

Darkness Illuminated

Trail of Cthulhu Conversion notes

“Darkness Illuminated” is a *Call of Cthulhu* scenario written by Jon Hook and published in *Island of Ignorance—The Third Cthulhu Companion* by Golden Goblin Press in 2013. *Island of Ignorance* is a new collection of articles and scenarios for the *Call of Cthulhu* roleplaying game.

The scenario takes place in Arkham in 1928. The *Arkham* sourcebook is not required to run this scenario. Keepers can change the location or year to another one in the 20s or 30s with a little effort, adjusting the timeline accordingly. Note that the handout for the newspaper article reporting on William Herrington’s death is dated.

This scenario is “sandbox” style and contains no core or necessary clues. The investigators will have great freedom in the paths they choose and their approach to the resolution.

Note that the print and PDF versions of *Island of Ignorance* each have their own page numbering. For ease of use, this file references the page numbers of both versions, with the pages of the print edition appearing prior to the slash.

The Key Players

Francis Warrens & Warrens Laboratories

(page *print* 113 / *PDF* 115)

Francis Warrens, Opportunist Entrepreneur

Athletics 5, Firearms 4, Health 8

Weapon: +1 (.45 revolver)

The Consultant

(page *print* 114 / *PDF* 116)

The Consultant, Tortured Mi-go and Elder Fungi from Yuggoth

Abilities (on land / in air): Athletics 3/8, Health 6, Magic 8, Scuffling 6/9

Hit Threshold: 3/4

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: +1 (flying)

Weapon: -1 (nippers)

Armor: the non-terrene composition of the mi-go reduces all impaling damage, including bullets, by 2

Stability Loss: +1

Spells: Blinding Fog (Create Mist of Releh)

Create Mist of Releh

The spell obscures vision for 6 combat rounds.

Stability Test Difficulty: 4

Cost: 2 Stability or Magic

Time: One round

Dr. James Herrington

(pages *print* 114-115 / *PDF* 116-117)

- This is a lie and **Assess Honesty** informs investigators that Dr. Herrington is hiding something about his injury.

Dr. James Herrington II, Insane Grieving Father

Athletics 2, Health 6, Piloting 4, Weapons 3

Weapon: +0 (sword cane)

William Herrington

(page *print* 116 / *PDF* 118)

- Should investigators attempt to use Interpersonal abilities on either Dr. Herrington or William, the mi-go still has a 40% chance to control William against his will.

William Herrington III, Parasitic Son

Attacking William: An attack made specifically to William must match his Hit Threshold of 6. Should this happen, what is left of his brain is destroyed, and the remaining damage from the attack is suffered by Dr. Herrington. If the attack roll misses but would still overcome Dr. Herrington’s Hit Threshold of 3, Dr. Herrington takes the damage directly.

Telepathic Link: William Herrington maintains a telepathic link with both his father, Dr. James Herrington and the mi-go captive known as The Consultant. While the mi-go has no direct control over Dr. Herrington, it has control over William. Through William, the Consultant whispers eldritch secrets to the

doctor all night long. This accelerated Dr. Herrington's insanity and made him more pliable to the suggestions of his "son".

Gas Spore Attack: William can cough forth a 10-foot-diameter cloud of spores. Those caught within it can make a Difficulty 6 Athletics or Fleeing test to avoid it completely. If caught in the cloud, victims must make a Difficulty 5 Health test or suffer full-body paralysis for 2d6 rounds. Those succeeding in the test have their movement rate reduced by half and the Difficulties of all tests and contests are increased by 2 for 1d6 rounds. This paralysis does not affect the involuntary nervous system, allowing the heart, lungs, and diaphragm to function without impairment. William / The Consultant will only use this attack to protect Dr. Herrington. Once it expends the spores, the organ requires 2 hours to produce enough spores for another such attack, so this is usually an action of last resort. Thralls, William, and Dr. James Herrington are all immune to the paralytic effect of the spores.

Abilities: Health 1 (see above), Scuffling 20

Hit Threshold: 6 (see above)

Weapon: -1 (gas spore)

Armor: none

Stability Loss: +0

The Thralls

YUGGOTHIAN THRALLS, Lesser Servitor Race

(pages *print* 117-118 / *PDF* 119-120)

- Investigators using **Assess Honesty** against a thrall realize there is no way to tell if one is lying and must make a 1-point Stability test due to the creatures' unnerving behavior.

Yuggothian Thralls, Genetically Enhanced Mi-Go agents

Gas Spore Attack: The Thralls also have a gas-spore producing organ, which developed within their throats and tongues as part of their re-written genetic code. The thralls can spray a 15-foot-long cone of gas-like paralytic spores. Those caught within it can make an Athletics or Fleeing test to avoid it completely. The Difficulty to avoid a spray from a Stage One thrall is

4, while the Difficulty to avoid one from Stage Two thrall is 5. If caught in the cloud, victims must make a Difficulty 5 Health test or suffer full-body paralysis for 2d6 rounds. Those succeeding in the test have their movement rate reduced by half and the Difficulties of all tests and contests are increased by 2 for 1d6 rounds. This paralysis does not affect the involuntary nervous system, allowing the heart, lungs, and diaphragm to function without impairment. Once it expends the spores, the organ requires 2 hours to produce enough spores for another such attack. Thralls, William, and Dr. James Herrington are all immune to the paralytic effect of the spores.

Game Statistics — Stage One Thrall

Abilities: Athletics 9, Health 7, Scuffling 16, Weapons 8

Hit Threshold: 4

Alertness Modifier: +1 (night vision)

Stealth Modifier: +2

Weapon: -2 (fist), -1 (knife, club, or improvised weapon)

Armor: none natural, but may wear artificial armor

Stability Loss: There is no Stability loss for merely seeing a thrall who appears human. Seeing their eyes or them use a gas spore attack is a 1-point Stability test at +0.

Spells: Create Mists of Releh

Game Statistics — Stage Two Thrall

Abilities: Athletics 12, Health 8, Scuffling 16, Weapons 8

Hit Threshold: 4

Alertness Modifier: +1 (night vision)

Stealth Modifier: +2

Weapon: -2 (fist), -1 (knife, club, or improvised weapon)

Armor: firearms and piercing weapons do half damage (round up); may also wear artificial armor

Stability Loss: There is no Stability loss for merely seeing a thrall who appears human. Seeing their eyes or them use a gas spore attack is a 1-point Stability test at +0.

Spells: Contact Mi-Go, Create Mists of Releh

Yuggothian Weapons and Defenses

(page *print* 118 / *PDF* 120)

Thrall Bio-Armor

It provides less protection against attacks, and it wears out faster than regular mi-go bio-armor, in 5–8 days. The thrall bio-armor provides 2 points of protection against electrical, flame, and physical attacks. The armor can be removed by the thralls without damage, but a regular human wearing this armor and then removing it suffers 1 point of damage and reduces the armor's effectiveness by 1 point.

Electric Grenades

When thrown, the grenade bursts on impact and detonates in a 10-foot diameter sphere of blue sparks, causing +1 damage to everything within point-blank range.

Similar to mi-go Electric Guns, those injured by this weapon must also make a Health test with a Difficulty equal to the damage they received from the grenade. Those who fail this roll are knocked unconscious for 1d6 rounds. Those who roll a 1 on a failed test and then a 6 to determine length of unconsciousness enter immediate cardiac arrest and die 3 rounds later unless treated with a Difficulty 4 First Aid test.

Slug Thrower

It can only hit targets within close range and carries eight pennies when fully loaded. The Firearms ability is used to fire it. The weapon does +1 damage (+3 at point-blank range), causing painful burns as molten copper lances through its victim. Thralls so armed have a Firearms pool of 16 to hit with these weapons.

Important Locations

St. Lucy's School for the Blind

Speaking to the Staff

(page *print* 120 / *PDF* 122)

- However, doing so requires investigators to make a 1-point **Credit Rating**, **Bureaucracy**, or **Reassurance** spend. A cash donation of at least \$5 would also succeed, as St. Lucy's is usually, although not currently, in desperate need of funding.
- A 1-point **Assess Honesty** spend indicates they are fearful and hiding something. Investigators must again make a 1-point **Credit Rating**, **Bureaucracy**, or **Reassurance** spend to resume

the conversation; or make an additional cash donation of at least \$50.

Research on Dr. Herrington

(page *print* 121 / *PDF* 123)

- If the investigators research Dr. Herrington or his boating accident in any major New England newspaper, they find the following article with **Library Use**.

Dr. Herrington's Office

(page *print* 121 / *PDF* 123)

- There is a small locked cabinet (Dr. Herrington has the only key; it requires a 1-point **Locksmith** spend to break into it) filled with a variety of common drugs, with six unlabeled bottles tucked behind them.
- Investigators with **Biology** or **Outdoorsman** determine that it is an unknown species possibly related to the morel mushroom.

Boston City Hospital

(pages *print* 121-122 / *PDF* 123-124)

- Investigators with medical credentials or those making a 1-point **Credit Rating**, **Bureaucracy**, or **Reassurance** spend learn the following information from either:

Warrens Laboratories, Arkham Research Facility

Security Guards

(page *print* 122 / *PDF* 124)

Athletics 8, Firearms 8, Health 7, Weapons 6

Alertness Modifier: +1

Weapon: +1 (.38 revolver), -1 (nightstick)

Experimental Blindness Drug

(page *print* 122 / *PDF* 124, boxed text)

Should anyone who isn't both blind and between the ages of 13 and 21 take this drug, it has the effects of a neurotoxin, with a fatal onset time of 15 minutes. Such victims must make a Difficulty 8 Health test or succumb.

Journal of Alien Medicine

(page *print* 122 / *PDF* 124, boxed text)

- While written in English, the notes are recorded in a personal medical shorthand cipher which only investigators with the Medicine ability can understand.
- Journal of Alien Medicine: The journal requires the Medicine ability and one hour to skim, six hours to read, or two weeks to study. Skimming this book provides 1 dedicated pool point for either Medicine or Pharmacy. Poring over it provides +1 to your Cthulhu Mythos rating.

Scientists

(page *print* 124 / *PDF* 126)

Athletics 4, Health 6

Technicians

(page *print* 124 / *PDF* 126)

Athletics 6, Health 6, Weapons 3

Weapon: -1 (wrench or pipe or hammer)

Important Locations in Warrens Laboratories, Arkham Research Facility

Frances Warrens's Apartment

(pages *print* 124-125 / *PDF* 126-127)

- (Each journal takes 1 week to read, and skimming the entire collection provides 1 dedicated pool point for one of Biology, Medicine, or Pharmacy, while poring over it grants +1 Cthulhu Mythos.
- Investigators making a 1-point **Architecture** spend locate a secret panel in one wall which opens to some recessed shelving.

The Holding Cell

(page *print* 125 / *PDF* 127)

- Interpersonal abilities simply don't apply as they've been ordered NEVER to let anyone into this area who isn't accompanied by Francis Warren.
- Freeing the creature requires at least two bars to be cut and bent (doing 60 points of damage or 30 points of damage and a Difficulty 8 **Athletics** test). However, the welding equipment can inflict damage with a modifier of +3 to the bars per round, and is by far the easier way to free the captive mi-go.

The Thrall's Mission, Key Events

Biological Harvest (April 21st–28th)

(page *print* 125 / *PDF* 127)

- Investigators viewing the students killing and butchering the animals must make a 1-point Stability test.

Confronting the Thralls

(page *print* 126 / *PDF* 128)

- Their eyes glow in dim light or darkness, causing the investigators to make a 1-point Stability test.

Parley, Alien Recruitment

(page *print* 126 / *PDF* 128)

- Those hearing this must make a 1-point Stability test.

Options for Resolution

The Setback

(page *print* 127 / *PDF* 129)

In a Pulp game, the investigators refresh 1 Sanity point for removing a non-human mythos threat from Arkham and the scenario ends.

Siding with Warrens Laboratories

(page *print* 127 / *PDF* 129)

Investigators who betray the thralls and see them shot down must make 3-point Stability tests. The investigators receive their \$5,000 reward, refresh 1 Sanity point in a Pulp game if they believe their actions are just and necessary to protect human lives, and the scenario ends.

Siding with the Consultant

(page *print* 127 / *PDF* 129)

- These tonics are in steel syringes and must be injected into a subject's bone marrow, causing 1 point of damage. There is one tonic for each investigator. The tonic gives them a dedicated pool point in Health that can be used in any Health test, including Consciousness rolls; the pool point cannot be used to reduce damage from attacks. The tonics have the side effect of granting immunity to Stability tests for viewing mi-go (those injected with the tonic now view mi-go as beautiful, feeling both calm and joy in the creatures' presence).

- In a Pulp game, the investigators refresh 1 Sanity point for freeing the imprisoned alien and seeing the formerly blind youths happily move forward to lead productive lives as mi-go agents, and the scenario ends.

Clearing the Playing Field

(page *print* 128 / *PDF* 130)

- Those witnessing this must make a 1-point Stability test.
- If the investigators believed that removing both threats was the best course of action, then this outcome, in a Pulp game, refreshes 1 point of their Sanity and the scenario ends.

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