

# Song of the Spheres

## Trail of Cthulhu Conversion notes

This documents contains conversion notes for “Song of the Spheres” adventure by Gary Sumpter. It was originally published in “In the Shadows” scenario book by Chaosium in 1995. This conversion requires text of the original adventure to play.

### The Spine:

- **Sir Hubert’s bookmark (the song papers #2)**
- **Linking The Song of the Sphere to Charles Frye (the song papers #3)**
- **Linking Charles Frye to Gabriel Quantrill (the song papers #3 and #4)**
- **Charles Frye is survived by his daughter Marion, residing in Boston (the song papers #3)**
- **Marion’s father trunk (containing the song papers #11)**
- **The article about Antonia Balsamo disappearance (the song papers #6)**
- **Quantrill’s business card (the song papers #7)**
- **Quantrill’s note to Signorina Balsamo (the song papers #8)**
- **The article about Antonia Balsamo reappearance (the song papers #9)**
- **Soho residents tell about Quantrill whereabouts.**
- **The stolen musical score and the master recording in Quantrill’s bronwstone.**

### New Haven, Connecticut

#### The Hatton Residence

Sir Hubert’s ground-floor room:  
(pages 40-41)

- **Library use, Evidence collection or Simple search (core):** Anyone who examines Sir Hubert’s copy of *The River War* notices a folded slip of paper used as a bookmark. Give the players *The Song Papers #2*.
- **Art History 1-point spend:** “Song of the Spheres” is a piece for soprano with accompaniment by piano and flute attributed to Charles Frye, an unremarkable English

composer of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century who produced operas that range from mediocre to uninspired.

- **Art History 2-points spend:** Charles Frye’s last musical work, an opera to commemorate Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee, was begun in 1896 but never completed. Frye committed suicide and “Song of the Spheres” was found unfinished on his body. Those who have studied the musical notation of the piece, describe it as awkward and unconventional. There were rumours about how Frye’s relationship ruined the career of an English virtuoso flautist Gabriel Quantrill. Frye is survived by a daughter, herself a pianist.
- **Simple search:** The envelope on the table next to the chair contains two tickets to an upcoming performance of Verdi’s opera *Aida* in New York City.
- **Simple search:** to notice a stack of ordinary talking machine records on the gramophone platter. The records have blank labels, except for the numbers 1-4.

### Researching The Song of the Spheres

New Haven Conservatory of Music,  
or any similar institution:  
(pages 41-42)

- **Library use (core):** four hours of research identifies the piece and its possible composer. Give the players *The Song Papers #3*.
- **Library use (core):** additional research gives information about Gabriel Quantrill. Give the players *The Song Papers #4*.

Any large public or university library:  
(page 42)

- **Library use:** four hours of research uncover a relevant article about Quantrill’s escape. Give the players *The Song Papers #5*.

### New Haven General Hospital

Psychiatric Ward of the hospital:  
(page 42)

- **Reassurance:** give access to Sir Hubert’s doctor and room.
- **Medicine:** corroborate Dr. Eastman’s opinion that Sir Hubert is catatonic.

- **Reassurance 2-point Spend:** (after passing a lot of time with him) Sir Hubert shriek out “Quantrill”.

## Boston

### Marion Frye Farwell

(pages 42-43)

- **Art:** suggest checking under “piano instruction” in a business directory to find Marion Frye Farwell residence.
- **Assess Honesty 1-point Spend:** suggest that Marion believes her father to have been in a perverse relationship with Quantrill, and that this perception has stifled all her natural curiosity about her father.
- **Credit rating 4 or Reassurance (core):** Marion shows the old trunk containing her father’s effects and correspondence.

## New York

### Antonia Balsamo

(pages 43-45)

- **Arriving in New York (floating core clue):** to accidentally find an article about the disappearance of Antonia Balsamo. Give the players *The Song Papers #6*
- **Art History 1-point Spend:** give biographic information about Balsamo before talking with her impresario (when reading the article).

### Rehearsals at the Metropolitan Opera House:

(page 45-46)

- **Any investigative ability:** impress Signora Maria Capaldi and she disclose that Antonia is a wilful young woman who sometimes disregards the curfew imposed on the company by its managers.
- **Reassurance:** Signora Maria Capaldi agree to show Signorina Balsamo’s suite to the investigators (she insist on accompanying them).

### Signora Balsamo’s Suite at The Empire Hotel:

(page 45-46)

- **Evidence collection (red herring):** spot a small card nestling among the white rose blossoms and ferns. It read, *Best Wishes from Johnny*.

- **Evidence collection or Simple search (core):** anyone inspecting the score, notice Quantrill’s business card inside the back cover. Give the players *The Song Papers #7*.

## The New York Times

(page 46)

- **Simple search:** any journalist working in New York notice that Quantrill’s business is a fraud.
- **Simple search:** going to the personnel offices of the Times lets the investigators learn that no Gabriel Quantrill is or has ever been on staff roll.

## Police Involvement

(page 46)

- **Simple search:** showing Quantrill’s business card let police detective Jack Heathcliff show the note left by Quantrill. Give the players *the Song Papers #8*.
- **Simple search:** find similarities between Quantrill’s note and the handwriting of the note found in Sir Hubert Hatton’s room.

## A dead End?

(page 47)

- **Reading the newspapers (floating core clue):** the investigators accidentally find an article about the reappearance of Antonia Balsamo. Give the players *The Song Papers #9*.

## Bellevue Hospital

(page 47)

- **Reassurance:** give access to Balsamo’s room without being accompanied by Signora Capaldi or Detective Heathcliff.
- **Simple search:** when questioned, Signorina Balsamo dimly recalls many brilliant points of light, like stars, dancing to some shrill and ghostly cadence, while beneath her the earth itself seemed to tremble with a great rumbling noise like that of an earthquake or thunder.

## Quantrill

### Soho

(pages 48-49)

- **Credit rating 1 or Oral History or Streetwise (core clue):** let query local residents to learn of someone fitting Quantrill’s description. This fellow, they are told, has been renting a small

brownstone on the east side of Broadway, just south of Spring Street, for about a month.

## His Rented Brownstone

(pages 48-50)

- **Simple search:** anyone with an ear pressed on the front door hear the faint, forlorn strains of music from within.
- **Locksmith:** can unlock the front, back or cellar door.
- The front door can be forced with Athletics against Difficulty 5. The back door and cellar door can be forced against Difficulty 4.
- **Art (music) or Craft (recording device):** allow operating an outdated recording device in the living room.
- **Evidence collection or simple search (core clue):** find Frye's frayed musical score for "The Song of the Sphere" in the hinged seat of the piano bench.
- **Art (music):** concludes, after a brief examination, that the score to Frye's unfinished oratorio is incredibly complex, and appears to have been written using an unknown form of musical notation.
- **Language (Latin):** let read the libretto "Nebulum Nigritiae".
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** conclude that the "Nebulum Nigritiae" is an archaic invocation to Tru'nembra, the Angel of Music.
- **Art (music) or Craft (recording device) (core clue):** indicate that the flat wax disc on the platter of the recording device is a master recording from which shellac pressing are made.
- **Simple search:** find "An Elegy For The Universe" on the desk in the upstairs bedroom. Give the players *The Song Papers #10*.
- **Evidence collection or Simple search:** finds in one corner of the cellar a bundle of filthy, threadbare blankets and a length of frayed rope. Evidence collection let conclude that it represent the location of Signorina Balsamo's captivity during her abduction.
- **Evidence collection:** notice that two people live in the brownstone.
- If Wilson Oliver is sleeping in the cellar, **Sense Trouble against Difficulty 4** warns about his presence. If Oliver and Quantrill are aware of the investigators' arrival and attempt to take them by surprise, **Sense Trouble against Difficulty 5** warn about their presence.

## The Angel of Music

### Celebration at the Empire Hotel.

(pages 50-52)

- **Medicine:** confirm that Signorina Balsamo is dead, yet continues to sing. (**Stability loss: +1**)

#### Tru'nembra

Outer God

**Additional Stability Loss:** +1 (*per round* it remains audible)

**Additional Sanity Loss:** +1 (*per round* it remains audible)

**Health Loss:** 1 (*per round* it remains audible)

**Sonic Blast:** +12 (automatic hit)

## Casting

### Frederico Argento

Health 7, Stability 7, Sanity 7.

### Maria Capaldi

Health 6, Stability 8, Sanity 9.

### Jack Heathcliff

Athletics 5, Firearms 5, Fleeing 4, Health 7, Stability 7, Sanity 7, Scuffling 7. Weapons 5.

**Hit Threshold:** 3

**Weapon:** Revolver +0, Nightsitck -1.

### Antonia Balsamo

Health 7, Stability 5, Sanity 6.

### Wilson Oliver

Athletics 3, Fleeing 2, Health 8, Stability 4, Sanity 2, Scuffling 5.

**Hit Threshold:** 3

### Gabriel Quantrill

Athletics 2, Firearms 4, Fleeing 4, Health 7, Stability 8, Sanity 0, Scuffling 5. Weapons 3.

**Hit Threshold:** 3

**Weapon:** Automatic pistol +0, Sword Cane -1, Biting -3.

**Spells:** as by the ToC core book.

# Tomes and Spells

## An Elegy Of The Universe

(page 49)

Grants 1 dedicated pool in Cthulhu Mythos.

Contains the spell “Enchant Recording”.

## Enchant Recording

(page 50)

**Stability Test Difficulty:** 5 (4 with relevant Art or Craft spend).

**Cost:** 2 stability and 1 sanity for the caster.

**Additional cost:** the caster and the participants can spend additional stability points to feed the stability reservoir of the recording. (if a participant don't know the spell, he or she is limited to 1 point spend).

## The Song of the Spheres

(pages 52)

Each rounds, the listener must make a 3-point Stability Test. Those who fail lose the 3 points, and become temporarily **blasted** for 1d6 months. (They do not lose the Stability rating point.) Those who succeed lose only 1 Stability.

**Sanity Pool Loss: 1** (Actively listening to the piece)