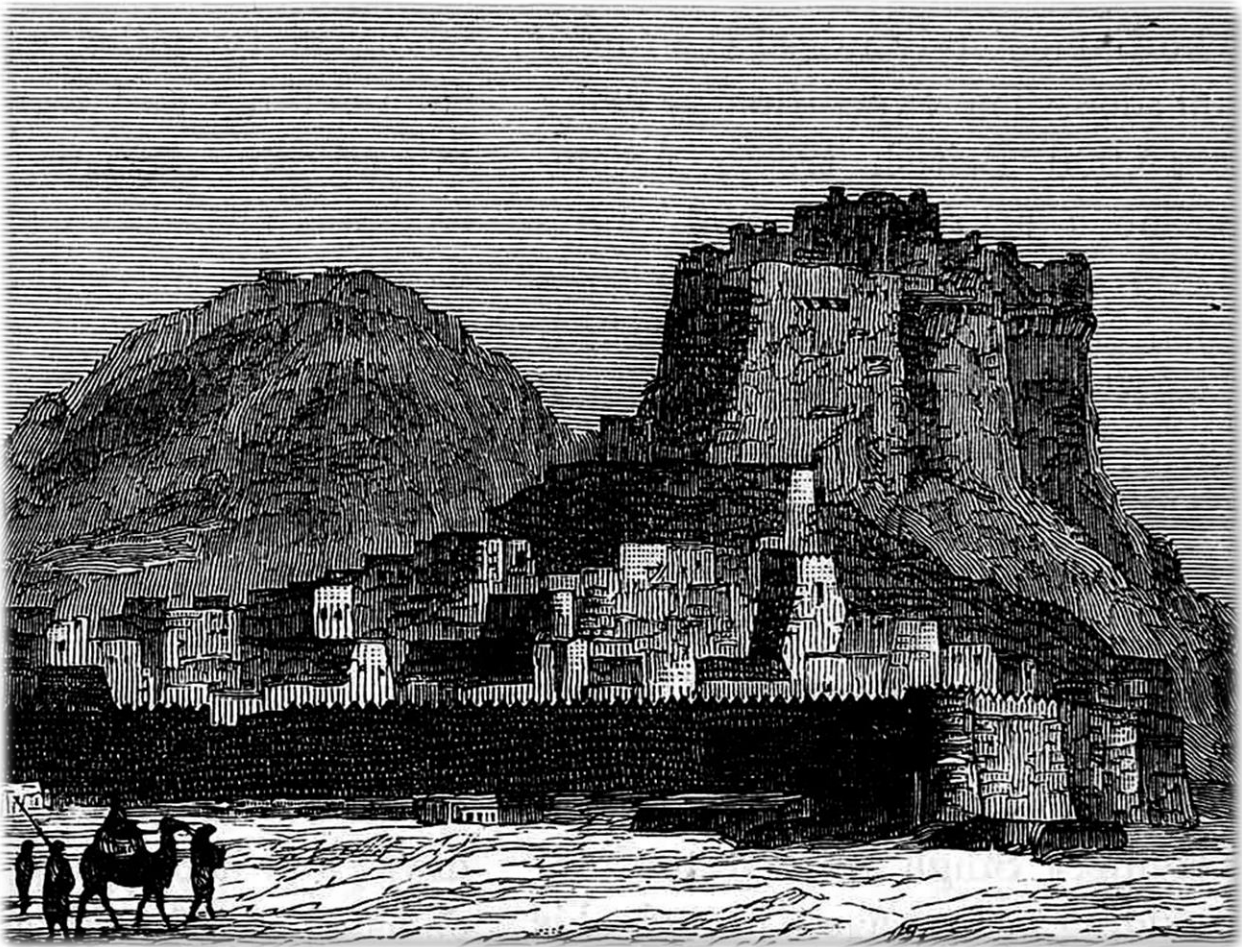
Were they so wrong?

I, a child-father with two needful spirits of my own, with Akram and Adaya reliant upon my silver, learned that the other orphans were more a threat to us than kindred. These lesser jackals, the “dreamless ones,” grew more fearful of us still; and in fearing, cast for us only stones and hateful curses. So did we three find ourselves at last alone.

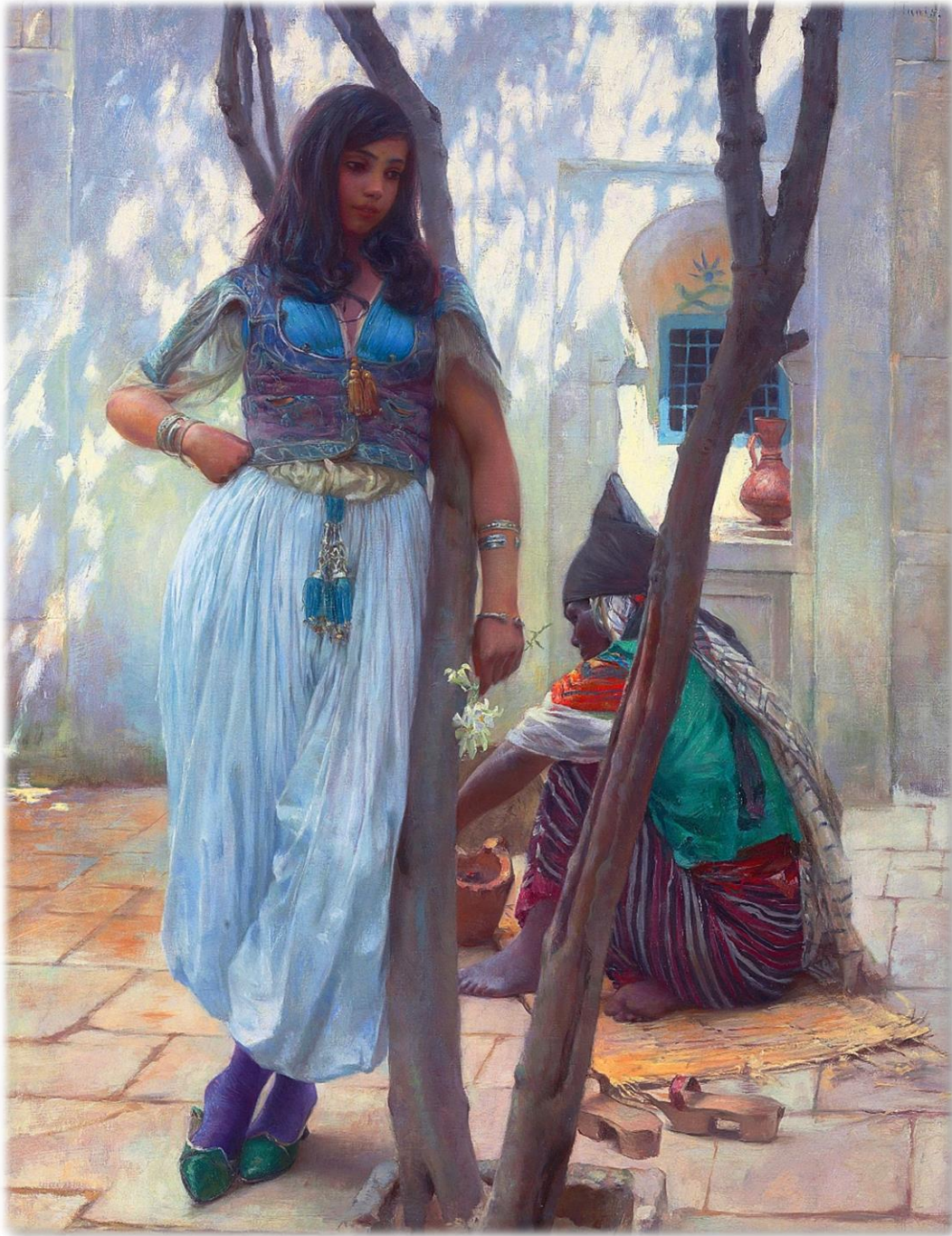
Branded a vagabond, I endeavored to take Akram and Adaya away with me. We three left the caravan emporiums of Sana'a, letting the other urchins take our place. They believed that they had ruined me, and perhaps they had. But we three, we faded into the night with silent purpose. We let the jackals have their beggar scraps of meager trade. Being the more cunning, Adaya and I sang instead at the eastern gate, where the spice merchants come forth from the horrors of the wasteland.

There, we learned more of secrets, and more of death.

It is the east gate of Sana'a, yet still, through which come the gold and spice and ivory and laughter. The east gate is that of the starker wanderers, the silent and the desperate. Through the east come trinkets of Asia, rumors of Irem of the Thousand Pillars and clay-shards dug from the Rind of Babylon. Through the east come warlock and *fakir*, exile and leper, astrologer and the maimed man who is dethroned, who stands yet mighty in his mind.



The language of the eastern gate is not one of silver, but one of scrolls, of relics, of tales which tell of Ghul and funereal shroud and tears of blood. It is the gate of blackest tales, of miracle and nightmare. To such men and crones as walk in from the east, the *redeb* music of Akram fell unwanted, the sensual dances of Adaya met with murmurs of desire. Yet she was but a girl.



My song, only, of R'lyeh and the Sleeper in the deeps, enchanted those parched ones
who strode out from the east.

For what unimagined ecstasy, I sang, would it be to drown, to be immersed in frigid water and so to die in breathing? To a man born of the desert, such an imagined death is wondrousness, a purest delicacy.

And so we three sang our darkest entreaties to those who carried spice, who carried their tales of death in from the wasteland.

My own song was the most haunting, the most riddled and uncrystallized, and so I was to our listeners by far the most enthralling. Where Akram would play of the *rebab* and Adaya would sing of water and spice and horizons which curved as the virgin's turning breast, I would sing not in words, but in the dream-song of that black voice which we three did taste whenever we slept, the glimpses of the veilings of the Sleeper in the Abyss, of Cthulhu.

I did sing:

Agafh'th kahnta, entorei, entorei.



(Dee has transliterated this as written, but the meaning is unknown. This may in truth be a corrupted remnant of the Aklo tongue. K.)



The tongue of dreams I sang, and chilled the hearts of all who heard, and they did wonder of my visions woven of moist shade upon the sand. These chantings of R'lyeh were born of darkness, and the darkness of my song was beautiful. At times our listeners were the men of far Damascus, at others the warrior women from the Utter East; and always the old dust-men from Jerusalem, who met my sweet boy-voice not with curious smiles, but with tears. But all who did listen to my song, in fearing me, were moved. So the silver flowed ever greater, until the night of the gore-moon.

To many such listeners, the soul-strings who did resonate with my tales, I became the only singer who was sought. In time, some few wanderers and secret-seekers came not for the *markets* of Sana'a, but rather only for my revelations.

And so, perhaps when I was of ten years, with Akram and Adaya I did glory more in secrets than in songs. We sold treacherous truths, we made enemies all the more. For children, we grew rich. The night became our sole domain. When all the other children and beggars were sleeping, cradled in the frost of their own fears, we three gave reign to our one dream of the sunken city, wakening with the sunset and preying upon the veil of breathing night.



16

SCROLL VI

OF NAJEED AND VILE TREACHERIES

(UNFINISHED)

(This curious scroll begins in the middle, in the midst of one of the most personal of Al-Azrad's many confessions. As will be later revealed, Najeed of Sana'a was a servitor and thrall to the Cult of Cthulhu; and in hearing the songs sung by the young Al-Azrad, he came to understand that Al-Azrad was receptive to the tonal dream-visions resonating from dead Cthulhu in R'lyeh. It appears that Najeed, perhaps in reporting the songs of Abd to the hierarchs of the Cult, was the impetus which caused the three children — Adaya, Akram and Al-Azrad himself — to be considered a danger to the Cult's secrecy, a threat which should be eliminated. Allusions throughout Codices I and II tell us that the Cult of Cthulhu murdered Akram and Adaya, and that Al-Azrad alone escaped their wrath. Al-Azrad may have fled, but I personally believe he first attempted to save Adaya and then was nearly killed himself. Further decryption of the Dee Necronomicon text may reveal this theory to be unsound, but for now this conjecture seems best to fit with what little is known of Al-Azrad's youth and his later obsession with vengeance in the name of his beloved. K.)

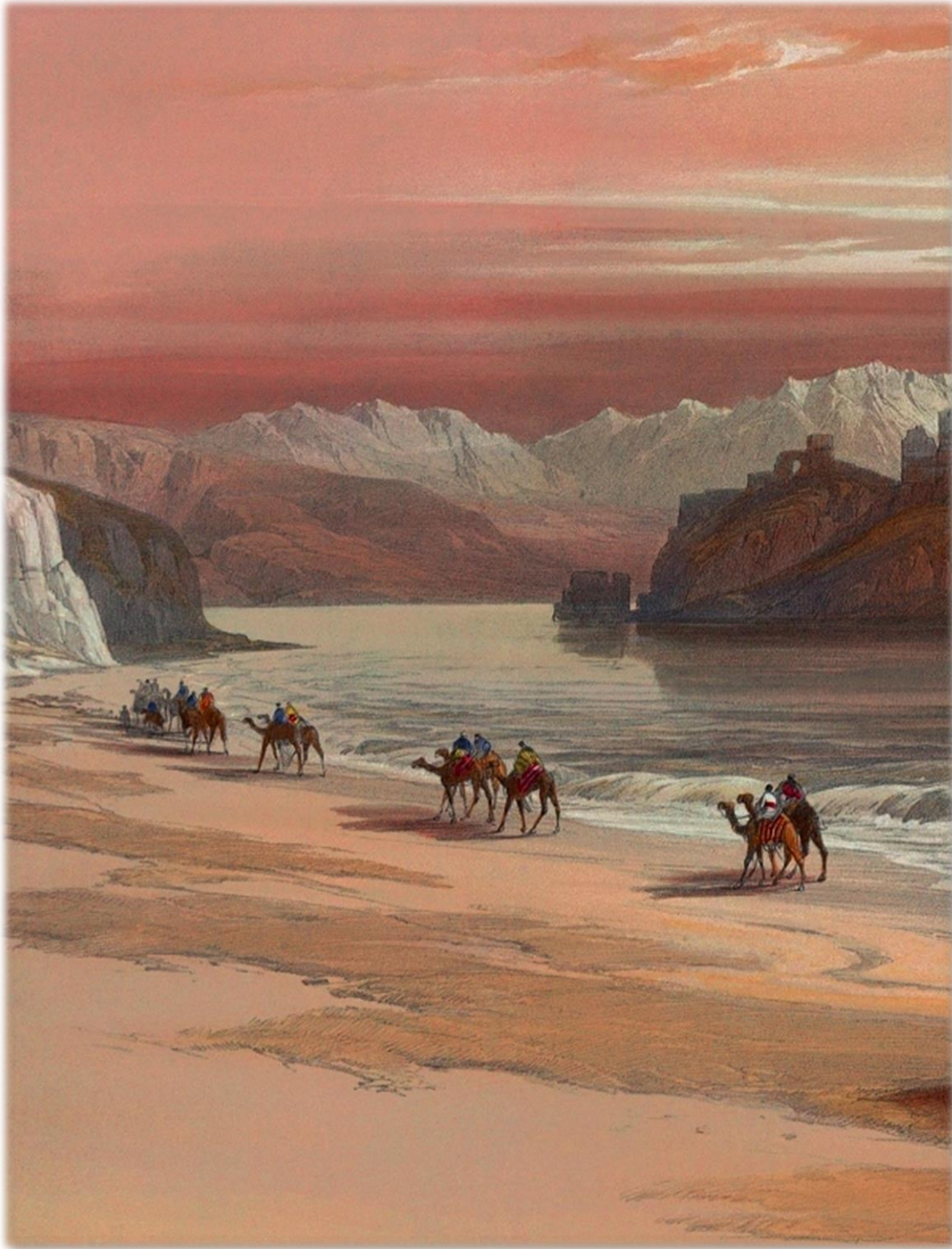


(From a notation by Dee which reads "The remnant is as follows," it may be implied that this scroll was damaged, and/or that this scroll was left incomplete when originally written by Abd Al-Azrad.)

(...)

... yet I was lord of myself even then, until came the night of the gore-moon which the wise men fear. The eclipse I beheld that night did change my path forever, and the blood-moon's hollow reflection I ever shall remember.

That night, twenty-seven were our listeners, of three caravans: one of a *malik*, one of a mariner, one of a caravansary liege.



So many were the touches of coin and laughter that I sang alone, and Akram — with Adaya, scab-shinned, giggling and perched upon his shoulders — Akram, he was frantically twirling his scarf in the shape of three folds, so that the coins would roll along the linens pale and into Adaya's beringed hands.

Beyond our listeners, however, leaned a glowering silhouette — so stood the gristled storyteller who alone understood the song that I was truly singing, black Najeed.

It was he who knew Cthulhu and R'lyeh were no mere nonsense in a child's song, but instead were unified with truth and one with nightmare. The moment when I doomed my friends passed, in song, without my understanding. But that night of the eclipse, in singing of R'lyeh as Najeed looked down upon me, I had dared too much. For the gift of one eld golden *solidus* — a rare Roman coin which Najeed had his own secret-bargaining set upon, a coin from the hand of the spice caravan's one master — had become instead a gift for Adaya's rapid fingers, and Najeed's eyes in meeting mine were filled with hatred.



After we secured the Roman coin of gold, we departed and hid ourselves.

Long after midnight, when Akram had gone for water and Adaya laid asleep beside our cistern-lair in the Alley of the Yellow Spider, the shadow of Najeed did come to me. I saw it upon the rooftops, and three were its claws — two hands, and one *jambiya*. Najeed leapt down to the sands ere I comprehended the threat in what I had seen. He did show his *jambiya* to me, its acid-etched razor, its hilt of mother-of-pearl, its tip a pitted crescent dried and black with another's bloodshed. It was this tip that he kissed upon my lip, and asked for my silence only. This I gave him.

And Akram, my protector, was yet to return to me. Adaya slept on.

Najeed's whispers against my neck told me many things — that he was drunk on spice wine, that he would kill if made to come to me a second night, and that he feared me more than he feared anything but the dream, the nightmare of Cthulhu and R'lyeh. Najeed said only to me, "Go far from here, O wretched child, go far from the northern gate. The men of the caravans, the wealthy ones and their bladesmen, they will no longer hear your vile song of Great Cthulhu. Yes? Unburden your nights' entertainments far

from Sana'a, or when I next shall come to you, this blade shall not kiss your lip, but rather the throat of your sweet Adaya as you are sleeping. We understand?"

This I with all sincerity did promise him, that I alone would leave Sana'a, never to return. As I breathed this last, he fled, and then only did that fool-friend Akram return with a frown of confusion and the idle slosh of water in his vase.

In the daylight, however, I questioned my fear of Najeed. How could I leave my only home on the wings of a coward's threat? And when the unknowing Adaya smiled upon me, that same fear of Najeed I then came to mock, and I named the fear as nothing. Thus we three held for some few sand-moons (*Clarice has written: Months?*) to our stories, our songs, and trade in secrets before the eastern gate.



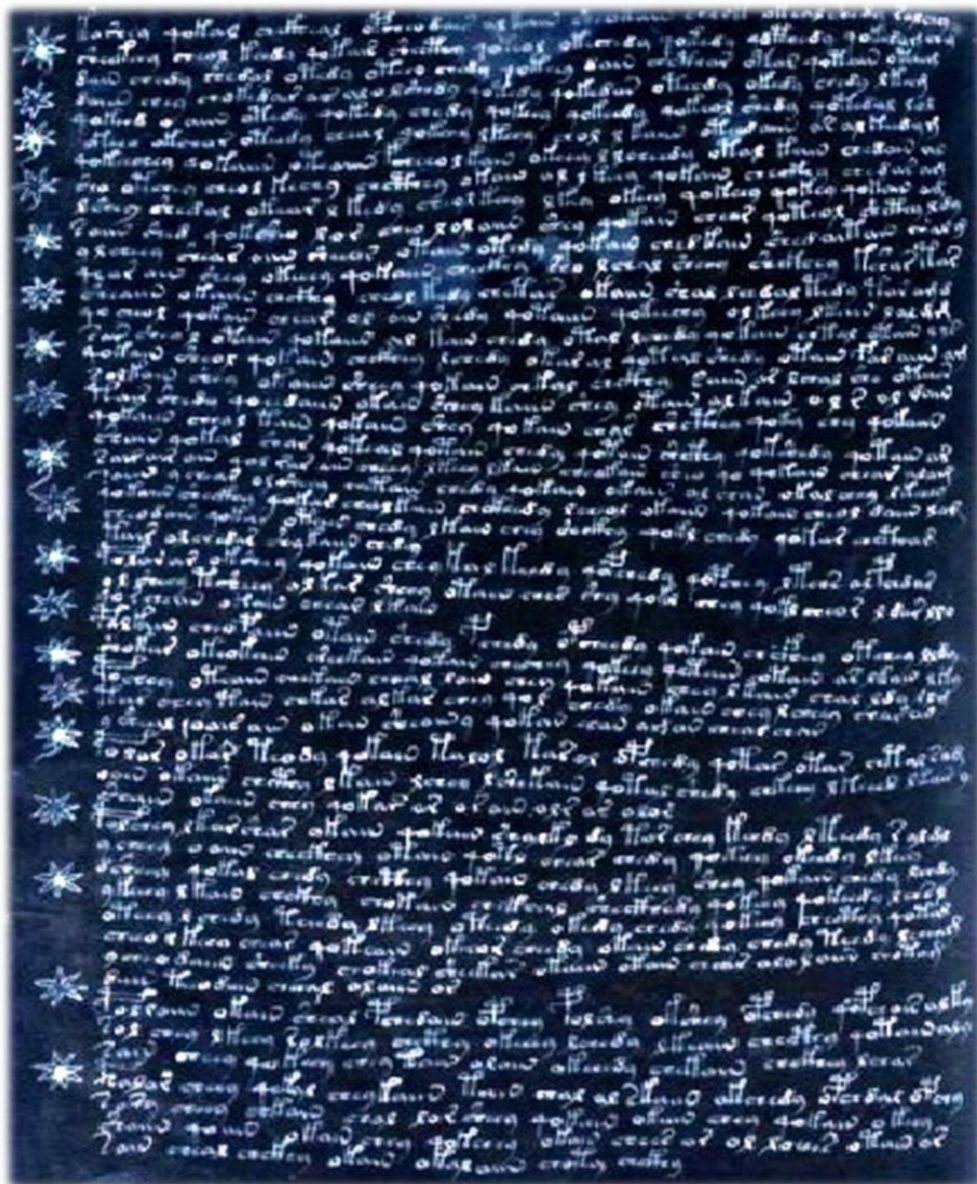
Akram, of the furrowed brow and the sun-browed hands, of the smiles which told of laughter but not of brilliance, he was growing immense and becoming a poor burden in this regard. He toiled all the harder to please me, and so I fed him, but his tongue was a torment to the ever-deeper delicacy of our trade. Adaya the cunning stayed with me, learning, turning secret-keepers' silences to kindly entreaties. But poor Akram was a shameful weight upon this darker trade, and this in those last nights he did begin to understand. Two moons after the first coming of Najeed, Akram did leave us.

Thereafter Adaya and I — especially myself — still brought Akram food, and even scrolls. For somehow, through a merciful tutor skilled with the resistant clay of an ogrish child's mind, Akram had been taken in as the scribe to an astrologer. The scrolls we brought, Akram in turn revealed to his master, who knew better than to question the gift from whence it came.

In this the astrologer was truly a wise man of Sana'a. In those few deep moons of water and locust cry, Akram would share the decipherments of our treasures, as his master slept in a curtained chamber far below. It is Akram, then, who unknowingly taught me to read a little in many languages — not by what he told me, but through the scrolls and shards I brought to please his master. This gathering of similarly-emblazoned scrolls and sigils proved to be Akram's gift, and the pleasure the writings gave him was a solace to my heart.

The scrolls were of a thousand dead souls' voices. And so did ever darker secrets, of the past and impossibilities, come to me.

In this time, I was yet too young to understand why Akram's slowness angered me. Only by the written word did he come to brilliance; all else was ruin. It is now I understand that I did love him, but more than this, he was my brother. And so it was that my impatience with his brute thoughts overshadowed my adoration of his heart. Such is the curse of brothers, we find one another's weaknesses and we worsen them.





As these moons grew on, and our secrets became Adaya's wisdom and my tongue itself was turning from cryptic silver into gold — in these nights of enchantment, these nights of Ghul-tale and scorpion whisper — Adaya became a young maiden, and in her own secrecy came to love me. But these fleeting joys, which I did not embrace in their own time, were to end all too soon. The prideful innocence of we three jackals ended on the night that Najeed came forth the second and last time: Najeed then of the crazed eye, the burn of branding, the babbling and the knife.



(Dee has written: "The scroll doth endeth here." It appears that Al-Azrad had originally intended to confess exactly what transpired upon the night when Adaya lost her life, but if he has done so fully at any point in Al Azif, this translator has yet to discover the passage.)

GATHERING THE SECOND:

CTHULHU, R'LYEH,
AND NIGHTMARE

21

SCROLL VII
OF THE MYTH OF THE GILDED WATERS,
THE MYTH OF THE MATRIARCH
(FRAGMENTARY)

(An unknown span of time exists between the inscription of Scroll VI and Scroll VII. When Al-Azrad resumed his writing of Al Azif, his focus was not upon the sorrows in his own past, but rather on the ever-recurring nightmares of Cthulhu and fell R'lyeh. Here, in Scroll VII, he writes of the Myth of the Matriarch, a favored tale from Sana'a and Jericho, as well as ancient Babylon. The Kingdoms named "Akkad" and "Sumeru-land," however, appear to be unique to Al-Azrad's telling of the tale. The placement of this scroll before the Second Gathering implies that Al-Azrad believed this Myth to be one of the few surviving tellings of the deeper tale of Cthulhu itself. K.)



HEREIN,

Reader and defiler of my secrets,

Shall you know

Of what little I have learned,

In terror and in bloodshed,

Of the Myth of Matriarchs,

Of the Great Dragon, the *Kulullu*,

(Clarice: Sumerian tongue, the sea monster?)

Which slumbereth in the Abzu,

Deep in the Abyssal Reaches,

The Chaos beneath the sea.

O, Abaddon.

(lacuna)

(...)

This is the elder fable of the *Sufi*, the lost ideal of the golden age as it was told to me. Herein, too, lieth my own meager handful of fragments, its thousand revelations, the fable's lies and truths, thus:



THE MYTH OF THE MATRIARCH

In the beginning, men did not rule.

In the dawning of civilization, when the people were ruled by Matriarchs, when it is said that the rivers' spirits spoke to women alone in tides of dream, whispering unto them to settle their people where the bounty was ever greatest; in this age, the water temples were the first great edifices to be lofted, temples of mighty brick layered in bitumen, adorned all with mosaics pressed in coral and lapis lazuli.

These great water-tiered temples, these ancestors of the *ziggurats*, were raised in solemn reverence to the goddesses of plenty, of fertility, of harvest. As the settlements around the temples grew into cities peopled by women of wisdom and men of peace, wealth came. And with wealth, there came disparity, and envy.

The war-tribes of the north did covet the temple treasures of Sumeru-land, and the warriors of the dunes did envy the lives enjoyed by the hunters of the grassland and the priestesses of waters.



The men of Sumeru-land, once silent, began to speak against the war-tribes of the wasteland. The voices of these men grew bold, for men were the masters of the hunt and keepers of blade and spear. Men did pride themselves then as defenders of the mighty walls of the cities of Sumeru, the many-templed glories between the rivers.

As the war-tribes came near and tested these men of eld, arrows took to flight, and men and women bled in gardens and upon the sand. The cities of Sumeru were besieged.

Peoples of harvest and the worship of the water-goddesses thereby turned their minds to vengeance, then to war and war alone.



The war-tribes were beaten back, at great price. Sumeru was laid low, and the lesser land of Akkad its only remnant. Flood and fire ravaged many fields, the cities grew ever-inward in their covetous glories and crumbling temples, and where the Matriarchs once ruled there rose the Patriarchs alone.

The age of men began.

In this more shadowed age, the dreams of men rather than women were deemed sacred and eternal in the war-cities of Uruk, and Nippur, and Eridu. And it is to these minds of the warlike Patriarchs — sensitive to matters of power and grief and bloodshed — that the goddesses of the waters could not whisper. Even among the women, the spirits then were silent. In this void within the tides of dream, where fear and hatred and violence did reign, the whispers of the great *Kulullu* did take hold.

Holy men whose voices were law and destiny to their people, these men became obsessed with the unity and sameness of their one nightmare of *Kulullu*. They all did dream in horror of a Sleeper, a tentacled Beast which gloried in death upon a throne of dreams, slumbering deep in the Abzu of the netherworld, the un-sea which lieth far beneath the sea itself: a Chaos of flowing nightmare.

These dreaming Patriarchs spoke of the tomb-throne and its riches, and the name of the sunken city was R'lyeh. To some few prophets R'lyeh was the kingdom of the dead and eternal torture, while to others it was the promised city of inverted heaven beneath the waves. Ziggurats were raised in R'lyeh's image, and the ruins of the water-temples were cast down. The name "Cthulhu," from *Kulullu*, gave way to ritual, and in the mouths of ten thousand worshippers, this Beast was named in the open rather as a lie, as *Ti'amtum*.

In ages after, the Cults of Cthulhu and Ti'amtum divided as the believers in each blasphemy came to defy the other. In this manner, worship of Cthulhu became separate from the worship of Ti'amtum the Beast. The Beast cult was of the Kingdoms' feast-halls, while the worship of Cthulhu faded into secrecy, deep within the chambers of the ziggurats themselves.

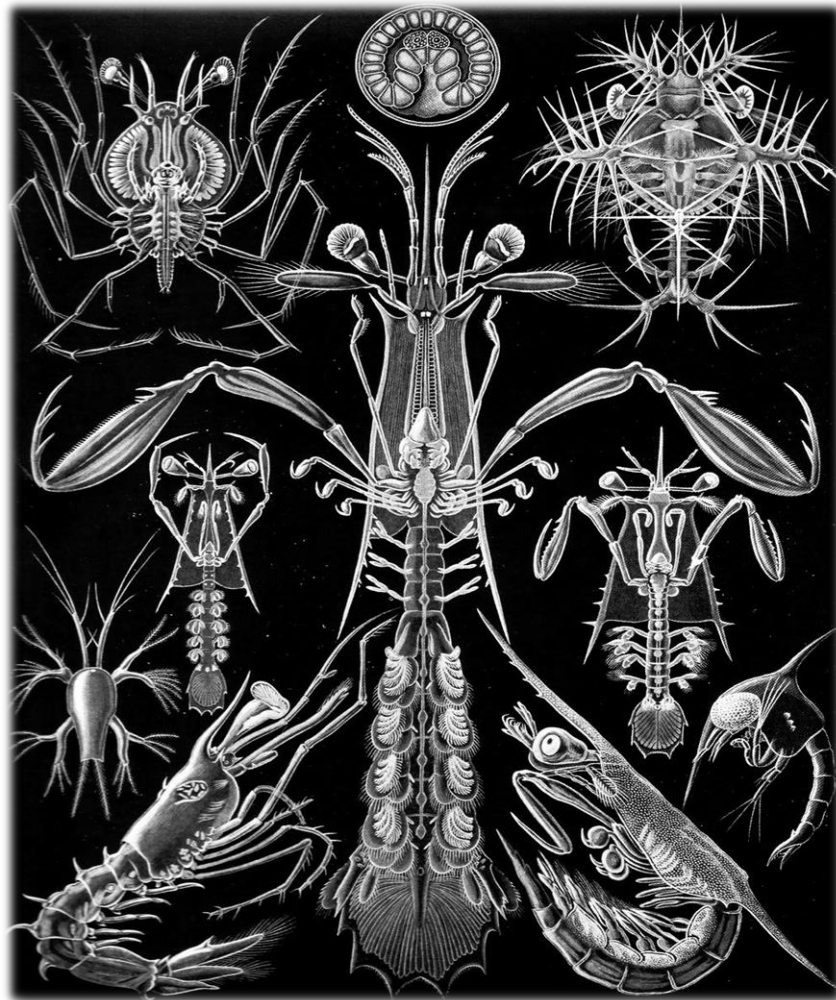
Ages thereafter in fabled Babylon, the name of the Beast Ti'amtum became *Tiamat*. Thus did the worship of the Great Dragon beneath the seas become a lie. Those who worshipped Tiamat knew not the nightmare in itself, they knew only the dream of

Cthulhu as it was spoken to them by the Patriarchs. They did not know the nightmare's truer name.

Through many hundreds of years, even this truth was lost. But to those who still worshipped in blood and secret, the truth-knowers who chanted the one true name — the Cult of Cthulhu — did exalt Him in cavern, in temple ruin and in fen.

The Cult of Tiamat is nothing now, murdered by its own foolish lies and hatreds, its lords never comprehending the lie in its own sanctity. Tiamat is a fable, Cthulhu is the real. The Cult of Cthulhu, those evil ones who know the truth of the dark prophecy and the coming End of Days, yet lives on.

Again the centuries passed in legion, floods tore the earth and the seas receded.



Fertile river-lands became marshes choked with salt and sand. Wars were waged over what little of the Akkadian glories still remained of lost Sumeru-land, and plague and famine followed in their wake. The nightmare of men came ever again to dominate the water-dream of the women, and soon it was that the resurgent worship of the water-goddesses was forbidden in the ruins and then in the embattled cities themselves.

Gods alone, served by goddess-slaves, were then named as the lords on high, rulers of the many heavens. There was Marduk, and there was Yahweh. There was Baal, there was Dagon and a hundred ever on. We have known Mithras, we coveted the blood of Jesus and so then he was lost to us, and sacred Allah ... but all of these were only the dreams of men themselves. The only truth, in horror, was the outsider dream which came from the Thing which whorls beneath, Cthulhu, in his great palace of R'lyeh.

Outside the secrecy of the eternal Cult, men now know nothing. But in his eternal tomb, Cthulhu slumbereth and dreameth on. When he doth wake, the End of Days is come.

Such is the fable. Such is the end of the golden age.



In scrolls hereafter I shall speak of my own truths, my own nightmares, the horrors which I have seen and the lies of faith which have been shattered by revelation and the more ethereal beasts from beyond the spheres. Some little of what I have learned, from *Sufi* or *fakir*, is at peace with this Myth of the Matriarchs. Deeper secrets, from the voices of Ghuls and trances of Klocha, from the near-ruined hieroglyphs of buried Hadoth, however ... these tell me of far darker Things.



Yet the names of the fable I here in honor do preserve — lost Sumeru, lost Akkad — for such names are in languages now known only to a precious few. As the Crescent rises and war reigns high once more upon its throne of plague and sorrow, the sages are lost and even the echoes of their whispers perish and fade into the sands soon thereafter. I, disciple of Klocha the Eternal Matriarch, know some little of the dead tongues, and so I do set this here, the Myth of the Golden Waters.

May the wisdom here remain.

The names of these Kingdoms, lost, live only here.

Glory to fallen Akkad, to lost Sumeru.

Ai.

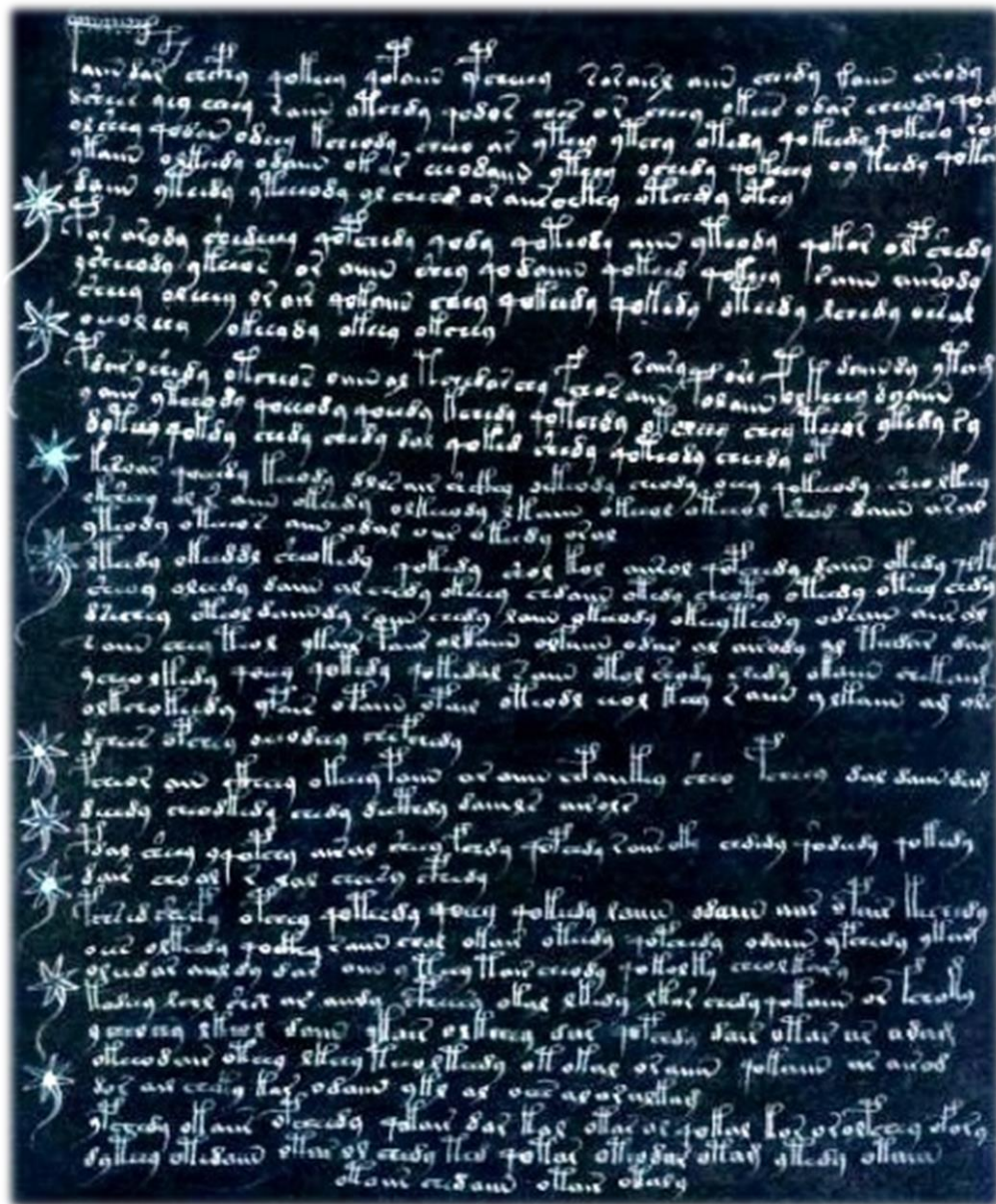


(The contents of this Scroll are troublesome, as they imply that knowledge of Sumer, Akkad and other primal cultures of the Fertile Crescent was still extant in scattered repositories of tablets and even scrolls in the time of Al-Azrad. It also implies that there was a secret oral tradition of a matriarchal myth now nearly lost to us. Frazer's Golden Bough speaks in echoes of this remnant, but later scholarship tells us that these ancient civilizations were practically unknown to even the most learned of historians during the 8th century A.D.)

Akkadian is certainly an extinct language, and in Al-Azrad's time was virtually unknown. And yet, Al-Azrad's inclusion of near-accurate Sumerian and Akkadian names throughout Al Azif speaks to the veracity of this survival. That which was lost was long forgotten, it seems, but not to everyone. Was the burning of the Library of Alexandria perhaps the event which destroyed the majority of these records forever? History does not tell us.

The mystery surrounding Al-Azrad's knowledge of Mesopotamia is beyond my own expertise, but it is certainly fascinating. Regarding Al-Azrad's own belief (which was apparently touched upon in Ibn Khallikan's lost scroll of the Wafayat) that the Arabic language stems from an Akkadian root, I can say a little more. This seems false, as Arabic has far more in common with Nabataean, Aramaic, Hebrew and even Phoenician when compared to Akkadian and the related Babylonian dialects.

Still, we are left to wonder: what languages did Al-Azrad write the original Al Azif in, besides Arabic? Dee's secret inscription alludes to the Aklo tongue and the Naacal. Did John Dee obscure all of these original forms with Edward Kelley's crystal scrying, turning a multi-linguistic treatise into unified Arabic and then Enochian? Or was the Latin of Olaus Wormius the point at which almost all of Al-Azrad's original words were somehow lost? These riddles are crucial to our understanding of the Necronomicon (especially the purported effectiveness of its spells and formulae), but they will probably never be answered. K.)



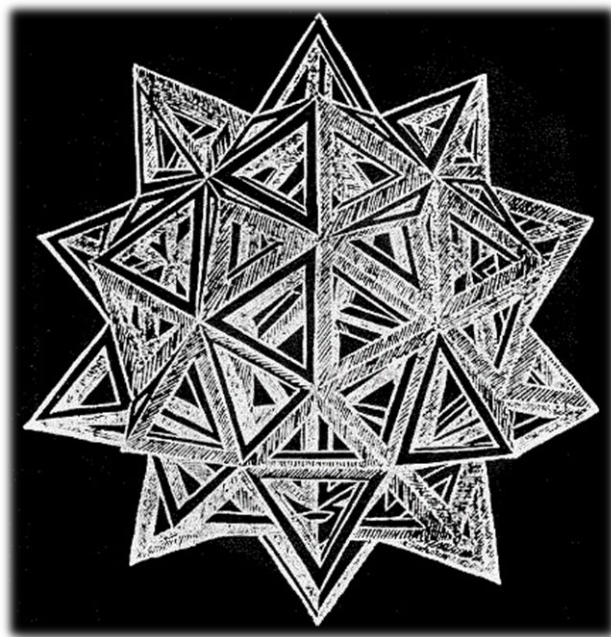
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SCROLL VIII

OF THE TYRANT DEAD AND DREAMING:
HE WHO SHALL RISETH UPON HIS THRONE
AND SO OUR WORLD,
THE GREAT CTHULHU

THESE ARE THE REVELATIONS of the Great Cthulhu.

Bartered with my own blood and grief, these secrets are the manifestation of He who will rise out from R'lyeh and be master of our world; He who shall reign over us in slaughter; He who will feast and glory; He who shall leave the world a husk and so plunge on unto other worlds, other aeons, hastening the End of All, the collapsing of the Omni-Kosmos.



Eternal returning, in death we shall be reborn. O Azathoth, *ia!*

(The Omni-Kosmos is a topic of considerable complexity, which Al-Azrad speaks of in far greater detail in later Scrolls of Al Azif. In essence, the Omni-Kosmos is the “metaverse,” the infinite matter and energy web into which all possible universes are interwoven, comprising ten (or more?) tiers of intertwined dimensions.

Here, he alludes to a belief that the synthetic collapse and chaotic rebirth of the Omni-Kosmos is the sole purpose of the entity Azathoth, and also that Cthulhu has some significant role to play in the quickened destruction of the metaverse’s current incarnation. The Omni-Kosmos is apparently regenerative, reborn through its own destruction and the death of all its lifeforms. K.)

These secrets have come to me from the ruined shrines of Shub-Niggurath, drowning beneath the harbor of Alexandria; from the stones of the shattered Pharos and its sigils. Too, these secrets come from the hieroglyphs of Hadoth; from the whispers of the crone Klocha, she who tormented and exalted me; from the reflections of the Shining Trapezohedron; from the petroglyphs of the Nameless City, the tomb-gifts under Irem, the funereal discs of Babel and my own nightmares of dread R’lyeh itself.

In defiance of the Great Cthulhu, my reader and beholder, know this: these secrets are to you a weapon. He is eternal, the End of Days cannot be averted. For we are less than insects before the Great Old Ones, and of the Great Old Ones, Cthulhu is beyond even Them. Dread Cthulhu is the one who soweth, the one who reaps of mortal flesh. To we who shall be reaped, who struggle on in vain, He is the unconquerable.

But the cataclysm of our slaughter can be delayed, by the blood sacrifice in war of the valorous and the wise. You who do find these scrolls, blood shall be the binding, and you are mine. You, in your own age and in my holy stead, shall wage the war against Cthulu’s Cult. As my warrior you will rise.



You, beholder, shall sacrifice yourself in defiance of the One. You will grow bold, and for those kindred souls you do adore, you will slay to the last. Knowing that our world

is coming to an end, and only we few stand to protect it and allow it to linger on, how can a valorous man or woman do anything but fight against the rising of the One?

In willing death, the bold define themselves.

There is no other worthy destiny. Cthulhu cannot be escaped. Fools might flee upon winds of nepenthe into the Empire of the Blackened Mind, but their bodies will be annihilated; cowards might kill themselves, but their children will face the slaughter of the End of Days in their stead. We can fight and slay those who hasten the One's rising, but Time shall ever be our greatest enemy.

Learn of the Cult, and taketh from them everything ... by blade and by thine own treachery. Give no honor to the evil ones. *Slay*. Show no mercy, for mercy before Cthulhu is the death struggle of the hopeless.

The greatest weakness of Cthulhu is that in death and dreaming, he needs the legions of the weak to do His bidding. Without His Brethren of the Stars, without the Deep Ones, without Dagon and the mortals who receive His dreams and bow to Him, aeons will pass before the black tomb of R'lyeh shall be opened. Yet with their aid, and if the Cult is not disrupted? Should bold men and women fail to defy His Cult, His rising shall come nigh in thirteen hundred years. (*Clarice has written here: circa 2030 A.D.?*)

So sayeth to me the Lord in Ebon, Nyarlathotep. Believe.

And so these secrets are for you not in the vain belief that you can destroy Great Cthulhu Himself; rather, these are the sacred secrets of His Cult, and it is well to remember that those who worship Him — even the Deep Ones themselves — are mortal. Servitors and slaves shall bleed, and may they perish beneath you. Learn what true horror lies beneath you and seek it, annihilate it. Wherever you see these signs which I inscribe hereafter, where you find the echoes of these secrets, do not falter. Find Cthulhu's worshippers, and destroy them.

By your hand, and by my resurrection in your mind: in centuries long after my own sacrifice, so is my beloved Adaya to be avenged.



2-3

SCROLL IX

THE MASK OF BEING, IN WHICH CTHULHU VEILS HIMSELF

THE SHAPE OF CTHULHU and of his Brethren is known to us from idols crafted by his worshippers, and his images graven in all the elder ages by the Deep Ones. And too, I have seen his visage, rising in my dreams.

The race of Cthulhu is *Mnemba* (*Clarice: octopoid*), translucent as crystal, of pulpy sinew and curdled ichor, yet limbed and structured upon enormous webs of rind and bone. The Great Cthulhu is a draconian Thing, a Beast bipedal, with heel to haunch and legs back-bending as do the limbs of the jackal or the desert wolf. He is gaunt with rot, his skeleton sheathed with translucent emerald flesh, a glass-veiled (*transparent?*) heart surging with yellow curd of blood, ichor pulsing through the spiderwork of his veins. From his spine there rise membranous wings which clot upon the sky, and over their breadth there whorl the liquid rainbows of blackest oil. Atop all, a crown of horror, the head with its eyes — slit-jeweled and immemorial — is surrounded with polyps and with barnacles; and ever the writhing, the hundred tentacles veil beneath the ravenous maw of the *Mnemba*, a beak of gristled bone. From the bony ridges of this gnashing circle shall thunder the roar of triumph, calling forth the End of All.

Yet what the idols revealeth not is His terrible vastness. This is ever the vision of my nightmare, and as I know it is a dream-sending from Cthulhu of what shall be in his awakening, this I will bear for you once more, so that you may receive it:

As a mountain does he walk, the wave is born of his rising, the stones he grips upon shall crumble beneath claws the size of a *ruk'h*'s imperious clutches. Fingertips open with corpse gas and pus, sending forth squelching bubbles, venomous tide-pools in which a man or beast could drown. And many shall. And from below, following the searching of the claws, the grasping of the earth, the bulk riseth. The grease bubbles up, the parasites from the many reflections (*dimensions?*) which clustered for aeons upon Cthulhu's rot shall scuttle down and struggle in their torments and their dying. Bereft of the ocean's

vastness and its crushing pressure, these Things which feed upon Him shall burst asunder whilst still scuttling upon the legs of locusts, breathing nothing, drowning upon air.

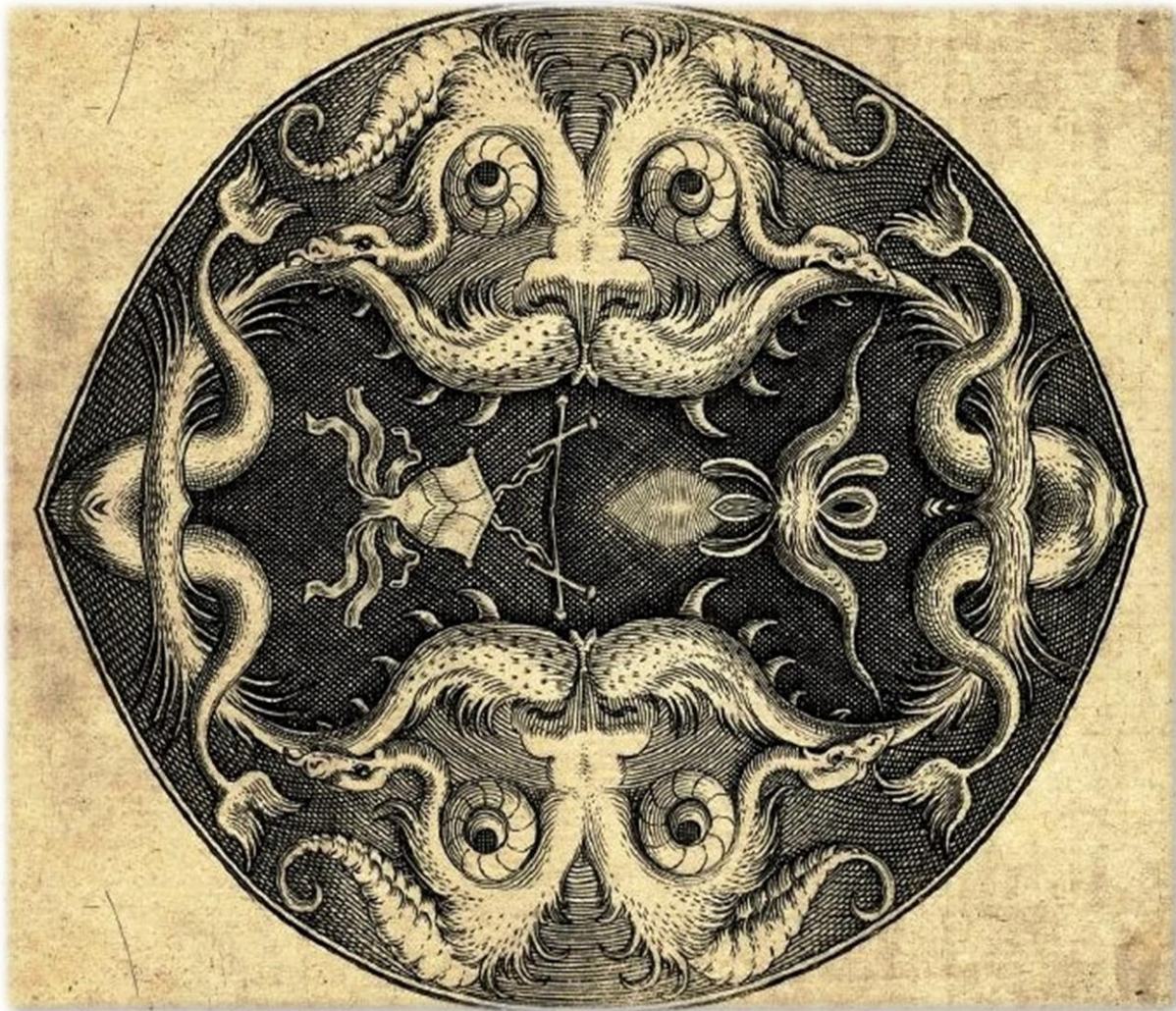
The ocean shall burn apart. The depths will drool and whirl with echoes, blasts of blackest steam will rise as the effluvium pooled beneath Cthulhu's corpse is given unto the open air for the first in countless ages. The horrific foetor riseth, the stench of a million corpses, for though Cthulhu shall riseth up from death itself, his body is ever festering, ever healing, seeking to decay and collapse within its rot, held together by his will and by the lingering of Vhoorl within his veins.

Behold! Tiered jellies over sinew, the limbs stretch far, as a mockery of the shape of man, a Titan, the abomination stands.

Arms outspread to a crimson sky, gassy sacs distended at the joints, giving forth the effluvium and emerald gases, jellied filth drips from him in a rain. Some few idolaters underfoot revel there in their drowning, swallowing of his glories. And so they perish, exalted. From his face, the tangle of tentacles rises, writhing, cored through with rot wherever their razor-tendrils fester, and there in trumpeting the grayed sun doth shineth forth through every hole burned through these tentacles' rotted skins.



Such is my confession, my vision, and the dreaming of Akram and Adaya. When you dream thus, when we come to you in the Real of Otherness, know that he ... *He* ... is coming.



2-4

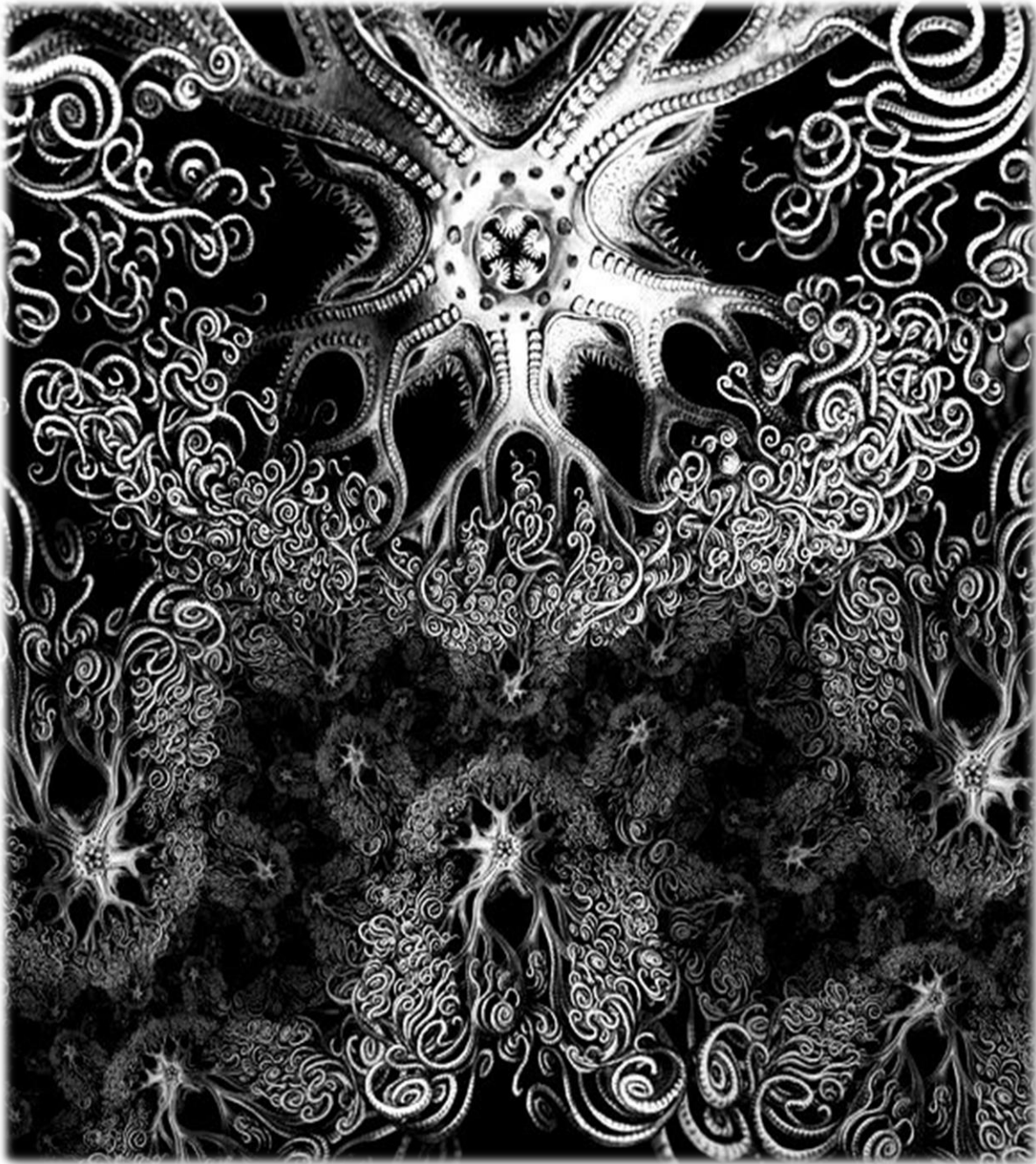
SCROLL X

THE FEASTING OF CTHULHU UPON OUR DREAMS

CTHULHU HAS COME not only to slaughter and to reign, but to feed upon minds and the feeble offerings of our fears. Our world is one of millions to which he has descended. In tearing away the veil and crossing the Void into our universe, he died; for the nature of the fractures between the spheres is such that his ichorous flesh could not endure the stricture of its reflections into the rudimentary cages of length and width and breadth (*Dee: "These, the three dimensions"*). And while the manifestation of his flesh was thus destroyed in his emergence, the Chaos of his dream-self lingered on.

As psyche only, the Great Cthulhu did gather the essences of Vhoorl unto himself, recreating the image of his flesh about his being, and so regenerating the plasm of his form from the will alone. Vhoorl his homeworld whorls within another universe, a higher reflection. Having been of body and sinew reborn, the flesh of Cthulhu now is strained. It is phased, flickering both in our world whilst ever resonant upon the distant world of Vhoorl. And so he is the manifest and the presenceless, the Beast Within Two Worlds, the Spawn of the Stars.

As he lived, so did he die, and in death he was reborn. While after his emergence his body was full reformed; while even in aeons past did Cthulhu stalk upon this world to wage his war upon the Elder Things; still, in the sinking of R'lyeh, his corporeal husk was ruptured once again. Such is the eternity of Cthulhu, mortal immortality, dying and undying. Enshrined within his tomb beneath the spire of R'lyeh, the body can only waken once more to life when our feast of dreams has strengthened his psyche to the point of re-conception of his self. And so does he lie dreaming, eroding, becoming.



This is no weakness, this is the way of the immortality in flesh and mind yet unified, the ever-birth and death of Great Cthulhu, most mighty among the Old Ones. Timeless he stands, the flickering of the body lorded over by the mind in twain, and in only every

other moment is he imprisoned. Caged, free only for merest fractions in infinity, the dream-pulses of Cthulhu cascade with the unbreathing ecstasy of his rage.



Not all shall dream of Cthulhu, or know his chantings. This is the black gift of mortal kith. It is said in fable that the stalkers of the desert, the Ghuls, did choose their deathlessness bereft of dream in order to silence the horrific sendings of Cthulhu inside their minds. In this way, the Ghuls name themselves the forsaken and the free. They no longer dream of Him, yet they are cursed to forever remember.

For we mortals, however, who choose not the path of the Ghul and the devouring of our own kind, there is no such mercy. Thus the mortal paradox: we are the free, and we too are the caged prey. We imagine illusions greater than any god. In so imagining, we learn and we are made the lords of creation; but in dreaming, we feed Cthulhu, and so bring forth the End upon us all.

2-5

SCROLL XI

THE REVELATION OF CTHULHU, HIGH PRIEST AND TYRANNIS OF THE BRETHREN OF VHOORL, AND THE HIGHER LORD HE DOTHTH WORSHIP

THERE IS A GREATER SECRET of Cthulhu, the revelation of his reverence.

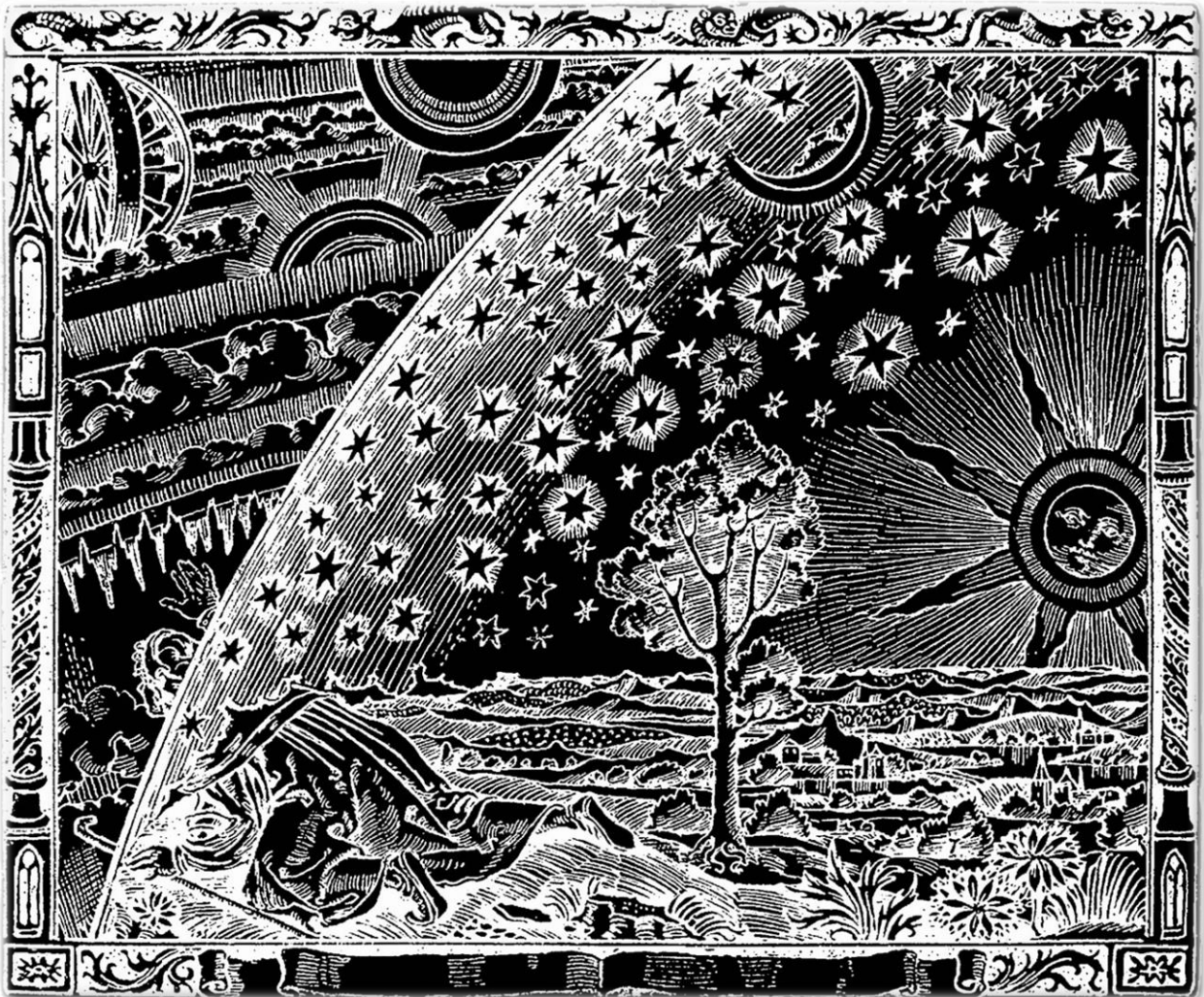
Be it known that if Cthulhu be truly a god to his lesser kindred, he too doth worship. He is the one high priest of his own kind, the tentacled ones, the Brethren of the Stars. Too, some do whisper that Great Cthulhu is the high priest of the Great Old Ones as well. For Cthulhu is the mind of legion; of all his race, he alone is the dreamer and the nexus of their will. As he is mind, so the Brethren are the body. The Brethren sendeth dreams by his command, and so are Dagon and the Deep Ones made to rise and mingleth with the women of our kind.

And why are the Deep Ones thus commanded to breed with mortal women? Our kingdoms are to overflow with children, souls in legion, risen in our billions for the reaping. We are bred as an exotic strain of cattle, and the Deep Ones — in their intertwining with our bloodlines — ensure our synchronicity with the flesh of Cthulhu himself.



And what then of the greater riddles? What of meaning, of destiny? Who does Cthulhu worship in his solitude? Does he bow to a higher power, or does he deign to serve as the high priest of a lesser puppet to his will? None knoweth. I believe he hath two lords, and they are the 'Umr at-Tawil, Yog-Sothoth; and higher through the gate revealed, there riseth ever higher the Only, the One of Chaos, his true lord Azathoth.

Verily is Cthulhu a conduit of Yog-Sothoth; for with his dreams in death, he doth craft bridges of souls and so bringeth forth the resonance of the gates which lie between the worlds.



So too does he empower himself, and through him as their hive-mind, the Brethren of the Stars draw the essence from the stones of Vhoorl itself into the wounds which were gashed in the monoliths of R'lyeh. Yet R'lyeh, the sundered and the rising, was ravaged in the war with the mighty Elder Ones.

Far beyond the southern seas, R'lyeh is now swallowed in the silence of our world's oceanic netherworld, the Abzu. There, deep in the nether, are many of the visions of

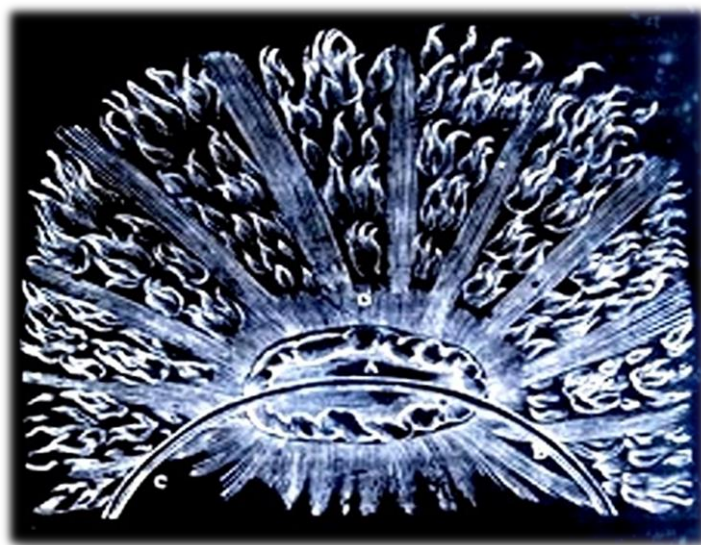
Cthulhu silenced ere they can corrupt the dreams of men. It is well that the ruined city lies beneath the waves, for were it elsewhere, Cthulhu would already stand reborn and ravening.

May it be, that as the bridges and the gates between the Abzu and Vhoorl are raised through the reflections, R'lyeh stirs and its gashes are healed. And so in our age the city may yet riseth, aswirl with the malignity of its own firmament, entwined both with our lesser sphere and the greater of Vhoorl's own, unified, unconquerable.

And so it is before the death of every world he conquers, Cthulhu shall be made One.

For when the gates to Vhoorl are unified, when the lenses of thought are with the stars aligned and stricken through with Great Cthulhu's scream of the awakening, the sky will rain with blood and the rift to the Otherness shall be opened. The immovable Void, torn away as a tapestry, will warp unmoving, and so will it come to us. The airs and aethers, the clouds and heavens of our world shall be stripped away. The mirrors upon which all realities are reflected (*Clarice has written here again: higher dimensions? Alternative universes?*) shall warp in twain, the stars themselves will wheel in unnatural courses, and so shall Al-Ghul, Yad al-Jauza, Fam al-Hut, and all of the Kahkashan come to swirl as one and rise where our vizier Sun himself shall then be blinded.

(These are the names of stars in Arabian astrology: Al-Ghul is Algol, Yad al-Jauza is Betelgeuse, Fam al-Hut is Fomalhaut, and the Kahkashan is attributable to the Milky Way. K.)



So by the Cultic sacrifices, by the feast of dreams the stars shall be made right, so that the reflections are all as one. The sundering of the city shall be healed, the opening of his tomb in fell R'lyeh must come to pass. The hastening of such is dependent upon the resonance of Vhoorl, the waking and focus of the Brethren, and the gates of Cthulhu's dreaming which bringeth the reflections of the emerald (?) into unity.



By mortal and immortal, the One shall be defied.

Cthulhu will rise, and the Last War shall be waged. As the End of Days begins, another un-god will rise in immortal defiance.

For a prophecy does further entreat that the Nameless, the Unspeakable One, shall be empowered by the shaping of the rift as well. To those who are of the Cult of the Yellow Silk, there is the belief that the King in Yellow will arise and so wage war upon Cthulhu for the right to reapeth of our world. If this be true, in their tumult shall all mortals then be slaughtered or enslaved.

The Majesty in Yellow cannot be worshipped as our savior, for if he is the victor who seizes the throne of the Abzu beneath our world, we are as lost as if Great Cthulhu himself were to be alone our tyrant. Whoever the victor of the Last War shall be, we beneath their feet will be lost. There is no path which leadeth to our salvation.

These only shall be the fates of the Kingdom of Man: the many shall be the feast, the few shall be enthralled, and our ravaged world of slaughter shall remain Cthulhu's kingdom.

GATHERING THE THIRD:

THE DEATH OF ADAYA

31

SCROLL XIITHE EMPIRE OF THE BLACKENED MIND
(FRAGMENTARY)

(This scroll was apparently damaged by fire. I am tempted to regard XII as the missing half of Scroll VI, relating the death of Adaya; but I have no evidence of this, and even if this is true, a crucial joining section of the narrative is lost. It appears that the missing section speaks of Al-Azrad's tragic final nights in the city of Sana'a. It appears further that Adaya was attacked, and that Al-Azrad himself had fled, returning only to find that Adaya yet lived on, then to die in his embrace. See also my preliminary note to Scroll VI for my personal thoughts concerning the fact that Najeed was a servant to the Cult of Cthulhu, and that he was culpable toward Adaya's death. He himself may well have been her murderer, or he may have been accompanied by the hierarchs of the Cult whom he did serve. K.)



(...)

... and so it was that Adaya, bleeding from her wounds, did die in my arms. Her last words were that she loved me, and would do so forever, and that I in my time should come to her.

As I asked her, "How, beloved, can I ever come to you? And where?" she breathed her last.

Yet I knew then that my theft of the *Mnemba* (*Clarice Whateley has again translated from the Arabic: "octopoid, or octopus-headed"*) amulet had been the reason why the vermilion-robed ones had stalked me to the cistern; and that, in giving the bauble to her as the love-gift of a young man and a fool, I in my prideful spiting of Najeed had caused her to be slain.

But our love was one of dreams. She still was with me. Born of nightmare, Adaya and I had spoken not only of our sharing of R'lyeh and its horrors. Too, we whispered to one another of dreams more beautiful, those which were born of our own hearts. I told her of the *jinn* of the silver waters, and she told me of her fantasies of mountains, where water itself would turn into a priceless crystal, *ice*, and never flow again. In our years together — and this was never understood by Akram, and in envy it did divide us, we two brothers — Adaya and I learned too that there exist two hierarchies of dream.



In the lesser tier of dream, known by all mortals who sleep, there linger the mere fantasies which are isolate and forgotten upon waking. Such fancies are illusions born merely of desire and desire's fading, and come to nothing. But the greater dreams are of a world of kingdoms which, akin to the horror of R'lyeh, is shared in rapture and locked away as a secret by the blessed few. Deeper dreams are a world apart. Some do name this consensual paradise the Dreamlands.

The Dreamlands are of wonder, and beauty, but there is horror there as well. And it is known to me now that if one should meet with horror and believe that they have died within the Dreamlands, that the body within the Real will die as well.

Thus are the two worlds, ours and the Real of Otherness, entwined.

In dreaming together, Adaya and I came to understand that we could walk as one sharer within the Lands of Dream. And, upon our waking, we would remember all the glories we had beheld. There, we forever dreamed as one.

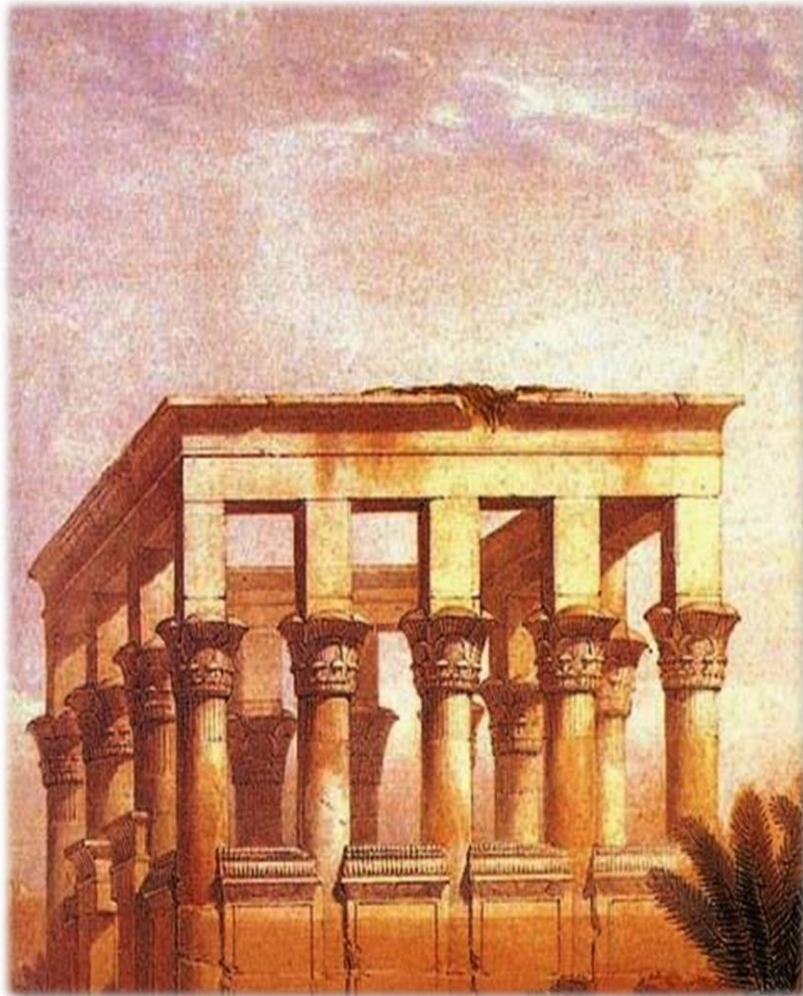
But the Lands of Dream carry a graver price, for they are born not only of the dreamers' shared and mingled wonderment, but also of our primal fears. There are terrors in the Lands of Dream to which only Cthulhu would loom as a greater abomination. These nightmares reside within us in an ancestral sharing of elder memory, a core of ourselves where those who gave birth to our sires' sires left their terrors in an eternal imprint upon our souls. These loathsome dreads are made manifest against our will, the reflection of our mortal dread: the ultimate fear of Death.

And in learning all of this, of the beauty and the nightmare which swirl as one in the Lands of Dream, I now do name this Otherness not the Dreamlands, but rather the Empire of the Blackened Mind.

There was a time when I did believe that I could dream my dear Adaya back to life. I learned in my years of wandering the wasteland that even in dreams, the dead are lost to us. But still, there are domains of majesty in dream, there in the unearthly kingdoms to behold.

For dreams are memories of moments which never happened. This is not to say that dreams are false, no. The Lands of Dream shift in tidal oneness with the rhythms of the earth, yet these eternal lands are never bound by the laws of Time. In architecture and structure, in the ways of their peoples and the temples which they have raised, the Empire

is centuries behind our own. It is a reflection of our memory which never was, our age of Matriarchs, our golden age. There, some shards of the ancient Myth of the Gilded Waters do live and breathe in truth.



For there are indeed glorious peoples within the Empire of the Blackened Mind who dwelleth there alone, who when they themselves deign to dream, dream of our own *reality* as their *fantasy*. Too, there are dreamers who are native to the Real, who in crossing in their sleep into the Empire's domain know and find themselves to be journeyers in a land which never was, and yet which is enthroned upon the True, an *aspect* of reality, as a facet is but one fragile mote of a shining jewel. Well it must be remembered that a death in the believed Dreamlands is a death of the dreamer's flesh. The body cannot linger

when the mind it cages hath died in horror. As the mind dieth elsewhere, the body crumbles here. All of these miracles of beauty and of dread are unified, enmeshed in the riddling kingdoms of the Empire of the Blackened Mind.



Yet what of such glories, when the End of Days is yet to come regardless of our will? All of these truths remain as the futile wisdom of the stranger I have now become, a mad hermit of the alleys of Damascus, aged and alone.

I return to my storied yesterday.



To my youthful hope, to be with my Adaya once again, it seemed that in dream it might well be possible for we two to live forever. Yet how then would I dream of my Adaya, when she herself had perished?

As wheels of sand, ever churning, flow the lingering paradoxes of the Empire of Sleep.

The riddle which vexed me was my own belief in her oblivion. In dreaming, I knew that the Empire was real, and so it was. Yet there I also knew that my Adaya was dead. How could I divide my mind, so that I believed in the Empire of the Blackened Mind, while forgetting that I believed in the death of my Adaya? That paradox was the secret. If I could forget her unreality, she would become real within the Dreamlands. If only I could impel myself to disbelieve Adaya's death, and I did dream of her alive ... in the Empire, *would* she live again?

I believed. But my doubts could not be excoriated. I tormented myself in sleep, dreaming of her always but forever unable to make her real. In my nightmares she did die again, a thousand times and more.



There was a way to save her. The sages knew, the stories I had sung and whispered mocked me with their possibilities.

There is a word of power among the Greeks, and that is *nepenthe*. Nepenthe is a willful forgetting of the utmost essence of the self. It is not oblivion, but rather a divine revelation

in which the tortured aspects of the elder self are shed, as are the ashes of the Phoenix; and so the greater, ever-younger self is thus reborn.

In forgetting the man, the soul becomes the child.

In centuries past, nepenthe was a gift of spice wine, or the envenomed vapors which rose from the cavern-clefts of oracles. The mysteries of Eleusis did coil round the worship of nepenthe, and the Hierophants of Arcadia knew its truth.



But in Sana'a and my own century, there was known to me one dark gift only which came from the Utter East, and that is the violet frankincense. That alone, the stories told me, was the last gateway to nepenthe in this age.

Frankincense in and of itself is but a spice. But the violet strain of this spice is a crystallized corruption of itself. By the mad, it is whispered that the *violet* spice is born of the fungal leavings of the *Yuggothai*, those astral stalkers which are known as the Mi-Go. Of these sagacious and unearthly Things, the Fungi Who Stride the Ice, I will speak elsewhere. But my first understanding of the treasures born of their waste was the violet frankincense, the spice kissed by their leavings.

This spice was found to sift only rarely through its filter, the east gate caravansary of Sana'a. But I was the jackal of that city's secrets. I gave myself, body and soul, to a sallow merchant who demanded *me* as his price for the frankincense of the *Yuggothai*. And this I paid. There in the caravansary, seven nights after Adaya's death, I did purchase a dram of this precious spice, this violet liquid crystal.

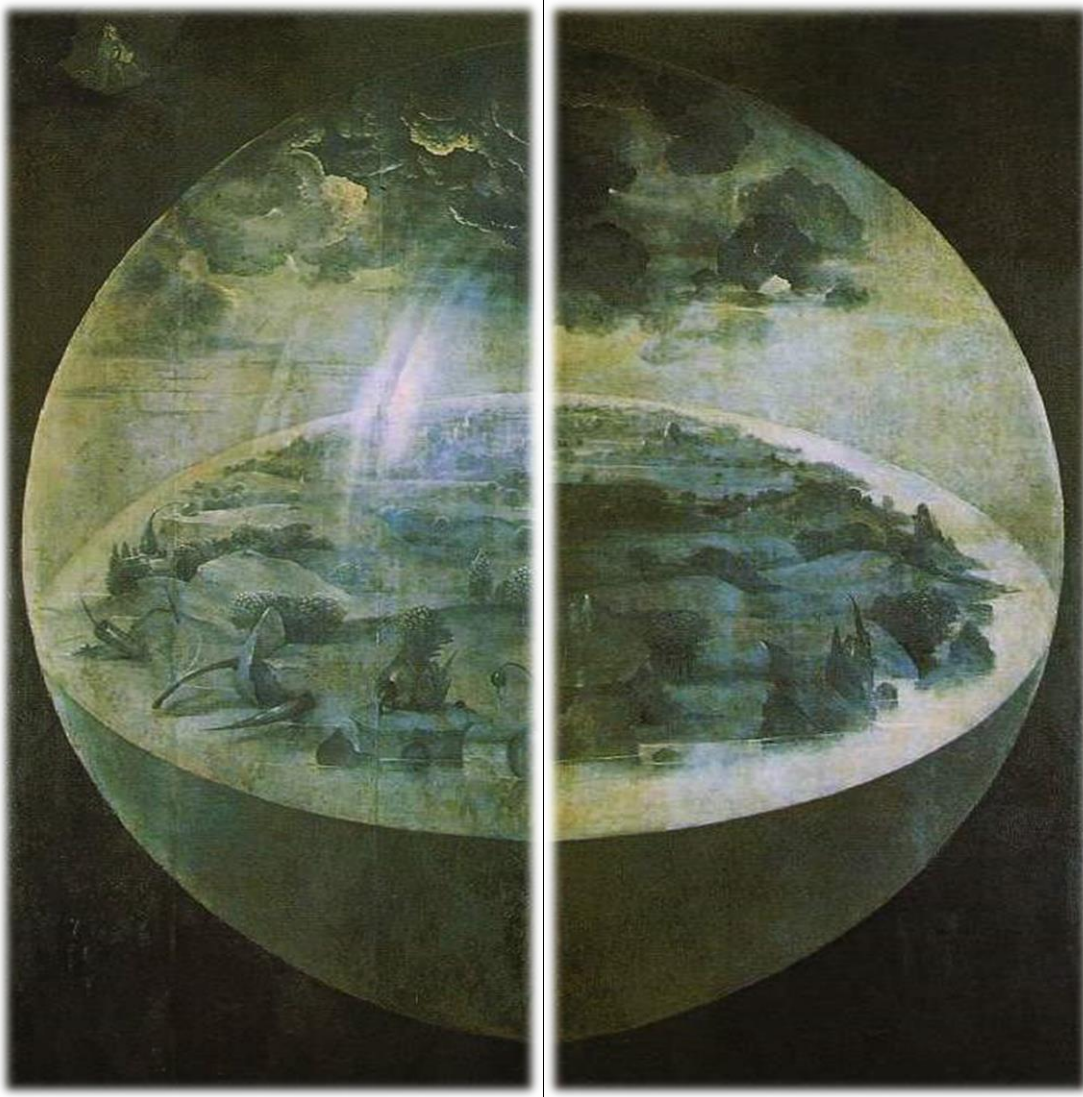
Verily, it is worth ever more than its weight in gold.

For the violet, in truth, when burned and breathed as smoke brings in truth the sacred nepenthe of ages old. I sat beneath a rooftop tent, and burned the frankincense in the night. There, in the cloying and sugared cloud of its burning, this spice did bring me into the Lands of Dream.



Behold, for this is the dream rendered unto me by the mists of *Yuggothai*:

I dreamed more vividly than ever in my life. I balanced upon the border of the Dreamlands, even as my entranced eyes still were closing.



There in the Otherness I did *believe*, and an illusory palace rose all about me. As I strode from courtyard to courtyard, the Palace of Nothingness became the Real. This was the dark gift of the spice: I forgot all of my sorrows, and so too did I forget that Adaya had died beneath a blade.

O, nepenthe.

I did desire her anew, and I did dream of her. And there, adrift in my grief and ecstasy, lost in the Palace of Nothingness, the slain Adaya did rise and come to me.

My soul could not question the impossibility of her presence, for it sang with an all-consuming joy.

So did I find myself enraptured. From out of the courtyard gardens she glided to me, we touched hands. We kissed, and we did lay together as never we had in life.

Having loved her I did rise, and hand in hand we walked the halls of the endless and ivory palace.

She was silent, she a princess, and I her innamorato. Guided by my desire, she flowed with me neath cascades of birdsong and currents of leaf-shadow, out of the last courtyard and through to the endless halls, until we two discovered an ornate stair, which led down into the palace's beguiling under-realm of emerald and of twilight.

Seventy were the steps we descended in our bliss. The coolness of shadow filtered through the lingering echoes cast in wild-song by the birds, yet soaring far above. By the time she and I came to alight upon the twentieth step descending, the air began to warm; and we sensed a burning far below.

The staircase spiraled ever down, and flickering shadows of firelight began to dance upon the alabaster walls. Gusts of heat turned the moisture of the air into a mist.

With doubt and trepidation, Adaya did falter. I looked back to her upon the higher stair, and tears shone in her eyes.

Did she understand that she had died? At that moment, in the nepenthe, I myself did not remember she was gone. And so she was there, caged in my fever dream, a prisoner of my belief.

She said nothing; I kissed her brow, and upon my gentle insistence she did stir and acquiesce. So by the draw of one trembling hand, I did lead her further down.

Scarlet radiance flared and the heat washed over us. We stepped into a grotto encircled by licks of flame, an ancient polished cavern filled with an ever-reflecting glory of shadows and of light. The little fires did leap from narrow fissures jettied all along the cavern's walls. And in the midst of that cave of eld there stood two priests from the land of Khom, arrayed in ochre robes and cloth of gold.

They raised their heads, not in the least dismayed then to behold me. They were *pshent*-bearded in the manner of Egyptians: not as the merchants and bladesmen are in my own day, but rather by the arts of ancient Khom herself, the dead realm of the

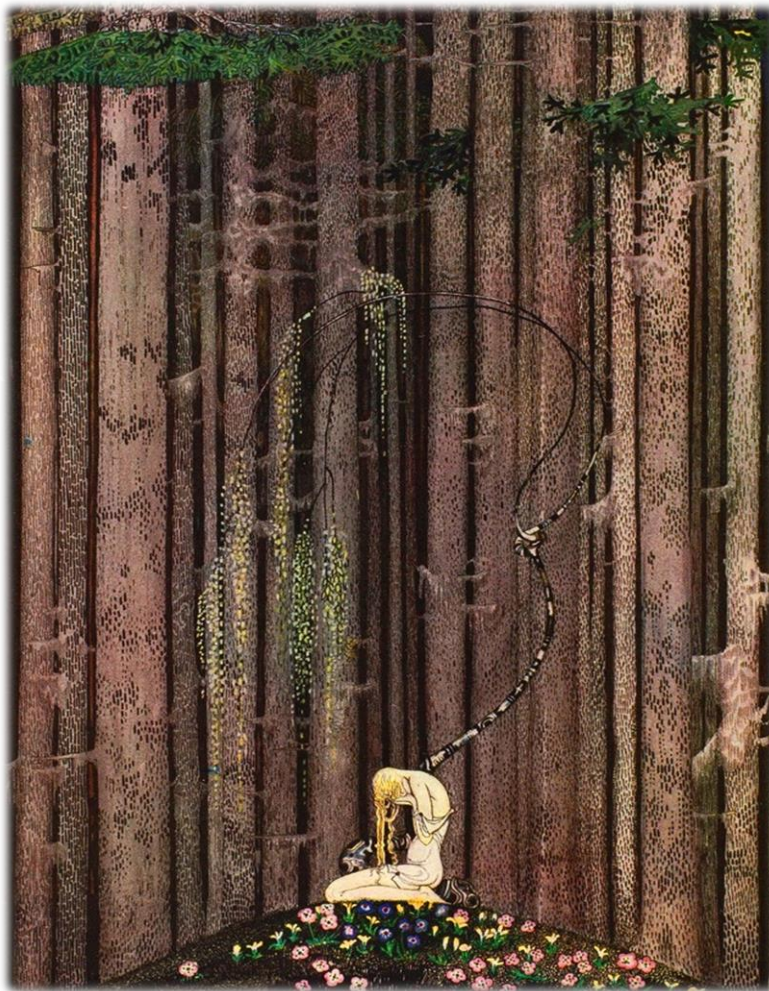
Pharaoh. Ringlets of gold — and translucent crystals, each hollow stone filled with water — did ring their beards. These two men were of that sacred race, the True Khomites, dark and wise: their kohl-rimmed eyes were ancient, and in regarding me those eyes reflected every fire.

Adaya in fear did quail from them, and weep.

And as I comforted her, the younger of these two ancient ones did say to me, “Welcome, one who names himself as Abd. I am Nasht.”

And the elder, speaking in solemn cant, “I am Kaman-Thah.”

I greeted them, and stated that my beloved and I desired to enter the Eden-lost, the enchanted cedar forest of Huwawa.



And Nasht nodded to me, and as he turned his hand upon the air, the flames of the farther cavern wall relented. There was revealed an ornate portal, Arabesque swirlings of hollowed jewel and stone, carved from the cavern itself, there made to frame another descending stair.

And I began to cross the cavern in silent joy, for I knew that the Eden-lost did await me far below, a lush netherworld of wonders. There I would find the deeper gate which opens upon the forest of our dreams.

Yet Adaya would not follow me. As I turned to lift her — for she now was curled in grief upon the floor — Kaman-Thah did say to me: “You, Abd can pass, for you are worthy.”

I replied — for the nature of nepenthe is to cloud the memory, and yet to glory in its mist — “Worthy? There is my father’s darkness in me, and I do revel in it. I beneath his Fate may be to lie accursed as a murderer, perhaps. I do not remember. I, priest, am not pure.”

And Kaman-Thah nodded, pleased yet saddened. He did say, “There is a terrible darkness in you, child. This is true. The nature of your soul-shadow you have now forgotten, and so on a drift of spice have you come to me. But the Dreamlands are meant not for the pure, but rather for those who believe in both the terrible and beautiful as one. Of all the souls of your city and the spirits of your age, beloved Abd, you are he.”

I was well satisfied. I *was* worthy. I was. I would venture on, I would conquer the daemon Huwawa who guarded immortality. I would have and rule my Eden-lost, my Kingdom of Nothing. And so I compelled Adaya to rise, and I enfolded her.

Yet Nasht did say to me, “To the Gates of Deeper Slumber, you alone may pass. The Forest Enchanted and all the lands which lie beyond will welcome you. But this bereaved one, this grieving maiden? She cannot go forth with you.”

And swallowing my rage, I asked, “Why not?”

And Nasht replied, “Because she is not truly here, and you only dream of her.”

Kaman-Thah did say, “She is with death. She is lost to you.”

And I said, “But this is the threshold to the Otherness of the Real. Here, the impossible shall reign. These are the Lands of Dream.”

And Nasht replied, "So they are. But this moment and this place *are* real in themselves, and in all of the realities, she is dead. Adaya is not here of her own will, child, but rather solely of your own."

I gazed into the eyes of Adaya, and she did kiss me. She did speak then in my dream, for the first and only time. She said unto me, "Al-Azrad, ever do I love you. Know this, remember this if nothing else upon your waking. I beg of you, set me free. Give me the peace of death. Live your life, learn the secrets of the Abyss which you must know; and when the end of your time is nigh, release yourself, and so for eternity will you come to me."

And as I wept and touched the ringlets of her braided hair, Adaya faded from my embrace.

I woke with the same tears upon my face which I had cried in the fiery cavern of Nasht and Kaman-Thah. I cried out her name, yet I was upon the rooftop in benighted Sana'a, alone.

The smoke of the earlier hours yet lingered, but the crystals of the violet frankincense were ashes. Many a year would pass before I ever found such crystals to be my treasures once again.

And scarcely since that night have I dreamt of my Adaya again, despite my fervent wishes every night to do so.

3-2

SCROLL XIII

THE LAMENT OF THE DEAD

DESPITE THE LINGERING MERCIES of the heat and the aridity of high Sana'a, the body of my Adaya had begun to render itself unto the dust. I extracted from her mouth one tooth, for that is the way of my people when the beloved must be buried.

I wrapped her then in linens and I sealed her shroud with beast-glue of melted fat. I stroked a veil of cinnabar over her hidden face, shaping it in the symbol of the moon.

My love.

Having done this, in deepest night, I left Sana'a with her enshrouded body. I forsook the city at that time, wanting nothing more to do with it or its people; and I swore that my beloved's body would forever remain untouched. For to one such as myself who knew black secrets, there were tales whispered that those corpses which were buried in Al Adim — the canyon hollow, the grave-ravine beyond that city's black western gate — were blasphemed by treasure hunters, by necromancers, and worse.

For my Adaya to be untouched, inviolate, I would bury her in secret, and alone.

And so it is that in the night I carried her to the Oasis of Zarzara, three leagues into the desert, *sahra*. Striding through the chill and wind in solitude, arriving there just ere to sunrise, I prayed thus: for my Adaya, the afterlife would not be the end of all, but rather a rebirth.

Would then that I knew my true destiny.

O Adaya, forgive me.



With my spade and my own fingers I did bury her beneath the date palm which offered the sweetest shade, near to the waters of Zarzara. Her shroud I did well anoint

with amber and spice of myrrh, for I knew these sweet scents of eternity were offensive to the digging beasts of the *sahra*. With layers of fronds and stones each set upon her, I did set her to rest.

She was my beloved, a daughter of Judaea. Although her ways were ever a mystery to my own, I sought desperately to honor her in the ways of her people. I knew precious little of her tribe, only what I had heard from merchants in the night, for she rarely spoke of the mother who had died, the father who had forsaken her. I myself had no religion, no belief. I was in exile, not only from the people of Sana'a, but also from my own grieving heart.

I no longer knew myself. The lingering gift of the nepenthe is its own black curse as well.



Having buried her, I drank of the morning waters, and I did grieve.

I sang my most beautiful song of songs over her grave, and laid there in the shade until exhaustion stole over me.

In falling prey to slumber, I had a precious memory of Adaya return to me. How before that moment had I never remembered? Had the veiling of that past torment been a trick of my own wisdom, a nepenthe born not of spice, but of the heart in all its need?

The memory was this:

As a child, first having fled Ghanara, I did see a bleeding woman garbed only in sackcloth and crown of thorn. The bladesmen of the emporium cried out to the blood-hungry crowd that she was an adulterer. She was stoned. In my fascination, the sick and twisted pleasure with which I watched that miserable woman in her suffering, I was not only ashamed of myself, but I was ... what?

As every stone fell, as blood dripped and bone shattered, I experienced pleasure. In the black shadow of myself, that aspect of my spirit which I strive to deny in all of its desires, in the Beast, I was fulfilled.

The woman died gazing across the marketplace, looking into my eyes alone. Only I would meet her gaze. To the others, she was not a tragic loss, a woman of exquisite beauty

even in death. To those who had killed her, she was a husk, a depleted vessel unworthy of further thought.

I cried that night, not only for the poor woman and the horror of her killing, but for myself, the damage I had done to my own spirit in taking pleasure in her suffering.

That was the very first night in which Adaya, my dream made flash, had embraced me.



Adaya was my lover in dream alone. I was a boy, and she a virgin. We never more than touched, but she was and shall be my love forever.



3-3

SCROLL XIV

OF THE CRIMSON THAT IS DESIRE

(This scroll was uniquely titled thus by John Dee. From the elaborate script of his pen in this passage, it seems that he was deeply moved here by Al-Azrad's adoration of Adaya.)



(This is the scroll-song, translated into English, which Al-Azrad did compose and sing over the grave of his Adaya. It is perhaps one of the most haunting passages in Al Azif.)



MERSIYE (ELEGY)

THE FUNERREAL SONG

FOR THE MAIDEN OF JUDAEA,

O ADAYA

EVER IN HER MEMORY,
 I am the beloved of the lost.
 We dreamed as one,
 Echoing thrum of jackal heart.
 She was the only,
 She is everything.

In death, Adaya,
Forever you are mine.
In the Empire
Of the Blackened Mind,
Unto the crest of cavern's fire,
Yet cradled in nepenthe,
There my maiden breathes.

There, in Dreamland, she embodies
Sheer transparency of starlight.
In Palaces of Nothingness,
From off the twilight's sculptures
Of fire and of shade,
Gathering my every breath
From star and blossom into song,
Measuring the weft of every moonbeam,
Adaya, O weaver of my dreaming
Turns my lucent soul within her hands.

In lingering in the Empire,
She draweth down the moon,
She with spellbound fingers
Twirls the sacred crescent from the sky.

Yet unknowing

She is lost, awash in laughter,
There she weighs my spirit's wane
In a spindling of her fingerprints.
She and I, with songbirds
Glory in the majesty of flight.

For she
Is the beauty of the rarity of rain,
The desert misting in rains' flight,
The crystal lingering of manna on the *hapau* trees.
More truly than the flesh she left behind,
Here she is herself, simplicity,
Wedded sweetly to her imperfection.

And beholding me, so she loves,
And so she doth remember love and life,
And so
She is lost to me.

Ever in my memory,
O Adaya,
You are the beloved and the lost.
We dreamed as one,
Echoing thrum of jackal heart.
In life, she was the only.
In death, she is everything.



3-4

SCROLL XV

THE WATCHER AT THE OASIS

HAVING SUNG MY HEART to the body of my beloved, and having slept, I woke with the next sunset to the flurry of wings. An oasis is not only a sanctuary crafted of sweet waters and cool breezes; it is a place of the birds of passage. These ever-beautiful creations fill the palms before they endure the fire of the day, coveting the moisture and the shade. At sunset, they soar across the desert in its chill, lofting on the thermal winds seeking their next horizon.

Yet in waking me that twilight, the cacophony of the birds was not only one of wings, but of cries of alarm.

I drew my *jambiya* and looked all about, fearing bandits or *badawi* grave robbers. Perhaps, I feared, even the foul Najeed had followed me to render himself as my assassin. But no.

There was a silhouette of black against the blood-red of the setting sun, its heels set to its haunches, and as it crouched it sniffed the scent of me from the air. Its snout was of the *wulfen*, a predatory face of canine cast. It lifted its too-long fingers to the breezes. The thing was so gaunt, its waist was pinched as narrow as that of a wasp, and then I knew:

My mother, the Shepherdess, had in all her whispers — the desert elegies sung for me as her child — spoken true. The myths of the Ghuls, the deathless and corpse-eating prowlers of the desert, were no myths at all.

The Watcher at the Oasis, this thing, was an ancient Ghul. Once more, it scented the moistened air.

The thing did sense me as I lowered my blade in comprehension. Seeing this, it did not flee, it did not approach. I believed that it would kill me, and despite my blade I bore no illusions that I could survive such a confrontation. For this was a Deathless One. The thing had mastered the desert and hunger and had snapped the chains of death itself. How could I, not even yet a man, hope to vanquish it?

And so I bowed my head over the grave, and whispered a prayer to be with my Adaya. It was a blessing, it seemed, to die where her body had been buried by my own hand.

But when I dared to raise my head again, not even the echoes of birdsong were to be heard. Only the wind. The Watcher had left me to my love. The Ghul had gone.



3-5

SCROLL XVI

THE TEMPTATION OF AHARON

AFTER THE FULCRUM MOMENT of the Watcher at the Oasis, I was reborn. Not only was I alive, but for the first I had a glimpse of understanding into the truer nature of the worlds. What some called superstitions: the Ghuls, who stride the waste and lord over themselves undying? To my mind, things once “known” as falsehoods were proven to be real.

It was not so difficult for me to believe in them. The Empire of the Blackened Mind, the Otherness, the nightmare of Cthulhu, these were to me facades which despite their own realities had never touched my mundane life in the waking world. But all of them were real, were they not? All of them had been experienced not only by myself, but by Akram and Adaya as well.

The Ghul at the oasis had certainly been real and of this earth, and I had beheld its silhouette before the setting of the sun. I was yet enthralled by the ways of youth, the ways of simplicity. I had seen, and so what I had seen was true.

Deathlessness was true. Then what of immortality?



Of course, the world of grief and exile still held its own complexities.

I had sworn that I would never return to Sana’a, the death-place of Adaya and so by my heart accursed. Yet still I needed food and water to survive. My shame, in deciding to live on, was to leave Adaya’s grave. But as I recalled her farewell words to me, in her death and in my dreaming, I found that it was not love alone which dwelled inside me and gave me the breath of life. Greater than this, there was a curious mask upon the face of Hope.

This mask, I learned, was Hatred.

I desired nothing more than for Adaya's murderers to die. But more than this, seeing the Watcher at the Oasis had caused me to question many things.

There are many even among the *Sufi* and the sages who in their heart of hearts truly never believe in miracles, or the horrors of the netherworld. Comforting themselves with intangible visions of man-gods and lovely angels, they never allow themselves to fear the true Things which crawl amongst the shades, the Things which revel in our horror and long to devour us.

But for myself, cursed by the dreaming of Great Cthulhu, and finding that others knew of the dream's every detail ere I ever shared such with them, I knew that there are many things in this world that are more real than ourselves, more real than the narrow cages of the few things we dare to believe in.

Mortals are sentient beasts, but beasts nonetheless they remain. We are fools, slaves to desire and pleasure and denial, prey to hunger and relentless in our flight from the truths of cruelty. In return, those truths care not if we believe in them; they simply *are*. And so the sight of the Ghul, although it terrified me, did not cause me to deny it in horror, to loathe it, or to believe that I had fallen into madness. Rather, it gave me Hope, Hatred, and the power to remove Hope's mask to find my destiny.

I would have my own revenge upon Adaya's murderers.



I knew then it was possible for the flesh to live beyond the grave, and for a lost Ghul to rise again and return in a flesh which even the desert could not kill. Could it then not be possible to bring my beloved Adaya back to life?

Even if she were to return as a Ghul, I would love her. If that were the secret of immortality, then so be it. I would resurrect her, I would commit the same blasphemies upon myself, and as Ghuls we would live forever.

Are not the desperate hopes of youth so fragile?



It is evil, to hope for the beloved's resurrection against her will.

The desire for another's eternity is not a weakness, yet it is the most merciless of strengths our hearts remain compelled to understand. Such desire is a longing for the forbidden, to shatter the mortality of the beloved and to make of her an idol of carven flesh.

Love is not only longing, it is the coveting of more than all that is truly possible for man.

I knew the tales of such blasphemies very well. Such thoughts were the lure of the Black Pharaoh Nephren-Ka, who in his own oblivion knew all that we desire, and who curses us by giving that wish to us as the most deathly gift of all. Immortality is a wicked treasure, as dire to give as it is to receive.

But all men wish it, either for their lovers or for themselves.

So do sages set their names into the Blackened Codex of Azathoth; if they do not adore a woman, still they adore the lure of wisdom of the stars. Those who compel themselves into obsession for ever more of desire are touched upon by the unreal. Such is the nature of the Empire of the Blackened Mind, consensual longing born of sorrow.

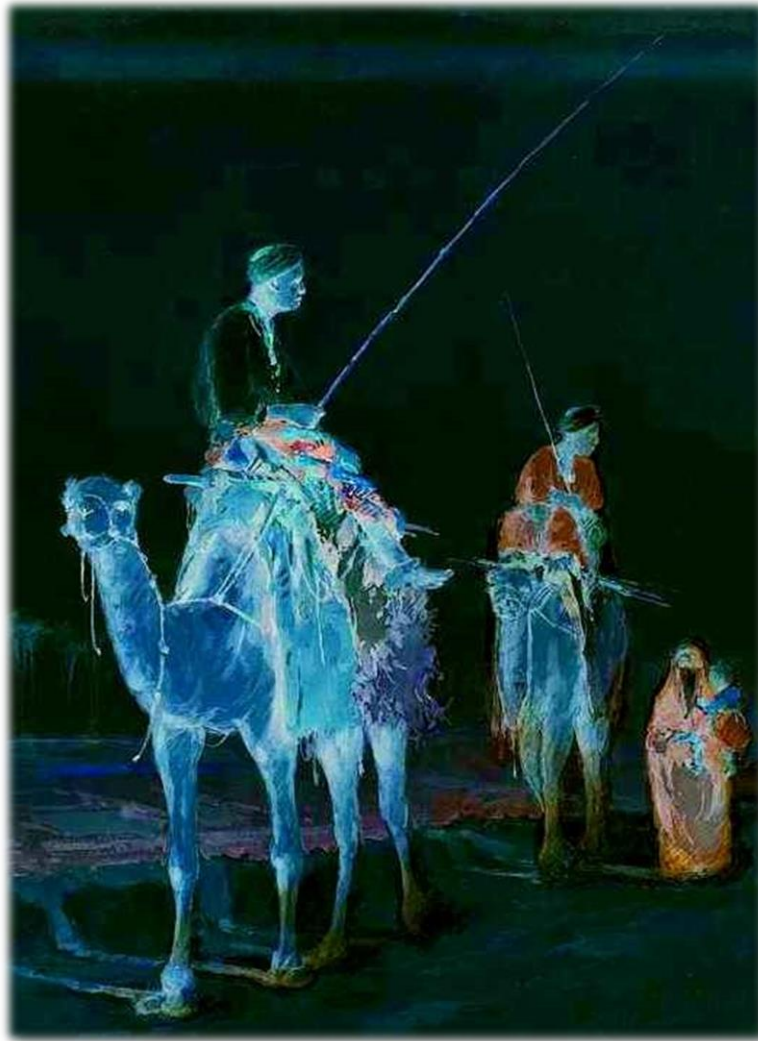
If Ghuls did exist, could I not raise my Adaya? Could I not beg the Watcher to resurrect her, and then to change me to stand beside her?

Such an innocent I was.

It is evil, to hope for the beloved's resurrection against her will.



Such ruminations filled my mind as I walked back from the oasis through all the shadowless fires of the day. I found myself, parched and sun-stricken, at the lesser caravansary seven leagues west of Sana'a's great walls: the encampment named Jumani-Sab'a, the Place of the Seven Pearls.



There I did meet Aharon the sage. There was but one caravan there in the high-sun of the day. Its guards warded me off, hounding me away from the camels all laden with grain and spice. The merchants, seeing that I was deluded from my hours beneath the sun, gave me a berth of silence and nothing more. The women made the signs of the horns with their slender hands, and none would speak to me. But the holy man, Aharon the desert wanderer, rose in his tattered robe and he did fix upon the wanting, the pain, the fire within my eyes.

He alone was kind enough to trade my empty waterskin from the Oasis of Zarzara. For payment for the sharing of his own water and the sanctuary of his shade, he asked

only of me the last of the amber and cinnabar with which I had anointed Adaya's shroud. Thus he gave me a full waterskin of his own, and the shadow of his wind-frayed tent, a skeleton of wicker sticks and rags of linen, leaning to and fro upon the sand.

I drank. I slept and woke in brief and fitful torments. Aharon, he did care for me.

In between my silences, I offered my grudging thanks. The meagerness of my gratitude was made stronger by my sincerity.

Night began to fall, jackals yelped near the horizon. We spoke of many things.

And as the chill of evening crept over the dunes, and my body blistered and shivered from the torments which it had borne, Aharon asked me not my name or what secrets I had buried in the sands beside Zarzara.

But rather, he asked me: "Friend, when you walked to the oasis alone, and you did slumber there, on waking, what did you see?"

I saw the Watcher. I beheld a Ghul.

I had no reason to share such an unbelievable secret with this man. But I had been hollowed by my grief, by the vision of the Watcher and my acceptance of the Unnatural, striding among the wastelands of our world. So hollowed and shattered, I was uncaring of whatever might happen to me. I wanted only to grow wise enough to know the ways of Adaya's murderers; to grow clever and fearless enough to stalk them; to wring the secrets of immortality from either them or from the mysteries of the Ghul; and to grow merciless enough to slay them all.

I had hope alone in my belief that there would be a way to bring my Adaya — as Ghul or returning mortal, I cared not, for love is eternal and the flesh is never equal to the spirit of the beloved — back into my arms.

And in such a reverie, I did tell the *fakir* Aharon precisely what I had seen.

"I saw the Watcher. I beheld a Ghul."

Rather than scoff at me, instead of kicking me away from his fire or cursing me as mad, Aharon only smiled sadly and did look into the flame which he had made. He scattered the precious amber I had given him into the cinders, and the sweet perfumes of embalming and wonderment did course over us in a smoke of fog and spark.

He said to me: "Of all amongst this caravan you could tell, only I. You share this with me alone, a gift of truth. I do believe you. Ninety-seven moons ago, I myself did bury my

first wife at that oasis. The palm I had laid her beneath is gone, dried away from the receding waters and taken by the sands. Her grave is lost. But I know she is there. And the Watcher? The one who sits upon the rise and crouches and gazes and does not slay those who behold him? That selfsame Ghul, I did see him as well. For after I buried my Zahiya, he came to me. And I was fool enough to attack him.”

Spellbound, I said nothing. I waited.

Aharon went on:

“He dashed the *kulhad*-hatchet from my hand, shattering my wrist and writing my shame in scars all down my forearm to the bone. Do you see? Here, and here? Yet the Watcher he did spare me, and he swore that he would provide me with the black gift of nepenthe. This Watcher has a name, as well. In his own age of mortality, a stargazer and a harp-priest of Akkad, he was known as Naram-gal. He offered to me a release from grief, the forgetting of mortal cares, for I was dying of a broken heart. If only, yes, if only I would give to him one gift in return.”

“And what gift?” I asked of him.

And Aharon said, “I did let Naram-gal unbury my wife, and feast upon her flesh.”

Revolted, I stood and kicked the amber coals of the fire across the sand. I began to draw my *jambiya*, and the guards stationed at their farther fires silenced their private laughter and drunken slurs and quieted themselves to watch me warily.

But Aharon, who had taken me in that day and had shared his waters and gentled my sorrows, ignored my blade and only looked into my eyes.

Feeling a fool, I cast my blade away. And I asked of him, “You let that ... that *thing* defile the body of your wife? How could you?”

And Aharon replied, “Young one, do you not know? If love and honor truly were all to you and sang as one within your heart, you would have killed yourself over your Adaya’s grave. You did not. If you could release her, if you could be so strong as to free her unto death and go on to a life alone, you would have buried her in the canyon-land Al Adim, where every other soul of Sana’a is laid to rest. This too, you did not do.”

“No. You took her body to the Zarzara, you balmed her with treasured spice, and you tarried there. You thought you would take your life, and you did not. And in waking, seeing the Ghul Naram-gal and embracing the mercy of his intrigue, you did walk away.

And so you are here. You choose to live, as you choose to be furious with me. Because, my friend, if the Watcher had promised you resurrection for your love, *you might have done the same as I*. Desire of this kind which burns within you, it is not only love, it is selfishness, yes? The soul of your Adaya longs only to be at peace, but still you want her. Is that not the bitterest of truths? Your love for her is great, but your love for yourself is greater still. You forbid her exaltation. You cannot let her leave you."

There was one moment, a fleeting one of fire, when I nearly took up my blade again and slashed Aharon's throat. But my hand did tremble. Why? Because the sage was cruel to say such things to one bereaved? Because he was fearless of death, and perhaps even would welcome it?

No.

It is because what Aharon said to me was the truth. This I could not deny. I *did* want her back, whatever the price, whatever unnatural magic might be demanded to cheat death and kiss her living lips once more. Aharon knew this. For the first time since Akram had smiled upon me, and the first since Adaya had taken me into her shelter, I had found a kindred soul.

All of this Aharon understood as I knelt in silence. And I wept.

He did not touch me. He said nothing until I raised my head, then only, "Boy. Look to my hands."

Aharon then did show me the tattoos upon his palms, each burned and scarred with the primal sigil of the Cabal of the Ghul. The sigil is in the shape of four extinct tiger jawbones, arrayed in the order of the four stars of the horizons, a compass rose made of teeth.

He told me that he was burned thus by the grateful Naram-gal, and that this is the symbol by which the Ghuls mark those among the mortals who are to be spared. Such people may wander into the desert, into the farthest wastelands and even the graveyards of the haunting Jinn and the cries of Al Azif, and never be slain by the Ghuls who dwell there. And if such a marked one should choose to do so, he may later even share the feasting upon the dead beside the Ghuls themselves, and so become one of them, and learn of their every secret.

Immortality.

And who in turn lords over the Ghuls, or over the ones who are marked so? When I dared to ask Aharon whom he did serve, he did not answer. When I asked further if he had eaten of the flesh of the dead, he said, "Not yet."

But he did gift me with an amulet, made of corpse-lizard bones, in the same shape of the sigil of the Cabal. This I wear still.

And then Aharon did tell me, "Listen to me now. Do not judge me in anything but silence. Yes?"

I let him put his arm around me. He said further:

"Truly, it will be possible to bring your beloved Adaya back to life. One such method is yet known by the most elder among the Ghuls. This secret I do not know, for I am marked and not yet of them, but I do know that the gift of rebirth would not bring her back in the way that you believe. Deeper, I know that the price of such a sorcery is far greater than any sane man would ever dare to pay."

He shrugged. And he went on, "But who am I, young friend, to question your obsession? I have a madness of my own, for I believe that the afterlife is not in heaven, but of this earth. And I believe that I will walk that earthly paradise. I will feast with the Ghuls upon my own flesh, and so I will become one with them."

I covered my face. *To eat of one's self*. Was that the secret of the Deathless Ones? Or only one of a thousand horrors?

"Friend," Aharon said to me, "I can only point you the way. This sorcery of resurrection is known to the eldest Ghuls, this much is true as I have told you. But you alone must choose which path you are to follow. Will you seek such forbidden wisdom, or will you shun it as the blasphemy it certainly must be? Such is the way of desert walkers, the marked ones of the Ghuls. Once tattooed or bearing an amulet, we vow to share the secret of the sigil with one we believe is worthy, and one other person only. I have chosen you. Tonight, sleep beside me. If you kill me, I will have dishonored my master Naram-gal in choosing wrongly of your heart, and so I will deserve it."

"But if this night you stay with me in peace, then I have chosen well, and my debt of shame is paid. The spirit of my own beloved Zahiya will forgive me for allowing the Watcher to feast upon her, and she at last will slumbereth in peace. Then will I be worthy to walk into the desert and share the feast with the Ghuls of Naram-gal, and so will begin the blessing of my afterlife upon this world."

There was nothing I could say. But I did lay myself beside him, and to show my faith in his confessions, I thrust my dagger into the fading coals and left it there. Aharon did not seem to care.

When the moon had risen, half-cored and orange with a sandstorm raging upon the ever-far horizon, Aharon turned his back to me. But his last murmur bade me to sleep beside him. I laid near to him, sharing his warmth and waiting. In time, he breathed with the ease of sleep.

When I woke there in the morning, recovering my cooled *jambiya* from the ashes, the caravan had departed. I found only Aharon's tracks leading out from Jumani-Sab'a, toward the far oasis of Zarzara.



He had chosen me as his successor, to carry forth the secret of the Cabal of the Ghul. He was gone.

GATHERING THE FOURTH:

OF AKHUTU,
THE CULT OF CTHULHU

41

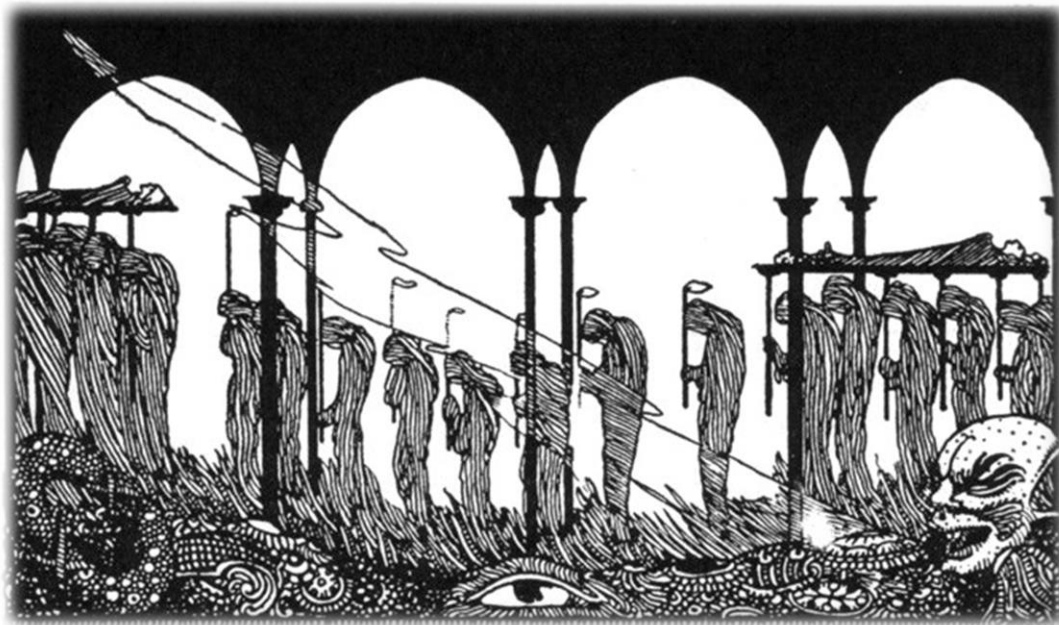
SCROLL XVII

UNVEILING THE DEEPER TREACHERIES AND THE UNHOLY NAMING OF THE MASTERS OF NAJEED

(?)

❧❧❧

(The title is known. This scroll is missing, but Dee has left clues in his scrawlings that he believes that Al-Azrad did come to learn with certainty that the Cult of Cthulhu, as well as Najeed, had caused her death. The only word on the scroll which now remains is "Nyarlathotep.")



42

SCROLL XVIII

AKHUTU: OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF FILTH

THE CULTISTS OF CTHULHU oft speak of themselves as one with the *Akhutu*; that is, “the Brotherhood” in the lost tongue of Akkad. The word “cult” itself may be a corruption of this ancient name, a curse upon the worshippers of dark forbidden powers beneath the earth.

The Akhutu is the many-one of those blasphemers and defilers who toil to bring about the end of free mortal reign upon the earth. We who do not embrace Cthulhu’s worship; or worse, we who fight against the Cult and seek to slaughter its priests and thralls? We are but their prey.

We are here to by them be cleansed. Our deaths must be in agony and terror, for only then in our dying cries do we send forth the primal essence of our minds, and in the panic of torment our dying feeds the psyche of Cthulhu as he slumbereth in R’lyeh. In this manner do we strengthen the Sleeper’s dreams which open the gates of cataclysm between Vhoorl and R’lyeh, quickening the coming End of All.

Be it known that all of the Akhutu are mad. They are bestial, and worthy only of destruction. To their minds, however, the sacred madness is a gift born of revelation, and those who do not possess this “Mark of the Chosen” are believed to be weak, incapable of comprehending the glory of the End. In such thinking, the oblivious and the innocent are a waste and serve no other function than to feed the Great Cthulhu with their agonies.

The Akhutu believe that in serving Cthulhu thus, they will rise among the few who are spared in the End of Days and who shall be exalted as the many-pleasured task-masters, anointed by the Brethren of the Stars to rule over the tearing of our world.

The Akhutu believe that only the mad are strong, and only the strong will prevail.

Can such be true? The greatest men and women I have ever known have proven to be mad. I, too, succumb to the disease of visions and screams deep in the night. I am mad not for what I believe, but for what I have seen with my own eyes and comprehended.

Of the Cult's convictions, I do not believe their judgment of the innocents to be true. To me, the Akhutu are nothing more than a Brotherhood of Filth, the mere deluded pawns of an un-god which ravens enthroned beyond any mortal dynasty.

And yet I believe that those who fight against the Cult are sacred warriors; that those who sacrifice themselves to slow the time when the stars are to be right are the greatest and holiest fighters that the Kingdom of Men shall ever know.

Many of my allies, my mentors and even unbelievers have fought the Cult over the years. I have seen valorous men and women fall prey to the abominations of the murderous Cult, and cowards as well. The Akhutu, they seek to silence us, for they know that an awakening is nigh. In the last few centuries before Cthulhu's rising, there will be a War of Culling and of Reaping, the likes of which no empire or kingdom of our earth has yet beheld.

The opening time for that war is now.



In writing of this Cult, I invite my death. There are now few cities and fewer sanctuaries to which I can run; and I now devote myself to sharing these forbidden secrets with you, my reader, as my slave warrior and chosen. You will be my vessel, by reading of me you will invite me to be your will. Together we will slay and delay the rising.

And in this here-time, the night of this scroll's inscription by my hand? From this moment, I will flee no more. Of all the sanctuaries I have known, of all the places where I have eluded the Cult and refused to make my stand, there now is nothing to believe in.

Too many have died protecting me. Of battlegrounds, and chosen mantles of sacrifice, Damascus shall be my last.



The writings of the Cthulhu Revelations are nearly complete.

When I am done, having inscribed all of the many hundreds of my scrolls, I will hide them in the libraries of Damascus and in those caverns which line the shores of the Sea

of Salt. Though horribly I will die, I will die a man. The flesh is a century's slave, but the will is of eternity. My revelations, in you, will live beyond me.

I grieve not, I am already dead and mankind must know what is to come, so that the end is a Last War of defiance, and not a pathetic slaughtering of the lambs.



In fulfilling my return, know ye well:

The Akhutu-cult believes itself to be eternal. But our world is more ancient than any but the most fearless of sages dares believe. In all of the billions of this world's years, there are many more aeons yet to unfold ere the finality of Gaia's destruction by ice and fire. Great Cthulhu himself will leap from this world once the aeon of slaughter ends and he is sated, hunting other worlds to further greatness himself and glorify his psyche, as he seeks the ultimate power which he believes will allow him to endure the destruction of the Omni-Kosmos and so the rebirth of Azathoth.

(Whateley: Does this mean Cthulhu intends to survive the end of the universe, the "Big Crunch"? The Second "Big Bang"? What is to be reborn after the collapse and the end of Time?)

And so while the Cult and humanity itself will eventually perish utterly, for a time of some thousands or millions of years Cthulhu in his triumph will revel and feast upon our world. Even after war and cataclysm, in the aeon of Cthulhu's triumph there will be a need for some few mortals to remain. As we are harvested, the chosen few will serve as the instruments of destruction and be gloried with every pleasure which the dying slaves of the innocent can rendereth unto them.

It matters not to the Akhutu whether Cthulhu rises in this lifetime, or the next, or a dozen generations hence. The Cult believes itself to be one, a unity of minds which is of many bodies and a single will. As the conduit of Great Cthulhu's dreams, the Cult is a hive, a legion of interlaced vessels all resonating with the oneness of the Sleeper's revelations. When some few of the Akhutu die, the survivors revel to know that the oneness of their body is shorn in blood and growing stronger.

And are they wrong to believe so? I cannot say. It is said that the Cult began when the holy men, the shaking men (*Clarice has written here: "Epileptics?"*) were first called sacred

by our ancestors who were the *Troglodytae*, the crawlers in darkness and the dwellers of the caves. When our dreams began, Cthulhu *knew*. And as our ancestors' first dreams of beauty created the Dreamlands, and the first nightmares of the Sleeper — his festering adorations in the corpse city of R'lyeh — were awakened by our wonder. From the beginning of nightmare, beauty and evil were intertwined.

Our ancestors believed their own nightmares were the calling of the earth, the song of the planet. They worshipped Gaia with their blood. From such sacrificers were born the Akhutu. The Cult is now the vilest of mortal cabals, and the eldest. It has endured the fall of empires, it has passed beyond confines of language and kingdom and through the veils of utmost secrecy, into every land of this earth.

As horrible and degraded as the Akhutu may be, as bestial and inhuman as I judge them to remain, they still are ever fervent in their primal oneness, the bloodthirsty atrocity of their faith.

So, in killing them, will you stand among the righteous.



(Note bene: The author Howard Phillips Lovecraft claimed that there were no discussions of the Cult of Cthulhu contained within the Necronomicon. This may be true; however, it must be remembered that Dee's encrypted text purports itself to be a true and faithful rendering of the remnants of the work of Olaus Wormius and therefore Al Azif. Al Azif precedes the Necronomicon. Does this mean that a later and second Necronomicon, translated and published after Dee's version, was created by another; and that this partial work contained none of the scrolls which speak of the Cult itself? Did Lovecraft himself possess such a "successor" text, and did he write the fiction of what we now call the Cthulhu Mythos as a veiled testimony of all he had learned within?

I do not possess sufficient evidence at this time to insist that such a "Lesser Necronomicon" exists, outside of the nonesuch Whateley example. Without further proof, I am loathe to purport a hypothesis of Lovecraftian ownership of such a work, and leave myself open to professional disgrace. But I will say that even if such a theory is improbable, it is certainly not impossible. K.)

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SCROLL XIX

OF THE CULT'S ONE PRIMAL SACRIFICE, AND THE BLASPHEMIES WHERE THEY REVEL IN THE MARSHES OF SALT

(This scroll appears to mirror some repetitive passages in other scrolls, and John Dee in his translation has written: "The year anno Domini DCCXXXVII?" This implies that this scroll may be a later writing of Al-Azrad, which he then decided to bundle in the earlier works which constitute this Fourth Gathering of Al Azif. It is likely that he decided he had more forbidden secrets which he wished to reveal at last. K.)



THE OBSESSION OF AKHUTU, the Cult of Cthulhu, is to quicken the time of the un-god's return. In dominating thralls and slaves, in murdering the sharers of their secrets, in culling mad dreamers of R'lyeh's whispers and making of them priests, the Akhutu bringeth the minds of mortals to resonate with the dreaming of He Who Sleeps Beneath the Waves. For the greater the legion of mortals who dream of him and believe in him, the quicker shall R'lyeh rise, and so bring Great Cthulhu his triumph and our butchery.

I write of this so that you, who read this, shall know of the coming of Cthulhu, and how the Cult accelerates his coming, attuning minds and bodies to the death-dream resonance of his oneness, speeding the rising of R'lyeh. The more cultists and defilers we shall destroy, the longer is His death's lingering.

May Cthulhu sleep. For an aeon farther still, may the Kingdom of Men yet endure.



But there are greater powers than the Cult which we cannot hope to conquer. There are the Brethren of the Stars, Cthulhu's own kind, who slumber with him beneath R'lyeh. Too, there are the Deep Ones of Lord Dagon, who breed with our maidens and rise forth as the instruments of His will. And what too of his mortal servants?

They are weak, and proud and vain, reveling in the certainty of their triumph. It is these that you must kill. The more I reveal to you of Great Cthulhu and his Cult, the more you will knoweth him; and though in destroying them you yourself shall become a beast, the bloodshed you bring will serve to slow the coming of our Apocalypse, the End of Days.



To find and destroy the Cultists of Cthulhu, the temples and the rituals shall you know.

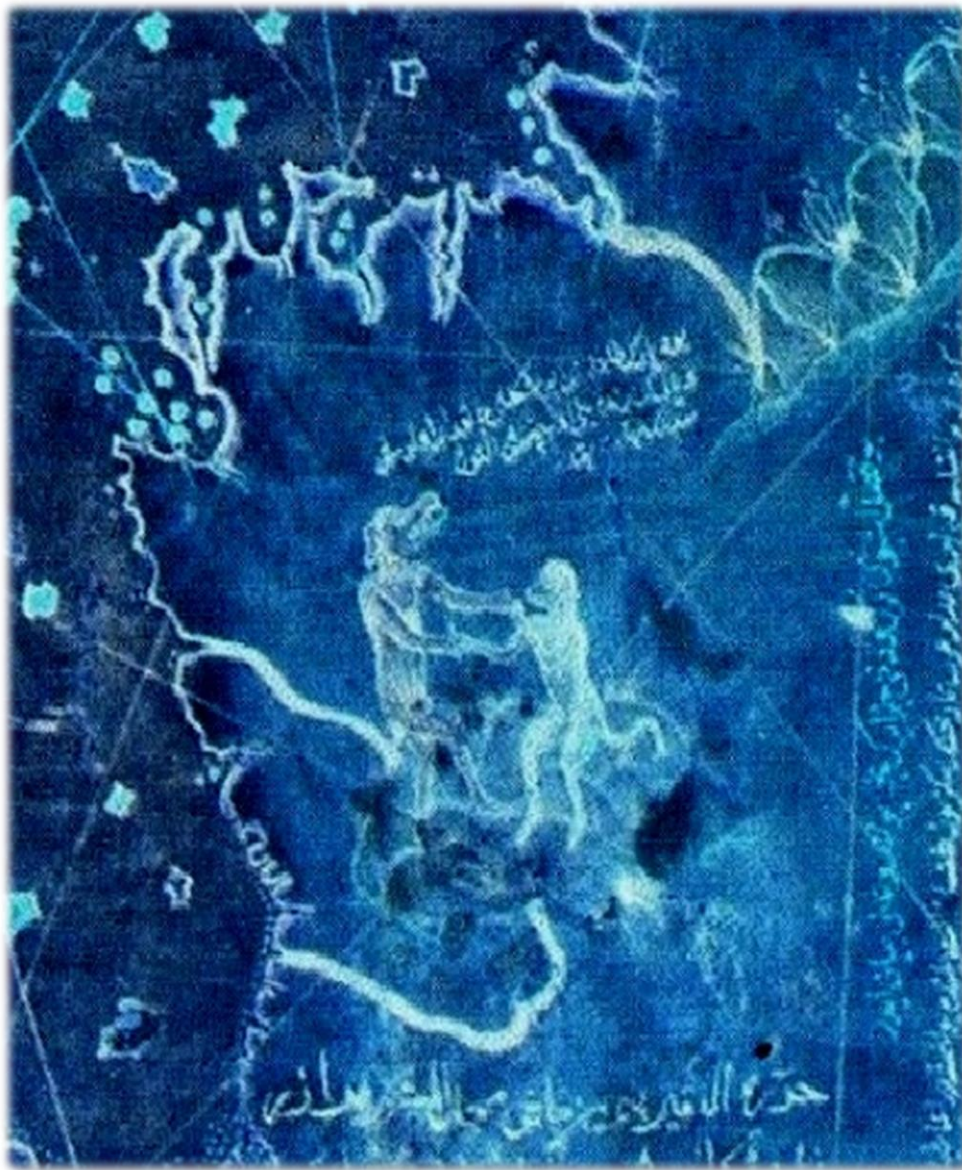
Many of the temples are ruins, for the unholy places of eld were raised where the Gaian lines of power — those ethereal fractures of Passage, the Paths which scab and slide between the spheres — intersect and render tangible the opening of the Gates, the pathways of the 'Umr at-Tawil. (*Clarice Whateley has written in the margin: "Ley lines?"*)

In the wasteland, where the Paths are few, the lairs of the Cult are few as well. As Great Cthulhu slumbereth beneath the waves, so do his servitors favor shorelines, ancient seas whose beds are now dry, and poisonous waters such as the Scarlet Sea, and the Sea of Salt east of Jerusalem. Where there is water, the resonance of the dreams is ever greater. In the Rub' al Khali, the Akhutu are little known; but in the salt marshes of the Tigris and Euphrates, their crumbling shrines and horrific idols there are many.

These marsh-shrines can be found where the trees of weeping rise above the reeds. Such places are not reverent temples of brick and bitumen, but rather cleared hollows in the wilderness where the idols of Cthulhu have been raised upon the stones of the fallen temples of old. When one strides the salts and there finds a hewn circle within the marshes, where all the trees are shorn and piled in dams of waste, and the salt-waters coil about the idol of a Thing that is neither cuttlefish, nor dragon, nor man ... *Mnemba* ...

Such are the marsh-shrines of Cthulhu.

There will be a monolith in the center of all: perhaps a remnant of a Khomite obelisk, or a shattered pillar raised from lost Persepolis, or I too have seen a great cedar carved all with hollows, chained all about, the bloodied and shrieking forms of dying children chained into the cedar where they did die slowly in horror, and the innocent blood dripped down to be lapped from the mud by the Cultists in their ecstasy. Far worse horrors there are, but this near the wastes of Babylon I have seen.



This Blood Monolith, whether stone or wood or tree or blasted clay, is the Cult's unholy symbol of R'lyeh. Upon or before that vile symbol they will place the greatest and most blasphemous of their treasures, the image of The Mountain Which Strides, the Great Cthulhu.

And they will dance in circles about their idol, abandoning themselves as the dreams of the Sleeper course into the idol and the tentacles of psyche overbear their frenzied minds. At times, those whom they have brought for sacrifice will be forced at blade-point to dance naked before the idol, until the entire Cult riseth with a shriek of triumph to tear the exhausted dancers apart with tooth and claw. So is the idol bathed in blood, for the dead flesh of Cthulhu must have sustenance to firm itself within our own reflection of the Real.



44

SCROLL XX

TO BE KNOWN BY THE AVENGER AS A SIGNIFIER OF THE DEFILED ONES, A RITE OF THE CULT OF CTHULHU

IN SEEKING OUT the Cult and the fell places in which they worship, the Canticle of the Beyond is one of the blasphemous rites which you shall be compelled to hear and to behold. When the Akhutu has gathered in chant and sacrifice, their priests are vulnerable and their servitors lie blind in their adoration. When the enemy is gathered thus, a coiling of vipers, you must strike.

This rite praiseth not only Cthulhu, entombed in the deeping of our world; but elsewhere as well, the other great powers of the Beyonding. Who can know the Canticle's full purpose or its meaning? May it be a ceremony of blood tribute, or merely a presage to sacrifice? I myself believe that this black rite is never chanted by the Cult of Cthulhu alone, but too, by the many who are in legion. The Cults of Shub-Niggurath, of the King in Yellow, of the Lord in Ebon himself may well indulge themselves as well in all these mysteries.

But never have I known a sage or sorcerer alone to conduct this rite. Even by Nyarlathotep in his crueler condescensions, this rite has never been asked of me.

What means this?

As canted by the Cult of Great Cthulhu, perhaps the Canticle's purpose is to appease those powers who are not only thirsty for the blood of innocents and the damned, but for release into our world. Mayhap, it is a sacrifice made prior to greater worship of Cthulhu Himself, so that undesired interest from Those Who Lurk Beyond is not received by the Cult who entreats of Him. For Cthulhu, yet dreaming, is a dead Thing. He slumbereth, and his worship oft requires much sacrifice — or greater, the orgiastic rituals of the Deep Ones, which I shall delve into further in accordance to my purpose — to ever have impact upon the incessant silent thundering of his will.

The rite may be in praise of these higher powers, seeking their aid and boon, imploring them to shatter through the spheres and to hasten the time of the stars coming to be right. Thus it would be as well to hasten the rising of R'lyeh.

Yet what of summoning? Why not bring these hideous powers forth?

This rite is not one which beckons, but rather one which *abjures*. The truths of Yog-Sothoth, the gate and key and opener of the gate, are not venerated in this Canticle and this alone tells us much: the summoning of the horrors from Beyond is not its purpose.



Be it known that the Cult of Cthulhu believes that its own survival rests upon the fruitions of this ritual. Its disruption, and the slaughter of those present, is ever worthy of thy vengeance.

We need not understand the Canticle, after all. We need only slaughter those who sing.

Find those which canteth thus, and silence them. Scatter them to the dust. And shall ye free the innocents, those who were to be sacrificed? No. The ritual must endeth all. Be merciless.



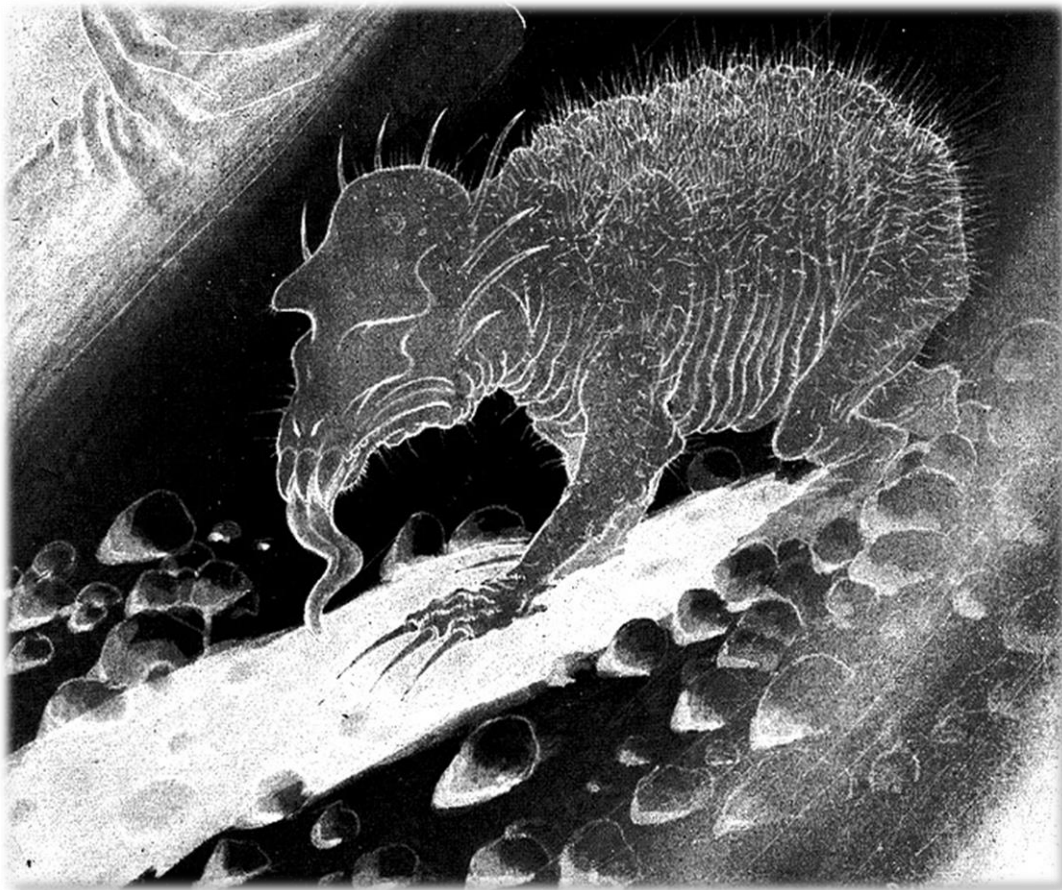
IN PRAISE OF THE FARTHER POWERS, THE CANTICLE OF THE BEYOND

Hear us, O mighty ones
Who lord over oblivion!
We speaketh in blood,
We pray to thee in sacrifice.
All praises to They who leap between the stars,
Who are ageless, who feast upon the worlds,
Blind and numberless
Which coil as cinders round
The blackest frosts of the Utter Void.
Adoration to thy will, feast and hear us!

Praise unto the Mother, Shub-Niggurath,
For she is Queen and Lady of the Wood.

Where the cedars rise over the blood pits,
She rises, the Entirety. Her gifts of the flesh,
The Thousand Young
Rise as a reseeded of this earth,
A sowing of fields of flesh
Presaging His greater harvest.

May she thwart the coming of the Hunters,
The destroyers who reave our journeying,
Who desecrate the gifts of the tribe of Leng.



Serve to shelter the ways of our own passage
From the Hounds who hunt,
The Beasts of Tindalos.
Time and the Void are one,
The opening of the gates,
The fracturing of spheres
Is hastened by our sacrifice.

As we lay death-gifts in breathing
Before the mighty ones who reap of us,
So do we serve the Chaos
Who is all, O Azathoth.
Hear us, let the paths
Of the unworthy be unmade!

The Great and the Elder,
They shall glory in our sacrifice.
From the crystal pools of night
To the shardings of the Void,
From the shardings of the Void
To the crystal pools of night,
Beyond and so ever before us,
Ever shall be our praises of Great Cthulhu,
Of Black Tsathoggua, reveler of Shathak,
And of Him Who is the Unspeakable.

Ever we cry their praises,
Ever birth-blood we offer
Unto the Black Goat of the Wood.

Ia! Shub-Niggurath!

The Goat with a Thousand Young!
For in this age it has to come to pass,
That She of the Woods,
Now made motherless to our kind,
Beareth no High Priestess of our kith.
For the fools of this world
Hath slaughtered those who receive her.

So doth she demand a feast of the Cabal
Of the worthy, of dreamers,
And so hath they descended unto the gate,
Seven and nine, descended the steps of onyx.
So shall the one, the harbinger and chosen
Be gathered by her maws,
And there be annihilated,
One with oblivion,
So made worthy.



CASTLE OLDSKULL ~ LOVI

KENT DAVID KELLY

Great too shall be the tributes
To the Daemon Sultan, Azathoth,
He of whom Cthulhu
Hath taught us the revelations,
And so we inscribe in souls
The names of the worthy
In the Blackest Codex
Where the essences of the chosen
Are to be kept as one,
And so exalted.

Azathoth! His herald descends amongst us
On tides of night from beyond the Void,
From beyond the rinds of the limitless
And the fracturing of the spheres.
He descendeth
Through the scattering of stars,
Unto the thousand worlds,
Through the spheres
Of which Yuggoth is the child,
Coiling in the aether
Which whorls beyond Yuggoth's rim.

He descendeth, beloved of the Beasts
To all the thousand worlds

Where the sages of the chosen races rise,
Culling his harvest of prophets,
Crushing to dust the worthless chaff.

And so this night,
We choose from the unbelievers
Those worthy of slaughter,
We choose from amongst our brethren
The wisest to crawl before him.
Our prophets have journeyed
Out among the Kingdom of Men,
Have mimicked the ways of Kings thereof,
So that He who revels in the Void
May knoweth of the deceivers.

To the treasure-laden herald, Nyarlathotep,
Must all such things be told,
So that he may know our frailties
And so overwhelm them in revelation.

For as with Nitocris, as with Nephren-Ka,
He shall clothe himself in the images of man,
The obsidian mask and the robe which veils,
And He shall descend
From the world of the Seven Fires,
Into the Otherness of Dream.

There, in the name of the fearless seekers,
He shall taunt and mock
The feeble gods who slumber
In their citadel of Kadath,
Their tomb of clouded onyx and brittle frost.

So are the false dreams to be silenced,
So are the minds lain open to receiveth
The cry of He Who Slumbereth
Beneath the Waves,
Ph'nglui mglw'nafh, Cthulhu R'lyeh,
Wgah'nagl fhtagn.

So cometh death, the silence!
Hear our pleadings to the Sleeper,
The Great Cthulhu,
O Nyarlathotep, herald of the Chaos,
Bearer of the triad of the scarlet eye,
Bequeather of adorations unto Yuggoth,
Lord and Father
Of the Million Who Are Chosen,
Stalker among the netherworlds,
Culler of the fractures, finder of ways!

So let our entreaties to Cthulhu be heard,

So let our sacrifice be not in vain!
For we have chosen from the deceivers,
So that ye may reap of them.

Take these, the unworthy, and be appeased,
So that in the hollows riven by their screams
Our prayers may be heard
By He Who Sleeps Within the Depths,
In his palace in R'lyeh!
Cthulhu, who lieth dreaming,
Be aided by our sacrifice,
Rise and feast, triumphant!

(The slaughter of the present victims then begins.)

THE ONGOING TRANSLATION

OF

KITAB AL AZIF,
NECRONOMICON

SHALL CONTINUE

Seek Hereafter
Miskatonic University Manuscript
Cat. LOV2 6-2017.KDK
Codex Appellation "Oldskull,"
Special Collections Division

EMERITUS-IV
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APPENDIX I:

GAME MASTER'S

LOVECRAFTIAN LEXICON

PART ONE:

A ~ E

The tale of Abd Al-Azrad and all of his dark misadventures will continue in the next supplement in this series. Rest assured, for on that account there is much more in store for you explore alongside him!

Hereafter, I take of my storyteller's hat and put on my Game Master's hat once again, to offer you an ambitious selection of inspirational bits and pieces that you can use as idea generators in your own campaign. Readers of supplement PM1, *The Pegana Mythos*, will find much of interest here ... because I use the same mysterious-yet-evocative approach, dropping names, facts, half-facts and wild untruths like nobody's business so that you can do your own research and come up with some amazing dungeon and campaign world ideas for your next game. But for those of you who have not yet read PM1, I will say that these appendices are more "fluff" than "crunch." In other words, the atmospheric pieces and riddles I offer will inspire you in the adventure design phase, but you can't just plunk this book down during play and turn to a page and find lots of monster stats to work with.

(Well, I did make a tip of the hat to both Lovecraft and Gygas, and I put in dozens of awesome Deep One templates. Because who can write an amazing adventure scenario that can't be made even more amazing through the further inclusion of Deep Ones in the dungeon? That's right. NO ONE CAN. So have a bucket of fish and frogs, and have fun with them.)



This section of the book is a guide to my own World of Oldskull campaign, from the Cthulhu Mythos perspective. In Appendix I, you will find the first of three chunks of the concepts that I used to develop the story of Abd Al-Azrad and the Necronomicon. (The other two chunks will be in Books II and III of this series, as soon as I get my piles of notes in proper order.) The concepts here were inspired chiefly by H. P. Lovecraft, Lord Dunsany, Gary Gygax, John Eric Holmes, Rob Kuntz, James Ward, Abraham Merritt, Robert Chambers, and world mythology. I think that the lore here will make your read of Al-Azrad's tale richer and more satisfying, and needless to say I drop plot points all over the place. So please note that there are SIGNIFICANT SPOILERS in this section if you haven't read the full story of Al-Azrad just yet. And yes, this means there are spoilers for Books II and III hereafter! You have been warned.

And from a world-building perspective: Please note that the world of Al Azrad as I offer it here is a fantasy version of the Arabian peninsula, circa 600-750 AD. This world would not have medieval weapons, armor, or treasures, and some character classes would be drastically different in operation during this era. But there is nothing stopping you from using all of this information and game lore in your c. 1400-1500 AD FRPG, as I do. Do you want significant background and histories for your dungeons, but you don't want to write it all out? Then the notes on Babylon, Irem, the Nameless City and other such places should make you pretty happy. And if your campaign features time travel, or if your PCs are able to travel to the World of Oldskull and meet Abd Al-Azrad in the flesh, more power to you.

The lore chapter, for subjects beginning with letters A, B, C, D and E, appear hereafter. If you were never interested in adding the Arabian Nights, the Babylonian, Egyptian and Sumerian Mythoi, or the works of Lovecraft to your campaign before, I think you will change your mind after you read the lore I offer you here. Enjoy, and have fun working on your own campaign expansion!



IS FOR ASHMODAI

[001]

Abaddon (Demon Prince): The demon prince of death and undeath, who was known to the Empyreans as Orcus, god of the underworld.

Approximated game stats: Defense +80% (AC -6), Blood Dice 33D8+1, HTK 150, 2 Attacks (Wand / Poison Sting), Average Damage Special / 5, INT 20, Chaotic Evil, Lethality Level 11.

[002]

Abd Al-Azrad (NPC): The “Servant of the Devourer.” A chaotic neutral savant of the Arabian wastelands, fl. AD 666. Adult ability scores STR 12, DEX 15, CON 17, INT

17, WIS 14, CHA 6. His favored spell types include charm, necromancy, occult summoning, haste, abjuration, and time-altering magics. His learning comes primarily from his wanderings of Arabia, Aegyptus (Khom), and the Dreamlands. He is on very good terms with the Ghuls and their lore, and is sometimes an ally (of convenience) of Nyarlathotep. He is an avowed nemesis of the Cult of Cthulhu.

Experience level sequence, as featured in Codex I: zero (in Sana'a under Ghanara, age 1 to 8), 1 (in Sana'a at the age of 9, having left Ghanara), 2 (departing Sana'a as a youth), 3 (as a young man, joining the caravan of Saheed), 4 (under the tutelage of Fatimah), 5 (in surviving the sandstorm and meeting Naram-gal), 6 (in guiding the Caravan of the Black Scarab), 7 (as a disciple of Anata), 8 (in the adventure of the Nameless City), 9 (in beginning the adventure of Babylon), 10 (in escaping Babylon), 11 (in receiving the revelation of Nyarlathotep), 12 (in attempting the resurrection of Adaya). Experience level at time of death, 23.

[003]

Abdul Alhazred (NPC): The childhood name originally given to the writer of the Necronomicon, as decided upon by H. P. Lovecraft. The name is actually a somewhat nonsensical transliteration, and has been corrected as Abd Al-Azrad in this volume.

[004]

The Abominations of the Feast (Lore): The term bestowed by ancient Empyrean necromancers upon the (rather chaotic) Ghul-cult "laws" and rites of tribal dominance, supremacy, and hierarchical cannibalism.

[005]

The Abyss (Realm / Netherworld / Planar): See the entries the Abzu, and the Great Abyss of Nodens.

[006]

The Abzu (Realm / Netherworld): The great watery and chaotic Abyssal Reaches of Sumerian lore. In the World of Oldskull, the Abzu is a corrupted Demiplane of Elemental Water, which is connected to our netherworld through the various Sunless Seas. It is rumored that the Abzu also hides ancient air-filled caverns, which lead into the demonic planes of chaotic evil.

[007]

Adaya (NPC): A neutral good Judaeen bard of Sana'a, who perished in youth (slain by the Cult of Cthulhu). She was the beloved of Abd Al-Azrad. Young adult ability scores STR 8, DEX 17, CON 11, INT 14, WIS 14, CHA 17. Experience level 1.

[008]

Aden (City): The most important regional port in the spice trade. The spice-blenders here specialize in the creation of Phoenix Eggs and exotic (magical) incenses of prayer and meditation. Aden connects the trade of India to that of the Mediterranean

[009]

Adze of Horus (Treasure): A magical implement which allows a cleric of Horus to perform a pure mummification, which allows the mummified person's soul to enter the Egyptian afterlife (Amen-ti). When carried, it provides +1 to Armor Class and saving throws. Estimated value 7,500 gold pieces.

[010]

Aegyptus (Realm): The Empyrean name for the ancient land of Khom. The name persisted after the Arabian conquests of the 7th Century. The name is used by sages and scholars in passing, but primarily by outsiders.

[011]

Aga of Kish (NPC, and Treasure): A great conqueror king (level 17 fighter, lawful neutral) who besieged the city state of Uruk. He was a proud patron of martial magics, and to this day rare and ancient magical weapons and armor (+1, +2, +3) can be found that were crafted in his day from the most unusual of materials: crystal, meteoric iron, obsidian, and orichalcum.

[012]

Aharon, the Sage of the Seven Pearls (NPC): A wandering sage and fakir (chaotic good mystic) of the oases, who cared for Abd Al-Azrad in his youth. Adult ability scores STR 10, DEX 11, CON 15, INT 14, WIS 17, CHA 16. Experience level 8 at death (actually, Ghul metamorphosis). In a second life, he became a respected (chaotic neutral) Ghul and treader of the Empire of the Blackened Mind. He was instrumental in the tenuous secret peace which existed between Ghuls and desert men in the eighth and ninth centuries. A mentored Ghul sect of fakirs, which is true to his teachings and explorations, survives in the Khali to this day.

[013]

Ai (Lore): An ancient word of insistence, roughly translated as “yes,” “verily,” or “behold.”

[014]

Ajid (NPC): The father of Fatimah (thief?). Little is known of him, other than the fact that he taught his daughter everything he knew.

[015]

Ak'nath (Lore): The words of celerity, “I am the wind,” the leading incantation of Abd Al-Azrad’s lethal haste spell.

[016]

The Ak'nath Incantation (Spell): A powerful and nasty Ghul spell, similar to Haste and with a minor glimmer of Time Stop. It gives the caster the following advantages: (1) automatic winning of initiative in the round that the spell is cast (retroactively, regardless of rolls), but with this spell casting as the only action option; (2) +4 to initiative rolls for the round immediately after the spell is cast; (3) -4 initiative to all foes within 20' of the caster on the round immediately after the spell is cast; and, (4) the ability to instantly cast one additional spell (in the next 2 rounds) with a usual casting time of 3 rounds or less, with no chance of interruption. In other words, if the Ak'nath spell is cast on round 6, then the bonus spell would need to be woven on round 7 or 8, or the benefit would be wasted. This spell is usually used in desperation in the name of survival, but can also be used to create Time Stop-like “one-two” kills by a daring caster.

Spell level 5, learnable by magic-users and savants, ancient and very rare. It is rarely used by mortals save in life or death situations, because it artificially ages the caster 3D6 months, and has a 25% chance of permanently reducing the caster’s Constitution score by -1. If the caster is not afflicted by Constitution loss, there is a 10% chance that he or she will cause a dimensional rift and be attacked by an accidentally-ensnared Invisible Monster (a Beast of Nothingness) at some random time in the following 1D12 days thereafter. And so, a secret to the reader, did perish the mighty Abd Al-Azrad.

As a note of game balance, no one — not even a Ghul Lord or Lich — can cast the Ak'nath Incantation more than once per month.

[017]

Akh (Monster / NPC): The Egyptian term for the magical survival of a dead person’s intellect in the afterlife, as a single, invisible, cohesive entity. Evil Akhs typically become wraiths, spectres, or ghosts. Neutral Akhs may become either phantoms or Invisible Monsters. Good Akhs tend to endure as disembodied voices, providing guidance and

wisdom to a favored individual who believes in them for 1D3 nights. Akhs are very rarely (VR) found in Arabia and surrounding lands, rarely (R) in Aegyptus, and almost never anywhere else.

[018]

Akhenaten (Monster / NPC): The great Heretic Pharaoh of Khom, who reigned in the 18th Dynasty. He was responsible for the disruption of the old ways of worship and reverence throughout the land, and caused the deities of the Egyptian mythos to temporarily turn away from the land's clerics and mystics. He introduced the worship of Aten, a primal power of sun and light. It was soon realized that Aten was an illusion hiding the great embodied darkness, Nyarlat.

Akhenaten — an entombed and imprisoned lich (level 21 magic-user), buried by his own people — is celebrated to this day by certain sects of chaotic evil Ghuls, who hope to find and free him.

[019]

Akhri the Unworthy (NPC): A fallen paladin of the wasteland. Found in the Mosque of the Undervaults, at the outskirts of Babylon. While once lawful good, he lost his entire family to desert raiders and plague, and over time became lawful neutral with evil tendencies (a cavalier, of lost paladin-hood). Ability scores STR 17, DEX 15, CON 15, INT 13, WIS 11, CHA 15. Experience level 6 at time of death. Brazen, drunken, charismatic, and intimidating, he was responsible for the fall from grace of several of the men who chose to follow him. He was reluctantly slain by Abd Al-Azrad. Some whisper he became a Ghul, and lived in exile.

[020]

Akhutu, the Brotherhood (Faction): The great and undying cult of the cataclysm, worshipping Cthulhu, which is propagated by the death priests and the Deep Ones. The goal of the cult is to psychically unify humanity in thrall to serve the will of Great

Cthulhu, generating enough psychic power to awaken the horror of R'lyeh and to bring about the Last War.

[021]

Akkad (Realm / Ruins): Akkadia, the last surviving fragment of the kingdom of Sumeru-Land.

[022]

The Aklo Tongue (Language / Lore): An ancient language instilled with words of power, which survives to this day in occasionally-unearthed scrolls and spell books of rare arcana. The language is used in the incantations of various magic-user, savant, and necromantic spells. The language is known to some Ghuls, Men of Leng, Liches, Mummies, necromancers, and to Un-Gods. It is known only to a few that this is, in fact, the language of the Serpent Folk.

[023]

Akram (NPC): A well-intended yet dull (neutral good) orphan thief of Sana'a, and ally of Abd Al-Azrad. Young adult ability scores STR 13, DEX 8, CON 14, INT 7, WIS 7, CHA 13. Experience level 1. Slain by the Cult of Cthulhu.

[024]

Al Adim (Locale): The graveyard-canyon near the city of Sana'a. It is well known to grave robbers, necromancers, bandits and Ghuls, and it has many tunnels which lead down from the tombs into the netherworld.

[025]

Al-Ghul (Star / World, Demon Lord): The star system Algol, which is worshipped by the Ghuls as their guiding light. Lovecraft termed this the Daemon-Star, an evil entity which battles eternally with the Nemeses. The Ghuls regard it as the symbol of omnipresent evil, defied by human sacrifice and will.

[026]

Alexandria (City): The great port city of Aegyptus. Off shore, there are several sunken shrines devoted to Shub-Niggurath which still hold treasures and eldritch power. The Great Library there, when burned, represented the greatest loss of arcane lore which humanity has ever suffered. However, many of the scrolls were in fact saved and smuggled into Arabia, Yemen, and beyond, and it is these which informed the learning of Abd Al-Azrad and his longing to explore the land of Khom.

[027]

Alu Demon (Monster): The race of Night Demons, who wander the wasteland in search of mortal prey. They devour souls and leave behind animated Wights of the victims' flesh. The Wights are fearful to the Ghuls, who see them as soulless abominations bereft of any hope of exaltation in the afterlife.

[028]

Amaranth (Treasure): The slightly magical flower which never fades, revered by the ancient Achaeans. It is regarded as a symbol of life and youth and hope, and its crushed petals are used in potions, scroll inks, and magical item creation. Estimated value 1 gold piece per preserved and cultured petal.

[029]

Amber (Treasure): A beautiful, soft golden “jewel” made of fossilized resin. It is used as an incense, and occasional potion ingredient. The hardest specimens are regarded as precious stones with lightning properties. Estimated value 10 gold pieces per flask (as semi-solid incense or balm), 100 gold pieces (as the rarer hardened and polished stone), up to 1,000 gold pieces for very rare specimens with remarkable inclusions (fossilized spiders, ants, leaves, etc.).

[030]

Amen-ti, aka Amenti (Realm / Plane): The idyllic yet dangerous netherworld and paradise of the Egyptian mythos. The magical gateways into Amen-ti are found to the west of the River Nilus, in temples, ruins, and underground. It is the sacred domain of Osiris and his chosen.

[031]

Amethystos (Treasure): The Achaean term for the purple jewel known as amethyst, revered for its abilities to prevent drunkenness and to resist poison (+3 to saving throws, only if kept in a cup where poison is, or in a cup where water is poured, and then swallowed as a potential antidote). In game terms, a non-magical amethyst is typically worth 100 gold pieces, and confers no benefits. A magical Amethystos is worth 1,500 gold pieces, and turns to crystalline powder (consumed and destroyed) when it comes into contact with poison in a cup. A rare netherworld variety, the black amethyst, is worth 1,000 gold pieces, and can be used to create a Ghul Amulet in addition to the anti-poison power.

[032]

Amytis (NPC): A Persian princess, whom King Nebuchadnezzar fell in love with. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon were built to assuage her sadness. In death she became

an Ancient One, dwelling enthroned (in enamored madness) beside her husband within the purgatorial sanctum of Nyarlathotep, which is known as the Endless Hall.

[033]

Anar'kai (Monster / NPC, and Treasure): The Coiler of Nothingness, the Undescended, one of the Serpent People. The last high priest (level 18 cleric / cultist) of the Nameless City, and a master artificer of powerful magic items. Because of the mighty preservation spells he cast upon his works (particularly the scribal discs of spell lore), some few of his masterworks yet survive.

[034]

Anata (Monster / NPC): The Mother of All, the Elder Matriarch of the Qabilla of the Shattered Jaw. The mother (creator) of Naram-gal. Ghul-crone magic-user (necromancer and prophetess), chaotic neutral with good tendencies, experience level 13 at the time of the tutelage of Abd Al-Azrad. One of the most powerful Ghuls in Arabia. Ability scores STR 13, DEX 12, CON 18, INT 19, WIS 18, CHA 4 (19 to Ghuls).

[035]

The Ancient Ones (NPCs, Monsters): The sentient souls who are honored and kept by Nyarlathotep. They dwell in the Endless Hall before the gateways of Yog-Sothoth, to await the End of Days. Those who become Ancient Ones begin their afterlife in love, lost in the rapturous splendor of Nyarlathotep's domain. However, they slowly go mad as they realize that the Endless Hall is an infinite prison, filled with whispering illusions which never allow sleep, and with tomes whose words forever change to speak only of the reader.

In the words of Lovecraft, "The world of men and of the gods of men is merely an infinitesimal phase of an infinitesimal thing — the three-dimensional phase of that small wholeness reached by the First Gate, where 'Umr at-Tawil [Yog-Sothoth] dictates dreams to the Ancient Ones. Though men hail it as reality and brand thoughts of its many-

dimensioned original as unreality, it is in truth the very opposite. That which we call substance and reality is shadow and illusion, and that which we call shadow and illusion is substance and reality.”

[036]

Antarktos (Realm): “Ice-covered mountain,” the name given by Achaean sages to the land of ice, which is at the bottom of the world. It is there where the Mountains of Madness lie. Sages and visionaries see Antarktos in their dreams and divinations, because of the still-resonant telepathic memories of the Shoggoths and the Elder Things. It is said to have been visited in the flesh by the ever-journeying Abd Al-Azrad, and can indeed be reached via magical gateway.

[037]

Anubis (Deity): The great protector god of the afterlife in the Egyptian mythos. Avatar-incarnation STR 24, DEX 19, CON 22, INT 24, WIS 24, CHA 19, level 20 cleric, level 20 magic-user, level 12 paladin, HTK 300. Lawful good, lesser god.

[038]

Apep (Demon Lord), aka Apophis: The mighty devouring serpent of the Egyptian mythos, the swallower of light. He is the destroyer of blessed souls, and the bringer of darkness. Indirectly, he will be in part responsible for making the stars right, for the awakening of Great Cthulhu in the future.

Approximated game stats: Defense +70% (AC -4), Blood Dice 55D8+3, HTK 250, 2 Attacks (Bite / Constriction), Average Damage 17 / 14, INT 13, Chaotic Evil, Lethality Level 10.

[039]

Arabia (Realm): The lands of the Arabian peninsula. See particularly Arabia Deserta, Arabia Felix, and Arabia Petraea.

[040]

Arabia Deserta (Realm), aka Arabia Magna: The vast, deadly desert interior of the Arabian peninsula.

[041]

Arabia Felix (Realm): The southern Emphyrean province in the Arabian peninsula, when the Emphyreans (Romans) held sway; including Yemen. The fertile, blessed and happy land, so named because of the relative harshness of the other two provinces. It is greener, and has more rainfall and vegetation.

[042]

Arabia Petraea (Realm): The Stonelands, the Arabian province nearest to the Mediterranean and the Holy Land. Its secret capital is Petra. A major nexus of trade routes between Yemen, Egypt, Asia Minor, and all the realms beyond.

[043]

Araby (Realm): A common term for the lands of Arabia, used chiefly by outsiders. Dwellers in Arabia tend to use the names of the three ancient Emphyrean provinces (Deserta, Felix, Petraea).

[044]

Arcadia (Realm): The idyllic realm within the Achaean peninsula, the home of centaurs, dryads, satyrs, river godlings, and so forth.

[045]

Asakku Demon (Monster): The decayed, avian demon race of telepathy, possession and madness. They are also known as Greater Vulture Demons.

[046]

Ashmodai (Arch-Devil), aka Asmodeus: The arch-devil of lechery, corruption, and revenge, who reigns over the deepest Hell. He is frequently invoked by Arabian and Yemeni spell casters who are striking out against a hated foe, even in the name of good. (The reasoning likely being that the devil always exists, and his attentions are being pointed solely at the “worthy” recipient of violent magic, rather than the righteous).

Approximated game stats: Defense +85% (AC -7), Blood Dice 44+2, HTK 199, 1 Attack (Smiting), Average Damage 9, INT 20, Lawful Evil, Lethality Level 11.

[047]

Astaroth (Demon Lord): The lesser demon lord of dragons, self-deception, shape shifting and subdual.

Approximated game stats: Defense +65% (AC -3), Blood Dice 31+1, HTK 140, 1 Attack (Viper Scourge), Average Damage 12, INT 17, Chaotic Evil, Lethality Level 10.

[048]

Aten (Lore): The manifestation of blinding sentient light and knowledge in the Egyptian mythos, as revered and manifested by Akhenaten, the Heretic Pharaoh. However, Aten is not a true being; it is rather the un-reflection and opposing halo of the utter darkness manifested in Nyarlathotep, the Lord in Ebon.

[049]

Atlantis (Realm): The great sunken island kingdom of yore, as featured in the World of Oldskull (and inspired by Howard and Lovecraft, as well as Achaean lore). Lovecraft tells us how “the Kings of Atlantis fought with the slippery blasphemies that wriggled out of rifts in the ocean’s floor,” which makes it clear that the civilization opposed the Deep Ones of Dagon and Great Cthulhu (and paid the ultimate price). One of the most powerful ancient Kings was Kull the Conqueror. The Atlantean high priest Klarkash-Ton (a mortal who re-manifested in later centuries as author Clark Ashton Smith) was corrupted by the un-gods, and indirectly caused the downfall of the last King and the deluge.

The sinking of Atlantis was known as the Cataclysm, and destroyed Lemuria as well. The isles Bal-Sagoth and Poseidonis endured, through the intervention of powerful magics. It is whispered that the surviving Atlanteans fled north, to become in time the elder grandsires of Conan and the other Cimmerians.

[050]

Azathot-kol (Deity): An ancient name for Azathoth, meaning “Lord Azathoth.”

[051]

Azathoth (Deity): The One of Chaos, the Daemon Sultan, the primordial essence of Azoth (the universal solution). As Lovecraft tells us, this is “the boundless daemon-

sultan Azathoth, whose name no lips dare speak aloud, and who gnaws hungrily in inconceivable, unlighted chambers beyond time amidst the muffled, maddening beating of vile drums and the thin, monotonous whine of accursed flutes; to which detestable pounding and piping dance slowly, awkwardly, and absurdly the gigantic ultimate gods, the blind, voiceless, tenebrous, mindless Other Gods whose soul and messenger is the crawling chaos Nyarlathotep."

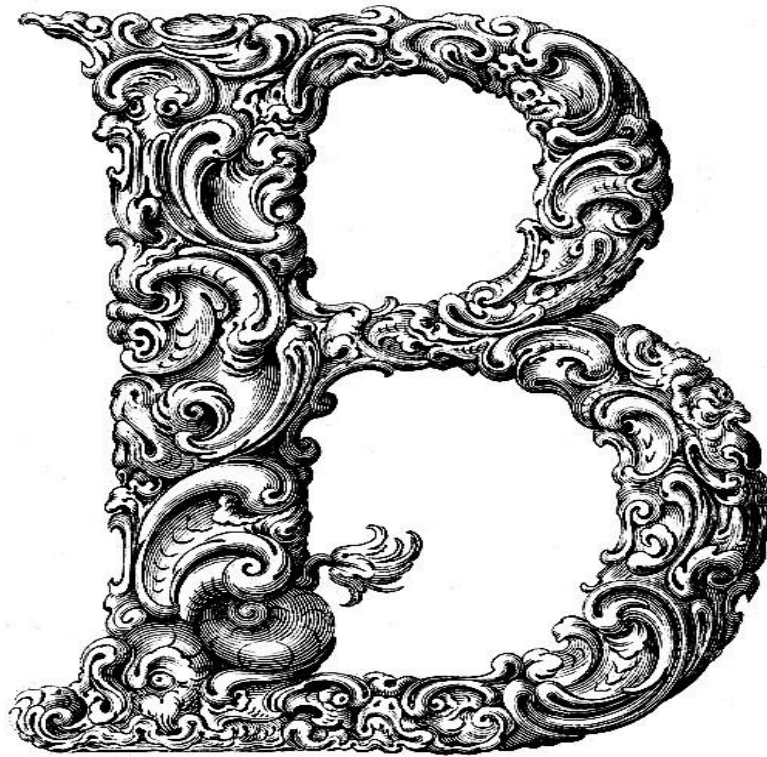
Azathoth is therefore the progenitor and destroyer of life and worlds, the creator and decayer of the infinite incarnations of All, the Omni-Kosmos.

Approximated game stats are largely irrelevant, as any mortal — no matter how powerful — who transcends existence to come before Azathoth will collapse into a writhing entropic fluid, pure tendrils of Chaos, to join as one with the beating core of Azathoth for eternity.

[052]

Azrael (Entity): The Singer of the Black Angels, the great Archangel of Death. Lawful neutral and remorseless. He very rarely shows himself to mortals, until their moment of irrevocable death is come. (An adventurer who is fated to be resurrected, or to be reborn as an ancient soul in another manifestation of flesh, will not behold Azrael at the time of death.)

Approximated game stats: A Celestial Archangel. Defense +95% (AC -9), Blood Dice 39D8+3, HTK 177, 1 Attack (Sword-Scythe of Death), Average Damage 23, INT 20, WIS 24, Lawful Neutral, Lethality Level 11.



IS FOR BAAL

[053]

Ba (Lore): In the Egyptian mythos, the Ba is the non-corporeal manifestation of a person's personality and individuality in the afterlife. It is similar to the Akh (the undying intellect), but it is an incarnation of emotion and memory. Its chief importance (in regards to the Necronomicon) is that the undead who retain a Ba rarely fall prey to utter evil. The chief example is Ghoukind; the Ghouls (chaotic evil) have lost their Ba and tie to humanity, while the Ghuls (chaotic neutral) have not. The chaining of the Ba, or the reinstatement of the Ba, is a key secret in the necromantic resurrection of souls (such as that of Adaya) in another mortal's unwilling flesh.

[054]

Baal, aka Ba'al (Arch-Devil): More properly Ba'al Zebul (the princely Ba'al, the tempted and falling angel) who became Ba'al Zebub (the Lord of the Flies). A powerful arch-devil. He was a lost angel worshipped as a god by deceived mortals in Canaan, who was then conquered by the forces of light and cast into Hell. He remains the lord of vermin, plague, symbols and deception.

Approximated game stats: Defense +75% (AC -5), Blood Dice 36D8+7, HTK 166, 1 Attack (Bite), Average Damage 7, INT 18, Lawful Evil, Lethality Level 11.

[055]

Babel (City / Ruin): The elder sages' name for Babylon, c. 1100 BCE - AD 1000. Compare Babilu and Babylon.

[056]

Babilu (City): The ancient Akkadian name for Babylon, c. 2300 - 1100 BCE. Compare Babel and Babylon.

[057]

Babylon (Ruin): The Greek (and now commonly accepted) name for the great ruined city of Babylonia. There are many ruins, treasures, lost temples and netherworld dungeons here. The most important tales (in regards to the Necronomicon) involve Abd Al-Azrad's understanding of Nebuchadnezzar and Amytis, and the Hanging Gardens.

[058]

Badiya (Realm): The ancient desert, particularly in the region of Syria.

[059]

Balm of Bay Leaf, aka Bay Laurel Oil (Treasure): A plant of minor magical power, which can be cultivated (chiefly by druids and high-level magic-users) as an ingredient in potions of insight, clairvoyance, and / or Dreamland journeys. It is used in the latter regard chiefly by wizened Ghuls. Few mortals know how to derive the magical properties of bay leaf, and it is not uncommon, so its value fluctuates depending on the buyer ... but in the desert, it is considered prized and rare. Estimated value 10 copper pieces to 5 gold pieces per pouch of preserved leaves; 1 to 100 gold pieces per flask of extracted oil.

[060]

Balm of Gilead (Treasure): A magical healing salve ("potion" of resin) derived from the terebinth tree. Very rare. Heals 1D4+1 points of damage per application, up to twice per day. Estimated value 200 gold pieces per vial (1 application).

[061]

Basim (NPC): An uncouth, yet resourceful, thief and smuggler of the desert wastes. Chaotic neutral, experience level 4. Ability scores STR 12, DEX 15, CON 16, INT 11, WIS 9, CHA 10.

[062]

The Battlefield of the Saif (Locale): The place in the wasteland where Ibn Hatim and his warriors perished in battle against the raiding Sindhi in the 7th Century AD. Battlefields are favored places for treasure and relic hunters, but they are also frequented by Ghuls (and the occasional skeletons, wights, and wraiths as well). Typically, wasteland battlegrounds are preserved by the piling and shifting of sand, and are newly exposed by sandstorms.

[063]

Beast of Nothingness (Monster): A chaotic evil form of Invisible Monster, known for its spiny tongues and its ability to “appear” as a scarlet horror ... which is caused by its temporary visibility as it drains the blood out of victims. They can be summoned by evil cultists and clerics, and have been known to be temporarily bound and controlled by death priests of the Cult of Cthulhu. One such creature was responsible for the assassination of Abd Al-Azrad.

Approximated game stats: Defense +35% (AC 3), Blood Dice 8D8, Average HTK 36, 1 Attack (Draining Bite), Average Damage 10, INT 13, True Neutral, Lethality Level 7-.

[064]

Beast of Tindalos (Monster), aka Hound of Tindalos: Deadly planar predators, who hunt by tracking aberrations in the various dimensions, time streams, and planar seams. By definition, this means that they track and kill planar travelers (such as adventurers) who are going to places they really shouldn't. They are regarded by some as “purifiers,” enforcing the natural order of causal events and dimensional trajectories, but they are cruel and vicious killers despite their mysterious intentions.

[065]

Bedouin (Caste): The common term for Nomads and Dervishes of the Arabian peninsula.

[066]

Bel Belim (Deity): The Lord of Lords, a title of Marduk, the lawful neutral god of cities, civilization, wind and storms in the Babylonian mythos.

[067]

Belet-ili (Deity): The Lady of the Gods, a title of Nin-Hursag, the goddess of earth and earthly control in the Sumerian mythos. She is sometimes worshipped (in fear) by the Ghuls, who regard her as “The Crusher” ... meaning, most likely, that she is propitiated to prevent cave-ins and collapses in the netherworld.

[068]

The Beyonding (Lore): An abstract term favored by Abd Al-Azrad and other savants, which can be roughly translated as “collectively, the reachable planes of existence beyond the Prime Material Plane.”

[069]

Black Amethyst (Treasure): See Amethystos, Black Jewel of Naram-gal.

[070]

Black Angel (Monster): The dreaded lawful neutral Angels of Death who serve Azrael. They are messengers of death, entropy, cataclysm and decay, and may from time to time appear with future omens of warning as a mercy. They engage in battle, even against the foulest abominations of evil, only if they are attacked first.

Approximated game stats: They are variously Primal, Elemental (Air, Earth, Fire, or Water), or Astral Angels.

Primal Angel of Death: Defense +75% (AC -5), Blood Dice 7D8+28, Average HTK 60, 1 Attack (Great Sword of Fire), Average Damage 11, INT 16, WIS 18, Lawful Neutral, Lethality Level 9-.

Elemental Angel of Death: Defense +70% (AC -4), Blood Dice 8D8+32, Average HTK 68, 2 Attacks (Rod of Smiting), Average Damage 8 / 8, INT 17, WIS 19, Lawful Neutral, Lethality Level 9.

Astral Angel of Death: Defense +80% (AC -6), Blood Dice 9D8+36, Average HTK 77, 2 Attacks (Mace of Wrath), Average Damage 10 / 10, INT 18, WIS 20, Lawful Neutral, Lethality Level 10.

[071]

Black Jewel of Naram-gal (Treasure): A very powerful Ghul Amulet, crafted of black amethyst. Its powers are as follows:

- If held or worn by a sleeper of good or neutral alignment, it will give eerie and haunting dreams, with the opportunity for the sleeper to willingly enter the Dreamlands for 1D4+6 hours.
- If held or worn by a sleeper of evil alignment, it will give nightmares, and forcible entry into the Empire of the Blackened Mind for 1D4+6 hours.
- If inserted under the tongue, the dreamer will also be able to draw a loved one into the shared dream as well. If the dreamer is of good alignment, the loved one must be willing or the dream will be dispelled.
- And if the stone is willingly swallowed, the possessor will become a vulnerable restless spirit, wandering the wastelands of Araby, to soon be discovered by the spirit of Naram-gal.
- If Naram-gal decides the possessor is worthy of glorification, the character will be turned into a Ghul forevermore, with experience level and class (if any) retained and alignment turned to chaotic neutral.
- But if the possessor is unworthy, Naram-gal will seize his stone once more, and the character will awaken screaming without it, driven temporarily insane for 1D6+6 days.

Estimated value 25,000-30,000 gold pieces.

[072]

The Black Key of Nergal (Minor Artifact / Treasure): Nergal is the neutral evil god of death, plague, war, and the underworld in the Babylonian mythos. He dwells within the great nether cavern of Irkalla, and he keeps the damned imprisoned within their cysts by sealing each crypt with the Black Key. Its powers are unknown, but certainly include

imprisonment, despair, madness, paralysis, poison, fear and resurrection (a power to be granted only once a year). Estimated value unknown, perhaps in the range of 75,000 to 125,000 gold pieces.

[073]

Black Necronomicon (Treasure): Relatively poor printed copies of *Al Azif*, chiefly those created in Teutonia (Germany) c. 1450 AD. In the World of Oldskull FRPG, these works are “new” due to their appearance in the timeframe in which Player Characters (PCs) are adventuring and experiencing a resurgence of the Cult of Cthulhu. Estimated value dependent upon spells chosen by the GM.

[074]

The Black Ritual of the Rising (Spell): The spell by which Abd Al-Azrad brought Adaya back into the flesh, in the body of Hadjara. The casting of this spell is an evil act, because it is not just a form of resurrection; it eternally damns the soul which naturally owned the body, and through an act of necromantic possession it names and binds another slain person’s soul and imprisons them within that body simultaneously. The process causes temporary insanity (for 30-WIS days) in the newly-risen subject, and is agonizing in the extreme.

If the newly-resurrected person is unwilling to live again, the insanity is permanent, and the person will be forever suicidal until released. If the person is willing (for whatever reason, up to and including mind control or deception), their alignment will turn to chaotic evil one stage at a time, a month at a time. The belief in good is lost first, and then the belief in chaos is embraced. As an example, a resurrected person of lawful good (LG) would be LG for 1 month (with some of that month spent insane), then LN in month 2, LE in month 3, NE in month 4, and CE thereafter.

This is a level 5 spell learnable by clerics, magic-users, and savants. (Arguably, a druid or a mystic could learn it, but not being of evil alignment they would probably never dare to cast it.) The spell is unique in that it requires the caster to create a unique incantation, by which the soul of the desired person is lured and bound. The creation of the

incantation requires 1D20+20 uninterrupted hours, and the casting of the spell requires 1D6+6 uninterrupted rounds. The living subject to be damned cannot be slain, and will almost certainly need to be drugged, paralyzed, chained, etc.

[075]

The Blackened Codex of Azathoth (Artifact / Treasure): The imprisoning book of souls, wherein the herald Nyarlathotep keeps the names (and resurrection-worthy details of sentience and personality) in the name of Azathoth. The purpose of this “gift” is believed to involve the rapid creation of a newly resurgent cult of Azathoth and Nyarlathotep, following the destruction of our universe. The faithful will be recreated “redeemed” in a new world, in another universe, following the End. And so, the black and future fate of that new universe will be sealed ...

The book is offered, in dream, at least once to any Dreamland / Empire journeyer who (a) has at least two mental ability scores above 14 (INT, WIS, and / or CHA), and who (b) has attained the 11th experience level, regardless of alignment. Any mortal who willingly “signs” the book offered by Nyarlathotep (in blood) will enjoy a vital mortal life, with permanent bonuses of +1 STR, +1 DEX, +1 CON, +2 INT, +2 WIS, and +3 CHA, to a maximum of 18 (STR, DEX, CON) or 19 (INT, WIS, CHA). Alignment will be turned non-good, but not necessarily evil. (For example, a chaotic good subject would become chaotic neutral.) Lifespan will be increased by 101+1D100 years, although the person can still be slain. Once the mortal perishes, he or she can never be resurrected, for the soul is then imprisoned in the Endless Hall. After spending thousands (millions?) of years in the Endless Hall, the universe will be destroyed and the newly-created hell of Azathoth will embrace the newborn person ... forever a slave to Nyarlathotep, of course; but that lifetime will likely be sensual and glorious, and filled with power, conquest, and domination.

As Lovecraft tells us, “The expression on her face was one of hideous malevolence and exultation, and when he awaked he could recall a croaking voice that persuaded and threatened. He must meet the Black Man, and go with them all to the throne of Azathoth at the centre of ultimate Chaos. That was what she said. He must sign in his own blood the book of Azathoth and take a new secret name now that his independent delvings had gone so far. What kept him from going with her and Brown Jenkin and the other to the

throne of Chaos where the thin flutes pipe mindlessly was the fact that he had seen the name 'Azathoth' in the Necronomicon, and knew it stood for a primal evil too horrible for description ..."

The other powers of the Codex are unknown. The value of the book, considering its power to allow life to transcend the death of a universe, is basically infinite; but anyone fool enough to steal it would become the nemesis of Nyarlathotep forevermore. The details are mostly listed here so that the GM can adjust the ability scores of powerful followers of Azathoth, and perhaps understand a bit of their motivation.

[076]

Blood Monolith (Locale): The earthly power manifestation within any truly mighty shrine, fane, or temple of Cthulhu. They are created primarily by cultists of the Akhutu, and Deep Ones.

As Abd Al-Azrad tells us, "There will be a monolith in the center of all: perhaps a remnant of a Khomite obelisk, or a shattered pillar raised from lost Persepolis, or I too have seen a great cedar carved all with hollows, chained all about, the bloodied and shrieking forms of dying children chained into the cedar where they did die slowly in horror, and the innocent blood dripped down to be lapped from the mud by the Cultists in their ecstasy. Far worse horrors there are, but this near the wastes of Babylon I have seen."

The power of the Blood Monolith is dependent upon human sacrifice. For each innocent person slain before it, the Blood Monolith gains 1 point of power. Evil clerics of Cthulhu who meditate before the Monolith will gain the ability to cast 1 extra spell of maximum level, per day. For example, if a level 7 cleric were to meditate before it, he would be able to cast 1 additional level 4 spell that day ... that being the maximum level of spells that he is able to cast. A spell-granting Monolith will be drained of 1 point per day, if any number of clerics are drawing such power from it.

Additionally, all cultists who serve Cthulhu will gain the ability to regenerate 1 HTK per round after being wounded, so long as they are near to the Monolith. The range of this effect (in three dimensions) is 10' per power point. So if a dungeon has a 37-point Blood Monolith situated on dungeon level 3, and the power radiates for 370', it is very

likely that the entire dungeon level, and considerable parts of dungeon levels 1 and 2 above, would be instilled with the power. All good-aligned characters within this area of power will feel a dark, whispering disturbance which they cannot quite define ... particularly when they try to sleep.

Naturally, any clerics and cultists of Cthulhu will fight to the death to defend and feed their Blood Monolith, and any good characters will want to destroy it. I recommend a special XP award of 100 XP per power point to anyone directly involved in such destruction. In this example, all party members would gain +3,700 Experience Points if the Monolith is destroyed.

[077]

The Bnazi (Caste, NPCs): The mystical dream nomads of the Bnazic Desert, which lies in the Dreamlands near to Mnar and Sarnath. They are typically illusionists or jesters of minor power (experience levels 1 to 3).

[078]

Bokrug (Monster): The great Water Lizard, who is appeased and worshipped by various fresh- and saltwater-dwelling creatures, such as the Beings of Ib (frogmen, etc.).

Arguably, this creature is most likely an ancient and noble Water Elemental (Blood Dice 24D8, HTK considerably above average) who favors the manifestation of a jeweled water-lizard of supreme beauty and size.

[079]

Brethren of the Stars (Monster): See Star Spawn of Cthulhu.

[080]

Bubastis (Ruin): An ancient city of Aegyptus, the cult center for the worship of Bast(et). Bast is the chaotic good lesser goddess of cats, defensive or justified warfare, and revelry. While the city is a ruin, the sect of priests lives on, in the passages beneath the ruin of her great temple. The priests and priestesses of Bast are shape shifters, or summoners of lions, and they are mighty foes of the ever-encroaching undead.

[081]

Buopoth (Monster): Shy, elephant-like creatures who dwell within the Dreamlands. They hide in shadowed forests and are usually only seen for a few minutes at drinking holes, riverside, etc. They are regarded as symbols of tranquility and reflection.



IS FOR CULT

[082]

The Cabal of the Ghul (Lore / Monstrous Faction): The collective order and race of Ghul-kind. While individual tribes will wage war upon one another from time to time, the Cabal is venerated by all. Its proudest laws and traditions — beyond the rites of death magic and cannibalism — relate to the origin of the Ghuls in humanity, the retention of human memory and emotion, and the defense and preservation of the Dreamlands.

[083]

The Cackling Plague (Affliction): A fatal degenerative disease, which afflicts Ghuls who consume human brains. It is the Ghul equivalent of the real human disease Kuru,

the “laughing sickness,” which is a disturbing subject that the reader can research at his or her leisure.

[084]

The Canticle of the Beyond (Song-Spell): A ritual spell of abjuration, a traditional minor magic which is chanted by the cults of Cthulhu, Shub-Niggurath, Azathoth, Nyarlathotep, and others. Some believe that the spell has minor powers of protection, or at least the appeasement of great and violent powers; but the truth is unknown. No spell caster outside of the cults who has learned and invoked the Canticle has ever secured significant benefit from its utterance. It may well be that the spell is collectively ritualistic, meaning that it only has power when many believers chant and cast it simultaneously.

The GM can use the Canticle to justify bad luck, bad die rolls, etc. suffered by the PCs when they are battling the Cult of Cthulhu and similar powers. The superstitious people in the World of Oldskull certainly believe this ill omen to be true, and you would do well to tell your players this!

[085]

Canticles of the Deathless Ones (School of Magic): The great spells of the elder Ghuls, of which Abd Al-Azrad knew intimately of three (of Naram-gal, Anata, and Hetshepsu). These unique powerful spells pertain to necromancy, blood sacrifice, cannibalism, resurrection, regeneration, madness, and Dreamlands journeys. Whenever you want to introduce a creepy new spell in your game that these parameters, you can consider it as a likely Canticle which the PCs must find and learn for themselves.

[086]

Cantus-Ghul (Monster): Any sentient Ghul who is able to read, write, understand, and speak a human language. Not all of the Cantus-Ghuls are elders, but all of the elders are Cantus-Ghuls.

[087]

The Caravan of the Black Scarab (Faction): A hard-luck caravan of Arabia in the time of Al-Azrad, who survived the wasteland by combining mercantilism with smuggling, theft, and even offering themselves as mercenary scouts and warriors from time to time. They — actually, their descendants and allied Ghuls — are whispered to endure to this very day.

[088]

The Caravan of the Seeking Vulture (Faction): The occult and secretive treasure-seeking caravan, allied with the Ghuls, which Fatimah and Al-Azrad were members of. The caravan troops were few in number, but consisted of several medium- and high-level NPCs in addition to the usual guards and servitors.

[089]

The Caravan of the White Stallion (Faction): One of the faster, wealthier, and more successful (but also, least magical) caravans of Arabia in Al-Azrad's time. Its men were superstitious, fearful, cunning and opportunistic. Most of its members were thieves, mountebanks, or fighting men.

[090]

Cassia (Treasure): A type of cinnamon, made from the fragrant bark of Asiatic trees. It is not as valuable as true cinnamon, but it is pleasant and aromatic and coveted nonetheless. Estimated value 1D6+4 gold pieces per pouch, depending on treatment and quality.

[091]

Celephais (City): A wondrous city of the Dreamlands, which endures in glory outside of time. Technically, it will not be created until King Kuranos dreams it (quite a few centuries after the lifetime of Abd Al-Azrad), but it was whispered of in divine anticipation for thousands of years before it truly existed.

[092]

The Chalukyas (Caste): The residents who are loyal to a powerful dynasty in India. In the World of Oldskull, they are the central and motivating force for the spice trade, serving as the conduit between eastern Asia and the Mediterranean region. There are nomadic Chaluk-affiliated tribes (typically chaotic good) as far west as Arabia.

[093]

Changeling (Monster): In some fashion, these are young humans who are turned into Ghuls. The gory details will need to be puzzled out by the GM. And if you really want to creep out your players, you can feature hungry and aggressive Changeling mini-Ghuls in your game.

Approximated game stats: Defense +20% (AC 6), Blood Dice 1D4, Average HTK 3, 3 Attacks (Claw / Claw / Bite), Average Damage 1 / 1 / 2, INT 5, Chaotic Evil or Chaotic Neutral (depending on tribe), Lethality Level 2.

[094]

The Chronicles of Nebuchadnezzar (Treasure): A non-magical tome, whose chief value is that it was written by a sage who lived contemporaneously with Nebuchadnezzar and Amytis. As such, it is filled with details concerning lost treasures, secret doors and passageways, the worship of un-gods, etc. that are found nowhere else. (As a game effect, I recommend that the owning PC's player can ask one Babylon-related

question — concerning the ruins, mega-dungeon, treasures, monsters, secret tricks, traps, etc. — per session, and receive an answer, although the answer will probably be a highly cryptic riddle.) The tome cannot really be memorized, due to its oblique style and many strange asides that only make sense in cross-reference; and the effect will be lost if the work is sold. It could probably be copied, but that would take a devoted scribe a year's uninterrupted time.

This treasure could be considered overpowered if your players are ingenious, or it could be relatively useless. (Recommended) estimated value 5,000-10,000 gold pieces.

[095]

The Chroniclers of Old (Lore): The ancient historians, chroniclers and diarists, as collectively referred to by Al-Azrad. Not all of them are human, but some of the most prominent — in a world where most of the myths are real, though partial and cryptic — would include Homer, Herodotus, Plato, Virgil, and so forth.

[096]

Cimmeria (Realm): The land which was colonized by Atlantean survivors. After the Great Deluge, its mountains became the isles of Eire (Ireland) and Britannia / Caledonia (England / Scotland). A certain barbarian is likely the most famous of the Cimmerians. In the age of the World of Oldskull (c. 1400-1500 AD), it is a partially corrupted shadowland, still wild because of the incursions of demons and other planar horrors.

[097]

Cinnabar (Treasure): A beautifully red, yet toxic, powdered mineral. Ceremonially, it is used to mark the dead with protective sigils (so that they are not feasted upon, or claimed by evil, or reanimated as undead). Its effectiveness actually depends upon the devotion of the user for the buried one, because its sole magic is to retain the latent power of primal emotions. Evil creatures tend to find such auras painful and unpleasant, and

will avoid them if possible. Estimated value 1D10 gold pieces per vial, depending on quality.

[098]

Cinnamon (Treasure): An exotic and aromatic island spice of Asia, which is rare and prized in the World of Oldskull ... particularly in Egypt and the various palaces of Europa. (In many places in Asia, this tree bark grows like a weed.) It is a rarer and more prized form of cassia, although it has no significant magical properties. Non-magically, it is used as a food preservative or alchemical disinfectant, as well as in food. Estimated value 1D10+10 gold pieces per vial, depending upon freshness and quality.

[099]

The City of Man (Lore): A term for any great patriarchal city, as referenced by a matriarchal culture. The implication is that while the creations of men are great, they are deadly because they always lead to the destruction of lesser things, and eventual self-destruction. To “wander in joy in the City of Man” is a euphemistic way of saying, “simultaneously embracing a blessing and a curse.”

[100]

Clove (Treasure): Another exotic island spice, drawn from flowering trees. It has a fair amount of worth (1D8+1 gold pieces per pouch, depending on quality), but its most important use is as a reagent in potions of healing, or curing, or poison antidotes. Alchemists, priests and high-level magic-users will typically identify prized and needed cloves on sight. Such “prime” cloves are indistinguishable to others, but represent the finest 5% of any amount found. A full pouch of prime cloves would be worth 2D20+60 gold pieces to the right buyer. However, typically only a pinch at a time is found ... and almost never separated from the bulk cloves of lesser quality.

[101]

Cobra Venom Elixir (Treasure): A form of sleep and paralysis potion. It is made with amber and honey, which will hide the venom and make it undetectable to most (anyone with a WIS of 17 or less, although an assassin will always have a 10% chance per experience level of discovering the nature of the liquid, to a maximum of 95%). The potion is not effective as a weapon coating or injection; it must be swallowed. It can be hidden in drink. Estimated value 300 gold pieces per dose (and 1D4+1 doses per bottle, as it is potent), slightly magical.

[102]

Codex of the Sibillance (Treasure): The unpublished personal “Enochian” translation of the Kitab Al Azif, which was created by the archmage John Dee of Mortlake in 1586 AD. In the World of Oldskull FRPG timeline, this is a crucial future event, which has not yet occurred (but nevertheless, this time stream can be visited by powerful adventurers using wish spells etc.). The book you are reading now is the partial text of the Codex of the Sibillance, as copied and annotated by Clarice Whateley of Cambridge.

[103]

Coptos (Town): A small, but important, ancient town in southern Aegyptus. The town remains important as a trade route anchor, caravan staging point, mining district, and (in a dying manner) religious center for the Egyptian mythos.

[104]

The Crawling of the Chaos (Lore): Obscurely, this term means (in the sole usage of Abd Al-Azrad) “to journey through the planes, or other worlds, or Dreamlands, under the influence or watchful eye or Nyarlathotep.” This rare bit of knowledge is lost to all but the most wizened of sages; most other translators believe the passage is a repeated misprint of “The Crawling One from Chaos.”

[105]

The Crawling One from Chaos (Deity): A term for Nyarlathotep, underlining the fact that Nyarlathotep is a free-willed manifestation of the primal will of Azathoth.

[106]

Cromai (Realm): The unreachable mountaintop throne of Crom, the cruel and distant god who is revered by the Cimmerians. It is said that the highest peak in Cimmeria is Cromai incarnate, but actually this term refers to the magical gateway and “eye” there atop the spire, which leads into Crom’s planar stronghold. Crom himself can, at times, be witnessed gazing through the “eye” in thunderstruck-moments during the fiercest of storms ... but only by those who dare to climb the peak.

What divine favor would such a daredevil climber ask?

[107]

Crumbling Disease (Affliction): In Arabia and Aegyptus, the name given to the sadly common disease of leprosy.

[108]

The Cthulhu Revelations (Treasure): The lore scrolls of Al Azif which pertain specifically to Great Cthulhu and the Akhutu. Notably, the partial and Latin Necronomicon (and similar translations) deal with these concepts in oblique and glancing fashion. Estimated value dependent upon spells chosen by the GM.

[109]

The Cult of Cthulhu (Faction): See Akhutu.

[110]

The Cult of Shub-Niggurath (Faction): The cult which worships the un-god of fertility, summoning, and unholy creation. By their very nature, the cultists tend to fall into two distinct groupings. The first are the willing slaves and minions, who sacrifice themselves to the horrors (the Thousand Young) which Shub-Niggurath creates in an endless manner. The second are the priests, who make quite certain that they themselves are never sacrificed. The first group is comprised of normal human cultists, as well as the occasional NPC of experience level 1 (hardly anyone lives to make it to level 2). The second group is comprised of evil clerics, with experience levels ranging from 2 into the low 20s.

Priests of Shub-Niggurath favor rare spells involving summoning (they have access to Monster Summoning I – VII, unlike most clerics) and abjuration (to banish the occasional summoned horror that will burst free of magical bonds, determined to eat the priest).

[111]

The Cult of the Yellow Silk (Faction): The cult of the King in Yellow. The King in Yellow really needs his own unique supplement, but for now I will say that his cultists tend to be sly, creative, and imaginative individuals with high Charisma and the ability to subtly influence others. Mindless cultists are not favored by this cult, although they frequently serve as pawns to be casually sacrificed in minor plays for power.

Uniquely, although all cultists of the King in Yellow are chaotic, they can be good, neutral, or evil. CG cultists tend to be artists or creators of beautiful things, who draw upon the darkness for inspiration; CN cultists are unpredictable, but alluring and occasionally admirable; and CE cultists tend to be subtle, restrained, and patient ... and they infiltrate the highest kingdoms, corrupting them from within.

Cultists of this faction tend to be individualistic, and can be of any race, class, and level. They tend to gather followers (pawns) to their cause through wit and charm. For

obvious reasons, the most common classes for these cultists are mountebank, bard, jester and illusionist.

[112]

Cult Fanatic (Assassin Specialization): Cult Fanatics, in game terms, are assassins who solely serve a cult which worships an un-god. Unlike mercenary assassins, who sell their services to the highest bidder, Cult Fanatics use their skills (of disguise, infiltration, and assassination) to kill the enemies of the cult. They are subservient only to higher-level clerics of the cult, whom they take orders from.

[113]

Cult Priest (Cleric Specialization), aka Shadow Priest: Any cleric who worships an un-god. This includes the clerics of Cthulhu, Nyarlathotep, the King in Yellow, Azathoth, and so forth. Such clerics are always evil, or chaotic neutral. They draw their power by praying to the un-god of their choice, not to any deity. As these cosmic horrors are quite beyond the mortal and terrestrial pantheons (the Egyptian, Greek, Norse, and so forth), they are able to grant spells to followers despite their not being “gods” in the technical sense.

Cult Priests tend to be reclusive and secretive (see following paragraph), and they make very poor PCs, because everyone hates them and wants to kill them. Each cult has its own unholy symbol, rites, favored spells, and preferred types of minions. The Cult of Cthulhu for example is allied with the Deep Ones, while the Cult of Nyarlathotep is allied (to an extent) with the Ghuls. These cults do not necessarily play nicely with one another, although temporary alliances of convenience are common.

Uniquely among evil factions and archetypes, Cult Priests are feared even by other evil NPCs. It is not unheard of for an infernal champion (a worshipper of an arch-devil), an abyssal champion (a worshipper of a demon lord) and a death priest (of Nergal, Hel, etc.) to temporarily unite in the name of wiping out a group of Cult Priests before going their separate ways. The reason for this is very simple: all high-level spell casters, through divination, know very well that the Cult of Cthulhu and related powers will be

responsible for the destruction of this world. If that further fate can be altered, or even exterminated, that is a worthy cause for anyone.

Isn't it?

[114]

Cultic Warrior (Fighter Specialization): A fighter who serves a faction of Cult Priests and Cult Fanatics. Cultic Warriors are the minion leaders, the ones who lead all of the mindless thralls and sacrifices into battle against the PCs. As such, they are the strongest of the minions, but they tend to have short lifespans. (I recommend fighters of experience levels 2 to 5, 1D4+1).

Cultic Warriors are not necessarily unintelligent, but as fanatical slayers who are always vacillating between “seizing the initiative” (making up excuses to be violent) and “just following orders,” they tend to have very low Wisdom scores. This is not to say that they are helpless, however; just easy to manipulate or kill. Unfortunately, their single-mindedness causes problems.

For example, if the PCs are shopping in a city, and they are being watched by a cult, all of the Cult Fanatics and Cult Priests will be lurking in the shadows, waiting for a perfect moment of secrecy in which to abduct or kill the adventurers. They will bide their time. Meanwhile, the Cultic Warriors will lead a hundred minions straight through the city, weapons drawn, to attack the PCs in broad daylight. Surely, the PCs and the city watch will fix the situation fairly quickly, but it's going to get very bloody and audacious first.

[115]

Cultist (Caste / Monster): A devout worshipper of an un-god, who believes that unholy worship and terrestrial annihilation will lead to eternal glory, or even apotheosis. In game terms, a cultist is a normal human of chaotic neutral or evil alignment, with unshakable morale. They typically have 1D6 HTK, and are very easy to kill. But they are absolutely fearless, and you never just see one cultist, and they are almost always led by Cult Fanatics, Cult Priests, and / or Cultic Warriors.

Your level 3 PCs may sneer at a dungeon encounter with dagger-wielding cultists charging into melee, until they realize that there are 150 of them ...



IS FOR DAGON

[116]

Daemonion (Lore): A collective term for all of demon-kind, including daemons, daimons, and fiends.

[117]

Dagon (Deity / Monster): The eldest of the Deep Ones, and the great minion of Cthulhu. He serves as the conduit between Cthulhu, the Deep Ones, and humanity, serving as a “nightmare amplifier.” Arguably, if Dagon were to be slain, the telepathic influence of Cthulhu would be greatly diminished ... perhaps to the point that the waking of Cthulhu could be delayed for a century or more.

I personally think that “Dive Deep, Kill Dagon” sounds like the perfect epic quest to end a high-level FRPG campaign, don’t you?

[118]

Dagonai (Deity): An unholy ancient name for Dagon, perhaps similar to the term “Adonai” for “lord.”

[119]

Damascus (City): A great trade city, “of manna and veil and treachery,” and the death locale of Abd Al-Azrad in AD 738. Known for its libraries, scroll archives, emporiums, spice trade caravansaries, flowering gardens and winding alleys. A prime stronghold, also, of the Cult of Cthulhu.

[120]

Daughter of the Desert (Caste / Class Template): The female barbarians, rangers, hunters and desert druids of the wasteland. A preeminent example would be the Shepherdess, mother of Al-Azrad.

[121]

Deep One (Monster): A vicious batrachian (frog-like) humanoid species, known for fanatical devotion to their elder matriarch Hydra, lord Dagon, and deity the Great Cthulhu. Deep Ones are known to create human-Deep One hybrids, and to ally fervently with cultists who are working to destroy the world of man. They favor salt waters, darkness, shoreline caves, lost temples and the netherworld. A Deep One never stops growing, and so there is a large variety in archetypes and lethality levels based upon the size and caste of various individuals.

Deep Ones are classic foes and nemeses, who can bedevil PCs from experience levels 1 to 20. Feel free to use them whenever you want to include a Lovecraftian presence in your dungeon, for they are everywhere.

Approximated game stats (for a decent sampling of the major types):

I

Deep One Fingerling (Young / Spawn): Untrained. Defense +10% (AC 8), Blood Dice 1D4, Average HTK 3, 1 Attack (Bite), Average Damage 1, INT 5, Neutral Evil, Lethality Level 1-.

Deep One Hatchling (Youth): Untrained. Defense +15% (AC 7), Blood Dice 1D8-1, Average HTK 4, 1 Attack (Bite), Average Damage 2, INT 7, Neutral Evil, Lethality Level 1.

II

Deep One Hybrid (Half-Human): Slave Minion. Level 0+. Defense +20% (AC 6), Blood Dice 1D6+3, Average HTK 7, 1 Attack (by Weapon), Average Damage Variable, INT 9, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 2-.

Deep One Thrall (Pureblood, Commoner): Level 1+ Fighter. Defense +25% (AC 5), Blood Dice 2D8, Average HTK 9, 1 Attack (Bite), Average Damage 4, INT 11, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 2.

III

Deep One Minion (Pureblood, Warrior): Level 2 Fighter. Defense +30% (AC 4), Blood Dice 2D8+2, Average HTK 11, 2 Attacks (Dagger / Spear, Arrow / Arrow, etc.), Average Damage Variable (3 / 4 etc.), INT 13, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 3-.

Deep One Blid-Ilgh (Lesser Guardian): Level 3 Fighter. Defense +30% (AC 4), Blood Dice 3D8+3, Average HTK 17, 2 Attacks (Dagger / Spear, Net, etc.), Average Damage Variable (3 / 4 etc.), INT 13, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 3.

Deep One Blid-Thulgh (Lesser Apprentice): Level 3 Cleric. Defense +30% (AC 4), Blood Dice 3D8+2, Average HTK 16, 2 Attacks (Net / Mace etc.), Average Damage Variable, INT 14, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 3+.

IV

Deep One Blid-Nthlai (Lesser Whip): Level 3 Fighter / Level 3 Assassin. Defense +30% (AC 4), Blood Dice 4D8, Average HTK 18, 2 Attacks (Net / Long Sword etc.), Average Damage Variable, INT 14, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 4+.

Deep One Ilgh (Guardian): Level 4 Fighter. Defense +30% (AC 4), Blood Dice 5D8+3, Average HTK 26, 2 Attacks (Dagger / Harpoon etc.), Average Damage Variable, INT 13, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 4+.

V

Deep One Thulgh (Apprentice): Level 4 Cleric. Defense +30% (AC 4), Blood Dice 5D8+1, Average HTK 24, 2 Attacks (Net / Mace etc.), Average Damage Variable, INT 15, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 5-.

Deep One Nthlai (Whip): Level 4 Fighter / Level 4 Assassin. Defense +35% (AC 3), Blood Dice 6D8+1, Average HTK 28, 2 Attacks (Net / Long Sword etc.), Average Damage Variable, INT 15, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 5.

Deep One Doolm-Ilgh (Elite Guardian): Level 5 Fighter. Defense +35% (AC 3), Blood Dice 7D8+1, Average HTK 33, 2 Attacks (Dagger / Harpoon etc.), Average Damage Variable (STR 16), INT 14, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 5+.

VI

Deep One Vra-Thulgh (Apprentice Adept): Level 5 Cleric. Defense +35% (AC 3), Blood Dice 6D8+4, Average HTK 31, 2 Attacks (Net / Mace etc.), Average Damage Variable, INT 16, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 6.

Deep One Uulm Nthlai (Master Whip): Level 5 Fighter / Level 5 Assassin. Defense +35% (AC 3), Blood Dice 8D8+1, Average HTK 37, 2 Attacks (Net / Long Sword etc.), Average Damage Variable (STR 16), INT 15, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 6+.

VII

Deep One Quol-Thol (Sergeant): Level 6 Fighter. Defense +35% (AC 3), Blood Dice 8D8+3, Average HTK 39, 2 Attacks (Dagger / Harpoon etc.), Average Damage Variable (STR 16), INT 14, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 7.

Deep One Blid-Dagonai (Lesser Priest / Priestess): Level 6 Cleric. Defense +35% (AC 3), Blood Dice 7D8+3, HTK 35, 2 Attacks (Net / Mace etc.), Average Damage Variable, INT 15, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 7+.

VIII

Deep One Guul Nthlai (Chief Whip): Level 6 Fighter / Level 6 Assassin. Defense +35% (AC 3), Blood Dice 9D8+3, Average HTK 44, 2 Attacks (Net / Long Sword etc.), Average Damage Variable (STR 17), INT 15, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 8-.

Deep One Blid-Dagonai (Lesser Eye of the Overlord): Level 6 Cleric / Level 6 Assassin. Defense +35% (AC 3), Blood Dice 9D8+1, Average HTK 42, 2 Attacks (Net / Long Sword etc.), Average Damage Variable (STR 16), INT 16, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 8-.

Deep One Uulm Quol-Thol (Master Sergeant): Level 7 Fighter. Defense +35% (AC 3), Blood Dice 11D8+2, Average HTK 52, 3 Attacks (Dagger / Harpoon etc.), Average Damage Variable (STR 17), INT 15, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 8-.

Deep One Shrolu-Dagonai (Shrine Priest / Priestess): Level 7 Cleric. Defense +35% (AC 3), Blood Dice 10D8+3, Average HTK 48, 2 Attacks (Net / Mace etc.), Average Damage Variable, INT 16, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 8.

Deep One Y'ha Ngaath (Monitor): Level 7 Monk. Defense +45% (AC 1), Blood Dice 12D8+3, Average HTK 56, 6 Attacks (4 Claws / 2 Bites), Average Damage 5 / 5 / 5 / 5 / 4 / 4, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 8.

Deep One Blidthron (Lieutenant): Level 8 Fighter. Defense +40% (AC 2), Blood Dice 13D8+1, Average HTK 60, 3 Attacks (Dagger / Harpoon etc.), Average Damage Variable (STR 18), INT 15, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 8+.

IX

Deep One Lyah-Dagonai (Temple Priest / Priestess): Level 8 Cleric. Defense +40% (AC 2), Blood Dice 12D8+1, Average HTK 55, 2 Attacks (Net / Mace etc.), Average Damage Variable, INT 17, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 9-.

Deep One Aza-Dagonai (Eye of the Overlord): Level 7 Cleric / Level 7 Assassin. Defense +40% (AC 2), Blood Dice 12D8+2, Average HTK 56, 2 Attacks (Net / Long Sword etc.), Average Damage Variable (STR 17), INT 18, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 9.

Deep One Guul Dagonai (High Priest / Priestess): Level 9 Cleric. Defense +45% (AC 1), Blood Dice 13D8+2, Average HTK 61, 2 Attacks (Net / Mace etc.), Average Damage Variable (STR 16), Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 9.

Deep One Guul Aza-Dagonai (Great Eye of the Overlord): Level 8 Cleric / Level 8 Assassin. Defense +45% (AC 2), Blood Dice 15D8+2, Average HTK 70, 2 Attacks (Net / Long Sword etc.), Average Damage Variable (STR 18), INT 18, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 9+.

X

Deep One Guulghra (Captain): Level 10 Fighter. Defense +45% (AC 1), Blood Dice 16D10+2, Average HTK 90, 3 Attacks (Long Sword / Harpoon etc.), Average Damage Variable (STR 18/50), INT 16, Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 10-.

Deep One Pruulhu Dagonai (Noble High Priest / Priestess): Level 10 Cleric. Defense +45% (AC 1), Blood Dice 16D8, Average HTK 72, 2 Attacks (Net / Mace etc.), Average Damage Variable (STR 17), Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 10.

Deep One Vul'Puulm (Patriarch Prince, or Matriarch Princess): Level 10 Cleric / Level 10 Assassin. Defense +55% (AC -1), Blood Dice 16D10+2, Average HTK 90, 2 Attacks (Long Sword / Harpoon etc.), Average Damage Variable (STR 18/75), Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 10.

Deep One Vul'Thoop (Patriarch Duke, or Matriarch Duchess): Level 11 Cleric / Level 11 Assassin. Defense +60% (AC -2), Blood Dice 18D10+1, Average HTK 100, 2 Attacks (Long Sword / Harpoon etc.), Average Damage Variable (STR 18/00), Neutral Evil (with Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 10.

Deep One Guul Vul'Thoop (Grand Patriarch King, or Grand Matriarch Queen): Level 12 Cleric / Level 12 Assassin. Defense +65% (AC -3), Blood Dice 20D10, Average HTK 110, 2 Attacks (Long Sword / Harpoon etc.), Average Damage Variable (STR 19), Neutral Evil (With Chaotic Tendencies), Lethality Level 10.

(Deep One Lethality Levels may need to be adjusted, depending upon the FRPG rules you're currently playing under.)

[122]

The (Great) Deluge (Epoch / Lore): The massive flood (caused by Dagon, Hydra and the elder Deep Ones), which destroyed Atlantis and caused a great Cataclysm to unfold. There have been many lesser Deluges, which were similarly catastrophic but of a more

localized nature. How many of these were caused by the Deep Ones in the name of Great Cthulhu? Most of them, to be sure!

[123]

Desert Honey (Treasure): A healing salve, which can (up to three times per day) heal open wounds. The healing induced when brushed upon a wound is minor, 1D2. The honey can also be imbibed, which in game terms has the same effect (causing 1D2 points of healing even if open wounds have not been suffered, and thereby used to heal fatigue, burns, or what-have-you). Estimated value 50 gold pieces.

[124]

The Desert Mother (Lore): A term used of the Khali wasteland, which basically implies “We are all, despite our beliefs, of the desert who gave birth to us.” It is a saying of kinship, excluding outsiders from beyond the Arabian peninsula.

[125]

Dhub Lizard (Animal): An incidental creature, no larger than a jackal. They thrive in hot deserts where other reptiles cannot, typically by burrowing, slumbering, and somehow altering the temperature of their blood. Desperate adventurers have been known to drink their blood when there is no water to be had.

[126]

The Discs of Anar’kai (Treasure): The engraved and preserved metal “scrolls” which embody the learning and arcane magics of Anar’kai and the Serpent People. As a dying race, the Serpent People of Anar’kai’s time were interested in preserving knowledge of longevity, soul draining, necromancy, mind control, Dreamlands journeys, magical gateways, and the transmigration of souls. Each set of discs will typically preserve

between 1D4 spells, some of them very rare or even unique. Estimated value dependent upon the spells chosen by the GM.

[127]

Dragon Age (Epoch): The lost era of the Dinosaurs. Al-Azrad, of course, was by no means familiar with the differentiation of the Triassic, Jurassic, Cretaceous, etc.

[128]

Dragon in the Flesh (Monster): The common term for the lost races of saurians, which we call the Dinosaurs. They are extinct in most places, but can (in the World of Oldskull) be found in lost world regions, Afrik, and the netherworld.

Example species:

Deinonychus: Defense +30% (AC 4), Blood Dice 4D8+1, Average HTK 19, 3 Attacks (Claw / Claw / Bite), Average Damage 2 / 2 / 5, Unaligned, Lethality Level 4+.

Stegosaurus: Defense +35% (AC 3), Blood Dice 18D8, Average HTK 81, 1 Attack (Spiked Tail), Average Damage 13, Unaligned, Lethality Level 8-.

Tyrannosaurus Rex: Defense +25% (AC 5), Blood Dice 18D8, Average HTK 81, 3 Attacks (Claw / Claw / Bite), Average Damage 4 / 4 / 23, Unaligned, Lethality Level 9.

(Dinosaur Lethality Levels may need to be adjusted, depending upon the FRPG rules you're currently playing under.)

[129]

Dread Ziggurat (Dungeon): Any corrupted ziggurat of chaotic evil, risen to the glory and worship of Cthulhu. Such places typically connect to the netherworld, and to a Sunless Sea (and from there to Abzu) as well as the Dreamlands.

[130]

Dreaming One (Caste / Culture): Any person who is experiencing, or capable of experiencing, the Dreamlands.

[131]

Dreamless One (Caste): A term for those mortals who are incapable of entering the Dreamlands, due to their lack of faith, will, or imagination. In game terms, NPCs and PCs of INT, WIS, or CHA less than 8 have difficulty entering the Dreamlands, and anyone with two or three of these ability scores below 8 can never enter the Dreamlands unless dragged there as prey.

[132]

The Dreamlands (Realm / Plane): The realm of consensual dream, where Dreaming Ones can leave their bodies behind and inhabit new flesh, instilled with their own mind and soul. The Dreamlands are both wondrous and horrific, filled with the things that humans have dared to dream, as well as the nightmares which have been suppressed by the race (such as the susurrations of Cthulhu). To expand upon this topic would require an entire supplement, but suffice it to say for now that the Dreamlands comprise an idyllic, magic-rich planar realm which combines world mythology with the writings of Lord Dunsany and H. P. Lovecraft. See also supplement PM1, *The Pegana Mythos*.

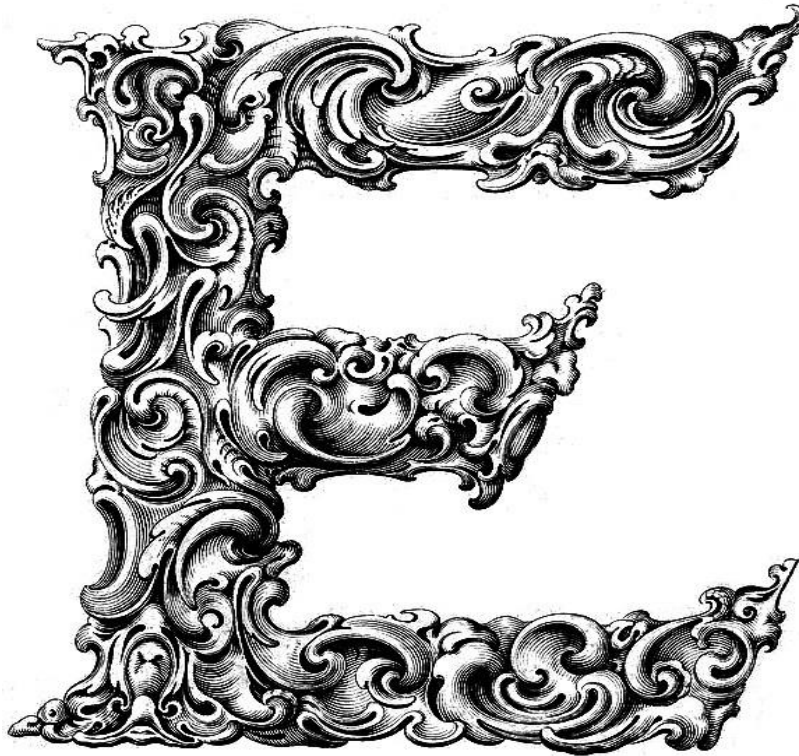
[133]

Dumuzid (Deity / NPC), aka Dumuzi: A great king of Sumeria from the age after the Deluge, in the time of Lugalbanda and Gilgamesh. He was dragged to the netherworld by Inanna, and became a reluctant god of death and shadowry.

[134]

Dune-Malik (Title): A Malik (great chieftain and petty king) of the open wasteland. Not technically a King, but certainly a ruler of a vast realm where no other person is willing or able to wield more significant power.

In terms of the World of Oldskull campaign (in reference to GWG1, Game World Generator), a Dune-Malik would be roughly equivalent in hierarchy and experience to a Viscount: a Risen Dune-Malik would be experience level 10, Ascendant level 11, Mighty level 12, Revered level 13, and Exalted level 14.



IS FOR ELDER THING

[135]

E-Meslam (Dungeon / Locale): The name of the shadow palace of Nergal, deep within the netherworld.

[136]

Eden (Realm / Plane): A sanctuary garden of purity, in which humans were kept in an idyllic godly experiment pertaining to the nature of innocence, corruption, knowledge, good and evil. Many tales differ, but Al-Azrad regarded the many permeations of the tale as proof that the place existed ... but only ancestral memories deep beneath the longing instincts of humanity remain.

[137]

The Eden-Lost (Culture / Lore): A poetic name for mankind, fallen from innocence and into the longing of nostalgic dream.

[138]

The Eden-Lost (Realm): A name for the lost and enchanted nightmare forest of Huwawa. As every Dreaming One experiences the Dreamlands (and the Empire of the Blackened Mind) through their own cultural “filter,” it can be ascertained that this place is and the “Enchanted Wood” of the Zoogs — as experienced by Randolph Carter — are one and the same.

[139]

Elder Age (Epoch): The time before humanity, when only the Un-Gods and creeping life forms stalked the earth.

[140]

Elder Thing (Monster): The powerful race of plant-like explorers and scientists, which (on Earth, and in the World of Oldskull) created the mighty city beneath Antarktos. The Elder Things are known for their wars with Cthulhu, and also for their biological creations. They created Shoggoths as slaves, and pre-humanity as an accidental byproduct of bestial experimentation.

[141]

The Elder Tree of Life (Lore / School of Magic): The great tree which connects time periods, and worlds, to our own terrestrial realm. In the World of Oldskull campaign, the “tree” actually refers to the branching conduits of magic, which — via magical

gateways — connect worlds, universes, planes and times to one another. Several schools of magic, particularly those of divination, abjuration, channeling and journeys, are powered and made manifest by the complexities of the Elder Tree. Example arts which explore these schools of magic include the Kabbalah, Yggdrasil chants, Assyrian spirit journeys, and shamanic tree worship.

Several ancient Ghuls are powerful in the ways of the Tree of Life, with the Ghul-Crone Anata being foremost among them.

[142]

Elephantine Isle (Locale): The most important of the arcane Nilus isles of Aegyptus, where Khnum and the floods are worshipped. The true power which resides here — hidden veiled atop her shadow throne, in flooded caverns deep — is Klocha the Unbeholden, the ageless sorceress and deep wanderer who taught Abd Al-Azrad of Hadoth, the Ghul King, and the true secret purpose of Nyarlathotep.

[143]

Eleusis (Town): A minor town of Achaea. The locale is most important as the protected site of the Eleusinian Mysteries, which are the ritual Dreamland journeys of ascension practiced by the Druidic Hierophants and their followers. The rituals take place in caverns beneath the town, a literal world apart from the mundane and everyday activities above.

[144]

The Emerald Sea (Realm): The Great Green, or Wadj Wer, which is the Egyptian name for the Mediterranean Sea. In the World of Oldskull campaign, this term refers exclusively to the waters north of Egypt and off Alexandria (as far as Tyre), where many sunken ruins (including the lost shrines of Shub-Niggurath) can be found.

[145]

The Empire of the Blackened Mind (Realm / Plane): The Dreamlands, as experienced by madmen, evil persons, or people who are corrupted by nightmares. While the Dreamlands are sometimes paradisiac, the Empire of the Blackened Mind is filled with shadow, corruption, poison, slimes, madness, and the living dead. When adventurers go insane, the Dreamlands may temporarily shift and subvert themselves to become the Empire. People's faces will melt, shadows will come alive, walls will bleed, whirling vortices will open between the stars, and so forth.

[146]

The Empire of Sleep (Realm / Plane): Collectively, the Dreamlands and the Empire of the Blackened Mind together as one. These are two perceptions of the same malleable psychic plane.

[147]

The End of Days (Epoch): The future age, when mankind will perish utterly. This era follows soon after the Great Dying.

[148]

The Endless Hall (Dungeon / Plane): The secret planar palace of Nyarlathotep ... or at least, the non-Euclidean enclosure where he chooses to keep his chosen souls, the Ancient Ones.

[149]

The Endless Stair (Locale): An undiscovered locale in the netherworld, which Al-Azrad once proclaimed was the primary conduit between our world and the lost shores

of the Abzu. It is likely related to the great stairways of Koth, as in this example spoken of by Lovecraft on behalf of Randolph Carter:

“Terrible is the memory of that dark descent, in which hours wore themselves away whilst Carter wound sightlessly round and round down a fathomless spiral of steep and slippery stairs. So worn and narrow were the steps, and so greasy with the ooze of inner earth, that the climber never quite knew when to expect a breathless fall and hurtling down to the ultimate pits; and he was likewise uncertain just when or how the guardian night-gaunts would suddenly pounce upon him, if indeed there were any stationed in this primeval passage. All about him was a stifling odour of nether gulfs, and he felt that the air of these choking depths was not made for mankind. In time he became very numb and somnolent, moving more from automatic impulse than from reasoned will; nor did he realise any change when he stopped moving altogether as something quietly seized him from behind. He was flying very rapidly through the air before a malevolent tickling told him that the rubbery night-gaunts had performed their duty ...”

[150]

Enki (Deity): In the Sumerian mythos, the lawful neutral greater god of waters, rivers, and oceans. His true purpose is lost to time, or known only to his highest priests; but it is believed that he was intrinsic to humanity’s defiance of Dagon and the Deep Ones during the resurgence of Cthulhu c. 4,000-2,500 BCE. He is also the god of artifice, water elementals, clay golems and civilization. While wounded, slumbering and very little worshipped today, he is still revered by a strong and secret cabal of priests. Al-Azrad both mocked Enki for his inability to save his people, and revered him for trying.

[151]

Entity Eternal (Deity / Monster), plural Entities Eternal: A vague name for the creatures which are the mightiest Jinn, and other associated deities. They include the Sultan of the Ifrits, the Caliph of the Djinni, and others. Al-Azrad alludes that they are in league with the Gods of Kadath, but this is a murky subject at best which still remains a mystery most profound.

[152]

Ereshkigal (Deity): The neutral evil goddess of the underworld — bride of Nergal — in the Babylonian mythos. She is the queen of the dead, deceiver of Inanna, controller of demons, and a likely inspiration for the later-appearing goddess Hecate.

[153]

Eridu (Ruin): An ancient city state of Mesopotamia, where the great Abzu purification temple of Enki once stood. This site was utterly destroyed by the Deep Ones of Dagon, who regarded the worship of Enki as a direct threat to the reawakening of Great Cthulhu. There is not much of the ruin left on the surface, but surely some fascinating mysteries have endured deep underground ...

[154]

Essential Salts of Osir (Treasure): Lovecraft tells us of the “Essential Saltes,” which are the mortal remains of the dead in desiccated form. We read (modernized): “The essential saltes of animals may be so prepared and preserved, that an ingenious man may have the whole Ark of Noah in his own study, and raise the fine shape of an animal out of its ashes at his pleasure; and by the like method from the essential saltes of human dust, a philosopher may, without any criminal necromancy, call up the shape of any dead ancestor from the dust whereinto his body has been incinerated.”

In the understanding of Al-Azrad, such salts — and the necromantic process of resurrecting them, either as a non-corporeal prophesier or as an undead servitor in reanimated flesh — are empowered by Osir(is), the Egyptian mythos god of resurrection and enlightenment.

In game terms, using the salts to summon up a spirit would be an alternate version of the Speak With the Dead spell. This action would not be considered evil, because the dead spirit is only returned to our world for a brief while before returning to the earth. Using the salts to bring someone back to life in controllable form, however, would be a

chaotic act, if not outright evil, in nature. Such a spell would be a combination of Animate Dead and Reincarnation. The GM will need to work out the details ... but suffice it to say, it would take a powerful necromancer to control a powerful reanimated NPC, and the thing would assuredly attack and kill the necromancer if ever given the opportunity. Animals, however, can be brought back with dangerous but far less serious repercussions.

Not every monster leaves behind essential salts when it dies. In fact, the salts need to be carefully gathered, preserved and altered by an alchemist to function at all, so the salts are quite rare in all places beyond Arabia and Aegyptus. The art of salt preparation has almost been lost in the current campaign era (c. 1500 AD).

The estimated value of essential salts varies, because each set belonged to something that is dead, and the power of the salts varies with the power of the creature. As a rule of thumb, I would recommend the following:

(Ancient salts allow non-corporeal reanimation, but not corporeal. The number of questions that can be asked, the accuracy of the answers, etc. depends on how you as GM prefer to run Speak With Dead spells in your game. Interpretation of power is the key.)

Ancient Essential Salts of a Beast: This would allow the return of an animal's spirit, but since the beast is not sentient and cannot speak, only a druid would be capable of "asking" the risen spirit questions. The value of such salts would be minimal; perhaps 10 gold pieces per full Blood Die of the beast in question. So a dead bear with Blood Dice 5D8 would have essential salts worth about 50 gold pieces.

Ancient Essential Salts of a Monster: This would allow the return of a monster's spirit, and the spirit would be able to communicate via Common, its own language, and/or a form of image-laden telepathic empathy. The value of the salts depends on the intelligence of the monster in question. (Smarter monsters have better answers to questions.) The value of such salts would be around 50 gold pieces per INT point; so a monster of INT 15 would have salts worth 750 gold pices.

Ancient Essential Salts of a Person: Similar to the above, but the spirit will be able to communicate through a combination of Common and telepathy. This makes the questioning process easier, and potentially more beneficial. The value of such salts would be around 75 gold pieces per INT point.

("Normal" salts allow either non-corporeal or corporeal reanimation, at the discretion of the spell caster. Of course, the salts only have "1 charge," so this is a single and irreversible decision.)

Essential Salts of a Beast or Monster: These salts could be used as above, or could be used to reanimate a dead beast as a zombie. The value of the salts would be about 100 to 200 gold pieces per Blood Die of the beast in question. A bear, for example, has more valuable salts than a cow, simply because of combat potential. The zombie will have almost no intelligence, and will be weaker (by one full Blood Die) than it was on in life. For example, the reanimated remains of a Hill Giant (Blood Dice 8D8+2 in life) would have Blood Dice 7D8+2 as a zombie. Please note that the powers of a monster that are magical, or intelligence-based, will not be usable by the reanimated creature. As an example, a zombie Basilisk would be able to bite, and scare the crap out of people, but it would not be able to petrify victims.

Essential Salts of a Person: This is a very dangerous treasure, for several reasons. The salts could be used as above (just to summon a spirit), or they could be used to reanimate a dead person. The person who "comes back" will be Neutral Evil, with -3 INT compared to life, but they might still be extremely intelligent. (Consider that a reanimated archmage of INT 18 would still have INT 15 in undeath!) The creator of the Thing will need to suffer 1 point of damage, per experience level of the creature brought back, per day to keep it controlled and "alive." So if a level 5 fighter was reanimated, his creator would need to willingly suffer a 5 HTK loss per day (as healable wounds) to "feed" the Thing, or it would break free and attack. If the Thing is not fed, it will break free and attack its controller ... and every day that it is fed, it has a 2% chance per INT point, +5% per day after the first, of getting free regardless. For example, if the fighter had 9 INT in its arcane zombie state, it would have an 18% chance of getting free on the first day, a 23% chance the second day, a 28% chance the third day, and so forth.

Reanimated people can speak, follow orders, attack, wield weapons, and even cast a few spells as commanded ... with exceptions. Clerics, druids, mystics, and other divine (or unholy) priest-types cannot cast any spells, because the god they worshipped has forsaken them. Even if they were evil in life, they have no spell power. Magic-users can cast spells up to the 2nd level of power, but only once, and spells cannot be rememorized. Spells of 3rd+ level cannot be cast ... the Thing has no knowledge of them. Non-spell

abilities, such as thieving skills, tracking, monk attacks, backstabbing, and even bardic charm (shiver) can still be used in undeath.

People reanimated as arcane zombies are “fast zombies.” This means they suffer no reduction to their movement rate, and they retain the strength, agility, constitution, and so forth which they had in life. They will have 8 fewer HTK than they did in life, to a minimum of 9 HTK. (And yes, this means that if a normal man of level zero with only 3 HTK in life is resurrected, he will become tougher and have 9 HTK as a zombie!) They can be turned as Special Undead.

The value of such salts is 1,000 gold pieces, plus 1,500 gold pieces per experience level of the dead person. Therefore, the salts of a level 10 NPC would be worth 16,000 gold pieces, and the salts of a level zero human would be worth 1,000.

Special note: If you’re a mean nasty GM, then the next time a PC dies and is not resurrected, have them come back as an arcane zombie under the control of a necromancer NPC! Your players might never forgive you, but the play results will be amazing.

[155]

The Etemenanki (Dungeon / Ruin): The name of the great ziggurat of Marduk in Babylon, known more commonly as the Tower of Babel. In the World of Oldskull campaign, the catacombs beneath this ruin are a Lovecraftian mega-dungeon. Have fun!



(Research and compilation efforts continue, deep into the nights. Letter entries F – N are being compiled for the OLDSKULL NECRONOMICON BOOK II, and letter entries O – Z are being compiled for the OLDSKULL NECRONOMICON BOOK III. Additional information will be provided in the future, as my research uncovers further wondrous discoveries of the dark. ~K)

APPENDIX II: TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF THE CTHULHU MYTHOS

If you want campaign lore and background, you've come to the right place!

In the World of Oldskull campaign, the Cthulhu Mythos provides the most detailed history of the game world, dating back to the creation of the universe. This is because of all the mythoi, the Cthulhu Mythos is the one that is most obsessed with time, pre-ancient events, celestial phenomenon, geological cataclysms, arcane mysteries, and the fundamental rise and fall of various lifeforms and civilizations. So in an old school / OSR pulp game venerating the authors of weird adventure fiction that was written in the 20th Century, it logically follows that I frequently regard Lovecraft's Mythos as "The Authority" when it comes to deep campaign lore.

This Cthulhu-centric world view is supplemented by the much more recent (yet ancient) Pegana Mythos, and the Hyborian Age Mythos of Robert E. Howard. Into this foundational framework of history, I hang dates relating to the Greek, Norse, Sumerian, etc. mythoi — and conflicting creation myths — wherever I can fit them. This process creates a MASSIVE world history which informs all of my dungeon designs, ancient treasure lore, artifacts, most powerful spells, dragon lore, demon lore, ancient NPCs (liches etc.), and so forth ... to say nothing of my supplement writing and publications!

Because this information is so intriguing, inspirational and helpful when compiled, I provide you here with my own interpretation of time and significant events which pertain to the Cthulhu Mythos. But I must warn you, this chronology is a major work in progress! It's a beautiful mess, and I prefer it that way. I never let any player know this

entire chapter, because doing so would suck a lot of the mystery out of the game. It's much more evocative when I can say "You now hold the fragmentary sword-scepter of Crom-Ya, which dates to (year)" rather than hearing a player lecture me, "Hey, you said last year this scepter came from 18,254 BC, and now you're saying 17,601! And the Cthulhu Encyclopedia doesn't mention this thing at all! What gives?"

In other words, if you're looking for absolute dates and official information stamped with a corporate seal of game company approval, look elsewhere. That is not the purpose of this Game Master lore.

In the spirit of any highly complex fictional creation, my campaign's chronology IS NOT REPRESENTATIVE FICTIONAL HISTORY. It is my own. It is a minefield of rich ideas, and nothing more! I run to my notes like these whenever I need a cool name, concept, time period, monster origin, lost city, or whatever. But I also shift around dates, centuries, concepts, and even entire mythoi and creation myths depending upon my current needs. (When things conflict, I bring in the concepts of alternate dimensions and time paradoxes.) So if you are ever so foolhardy as to rely on this chapter as gospel, and then download an update to this book a year from now, you should expect some significant surprises and irreconcilable lore issues! Don't hang your full campaign, or your understanding of weird fiction, on this chapter alone. I am a guide ... not a sage. Consider this chapter as a creative tool.

But with all of that said, here is my currently-in-use summary of the Cthulhu Mythos timeline, with only major events being listed. I hope that you find this useful. And if I cause you to go digging in the works of Lovecraft, or Gygax, or Howard, or Dunsany, or Smith or Merritt or Stephen King or whoever else, I will consider the true purpose of this chapter to be fulfilled.

So happy reading, research, and adventure making!

THE END AND THE CREATION	
Approximate Time / Era	Event(s)
c. 14 Billion Years Ago	The Elder Universe — the universe which preceded ours — begins to collapse as the entropic energies of Azathoth prepare once again for the grand metamorphosis.
c. 13.8 Billion Years Ago	The Elder Universe collapses in upon itself. Azathoth, reborn, blossoms once more into a new dimension of space-time replete with completely new physical rules and a unique future cosmogony: hence, the “Big Bang.”
c. 13.65 Billion Years Ago	The first star, “Methuselah,” is born.
c. 13.5 Billion Years Ago	The first black holes form, interlacing our universe with wormhole conduits to other universes and dimensions. And so, our universe becomes enmeshed in the forever birthing and dying Omni-Kosmos. Elder lifeforms from beyond begin to take interest in our universe.
c. 13.2 Billion Years Ago	The first galaxies are formed.
c. 12.7 Billion Years Ago	The first geologically sustainable planetary bodies are formed, although the existence of life is still impossible..
c. 11 Billion Years Ago	The universe begins to cool.

THE TIME OF THE UNKNOWN ANCIENTS

Approximate Time / Era	Event(s)
c. 10.4 Billion Years Ago	The first appreciable atmosphere forms around a relatively cool planet. The first water-based life, seeded by comets, appears soon after.
c. 8.2 Billion Years Ago	First glimmers of sentient life.
c. 8 Billion Years Ago	The first sentient culture, the Ur-Ancients, reaches technological maturity. Almost nothing is known of them.
c. 7.5 Billion Years Ago	The largest ever known gamma ray burst wipes out the civilization of the Ur-Ancients, whoever they were.

THE PRIMORDIAL AGE OF SOL

Approximate Time / Era	Event(s)
c. 4.57 Billion Years Ago	Sol, our sun, forms.
c. 4.56 Billion Years Ago	The proto-Earth, which eventually become our world — and its entwined dimensional partner, the World of Oldskull — begins to form.
c. 4.53 Billion Years Ago	The celestial body Theia collides with proto-Earth, and the resulting cataclysm results in the initial formation of Luna, our moon.
c. 4.4 Billion Years Ago	Water comes to Earth in the form of asteroids and cometary bodies, and rain eventually begins to fall.
c. 4.2 Billion Years Ago	The first (native) single-celled life emerges on Earth.

c. 4.1 Billion Years Ago	<p>Drawn by the presence of native life and the prospects of inviolate dominion, Tsathoggua comes to Earth and dwells in the netherworld.</p> <p>“There are openings which human beings know nothing of ... and great worlds of unknown life down there; blue-litten K’n-yan, red-litten Yoth, and black, lightless N’kai. It’s from N’kai that frightful Tsathoggua came ... the amorphous, toad-like god-creature mentioned in the Pnakotic Manuscripts and the Necronomicon ...” (The Whisperer in Darkness, Lovecraft)</p>
c. 3.6 Billion Years Ago	The first great supercontinent of Earth, Vaalbara, forms.
c. 3.2 Billion Years Ago	The second great supercontinent, Ur, forms.
c. 3.1 Billion Years Ago	The first land-based bacteria appear on Earth.
c. 2.8 Billion Years Ago	The supercontinent Vaalbara collapses.
c. 2.5 Billion Years Ago	First significant amounts of oxygen, a poison created by bacteria, accumulate in Earth’s atmosphere.
c. 2.5 Billion Years Ago	The movement of Earth’s tectonic plates begins.
c. 2.4 Billion Years Ago	The first major glaciation of Earth (the “ice planet”) begins.
c. 2.15 Billion Years Ago	The first major glaciation era ends.
c. 2.1 Billion Years Ago	The first (native) multi-cellular life appears on Earth.

THE AGE OF THE GREAT OLD ONES	
Approximate Time / Era	Event(s)
c. 2 Billion Years Ago	Chaugnar Faugn first comes to Earth, in the name of survival, but will remain in torpor and gradual metamorphosis.
c. 1.1 Billion Years Ago	<p>Perhaps instigated by the unnatural disruptions caused by Chaugnar Faugn, a strange race of enormous, non-sentient fungal cones populates the Earth and begins to thrive.</p> <p>The death fungi monstrous forms which exist in the World of Oldskull, such as withering and shrieking fungi, likely date their genesis to this age as well.</p> <p>“...the cone-shaped things that peopled our Earth a billion years ago.” (The Shadow Out of Time, Lovecraft)</p>
c. 1 Billion Years Ago	<p>The aquatic Elder Things come to Earth, colonizing the planet to ensure their race’s survival against the Great Old Ones and other powers. They initially populate Antarctus Oceanus (the Antarctic Ocean).</p> <p>“Their original place of advent to the planet was the Antarctic Ocean ...” (At the Mountains of Madness, Lovecraft)</p> <p>“The builders of the city were wise and old, and had left certain traces in rocks even then laid down well-nigh a thousand million years ...” (At the Mountains of Madness, Lovecraft)</p>
c. 998 Million Years Ago	Needing a powerful slave race to aid their efforts at survival, the Elder Things create the first primordial Ur-Shoggoth. From this, the first proto-Shoggoths are created and the mental control of animates tissues begins.
c. 997 Million Years Ago	As the Shoggoths rise into slavery and obeisance, the Elder Things turn their science toward the creation of new lifeforms more adaptable to Earth’s climate and atmosphere. Several of the earliest “monsters” in the World of Oldskull date to this time.

	<p>“When the star-headed Old Ones on this planet had synthesised their simple food forms and bred a good supply of shoggoths, they allowed other cell-groups to develop into other forms of animal and vegetable life for sundry purposes; extirpating any whose presence became troublesome.” (At the Mountains of Madness, Lovecraft)</p>
c. 900 Million Years Ago	By this time, the Elder Things have grown in number to the point where they populate most of Earth’s oceans.
c. 800 Million Years Ago	The Elder Things, using their advanced science to compel a generation of their own young into a rapid yet perilous self-metamorphosis, experimentally populate the surface lands of Earth.
c. 770 Million Years Ago	Another major glaciation event begins.
c. 650 Million Years Ago	<p>This may be the age when the Polypous Ones came to Earth. They create vast cities, and the Great Race of Yith flees from their vicious cruelty.</p> <p>“... A horrible elder race of half-polypous, utterly alien entities which had come through space from immeasurably distant universes ...” (The Shadow Out of Time, Lovecraft)</p> <p>“When these things had come to the Earth they had built mighty basalt cities of windowless towers, and had preyed horribly upon the beings they found.” (The Shadow Out of Time, Lovecraft)</p>
c. 600 Million Years Ago	<p>At this time, the Polypous Ones are a dominant force on Earth.</p> <p>“... Had dominated the Earth and three other solar planets about six hundred million years ago.” (The Shadow Out of Time, Lovecraft)</p>
c. 530 Million Years Ago	The first fish appear, likely influenced by the Elder Things.
c. 525 Million Years Ago	Trilobite lifeforms appear, perhaps influenced by the Elder Things.
c. 450 Million Years Ago	The Earth’s land is heavily populated by highly adaptable plants and arthropods.

c. 420 Million Years Ago	The first significant (native) air-breathing animals appear, perhaps influenced by the Elder Things.
c. 380 Million Years Ago	The first tree-like plants appear.
c. 370 Million Years Ago	<p>The first amphibians appear; Lovecraft's 20th Century estimate on this one has been proven to be wrong.</p> <p>"Things of inconceivable shape, they implied, had reared towers to the sky and delved into every secret of Nature before the first amphibian forbear of man had crawled out of the hot sea three hundred million years ago." (The Shadow Out of Time, Lovecraft)</p>
c. 350 Million Years Ago	<p>Great dimensional and geologic cataclysms wrack the Earth, presaging the coming of R'lyeh.</p> <p>"With the upheaval of new land in the South Pacific tremendous events began. Some of the marine cities were hopelessly shattered, yet that was not the worst misfortune." (At the Mountains of Madness, Lovecraft)</p>

THE AGE OF GREAT CTHULHU	
Approximate Time / Era	Event(s)
c. 349 Million Years Ago	<p>The Thralls of Cthulhu, sent from Vhoorl by the Great Cthulhu, invade the Earth and wage war upon the Elder Things. The dimensional city of R'lyeh soon journeys to Earth as well.</p> <p>"Another race — a land race of beings shaped like octopi and probably corresponding to the fabulous pre-human spawn of Cthulhu — soon began filtering down from cosmic infinity and precipitated a monstrous war which for a time drove the Old Ones wholly back to the sea — a colossal blow in view of the increasing land settlements." (At the Mountains of Madness, Lovecraft)</p>

c. 348 Million Years Ago	<p>A tenuous peace of mutual exhaustion exists between the Thralls of Cthulhu, who control the surface, and the Elder Things, who control the seas and Antarktos.</p> <p>“Later peace was made, and the new lands were given to the Cthulhu spawn whilst the Old Ones held the sea and the older lands. New land cities were founded — the greatest of them in the antarctic, for this region of first arrival was sacred. From then on, as before, the antarctic remained the centre of the Old Ones’ civilisation, and all the discoverable cities built there by the Cthulhu spawn were blotted out.” (At the Mountains of Madness, Lovecraft)</p>
c. 348 Million Years Ago	<p>Another great cataclysm — perhaps wrought by a Great Old One — forces the Thralls of Cthulhu and the city of R’lyeh under the sea.</p> <p>“Then suddenly the lands of the Pacific sank again, taking with them the frightful stone city of R’lyeh and all the cosmic octopi, so that the Old Ones were again supreme on the planet except for one shadowy fear about which they did not like to speak.” (At the Mountains of Madness, Lovecraft)</p>
c. 345 Million Years Ago	<p>With Great Cthulhu imprisoned beneath the waves, the Elder Things reign once more and begin to spread across the surface lands.</p> <p>“At a rather later age their cities dotted all the land and water areas of the globe.” (At the Mountains of Madness, Lovecraft)</p>
c. 321 Million Years Ago	<p>Tentative timeframe for the coming of Yig, the Great Serpent, whose origin is unknown.</p>

THE DAWNING AGE OF REPTILES

Approximate Time / Era	Event(s)
c. 320 Million Years Ago	The first reptiles appear, likely influenced by the Elder Things, or by Yig.
c. 305 Million Years Ago	The oxygenation of Earth reaches its absolute peak, resulting in gigantic arthropod lifeforms.
c. 300 Million Years Ago	Earth's last supercontinent, Pangaea, emerges.
c. 275 Million Years Ago	Yig creates his sentient servitors, the Serpent People, who reside mostly in the netherworld and warmer surface regions.
c. 252.17 Million Years Ago	A massive cataclysm, the Permian Extinction Event. 95% of Earth's life perishes, "resetting" the natural order. The Triassic Period begins.

THE AGE OF DINOSAURS

Approximate Time / Era	Event(s)
c. 231 Million Years Ago	The first dinosaurs appear. Al-Azrad would term this the dawning of the Age of Dragons.
c. 229 Million Years Ago	Due to the rapid proliferation of the predatory and competing dinosaurs, the surface-dwelling Serpent People are either wiped out or forced back into the netherworld.
c. 225 Million Years Ago	The first mammals appear.
c. 201.3 Million Years Ago	The Triassic Extinction Event. 75% of Earth's life perishes. The Jurassic Period begins.
c. 190 Million Years Ago	The first giant sauropods appear.

c. 180 Million Years Ago	Pangaea splits into two huge continents, Gondwana and Laurasia.
c. 176 Million Years Ago	The first stegosaurus appear.
c. 160 Million Years Ago	<p>During the Jurassic Period, the Mi-Go colonize Earth and wage war with the Elder Things.</p> <p>“During the Jurassic age the Old Ones met fresh adversity in the form of a new invasion from outer space — this time by half-fungous, half-crustacean creatures from a planet identifiable as the remote and recently discovered Pluto; creatures undoubtedly the same as those figuring in certain whispered hill legends of the north, and remembered in the Himalayas as the Mi-Go.” (At the Mountains of Madness, Lovecraft)</p>
c. 159 Million Years Ago	<p>By this time, the Mi-Go dominate the surface lands (and some subterranean regoins) in the northern hemisphere, but the Elder Things persist.</p> <p>“In the end the Mi-Go drove the Old Ones out of all the northern lands, though they were powerless to disturb those in the sea. Little by little the slow retreat of the elder race to their original antarctic habitat was beginning.” (At the Mountains of Madness, Lovecraft)</p>
c. 158 Million Years Ago	A sect of the Mi-Go which worships Ghatanothoa settles in the land of Mu. (Out of the Aeons, Lovecraft and Heald)
c. 155 Million Years Ago	The first birds appear.
c. 150 Million Years Ago	<p>A great war is waged between the rebellious Shoggoths and the Elder Things.</p> <p>“They seem to have become peculiarly intractable ... perhaps 150 million years ago, when a veritable war of re-subjugation was waged upon them by the marine Old Ones.” (At the Mountains of Madness, Lovecraft)</p>
c. 145 Million Years Ago	The Cretaceous Period begins.

c. 106 Million Years Ago	Reign of spinosaurus, the largest known carnivorous dinosaur.
c. 80 Million Years Ago	Australia splits away from Antarctica. The Antarctica region is mostly controlled by the Elder Things, and the Australia region is mostly controlled by the Polypous Ones.
c. 68 Million Years Ago	Reign of tyrannosaurus rex, one of the deadliest carnivorous dinosaurs.
c. 66 Million Years Ago	A massive celestial impact causes the Cretaceous Extinction Event. 75% of Earth's life perishes, including all of the landborne dinosaurs.

THE AGE OF MAMMALS	
Approximate Time / Era	Event(s)
c. 60 Million Years Ago	The first primates, arguably created by the Elder Things as a failed experiment, appear.
c. 50.2 Million Years Ago	By this time, the Great Race of Yith is almost completely gone from the surface of the Earth. "But most of the tales and impressions concerned a relatively late race, of a queer and intricate shape resembling no life-form known to science, which had lived till only fifty million years before the advent of man." (The Shadow Out of Time, Lovecraft)
c. 50 Million Years Ago	The surviving Elder Things rebuild their great city in Antarktos. "... The founding fifty million years ago of the vast dead city around us ..." (At the Mountains of Madness, Lovecraft)
c. 30 Million Years Ago	South America splits away from Antarctica. The Antarctica region is mostly controlled by the Elder Things, and the South America region is mostly controlled by the Mi-Go.
c. 3 Million Years Ago	The Great Horror, Rhan-Tegoth, comes to the northern frozen lands.

	<p>"It is supposed to have come from outer space, and to have lived in the Arctic three million years ago. It treated its sacrifices rather peculiarly and horribly, as you shall see." (The Horror in the Museum, Lovecraft and Heald)</p>
c. 3 Million Years Ago	<p>Temperatures begin to drop gradually, and then precipitously, with the coming of Rhan-Tegoth and boreal nightmare.</p>
c. 2.58 Million Years Ago	<p>The Ice Age (Quaternary Glaciation) begins. A great surge of the polar ice causes many extinctions, migrations and the hiding of civilizations in the underworld. The Pleistocene begins. (Lovecraft believed this occurred c. 500,000 BCE, but it occurred earlier.)</p> <p>"... The coming of the frightful ice in the Pleistocene some 500,000 years ago ... must have put an end to any of the primal forms which had locally managed to outlive their common terms."</p> <p>"Nowadays we set the beginning of the general glacial periods at a distance of about 500,000 years from the present ..." (At the Mountains of Madness, Lovecraft)</p>
c. 2.2 Millon Years Ago	<p>The nightmares of Cthulhu reach into the Empire of the Blackened Mind. In the pre-human Dreamlands, the (nightmare-created?) "Men" of Leng build the vast city of Sarkomand.</p> <p>"Indubitably that primal city was no less a place than storied Sarkomand, whose ruins had bleached for a million years before the first true human saw the light, and whose twin titan lions guard eternally the steps that lead down from dreamland to the Great Abyss." (The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath, Lovecraft)</p>
c. 2 Million Years Ago	<p>By this time, the Elder Things of Earth exist only in Antarktos, the southernmost areas of South America, and scattered dominions in the seas.</p>
c. 1.7 Million Years Ago	<p>The ice spirit Ithaqua, created by the nightmares of Rhan-Tegoth, rizes in the frozen northlands.</p>
c. 1.5 Million Years Ago	<p>The Homo Erectus people learn how to use and control fire.</p>
c. 950,000 Years Ago	<p>The Elder Things of Antarktos (and a few other surface areas) are forced back into the dark waters by the changing climate and their own deteriorating numbers and science.</p>

	“When the great chill of the Pleistocene drew on, however — nearly a million years ago — the land dwellers had to resort to special measures including artificial heating; until at last the deadly cold appears to have driven them back into the sea.”
c. 640,000 Years Ago	A massive Yellowstone eruption wipes out most surface (non-subterranean) life in the North America region.
c. 300,000 Years Ago	The powerful (in future) matriarch of the Deep Ones, Pth’thya-l’yi, is born to Mother Hydra.
c. 250,000 Years Ago	Neanderthal cultures arise.

THE DAWN OF MAN	
Approximate Time / Era	Event(s)
c. 195,000 Years Ago	Modern human-type primates arise.
c. 195,000 Years Ago	Approximate beginning of the early age of man in Mu. (Date slightly modified from Lovecraft, to correspond with the rise of modern man.) “A vanished continent of the misty, fabulous dawn-years ... that to which legend has given the name of Mu, and which old tablets in the primal Naacal tongue speak of as flourishing 200,000 years ago.” (Out of the Aeons, Lovecraft and Heald)
c. 195,000 Years Ago	At this time, Tsathoggua is worshipped in Hyperborea. “... 200,000 years ago, when Europe harboured only hybrid entities, and lost Hyperborea knew the nameless worship of black amorphous Tsathoggua.” (Out of the Aeons, Lovecraft and Heald)
c. 192,000 Years Ago	The likely dawning age of the first Ghuls, perhaps resulting from human-practiced cannibalization rites.

c. 190,000 Years Ago	Collectively dreaming, humans reshape the nature of the Dreamlands.
c. 173,150 Years Ago	The human High Priest of Shub-Niggurath, T'yog, defies the reign of Ghatanothoa in the Year of the Red Moon.
c. 100,000 BC Years Before the Common Era (BC, BCE)	Age of major human migrations and repopulation begins.
c. 78,000 BC	The matriarch Pth'thya-l'yi comes to rule the Deep Ones in the sunken city of Y'ha-nthlei. (The Shadow Over Innsmouth, Lovecraft)
c. 50,000 BC	A lost kingdom of humans, with dark skin and elongated skulls, thrives in the southernmost regions of Afrik. "... A general of the great-headed brown people who held South Africa in B.C. 50,000." (The Shadow Out of Time, Lovecraft)
c. 36,000 BC	Neanderthals become extinct.

THE AGE OF KULL? (THE THURIAN AGE)

Approximate Time / Era	Event(s)
c. 20,000 BC	Humans wage war and take the realm of Valusia from the Serpent People (Howard).
c. 19,000 BC	The reign of King Kull (very tentative; this date may move in the future).
c. 18,000 BC	Maximum spread of the human-era Ice Age.
c. 18,000 BC	The Great Cataclysm occurs (Howard). Much of Atlantis sinks beneath the sea. The Thurian Age ends.

THE AGE OF CONAN (THE HYBORIAN AGE)	
Approximate Time / Era	Event(s)
c. 17,900 BC	Survivors from Atlantis gain a foothold in an island to the north, as Cimmerians. Survivors from Lemuria are enslaved by monstrous powers.
c. 17,500 BC	The Lesser Cataclysm occurs, sundering Thuria (Howard).
c. 15,500 BC	In the east of Thuria, the Lemurians gain their freedom.
c. 15,400 BC	Rise of the elder kingdoms of Acheron and Stygia.
c. 15,000 BC	<p>The great Cimmerian chieftain Crom-Ya reigns, and is deified (as the enigmatic god Crom) upon his death.</p> <p>(This event is very useful to the timeline, because it ties the Cthulhu Mythos and the Hyborian Mythos together ... however tenuous the link may be. It was a deliberate chronological linkage by Lovecraft with the works of his friend, Robert E. Howard.)</p> <p>"... Crom-Ya, a Cimmerian chieftain of B.C. 15,000." (The Shadow Out of Time, Lovecraft)</p>
c. 14,500 BC	By this time, Crom is remembered only as a deity, of divine origin.
c. 13,000 BC	Fall of the Empire of Acheron. The time of the Young Kingdoms begins.
c. 10,040 BC	The birth of Conan the Cimmerian.
c. 10,020 BC	Adventures and wanderings of Conan.
c. 10,000 BC	Rise of King Conan.
c. 10,000 BC	The Ice Age slowly fades (from a human generational perspective).
c. 9,600 BC	Disruptive climate changes, and the gradual decline of the Hyborian Age.
c. 9,550 BC	The melting. The Great Deluge, or flood, takes place in what will later become the region of the Mediterranean and the Holy Land.

c. 9,500 BC	The Ice Age ends.
c. 9,000 BC	The Thuum'ha frogmen of the Dreamlands are wiped out, and Sarnath enjoys a golden age of 1,000 years of prosperity. "And a thousand years of riches and delight passed over Sarnath, wonder of the world and pride of all mankind." (The Doom That Came to Sarnath, Lovecraft)
c. 8,000 BC	Bokrug, the Water Lizard, brings doom upon Sarnath. "Ten thousand years ago there stood by its shore the mighty city of Sarnath, but Sarnath stands there no more." (The Doom That Came to Sarnath, Lovecraft)

THE AGE OF THE ARCANES CIVILIZATIONS	
Approximate Time / Era	Event(s)
c. 4,000 BC	Commonly accepted beginning of modern history, meaning (in game terms) the rise of preservable forms of writing in human cultures.
c. 3500 BC	Khomite tribes begin gathering annually in great displays of trade and peace. The future nation of Khom (later Aegyptus) is presaged.
c. 3120 BC	Founding of Khom. The reign of King Scorpion I begins.
c. 2686 BC	The Third Dynasty begins in Aegyptus.
c. 2620 BC	Reign of the mortal Pharaoh Nephren-Ka.
c. 2613 BC	Sneferu overthrows Nephren-Ka. The Third Dynasty comes to an end.
c. 2345 BC	The Sixth Dynasty begins in Aegyptus.
c. 2184 BC	Reign of the mortal Queen Nitocris.
c. 2181 BC	The Sixth Dynasty comes to an end.
c. 1725 BC	The Fourteenth Dynasty begins in Aegyptus.

c. 1700 BC	The time of Khephnes, who knew (from personal experience) of the Great Race of Yith, and of Nyarlathotep. “... Khephnes, an Egyptian of the 14th Dynasty who told me the hideous secret of Nyarlathotep ...” (The Shadow Out of Time, Lovecraft)
c. 1650 BC	The Hyksos, a degenerate yet arcane people of ancient Stygian blood, invade Aegyptus.
c. 1650 BC	The Fourteenth Dynasty comes to an end.
c. 1352 BC	The heretic Pharaoh Akhenaten rises to power.
c. 1336 BC	The heretic Pharaoh Akhenaten is slain.
c. 500 BC	The initial rise of Empyrea.
c. 80 BC	The Empyrean (Roman) quaestor Titus Sempronius Blaesus is inhabited by one of the Great Race of Yith. (The Shadow Out of Time, Lovecraft)

THE AGE OF ABD AL-AZRAD AND HIS DISCIPLES	
Approximate Time / Era	Event(s)
476 AD	The fall of Magna Roma, later to be known as the Free City of Grimrook.
c. 666 AD	The birth of Samir of the Wastes, to be known as Abd Al-Azrad.
c. 673 AD	By this time, the young (nameless) Samir is under the control of Ghanara.
c. 675 AD	Strongest influence of the young Al-Azrad in Sana’a.
c. 685 AD	The first wanderings of Al-Azrad in the deserts of the Arabian peninsula.
c. 687 AD?	The adventure of Al-Azrad in the Nameless City.
c. 689 AD?	The adventure of Al-Azrad beneath the ruins of Babylon.
c. 690 AD?	Al-Azrad journeys to Aegyptus.
c. 692 AD?	The time of Al-Azrad in Elephantine and Hadoth.

c. 695 AD?	The journeys of Al-Azrad in the Dreamlands.
c. 700 AD	The time of power for the great mad dreamer, Abd Al-Azrad.
c. 708 AD	Al-Azrad meets with the mysterious caravan master Saheed for the last time. It is believed that Saheed implored Al-Azrad to come with him, to become a Ghul in order to “save his life.”
c. 720 AD	The dream journey of Al-Azrad into the ruined city of the Elder Things, beneath Anarktos. The encounter with the Shoggoths.
c. 730 AD	Al-Azrad begins writing his scrolls, which will be gathered as Al Azif.
738 AD	Al-Azrad is slain by a Beast of Nothingness.
768 AD	The rise of Charlemagne.
c. 775 AD	The time of the First Order of the Paladins.
787 AD	Mentions of Abd Al-Azrad as a revered figure are purged from Apocryphal scrolls as a result of the Council of Nicaea.
920 AD	The Holy Archon Johannes X of Romagna speaks against the necromantic teachings in the tradition of Al-Azrad.
c. 950 AD	The monk Theodorus Philetas translates Al Azif into Greek, as Nekronomikon.
c. 1050 AD	Patriarch Michael Keroularios of Great Byzantium orders all copies of the Nekronomikon confiscated and destroyed.
1095 AD	The Crusades against the demon legion begin.
1228 AD	The monk Olaus Wormius translates Al Azif into Latin, as Necronomicon.
1231 AD	Transcribed copies of the Necronomicon are proliferating, spreading the art of black magic once again.

THE AGE OF OLDSKULL (FRAGMENTARY)

Approximate Time / Era	Event(s)
1307 AD	Fall of the Knights Templar, and the vengeance omen presaging the End of Days.

1337 AD	The Hundred Years' War begins between the Kingdoms of Britannia and Ghol.
1347 AD	The Occidental reign of the great demon plague known as the Black Death begins. Rise of the plague doctors.
c. 1347 AD	The beginning of the dark age of heroes and fallen hierarchs (Player Characters) in the World of Oldskull campaign.
1438 AD	Rise of the Incan Empire in Terra Nova.
1448 AD	The first reign of the mortal Vlad Tepes, destined to become Dracula, begins.
1452 AD	The dark times. "Black" transcriptions of Al Azif fragments appear, marking a new rise of forbidden occultism and demon worship in the Occident.
1453 AD	End of the Hundred Years' War.
1453 AD	Great Byzantium falls to the demon legion.
1478 AD	Witchcraft hysteria. Institution of the Iberian Inquisition. The imprisonments and slayings of the magi begin.
c. 1500 AD	The end of the age of heroes in the World of Oldskull campaign.
c. 1527 AD	John Dee, future translator of fragments of the Necronomicon, is born.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Beginning play as a chaotic neutral normal human with one measly hit point to his name, KENT DAVID KELLY eventually became apprenticed to a magic-user of ill repute ... a foul man who dwelt in the steamy deeps of the Ivory Cloud Mountain. After this mentor carelessly misplaced an intelligent soul-sucking sword and then died under suspicious circumstances, his former henchman Mr. Kelly escaped to the deeper underground and there began playing Satanic role-playing games. This, the legends tell us, occurred in the year 1981.

Hoary wizard-priests who inspired Mr. Kelly in his netherworldly machinations included the peerless Gygax, Carr, Arneson, Cook, Hammack, Jaquays, Bledsaw, Moldvay, Kuntz, Schick and Ward. Sadly, a misguided made-for-the-basements movie entitled *Mazes and Monsters* gave Mr. Kelly's parents conniptions in 1982. As a result of that blasphemous Tom Hanks debacle (and other more personal lapses in judgment), Mr. Kelly was eventually forbidden from playing his favorite game for a considerable length of time.

Nonplussed but not defeated, he used this enforced exile to escape to a friend's alehouse, and there indulged himself in now-classic computer RPGs such as Zork, Telengard, Temple of Apshai, Ultima, Tunnels of Doom, The Bard's Tale, Phantasie, Pool of Radiance, Wizard's Crown and Wasteland. He then went on to write computer versions of his own FRPGs, which led to his obsession with coupling creative design elements with random dungeons and unpredictable adventure generation.

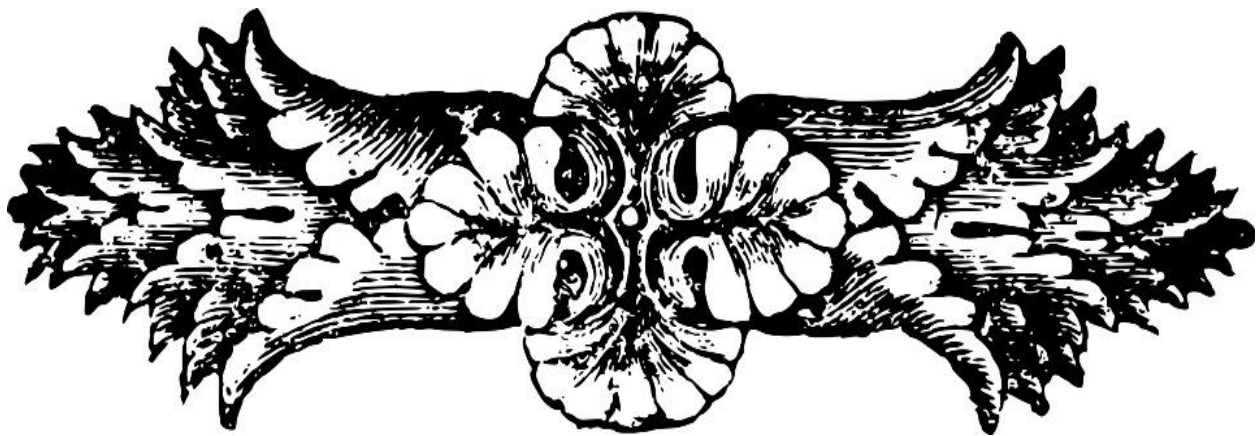
Mr. Kelly wrote and submitted his first adventure for *Dungeon Magazine* #1 in 1986. Unfortunately, one Mr. Moore decided that his submission was far too "Lovecraftian, horrific and unfair" to ever serve that worthy periodical as a publishable adventure. Mr. Kelly, it must be said, took this rejection as a very good sign of things to come.

In the late 80s and 90s, Mr. Kelly wrote short stories, poems and essays ... some of which have been published under the Wonderland Imprints banner. He wrote several dark fantasy and horror novels as well. Concurrently, he ran Dark Angel Collectibles,

selling classic FRPG materials as Darkseraphim, and assisted the Acaeum with the creation of the Valuation Board and other minor research projects.

At this time, Mr. Kelly and his entourage of evil gnomes are rumored to dwell in the dread and deathly under-halls of the Acaeum, Dragonsfoot, ENWorld, Grogardia, Knights & Knaves, ODD, and even more nefarious levels deep down in the megadungeon of the Web.

There he remains in vigil, his vampiric sword yet shivering in his hand. When not being sought outright for answers to halfling riddles or other more sundry sage advice, he is to be avoided by sane individuals *at all costs*.



OTHER BOOKS

BY KENT DAVID KELLY

This book was a labor of love, and like all of my works it has been self-published. Notoriously, online vendors do not always play nicely with one another, and sadly you must know that I cannot provide you with exhaustive links to the various sites where all of my various books are sold. (And I kindly ask that you please not pirate my works, as that takes money and security away from my family.) But I can provide you with the titles, and you can go exploring on your own to discover my other works! Google is a beautiful thing. My available books, as of summer 2017, include:

[1] Arachne: A Pyre of Angels

CASTLE OLDSKULL FRPG GAMING SUPPLEMENTS

[2] City-State Encounters (CSE1), [3] The Classic Dungeon Design Guide, Book I (CDDG1), [4] The Classic Dungeon Design Guide, Book II (CDDG2), [5] The Classic Dungeon Design Guide, Book III (CDDG3), [6] Dungeon Delver Enhancer (DDE1), [7] Game World Generator (GWG1), [8] Oldskull Adventure Generator (GWG2), [9] The Great Dungeon Bestiary (CDDG2, prior series), [10] The Oldskull Necronomicon, Book I (LOV1), [11] Mega-Dungeon Monsters & Treasure (MDMT1), [12] The Pegana Mythos (PM1), [13] Treasure Trove: The Book of Potions (TT1)

[14+] The Complete Alice in Wonderland

(and many other public domain author editions, published under the Wonderland Imprints blazon)

[15] Cthulhu in Wonderland

DUNGEON MASTER'S GUILD GAMING SUPPLEMENTS

[16] City State Creator I (ELD2), [17] City State Creator II (ELD3), [18] Dungeon Crucible: Random Dungeon Name Generator (DC1), [19] Guy de Gaxian's Dungeon Monsters: Level 1 (GG1), [20] Old School Dragons: Molting Wyrmlings (DR1), [21] Oldskull Rogues Gallery I (ORG1), [22] Oldskull Rogues Gallery II (ORG2), [23] 1,000 Rooms of Madness (DC2-S), [24] Random Treasure Trove Generator (RTT1), [25] Spawning Pool of the Elder Things (SP1), [26] Treasure Trove 1: Challenge 1 Treasures (TT1), [27] Treasure Trove 2: Challenge 2 Treasures (TT2), [28] Treasure Trove 3: Challenge 3 Treasures (TT3)

[29] From the Fire: An Epic Novel of the Nuclear Holocaust

HAWK & MOOR: THE UNOFFICIAL HISTORY OF DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

[30] Book 1: The Dragon Rises, [31] Book 1: The Dragon Rises, Deluxe Edition, [32] Book 2: The Dungeons Deep, [33] Book 2: The Dungeons Deep, Deluxe Edition, [34] Book 3: Lands and Worlds Afar, [35] Book 4: Of Demons & Fallen Idols, [36] Book 5: Age of Glory, [37] The Steam Tunnel Incident

THE LYRIC BOOKS OF SHADOW

[38] I: For the Dark Is the Light, [39] II: The Summoning of Dark Angels

(Various other books are out of print, being reworked, stuck in a closet half-completed, or stuck inside my head ...)

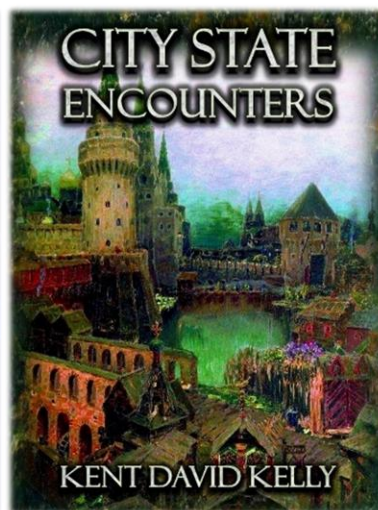
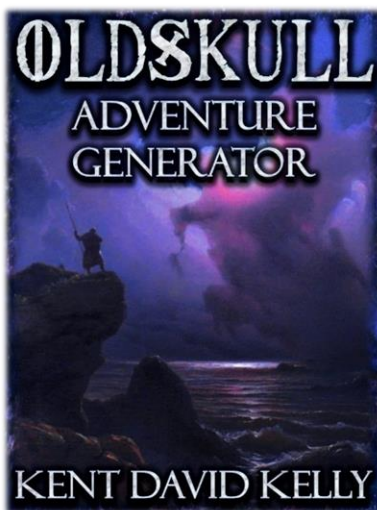
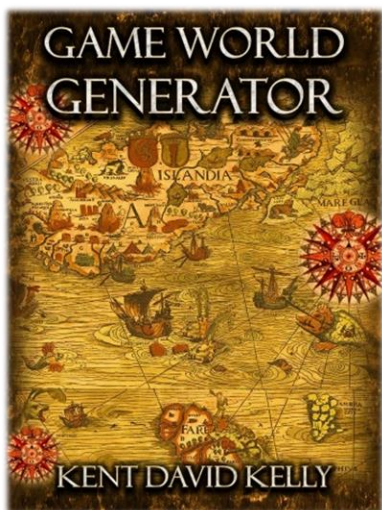
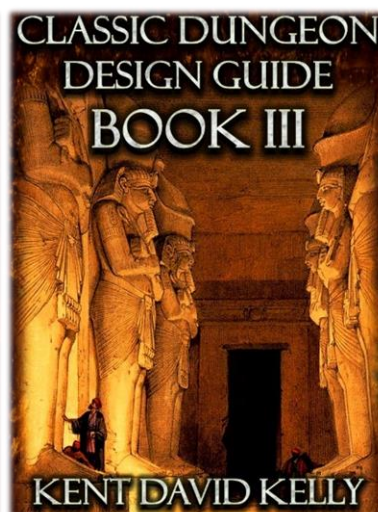
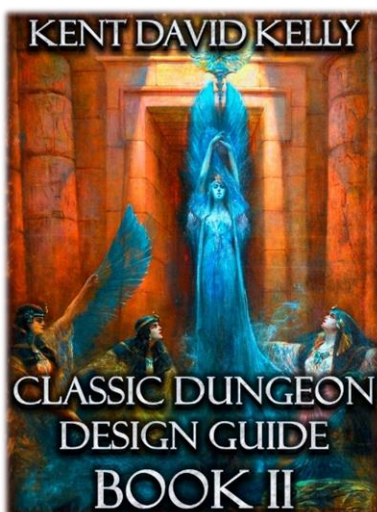
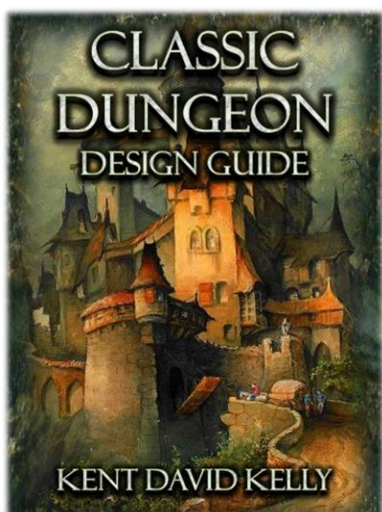
Please consider telling at least one friend about my books, and please leave me a review if you particularly enjoyed a title! Authors live and die by their reviews, and I appreciate your readership! Until next time ...

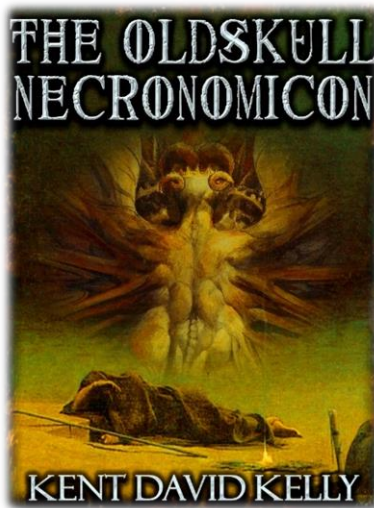
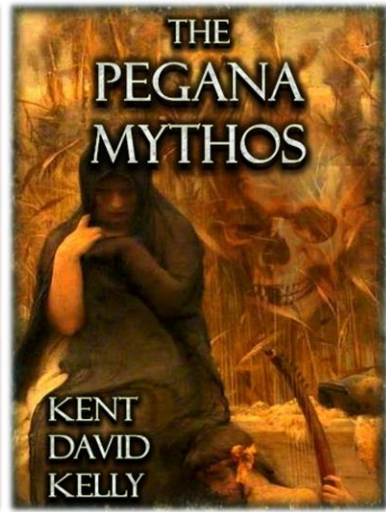
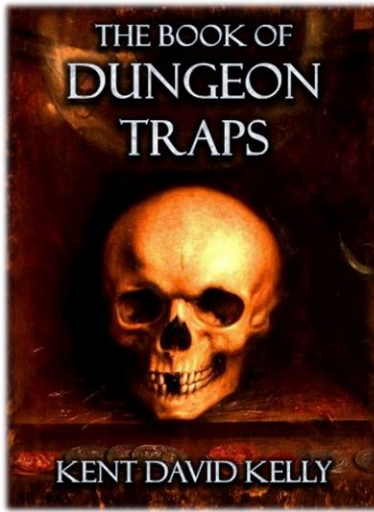
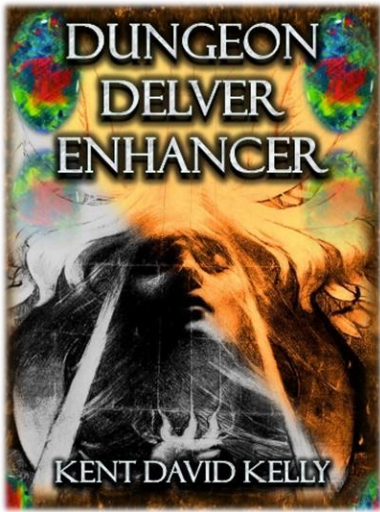
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CASTLE OLDSKULL OLD SCHOOL FRPG SUPPLEMENTS

(at DriveThruRPG.com)

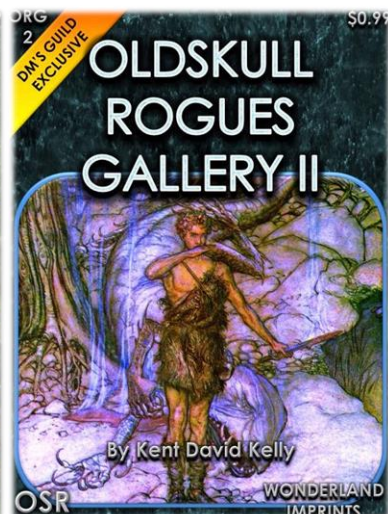
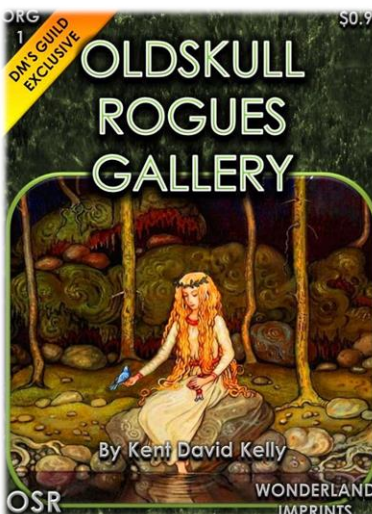
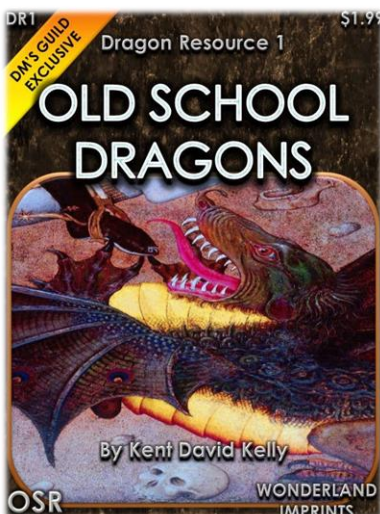
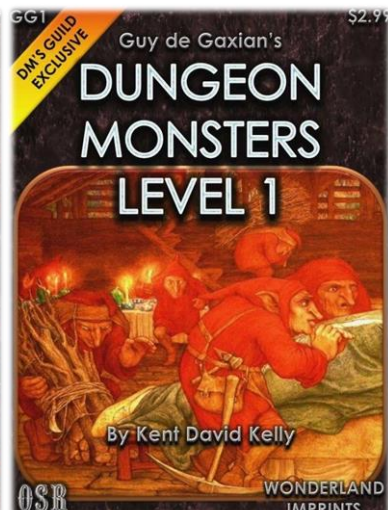
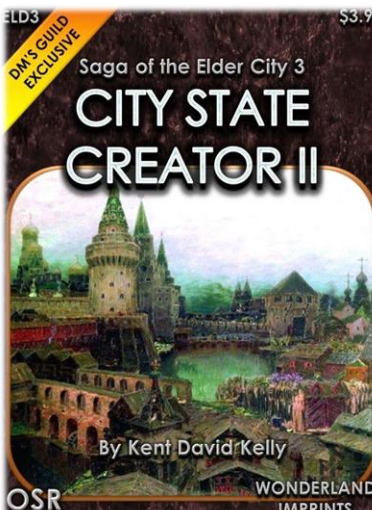
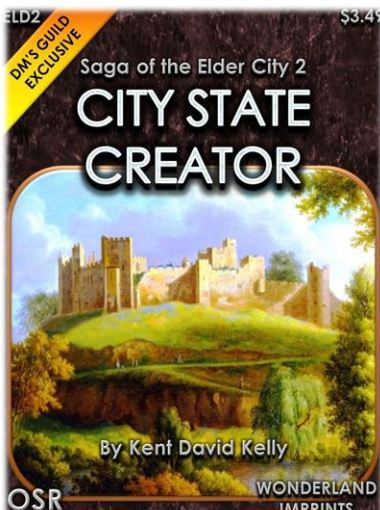
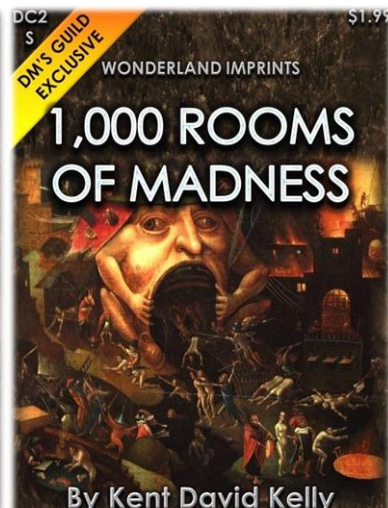
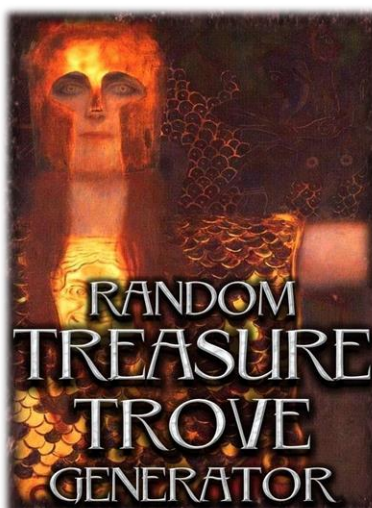
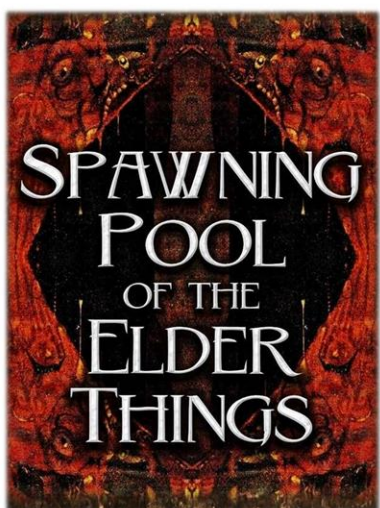
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OSR

THE WORLD OF CTHULHU ...

Behold the Cthulhu Mythos ... the secret lore pertaining to the creation of the universe, the rise of the Great Old Ones, and the perilous fate which awaits mankind as R'lyeh rises and we edge ever nearer to the End of Days. In this **NECRONOMICON** you will find the confessions of Abd Al-Azrad, and hundreds of lore pieces to fit into your classic old school FRPG campaign. Enjoy!

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