

Consumption

Trail of Cthulhu Conversion notes

“Consumption” is a *Call of Cthulhu* scenario written by Brian M. Sammons 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 1926. The *Arkham* sourcebook is not required to run this scenario. The scenario can easily be set in the 1930s; the ages of Dr. Bell, Det. Cooper, and Abner Crumpler should be recalculated to correspond with the year the scenario takes place.

The investigators are pitted against a number of conspirators, some of whom are easier to uncover than others. There is no specific order to investigations or climax to them, either. The feast, however, may wrap everything up or at least put everything in place, depending on the investigators’ actions.

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.

Our Story Begins...

(pages *print* 40-41 / *PDF* 42-43)

- Should the investigators be driving an automobile, have the one behind the wheel make a Difficulty 4 **Driving** test to avoid hitting the unfortunate woman.
- She was going to die anyway, but if the vehicle hits her, this extra guilt and shock requires the investigator driving to make a 2-point Stability test.
- The horrible state of the victim requires a 3-point Stability test to see.
- **Medicine** or **Forensics** informs the investigators that the burn scar is about three days old.
- Tracking the woman’s trail with **Outdoorsman (core clue)** is easy because of the mud, melting snow, and her blood. If no one uses that ability, investigators making a **simple search** of the area

notice the path leading to the burnt out shell of a long abandoned house.

The Charred House

(page *print* 41 / *PDF* 43)

- There are tire tracks in the snow, and Investigators making a 1-point **Evidence Collection** or **Driving** spend identify at least two different vehicles, based on width and tread type.
- A 1-point **Outdoorsman** spend at the door locates two sets of tracks: the dead woman’s barefoot, blood-splattered trail and a pair of booted prints.
- Twenty feet along the woman’s trail, Investigators making a 1-point **Outdoorsman** spend discover a knife which is still wet with blood.

The Shed

(pages *print* 41-42 / *PDF* 43-44)

- The shed is a house of horrors, and entering it causes a 3-point Stability test.
- Anyone entering the shed notices these items with **Evidence Collection (core clue)**.
- **Outdoorsman** or **Craft** can identify the contraption as a tanning rack used to dry the hides of animals.
- **Medicine, Forensics, or Biology** determines that the cover is made out of human skin.
- Handling this book and / or looking at the pictures causes a 2-point Stability test.

Researching the House

(pages *print* 42-43 / *PDF* 44-45)

- Investigators using **Library Use** at the Arkham Hall of Records find out the following.
- Investigators conducting research on Abner Crumpler discover the following facts with a 1-point **Library Use** spend.
- Investigators researching property via old newspapers at a library or newspaper morgue must make a 1-point **Library Use** spend to find the following information.

Looking into the Medical Instruments

(page *print* 43 / *PDF* 45)

- Clever investigators figure out that the instruments found in Abner's shack are from Miskatonic University's St. Mary's Teaching Hospital, as they are clearly marked "St. Mary's M103". Investigators with **Medicine** or **Biology** immediately recognize them; so might anyone familiar with Miskatonic University. Otherwise, they can track down their source with a little footwork; if the players are at a loss, Keepers may want to guide them towards checking town records, asking around, or the like.
- Non-physician investigators must make either a 1-point **Bureaucracy** or **Credit Rating** spend to locate someone willing to take a moment out of their hectic day to talk to them.
- Being an authority such as a doctor or policeman, bribery with a 1-point **Bargain** spend or a 1-point **Bureaucracy** or **Credit Rating** spend on hospital staff, or a Difficulty 4 **Stealth** test to get past the staff is required to get into St. Mary's Hospital morgue.
- **Assess Honesty** determines that he is telling the truth.
- If the investigators mention where they found the instruments or the dead woman, Dr. Morrison claims to know nothing about either, but **Assess Honesty** determines that he is hiding something. Even without the ability, Keepers can tell their players that he looks a bit nervous at the news, if they want to throw the investigators a bone.
- Investigators making a successful Difficulty 4 **Stealth** test can approach the door and eavesdrop on Dr. Morrison dialing a telephone and his following conversation.

Looking into the Suitcases

(pages *print* 43-44 / *PDF* 45-46)

- Anyone familiar with Arkham and possessing Credit Rating 4+, **Art History**, or **Craft** realizes that only one place in town would sell such fine luggage: Miller's on 177 W. Main St.
- **Reassurance** or **Flattery** are useless in prying the information out of the stuffy shop owner, unless done by someone with Credit Rating 5+ combined with the purchase of something costing more than \$50. A sizable bribe might also work, but anything less than \$100 with a 2-point **Bargain** spend insults the man, who explains that it wouldn't be worth his time going through past receipts from over a decade ago.

- The back door to Miller's is barred from the inside, so investigators attempting to break in will either have to break a window, kick down a door (Difficulty 5 **Athletics** test for front, Difficulty 7 **Athletics** test for rear), or make a 1-point **Locksmith** spend to pick the lock of the front door right out on Main Street. Each of these actions requires the one doing the breaking and entering to make a **Stealth** test (Difficulty 4 for picking a lock or breaking a window; the Difficulty for kicking in the door is 5 for the front and 7 for the rear) not to be seen or heard and reported to the police.
- Investigators breaking into the shop must use **Accounting** to find the receipt in Miller's extensive and overly-complicated filing system.
- Investigators familiar with Arkham recognize the name Eleazar from Eleazar's Funeral Home on S. French Hill Street.

Eleazar's Funeral Home

(page *print* 45 / *PDF* 47)

- Should investigators try to use **Assess Honesty** to determine Jasper's truthfulness, they must make 2-point spends.
- When the investigators leave, Jasper calls James Bell and has nearly the same conversation as Dr. Morrison had earlier, should the investigators eavesdrop on it with a Difficulty 4 **Stealth** test.
- Should investigators make a 1-point **Architecture** spend while in the funeral home, they hear creaking floorboards or the occasional smoker's cough coming from the second floor. Without a spend, a Difficulty 4 **Sense Trouble** test may see the woman glaring down at them from the top of the stairs.

Looking for William Simmons

(page *print* 46 / *PDF* 48)

- Investigators looking into William Simmons's disappearance must make a 1-point **Library Use** spend to discover another Arkham Advertiser article (Consumption Papers #4) from 1921.
- If the investigators don't think of it themselves, Keepers should have the investigators make a 1-point **Driving** spend and point this out.

William Toomy, age 28, thuggish watcher

(page *print* 46 / *PDF* 48, boxed text)

Athletics 10, Health 8, Scuffling 7, Weapons 4
Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: +1

Weapon: -1 (fists, with roll of quarters), -1 (switchblade)

Investigating the Leads

Dr. Morrison

(pages *print* 48-49 / *PDF* 50-51)

- Investigators examining the muddy tires on his car and using **Outdoorsman** or **Driving** realize the tread pattern looks quite similar to the tire tracks seen outside Abner's shack on the first night of this scenario, if those tracks were examined. If they were not, at the Keeper's option, investigators may make a 1-point spend in either of those abilities to recall the pattern.
- Should the investigators break into his home at 230 East Derby Street (1-point **Locksmith** spend) and search his basement, investigators making a **simple search** find an old sack buried under a layer of coal in the bin beside his furnace.
- Investigators examining the bones and making a 1-point **Biology** or **Forensics** spend learn that they are male, were boiled, and have gnaw marks on them made by human teeth.
- Investigators watching this house from afar after 10 PM and making a Difficulty 4 **Stealth** or **Shadowing** test see Jaspar arrive.

Jaspar Eleazar

(page *print* 49 / *PDF* 51)

- Investigators who read the morning paper remember a small newspaper story from that morning announcing the funeral for wealthy financier/developer Robert Beckworth. Otherwise, investigators can research the name tomorrow, uncovering the same information with **Library Use**.

The Coopers

(page *print* 49 / *PDF* 51)

- Investigators making a Difficulty 4 **Stealth** or **Shadowing** test observe Michael working on the family car.

Dr. Bell

(pages *print* 49-50 / *PDF* 51-52)

- Investigators can gain access to these records at St. Mary's with a 1-point **Bureaucracy** or **Reassurance** spend, or by having a medical Occupation. Should investigators fail to talk their

way past the hospital staff, they can try sneaking (Difficulty 4 **Stealth**) into Dr. Bell's office at the hospital. Their final option into is to use a 1-point **Locksmith** spend to break into his office at St. Mary's, his private practice, or his home.

- If the investigators gain access to these records, **Medicine** or **Accounting** tells them the mortality rate of Dr. Bell's patients has increased dramatically over the years, starting about 1897.
- If the investigators take the daring measure of breaking into Dr. Bell's home on the corner of East Washington and South Parsonage in Arkham, they find a locked library on the ground floor containing a locked roll-top desk (**Locksmith** to open).
- Lastly, in a locked trunk (**Locksmith** to open) in the basement of Bell's house, the investigators may find a truly damning item of evidence; a newly made vest of human skin.
- He keeps this ghastly garment here in case he needs an extra 7 Health points of protection should the second skin he currently has on falls apart.

Regnum Congo

(page *print* 50 / *PDF* 52, boxed text)

Each requires a 1-point Biology or Medicine spend to learn. Skimming this book provides 1 dedicated pool point for Anthropology, Archaeology, or History, but only applicable to the Congo in the 19th century or earlier. Poring over this book provides +1 to your Cthulhu Mythos, but only if you already have a rating.

Spells

(page *print* 50 / *PDF* 52, boxed text)

Consume Likeness

The victim must be no more than 2 feet taller or shorter and no more than 50 pounds heavier or lighter than the caster.

If the caster loses any Health points while in an assumed form, the caster must revert to original form and rest for 2 hours.

Stability Test Difficulty: 4

Cost: 3 Stability or Magic, or 6 Health per day while casting, plus 1 Stability or Magic *rating* point at the culmination.

Time: Four days to devour victim. Two minutes to change from original form to an assumed one. Twenty seconds to revert to original form.

Devour Enemy's Strength

The caster gains a dedicated pool of Athletics equal to the victim's *rating*. The pool decreases by 1 point per day until it reaches 0. However, once the pool is reduced to 0, the caster can make a Difficulty 6 Stability or Magic test to gain a permanent dedicated *rating* of 1 point. The pool points of subsequent victims add to the pool and decrease or become permanent rating points as above.

In addition to the normal uses of Athletics, the dedicated pool points can be used for incredible feats of strength, the sort a circus strongman would be capable of, at a cost of 2 points. Hand-to-hand damage can be increased by 1 point per point spent, to a maximum of 3.

Stability Test Difficulty: 4

Cost: 5 Stability or Magic to cast the spell itself. Eating a human heart is a potential 6-point Stability loss.

Time: One half hour to devour heart.

Feast of Cleansing

The feast increases Health pools by 3, even if this is over the feaster's *rating*. Once additional pool points are lost, the feaster's rating remains at the original value.

Stability Test Difficulty: 4

Cost: 5 Stability or Magic to cast the spell itself. Preparing or eating a victim is a potential 6-point Stability loss.

Time: Three hours to make stew and fifteen minutes to eat.

Food of Life

After the procedure is complete, the caster's life is extended by a year, during which time no aging will occur. The spell can then be cast each year to maintain its effects. After casting the spell the first time, the caster may appear and feel slightly more youthful; this also occurs if casting of the spell is resumed after an annual feast has been missed.

Stability Test Difficulty: 5 (4 with Biology or Medicine).

Cost: 5 Stability or Magic to cast the spell itself. Sacrificing and eating a victim is a potential 6-point Stability loss.

Time: The ritual preparation of the body takes 6 hours. The feast lasts several days.

Ingest Thoughts

Every five brains ingested gives the caster a permanent dedicated pool of 3 points that can be used for any Academic or Technical ability that the caster has a rating in. At the Keeper's discretion, 1 point can instead go towards a dedicated pool for an Academic or Technical ability that the caster does not already have a rating in, appropriate to the memories of one or more of the victims.

Stability Test Difficulty: 4

Cost: 5 Stability or Magic to cast the spell itself. Eating a victim's brain is a potential 6-point Stability loss.

Time: One hour to eat a brain.

Second Skin

This abhorrent enchantment requires that a living victim the same general size or greater than the caster has the skin flayed from his or her body. The victim's Health pool is added to the caster's. Should the wearer take damage, the initial points lost are taken from the vest. Once the garment reaches 0 points, it is rendered useless and falls apart.

Stability Test Difficulty: 4 (3 with a Craft spend)

Cost: 5 Stability or Magic to cast the spell itself. Skinning a victim and tanning the hide is a potential 6-point Stability loss.

Time: One week to prepare the skin.

The Cannibals' Response

(page *print* 51 / *PDF* 53)

- Kindly Keepers may want to give their investigators a chance to resist the infection by making a Difficulty 5 **Health** test.

Rewards

(page *print* 52 / *PDF* 54)

In a Pulp game, defeating all of the cannibals either through death or incarceration and destroying the *Regnum Congo* so that it can never again taint the easily corruptible grants a 1-point Sanity refresh.

The Arkham Cannibals

(pages *print* 52-54 / *PDF* 54-56)

Dr. James Bell, age 51, leader of the feasters

Athletics 7, Firearms 4, Health 14*, Weapons 6

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

* Includes 7 additional points of Health provided by vest.

Abner Crumpler, age 115, elderly crazed cannibal

Athletics 6, Health 9, Weapons 6

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: +1

Weapon: -1 (meat cleaver)

Armor: -1 vs. any (metal butcher's apron)

Edith Cooper, age 27, terminal man-eater

Athletics 6, Health 6, Weapons 5

Alertness Modifier: +1

Weapon: -1 (butcher knife)

Detective Michael Cooper, age 30, killer cop and devoted husband

Athletics 9*, Driving 5, Firearms 5, Health 9, Scuffling 7, Weapons 6

Alertness Modifier: +1

Weapon: +0 (.45 revolver), -1* (nightstick), -2* (fist)*

* Michael has a dedicated rating of 5 points. Michael's pool should be modified by 2d6 the first time the Investigators meet him. The bonus pool points decrease by 1 for each day after that.

Jaspar Edgar Eleazar, age 43, greedy undertaker

Athletics 5, Firearms 3, Health 6, Weapons 5

Weapon: -1 (.32 automatic), +0 (shovel)

Dr. Fredrick Morrison, age 71, morbid medical examiner

Athletics 6, Health 5, Weapons 5

Alertness Modifier: +1

Weapon: -1 (scalpel), poison syringe—victim must make a Difficulty 5 Health test or suffer cardiac arrest.

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