

# The Sassoon Files



A Sourcebook for the Call of Cthulhu  
and GUMSHOE Role Playing Games

SHEETS | COVER

CALL of  
CTHULHU

GUMSHOE





# The Sassoon Files



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# Introduction

Sun Yat-sen passed in March of 1925. China's merchant-class fled the death of another dynasty for an uncertain future. America's thrill seekers fled Prohibition for better times. Shanghai offered an illusory refuge and the promise of big business. The Huang Pu River was dredged to accommodate steam powered luxury liners and military vessels, alike. The ports of Shanghai were arteries clogged with commerce. Transport ships carried raw materials and opium into the city, and finished goods and wealth out of the city. At Shanghai's Great World Amusement Arcade, across from the horse tracks, prostitutes sought out high-rollers while politicians made deals with gangsters. One-armed bandits cranked and whirled, occasionally vomiting just enough coin to keep players hooked. Ghosts, Spiders, and Phantoms lined up outside the casino in a makeshift parking lot. Those who braved the alley behind the casino may have noticed the rickety metal stairwell precariously hanging off the five-story building that housed the Great World Amusement Arcade. Residents called these stairs the "stairs to heaven", and told tales of men jumping to their deaths. This is Shanghai; Victor Sassoon's Shanghai.

Victor Sassoon, a preeminent resident of Shanghai, has found himself trading correspondence with Doctor Henry Armitage. They share a common goal and common modus operandi. Victor fights to keep his empire safe, but he also fights for a Shanghai free from Mythos influence. Victor has gathered around him professors, detectives, debunkers, muscles, guns, criminals and other problem solvers to mount a defense against a rising tide. Victor is your hook.

The Sassoon Files provides a brief history of Shanghai and the primary factions that competed for influence and power: the Communists and the Nationalists who played a game of deadly cat and mouse; the Jewish tycoon who provided succor to refugees; the Triad societies who competed to provide vice for the city's residents; the Japanese who were moving closer to invasion. The Sassoon Files also explores the secret history of the Mythos and the local factions who sought to exploit that which could not be fully comprehended.

This campaign book is developed for two different role-playing game systems; GUMSHOE and Call of Cthulhu, 7th Edition. **Magenta-colored text denotes rules, content, and stat-blocks for Call of Cthulhu.**

This campaign book includes four main scenarios, each of which can stand on its own but are connected by the

thread of common location, time, characters, threats, and themes. Play the scenarios contained in this book as you see fit, but they can stand together as the basis of an entire campaign set in the Shanghai of the '20s.

Use the included pre-generated investigators, each with partially "fleshed out" backstories, or allow your players to build their own investigators. The pre-generated investigators are designed to offer a diversity of backgrounds and complementary skillsets.

There are several tools for expanding the four scenarios. We have included "Campaign Drivers", which are branching lists of events that will occur based on the actions of the investigators. Campaign Drivers can be used to propel "sandbox" campaigns which mix a dynamic, "living" historical world setting with secret Mythos machinations.

Two "player factions" are also available should you want to change the "perspective" of the included scenarios. Instead of using Victor Sassoon as the main "hook" for the campaign, investigators can belong to either the Green Gang, a ruthless Chinese Triad which controls Shanghai's opium trade, or the Communist Party, who is fighting a secret war of espionage and assassination against rival factions.

We have also included in this book an optional rule called "Lore Sheets". Lore Sheets can be used simply as hand-outs to provide players with additional settings information or character backgrounds. However, many Lore Sheets also describe new character-focused side quests and secret missions.

The Sassoon Files were originally developed and played as long-term campaigns by several groups of gamers living in the People's Republic of China. The contributing authors are all members of the China RPG gaming community, and the work itself is heavily reliant upon the support, feedback and help received from a great many people from many different nations. (Please forgive us if we fail to thank all of those who supported the creation of the Sassoon Files; we are eternally grateful for the support and we are humbled to have received it.) Publication of the Sassoon Files was made possible with the generous help of our Kickstarter backers.

The history of the Pearl of the East is rich; dig deep into the vein of old Shanghai. It will deliver lifetimes of both pulp and purist horror. Welcome to the Sassoon Files.



# The Century of Humiliation

When Marco Polo arrived in China centuries before, he found a thriving and vast continental empire which received tributes from all of the surrounding kingdoms in Asia. But at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, visiting foreigners no longer saw a mighty land empire. Rather they saw an inward-looking nation with an antiquated military and no meaningful sea power.

The Qing were not interested in trade. They were originally Manchu horse nomads who conquered China as their Mongol cousins had - with brutal force. The Qing maintained the Haijin (海禁) or "Sea Ban". The ban was intended to keep out pirates and plagues, but in the end, kept out neither.

The demands of the foreign powers grew. The missionaries wanted to convert souls. The merchants wanted to trade on favorable terms and amass wealth. Eventually, the foreigners forced the point. The First Opium War started in 1839, beginning what would later be called "the Century of Humiliation" (百年国耻). This was a time of intervention, imperialism, and abuses by Western nation-states and Japan.

England's superior cannons and ships enabled them to decimate the unprepared forces of the Qing in the First Opium War, which was concluded in 1843 with the Treaty of Nanjing. The British forced the Chinese Empire to cede control of the island of Hong Kong and give "extraterritoriality" to foreigners in five "Treaty Ports", or "concessions." Thus, Shanghai came to be controlled by foreigners. From this time forward until the mid-20th century, foreigners living in the concession ports would not be subject to Chinese law, and foreigners living in China could trade with whoever they wanted.

## The Taiping Rebellion to The Boxers

In 1850, a millenarian Christian cult led by Hong Xiuquan started the Taiping Revolution. Hong believed himself to be the brother of Jesus of Nazareth and launched a campaign to convert China to his version of Christianity, which included influences from Daoism, Confucianism, and perhaps other beliefs. Over the next decade, the Taiping and the Qing waged a total war for control of China.

By 1853, Hong Xiuquan retreated into the "Heavenly Palace" in Nanjing, where he lived with many women and wrote religious edicts. His army pushed East to Shanghai and North into Henan. The Qing proved wholly ineffective in dealing with the Chinese Christian Empire. This changed in 1860, when the Xiang Army, comprised of conscripted peasants and irregular militias led by Zeng Guofan, pushed back against the main mass of Taiping's troops. At the same time, the Qing "Ever Victorious" army led by the American Frederick Townsend Ward, repulsed Taiping forces from Shanghai and Ningbo. After the Xiang Army surrounded Nanjing, Hong told his followers that God will supply mana from the grass and vegetation growing within the city. Hong died of food poisoning in 1864. Nanjing fell a few days after.

The Taiping Rebellion became one of the bloodiest conflicts in human history with over 60 million dead. The Rebellion would continue for another decade.

In 1856, concurrent with the Taiping Rebellion, the Second Opium War began. Foreign merchants and diplomats, unhappy with a perceived lack of compliance with the Treaty of Nanjing, launched "reprisal" attacks against Chinese fortifications along the Pearl River (珠江). The Second Opium War culminated with Western troops from England and France sacking and plundering the Summer Palace in 1860. At the conclusion of the war, the Treaty of Tianjin granted eleven more concession ports





to Western powers and Japan. It also forced China to legalize opium and grant freedoms and protections to Chinese Christians.

Chaos and humiliation continued into the turn of the century. In 1895, Japan, thought to be a small nation of pirates and backwards knights, wiped out the Chinese Navy in the First Sino-Japanese war. The Japanese took Taiwan as war spoils and demanded an equal seat in the Concession cities.

In response to that humiliation (and in response to economic, social, and environmental changes in general), commoners rose up against the foreigners during the Boxer Rebellion in 1899. The Empress Dowager Cixi belatedly placed support on the uprising, before it was crushed by joint forces of the Eight Country Alliance, including large and well-armed armies from Great Britain, America, Japan, Russia, France, Germany, Italy, and Austria-Hungary.

After the failure and devastation of the Taiping Rebellion and the Second Opium War, attempts were made to modernize. Like the Japanese, China sent out students and officials to learn from Westerners. Modern ships and techniques were brought back to China. Foreign ideas like communism, nationalism, and modernity were also brought back. New schools and academies were set up to train a "New Army" (新军); a military modeled on the organizational structure and methods of the West. But the insular Qing was still not able to reverse their descent.

Instead of creating a modernized New Army that would lead to a greater central authority (as Japan did in its Meiji reformation), the Qing put the onus for modernization on the provincial governors, who all came from a class of landed aristocracy. The result of this New Army initiative was the creation of many separate modern army units, each loyal to provincial New Army leaders, family clan elders, and regional elites.



## Sun Yat-sen and the Revolution

Sun Yat-sen was born into a relatively prosperous family with international ties. Educated at a missionary school in Hawaii, Sun Yat-sen later became a Christian while studying medicine in Hong Kong. In Hong Kong, he associated with similar well-educated intellectuals who were interested in the modernization and unification of China. In 1895, in response to the humiliation of the defeat in the first Sino-Japanese war, Sun Yat-sen attempted to start a revolutionary society. That effort failed, leading to his exile in Japan. While in exile, Sun formed relationships with British, American, Japanese, Filipino, and Malay activists promoting democracy and anti-imperialism.

One of his admirers and co-conspirators from this time was a young man named Chiang Kai-shek. Chiang was an intensely intelligent and bellicose young man from a wealthy family. Chiang went to Japan to study military science in a Japanese military preparatory school, but soon he became deeply involved with Sun's Chinese Nationalism Society. Chiang became an enforcer within the expatriate revolutionary group. Through his contacts in Japan, Chiang made critical connections with Chinese underground societies, including illicit "Triads." Importantly, he gained a connection with the Shanghai-based "Green Gang," headed by "Big Ear" Du Yuesheng and "Pockmark" Huang Jinrong.

Sun Yat-sen tried to lead revolutions twice more, once in 1900 and again in 1907. Both revolts failed and as a result of his failures, some student revolutionaries even organized an "anti-Sun" movement. This internal revolt was not entirely academic. Chinese students clashed with each other in Japan and elsewhere, and it was rumored that Chiang murdered one (or more) anti-Sun faction leaders.

Keepers interested in Chiang Kai-shek may read ["The Early Chiang Kai-shek" \(Loh and Pichon, 1971\)](#) for more background on this historical figure. Imagine if Chiang Kai-shek had access to weaponized Mythos artifacts.

On October 10th, 1911, New Army soldiers of the Qing dynasty revolted in what became known as the "Xinhai Revolution". 2000 years of imperial rule ended. Upon hearing of the revolution, Sun returned to China, where

Sun Yat-sen, 1924





a small council of warlords elected Sun to be the first President of the new Republic of China and leader of the “Nationalist People’s Party” or Kuomintang (KMT, using the Wade-Giles system to anglicize 国民党).

However, Sun and his warlords were militarily weak. Yuan Shikai, a warlord and military leader of all Qing forces was dispatched to put down various revolutionary groups. Instead of fulfilling his orders, Yuan Shikai switched sides to join the KMT and captured the child emperor Puyi. As a reward for forcing the abdication of the Qing dynasty, Yuan demanded that he be elected President, which came about in February of 1912. Over the next 2 years, Yuan progressively rejected all checks and balances on his power from the KMT and the newly created parliament, eventually outlawing the KMT in 1914. Yuan handed control of the military to all loyal provincial governors.

In November of 1915, Yuan Shikai’s handpicked parliament voted to make Yuan “Emperor of the Hong Xian” (洪宪) dynasty. In return for ceding sovereignty over the city of Qingdao, Yuan received support from Japan. However, Yuan’s sons openly fought for the right to be called “Crown Prince” and several “governors” rebelled. Yuan died just a few months after his “election” to the throne.

China became a nominal republic where each province was ruled by a warlord. During this time various warlords fought with each other for territorial control. In the far South, around Canton province, a group of warlords gave their fickle support to Sun.

For the next 15 years following the Xinhai revolution, Sun and his favorite ally, Chiang Kai-shek struggled to consolidate power and unify China. They worked to bring warlords to their cause, they fought minor wars and skirmishes with rival warlords, and they clashed with political rivals within the KMT. This was a difficult struggle for Sun and Chiang, as neither had an army or sufficient wealth of their own. Their fortunes changed in 1923 when Chiang formed an alliance between the KMT and the Soviet Union, in which the Soviets agreed to provide training and military support.

With the help of Soviet trainers and weapons, a cadre of dedicated “revolutionaries” studied the art of modern war at the Whampoa Military Academy in Guangdong, with Chiang as headmaster of the school. Recruits learned how

to set up machine-gun and mortar positions and how to organize and lead troops. The school added political training to the students’ curriculum and taught Sun’s Three Principles (三民主义) of Nationalism, Democracy, and Social Welfare. The head of the political education department was Zhou Enlai.

The new leaders from Whampoa, marching under the banners of the KMT and allied with communists in China and abroad, recruited other dedicated nationalist revolutionaries. Through a series of victorious battles and prudent negotiations called “The Northern Expedition, between 1924 and 1927, they pushed North on a drive to reunify China.

On March 12<sup>th</sup>, 1925, Sun Yat-sen passed away before realizing a unified China. Chiang Kai-shek took over the KMT. On May 30<sup>th</sup> of that year, laborers and radical students, themselves still grieving over the loss of Sun, took to the streets to protest injustices and were shot down by International Settlement police. This became known as that “Nanjing Road Incident”. Over the following months, anti-foreigner strikes and protests ground Shanghai’s business to a standstill. The Municipal Council declared martial law and mobilized the “Volunteer Corps” to suppress protesters.

The May 30<sup>th</sup> Movement marked a turning point for Shanghai. The Chinese were given greater control over the International Settlement. The Municipal Council recognized that the KMT was an important force to be considered. Chinese elites were invited into the exclusive Shanghai Club and the Race Club.

Shanghai would not officially become part of a unified China until 1927 when Chiang’s Northern Expedition armies finally reached the city. But instead of a new era of unification, Chiang sought to rid the KMT and the city of Communists and Communist sympathizers. On April 12<sup>th</sup>, 1927, Chiang and his allies, including Du Yuesheng and the Green Gang, launched a surprise attack on the city’s Communists. More than 300 Communists and Union organizers were round up and killed on the first day of the “Shanghai Massacre”. By some accounts, more than 5,000 people were killed or went missing. The “Shanghai Massacre” marks the beginning of the bitter Chinese Civil War.



President Chiang Kai-shek, 1928



## Victor Sassoon

There is perhaps no historical figure more important in the shaping of modern Shanghai than Sir Victor Sassoon (1881 – 1961). He was truly a bon vivant, and his life proves the maxim that truth is stranger than fiction. In this campaign setting, Victor serves as the hook and the organizing force that binds the investigators together. All investigators must be, in some way, beholden to Victor and his interests.

Victor Sassoon came from a long line of advisers and bankers to the Ottoman court in Baghdad. After immigrating to India (and becoming citizens of the British Empire), the Sassoons built a trading conglomerate stretching throughout Asia. They amassed wealth through banking, real estate, cotton, oil exploration, and shipping, but opium was their primary trade good, and China was one of the biggest markets.

Victor Sassoon was born in 1881. Victor attended both Trinity College and the University of Cambridge. He served as a pilot in the Royal Flying Corps during the Great War and in 1916, Victor survived a plane crash that left him with a permanent limp. He would walk with the support of a cane for the rest of his life. In the 1920s, Sassoon moved his own “center” of business operations to Shanghai, where he spent most of his time when he was not taking pleasure trips and cavorting with movie stars in Europe.

In Shanghai, Victor invested millions into the local real estate sector. At one point, he owned 1,800 properties, including the famous Cathay House. Victor called his collection of impressive Huangpu riverside developments the “Bund”, a Farsi-Hindi word meaning, “water front”. The Bund came to define Shanghai’s image, and the architectural achievements can still be visited today.

In the process of building the cityscape of Shanghai, Sassoon brought over thousands of Jews from the Middle East and Europe to help manage his concerns. Some of these Jews were attracted to the growth potential of Shanghai. Many were fleeing pogroms, civil war, and later, the Nazis. These Jews included the architects and designers that shaped the look of Shanghai. It also included accountants, doctors, bankers, horse jockeys, artisans, and entertainers.

When Victor Sassoon was not buying and developing properties and banks, he spent his time practicing photography and cavorting with famous actors and intellectuals, including Charlie Chaplin and Marlene Dietrich. He was often found in the company of renowned women.

Victor Sassoon was a fan of thoroughbred horse racing, and was quoted as saying, “the only race greater than the Jewish race is the Derby”. He was the primary economic force behind the construction of the Shanghai Horse Track, near the old polo fields, and in 1925 he acquired a thoroughbred stable and studery; Victor’s horses would dominate the Shanghai Derby for many years.

Victor Sassoon had good reason to protect Shanghai from real and esoteric threats; he practically built it by himself. Victor Sassoon was very well read, and in our campaign setting, is very well aware of the threats posed by the Cthulhu Mythos. Through mail and telegram correspondence, Victor seeks counsel from the World’s premier expert on the Mythos, Henry Armitage. Henry willingly gives advice to Victor, to the extent that he can, and Victor does what he can in the fight against an eldritch cosmos. The investigators, Victor’s troubleshooters, are a necessary sacrifice for a greater good.

Victor Sassoon



# Mythos Hooks

## The Dark Ocean Society

Shanghai's elite participate in a charity auction with proceeds intended to relieve victims of the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923, which destroyed countless buildings and killed more than 140,000 residents of Tokyo. The Genyosha, or "Dark Ocean Society", a Japanese ultranationalist secret society, is the behind-the-scenes organizer of the charity auction and intends to divert the proceeds to nefarious causes. To make matters worse, a number of items "donated" and put up for auction are artifacts of Mythos origin. Investigators must use their limited resources to remove these artifacts from circulation amongst the general population, as well as put an end to the plans of the Dark Ocean Society.

## Shanghai Yacht Club

Recent dredging of the Huangpu River has disturbed a dormant colony of Deep Ones hibernating at the mouth of the river. The Shanghai Yacht Club, a group of amateur boating enthusiasts from Shanghai's upper echelon, has taken to holding secret meetings at the Shanghai Lighthouse every new moon. Its chairman, Robert Stockbridge, has an unhealthy interest in the occult; he and his unwitting neophyte occultists dress in robes and homemade Polynesian-themed masks and dabble in rituals that call to Mother Hydra and Father Dagon. Their initiation rites, award ceremonies, and celebratory feasts are mostly innocuous and incomplete, but their club has caught the interest of the newly awakened Deep Ones.

## Mikhail Borodin & the Many Masks of Nyarlathotep

The avatar of the Outer God Nyarlathotep walks among the residents of Shanghai, borrowing the form of Comintern Mikhail Borodin. Borodin makes appearances at the Canidrome, charity auctions, high tea, labor rallies, and violent protests. Conflicting reports surface placing him in two or more locations at the same time. Borodin also has an uncanny ability to avoid being cornered by investigators taking an interest in him. Individual

investigators who manage to meet with Borodin in private are always offered a deal that plays off their personal drives and is too good to be true.

## Pulp Profits

Newspaper Magnate and Canidrome investor Henry E. Morris Jr. has just returned from Batavia, Indonesia, where he came into possession of a Dutch language version of the esoteric book, *Invocations to Dagon*. While drinking Scotch at the Long Bar, Henry mentions his recent acquisition and his interest in potentially reprinting the text for sale and distribution in Shanghai. Victor Sassoon asks the investigators to break into the Morris family estate, located in the French Concession, and remove *Invocations to Dagon* from the Morris families' personal collection. It is unknown whether or not Henry understands or appreciates the danger posed by the text, but Victor knows that his heavily warded library is a better place to shelter it. As the Morris family are respected members of Shanghai's elite class, it is important that the investigators not get caught or do anything that implicates Victor.

## Ewo Cold Storage

Mr. Matheson of the Jardine, Matheson & Company, is a cultist of the worst type and trades in favors for riches with Deep Ones throughout Asia. As of late, he has been smuggling hibernating hybrid Deep Ones through his piers at the Shanghai & Hongkew Wharf Co., Ltd, and storing them at the Ewo Cold Storage warehouse in the Shanghai International Settlement. The young and politically-aspiring Municipal Health Inspector, Bart Dicker, has stumbled upon a frozen "aquatic" specimen during a surprise inspection of the warehouse. How will Bart react and can the story be contained? To what ends is Mr. Matheson warehousing Deep Ones in Shanghai?



### The White Purge

On April 12, 1927, Chiang Kai-shek initiated the Shanghai Massacre, wherein he ordered his loyal KMT soldiers to purge the party of all Communists and suspected sympathizers. Green Gang enforcers assisted in the location and assassination of targets. Big Eared Du, a competent practitioner of the magical arts, uses the purge as an opportunity to rid himself of a few rival sorcerers. Are investigators among those who made it to the hit list?

### The New Golden Horde

A quasi-Buddhist society of occultists calling themselves the "New Golden Horde" is holding weekly "prayer meetings" at the Da Cha Tea House in the Russian Slums. Most members of the "New Golden Horde" are White Russian immigrants and Mongolian mystics who have been worshiping the deceased White Russian General Robert Nikolaus Maximilian Freiherr von Ungern-Sternberg (1886 – 1921) as the "Golden King", an avatar of Hastur. Recently, a few of the more fanatical members of the society have visited Shanghai's various antique shops in search of a copy of Master Zhang Boduan's "The Folio of Perfection" (悟真篇), which is said to contain the ritual of resurrection. The New Golden Horde intends to resurrect von Ungern upon recovering his remains buried somewhere in Mongolia. Thereafter, they plan to bring the court of Carcosa back to Earth inside the Great World Amusement Arcade, with the hopes of installing their Golden King upon the throne of Carcosa.

### Terracotta Golems

Shi Chenyi is a young and well-educated Kaifeng (Chinese) Jew who recently aided Jewish refugees from the Russian revolution. The Kaifeng Jews suffered greatly during the Taiping Rebellion, nearly six decades ago. Many of their religious artifacts of heritage were destroyed and much of their understanding of the Jewish faith was lost. Out of gratitude for assistance, an elderly refugee gave Shi a collection of old rabbinical notebooks which originated in Prague. The notebooks contained almost incoherent ramblings about esoteric aspects of Jewish mysticism. Shi realized that what he possessed was a recipe for making golems; ancient Jewish temple protectors fashioned from clay. He became obsessed about using his new knowledge to bring forth an army that could bring peace and unity

to the lands of China. Shi experienced visions of God, a Heavenly King, instructing him to lead the army and bring about a new Kingdom of Heaven. To make such an army, he would need many pre-fabricated clay statues. Preferably statues imbued with the blood of warriors. Shi knew that such an army lay buried and waiting in Xi'an.

### Kongzi Filial Son Society

French Doctor Andres Berger, a pioneering obstetrician, has stumbled upon the Kongzi Filial Son Society ("孔子孝子会"), a local fertility clinic. The name of the clinic is innocuous, but the members have a dark secret. They are now nothing more than a fertility cult that venerates Shub-Niggurath, the Black Goat with a Thousand Young. Members of the cult are exclusively woman, but include both Chinese women and Western mid-wives attached to St. Marie Hospital. Members who desire a male child may call upon Shub-Niggurath to make them pregnant with male offspring, but at the cost of sacrificing a female child.

### One Fisherman's War

The Exquisite Jade Rock (玉玲珑), a 5-ton boulder of jade, was meant for the Song Emperor (circa 1100 CE), but the imperial ship carrying this marvelous prize sank near Shanghai, a little fishing village at the mouth of the Yangzi river. Villagers moved the Exquisite Jade Rock into the center of their walled village. Today, the Exquisite Jade Rock rests inside of Yu Yuan, a garden complex built by an imperial minister and opened to the public many years after his passing. Xu Haiguang, a fisherman who lives in a shanty built onto a bank in one of the canals feeding into the Huangpu, has taken to sacrificing and eating humans on top of the Exquisite Jade Rock, as it gives him super-human strength and better fishing hauls. Recently, Xu received visions that Mother Hydra, the Goddess of the Sea, needs his help in returning the Exquisite Jade Rock to its rightful place at the mouth of the Yangzi river. He intends to orchestrate a mass sacrifice so that he and Mother Hydra's fish-man acolytes will have the strength and power to move the heavy Exquisite Jade Rock.





# Timeline

- Circa 2050 BCE** Shu dynasty founded.
- 475 BCE** Warring States period, an era of intensive warfare with the goal of creating a unified Chinese empire begins.
- 221 BCE** Qin dynasty emerges as the first unified Chinese empire.
- 541 CE** The First Plague Pandemic spreads from Egypt to the Mediterranean.
- 1236 CE** Mongol invasion of Europe begins.
- 1260 CE** Marco Polo departs Constantinople for Asia. He will later meet Kublai Khan, the Mongol ruler and founder of the Yuan dynasty.
- 1346 CE** The Second Plague Pandemic spreads from Central Asia to Europe.
- 1636 CE** Qing dynasty is established.
- 1837 CE** Hong Xiuquan, a poor Hakka farmer, experiences religious visions; Hong Xiuquan claims to be the younger brother of Jesus Christ, and that Jesus Christ instructed him to rid the world of demon worship.
- 1839 CE** The First Opium War begins.
- 1842 CE** The First Opium War ends with the signing of the Treaty of Nanking, in which Hong Kong is ceded to the United Kingdom in perpetuity and the five treaty ports are established at Shanghai, Canton, Ningbo, Fuzhou, and Amoy.
- 1850 CE** Hong Xiuquan initiates the Taiping Rebellion. Hostilities with the Qing begin in January 1851.
- 1855 CE** The Third Plague Pandemic emerges out of Yunnan and spreads throughout the world, ultimately killing more than 10 million people in China alone. The Yellow River floods, shifting to a Northern position and cutting off the Grand Canal. The Grand Canal never recovered as sea shipping as railroads became a better alternative.
- 1856 CE** The Panthay Rebellion, known to Chinese as the Du Wenxiu Rebellion begins; Muslim Hui people and other Muslim ethnic minorities in Yunnan rebel against the Manchu rulers of the Qing dynasty. The Second Opium War begins.
- 1860 CE** Foreign forces burn the Summer Palace and the Second Opium War ends with the Convention of Beijing, resulting in war reparations, the legalization of the opium trade and the legalization of shipping indentured Chinese servants to the Americas.
- 1864 CE** Hong Xiuquan, dies. Taiping Rebellion is one of the bloodiest and longest conflicts in human history, with an estimated 20 – 30 million deaths.
- 1873 CE** The Panthay rebellion put down. The Yellow River floods. Due to neglect in the flood control projects along the Yellow River, the 1887 Flood becomes the second worst natural disaster in human history. Huangpu dredged, allowing deeper draft vessels access to Shanghai.
- 1900 CE** The Boxer Rebellion initiated by Anti-Western, Anti-Christian Boxer rebels who believed their Daoist magic would protect them against foreign bullets.
- 1905 CE** Sun Yat-sen (孙中山, aka Sun Zhongshan), while living in Tokyo University, first writes about the “Three Principles of the People: Nationalism, Democracy, and Wellbeing”
- 1911 CE** The Xinhai Revolution, or Chinese Revolution begins. Various “New Army” units of the Qing Army rebel against central leadership. Sun Yat-Sen elected President of the Republic of China in December. Sun Yat-Sen leads the KuoMingTang (“KMT”).
- 1912 CE** Puyi, the 6-year old Emperor, is forced to abdicate by Yuan Shikai. 2000 years of Imperial control ends. Yuan Shikai elected President and later names himself Emperor. China falls into the Warlord period, where commanders from the New Army fight for control of the provinces.
- 1913 CE** Sun Yat-sen flees to Japan and calls for a Second Revolution against Yuan Shikai.
- 1916 CE** Yuan Shikai dies from uremia.
- 1919 CE** Student intellectuals in Beijing march for democracy and nationalism. This came to be known as the “May 4th Movement”.
- 1921 CE** Influenced by the May 4th Movement, Chinese communists hold their first National Assembly in the French Concession of Shanghai.



## 1924 CE

**January 10** – The cornerstone of the new American Club is laid.

**February 9** – Following harbor improvements and dredging, the 'Empress of Russia' of the Canadian Pacific Steamship Company become the first "Round-the-World" steam-powered ship to dock in Shanghai.

**May 12** – The Union Jack Club is opened on Myburgh Road for the benefit of British Naval personnel.

## 1925 CE

**March 12** – Sun Yat-sen dies of pancreatic cancer. Chiang Kai-Shek becomes the leader of the Republic of China. Meanwhile, Zhou En-Lai secretly recruits and places communists at many levels of the KMT military.

**May 30** – "May 30<sup>th</sup> Incident" begins when Chinese laborers and students taking part in anti-Japanese protests. Police officers set up a makeshift picket line and attempt to drive the protesters back. Inspector Everson orders his men to fire. Four of the protesters are killed outright and four of the wounded die later of their injuries. In the days following, there are more clashes between police and protesters. News of the incident spreads rapidly through China and strengthens the nationalist and anti-foreign movements.

**May 31** – Chinese General Chamber of Commerce declares a general strike. Shops are closed and laborers in foreign employ walk out on strike.

**June 1** – The Shanghai Municipal Council declares a state of emergency and mobilizes a militia.

**June 26** – Chinese shops reopen, but the industrial strike continues. Shipping is brought to a near standstill.

**December 21** – Inspector Everson and Police Commissioner McEuen resign.

## 1926 CE

**July** – The Nationalists began the Northern Expedition, a massive military attempt to unify China. The Expedition was led by Chiang Kai-shek and the National Revolutionary Army (NRA), an amalgam of earlier military forces with significant guidance from Russian military advisors and numerous Communists as both commanding and political officers. With the early successes of the Expedition, there was soon a race between Chiang Kai-shek leading the "right-wing" of the Nationalist Party and the Communists, running inside the "left-wing" of the Nationalists, for control of major southern cities such as Nanjing and Shanghai.

## 1927 CE

**January** – Allied with the Chinese Communists and Soviet Agent Mikhail Borodin, Wang Jingwei and his KMT leftist allies captured the city of Wuhan and declared the seat of National Government there.

**March 24** – "The Nanking Incident" begins when the National Revolutionary Army ("NRA") enters Nanking as part of the Northern Expedition. This is followed by anti-foreign riots and the looting of foreign interests. Chiang Kai-Shek, the commander in chief of the NRA concludes that communist within the NRA used anti-imperialist and anti-foreign sentiments to instigate the Nanking Incident.

**April 12** – Chiang Kai-Shek, with the help of the Green Gang, purges the KMT of communists, killing thousands in what will become known as the "Shanghai Massacre" or "White Terror". The KMT executes more than 5,000 alleged communists. Zhou En-Lai narrowly escapes assassination; the left wing of the KMT is absorbed into the Chinese Communist Party. Chiang Kai-shek appoints Du Yuesheng the head of the Bureau of Opium Suppression.

**December 14** – Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist Government severs relations with the Soviet Union.

## 1928 CE

Shanghai Canidrome is completed

**February 13** – Innsmouth raid

## 1929 CE

**October 29** – U.S. Stock Market Crash, "Black Tuesday" marks the beginning of the Great Depression.

## 1931 CE

**September 13<sup>th</sup>** – The staged "Mukden Incident" justifies the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, the ancestral home of the Qing Dynasty; a pro-Japanese government called "Manchuguo" is installed. Puyi will become the figurehead ruler.

## 1935 CE

**July 1** – The Ahnenerbe is founded in Nazi Germany as the "Study Society for Primordial Intellectual History and German Ancestral Heritage".

## 1937 CE

**July 7** – The "Marco Polo Bridge Incident" leads to the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War (which ends with Japan's surrender in World War 2).

## 1949 CE

Chiang Kai-shek and the remnants of the KMT fled to Taiwan; Mao Zedong proclaims the founding of the People's Republic of China.



## A Note on Spelling and Pronunciation

Following here is a very general, informal, not entirely accurate quick pronunciation guide for Chinese Pinyin Romanization system.

- Zh = J (not exactly, but close enough).
- Ou = o as in “Oh My God.” Zhou sounds like “Joe”.
- O = o as in “hot”
- I = ee as in “cheese”
- A = a as in father.
- E = e as in Edward.
- X = Sh (close enough). Mary Xie sounds like “Mary Shee-e”. Xie Xie (Shee-e Shee-e) is the Chinese word for “Thank you”.
- U = oo as in “Scoobie Doo”. So Big Ears Du sounds like “Big Ears Doo”.
- C= ts as in “tsk tsk”. Cixi sounds like “tsee – shee” (Actually, not even close but if you want to pronounce this better, go learn Mandarin)

Note that all Chinese names place family name first, so “Chaing”, “Sun”, and “Zhou” are all surnames. For every Chinese name of a person who is NOT from the “South”, the modern Pinyin system is used. “Zhou Enlai” is the most famous example of this used in this book.

Incidentally, the Mandarin Pinyin for Chiang Kai-shek is “Jiang Jie Shi”. Sun Yet-sen is “Sun Zhongshan.” Oh, and Mao Zedong is from South China, but I believe there is a law that his name must be written in Pinyin.

This book uses two separate Romanization protocols. For historical characters who are more associated with the Republic of China (rather than the People’s Republic of China) and who generally come from the Southern parts of China, we use the Wade-Giles system for Romanization. Wade-Giles is used for Mandarin but it was also applied to Cantonese, the dialect spoken in Hong Kong and large parts of “Canton” (Guangzhou) province. “Chiang Kai-shek”, “Sun Yat-sen”, and the “Soong Sisters” are the primary examples of names written in this book using the Wade-Giles system. Wade-Giles is still used in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

And one last thing to confuse our reader. We use the Wade-Giles system to write Kuomintang (KMT), the political party of Chiang Kai-shek, as that is how it is written in Taiwan. However, this is a Mandarin word. In Pinyin, it is written as (and sounds like) “guo min dang”.



## A Note About Chinese Investigators

Can you play a Chinese investigator if you are not Chinese? Why not? People are people. We can think of no better way to liberate oneself from racial and cultural biases than attempting to walk in the shoes of another. Roleplaying is about learning to view the world from different perspectives. No matter what your race or nationality, you can play a Chinese investigator. However, we advise you to avoid using fake Chinese accents because that’s just annoying.

## A Time of Extreme Racism and Colonialism

You, the investigator, are on the Titanic. It just so happens that a monster is on the ship and it will kill some people horribly. You can fight this monster, and maybe defeat it, while falling in love with an extremely attractive NPC who makes you feel like you are the King or Queen of the world. Cue Celine Dion music. It will be an epic and romantic adventure. If you achieve this experience, we the authors of this book will be proud.

You should know, however, that the Titanic was a glorious ship made by a colonial power, funded by banks which made their money in opium and gunboat diplomacy. On board the Titanic, the passengers, and crew are segregated by class and race. Invisible rules further divide by sex and sexual orientation. You may want to understand this and acknowledge it as you play. You go hunt that monster. But the players instinctively know that this ship will soon hit an iceberg and sink. When that happens, many will see their loved ones perish, frozen and drowning, their mortal remains sinking into the dark depths.

OK, you are not on the Titanic. You are in 1920s Shanghai. If you want, go rescue that beautiful singer and kill some monsters in Shanghai. If you have fun, we the authors of this book will take joy in this experience. But understand that this international city, home to businessmen, entertainers, criminals, and refugees from many parts of the world, is a place founded on the opium trade, imperialism, and oppression. It is also a world where women are excluded from many parts of society. Very soon, multiple “icebergs” in the form of the Chinese Civil War and the Second Sino-Japanese War, will hit Shanghai and the surrounding areas; tens of millions will die. There will be no escape for the women and children. What will happen is more horrific than any monster described in this book. Use that knowledge however you want, but also remember this is a game, and it is intended to both educate and entertain.



# Shanghai: The Pearl of the East

At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Shanghai was a small town located in a swamp near the mouth of the Yangtze River. The town was overshadowed by its prettier sister Suzhou and the far more important Nanjing - "South Capital" - a day's boat ride upriver. For the foreigners who sold opium and traded in the interior of China, Shanghai was a natural base.

By 1850, 5,000 foreigners lived in this small trading port town. Tens of thousands came in the decades to follow. The foreigners came from many countries; including Russia, Japan, Great Britain, America, Germany, and France. They brought supporting institutions. Several international schools taught the children of expatriates and rich Chinese. Protestant, Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox churches, as well as Jewish synagogues, tended to the foreigners' spiritual needs. They created rail and telegraph systems, newspapers, schools, hospitals, and jails.

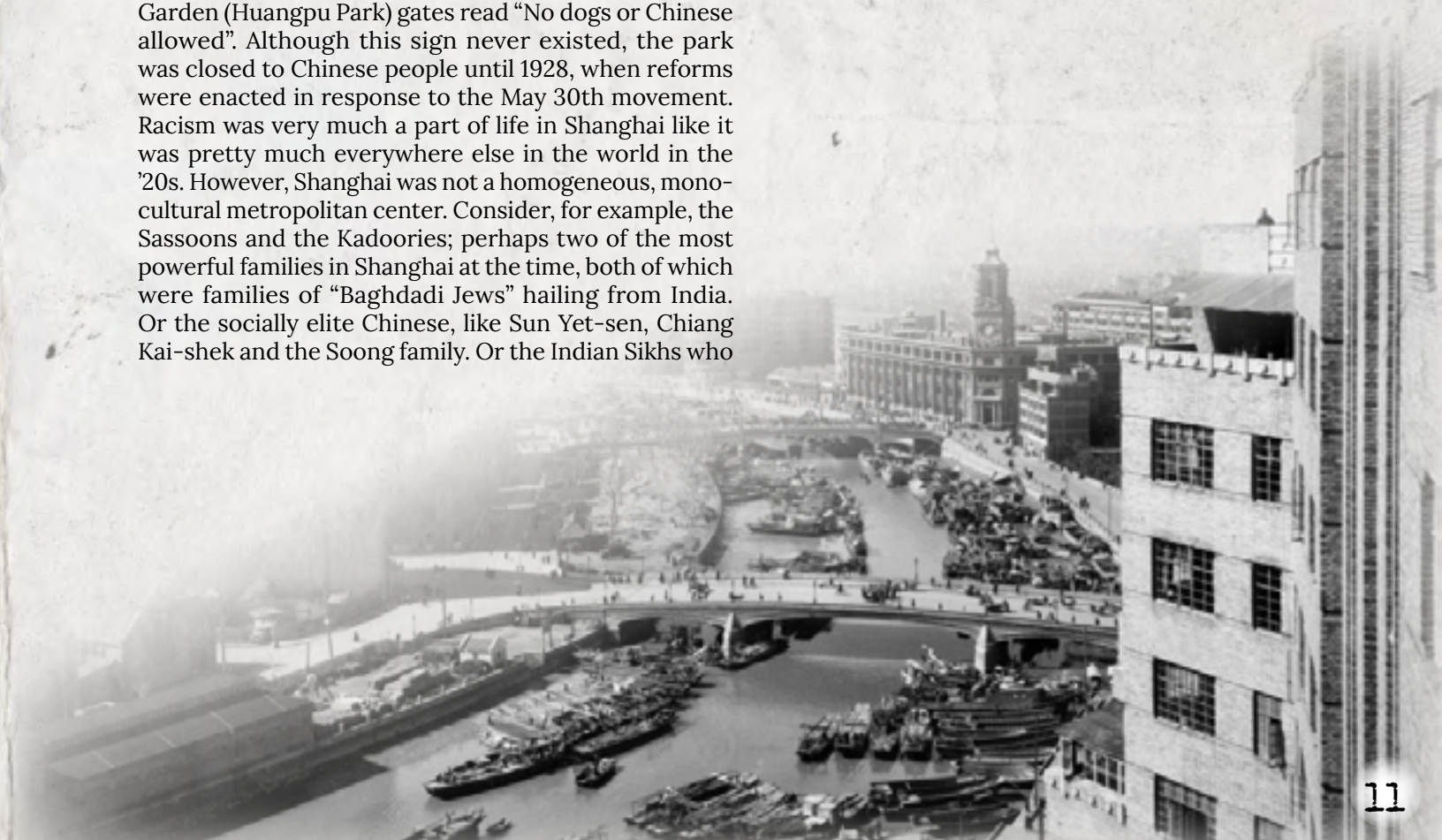
By 1925, over five hundred thousand foreigners called Shanghai "home". They lived in the Concessions, where they enjoyed extra-territorial jurisdiction; the laws of China did not apply to them. They dined on the Bund, they gambled at the horse track and they drank freely in local jazz clubs.

According to popular myth, a sign on the Shanghai Public Garden (Huangpu Park) gates read "No dogs or Chinese allowed". Although this sign never existed, the park was closed to Chinese people until 1928, when reforms were enacted in response to the May 30th movement. Racism was very much a part of life in Shanghai like it was pretty much everywhere else in the world in the '20s. However, Shanghai was not a homogeneous, monocultural metropolitan center. Consider, for example, the Sassoons and the Kadoories; perhaps two of the most powerful families in Shanghai at the time, both of which were families of "Baghdadi Jews" hailing from India. Or the socially elite Chinese, like Sun Yet-sen, Chiang Kai-shek and the Soong family. Or the Indian Sikhs who

made up a prominent portion of the Shanghai municipal police force. Or the Jewish families fleeing from the growing anti-Semitic sentiment that would culminate in the European and Russian pogroms that proceeded the Nazi Holocaust. Or the White Russians living in exile. Or Japanese businessmen pursuing economic ventures in the mainland. Or the black jazz musicians, like Buck Clayton, fleeing rampant American racism. Shanghai of the '20s was far from ideal, but it was nothing if not a turbulent and boiling hotpot of diverse races, nationalities, and cultures mixing together.

The Great China Amusement Arcade was Chinese owned and it drew crowds of all races and nationalities. Shanghai's prolific jazz clubs, which featured a fusion of Chinese folk songs and modern jazz, were filled with diverse crowds. The Shanghai derby was enjoyed by all, rich and poor, Chinese or foreign. Indeed, Victor Sassoon would have had it no other way.

The Sassoon Files assumes that Victor would have employed a set of investigators with a diverse set of backgrounds, expecting them to overcome their biases and work together in the best interests of humanity.





# MAP OF SHANGHAI CITY, 1925-1937

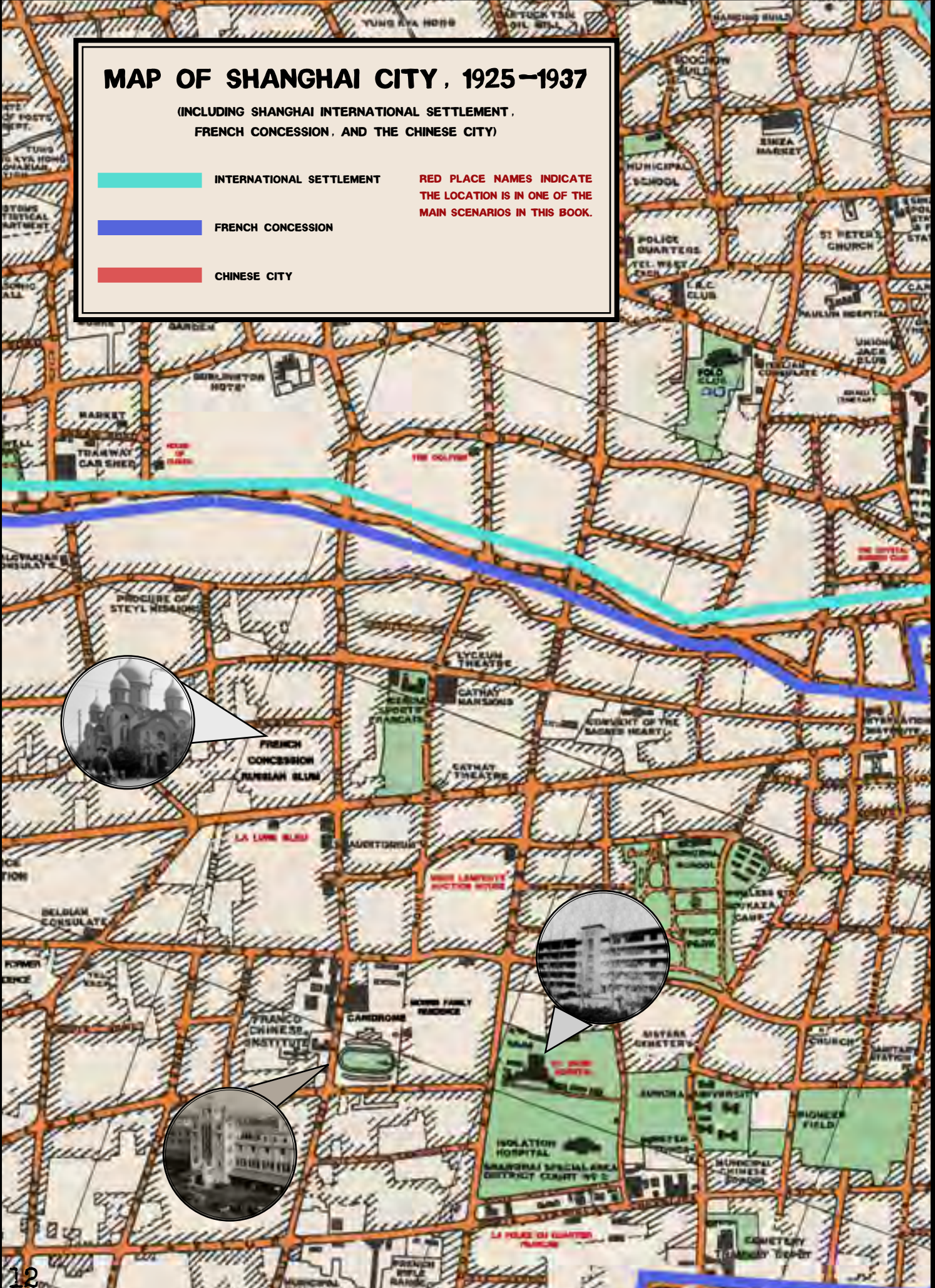
(INCLUDING SHANGHAI INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENT,  
FRENCH CONCESSION, AND THE CHINESE CITY)

 INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENT

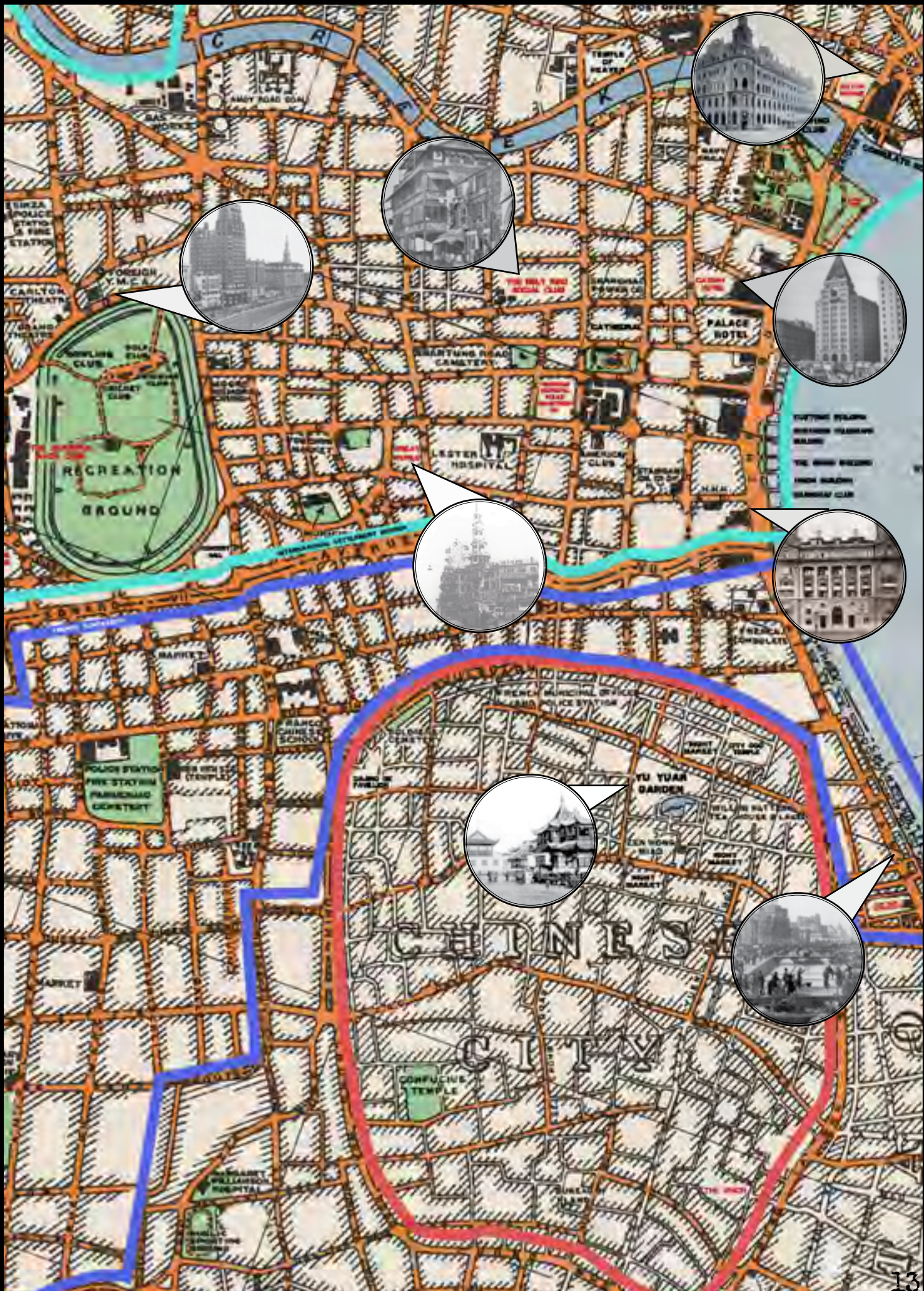
 FRENCH CONCESSION

 CHINESE CITY

RED PLACE NAMES INDICATE  
THE LOCATION IS IN ONE OF THE  
MAIN SCENARIOS IN THIS BOOK.









## The French Concession

Like the other Concessions, the French Concession of Shanghai came into being at the end of the first Opium War. It occupies land south of the International Settlement (controlled by the British and Americans) from the moat at the edge of the Chinese City extending past the "Xuhui" District in the West. The French Concession is famous for its upper-end residential neighborhoods and tree-lined roads.

**Canidrome** 逸园跑狗场 (open to the public in 1928) is a greyhound dog racing track and entertainment center. Buck Clayton and his jazz band often played here. Between 1949 and 1951, this stadium was used for mass rallies and public executions.

**St. Marie Hospital** ("Jukin Road", Ruijin Hospital on Ruijin 2 Lu, near Yongjia Lu) was established in 1907 and is the preeminent hospital in Shanghai. St. Marie includes a surgery theatre, general care ward, isolation ward, psychiatric ward, and morgue.

**Herr Lempertz' Auction House** is the Shanghai branch of one of the oldest art auctions houses in the world.

**The Morris Family Residence** (Now Ruijin Hotel) was developed by Benjamin Morris, owner of the Canidrome and the North China Daily News. This 100 acre estate is comprised of 4 large mansions and several smaller buildings.

**The Soong Family Residence** was originally built by a Greek shipping magnate. The Soong family purchased and moved into this mansion in 1918. Of the Soong sisters who lived in this mansion, the youngest married Chiang Kai-shek, the middle sister married Sun Yat-sen, and the oldest married the richest banker in China.

**Sun Yet Sen's former Shanghai residence** is next to a large city park. After his death, Soong Ching-ling continued to live there.

**La Police du Quartier Francais** is the head quarters of the French Concession police. They maintain a fleet of armored cars, many of which are parked here.

**La Lune Bleu** is a cozy hotel in the French Concession, two blocks away from the Canidrome, and near several French bistros and sidewalk cafes.

**Jewish Ghetto** of the French Concession, located near Jingan Temple, is older and better off than the Jewish Ghetto in the International Settlement. Many of the residents are merchants who have lived in Shanghai for several generations.

**Warehouse District and Docks** (Just East of the Old City) are a center of commercial activity for both foreigners and Chinese alike. "The Old West Gate" (Lao Ximen, 老西门) is the gate between the Chinese City and the docks to the East along the Huangpu River. The Old Dock (Lao Matou, 老码头) area sees both fishing business (and a fresh fish market) and smaller cargo vessel servicing, as well as residual "floating brothels" sex-trade on boats.

**San Yuan Packaging and Distribution Company Warehouse** is a warehouse that serves as a Wo Hop To hideout (see Let Sleeping Dogs Lie).

## The Chinese City

The Chinese City, or "Old Shanghai" ("老市") consists of the original walled city of Shanghai, although the walls were torn down in 1912. The old moat circumventing the city has been filled in and made into a road which circles the entire area. Like Suzhou and other cities in the area along the Great Canal, Old Shanghai also used to be a "canal city" but most of the canals were filled in by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Old Docks





Since the mid-19th century, The Chinese City was considered the counterpart to the foreign Concessions. At times the Chinese City grew rich, but at various other times, it was overrun with refugees hoping to find protection from strife at the doorsteps of the foreigners. In the 1920s, local Chinese call this area South City ("Nanshi", 南市), as it is south of the International Settlement.

**The Yu Yuan Garden** is named after a large chunk of Jade that lies near the center of the garden. Legend has it that the Jade was meant to be delivered to the Ming Emperor, but the ship which transported the rock sank. The locals were strong enough to pull the 5-ton rock from the ocean, but not strong enough to ship it to Beijing. The large complex covering 5 acres was built in the 16<sup>th</sup> century as a retirement playground for a government official.

**City God Temple** (Cheng Huang Miao, 上海城隍庙) was created in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century to honor spirit protectors of the city. It is located next to Yu Yuan Garden and surrounded by the usual temple street markets.

**Night Market** is actually a continuation of the day market that surrounds Yu Yuan. In the day, sweet and savory foods, jade pendants, antique heirlooms, silk bolts, bulk spices and tea, and everything else from within China's heartland could be found in the many makeshift stalls here. At night, the vendors who do not sleep keep their stalls open late, while the streets become completely filled with small food stands.

**Dajing Ge Pavillion** is a Temple built into the old City Walls. This section of wall is the only portion of the City Wall that was not torn down.

**The Union** is a mahjong parlor frequented by Wo Hop To soldiers.

## The International Settlement

The International Settlement was founded after the First Opium War as a concession granted to England and merged with the American concession in 1863. The International Settlement is governed by the Shanghai Municipal Council which directly controls the gas, water, rickshaws, police, electrical stations, and the orchestra (The government also controlled all prostitution and administered licenses to sell Opium until 1920). By 1925, The Municipal Council had seats for 5 British representatives and 2 for Americans. By 1928, this membership was expanded to include 3 Chinese and 2 Japanese representatives.

**The Bund** is named from the Farsi and Hindi word for "embankment." The area was developed primarily using Sassoon family's capital, with Victor Sassoon building approximately 1500 multi-story buildings along the Huangpu river.

**The Astor House** (Whangpoo Road, near the Garden Bridge) is the oldest international hotel in Shanghai. Located on the Bund, Astor house has a world-class ballroom, cafe, eateries, and multiple daily music performances. In 1925, Astor House was arguably upstaged by the three newer hotels built by Victor Sassoon.

**Consulate Row**, located in front of Astor House on the Bund, is the location of the consulates of Japan, Germany, the United States, and the Soviet Union.

**The Public Garden** is a small triangle shaped garden located on the Northern side of the Bund. It is the oldest public park in China. Chinese people were not allowed use of the garden until 1928.

**The Shanghai Club** is an English white men's club in Shanghai located in the Bund (site of the present-day Waldorf Astoria). The club was formed in 1864 but its new club building was built at the present location in 1910. At this time the Shanghai Club is the most exclusive men's club in Shanghai and, as such, is THE place to rub elbows with the rich and powerful.

**The Long Bar** is on the second floor of the Shanghai Club. Investigators can find a literal "Long Bar", which was at its time the world's longest bar at 110 feet in length. While membership in the Shanghai Club was reserved for wealthy expatriates, patrons of the Long Bar included a wide spectrum of social classes. Seats at the window overlooking the river were reserved for the very wealthy and powerful, while seats at the far end of the bar were often occupied by sailors and prostitutes.

**The Nissin Building**, located on the Bund, was originally built by a Japanese shipping company but was partially funded by Jewish merchants. The upper levels feature marble columns and reliefs. A Japanese-run Turkish bathhouse and restaurant can be found in the basement.

**Great Northern Telegraph Building** is the site of the first telephone switchboard in Shanghai. This building houses the central telephone network administration (owned by the International Settlement) for Shanghai.

**(The New) Custom House** (江海关, current building built in 1927) contains the Customs Control Administration of Shanghai. British officials from the International Settlement managed the tax collection and inspection from within this building on behalf of the government.



In 1928, Customs officials worked on behalf of the KMT government lead by Chiang Kai-shek. The Custom House has a large, notable clock on its tower.

**The North China Daily Building** houses Shanghai's first English language newspaper, founded by Henry Morris. In 1927, this building also housed American Asiatic Underwriters (years later becoming AIG, the world's largest insurance company), run by Cornelius Vander Starr. Starr also secretly worked for the US government as a spy.

**Cathay Hotel** is also called the Sassoon House. It is one of the first skyscrapers in East Asia. Victor Sassoon lives on the 10<sup>th</sup>-floor penthouse. The building has an art deco theme throughout. The rooftop restaurant overlooks the Bund below.

**Gutzlaff Signal Tower** or "Lighthouse" on the Bund was used to alert craft on the Huangpu about weather conditions.

**Great World Amusement Arcade** (大世界) near the Shanghai Race Club, is the first and most influential entertainment complexes in China. Five floors of Chinese opera, gambling dens, jazz acts, eateries, tea houses, massage parlors, circuses, shooting galleries, cricket fighting and brothels, all under one roof. The Great World Amusement Arcade was started by pharmaceutical magnate Huang Chujiu, who was allied with the leadership of the Green Gang.

**The Belt King Social Club** is the public-facing hangout and headquarters of the 4 Seas Gang.

**The Crystal Garden Club**, located to the South West of the Shanghai Race Club, is owned and operated by the Green Gang.

**The Shanghai Race Club** is in the center of Shanghai in the International Settlement (now Renmin Guangchang). Originally a private horse racing track, it was opened up to the general public in 1909. People from all walks of life come to the track to drink and gamble. Inside the 10-story clubhouse, the 340 exclusive club members drink, eat, and socialize.

**The Polo Fields and Stables** are just to the west of the Shanghai Race Club.

**Jewish and Russian Slums** of the International Settlement are located around the bend of the Huangpu, several kilometers to the North East of the Bund. This Jewish slum is populated by refugees, immigrants, and the children of immigrants from Eastern Europe. It is poorer than the "Jewish Ghetto" in the French Concession, populated by people who lost everything when they fled revolution and pogroms.

**Dacha Tea House**, located in the Jewish and Russian Slums in the North Eastern part of the International Settlement, is a quaint room on the first floor of an apartment building, decorated with Russian kitsch and antiques.

**The House of Clouds**, located near the border of the International Settlement and the French Concession, is a dirty and drab opium den.

**The Dolphin** is a low-end hotel near the border of the French Concession.

**Israeli Cemetery** is one of several Jewish cemeteries in Shanghai. This one, located on Mohawk road (now a small park at Huangpi Beilu, Nanjing lu), west of the horse track and south of the stables, is where Jewish horse jockeys and stable hands are interred.

**Shanghai Municipal Police Department HQ** on Foochow Road serves as the most important police station in the International Settlement. In 1925, there are approximately 2,500 policemen.

**Shanghai Concert Hall** Construction began in 1928; it was completed and opened to the public in 1930.

**The Ward Road Gaol** was the largest prison in the world from the time of its construction until the end of World War 2. The prison was overcrowded and rife with tuberculosis.

Park Hotel (next to Racecourse)





# Historical Figures & Dramatic Personalities

## Historical Figures

**Borodin, Mikhail (1884 - 1951):** Mikhail Markovich Gruzenberg, better known by the alias Borodin was a Comintern agent who served as an advisor to Sun Yat-sen, the left wing of the KMT, and later the CCP.

**Chiang, Kai-Shek (蔣介石) (1911 - 1975):** Chiang Kai-Shek was the leader of the KMT and served as the president of the Republic of China between 1928 and 1975, first in mainland China until 1949 and then in Taiwan. Chiang consolidated power by leading the KMT on the Northern Expedition against China's many warlords. Then, with the assistance of Du Yue Sheng ("Big Eared Du") and the Green Gang, Chiang purged the KMT of communist and leftist elements on April 12, 1927 (the "White Terror" or the "Shanghai Massacre").

**Du, Yue Sheng (杜月笙) (1888 - 1951):** Du Yue Sheng, known on the street as "Big Eared Du", was a Green Gang boss. Du Yuesheng fled to Hong Kong 1949.

**Everson, Edward (1883 - 1942):** Inspector Edward Everson was a station commander and high-ranking police officer with the Shanghai Municipal Police Department; he gave orders to fire into a crowd of protestors, resulting in the "Shanghai Massacre of 1925" and sparking the "May Thirtieth Movement".

**Fessenden, Stirling (1875 - 1944):** American lawyer who was the Chairman of the Shanghai Municipal Council from 1923 to 1929 and then Secretary-General of the Council from 1929 to 1939.

**Huang, Chujiu (黃楚九) (1871 - 1931):** Huang Chujiu was a Chinese pharmaceutical magnate hailing from Ningbo. The Great World Amusement Arcade was the crown jewel in Chujiu's financial empire. Huang Chujiu's childhood friend was the famous gangster boss "Pockmark" Huang Jinrong.

**Huang, Jinrong (黃金榮) (1868 - 1953):** Huang Jin Rong, commonly known as "Pockmark Huang" was the boss of the Green Gang, Shanghai's largest and most powerful triad.

**Kadoorie, Elly (1867 - 1944):** A member of the industrious merchant Kadoorie family, Sir Elly Kadoorie worked for and with Victor Sassoon to expand his families' holdings in Asia. Like Sassoon, Kadoorie was a prominent member of the Shanghai Jewish community.

**McEuen, Kenneth John (1879 - early 1940s):** K.J. McEuen was the Police Commissioner of the Shanghai Municipal Police Department; he was forced to resign in the aftermath of the Shanghai Massacre of 1925 and the May Thirtieth Movement.

**Morris, Henry E. (? - 1951):** Henry E. Morris Jr., of the esteemed Morris family was one of Shanghai's *bon vivant*; Henry inherited the North China Daily, the first English newspaper with wide-spread distribution throughout China. Among other notable investments, Henry financed the construction of the Canidrome.

**Sassoon, Victor (1881 - 1961):** Sir Victor Sassoon, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Baronet of Bombay, was Shanghai's preeminent *bon vivant*. Sassoon was a Sephardic Jew whose descendants hailed from the Middle East and India. He inherited a fortune made on the opium trade and turned that fortune into a diversified empire. Victor, an avid fan of the Derby, owned the highly successful Eve Stables.

**Soong Ai-ling (宋霭龄) (1888-1973):** The eldest Soong sister, who married China's richest man and finance minister H.H. Kung in 1927.

**Soong Ching-ling (宋庆龄) (1893 - 1981):** The middle Soong sister, who married Sun Yat-sen in Japan on 25 October 1915. She later broke with her family and supported the Communists. She would become joint vice-president of the People's Republic of China from 1959 to 1972.

The Soong Sisters, 1943







Zhou Enlai, Circa 1924

**Soong Mei-ling (宋美龄) (1898 - 2003):** The youngest Soong sister, she married Chiang Kai-shek in Shanghai on December 1, 1927. Soong Mei-ling was a prominent political figure in her own right, often participating or leading diplomatic missions to the United States and later serving as president of the Republic of China.

**Sun, Yet-Sen (孙中山) (1866-1925):** The founding father of modern China who founded the KMT and served as its first leader. Sun Yet-sen's life was one of turmoil and frequent exile.

**Zhou Enlai (周恩来) (1898 - 1976):** By 1926, Zhou Enlai was the heart of the nascent Chinese Communist Party ("CCP") in Shanghai. Zhou Enlai survived multiple assassination attempts by Chiang Kai-shek's rightist forces. He was instrumental in the CCP's consolidation and rise to power. He served as the first Premier of the People's Republic of China from October 1949 until his death in January 1976.

## Dramatic Personalities

**First Appearing in Strange Gates, Hidden Demons Bass, Danny:** "Danny-boy" is a uniformed police officer with the Shanghai Municipal Police Department.

**Dicker, Bart:** The Shanghai Municipal Health Inspector responsible for quarantining the House of Clouds.

**Griffith, Sam** Opium addict present when the Demon Kun was summoned.

**Kelly, Patrick:** "Paddy" is a beat cop with the Shanghai Municipal Police Department.

**Li, Zheng:** Master Li Zheng is a Daoist priest who assisted Father Mark Rousseau in performing the Daoist ritual that opened a gate and summoned the Demon Kun. Deceased, killed by the Demon Kun.

**Li, Bobby:** Unemployed younger brother of Master Li Zheng, participated in the ritual that opened a gate and summoned the Demon Kun.

**Ling, Wei:** A member of the Green Gang.

**Lu Chen:** Son to Lu Xun ("Lao Che"), and 4 Seas Gang lieutenant.

**Madame Gao:** Owner of the House of Clouds, an opium den and house of ill-repute backed by the 4 Seas Gang.

**Maybell, Frank:** Dr. Maybell is the Chief of Staff at St. Marie's Hospital.

**Mazenq, Fredrick:** Inspector Mazenq is a senior French police detective.



**Nurse Schultz:** Warm-hearted German nurse at St. Marie's Hospital.

**Rousseau, Mark:** French Jesuit Priest who acquired a copy of Strange Gates, Hidden Spirits, and subsequently performed a Daoist ritual that opened a gate and summoned the Demon Kun. Deceased, killed by the Demon Kun at the direction of the gangster Ling Wei.

**Sullivan, Abby:** Ambulance driver for St. Marie's Hospital.

**Zhou, Gang:** Captain Zhou Gang was a KMT officer who participated in the ritual that opened a gate and summoned the Demon Kun. Deceased.

**First Appearing in Let Sleeping Dogs Lie**

**Bones, Henry:** Dr. Bones is an American professor of archaeology at Princeton University.

**Bowler, John:** Petty Officer John Bowler works at the British Consulate and serves as the secretary to Admiral Richard Stockton.

**Crazy Cow::** Wo Hop To gangster and victim of multiple cloud memory spells. Currently detained in the Ward Road Gaol and under the care of Dr. Aue.

**Dr. Aue:** Swiss alienist and Sassoon's ally.

**Lempertz, Gunter:** Herr Lempertz is a private dealer of antiquities and owner of the exclusive Lempertz auction house.

**Gupta:** Victor Sassoon's Gurkha bodyguard.

**Harris, Mitchell:** Dr. Harris is an American archaeologist representing the Smithsonian Institute. Dr. Harris purchased the hand cannon known as the "Vermillion Bird of the South" at auction.

**"Iron Headed" Zhang:** Former head of the Wo Hop To gang. Deceased, poisoned.

**Stockton, Richard:** Stockton is a semiretired Royal Navy admiral working at the British consulate. He purchased the Earth's Jade pendant for his wife, June, at auction.

**St. John, John:** Wealthy collector of antiquities who bought the Qing banner known as the "Azure Dragon of the East" at auction. Deceased, poisoned.

**Lu, Roy:** Roy "Little Cart" Lu is the oldest son of Lu Xun ("Lao Che") and lieutenant in the 4 Seas Gang.

**First Appearing in There is This One Girl**

**Deng, Bing:** Lao Deng Bing is the senile leader of the Order of the Bloated Woman.

**Four-Fingered Zhou:** 4 Seas Gang Enforcer.

**Jardine, William:** Dr. Jardine is a member of the Jardine family, made wealthy through the Jardine-Matheson partnership, which was formed in 1827 and primarily engaged in the shipment of Opium. This character is a fictional figure based loosely on Robert William Buchanan-Jardine (1868 – 1927).

**Lu, Kai:** Son of Lu Xun ("Lao Che") and 4 Seas Gang leader who has fallen in with the Order of the Bloated Woman.

**Xie, Mary:** Jazz singer, renown for her rendition of the song, "There is this One Girl", Lu Kai's girlfriend, an avatar of the Bloated Woman.

**First Appearing in the Curse of the Peacock's Eye**

**Cao, Gaofeng:** Captain Cao Gaofeng is a graduate of Whampoa Military Academy and a KMT officer (in 1949).

**Marcetti, Andre:** Captain Marcetti is the captain of the riverboat Intrepido.

**Lu Xun, a/k/a "Lao Che":** Powerful necromancer and putative head of the 4 Seas Gang. His three sons are Lu Chen, Lu Kai and Roy "Little Cart" Lu.

**Taylor, Hudson J.:** The Reverend Taylor is the degenerate leader of the heretical Methodist Church of Chengdu.

**Taylor, Margie:** Reverend Taylor's wife.

**Walker, Laura:** Methodist missionary residing in Chongqing. Laura accepted donations from Lao Che, and liaisons with the Reverend Taylor in Chengdu.









# 奇門遁甲

## Strange Gates, Hidden Demons

By Jason Sheets

### HORRIBLE TRUTH

**Shanghai, December 1925.** On June 25, 1900, a Daoist monk named Wang Yuanlu discovered a great collection of ancient manuscripts in a sealed cave at the Mogao cave complex in Dunhuang, Gansu. This collection of scrolls, tomes, paintings, and terma included almost 50,000 different works, the oldest dating back to the fifth century. French Sinologist Paul Pelliot and Hungarian-British explorer Ayrel Stein gained access to the collection in 1907 and then began buying select pieces from Wang Yuanlu. In the years following, Russian and Japanese collectors also purchased significant portions of the collection.

The collection became known as the “Dunhuang Manuscripts.” The Manuscripts were written in numerous languages; classical Chinese, Tibetan, Uighur, Sanskrit, Arabic, Hebrew, Sogdian, and Khotanese. Included in it was a wide range of subject material, with religious and spiritual knowledge being a major aspect. Buddhist scripture, Daoist texts, Confucian scrolls, prayer books, apocryphal tomes, and Nestorian Christian works were all found within the collection. In addition to the spiritual material, Chinese government documents, anthologies, dictionaries, cookbooks, maps, astrological charts, ancient musical scores, and even a manual on Chinese-chess (weiqi) strategy were found within the texts. The Dunhuang Manuscripts also contained “Strange Gates, Hidden Spirits” (奇門遁甲), a long-forgotten “Polestar” Daoist text with ritualistic instructions on how to open and close gates to ethereal dimensions, as well as how to summon forth ancient entities through the open gates.

Strange Gates, Hidden Spirits was generally neglected by its owners and traded hands a number of times over the years. Eventually, it ended up as part of Dr. Sun Yat-sen’s

personal collection until his death in March of 1925. Upon his death, Strange Gates, Hidden Spirits was put up for auction as part of a larger plot, and was subsequently acquired by a Jesuit priest named Mark Rousseau.

Rousseau, whose ministry was at the St. Marie Hospital (广慈医院), spent many a night studying the text in his small bedchamber. He carefully practiced the “Dance of Yu,” a series of dance steps required to open and close gates. He memorized the words of the ritual and took notes on the religious accouterments he needed to perform it. Rousseau even went so far as to begin procuring some of these items. He then fashioned a seal made of date wood; a key component in the ritual. Eventually, curiosity got the best of him.

Rousseau recruited a number of people to help him “reenact” the ancient Daoist ritual. The first was elderly Daoist Master Li Zheng, who would perform as the “Magistrate of the Court in Yellow.” The second was Bobby Li, Master Li’s unemployed younger brother, who would serve as one of three “Courtiers.” The third recruit was Captain Zhou Gang of the KMT, a friend of the late Dr. Sun Yat-sen and a Catholic convert in Rousseau’s parish. The fourth recruit was Ling Wei, a friend of Captain Zhou, and low-ranking member of the Green Gang. Each of the recruits would recite the ritual, and Rousseau would perform the Dance of Yu over a carefully drawn Bagua (八卦) chalked on the floor.

Rousseau, an ordained priest and Jesuit in good standing, could not afford to have his reputation sullied by performing the ritual in the view of other members of his elite society. The concern was that word may reach Rome if Westerners became aware of his actions. Rousseau wanted to conduct the ritual in a location where other witnesses would be more discreet. Therefore, he chose







**Paul Pelliot at the Mogao cave complex in Dunhuang, Gansu**

to conduct the ritual in the back-room of "The House of Clouds", an opium den on the border of the Shanghai Municipal District and the French Concession.

When Rousseau completed the Dance of Yu, the gates of Hell swung open and the invisible demon spirit "Kun" crept through. All participants were shocked that the ritual worked, and in their stunned state Master Li forgot to issue commands to the spirit Kun. Bobby Li was the first to break when Kun violently fed on Captain Zhou. As the Captain's blood coursed through its body, its thirsty appendages and tentacular trunk became filled with sanguine fluid, revealing an unfathomable monstrosity that should never be perceived by human eyes. Bobby bolted for the door.

Master Li dropped the wooden seal and it rolled across the floor to Rousseau's feet; Master Li was the second to be destroyed by the demon spirit. It was a merciless meat grinder turning rapidly on whatever it could reach.

The demon then turned on the prostitutes and patrons in the adjoining rooms. It had torn through most of the occupants in the adjoining room, sparing only Madame Gao and a few opium addicts too high to notice the carnage. Finally, Rousseau was able to use the seal to command Kun to stop feeding. Shaken and exhausted, Rousseau collapsed in the floor, with his copy of Strange

Gates, Hidden Spirits tucked under his arm. Ling Wei snatched the date wood seal from Rousseau's exhausted grip and fled.

When Rousseau awakened, he surveyed the carnage and set upon a hasty plan to cover it up. His claim was that he was the first respondent to a particularly virulent outbreak of Cholera. He called upon the St. Marie Hospital ambulance, a horse-pulled wagon driven by Abby Sullivan, to take the bodies to St. Marie's morgue (in the French Concession). He then asked the Shanghai Municipal Health Inspector, Bart Dicker, to set up a quarantine around the House of Clouds, just inside the Shanghai International Settlement. Rousseau's original plan to clean up the evidence fell aside as Bart Dicker's call to action was swift. Before Rousseau could reenter the premises, the entire building had been cordoned by rope and yellow flags, and two of Shanghai Municipal Police Force's finest were posted outside. Rousseau then returned to St. Marie's Hospital, with the intent of burning the remains.

Doctor Fredrick Maybell, the Chief of Staff at St. Marie's Hospital had taken an interest in the newly arrived bodies and recommended the performance of an autopsy. Rousseau vehemently asserted that the bodies were victims of a virulent strain of Cholera, and that disturbing the bodies with a scalpel could spread the disease. Doctor Maybell took this claim to be incredulous, and a heated argument ensued. While shouting at the top of his lungs, Father Rousseau began cremating the bodies. When he was done, he retired to his room at the hospital, without a further word to Doctor Maybell.

A few days later, the body of a low-ranking 4 Seas Gang thug was found in an alley in the French Concession; Doctor Maybell was called upon by Inspector Mazenq of the French Concession to determine a cause of death. Doctor Maybell had the body taken to St. Marie's morgue; and then, knowing that the matter was complicated and involved multi-jurisdictional concerns, reached out to Victor Sassoon. Victor Sassoon was a friend and a powerful man, with a network and connections reaching into both the International Settlement and the French Concession. Victor assembles his best investigators for this most interesting case. Among Shanghai's human residents, only Victor Sassoon has any true comprehension of the Mythos and its dangers. Already, Victor senses something is awry. Should Victor determine that the deaths are the result of Mythos activity, he will push his investigators to find a solution and put a stop to the killing.

Meanwhile, Ling Wei, understanding that the possessor of the date wood seal can command the demon, plotted a course of murder. He called upon the Demon Spirit Kun to destroy Rousseau, before targeting his enemies and underworld rivalries.



At the beginning of the scenario, the gate to Hell (inside the House of Clouds) is still open, and the demon is subject only to the whims of Ling Wei, a thuggish killer. If the investigators kill Ling without acquiring the date wood seal, the demon is free to kill as it pleases; how long will authorities be able to write off the deaths as part of a growing Cholera epidemic? If the investigators close the gate without first commanding the demon to return from whence it came, they will not be able to banish it without performing the mind-bending Dance of Yu.

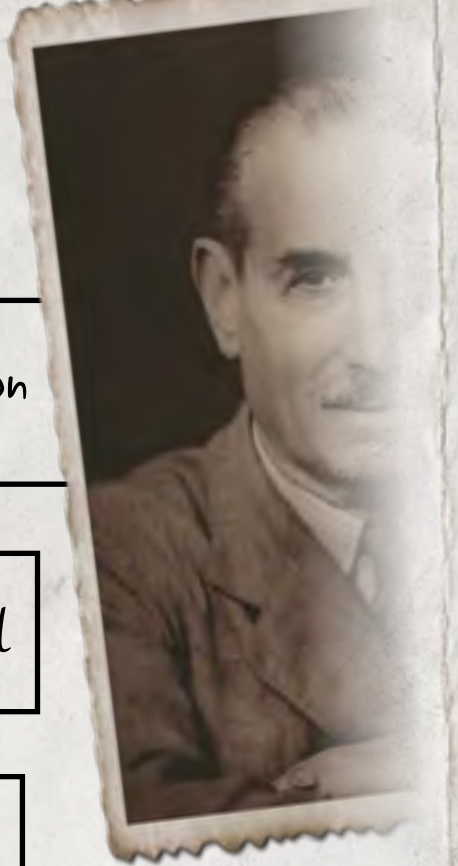
For a detailed account of the Polestar Daoist ritual, please see **Michael R. Saso, Taoism and the Rite of Cosmic Renewal** and **Taoist Master Chuang**. Michael Saso is a scholar of Chinese religion, and was previously a Jesuit who became an initiated Daoist priest of the Zhengyi Sect (正一道) in Taiwan. I spent an academic semester in his program many years ago, and he is the main inspiration for Strange Gates, Hidden Demons.

#### SPINE:

- Meet Victor Sassoon
- St. Marie Hospital
- The House of the Clouds
- (Optional) Inspector Mazenq and the French Police
- (Floating) The North China Daily
- (Alternate) Bobby Li
- (Optional) Inspector Everson and the Shanghai Municipal Police
- The 4 Seas Gang
- Madame Gao
- Ling Wei and the Green Gang
- Closing the Gate



# Spine



孕形塔庭  
司司鑄天吐  
汝生外也靈辰  
濕初嘔服  
鋼撈新  
面月鞭骸紅  
須市手形親

Meet Victor Sassoon

St. Marie Hospital

House of Clouds

Inspector Everson

Madame Gao

Ling Wei Green Gang

(Alternate)  
Bobby Li

Closing the Gate

(Optional)  
Inspector Mazeng

(Floating)  
North China Daily

(Optional)  
4 Seas Gang





# Meet Victor Sassoon

Date: December 1925

Location: Victor's Study, Hotel Cathay, the Bund  
(Shanghai International Settlement)

**Purpose:** Introduce the investigators to their mentor, Victor Sassoon, and set them upon an investigation into the alleged outbreak of Cholera and the strange corpse in the morgue at St. Marie's Hospital.



Read the following to set the stage:

Turn back the hands of time; back to early December of 1925. You are in Shanghai, the Paris of the East. Foreign powers divide and occupy Shanghai; the French hold their concessions, as do the Japanese and the Americans. The Shanghai International Settlement binds together what remains, aside from the Chinese in the old city and the Jewish and Russian slums on Suzhou Creek.

President Sun Yat-sen died in March of this year, but his dream of a strong and unified China still lives in the hearts of many. The controlling Kuomintang (KMT) is rife with deeply divided loyalties, including an emerging communist party.

On May 30th, an overwhelmed contingent of the Shanghai Municipal Police, led by Inspector Edward Everson, fired into a crowd of Chinese student protesters. Four demonstrators were killed on the scene, another five later died of injuries, and countless more were injured.

The months that followed were marked with labor strikes, protests, violence, and martial law, which continued until November, when Chiang Kai-Shek solidified his political position. Although many are eager to ply their trade and commerce, others feel a change in the air. These are uncertain times at best...

Please see Map in the Introduction Chapter.

The elevator ascends to the top floor of the Hotel Cathay. The top floor is the private residence of Victor Sassoon, a bon vivant who built and controls much of the city. Upon his request, you have gathered in his study. You each have a special bond to him, and he affectionately thinks of you as his "troubleshooters".

Victor Sassoon is a thin man, older and wiser than his youthful face portrays. He walks with a limp from an injury he earned flying a biplane in the Great War, but he carries a gentleman's cane in style. Today, he is seated in an oversized leather chair, smoking a pipe filled with cherry tobacco.

Who are you, how are you dressed and how do you know Victor Sassoon?

Give the players a chance to introduce their investigators and roleplay. Encourage some interaction before cutting to the purpose of the meeting.

Victor says, "Doctor Fredrick Maybell, the Chief of Staff at the St. Marie Hospital, has brought a certain matter to my attention. He tells me that his morgue houses a body drained of all its blood."

Victor will convey the following information:

- The body was delivered to the St. Marie Hospital by Inspector Mazenq, a French Concession police office. Inspector Mazenq identified the body as that of Xu Lisheng (a/k/a "The Monkey"), a low-ranking gangster in the 4 Seas Gang.







- Maybell says this is not the first time he has seen a body in this condition. He said that about a week ago, Jesuit Father Rousseau hauled in a dozen corpses in the same condition. Father Rousseau, a resident doctor whose ministry is at St. Marie, claimed the bodies to be victims of a virulent Cholera outbreak at the House of Clouds. Doctor Maybell disputed this diagnosis and recommended autopsy. Father Rousseau then became agitated and burned the bodies during a heated argument.

- The House of Clouds is an opium den just inside of the International Settlement. The International Settlement's municipal Health Inspector, Bart Dicker, has confirmed that quarantine has been placed on the House of Clouds.

- Inspector Everson, of the Shanghai Municipal Police Department, has continuously posted two guards outside of the House of Clouds to "enforce" the quarantine. Nobody gets in or out of the House of Clouds without Inspector Everson's express permission; of course, Victor can arrange for an inspection by the investigators.

- If utilized, **Assess Honesty** (a successful **Psychology roll**) tells the investigators that Sassoon believes that an outbreak of Cholera is unlikely; but the story is useful in that it can provide some cover for an unimpeded investigation.

Victor knows Father Rousseau only by reputation. Father Rousseau is known for being rather forward thinking, and has a strong command of the Chinese language, which he uses to convert many Chinese to his Catholic cause. Father Rousseau is also socially active; he enjoys an occasional drink at the Long Bar, participates in the Shanghai Yacht Club, and attends other high-profile social events. If Victor recalls correctly, Father Rousseau attended an auction for the disposal of some of President Sun Yat-sen's estate back in April. If asked, Victor will say, "I think he purchased a lot containing a collection of religious texts and manuscripts taken from the Mogao cave complex in Dunhuang, Gansu."

- If pressed, Victor knows quite a bit about the Mogao cave complex and the French Sinologist Paul Pelliot, but he knows nothing of the manuscript known as "Strange Gates, Hidden Spirits".

Victor Sassoon is a very savvy man with a great understanding of how the world turns; he is also aware of the existence of the Cthulhu Mythos. His purpose in gathering the investigators together as trouble-shooters is to serve and protect humanity from the mind-melting evils of the Mythos. He would conduct the investigations



himself, if it were not for his acute awareness that those who conduct such operations tend to be consumed, either mentally or literally, by cosmic horrors.

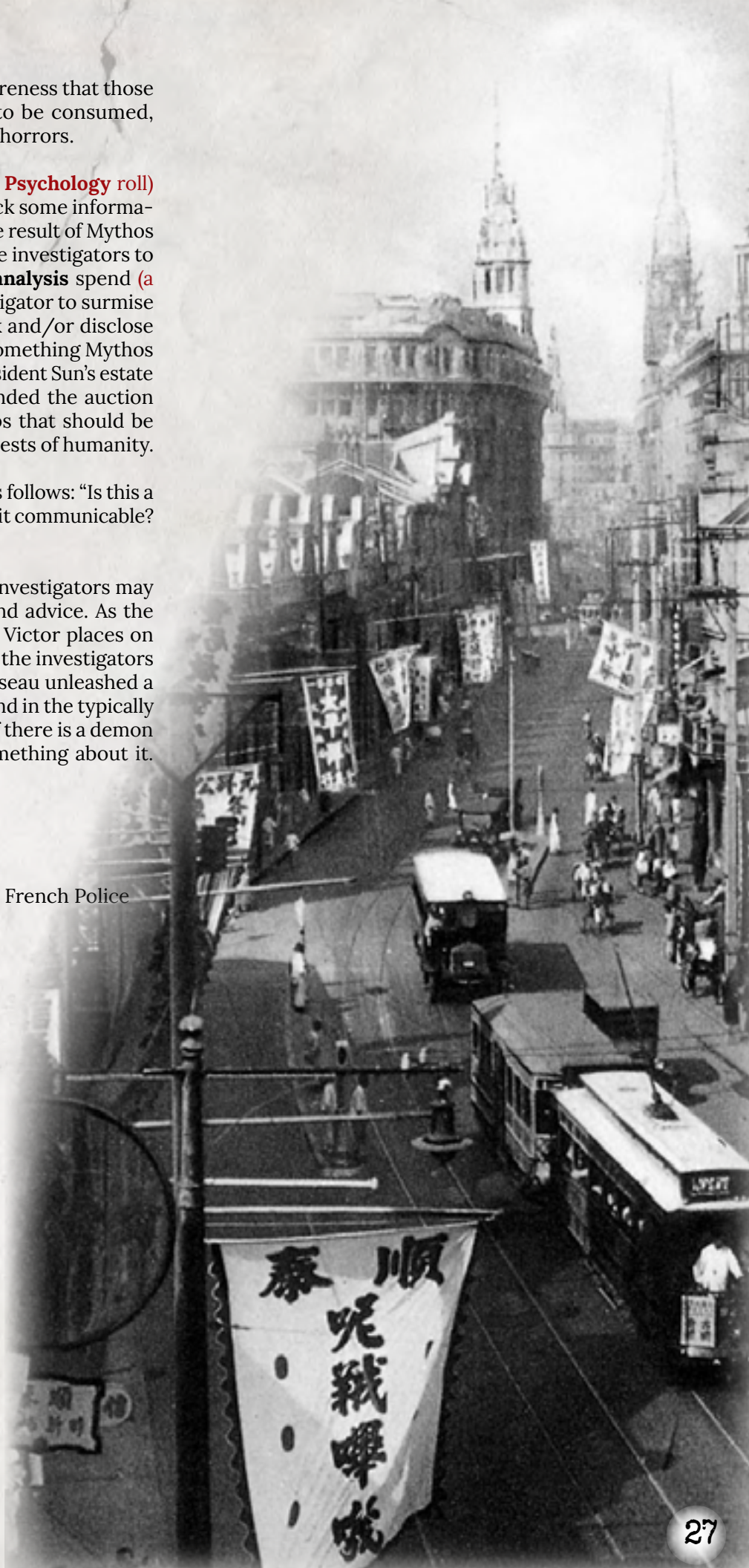
A use of **Psychoanalysis** (a successful **Psychology** roll) will ascertain that Victor is holding back some information. He believes that the bodies are the result of Mythos activity and that he may be sending the investigators to their death or worse. With a **Psychoanalysis** spend (a **Hard Psychology** roll), allow the investigator to surmise or explain what Victor is holding back and/or disclose that Victor believes Rousseau found something Mythos related in the lot he had acquired at President Sun's estate auction. After all, Victor himself attended the auction in an effort to secure texts and tombs that should be kept out of circulation in the best interests of humanity.

Victor's charge to the investigators is as follows: "Is this a Cholera outbreak or something else? Is it communicable? Is this a threat to our fair city?"

Over the course of the investigation, investigators may turn to Victor for further guidance and advice. As the threat becomes clearer, the demands Victor places on the investigators grow. For example, if the investigators tell Victor that they think Father Rousseau unleashed a demon into this world, he might respond in the typically understated style of an Englishman, "If there is a demon on the loose, we really should do something about it. Send it back and close the gate."

**Lead Outs:**

- St. Marie Hospital
- (Optional) Inspector Mazenq and the French Police





# St. Marie Hospital

**Location:** Jukin Road (瑞金路), French Concession

**Lead Ins:**

- Meet Victor Sassoon

**Purpose:** The investigators visit Doctor Fredrick Maybell at St. Marie Hospital, where he will give them access to a rather strange looking corpse. At the hospital, they may also speak with Abby Sullivan, the ambulance driver who, at the direction of Father Rousseau, picked up the bodies from the House of Clouds. Upon inquiry, Doctor Maybell may also allow the investigators to enter Father Rousseau's locked room on the third floor of the hospital, where they will find his body drained of all blood. The investigators then find a bundled copy of "Strange Gates, Hidden Spirits" and Father Rousseau's personal journal.



The St. Marie Hospital is a Catholic charity hospital and clinic located in the French Concession. The red brick building is three stories tall and its modest emergency room overflows with desperate patients, day-in and day-out.

St. Marie Hospital was a Jesuit hospital founded in 1907. The hospital's operating theatre first opened in 1918. The hospital held more than 300 beds, and included special wards for French soldiers, police officers and criminals. St. Marie Hospital is now known as the Ruijin Hospital (瑞金医院) and is located at Ruijin 2 Lu, near Yongjia Lu.

## Doctor Maybell

The hospital's Chief of Staff is Doctor Fredrick "the Bear" Maybell. Doctor Maybell is an extremely large man with a sharp Roman nose that looks out over a well-trimmed beard. He speaks French, English, and Latin with ease, proving that he is well educated, but he is what many people call "salt of the earth". Doctor Maybell handles the administration of the hospital and consults with patients, and when he's not busy with the performance of medical matters, he picks up a wrench to work on the hospital's generator; Doctor Maybell works ceaselessly. When he is not working, he is serving one of the city's many charities. He is genuinely a nice guy, although he holds some racist views as was common at the time.

When investigators arrive at the hospital, they are likely to be taken to Doctor Maybell's office. It will be empty. Doctor Maybell is currently in the hospital garage helping Abby Sullivan change a wheel on the ambulance. Any investigator using **Flattery** (a successful **Charm**) can talk an orderly or nurse into escorting them to the garage.

Once the investigators introduce themselves to Doctor Maybell, he will be receptive to their questions. If asked about the strange body in the Morgue, Doctor Maybell will say the following:

- "Yes, I brought this matter to the attention of Victor Sassoon. He is a trusted friend and is good at solving complicated matters, such as this one. The deaths are a mystery. Are we dealing with a disease? Perhaps an experimental weapon of war? The site of the quarantine is just inside the International Settlement; the most recent corpse was found in an alley in the French Concession. Inspector Mazenq lacks jurisdiction at the site of quarantine, and he refuses to cooperate with Inspector Everson."





- “Inspector Mazenq consulted with me on a peculiar matter; he found a corpse in an alley in the seedier part of the French Concession. It had been drained of all blood. I saw a similar corpse, in fact a dozen similar corpses a week ago. Father Rousseau had Abby bring them here.”

- “Oh, Abby? He’s a good lad. He’s been driving the ambulance here for years. Part of Father Rousseau’s congregation.”

- “Would you like to inspect the body? I have it locked up in the morgue.”

When asked about Father Rousseau, he might say the following:

- “Father Rousseau? Well, he’s been with the hospital almost as long as I have, about six or seven years?”

- While checking the pulse and heartbeat of a bedridden patient, “Where is he? I haven’t seen him around since last time he blew up at me. He was shouting and carrying on about the importance of burning bodies to avoid a Cholera outbreak. He seems to have made himself sparse as of late; it’s been at least a couple of days since I have seen him.”

- “It’s not like him to get angry or so vehemently argue over a medical opinion. He’s been acting strange lately.”

- “Normally, Father Rousseau likes to discuss religion, philosophy, and medicine. You know he reads, writes and speaks fluent Chinese? He’s read the Chinese classics; knows a thing or two about Buddhism and Daoism. He is normally quite pleasant. Maybe he has started self-medicating?”

- “The hospital provides him with a room on the 3rd floor. I can have Nurse Schultz accompany you there if you’d like.



## Abby Sullivan

Is a hulking Irish man with brownish red hair and a full beard. He was raised in a Catholic school and attends Father Rousseau’s sermons and communion. Abby is good with his hands and can find common ground with investigators who have **Mechanical Repair (Mechanical Repair skill level of 50% or higher)**. Abby likes to curse like a sailor but is otherwise morally grounded. If interviewed by the investigators with whom he shares common ground, he might say the following:

- “Father Rousseau? Something is amiss with him. He didn’t show up for Communion this Sunday.”

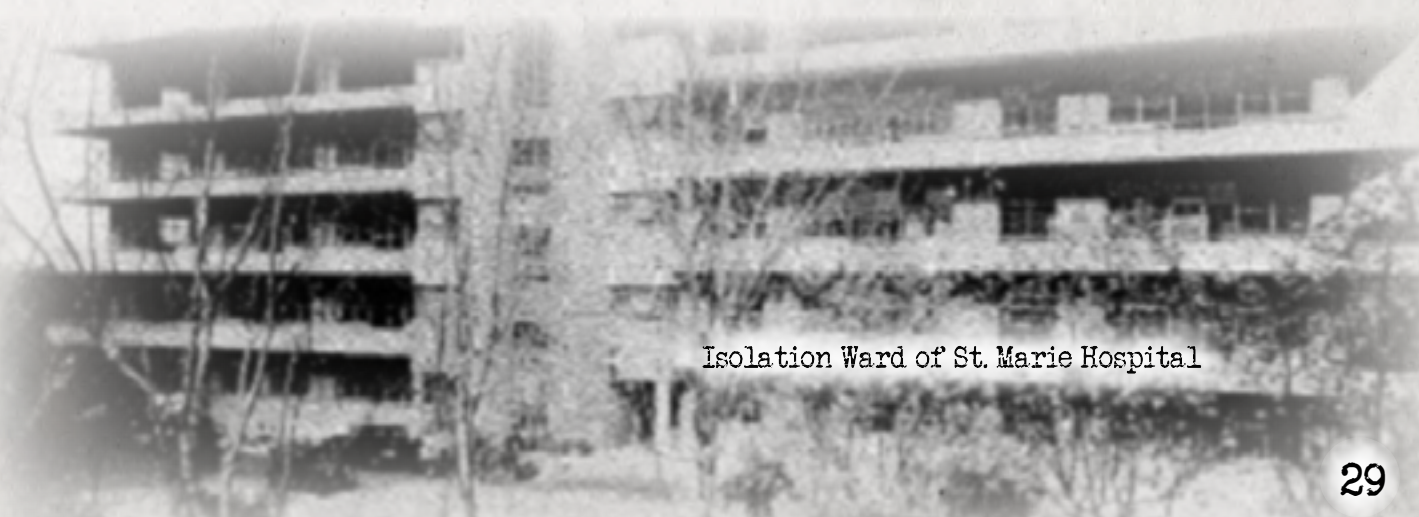
- “Caught him doing those silly Chinese stretching exercises the other day. If you ask me, he’s been consorting with the locals too much; clouds his judgment.

- “Yes, I brought in a dozen bodies from the House of Clouds. All of them bodies were dried and withered; they looked like prunes. Father Rousseau told me to wrap the bodies in sheets and then wash my hands, on account of the Cholera.”

- “What was a man of the cloth doing at a house of sin?”

## Nurse Schultz

Is a German nurse that is almost as tall as she is wide; thick ankles and a hairy upper lip that is always set to frown. She is deeply misunderstood, though, and is rather gentle with her patients. She truly does God’s work; it is a shame that God did not grant Nurse Schultz the same beauty on the outside that she displays on the inside. Nurse Schultz is a member of Father Rousseau’s congregation and can provide insights into matters involving Father Rousseau’s state of mind. Use of **Theology** is the best way to get Nurse Schultz to share her thoughts. **A Persuade roll can get Nurse Schultz to share her thoughts. Keepers may elect to give investigators who are members of the Catholic Clergy a Bonus Dice on their attempt to persuade Nurse Schultz.**



Isolation Ward of St. Marie Hospital



**Keeper's Note:** In the event of a casualty or an untimely demise, Doctor Maybell, Abby Sullivan, Nurse Schultz, and Bart Dicker could serve as a replacement character

that death was by exsanguination and that, based on rigor mortis and decay, death occurred less than a week ago. With a successful **Spot Hidden** or **Medicine** roll an investigator can identify four or five contusions to the throat and chest (where the maws of the Demon Spirit Kun attached).

## The Morgue

The morgue is a cold chamber of white tile and metal tables kept locked except when in use. Doctor Maybell and other members of the staff keep multiple keys to the morgue, so obtaining entrance should be relatively easy.

The body of the departed gangster, Xu Lisheng (a/k/a "the Monkey") is kept on a rolling metal slab that rolls into an icebox cabinet kept cool by ice blocks delivered by Victor's ice company daily.

The desiccated body is covered in tattoos that at one time must have been impressive, but now look like a pack of deflated monkeys eating shriveled bananas. The eyes of the corpse have filled with muddled clouds, and the taut tissue in the face has frozen into a permanent grimace.

Investigators viewing the body must make a 2-point **Stability** test. Hardened investigators receive a -1 bonus to the difficulty of the test. **Streetwise** confirms that this is the body of Xu Lisheng, "the Monkey", a low-level enforcer for the 4 Seas Gang. **Medicine** or **Evidence Collection** can determine that the body has been dead for less than a week, based on rigor mortis and decay. **Evidence Collection** or **Medicine** can identify four or five contusions to the throat and chest, (where the maws of the Demon Spirit Kun attached). A **Medicine** spend tells the investigators that death was by exsanguination.

Investigators viewing the body must make a **Sanity** roll (0/1D2). Investigators with a **Criminal Occupation** or **Police Detective Occupation** can confirm that this is the body of Xu Lisheng, "the Monkey", a low-level enforcer for the 4 Seas Gang. A successful **Medicine** roll determines

## Demise of Father Rousseau

Father Mark Rousseau's room: The door to Rousseau's room is locked. The lock is rather simple and **Locksmith** (a successful **Locksmith** roll.) can jimmy the door open without effort. Nurse Schultz, the head nurse, also has a keyring full of master keys for every locked door in the hospital, including the locked medicine cabinets. Once in the room, the investigators will find a very spartan room painted white. On the wall is a simple wooden cross. The window is open, letting in a damp cold.

A crumpled body in rigor mortis lies on the bed, with a rosary clutched tightly in one hand.

**Evidence Collection** tells the investigators that there are no flies and very little in the way of blood splatter. With **Medicine** (or an **Evidence Collection** spend), the investigators can determine that based on the rigor mortis, Mark Rousseau has been dead for about two days. Investigators with **Evidence Collection** or **Medicine** will notice that there is no blood pooling, as would be typical in a corpse of this age. This odd observation results in a 3-point **Stability** test. **Evidence Collection** or **Medicine** can identify half a dozen pre-mortem fist-sized bruises and open wounds on the face, throat, neck, and chest, where the maws of the beast attached. **Biology** would surmise the bites to be similar to what you might expect from a lamprey or a wolf eel. A **Medicine** spend tells the investigators that death was by exsanguination. An **Evidence Collection** spend is able to collect demon saliva for further study and chemical analysis; coupled with **Biology** an investigator could determine that the saliva has an anticoagulant effect and functions like certain snake poisons. This realization results in a 3-point **Stability** test.





A **Medicine** roll tells the investigators that, based on the rigor mortis, Mark Rousseau has been dead for about two days. Moreover, there is no blood pooling, as would be typical in a corpse of this age. This odd observation requires the investigators to make a **Sanity** roll (0/1D2). A **Spot Hidden** roll can identify half a dozen pre-mortem fist-sized bruises and open wounds on the face, throat and neck, and chest, where the maws of the beast attached. A **Biology** roll would surmise the bites to be similar to what you might expect from a lamprey or a wolf eel. A **Medicine** roll tells the investigators that death was by exsanguination. A successful Forensics roll is able to collect demon saliva for further study and chemical analysis and could determine that the saliva has an anticoagulant effect and functions like certain snake venoms. This realization requires the investigators to make a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3).

If Doctor Maybell is asked to consult on the condition of Father Rousseau's body or other recent victims of the Demon Spirit Kun, he might react as follows:

- Doctor Maybell is genuinely upset and saddened by Father Rousseau's death, and might exclaim, "My Lord!?" **Assess Honesty** (a successful **Psychology** roll) confirms that Doctor Maybell emotions are genuine.

- "I haven't examined the body yet, but I can tell you with absolute certainty that his death was not caused by Cholera. Let me see. Cause of death is...exsanguination. Very odd; where did all the blood go? It's as if somebody attached a tube to his vein and used a crank vacuum to get the last drops."

- **[CORE CLUE]** The closet contains the black robes of the Jesuit, as well as a bundle of ancient and brittle looking scrolls wrapped in yellow silk (this is "Strange Gates, Hidden Spirits") together with selected excerpts transcribed by hand into modern notebooks, including ritual instructions and chants. Please See **Strange Gates Handout 1**. A **Spot Hidden Roll** with a bonus die finds a copy of "Strange Gates, Hidden Spirits" wrapped in yellow silk. Please see **Strange Gates Handout 1**.

- **[CORE CLUE]** The desk is uncluttered and tidy; placed squarely upon it is a bible, a leather-bound journal, stationary, and pen. Please See **Strange Gates Handout 2**. A **Spot Hidden Roll** with a bonus die finds Father Rousseau's leather-bound journal. Please see **Strange Gates Handout 2**.

Keeper's Note: Ling Wei used the seal to command the Demon Spirit Kun to kill Father Rousseau. The Demon flew through Father Rousseau's open window and fed upon him in the night. At this point, it is unlikely the investigators will be able to determine that Ling Wei killed Father Rousseau, but they should have enough clues and information to advance the story without additional leads or clues.

#### Lead Outs:

- The House of Clouds
- (Optional) Inspector Mazenq and the French Concession Police Department

Rare picture from St. Marie Hospital, 1930s





# The House of Clouds

**Location:** The House of Clouds, an opium den just inside of the Shanghai International Settlement

## Lead Ins:

- St. Marie Hospital

**Purpose:** Investigators arrive at the site of the ritual. The site is under quarantine, and the Shanghai Municipal Police are refusing entry to anyone without Inspector Everson's permission to enter. Investigators will discover that the gate is still open; they may even feel the presence of the Demon Spirit Kun.



The House of Clouds is on the border of the Shanghai International Settlement and the French Concession. Barbwire and broken bottles adorn a make-shift wall of abandoned carts, broken chairs and sandbags. The wall was hastily thrown up during the riots back in June. There is an umbrella covered checkpoint in the center of the street, but it hasn't been manned in months. Throngs of people move through the street; they are of all nationalities, unhappily mixing.

The House of Clouds is small wooden building painted white; the paint is chipped and peeling, and black mold threatens the bare wood. The sign above the doorway is of a single blue cloud proclaiming to be the "Famous House of Clouds" in both English and Chinese.

The location was originally chosen because of uncertainty as to whether it was part of the French Concession or the Shanghai International Settlement.

This uncertainty allowed it to operate in the open and without much interference beyond the standard bribes required of this type of a business. Martial law and the decision to put up a wall has damaged its business and resulted in the need for steeper bribes to the Shanghai Municipal Police. The House of Clouds has seen better times, and up until recently has managed to keep its doors open. Almost a week ago, Bart Dicker, the Shanghai Health Inspector, shut it down as the source of a virulent Cholera outbreak. Two uniformed police officers stand posted outside of the House of Clouds; both of them have orange curly hair, one of them is smoking a cigarette.

## Uniformed Police Officers

The orange hair of the two uniformed police officers marks them as Irish; their names are Patrick ("Paddy") Kelley and Danny ("Danny-boy") Bass. They drew the short lot, and have been tasked to enforce the quarantine. They instinctively treat the site like a crime scene and make every effort to prevent evidence spoliation. Recently, the officers were chewed out by Inspector Everson for providing information to a newspaper journalist. They will be hostile toward investigators who hold themselves out as journalists, or who by virtue of the Journalist occupation, have all the tell-tale signs of being a journalist.

The police officers will speak openly with anyone with **Cop Talk** or **Flattery** (a successful **Persuade**, **Fast Talk** or **Charm** roll). A **Cop Talk** spend (a successful **Hard Persuade** roll) grants investigators access to the scene of the crime. With a **Bureaucracy** or **Law** spend (a successful **Hard Persuade** or **Law** roll) the Officers will grant them an audience with Inspector Everson and/or interview time with Madame Gao. Bribery (**Bargain**, **Credit Rating**) will not work on these officers as the House of Clouds is under official quarantine and the officers know that the





case has the attention of higher-ups. Officers Kelley and Bass can provide some or all the following information:

- The House of Clouds is an opium den; prostitution also occurs on the premises. It is owned and managed by Madame Gao. Madame Gao is backed by the 4 Seas Gang.
- The official story is that the House of Clouds is the source of a Cholera outbreak, but Paddy and Danny-boy know otherwise, and will give up their information and speculation without much effort. They might say something like, “go ahead and peek in the window. There is no way that is a cholera outbreak; that there is a crime scene!”
- Some sort of ritual was being conducted in the back room of the House of Clouds. Patty is absolutely certain that it was a satanic ritual. Danny-boy says it involves Chinese hocus-pocus, and he figures that “if they don’t believe in God, they can’t very well believe in Satan either.”
- Two bodies were found in the back room; ten bodies were found in the adjacent smoking room. Considering the carnage, there wasn’t a lot of blood. The deaths occurred a week ago. Four of the victims were foreigners and eight of the victims were Chinese. **Bureaucracy (a successful Law or INT roll)** confirms that Health Inspector Bart Dicker, in consultation with Father Rousseau, declared the deaths the result of Cholera. The bodies were taken to St. Marie Hospital by horse-drawn ambulance.
- An opium addict named Sam Griffith witnessed the murders, but he is not a very reliable witness because of his opium addiction. Sam Griffith said that the people in the den were attacked by a “dragon”. Sam Griffith also said the eminent Father Rousseau was present at the House of Clouds during the attack. Danny-boy might roll his eyes and say, “That’s exactly what you might expect a junky to say when his own arse is on the line.”
- Madame Gao survived or perpetrated the attack; Inspector Everson took her into custody.

## The Entry

The entry and antechamber of the House of Clouds are extraordinarily fragrant; a decade of opium use has left an almost sweet smell in the wood that form the walls and floor, the leather armchairs, and the heavy curtains that blot out the light of day. There is an oak writing desk in the corner of the room; it bears a ledger and pen. But this is no gentlemen’s sitting room; make no mistake, from the lewd paintings of naked women to the brass opium pipes waiting to be packed for a small pittance, this is a house of sin. The doorway into the smoking room is covered with a piece of blue cloth meant to be pushed aside by patrons.

- With **Accounting (successful Accounting roll)** the ledger shows a business that was rather profitable, until about 6 months ago. It includes a set of expenses or “remittances” which most likely go to pay off the police and criminal organizations. The ledger includes the names of clients, with Father Rousseau included as a regular customer. There is also an interesting entry for a payment made by Rousseau, a little more than two weeks ago, in excess of 200 silver pesos, which would pay for much more opium than one person could smoke in a single sitting. Although not clearly identified, this ledger entry records a payment for renting out the entire back room to perform the ritual.

## The Smoking Room

It takes a few seconds for eyes to adjust to the room primarily used for smoking opium; its recesses are filled with comfortable looking furniture and silk-covered pillows. The room is otherwise dark save for a red light that emanates from a doorway at the far side of the room.

4 foreigners and 6 Chinese died in this room. Although the scene has not been disturbed, you would need **Evidence Collection (a successful Forensics roll)** to know what





happened here. Most of the victims offered little resistance (as they were too high to move, or caught unawares by the Demon Spirit Kun). There are a few arterial blood sprays, and a small table has been knocked over.

## The Back Room

The furniture in the back room was cleared out to make space for the ritual.

There is something wrong with the lighting. Everything in the room has a red tint; the source of the light is not obvious.

Somebody has chalked a Bagua (八卦) or battle chart of the eight trigrams from the “Book of Changes” on the oiled wooden floor. Inside the circle of trigrams is an altar with tapers, a Chinese inkwell with red and black ink, two ceramic bowls of water, and two stone flower vases.

The room is unnaturally cold. None of the windows are open, but you can feel a breeze from the southwest portion of the room. It smells sour.

Please see **Strange Gates Handout 4** for the Later Heaven Bagua. (后天八卦)



•**Evidence Collection** (a successful **Spot Hidden** roll) to find the arterial blood spray from someone who was standing next to the altar (Master Li), and another blood spray from someone standing near the door (Captain Zhou).

•Curiously, all along the walls of the room, somebody has painstakingly chalked other classical Chinese words. Spend a point of **Theology** (Chinese) or 2 points of **Language** (Chinese) (A successful **Occult** roll by someone who can read Chinese) to determine that the chalk writings are an attempt to ward the room from evil spirits. Some of the wards are passages taken straight from the Dao De Jing (道德经) but others originate from more esoteric sources. The chalk ward before the door to the room has been smeared. **Evidence Collection** (a successful **Spot Hidden** roll) to find the Chinese characters, and surmise that somebody smeared the chalk while trying to flee the room.

• A set of gold colored Hanfu, or Chinese clothing traditionally worn by the Chinese elite, has been discarded in the North-West corner of the room. **Anthropology** (a successful **Anthropology** roll) provides that the gold color is represents the authority of the Heavenly Emperor; it would have been worn only by a high ranking official or magistrate. The gold embroidered cloak is stained with a streak of blood. The Hanfu has been haphazardly dropped near an open, but empty suitcase. The suitcase once belonged to Father Rousseau, as evidenced by a name tag.

*Keeper's Note: It is up to the Keeper to decide whether or not the wards are effective at keeping in and/or out the Demon Spirit Kun. If the Keeper decides the wards would otherwise be effective, then they were broken when Bobby Li ran for the door. Otherwise, the wards are meaningless window-dressing on an otherwise effective ritual.*

The Gate to Hell: the open gate is in the south-west portion of the room, closest to the trigram known as 'Kun' (坤). The realization that this is a gate requires a 5-point **Stability** test with a difficulty of 4 (**Sanity** roll 1/1D8). The gate is the source of the previously mentioned red light, as well as the faint, sour smelling breeze. Radiation from the other side of the gate (some very distant planet or wherever it is that Demon Kun normally resides) seeps into the room; an investigator with **Physics** (a successful **Science (Physics)** roll) that also understood that there was an open gate in the room might guess at the emanation of radiation, and if given time and materials could devise an experiment to confirm as much. In theory, an investigator may step through the gate; any investigator foolish enough to do so might observe some amazing otherworldly sights before their untimely demise or worse.

*Keeper's Note: It is up to the Keeper to decide just how dangerous the radiation is to the investigators, and should do so based on their anticipation of how the scenario and campaign might play out.*



At this point in the game, the investigators have found the gate and the instructions for conducting the ritual. They are missing the date wood seal necessary to command the Demon Spirit Kun to go back through the gate. The investigators need a date wood seal. The two most obvious ways to do this are to either (a) track down the original date wood seal or (b) to make their own seal. Tracking down the original date wood seal begins at Ling Wei, who absconded with the seal following the disastrous ritual. Investigators opting to make their own seal could most easily do this by tracking down Bobby Li, the brother of Daoist Master Li, and convincing him to regain his honor by helping to banish the beast and close the gate.

## The Date Wood Seal

Fabrication of a new date wood seal generally requires the assistance of Bobby Li (as Bobby Li knows the true name or sign of the King in Yellow, which was used to carve the seal). Please see (Alternate) Bobby Li. Even if the investigators fabricate a new seal, they must contend with



the person currently in possession of the original seal; both seals would be equally effective. A contest of wills could ensue, and any person in possession of the original seal would have an interest in finding a way to destroy anybody who could effectively challenge their unfettered use of the demon spirit (by use of another seal).

Securing the original date wood seal involves tracking down Ling Wei, assuming he has not lost possession of the seal to another person or faction.

**Keeper's Note:** If the investigation stalls, more bodies will start to appear; each time, pushing the investigators closer to the date wood seal. The Keeper can have either Inspector Mazenq or Inspector Everson (as appropriate) contact the investigators when a new corpse has been found. If this fails to compel the investigators to action, advance a Campaign Driver that is averse to the interests of the investigators.

## Optional Lead: Sam Griffith

Sam Griffith is an addict in need of a fix. Now that his opium den is under quarantine, he's at a loss for what to do. He rarely wanders far from the House of Clouds and may return. A **Sense Trouble** test Difficulty 3 (a **successful Spot Hidden** roll) would spot him watching the House of Clouds with interest. He has bloodshot eyes and scratches his arms like he has a case of body lice. Sam might say the following things:

- "Hey mister, can I have a smoke or borrow a nickel?"
- "I saw the dragon that attacked the House of Clouds. It glowed red as it ate both the maidens."
- "Father Rousseau was there. Wearing a Chinese frock. Ask him, he saw it all."
- "You know Ling Wei, the gangster? You know he's a gangster, right? Yes, so he stole the imperial chop. Picked it off the floor and ascended into the clouds."

## Optional Lead: Bart Dicker

Bart Dicker is a wiry, young American who set out to China in search of adventure a few years ago. Despite being an outsider and quite young, he's fairly well connected to city's movers and shakers. He picked up Chinese very quickly and was tapped last year to serve the International Settlement in the capacity of Municipal Health Inspector. Bart Dicker invoked the quarantine on the House of Clouds upon request by Father Rousseau. Bart did not inspect the premises, as Father Rousseau told him that he could become sick if he did so; he wholeheartedly trusts Father Rousseau's assessment that a potential cholera outbreak could be contained if an effective quarantine was put into place.

### Lead Outs:

- Inspector Everson and the Shanghai Municipal Police
- (Alternate) Bobby Li
- (Optional) The 4 Seas Gang



# (Optional) Inspector Mazenq and the French Concession Police Department

## Lead Ins:

- Meet Victor Sassoon
- St. Marie Hospital

**Purpose:** Investigators meet Inspector Mazenq and learn of his animosity towards Inspector Everson and the challenging political environment of old Shanghai. While speaking with Inspector Mazenq, the investigators learn of the conflict between the 4 Seas Gang and the Green Gang, and are pointed in the direction of Shanghai's strongest triads.



A few days after the catastrophic summoning, a French beat cop stumbled upon the mysterious, shriveled body of Xu Lisheng "the Monkey", a low-ranking member of the 4 Seas Gang, in an alley in the French Concession. None of the detectives consulted had ever seen anything like it, and neither had senior Inspector Mazenq. Inspector Mazenq called upon Doctor Maybell at St. Marie Hospital to determine the cause of death. Doctor Maybell, in turn, appealed to Victor Sassoon for help.

Inspector Mazenq is a proud Frenchman and a Protestant. He does not like his English, Catholic counter-part at the Shanghai Municipal Police, Inspector Everson. Inspector Mazenq will not directly cooperate with the Shanghai Municipal Police under any circumstances. He has a good understanding of the Shanghai criminal underworld and the French community, and is more likely to work behind the scenes than confront a problem

head-on. Inspector Mazenq responds best to **Cop Talk** and **Flattery** (a **successful Law, Charm or Persuade roll**) in native French.

Inspector Mazenq talks in a thick French accent, and might say something like the following:

- "We knew it was 'the Monkey' because of the distinctive tattoos on his posterior."
- "The body was taken to St. Marie for autopsy and disposal. Doctor Maybell can assist you, should you have any need for medical opinion."
- "We are treating it as a murder."
- "We understand that the 4 Seas Gang and the Green Gang do not get along well. Perhaps the number one suspect is a member of the Green Gang, no?"
- "We are aware that a dozen similar bodies were found at the House of Clouds, however, we lack jurisdiction to enter the premises."

## Lead Outs:

- (Optional) The 4 Seas Gang



French Municipal Council Building



# (Floating) The North China Daily

## Lead Ins:

- The House of Clouds

**Purpose:** This scene simply involves the investigators becoming aware of a newspaper report. The purpose of the scene is to give the players an update, remind the players that their actions have real-world consequences, and ultimately push the story forward. The Keeper should feel free to add stories and articles to the paper to reflect the actions of the investigators or otherwise add to a sense of urgency.



It's the second week of December and the North China Daily publishes its weekly newspaper. The paper includes the following articles which may be of interest to the investigators:

- Although the labor strikes have come to an end, Shanghai's economy has been dealt a serious blow. Many have called for the resignation and reformation of the Municipal Council. Chairman Stirling Fessenden has promised reform, and is said to be considering adding ethnic Chinese to the Council. Police Commissioner McEuen is under increasing pressure to "take responsibility" for the May 30<sup>th</sup> incident.
- A cholera outbreak has been reported. The Shanghai Municipal Medical Examiner reports that the source of the Cholera appears to be a brothel known as the "House of Clouds", and that twenty patrons and employees have fallen sick and have been quarantined, and that another eleven have succumbed to the disease. The bodies of those that died were cremated so as to contain the spread of the disease. Chairman Fessenden has promised to investigate why the brothel was allowed to operate within the Shanghai International Settlement.

**Keeper's Note:** During playtesting of this scenario, players were invited to embellish the North China Daily News Report, adding a reference to the earlier actions of their investigators. In a Pulp style game, this roleplaying exercise has a potentially great comedic effect.

## NORTH-CHINA

Vol. I. No. 1.

SHANGHAI, SATURDAY, Sep 10, 1920.

**SHIPPING.**  
**FOR LONDON DIRECT.**  
THE A. J. BAKER COMPANY, Captain A. J. Baker, Agent. The ship will leave Shanghai for London, 1st August, 1920.

**FOR FREIGHT OR CHARTER.**  
THE A. J. BAKER COMPANY, Captain A. J. Baker, Agent. Apply to J. BAKER, MATHESON & Co. Shanghai, 1st August, 1920.

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**MARINE INSURANCE.**  
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**FOR SALE.**  
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THE A. J. BAKER COMPANY, Captain A. J. Baker, Agent. Apply to J. BAKER, MATHESON & Co. Shanghai, 1st August, 1920.

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## (Alternate) Bobby Li

### Lead Ins:

- The House of Clouds

**Purpose:** The investigators follow the trail to Bobby Li, a participant in the ritual that opened the gate. Bobby Li can help the investigators understand the intricacies of the ritual, including the importance of the date wood seal.



Bobby Li is the unemployed younger brother of Daoist Master Li Zheng. During the ritual, he bolted in fear and smeared a chalk ward in the process. He blames himself for the death of his brother and Captain Zhou. He is likely the only person in Shanghai who understands Daoism and the ritual well-enough to assist the investigators in preparing and performing the ritual. Unfortunately, he is shaken to the core and is barely able to function. The investigators will need to work hard to rehabilitate him.

Bobby is currently holed up at the Dolphin Hotel, a small run-down hotel on the edge of the French Concession, near the Shanghai International Settlement and the Chinese City. **Streetwise** (a successful **INT** roll) identifies the building across the street as an opium den, and kitty-corner to that is a brothel. The Dolphin hosts only seedy clientele, such as the shattered Bobby Li, who has taken to drinking rice wine and smoking opium to oblivion.

Rehabilitating Bobby Li requires a 1-point spend in either **Psychoanalysis** or a **Reassurance** (a successful **Hard Psychoanalysis** roll). The players should fully explain and describe how they use their investigative skills to talk Bobby out of his stupor and deal with his serious addictions.

Bobby can provide the following information and assistance once he is sober:

- Bobby saw the ritual in detail, the opening of the gate in the southwest corner of the room and the demon that consumed his brother and Captain Zhou.
- Bobby knows that Wei Ling is a member of the Green Gang. Bobby knows the Green Gang is led by Pockmark Huang, but Bobby does not know the location of the

Green Gang's hangout (the Crystal Garden). With a **Streetwise** spend the investigators would be able to track down the location of the Crystal Garden. Please see (Alternate) Ling Wei and the Green Gang. (Investigators are able to track down the location of the Crystal Garden with a successful **INT** roll; any investigators with unsavory, criminal occupations enjoy a Bonus Die.)

- Bobby knows how to create a new date wood seal, but will not make this suggestion or volunteer information unless expressly asked by the investigators. Creating a new date wood seal requires knowledge of the true name of the King in Yellow. Knowing the true name of the King in Yellow is the same as seeing the Yellow Sign, which results in a **Stability** test 5, and loss of 1 **Sanity** (**Sanity** roll 1D4/1D8).

### Lead Outs:

- Closing the Gate

#### Bobby Li

Chinese Theology 6, Flee 4, Health 5, Languages 2, Scuffling 2, Stability 0, Streetwise 2, Weapons 1, Alertness -1

#### Bobby Li, 23, brother of Daoist Master Li.

STR 35	CON 50	SIZ 50	DEX 60	INT 50
AP 45	POW 65	EDU 50	SAN 32	HP 10
DB: 0	Build: 0		Move: 8	MP: 13

Brawl: 25%, unarmed 1D3  
Sword: 32%, with a Jian 1D8+1  
Dodge: 30%  
Armor: None

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 2%, Occult 72%,  
Spot Hidden 25%,  
Languages: Chinese 50%, English 25%



# Inspector Everson and the Shanghai Municipal Police

## Lead Ins:

- The House of Clouds

**Purpose:** Investigators approach Inspector Everson for assistance in their investigation. Inspector Everson provides the investigators with access to Madame Gao and points them in the direction of Shanghai's notorious triads.



Inspector Everson is an English Catholic from Manchester. He was stationed in Shanghai during a stint with the British Army and decided to stay in Shanghai after his honorable discharge. Inspector Everson is personally affected by the House of Clouds case. He suspects Father Rousseau was present during the House of Clouds murders and because Father Rousseau was a well-known and respected figure in Shanghai society, the manner and location of his death might embarrass the Vatican. Although Inspector Everson is highly motivated to solve the House of Clouds case, he is at a loss for a plausible explanation as to what happened there. To make matters worse, the Municipal Council is looking for a scapegoat for the May 30th incident. Police Commissioner McEuen, a personal friend and fellow Catholic has asked Inspector Everson to consider resigning from the police force. On December 21, 1925, both Inspector Everson and Commissioner McEuen will resign from their respective positions.

A **Cop Talk** spend (a successful **Law** or **Persuade** roll) is required to get Inspector Everson to open up about the House of Clouds case.

Inspector Everson is able to offer the following:

- “We found ten bodies in all. Eight in the smoking room and two in the backroom. They were drained of blood; they were dry, like...beef jerky.”
- “At first blush, I thought it was a satanic ritual, somebody set up candles, an altar, and weird writings on the floors. But Officer Venky, who speaks the local language, assures me that the chalk and other accoutrement are part of a dated Chinese religion. I've heard about things like this; I hear the secret Tangs get up to all kinds of nonsense. If this is the work of a secret Tang, then this is gang-related.”
- “The Tangs you ask? Well, there is the Hip Sing Tang, it's a front for the 4 Seas Gang. Then there's the On Leong Chinese Merchants Association which backs the Green Gang.”
- “The House of Clouds” is owned and managed by Madame Gao. I have her detained at the moment, but I don't have enough to charge her with the murders and will have to let her go soon.”
- “I suspect the House of Clouds is backed by the 4 Seas Gang. It managed to keep its doors open in the International Settlement through bribes to a crooked beat cop. Well, most of them, at some point another, take a bribe. It's hard to make ends meet on our paycheck.”
- “There were at least two survivors who witnessed the murders; maybe more. Madame Gao and an opium addict named Sam Griffith. Madame Gao hasn't been very helpful so far; claims that her English is not good. Sam Griffith has been forthcoming, but his information is circumspect. He says that a dragon with glowing red eyes attacked the patrons of the opium den. He also







says that Ling Wei, a low-level member of the Green Gang, was present at the House of Clouds during the murders. I'm liking Ling Wei for the crime."

- **Assess Honesty** (a successful **Psychology** roll) tells the investigators that Inspector Everson is holding back something.
- Unless Inspector Everson meets the investigators at St. Marie Hospital, **Reassurance** or **Cop Talk** (a successful **Persuade** roll) is required to convince Everson to acknowledge that he believes Father Rousseau may have been present during the murders at the House of Clouds.

#### Lead Outs:

- Madame Gao
- (Optional) The 4 Seas Gang

#### Inspector Everson and the May 30th Movement

"Stop! If you do not stop I will shoot!"

The mass of demonstrating Chinese students and laborers pushed forward, and Inspector Everson gave the order to fire. However, nobody heard, so Inspector Everson snatched a rifle from one of his men and fired the first shot himself. When the smoke had cleared and the crowd has dispersed, 13 demonstrators were dead and many more wounded.

The violence sparked a major anti-imperialist, anti-foreigner movement called the May 30th Movement (五卅运动). labor strikes, protests, and boycotts sweep all of China. The ranks of the Chinese Communist Party exponentially explode and by the end of December, Inspector Everson would be forced to resign.



## (Optional) The 4 Seas Gang

**Location:** A side street near East Nanjing Lu.

### Lead Ins:

- The House of Clouds
- Inspector Everson and the Shanghai Municipal Police

**Purpose:** The investigators are looking for the date wood seal, and their search has led them down a very dangerous path. This scene introduces the investigators to the 4 Seas Gang, a virulent criminal organization led by Lao Che, a mythos sorcerer and campaign protagonist. Presumably, the investigators will not meet Lao Che in this scene and are unlikely to fully realize the extent of the threat. The investigators have either blundered into this scene or have come here as part of a gambit to play the 4 Seas Gang off of the Green Gang. Either way, the investigators are one step closer to the object of their search, the date wood seal.



The Belt King Social Club is the 4 Seas Gang's hideout. Investigators can find it by either **Shadowing** Madame Gao or another member of the 4 Seas Gang (**Shadowing** test of 4 or be noticed) (a **successful Stealth roll**) or by spending a point in **Streetwise** (a **successful INT roll**). The Belt King Social Club is on the fourth floor of a four-story building.

- Law or Bureaucracy** (a **successful Library Use roll**) will reveal that on paper, The Belt King Social Club is owned by the Hip Sing Tang, which even has a putative office and meeting hall on the third floor of the building. A **Streetwise** spend or spends on other applicable ability pools (a **successful INT roll or Law roll**) will reveal that in reality, The Belt King Social Club is owned by the 4 Seas Gang, and that the head of the 4 Seas Gang is Lu

Xun (陆逊), also known as “Lao Che” (老车). His three sons, who also frequent the joint, are as follows:

- Lu Chen (陆晨)
- Lu Kai (陆凯)
- Roy Lu, “Little Cart Roy” (小车)

- The 4 Seas Gang backs Madame Gao and has an ownership interest in the House of Clouds. It has limited information regarding the fateful events that occurred at the House of Clouds, but most members of the 4 Seas Gang believe that the murders at the House of Clouds were an attack by the Green Gang; they are surprised that Lao Che has yet to strike back.

- The 4 Seas Gang has a close relationship with the Japanese secret society known as the Dark Ocean Society, Genyosha (玄洋社), and is thus in contact with Japanese military intelligence. It is possible that the 4 Seas Gang will want to sell either information about Strange Gates, Hidden Spirits or the original date wood seal to Japanese military intelligence. If Japanese military intelligence gets a hold of the seal, they will demonstrate its power by targeting KMT officers.

- The focus in club is on the stage, which hosts a number of large band and dance acts. The rest of the club is painted in silver and white and fitted out in chrome.

Disruptive foreigners will be escorted out by pistol-wielding thugs.

### Lead Outs:

- Madame Gao
- Ling Wei and the Green Gang





Lu Chen (陆晨)

Lao Che's youngest son, Chen, is the member of the 4 Seas Gang most likely to get mixed up in any story involving the date wood seal, whether this is a result of being targeted by Ling Wei, being introduced by Madame Gao, or otherwise. Chen is intelligent and cunning, making him a dangerous adversary. He would not hesitate to harness the power of the date wood seal.

Lu Chen

Athletics 8, Firearms 6, Health 12,  
Scuffling 6, Weapons 6  
Alertness +2  
Weapon: +0 Mauser pistol, -1 knife

Lu Chen (陆晨), age unknown, son of Lao Che & 4 Seas Gang lieutenant

STR 70    CON 80    SIZ 80    DEX 60    INT 70  
APP 60    POW 60    EDU 75    SAN -    HP 16  
DB: +1D4    Build: 1    Move: 7    MP: 12

Brawl:    68% unarmed 1D3 + 1D4  
Knife:    68% bonus 1d4+1 + 1D4  
Handgun: 80% Mauser semi-automatic 1D10  
Dodge:    60%

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 16%, Occult 70%, Climb 72%,  
Throw 60%, Jump 60%, Intimidate 70%,  
Psychology 70%, Spot Hidden 65%,  
Sleight of Hand 25%, Stealth 25%

Languages: Chinese 75%, Shanghainese 75%,  
English 50%, French 50%

Gaining an audience with Lao Che or any of his sons requires a **Streetwise spend** (a **Hard Fast Talk** roll). He is always flanked by armed bodyguards.

4 Seas Gang Thugs:

Athletics 6, Health 6, Scuffling 4, Firearms 5. [Fists (-2),  
Kicks (-1), Light pistols (0)]



4 Seas Gang Thug

STR 60    CON 60    SIZ 60    DEX 50    INT 40  
APP 50    POW 50    EDU 30    SAN 50    HP 12  
DB: 0    Build: 0    Move: 8    MP 10

Brawl:    60%, unarmed 1D3  
Handgun:    70%, luger 1D10  
Dodge:    25%  
Armor: None

Skills: Climb 72%, Throw 60%, Jump 60%,  
Intimidate 50%, Psychology 20%, Spot Hidden 25%  
Languages: Chinese 30%, Shanghainese 30%



# Madame Gao

## Lead Ins:

- Inspector Everson and the Shanghai Municipal Police
- (Optional) The 4 Seas Gang

**Purpose:** Interacting with Madame Gao helps the investigators understand what happened at the House of Clouds that fateful day when the gate was opened. Investigators may see the potential of playing the 4 Seas Gang off the Green Gang, or vice versa. Investigators pick up the trail of the date wood seal.



Madame Gao is a clever and industrious Shanghai woman in her late thirties. She owns and manages the House of Clouds, and does so with greed and viciousness rarely found. She facilitated the ritual (for a fee) and witnessed its destruction. Her mind is still processing what happened that fateful evening. When she puts together all the pieces, she will set her mind to recovering the date wood seal necessary to issue commands to the spirit that was summoned into her den. Madame Gao seeks to seize the seal and all of its associated power.

Madame Gao speaks Mandarin, Shanghainese, English, and French very well. She needs the language skills to run her business and will hide behind a lack of language skills if she is threatened with legal repercussions. Madame Gao understands power structures and manipulation. Despite this understanding, she is unable to resist a charmer; **Flattery** (a successful **Charm** roll) is the best way to get Madame Gao to open up during an interview.

If asked the right way, Madame Gao will reveal the following:

- “I know Mark Rousseau. He is my customer. He likes to chase the dragon; he smokes opium. I agreed to his crazy scheme!”

- “So, he rented my backroom to ‘reenact’ a Daoist ritual. Then some crazy Daoist priest comes along wearing a silk robe and writes all over the floors. They started dancing around, and now look what happened!”

Madame Gao witnessed a lot more than she is willing to admit. In particular, she saw Ling Wei steal the date wood seal, and she knows that the seal is necessary for controlling the spirit. An **Interrogation** or an **Assess Honesty** test of 3 (a successful **Psychology** roll) is required to determine that she is definitely holding back information, including what happened, how it happened and who survived. Madame Gao is thinking about her next move.

“Yes, I know Ling Wei. He is a member of the Green Gang. That’s Pockmark Huang’s group.”

With **Intimidation** (a successful **Intimidate** roll),:

“Yes, I have relationships. I have relationships with the 4 Seas Gang. If you know what’s best for you, you’d help me get released.”

The investigators can use **Shadowing** (a successful **Stealth** roll) to track and follow Madame Gao after her release. If followed, she leads the investigators to Ling Wei and the Crystal Garden. Please see (Alternate) Ling Wei and the Green Gang. Her plan, which will succeed if uninterrupted, is to seduce Ling Wei and then steal the date wood seal.

## Lead Outs:

- Ling Wei and the Green Gang





# Ling Wei and the Green Gang

**Location:** The International Settlement, Southwest side of the Central District, within walking distance of the Race Tracks and Old Shanghai.

## Lead Ins:

- Madame Gao

**Purpose:** The investigators confront Ling Wei or find another means of securing the date wood seal.



The Green Gang is Shanghai's most powerful, most notorious gang. Their hideout is the Crystal Garden, an invite-only jazz club that is very hard to find. Investigators can find it by either **Shadowing** Madame Gao (a successful **Stealth** roll) or by spending a point in **Streetwise** (a successful **INT** roll). The Crystal Garden Club is on the first and second floor of a three-story building, nestled between other office buildings of similar height.

Ling Wei spends a lot of his spare time at the Crystal Garden, and can likely be found there. He keeps the date wood seal in a leather pouch slung over his shoulder.

**Law** or **Bureaucracy** (a successful **Library Use** roll) will reveal that on paper, the Crystal Garden Club is owned by On Leong Chinese Merchants Association (安良堂; Ānláng Táng), which even has a putative office and meeting hall on the third floor of the building. Point spends in various ability pools will reveal that in reality, the Crystal Garden is owned by the Green Gang. The head of the Green Gang is Huang Jinrong, a/k/a "Pockmark Huang". His young and upcoming gang lieutenant Du

Yuesheng (a/k/a "Big Eared Du") also frequents the joint. Big Eared Du and his compatriots are known to hate the Communists, and if they gain control over the original seal, they will begin to target various Communists for assassination by use of the demon.

The Crystal Garden Club is an underground jazz club with a great chandelier, tiers of tables surrounding a dance floor, and an elevated stage and bandstand. The walls are painted black and adorned with a Chinese motif of silver dragons and phoenix.

Overly inquisitive foreigners without strong guanxi will be shown the door. Investigators drawing the ire of Pockmark Huang or engaging in violence will be assaulted by Green Gang Thugs:

Li Jinhui & the Bright Moonlight Song and Dance Troupe are the current headliners at the Crystal Garden Club. Acts rotate quarterly.

Li Jinhui was a historical figure and essential in the development of Shanghai Jazz, which melds Chinese folk songs with modern Jazz.

Gaining an audience with Pockmark Huang requires a **Streetwise** spend of 2 points (a successful **Extreme Fast Talk** roll). He is always flanked by armed bodyguards and an assortment of dolled-up table girls.

## Lead Outs:

- Closing the Gate





## Ling Wei

Ling Wei is in his early forties. He wears a Chinese silk shirt that is about a size too small and tight around his biceps. He has a scar that runs the length of his face. He got the scar from a broken bottle during a bar fight. Ling Wei is an unimaginative thug with a sadistic streak. He is respected by other members of the underworld and, as a distant cousin to Chiang Kai-shek, has relationships with the KMT.

Ling Wei understands that the date wood seal enables him to issue commands to the spirit, and that pursuant to his last standing command, the spirit is currently hiding in the smoking room of the House of Clouds. During waking hours, he has the date wood seal together with a Mauser pistol in his leather bag, which he keeps on his person. Ling Wei is plotting to have the spirit kill some members of the 4 Seas Gang, as well as a rival in the Green Gang, but first, he must have a drink or two at the Crystal Garden.

Ling Wei has a small and cluttered apartment in the predominately Chinese part of old Shanghai (南市).

### Ling Wei

Athletics 6, Firearms 6, Health 6, Scuffling 6,  
Weapons 4  
Alertness +0  
Weapon: +0 Mauser pistol, -1 knife

### Green Gang Thugs

Thugs: Athletics 6, Health 6, Scuffling 6,  
Weapons 4. [Fists (-2), Kicks (-1), Light pistols (0)]

### Ling Wei, 28, Green Gang enforcer

STR 60 CON 70 SIZ 70 DEX 70 INT 50  
APP 60 POW 50 EDU 50 SAN 50 HP 14  
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 MP 10

Brawl: 68%, unarmed 1D3 + 1D4  
Handgun: 80%, Mauser semi-automatic 1D10  
Dodge: 35%  
Armor: None

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 1%, Occult 25%,  
Climb 72%, Throw 60%, Jump 60%, Intimidate 50%,  
Psychology 25%, Spot Hidden 50%,  
Sleight of Hand 25%, Stealth 25%  
Languages: Chinese 50%, Shanghainese 50%,  
Japanese 40%, English 25%

### Green Gang Thugs

STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 60 DEX 50 INT 40  
APP 50 POW 50 EDU 30 SAN 50 HP 12  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP 10

Brawl: 60%, unarmed 1D3  
Handgun: 70%, luger 1D10  
Dodge: 25%  
Armor: None

Skills: Climb 72%, Throw 60%, Jump 60%,  
Intimidate 50%, Psychology 20%, Spot Hidden 25%  
Languages: Chinese 30%, Shanghainese 30%

Leaders of the Green Gang. Big Eared Du on far right.





# Closing the Gate

## Lead Ins:

- Ling Wei and the Green Gang
- (Alternate) Bobby Li

**Purpose:** The investigators have acquired both a copy of the ritual and a date wood seal in the true name of the King in Yellow, and they are prepared to command the Demon Spirit Kun to return to whence it came from and close the gate. This requires the investigators to complete the Dance of Yu in reverse order. Other actors, human or otherwise, will interfere with their efforts.



To close the gate, investigators will need to command the Demon Spirit Kun to return from whence it came. To do so, they will need to perform the Dance of Yu in reverse order to shut and seal the gate. Investigators (the players) should rely on the handouts that describe the ritual and the Dance of Yu.

**Keeper's Note:** The Keeper is strongly encouraged to ask their players to perform the ritual on the basis of Handouts 2 and 3. Parts should be assigned to each investigator; one investigator should serve as the Magistrate of the Yellow King (seal custodian), another investigator should serve as Yu (dancer), and the remaining investigators should serve as courtiers. The magistrate and the courtiers should be encouraged to sing the ritual chants, and the dancer Yu should be encouraged to retrace the dance steps that form the magic square.

The Keeper should find masking tape or chalk and draw out a diagram on the floor of the room where the story is being played. This diagram should either be (i) a Bagua or (ii) the 8 cardinal directions (south, southwest, west, northwest, north, north-east, east, southeast) or (iii) numbers 1 through 9 as shown below:

South

4	9	2
3	5	7
8	1	6

North

Writing out the numbers from 1 through 9 is the simplest course, but the least immerse.

The Dance of Yu completes a mathematical "magic square".

**Sources of Interference:** If the investigators fabricated a new date wood seal, then Ling Wei or the then current owner of the original seal is likely to appear and interfere with the investigators' gate closing ritual.

If the investigators took the original date wood seal from Ling Wei, then Ling Wei (if he is alive) and other interested parties may appear and attempt to harm the investigators while they perform the gate closing ritual.

**Keeper's Notes:** regarding Stability and Sanity:

An investigator realizing that the demon is in the same room must make a 5-point Mythos **Stability** test (**Sanity** roll 1D6/1D10).

Issuing a single command to the demon requires possession of a date wood seal and a successful **Stability** test, difficulty 4. Failing the check means investigator's commands are ignored. Investigators may spend Stability points to pass this check but failing the check does not result in a loss of additional Stability.

Commanding the demon to attack other people costs 5 points of **Stability** (**Sanity** roll 1/1D10). Watching the demon feed for the first time requires a 4-point **Stability** test (**Sanity** roll 1/1D10).



## The Demon Spirit Kun (坤)

The Demon Spirit Kun (坤): The demon, currently invisible, is hiding on a bed set in an alcove of the adjacent smoking room. It will not disturb the investigators unless one of two things happen: (a) the demon is ordered to do so by whoever currently holds the date wood seal, or (b) the demon is physically attacked. Finding the hidden demon spirit is not an easy task; an investigator would either need to specifically be looking for it and notice the indentation in the bed, or physically climb into the bed. Keepers should feel free to have an investigator with a Bad Luck drive (a failed Group Luck roll) bump into the demon; however, it is recommended that this not happen, if at all, until after the investigators have had a chance to find the Gate.

Athletics 10, Health 12, Scuffling 22

Hit Threshold: 6 while invisible, 4 when feeding and for six rounds after feeding

Alertness +1

Weapon: +2 bite. The demon regenerates Health points equal to any points of Health lost by a victim of its bite.

Armor: -3, immune to fire

Stability Loss: 5-point Mythos Stability test, and a loss of 1 point of Sanity.

### The Demon Spirit Kun (坤)

STR 130 CON 110 SIZ 45 DEX 120 INT 50

APP - POW 75 EDU - SAN - HP 24

DB: +2D6 Build: 3 Move: 10/10 flying MP: 15

Attacks per round: 3

Bite: 66%, 1D6. The demon regenerates HPs equal to any HPs lost by a victim of its bite.

Dodge: 23%

Armor: 4-point hide. Bullets do only ½ damage.

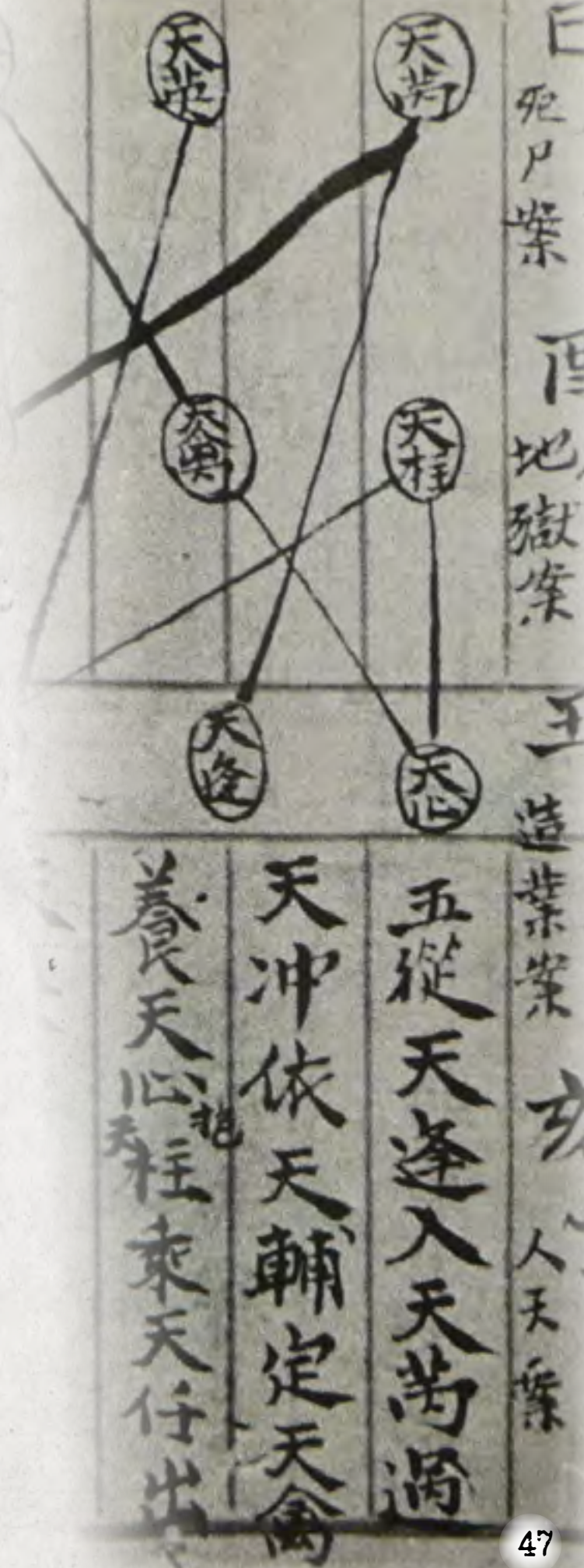
Sanity Loss: 1D6/1D10

### Keeper's Notes:

The demon is invisible unless it has recently fed.

The demon is an alien intelligence. It is bound to follow the instructions of whoever possesses the date wood seal, but it is not stupid. The demon can mimic human voices and other sounds.

When close to a demon it may make scratching noises, like a burrowing or nesting animal.





# Handouts

## Handout 1: Summary of "Strange Gates, Hidden Spirits"

### Generally:

- The tome is from a militaristic Daoist society from Wu Dang Shan, known as the Polestar Daoists. The Polestar Daoists made use of martial arts, weapons, and spirit summoning.
- It is said that this text was used at the Battle of the Red Cliffs to defeat Cao Cao's navy.
- The tome references a "King in Yellow", and "eight spirits".
- The tome is an extensive treatise related to the Book of Changes, and the oracle hexagrams.
- The Book of Changes is an extremely sophisticated form of mathematical metaphysics.
- The tome contains mathematic algorithms, in hexagram format.
- The tome can be read as a map of the universe.
- The tome references eight gates. Spirits lie hidden behind each gate. Through rituals contained in the tome, a sorcerer learns how to summon forth a spirit, and render it subservient to his commands.
- A gate is opened by dancing the magic steps of "Yu"

### On opening a gate:

- Draw on the ground a "Battle Chart of the Eight Trigrams".
- In the very center of the circle, set up an altar in honor of the Pole Star (Polaris; Ursa Major).
- Dance the Magic Steps of Yu, chanting the correct invocations.
- The spell requires "courtiers" to serve as an audience and participate in the ritual.

### On commanding a Spirit:

- The ritual is performed by a Magistrate of the Court in Yellow.
- Create a talisman of the relevant spirit, by writing their name on a yellow piece of paper. Then affix the ceremonial seal. Chant the correct invocations, and then burn the yellow piece of paper.
- The Magistrate must use the power of the date wood seal to command the spirit. The spirit may be coerced by threatening to reveal its name or using the power of the King in Yellow to punish it.

### On closing a gate:

- Reverse the Magic Dance Steps of Yu, and chant the closing ritual.

### The chant for opening the gate:

Ia! Ia! Ya-gou-sa-ta! Lurker at the Threshold! Hear us now!

The Qi Men magic gates respond to you  
Come forth from the court of A-wai-zi-ta  
The King in Yellow has a command!

Ia! Ia! Ya-gou-sa-ta! Lurker at the Threshold! Hear us now!

I command thee, approach the Battle Chart  
I summon your awesome wind!  
Open the gates of Kun!

### The chant for Closing the Gate:

Ia! Ia! Ya-gou-sa-ta! Lurker at the Threshold! Hear us now!

The Qi Men magic gates respond to you  
Come forth from the court of A-wai-zi-ta  
The King in Yellow has a command!

Ia! Ia! Ya-gou-sa-ta! Lurker at the Threshold! Hear us now!

I command thee, approach the Battle Chart  
I summon your awesome wind!  
Close the gates of Kun!

### The chant for commanding the Spirit Kun:

Out of chaos came the first gestation  
Crawling forth from A-wai-zi-ta's court  
Amongst the spirits spit forth  
Was the Spirit Kun

Leopard's face and tiger's whiskers!  
Hat of red and face of black!  
In your hand a whip of steel,  
Violent, oppressing, punishing, killing!

Hideous teeth and beard of red  
Leading a hundred thousand spirit soldiers  
Like a pack of bears

Secretly hiding your oppressive form!  
Deep and dark, black and murky  
Great thy strife, power for sorrow  
Riding on the violent winds

Rout the enemy in deep confusion!  
With your vast power help me execute you Master's command

Bring your flags, your drums, your standards  
Left and right, strike and scatter

Here today I command you!



形庭於巾形角形  
夙天已赤顏禍波  
且傷心曷碎威  
生也辰月馘累藏  
暗盡整鼓慟我  
初肥中災擄百  
賈來敵膽旌摧助

孕塔也須手親  
爨幽邊屋所  
肉召  
司鎗吐虎杜紅  
燹且繡殺猛司  
吁  
沈外靈面輓齒  
如災焚跨波  
衢我  
濕嘍一豹鋼初  
狀來威輓  
所左間



## Handout 2: Excerpts from Father Rousseau's Journal

**March 12** - In the death of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, I lost a dear friend and China lost a hero. I still remember hearing the news of his diagnosis, and while he did not shed a tear or curse God's name, I could not help but have a moment of doubt with regards to God's great plan. Dr. Sun was so close to uniting China into a great country; now his life's work will be abandoned. To numb the pains of loss, I took a clandestine visit to the House of Clouds. I noticed that once the barriers went up, the House of Clouds fell on the side of the International Settlement....

**April 6** - I attended the auction of Dr. Sun's estate in Beijing today; I understand most of the proceeds will go to charity. Dr. Sun's collection included some wonderful pieces, including some paintings and scrolls pulled out of the Mogao Caves in Gansu. The paintings and scrolls, being part of the Dunhuang Manuscript cache originally uncovered by the Sinologist Paul Pelliot, have an unsoiled provenance. I inspected a few of the pieces, and noted a text of Nestorian Christian origin, written in Hebrew and annotated in Syrian! I couldn't stand to see that material go to waste.

**May 7** - I thought the Nestorian Christian work to be the most valuable part of the collection. Oh, how wrong I was. The real prize is something titled "Strange Gates, Hidden Spirits", or as written in Chinese, 奇門遁甲.

**June 1** - In the wake of the incident at Nanjing Road a couple of days ago, the Municipal Council declared martial law. They formed up the militia and made a call for the protection of foreign interests.

**July 7** - Even two months later, "Strange Gates, Hidden Spirits" continues to hold my attention. Oh, how I wish I could see the rituals it describes actually performed. It would not be unlike the first time I witnessed Holy Mass at the Vatican. Perhaps I can find some friends to help me reenact one of the more detailed rituals? Given the sensitivities, these friends would most certainly need to be Chinese.

**November 11** - Martial law was lifted today; Dr. Maybell caught me practicing the Dance of Yu. He asked me what I was getting up to and I lied to him for the first time. I told him that I had "watched a few Chinamen doing morning exercises, and was

curious to discover if there might be some medical benefit to be derived from their heathen practices." It was but a little white lie, and I do not believe that his eyes and ears are disciplined enough to discern the difference between my words and my beliefs; he barely even pays attention to my sermons. In any event, this encounter reminds me of the necessity to be free from prying eyes when I reenact the ritual. If not a secret location, then at least in a place where those who might witness the ritual would know the value of discretion. The House of Clouds?

**November 14** - I have recruited Taoist Master Li Zheng to my cause. He will help me to study the 奇門遁甲, and will also help me in recreating the rituals. Master Li has assured me his younger brother, Bobby, will also assist.

**November 16** - I have spoken to Madame Gao, and she agrees to let us use her backroom. Master Li says we must first prepare the room for the ritual. He says we must purify and anoint the room, and then we must ward it from attacks by disgruntled spirits.

**November 26** - Master Li says we have sufficiently placed wards on the room that is to house our ceremony. We have made the sacrifices necessary to lay a Bagua Battlefield chart in the center of the room. The sacred Bagua Battlefield is painted in chalk. We have also installed a chariot altar. We acquired ox fat tapers from a Tibetan mystic, and placed them on the altar. Master Li tells me that he must consult the 奇門遁甲 in order to find Jia Kun's real name, and carve an appropriate royal seal out of fragrant date wood. The seal must purport to be the mandate of the Yellow King of Heaven and Hell.

**December 1** - We will reenact the ritual opening of the Gate of Heaven and the summoning of the spirit Kun. My recruits are Taoist Master Li Zheng, his brother Bobby, Captain Zhou Gang who is KMT and member of my parish, and Captain Zhou's friend, Ling Wei. I admittedly know very little of Ling, but if he will join without criticizing my interests in ancient religions, I won't look at him sideways.

**December 4** - I remember Bobby ran for the door. Master Zheng is dead. Captain Zhou is dead. So are a dozen other people who were in the adjoining room. Lord, what have I done?



# Handout 3: The Later Heaven Bagua - 后天八卦

South



East



West



North





## Joseph-Armand Saint-Pierre

In the Great War, Joseph-Armand was an infantryman in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1st Canadian Division, 1st Brigade, 2nd Battalion (Eastern Ontario Regiment). He landed in Plymouth on October 25th, 1914 then marched onward to France on February 8th, 1915. He started as a simple rifleman, but eventually reached the rank of sergeant through field promotion.

Life in the trenches was rough; the water, the long waiting, the bombardments. Then there were the insane races across the no man's land while praying not to catch a random bullet, followed by bestial hand to hand. But Joseph-Armand was a survivor. He didn't dwell on dying; he just focused on living... and taken as many Germans to the grave as he could before his time was up.

The nights were the worse. There were watches, staring at fleeting shadows in the no man's land while listening to those weird constant baying at night. Sometimes, when daylight ended his watch, he found partially eaten corpses. And there was weird stuff too, like that time he killed an intruder with a trench shovel, but later the body disappeared. And the time they overran a German line, but only found gnawed on bones.

Understandably, after the war, it was difficult to return to normal life. For Joseph-Armand, civilian life was too quiet and no one could understand what he had seen... what he could still see when he closed his eyes.

Joseph-Armand married a wonderful lady which briefly gave him something to brighten his day. But life was still too quiet. Even Marseille's roughest neighborhood were tame in his eyes. So when the opportunity came for some excitement and adventure in Shanghai, he took it.

In Shanghai, Joseph-Armand reunited with Victor Sassoon, a man he met in London during the Great War. Joseph-Armand had befriended a couple British pilots and through them had met Victor and others. Joseph-Armand lost track of Victor after his accident in 1916, but they crossed-paths again at a soirée in Shanghai. After recognizing him, Victor invited him for tea the next day and their friendship was rekindled.



### Occupation:

Military (Bodyguard) / **Soldier**

### Drive / **Trait**:

Ennui / **Driven by desire for adventure.**

### Pillars of Sanity / **Ideology**:

- The will to survive protects from death
- Humans are best when facing their fears
- Pragmatism

### Source of Stability / **Significant People**:

- Mrs. Saint-Pierre (wife)
- Victor Sassoon (friend and employer)
- Seth Silverstein (friend)



## Joseph-Armand Saint-Pierre

Sanity: 10 Stability: 10 Health: 10

Occupational Benefits: You can spend 2 points from your Reassurance pool to steady panicking or erratic Characters as long as your own Stability is above 0. Because you are a combat veteran, the Difficulty Numbers (including opponents' Hit Thresholds) of your combat abilities (Athletics, Firearms, Scuffling, Weapons) do not increase by 1 until either your Stability or your Health drops below -5. Some threats to your Stability may be made at a lower Difficulty number.

### Investigative Abilities

#### Academic Abilities

Language: 1 (English, French)

#### Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty: 6

Credit Rating: 2

Intimidation: 2

Reassurance: 4

#### Technical Abilities

Evidence Collection: 6

Outdoorsman: 4

### General Abilities

Athletics: 8

Conceal: 2

Driving: 2

Firearms: 10

First Aid: 5

Mechanical Repair: 2

Preparedness: 2

Scuffling: 6

Sense Trouble: 6

Stealth: 6

Weapons: 8

## Joseph-Armand Saint-Pierre

HP: (11) Sanity: (50) Luck: (50) MP: (10)

STR 50      DEX 70      INT 70  
CON 60      APP 50      POW 50  
SIZ 50      EDU 60      Move 8

### Skills:

Climb 44

Credit Rating 20

Dodge 75

Fighting (Brawl) 50

Firearms (Handgun) 86

Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) 86

First Aid 50

Language (Own) French 60

Language (Other) English 50

Mechanical Repair 20

Psychology 70

Spot Hidden 50

Stealth 50

Survival 50

DMG Bonus: none Dodge: 75 Build: 0

Suit, worn oxford shoes

Good quality trench coat

Fedora

Shoulder holster

.45 revolver

Electric torch

Whistle

Umbrella

"Lucky" trench shovel

Model 97, 12-gauge, pump action, trench shotgun

M1906 Springfield, bolt-action, .30-06

Cash: \$40      Spending Level: \$10      Assets: \$1000

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	50	25	10	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
.45 revolver	86	43	17	1d10+2	100	1(3)	6	100
12-gauge pump shotgun	86	43	17	4d6/2d6/1d6	10/20/50	1	5	100
M1901 .30-06 rifle	86	43	17	2d6+4	110	1	1	100
"Lucky" trench shovel	50	25	10	1d6+1	-	1	-	-



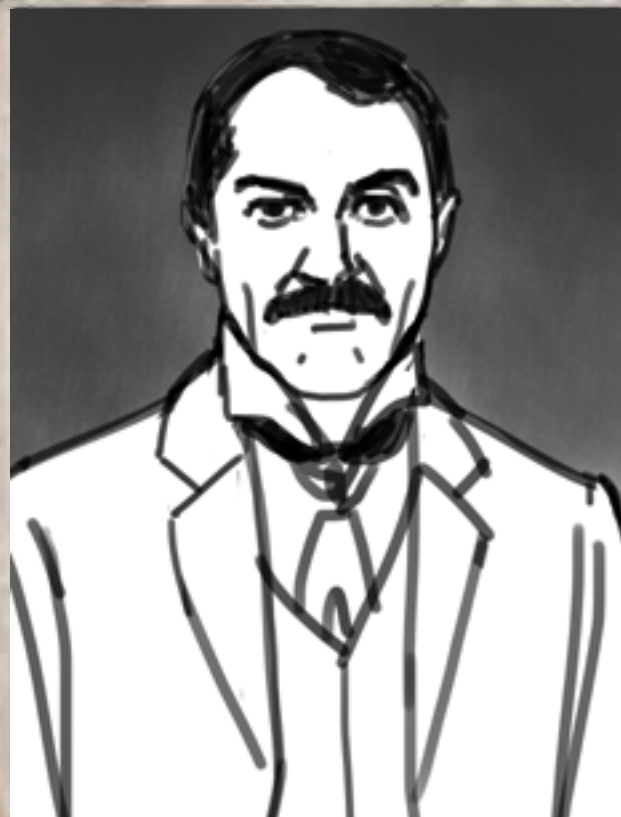
## Sir Edward Francis Hrabí

Edward was born in Surrey, England on the 9th of November 1880 to an upper-class family with significant ties to the East India Company and holdings throughout the British Empire. He attended Trinity College and upon graduation, was commissioned as a Lieutenant in a cavalry division under the command of Major General John French (1st Earl of Ypres). In 1900, Edward first saw action in South Africa during the Second Boer Wars.

Later, from 1916 to 1918, Edward would participate in the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, stationed originally in Cairo and taking part in the Sinai and Palestine Campaign, where he would rise to the rank of Colonel.

He was 33 when the Great War began, and was with Major General French at the Battle of Mons and the First Battle of the Marne, where the British Expeditionary Forces won a difficult victory after suffering heavy casualties. The failures of the Allied Forces at the Battle of Loos were blamed on Major General French, and he was forced to resign his command and take up an appointment as Commander-in-Chief of Home Forces. Edward, fiercely loyal to Major General French, obtained orders to follow him back to England for the purpose of training new recruits. After the war, Edward remained in the service for a number of years.

In 1921, Edward retired from active service and went to work for the Foreign Office, recently stationed in Hong Kong prior to heading to Shanghai. In Shanghai, he met up with Sir Victor Sassoon, an old friend and former classmate at Trinity College. Edward and Victor enjoy watching the derby together.



### Occupation:

Dilettante (Retired Colonel, British Army) / Dilettante

### Drive / Trait:

Duty / A sense of duty towards the crown was ingrained from a young age, and as a career military officer and veteran, duty continues to play a big part in Edward's willingness to push forward in the face of horror.

### Pillars of Sanity / Ideology:

- Glory of the British Empire

- Loyalty to brave leaders

- True leaders lead from the front

### Source of Stability / Significant People:

- Victor Sassoon

- Elly Kadoorie

- Amanda Knickerbocker

### Additional Notes



## Edward Francis Hrabí

Occupational Benefits: You may use your Credit Rating pool to call on personal connections in any field of endeavor. These contacts will generally be relatives, old schoolfellows, and similar people of your social class.

Sanity: 10 Stability: 10 Health: 10

### Investigative Abilities

#### Academic Abilities

History: 2  
Language: 1 (English, Dutch)

Library use: 2

Occult: 2

#### Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty: 5

Credit Rating: 8

Flattery: 4

Reassurance 2

#### Technical Abilities

Outdoorsman: 8

### General Abilities

Athletics: 8

Firearms: 10

First Aid: 3

Preparedness: 10

Riding: 10

Weapon: 7

Stealth: 2

## Edward Francis Hrabí

HP: (10) Sanity: (50) Luck: (50) MP: (10)

STR 50      DEX 50      INT 60  
CON 50      APP 65      POW 50  
SIZ 50      EDU 85      Move 8

### Skills:

Charm 50  
Credit Rating 90  
Dodge 25  
Fighting (Brawl) 75  
Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) 75  
First Aid 40  
History 15  
Language (Own) English 85  
Language (Dutch) 40  
Occult 25  
Psychology 30  
Ride 60  
Spot Hidden 40  
Survival 75

### Gentleman's attire

Tailored shirts and slacks

Dress loafers

Tan shirt and trousers, black belt

Riding boots

Cavalry saber

.303 Lee-Enfield rifle

Electric torch

Umbrella

Silver snuff box

Portable tea set

Derby horse stables

Surrey country house; Luxury apartment on the Bund

Cash: \$1,800      Spending Level: \$250      Assets: \$180,000

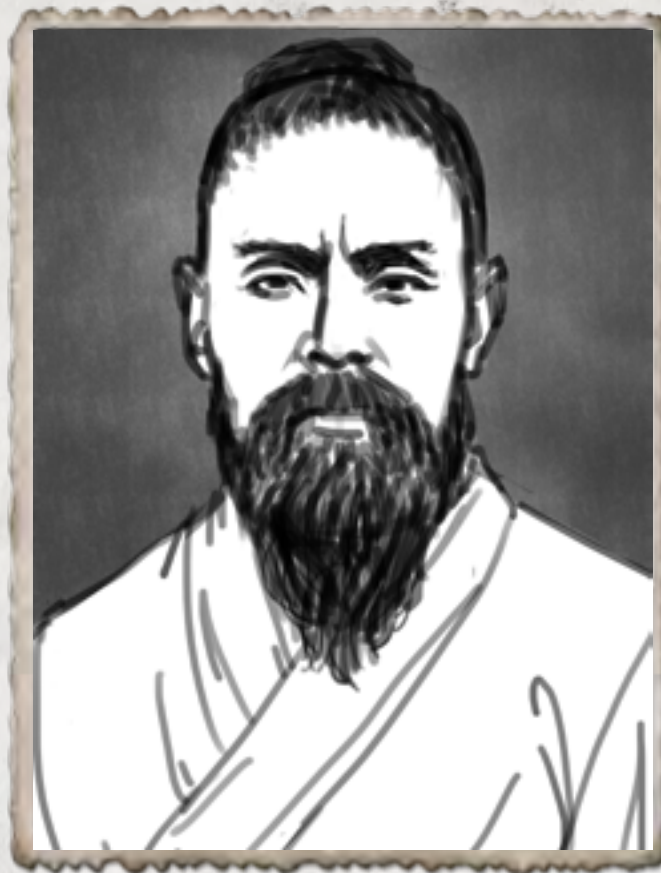
DMG Bonus: none Dodge: 25 Build: 0

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	75	37	15	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
Saber	75	37	15	1d8+1+db	-	1	-	-
.303 Lee-Enfield rifle	75	37	15	2d6+4	100	1	10	100



## Dai Xu Fei

Xu Fei was the 5th son of a wealthy Chinese family in Shanghai. However, he quickly lost interest in worldly matters, and his family lost interest in him. At a young age, he ran away from home and joined the monks at Wu Dang Shan. After learning all that he could on the top of a mountain, Xu Fei returned to the bustling city of Shanghai; the pinnacle of modern and all things foreign. Xu Fei hopes to continue expanding his understanding of the world, and he doesn't fear outside influences like so many other Chinese. Xu Fei is a Daoist priest, but he makes a living working various jobs, including bouncer and body guard. Xu Fei's research and studies of his faith brought him to the attention of Victor Sassoon. The two have become friends and have shared many conversations on topics religious.



### Occupation:

Clergy (Daoist Priest and Bodyguard) / **Boxer**

### Drive / **Trait:**

Thirst for Knowledge / **A thirst for knowledge drives Dai Xu Fei towards the Mythos.**

### Pillars of Sanity / **Ideology:**

- Daoism

- Unification of China

### Source of Stability / **Significant People:**

- Victor Sassoon (friend and sometimes employer)

- Lauri O'Malley, strongest woman in the world (friend and co-worker at Great World Amusement Arcade)

- Master Zhang (Daoist master at Wudangshan)

### Additional Notes



## Dai Xu Fei

Occupational Benefits: By using Theology or Reassurance you can gain access to religious records not generally or easily available to the public. Once per game session you may freely refresh any Interpersonal ability pool by talking to a Jewish person who maintains the faith (though not a fellow investigator). You make Psychoanalysis tests for Psychological Triage (see p. 79) at a Difficulty of 3, instead of 4.

Sanity: 8 Stability: 10 Health: 10

### Investigative Abilities

#### Academic Abilities

History: 6  
Language: 2 (Chinese, English, Shanghainese, Sanskrit)  
Library Use: 2  
Theology: 6

#### Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty: 4  
Credit Rating: 2  
Flattery: 4  
Oral History: 4  
Reassurance: 2

### General Abilities

Athletics: 10  
First Aid: 2  
Preparedness: 6  
Psychoanalysis: 2  
Scuffling: 14  
Sense Trouble: 4  
Stealth: 4

## Dai Xu Fei

HP: (10) Sanity: (55) Luck: (55) MP: (11)

STR 80      DEX 50      INT 70  
CON 55      APP 45      POW 55  
SIZ 45      EDU 65      Move 9

### Skills:

Charm: 60  
Credit Rating 20  
Dodge 50  
Fighting (Brawl) 90  
History 60  
Language (Own) Chinese 65  
Language (Other) English 40  
Language (Other) Shanghainese 40  
Language (Other) Sanskrit 20  
Library Use 40  
Occult 50  
Psychology 50  
Psychoanalysis 10  
Spot Hidden 50  
Stealth 36

DMG Bonus: +1d4 Dodge: 50 Build: +1

### Daoist priest robes

Various Daoist meditation manuals and texts, including the Dao De Jing  
Feng Shui compass

Cash: \$40      Spending Level: \$10      Assets: \$1,000

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	90	45	18	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
Chinese Broad Sword	90	45	18	1d8+2+db	-	1	-	-



## Amanda Knickerbocker

Amanda is a well-educated and independent woman from a family with some means. She entered the field of investigative journalism. Following a lead on the shipping magnate James Matheson, she relocated to Shanghai. The article did not pan out, but Amanda fell in love with the Paris of the East and has decided to stay a bit longer. Because of her proper upbringing, she is able to move in and out of high society with ease, and often finds herself in places like the Orchestra Hall, the Polo fields, or the Canidrome, and she finds herself next to the likes of Victor Sassoon, Stirling Fessenden and Henry E. Morris, Jr. The high society elite love Amanda for her charm; many have taken to finding ways to do her favors, ranging from job offers, attempts to court and offers to matchmake with their sons. One of those favors includes a job offer by Henry E. Morris, Jr, the owner of the North China Daily. Amanda accepted the job offer and officially started last week.



### Occupation:

Journalist / **Investigative Journalist**

### Drive / **Trait:**

Curiosity / **Amanda is as curious as a cat.**

### Pillars of Sanity / **Ideology:**

- Humans are born inherently good
- Transparency leads to better governance
- Democracy, suffrage, equality

### Source of Stability / **Significant People:**

- Henry E. Morris (friend and employer)
- Victor Sassoon (friend)
- Lord Benjamin Hightower (friend)

### Additional Notes



## Amanda Knickerbocker

Occupational Benefits: By using Reassurance, you have access to newspaper morgues. At your own paper, you do the same to get the records clerks to fetch relevant articles. Similarly, fellow journalists may confide "off the record" rumors and stories to you, unless you're a direct competitor.

**Sanity: 10 Stability: 10 Health: 10**

### Investigative Abilities

#### Academic Abilities

Languages: 2 (French, Chinese)

Library Use: 2

#### Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty: 6

Cop Talk: 2

Credit Rating: 4

Flattery: 10

Oral History: 4

Reassurance: 6

Streetwise: 1

#### Technical Abilities

Evidence Collection: 6

Photography: 4

### General Abilities

Athletics: 9

Disguise: 8

Driving: 2

Firearms: 6

First Aid: 3

Preparedness: 5

Shadowing: 8

Stealth: 4

## Amanda Knickerbocker

**HP: (9) Sanity: (55) Luck: (55) MP: (11)**

STR 45      DEX 50      INT 70  
CON 50      APP 65      POW 55  
SIZ 45      EDU 80      Move 8

### Skills:

Charm 90  
Credit Rating 30  
Dodge 50  
Fast Talk 80  
History 50  
Language (Own) English 80  
Language (Other) French 40  
Firearms (Handgun) 50  
Library Use 50  
Listen 25  
Persuade 50  
Photography 50  
Psychology 50  
Spot Hidden 50  
Stealth 50

**DMG Bonus: none Dodge: 50 Build: 0**

### Chic designer dresses

Collection of expensive hats

Silk handbags

Half pumps

Pleated skirts and blouses

Expensive jewelry

Khaki knickers and white blouses

Riding boots

.22 short auto pistol

Electric torch

Note pad, pencils

**Cash: \$80      Spending Level: \$10      Assets: \$2000**

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	25	12	5	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
.22 short auto pistol	50	25	10	1d6	10	1(3)	6	100



## Seth Silverstein

As a young man, Seth Silverstein served as a detective for the New York Police Department. Seth felt that he was passed over for deserved promotion because of pervasive anti-Semitism in the establishment. With the encouragement of his mother, Seth moved to Shanghai in search of an opportunity that deserved his loyalty. Seth was quickly befriended by Harry Edward Arnhold, the Chairman of the Shanghai Municipal Council. Harry offered Seth a position with the Shanghai International Settlement Police Department.



### Occupation:

Police Detective / **Police Officer**

### Drive / **Trait**:

Duty / **Seth places his duty to protect and serve above his own interests**

### Pillars of Sanity / **Ideology**:

- Judaism

- Law

- Meritocracy

### Source of Stability / **Significant People**:

- Victor Sassoon (friend and employer)

- Harry Edward Arnhold (friend)

- Hannah A. Silverstein (mother)

### Additional Notes

Additional Notes



## Seth Silverstein

Occupational Benefits: With judicious use of Cop Talk, you can not only put the police at ease, but gain access to case files, evidence rooms, and prisoners, among other things not accessible by normal civilians. If you're far outside your jurisdiction, you may need Cop Talk and a really good plan. Within your own jurisdiction, any points at all in Cop Talk will get you access to, and use of, police laboratories (for forensics and ballistics tests, or for more abstruse purposes) and even the morgue.

Sanity: 10 Stability: 10 Health: 10

### Investigative Abilities

#### Academic Abilities

Law: 4

#### Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty: 6

Cop Talk 6

Credit Rating: 4

Interrogation: 4

Intimidation: 2

Streetwise: 2

#### Technical Abilities

Evidence Collection: 4

Outdoorsman: 2

### General Abilities

Athletics: 8

Driving: 6

Electrical Repair: 4

Firearms: 12

Mechanical Repair: 4

Preparedness: 6

Scuffling: 6

Sense Trouble: 6

Stealth: 1

## Seth Silverstein

HP: (10) Sanity: (50) Luck: (50) MP: (10)

STR 50      DEX 70      INT 60  
CON 50      APP 50      POW 50  
SIZ 50      EDU 80      Move 8

### Skills:

Credit Rating 20

Dodge 35

Drive 50

Electrical Repair 50

Fighting (Brawl) 50

Firearms (Handgun) 90

Intimidate 55

Law 50

Language (Own) English 80

Listen 25

Mechanical Repair 50

Persuade 50

Psychology 50

Spot Hidden 40

Stealth 30

Suit, worn oxford shoes

Shoulder holster

.45 revolver

Handcuffs

Electric torch

Note pad, pencils

Blackjack chewing gum

Cash: \$40      Spending Level: \$10      Assets: \$1000

DMG Bonus: none Dodge: 35 Build: 0

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	50	25	10	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
.45 revolver	90	45	18	1d10+2	100	1(3)	6	100







# 惹事生非

## Let Sleeping Dogs Lie

By Dan Bass and Jason Sheets

### HORRIBLE TRUTH

#### General Sun Dianying Loots The Eastern Qing Tombs

In the early morning hours of June 12th, 1928, provincial warlord General Sun Dianying ordered the looting of the Eastern Qing Tombs near Zunhua, Hebei. General Sun's soldiers seized the tomb area and established a perimeter. General Sun Dianying then gave the orders to breach the sealed underground palace using light artillery. A small team of soldiers, grave robbers and "foreign experts" in archeology were sent in to collect the remains of the Empress Dowager Cixi and her finest treasures. From his staff car, General Sun Dianying personally oversaw the grave robbing and after Cixi's remains and personal effects were plucked from the tombs, General Sun's caravan of cars and trucks drove off with a small escort of armored assault vehicles.

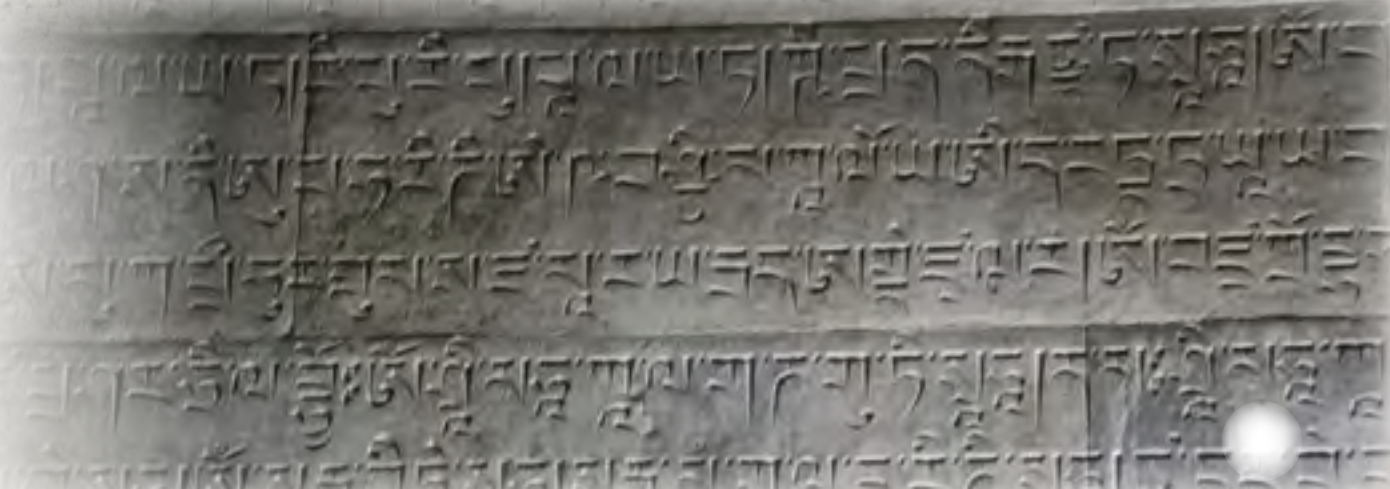
General Sun Dianying (孙殿英) (1889–1947) was a notorious Chinese warlord who led an army of bandits during the Warlord Era and later led a ragtag army in various regional conflicts including the Northern Expedition, the Second Sino-Japanese War, and the Chinese Civil War. General Sun was notoriously unreliable and would often change sides over the course of the conflict. He lives on in infamy, not as a particularly effective general, but because he looted the Eastern Qing Tombs, an act that was considered offensive by many Chinese and an act that was publicly rebuked by Chiang Kai-shek. During the Chinese Civil War, Sun would fight on the side of Chiang Kai-shek and the KMT. His army was defeated by the PLA, and he would later die in a POW camp in Wuhan.

To fund his standing army and promote his war efforts, General Sun Dianying traded Cixi's remains to Lu Xun (陆逊) - colloquially known as "Lao Che" (老车). He then sold the artifacts to Herr Gunter Lempertz, a private dealer with an exclusive auction house in the heart of the French Concession. The personal artifacts were put up for auction and sold to various collectors, museums, and archaeologists.

Cixi was the Chinese Empress Dowager and regent who effectively controlled the Chinese Qing dynasty from 1861 until her death in 1908. Historical views of Cixi as the regent of China are mixed; the mainstream view is that she was a ruthless despot; a conniving, devious and draconian ruler not above murdering rivals to maintain control. By some accounts, she even used arsenic to poison her own son because she thought him too weak to rule as Emperor. In recent years, a minority view of Cixi has arisen; namely that she was "dealt a bum hand" and merely did what she thought was in the best interest of China. The authors of this scenario make no "real world" moral judgments as to Cixi's ethical soundness and express no opinions as to whether Cixi was a good or bad regent. However, we do herein trade on the stories that she favored poisoning rivals and ruthlessly dispatched with those who would oppose her rule. We recommend that Keepers planning on running this scenario take a moment to read up on Cixi in order to make her character really "come alive".

#### The Sorcerer "Lao Che"

Lao Che, the putative head of the 4 Seas Gang, is also Shanghai's most powerful necromancer. When Lao Che is not busy blackmailing, smuggling, extorting, racketeering, murdering or otherwise carrying out the business of a gang boss, he likes to collect funeral urns





and “essential salts” of powerful families and rivals, for which he puts to various nefarious ends. Lao Che once resurrected the father of a rival and tortured him for days until a ransom was paid. The options for mixing dark and depraved crimes with the black arts are nearly boundless.

Keepers are encouraged to read H.P. Lovecraft's “The Case of Charles Dexter Ward” before running this scenario.

### **Cixi Resurrected**

After acquiring the remains of the Empress Dowager, Lao Che used his magic to resurrect Cixi. Lao Che then instructed the beholden Cixi to seize control over the Wo Hop To, a triad competing with the 4 Seas Gang. The Empress Dowager, like Lao Che, was or is something of a formidable sorcerer in her own right. She is able to cloud the minds of those looking upon her and implant destructive suggestions. Her favorite use of this spell is to implant an insatiable desire to consume tea and moon cakes, which she poisons with arsenic and makes readily available to the subject. Cixi used her magic to poison and kill the boss of the Wo Hop To, and then quickly consolidated her position as the new boss.

Lao Che found a use for Cixi, and because he is able to reverse the spell of resurrection, believes he can control her. Lao Che extorts the resurrected Cixi with the threat of death by spell reversal. Although Lao Che, and by extension the 4 Seas Gang, is able to exert significant influence over the Wo Hop To through Cixi, the gangs have not been consolidated and the rank and file remain separate.

Cixi's first order to her new-found street soldiers was to recollect her most prized possessions stolen from her tomb, namely six artifacts that she uses in the “Ritual of Mandate”, a ritual based on the six directions – North, South, East, West, Heaven, and Earth.

### **The Ritual Of Heavenly Mandate**

In addition to being undead and ruthless, Cixi is also a sorceress with ambitions of regaining her former power and reviving the Qing dynasty by completing the “Ritual of Heavenly Mandate”. To complete the ritual, Cixi must collect all six artifacts, each representing one of the directions: Azure Dragon of the East, Vermillion Bird of the South, White Tiger of the West, and Black Tortoise of the North, Earth's Jade and the Meteor of Heaven.

**White Tiger of the West** – Dr. Bones, an archeologist currently down on his luck, acquired possession of the White Tiger of the West. The White Tiger of the West is

a gold statue of a tiger with the Chinese symbol for king (王) on its forehead and is believed to be a gift from Tang Emperor Taizong to General Hou Junji for conquering the West. The relic's pedigree has not been verified. Cixi is in possession of the White Tiger at the beginning of the scenario.

**Black Tortoise of the North** – Victor Sassoon purchased the Black Tortoise, a curious snake-like creature carved of obsidian. The Black Tortoise dates back to the Jin Dynasty (~330 A.D.) and is said to have been created at Maoshan (in modern-day Jiangsu) by Daoist alchemist Ge Hong, also known as “Baopuzi”. Cixi's gang used a meeting with Dr. Bones as a pretext for robbing Victor Sassoon; Cixi is in possession of the Black Tortoise at the beginning of the scenario.

**Azure Dragon of the East** – The Azure Dragon of the East, a silk flag or banner dating back to 1644, was acquired at auction by Sir John St. John, a private collector hailing from London. The Azure Dragon banner depicts a blue dragon on a field of yellow. Each claw bares 5 talons, thus marking the banner as an object owned by the Qing Emperor. Unbeknownst to Victor Sassoon and the investigators, Cixi has already poisoned Sir John St. John and is in possession of the Azure Dragon of the East.

**Vermillion Bird of the South** – The Vermillion Bird, a bronze cast hand cannon dating back to 1294, was acquired at auction by Dr. Mitchell Harris, an archaeologist currently representing the Smithsonian Institute. The Vermillion Bird is said to have been cast by a master craftsman from Vietnam as a gift for the coronation of Temür Khan as emperor of Yuan Dynasty. In a feat of astounding workmanship, a vermilion bird has been intricately wrapped around the barrel of the cannon. At the beginning of the scenario, Dr. Harris remains in possession of the Vermillion Bird and Cixi's gang works tirelessly to run Dr. Harris to ground.

**Earth's Jade** – Earth's Jade was acquired at auction by Admiral Richard Stockton for his wife June. Earth's Jade is a round pendant that was crafted by the San Xing Dui (三星堆) in the Lost City of Jinsha, Sichuan in the 11th century. It has a companion pendant called the “Meteor of Heaven”. At the time Admiral Stockton makes an appearance in this scenario, he has become the victim of a cloud memory spell cast by Cixi and Cixi has already acquired Earth's Jade.

**Meteor of Heaven** – Another round pendant that is the mirror image of Earth's Jade, except that it is made of a strange meteor stone. The Meteor of Heaven was crafted by the San Xing Dui (三星堆) in the Lost City of Jinsha, Sichuan in the 11th century.



It is recommended that an investigator be in possession of the Meteor of Heaven at the beginning of the scenario. The Meteor of Heaven can be readily seeded in the opening scene of this scenario, "Stirring Up Trouble"; after planting the seed, the Keeper and the chosen player need only come up with a background explaining how it is that the investigator came into possession of the Meteor of Heaven. It is up to the player whether (or when) to disclose to the rest of the party that they are already in possession of the Meteor of Heaven. If the Keeper opts to not seed the Meteor of Heaven, then they will need to decide who bought the Meteor of Heaven at Herr Lempertz's auction and where it can be found as the investigation proceeds.

The Ritual of Heavenly Mandate is in a tome that was literally buried with Cixi, though its current whereabouts are unclear. Cixi, however, knows the ritual by heart and does not need the book. Completion of the ritual has a couple of effects. First, it will fully ground Cixi's soul to her mortal coil, thus preventing Lao Che (or any other necromancer) from reversing the resurrection spell. Secondly, it will unlock Cixi's powers, enabling her to command China's "true" standing army. At the time of the scenario, China's "true" standing army is the KMT. Should Cixi gain control of the KMT, she could alter the course of history.

Keepers are encouraged to consider the use of "Campaign Drivers" in their campaign, should the investigators fail to stop Cixi before she collects all six artifacts necessary for the Ritual of Heavenly Mandate.

The aforementioned six artifacts are necessary for the Ritual of Heavenly Mandate because of the importance Cixi ascribed to each of them in life. If an artifact is destroyed, that significance is lost, and Cixi will be free to ascribe that importance to a replacement object.

## Getting the Investigators Involved

All the investigators are friends of or work for Victor Sassoon. In some way, they are all indebted to him or trust him. He will call them in to help and they will answer. Individually, they may already be involved in the greater mysteries and will desire to follow up on open leads.

## SPINE:

- Stirring Up Trouble
- Sassoon's Invitation
- (Optional) John St. John
- (Optional) Admiral Stockton
- (Alternate) The Auction House
- (Alternate) La Police du Quartier Français
- (Optional) Crazy Cow
- (Optional) Dr. Mitchell Harris
- (Optional) Dr. Bones
- (Floating) The Hip Sing Tong
- (Antagonistic) Carrots and Sticks
- The Empress Reborn
- Wait, There's More!





## Stirring Up Trouble

**Date:** June 12<sup>th</sup>, 1928

**Location:** Eastern Qing Tombs, Zunhua, Hebei, China, about 125 kilometers northeast of Beijing.

**Purpose:** The story begins as a flashback; players experience the scene from the perspective of soldiers and grave robbers looting the tomb of the Empress Dowager Cixi. The purpose of this scene is to efficiently explain the historically accurate portrayal of General Sun Dianying looting the Eastern Qing Tombs and set up the backstory of how Cixi's remains ended up in Shanghai in the first place.



A wall of mountains surrounds the Eastern Qing Tombs; the air is stagnant and a fat moon hangs in the morning sky. General Sun Dianying has led his army here on the pretense of military exercises, but he has designs on plundering the tombs of the Eastern Qing dynasty. Under General Sun's lead, Division Commander Tan Wenjiang established a perimeter outside of the tomb area. Artillery has been pillared on the northern mountain and at the mouth of the valley. Nearly a dozen heavy supply trucks and a few armored Rolls-Royce attack vehicles are parked near the main gate of the tomb complex. General Sun's German-built Opel staff car is parked just inside the main gate. He is personally overseeing this operation; his pacing back and forth is worrisome to all those unfortunate souls under his command.

The investigators for this scene are all obscure archeologists, grave robbers, Chinese soldiers, and unskilled laborers. Character sheets are not necessary but players should make the effort to give these investigators names. For example, the player could

choose to play French archaeologist René Bouchard, a third-rate archaeologist who already had his eyes on the Eastern Qing Tombs when the General tapped him for this operation. Or Corporal Meng Bing and Private Huang "Jimmy" Jin, who were invited to participate by Division Commander Tan Wenjiang as a reward for loyalty and valor shown in recent combat. Or Old Wang Bao, a starving farmer who managed to convince the General that he took part in the construction of the tomb complex many years before. Investigators without character sheets are deemed to have a **Health** of 4 (8 hit points). If at any time they have a total of 0 points in the Health pool (0 hit points) they are deemed unconscious or otherwise unable to carry on. Allow the players to do whatever they think is reasonable given their chosen investigators and the situation. Remember, the purpose of this scene is to set up the backstory of how Cixi's remains and personal effects ended up in Shanghai in the first place.

At this point, the Keeper should allow the investigators to interact with each other and their environment. Details they will know:

- Any soldiers present are enlisted in the National Revolutionary Army (革命軍); these soldiers are reasonably loyal to General Sun Dianying and are part of a division that takes orders from Commander Tan Wenjiang.
- Any scholars present are French or German archeologists of tainted repute; without exception, they all have various vices, debts, disgraces and academic scandals that haunt them.
- General Sun Dianying hates General Chiang Kai Shek.
- All investigators have been ordered to enter the underground palace to remove any treasures from the burial chamber of the Empress Dowager Cixi. They were also given express instructions to recover Cixi's remains.







A wide ramp leads down to the main entrance of the underground palace. Heavy stone doors, covered in intricately carved turtles and birds, remain sealed. General Sun paces back and forth in the light of his staff car's head beams; even at this hour, he wears the uniform of a warlord general adorned with braids, medals and other military finery. His saber swings to and fro each time he abruptly turns about-face.

No amount of prying or pulling will open the doors. Nothing short of blasting them open will work. If the investigators fail to take the actions necessary to breach the underground palace, General Sun Dianying will grow restless and he will order his troops to blow a hole in the underground palace using a piece of nearby light artillery.

Of course, the underground palace and burial chambers of the Empress Dowager are cursed. Descending into the underground palace, traversing the catacombs, and entering the Dowager's burial chamber should be fraught with danger and deadly mishaps. Investigators rolling 1's (and fumbles) should be maimed and killed in horrible and graphic ways.

The underground palace is vast and devoid of life. Footsteps of soldiers and grave robbers echo off the walls, and the yellow light of the lanterns fight an unwinnable war against the darkness.

At an appropriate time, the Keeper should announce that heavy stone blocks have fallen from the ceiling killing or seriously injuring one of the investigators. In the unlikely event any of the investigators possess any relevant investigative abilities or skills, they are able to deduce that the falling stones were caused by an ingeniously engineered pressure plate trap built by the architects of the underground palace.

After the investigators have had a chance to dust themselves off, they will proceed to a portion of the underground palace just outside of the burial chamber of the Empress Dowager Cixi. Along the way, feel free to allow the investigators to describe what they see and what they find in the vaulted underground palace.

An elegantly carved white stone bridge symbolically bridges this life with the afterlife. Ceramic spheres the size of cantaloupe have been hoisted above the bridge; these ceramic spheres represent the stars in the northern heavens. The burial chamber of the Empress Dowager Cixi is just past the bridge, and from here many of its treasures are visible. Jade grasshoppers, a jewel-encrusted watermelon and a

silver crown adorned with jade rest on a lacquered coffin. Three ornate cherry wood chests occupy the spaces around the coffin. The chamber contains a collection of priceless treasures! It is little wonder why General Sun order the ransacking of this tomb!

The bridge is fitted with a tripwire trap that causes the ceramic spheres above to drop down on anybody standing on the bridge. Each ceramic sphere is filled with toxic hematite dust and will shatter upon impact, sending the fine-grain orange dust into the air, as well as the eyes and lungs of the intruders. Those breathing in the hematite will begin to cough violently, producing blood within minutes. While the hematite may not prove immediately fatal, it has a damage modifier of +0 (a **successful Dodge roll** or lose 1D8 hit points) and can incapacitate any individual failing a **Health** check (or failing a **CON** roll).

The very last trap that the investigators will face is set within Cixi's burial chamber. Picking up or moving any of the cherry wood chests will remove pressure from panels hidden under the chests, causing three spring-loaded chromate-covered crossbows embedded in the floor to discharge. These crossbows have a **damage modifier of +1** (a **successful Dodge roll** or lose 2D6 hit points).

Cixi's remains are within the lacquered coffin. Investigators who pry open the coffin will find that she has been buried with six of her most prized possessions: a hand cannon, an obsidian reptile, golden statue of a tiger, a royal Manchu banner, and two pendants including one made of jade, and the other made of meteor.

Keepers intending to put the Meteor of Heaven into an investigator's hands later should allow a character surviving up to this scene to pocket it. After the scene concludes, work with the player to create a backstory as to how the item went from tomb to Shanghai.

This scene can be ended once it has served its usefulness to the overall story. It is unnecessary to describe the manner in which all the treasures are removed. Needless to say, General Sun Dianying absconds with Cixi's remains and her most prized personal possessions, which are required for the "Ritual of Heavenly Mandate" described above. Keepers may consider either abruptly ending this scene after the last trap is triggered or when General Sun gives the order to blast the entrance shut with his artillery.

#### Lead Outs:

- Sassoon's Invitation



# Sassoon's Invitation

**Date:** Autumn 1928

**Location:** The Grand Dining Room, Hotel Cathay, Shanghai, China

**Lead Ins:**

•Stirring Up Trouble

**Purpose:** This scene is where the adventure begins in earnest. Character sheets should be passed out, using either pre-generated characters or player generated investigators that are vetted for theme and style of play. Again, the setting is Shanghai in the late 20's, and all investigators must have a connection to Victor Sassoon. They must be ready to come to his aide or be in his service for whatever reason. This scene now sets the tone for the rest of the scenario.



An invitation from Victor Sassoon arrives in the post. 'You are cordially invited to spend a relaxing evening at the Hotel Cathay. Please arrive at his manor at eight o'clock promptly, formal attire not required.' The note is odd in that Victor has never invited you over without a specific purpose in mind, leading you to wonder as to the reason for this supposed soiree.

Upon arrival at the Hotel Cathay, you are led into a Grand Dining Room, where you find Victor already situated comfortably in an overstuffed chair at a long table. Victor wears a worn but comfortable looking smoking jacket. The table is dressed in white and adorned with porcelain. An irritated looking Nepalese man stands behind Victor; this is Gupta, Victor's friend, and Gurkha bodyguard. Gupta is always armed with a curious looking knife; this evening is no exception.

Allow the investigators to interact with each other and Sassoon. This may be the first chance everyone has to introduce themselves. This should be basic chit chat, and Sassoon will not bring to light the real issue until everyone has settled.

**Once people are settled, read this:**

"Ladies and gentlemen, once again my sincere appreciation for joining me tonight. And while I do truly enjoy your company, I also hope you will forgive me for having a slightly ulterior motive for our small gathering. I am afraid I was the victim of a robbery yesterday."

Sassoon pauses before continuing to allow a moment of shock and outrage, and all can see and feel the palpable rage in the Gurkha.

"A month ago, I attended a private auction at Herr Lempertz's, where I acquired an interesting piece known as the "Black Tortoise of the North", a curious snake-like creature carved of obsidian. Herr Lempertz was unable to verify the provenance of the piece, but my research suggested that it dates back to the Jin Dynasty, around 333 A.D., and was crafted at Maoshan by a Daoist alchemist known as Baopuzi."

The item that Sassoon had was the "Black Tortoise of the North", a snake-like creature carved from obsidian. Investigators with **Archaeology** (a **successful Archaeology roll**) can date the Black Tortoise back to the Jin Dynasty (~330 A.D.), and is said to have been created at Maoshan, by the Daoist alchemists known as Baopuzi (抱朴子). Investigators with **Anthropology** or **Religion (Chinese)** (a **successful Anthropology roll** or **Hard Occult roll**) know that Maoshan, Jiangsu is the birthplace of the "Black Magic", "Left Hand", or "Unorthodox" Daoist secret arts.





"A few days ago, I was contacted by a Dr. Henry Bones, an American claiming to be a professor of archaeology at Princeton. He told me that he had come into possession of an artifact known as the "White Tiger of the West", a sculpture recently extracted from the tomb of the Empress Dowager Cixi. He further suggested that my artifact, the "Black Tortoise of the North", likely came from the same tomb. Dr. Bones asked me to meet him at the Dacha Tea House on Seward Road for the purpose of comparing notes on our newly acquired artifacts. My interest was piqued and I agreed to meet."

**Oral History** (a successful **Know roll**) would provide that General Sun Dianying recently raided the tomb of Cixi, and a number of Cixi's personal effects were removed.

We arranged to meet at nine o'clock for some tea, and a talk. We had a private room, and I arrived with Gupta promptly at nine. Dr. Bones was already there, and although he seemed a bit nervous, I attributed it to the excitement. Nothing else seemed out of the ordinary. We had some light conversation, and then Dr. Bones showed me a golden statue of a tiger he called the "White Tiger of the West", and I showed him the Black Tortoise. At almost that exact moment, the door burst open and in came several armed thugs. They took both items and hastily exited. I know Gupta wanted to stop them, but I did not allow it as I felt the item was not worth the risk of harm."

Victor takes a sip of tea before continuing.

"I am vexed by two questions. First, how did the gangsters know both Dr. Bones and I would be at the Dacha Tea House? Secondly, and more importantly, what did these cretins want with these two artifacts of unproven provenance? I asked you here, not so much as a plea for help in the recovery of a material object, but rather to help me obtain answers to these two questions."

At this point, it should become a question and answer session. Allow the investigators to question both Sassoon and Gupta.

#### **Sassoon can provide the following information:**

- Dr. Bones is a struggling, American archaeologist. He has been in China for several years trying to make a name for himself. In short, he is a tomb raider. Dr. Bones claimed that the artifacts were part of a collection of personal items known to have been buried with Cixi; he also seemed to know the way they were arranged within the tomb.
- Herr Gunter Lempertz's auction house is in the French Concession; auctions are held monthly and are by invitation only. Herr Lempertz is a well-respected dealer, originally hailing from Dusseldorf; he set down roots in Shanghai nearly twenty years ago.
- Dr. Bones was decidedly not present at the auction; he does not enjoy enough "credit" to justify an invitation.
- Other notable attendees included Sir John St. John, who bought the "Azure Dragon of the East", a banner of a blue dragon rampant on a field of yellow; Dr. Mitchell Harris, who bought the "Vermillion Bird of the South", a hand cannon wrapped with bronze designs; and Admiral Richard Stockton, who bought the pendant known as "Earth's Jade".
- Sir John St. John is a wealthy collector hailing from London. He resides in Hong Kong but is visiting Shanghai for a few months. He is currently staying at the Astor House. He was invited to this meeting with Victor Sassoon but is conspicuously missing.
- Dr. Mitchell Harris is an American archaeologist representing the Smithsonian Institute. He has been in China for the past year, acquiring artifacts and historical pieces to be added to the collection. Although Dr. Harris does not have the "credit" necessary to obtain an invitation to the exclusive auction house, he came to China with a sizable letter of credit in hand and his academic credentials check out. Dr. Harris is likely staying at a hotel in the French district. He would have been invited to this meeting, but he could not be located in time.





- *Admiral Richard Stockton* is a semi-retired admiral with the Royal Navy. He works at the British consulate and resides with his wife, June. He was unable to attend the meeting, as he and his wife had a long-planned social engagement related to breaking ground for the soon to be constructed Shanghai Concert Hall.

- **Archeology** (a **successful Archaeology** roll) would provide basic descriptions of each of the artifacts put up for action and information regarding the believed origin of these items.

- Sassoon does not consider the Black Tortoise to be of great monetary value. Although retrieval would be nice, it is not critical. It is more urgent to know why these particular men wanted it.

- Sassoon will defer to Gupta on most other questions.

#### **Gupta provides the following information:**

- The assailants included five men, armed with pistols, axes and a tommy gun. The men were obviously members of a triad, but Gupta is not sure which one. The attack was well executed. They came in, took both the White Tiger and the Black Tortoise and left. Dr. Bones ran away almost at the same time the attack occurred. He seemed to be in a panic and has not been seen since.

- Gupta took no action as he was not sure he could protect both Sassoon and Dr. Bones. **Assess Honesty** (a **successful Psychology** roll) confirms the accuracy of Gupta's comments in this regard, as well as his loyalty to Sassoon.

- Gupta subsequently went back to the Dacha Tea House to look for clues; he found nothing. He has already thoroughly interrogated the owner, managers and wait staff. **Assess Honesty** (a **successful Psychology** roll) confirms that Gupta was very thorough in his interrogation. They knew nothing about the attack or its perpetrators. The Dacha Tea House is clearly a dead end.

- **If asked about the location of Dr. Bones or Dr. Mitchell Harris**, Gupta will say that he believes both men are hiding out in the French Concession, but he isn't sure.

- **If asked about the identity of the responsible triads**, Gupta will suggest the investigators follow up with Inspector Mazenq of the French District Police. (See *La Police du Quartier Français*).

This scene can continue until the investigators feel that they have gotten enough information. However, Sassoon is a busy man, if it drags on too long, end the scene as follows.

Sassoon slowly stands up as Gupta helps pull his chair out for him, and hands him a silver-handled cane. He surveys the room.

"Again, I appreciate all of your attention to this matter, and should you need any further assistance, please contact Gupta. I am afraid the hour is not early, and I need to retire for the evening. Please feel free to continue your conversation and make your plans. Good evening to you all."

Sassoon slowly makes his way to the door but turns just as he enters the doorway: "One more thing, do be careful. I have an unusually bad feeling about this situation..."

He then exits, followed closely by Gupta.

#### **Lead Outs:**

- (Optional) John St. John
- (Optional) Admiral Stockton
- (Alternate) The Auction House
- (Alternate) *La Police du Quartier Français*





## (Optional) John St. John

**Date:** Autumn, 1928

**Location:** The Astor House, Whangpoo Road, Shanghai, China

**Lead Ins:**

- Sassoon's Invitation
- The Auction House

**Purpose:** The Investigators find John St. John, a victim of murder by arsenic poisoning.



The Astor House is a prestigious hotel famous for its “Chinese Tea Dance” show held every hour on the hour, all day long. The Chinese Tea dancers are not nearly as lewd as the French Quarter dancing girls, and as a result, the Astor House’s Chinese Tea Dance does not command the same audience. It remains, however, a popular meeting place for Shanghai’s socialites, and its grand ballroom plays host to dinner dances nearly every weekend.

The Astor House is managed by a Mr. Henry Wasser. The lead reception clerk is Mr. Kammerling, a Russian Jew who was born in Turkey. He has flawless fluency in over a dozen languages, including Chinese, Japanese, German, French, English, and Hebrew. Mr. Wasser is very busy and difficult to pin down. Mr. Kammerling, however, is happy to be of assistance to anybody from the upper middle class or higher (**Credit Rating** of 5 or greater) (**Credit Rating of 50% or higher**). Point spends in **Bargain** or **Reassurance** (a successful **Hard Persuade** or **Charm** roll) can obtain useful information from Mr. Kammerling.

Sir John St. John has lodged in Room 14 for over two months. Members of the hotel staff and guests recognize his name but have not seen him in a day or so. Mr. Kammerling will recall that John St. John was recently visited by an older Chinese woman with a very odd northern Chinese accent, the likes of which he has never heard. Mr. Kammerling might say “her word choices were archaic and formal”. However, Mr. Kammerling, a victim of Cixi’s cloud memory spell, will not be able to recall the woman’s name or describe her appearance or choice of clothes or any other details relating to the encounter. Mr. Kammerling, who has a didactic memory, will be visibly shaken by his failure of memory. **Assess Honesty** (a successful **Psychology** roll) confirms that Mr. Kammerling is not acting and is genuinely upset.

*Keeper’s Note: Mr. Henry Wasser and Mr. Kammerling were real people; at the time of this scenario, Mr. Wasser is the hotel manager and Mr. Kammerling is the most senior reception clerk. In the 30’s Mr. Kammerling would rise to the position of the hotel manager.*

Determining that John St. John has checked into Room 14 is easily accomplished, and gaining access is an easy matter; the door to Room 14 is not locked.

The door swings open, releasing an unpleasant smell. The wooden floor is slick with vomit and feces. An older gentleman is laying face first in a pool of his own vomit.

The man lying in the pool of his own vomit is John St. John. He is dressed in a vomit-stained, tailored suit; his pants are stained with bloody diarrhea. He is the victim of the resurrected Cixi, though the investigators do not yet know this.

- Investigators inspecting the corpse and bodily fluids spewed about the room may use their knowledge of

Astor House (on opposite side of Suzhou Creek)







Astor House

**Medicine** (a successful **Medicine** roll) to determine St. John died of poisoning. The palms of the hands are spotted with discolored “corns”; if the jacket and shirt are removed, investigators will also observe that the trunk of the body is also covered in spots. The vomiting, diarrhea and discolored spots suggest that St. John died of arsenic poisoning, a slow and painful death.

- **Forensics** (a successful **Medicine** roll) will provide that the body is relatively fresh; the victim has been dead for a day (plus however many days have passed since the investigator’s meeting with Victor Sassoon).

- **Evidence Collection** (a successful **Spot Hidden** roll) finds a mostly empty teapot, a teacup and multiple tins of “Iron Goddess of Mercy” tea (铁观音). If checked with **Chemistry** (a successful **Science: Chemistry** roll), liquid remaining in the teapot, as well as the tins of tea will test positive for arsenic.

- **Evidence Collection** (a successful **Spot Hidden** roll) finds dozens of empty moon cake boxes and wrappers. Any crumbs found will also test positive for arsenic with **Chemistry** (a successful **Science: Chemistry** roll). The empty moon cake boxes are labeled “San Yuan Packing and Distribution Co.”

- A point spend in **Library Use** or **Bureaucracy** (a successful **Extreme Library Use** roll) could result in determining that the San Yuan Packing and Distribution Co. maintains a warehouse in the Warehouse District, and is owned by a “Mr. Zhang”. Mr. Zhang, (a/k/a “Iron Headed” Zhang) is the former and now deceased boss of the Wo Hop To gang. Enterprising investigators might attempt to take shortcuts in the investigation by immediately heading to the warehouse (See “The Empress Reborn” scene) without having all the clues necessary to survive a confrontation with the resurrected Cixi; a decision to take a shortcut could prove fatal.

- **Evidence Collection** (a successful **Spot Hidden** roll) will find St. John’s wallet still on his person, and a gold-plated pocket watch on the dresser top. One of St. John’s travel trunks has been rummaged through; it is difficult to tell if anything has been removed.

#### Lead Outs:

- Admiral Stockton
- The Auction House
- La Police du Quartier Français



## (Optional) Admiral Stockton

**Date:** Autumn, 1928

**Location:** British Consulate and the Public Garden, Shanghai, China

**Lead Ins:**

- Sassoon's Invitation
- The Auction House
- John St. John

**Purpose:** The investigators find Admiral Stockton in the Public Garden. The resurrected Cixi has taken the Earth's Jade pendant from Admiral Stockton and magically robbed him of any related memories.



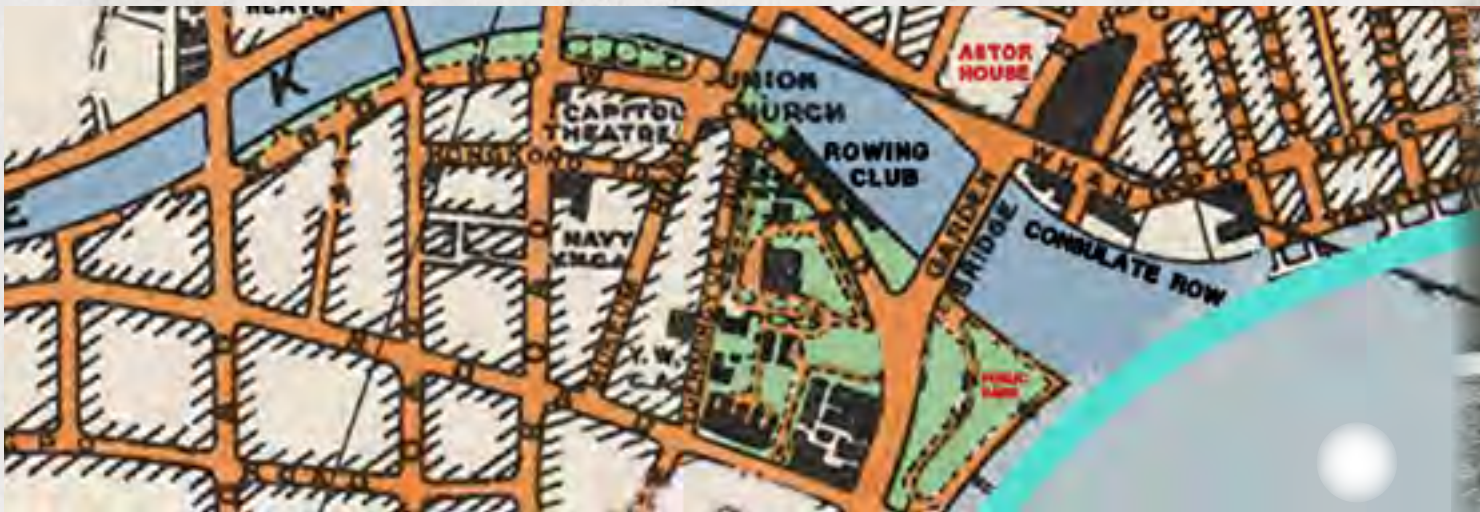
The search for Admiral Richard Stockton and Earth's Jade is likely to begin at his place of work, the British Consulate. The British Consulate is a two-storied building inside of a compound of six or seven buildings. The lawn is immaculate and the entrance to the compound is restricted to British citizens and those having legitimate business at the compound (**Bureaucracy**). (A successful **Persuade** roll or another appropriate skill test will grant investigators access to British Consulate.) Admiral Stockton is semi-retired and chained to a desk in the Office of British Naval Intelligence. The Office of British Naval Intelligence is relegated to two small offices on the second floor of the Consulate. Unfortunately, Admiral Stockton is not currently at his desk and hasn't been so for hours.

Admiral Stockton is provided secretarial assistance by Petty Officer John Bowler. If asked politely (**Reassurance** or **Flattery**) (a successful **Charm** roll), Petty Officer Bowler will tell investigators that the Admiral went for a stroll in the Public Garden, which he is want to do every day.

While the investigators are speaking with Petty Officer Bowler a delivery boy will deliver a box full of moon cakes and tins of "Iron Goddess of Mercy" tea (铁观音). The box is addressed to "Magistrate R. Stockton", written in a script that is barely legible, and obviously by someone who does not know Admiral Stockton's proper form of address. A bill of lading identifies the sender as the "San Yuan Packing and Distribution Co." The moon cakes and the tea are tainted with arsenic (**Chemistry**) (a successful **Science: Chemistry** roll) and intended to be consumed by Admiral Stockton, who is now the subject of a cloud memory spell and a planted hypnotic suggestion of an insatiable desire to eat moon cakes and consume tea.

Devious Keepers may very well sell the delivery as a signal that the scene at the British Consulate is coming to an end as the Petty Officer is quite busy; observant investigators (or investigators already alerted to Cixi's *modus operandi*) may pick up on the fact that this delivery is a means to assassinate Admiral Stockton.

Admiral Stockton set off for a walk through the Public Garden; before arriving, however, a rickshaw carrying the resurrected Cixi crossed his path. Cixi cast a cloud memory spell on the Admiral, and the implanted a hypnotic suggestion to crave the consumption of moon cakes and tea. After the short encounter, the dazed Admiral Stockton wandered into the Public Garden and sat down on a bench.





The “Public Garden” is a triangular park on the north end of the bund, with Suzhou creek forming the northern border and the Huangpu river forming the eastern border. It includes a resting pavilion, tennis courts and pathways flanked by well-trimmed rose bushes. Signs are posted at the entrances of the park that prohibit entry to Chinese, dogs, and bicycles. However, since the May 30th incident in '25, the police are unwilling, and perhaps unable, to enforce the posted rules.

A cursory search by the investigators will find Admiral Stockton on a park bench gazing off into the distance. At first, Admiral Stockton will have difficulty remembering his name. He will also have difficulty remembering that he is married to his grade school sweetheart, June and that their 30th anniversary is tomorrow. When he remembers these details, he will panic over an anniversary gift which he seems to have lost. Questions about Earth's Jade, pendants, auctions, and artifacts will be met with blank stares. **Assess Honesty (a successful Psychology roll)** indicates the Admiral's loss of memory is real and extremely disconcerting to him.

A successful **Psychoanalysis** test difficulty 3 (a **successful Psychoanalysis roll**) indicates that Admiral Stockton is displaying symptoms similar to patients suffering from concussions, but there are no signs of physical trauma or injury to the head. Investigators succeeding on this test by more than 2 points (**critical success**) will conclude that Admiral Stockton has suffered a traumatic psychological event and entered into a hypnotic state, one which he is likely to recover from if left alone long enough. Such an investigator might also surmise that it is possible to implant or remove a hypnotic suggestion while in such a condition.

If the Keeper is running a “Pulp” game, investigators may successfully hypnotize the Admiral with a **Hypnosis** test difficulty 4 (a **successful Psychoanalysis roll**). During hypnosis, the Admiral will describe a strange encounter with an older Chinese woman (the resurrected Cixi). The Admiral might say something like: “She was a strikingly confident Chinese woman carried in a gold gilded palanquin, or was that a rickshaw? I recall being extremely grateful to her. I gave her a fine gift; a gift fit for a Queen.”

A search of Admiral Stockton's pockets produces an empty jewelry box and a receipt of payment issued by Gunter Lempertz for an “antique jade pendant”; the Admiral has no recollection regarding the jewelry box or the pendant. If pushed hard enough, Admiral Stockton will recall his friend Herr Gunter Lempertz and his auction house, but he does not recall the auction in which he purchased Earth's Jade pendant.

Investigators attempting to remove or “write over” an implanted hypnotic suggestion must succeed on a **Hypnosis** or **Psychoanalysis** test difficulty 5 (a **Hard Psychoanalysis roll**). Investigators failing the first attempt to remove the implanted suggestion have worsened the condition of the patient. Subsequent attempts will require a test difficulty of 6 (an **Extreme Psychoanalysis roll**), and the patient has picked up another compulsion or Mania.

#### Lead Outs:

- John St. John
- The Auction House
- La Police du Quartier Français



Public Park, International Settlement



# (Alternate) The Auction House

**Date:** Autumn, 1928

**Location:** Lempertz's private auction house and abode, French Concession

## Lead Ins:

- Sassoon's Invitation
- John St. John
- Admiral Stockton



Stucco walls and wrought iron spikes encircle Lempertz's compound. The main residence is a squat, unmarked building made of granite. The interior is fitted out with trimmed hallways and doorways crafted in a heavy classical style; the rooms are filled with uncomfortable, but expensive stained oak furniture. There is little to differentiate Lempertz's home from his business; drawing room, parlor and auction chambers appear identical in every way save for size and the total numbers of unwelcoming chairs and benches.

Herr Gunter Lempertz is a frail-looking man with a mop of messy, straight white hair and an inquisitive smirk permanently fixed upon his wrinkled face. As a man who prefers his privacy, Lempertz makes a living by carefully picking and choosing both suppliers and buyers of fine art, antiques and historical artifacts. Herr Lempertz is the very model of discretion and is generally unwilling to disclose private information about his sources and patrons. Herr Lempertz acquired the artifacts from Roy Lu, the oldest son of the gangster boss Lu Xun (a/k/a "Lao Che"), who acquired the artifacts from General Sun Dianying; Herr Lempertz is absolutely unwilling to provide this information to anyone. Herr Lempertz is, however, willing to share the information he has regarding the artifacts that come through his doors, provided that inquirers possess at least a modicum of intellectual curiosity (e.g. investigators with **Archeology, Anthropology, Art History** or **History**) (investigators with 50% or more in **Archeology, Anthropology, Art** or **History**). Lempertz can make the following pieces of information available:

- Lempertz is aware that General Sun Dianying recently plundered the Eastern Qing mausoleum in Zunhua, Hebei, including the Empress Dowager Cixi's tomb. Lempertz

is confident that the artifacts were the personal effects of the Empress Dowager Cixi and that they were buried with her. He also knows and is willing to discuss the full, alleged history of each of the artifacts he auctioned off.

- Lempertz can confirm or provide the insight that there are six principle directions in Chinese cosmology, namely: South, East, North, West, Earth, and Heaven. As such, if the artifacts auctioned were a set, then the artifact representing "heaven" was not put up for auction. Lempertz correctly surmises that the "Meteorite of Heaven" (a pendant made from a fallen meteorite by the San Xing Dui people) is the missing piece that was not auctioned off.

- With a point spend in any of **Archeology, Anthropology, Art History, Oral History** or **Occult** the investigator will recall information about the "Ritual of Heavenly Mandate" and the need for six component pieces. The player making the point spend should be encouraged to take narrative control and describe the ritual and its effects upon successful completion. **Any investigator making a Hard Archeology, Anthropology or Occult roll will recall information about the "Ritual of Heavenly Mandate" and the need for six component pieces.**

Investigators may use **Stealth** (a successful **Stealth** roll) to steal a look at the guest log displayed in the auction chambers or **Filch** (a successful **Sleight of Hand** roll) to pocket the guest log. The guest log contains customer and supplier contact information, and includes entries and last known mailing addresses for Sir John St. John (Room 14 of the Astor House on Whangpoo Road), Admiral Stockton (residence near the British Consulate), and Dr. Mitchell Harris (at the La Lune Bleu). Investigators involved in the artifact trade may very well be listed in this guest log.

Enterprising investigators that make it into the office might be able to use **Stealth** or **Filch** together with **Accounting** to peruse the Herr Lempertz' ledgers, which tie Roy Lu to the disposition of the six artifacts. **Investigators that manage to make into the office will need to succeed on a Stealth or Sleight of Hand roll and an Accounting roll.** A business card for "Roy Lu, Senior Manager at the Hip Sing Tong Business Association" can also be found on the desk with use of **Evidence Collection** (a successful **Spot Hidden** roll).

## Lead Outs:

- Dr. Mitchell Harris
- The Hip Sing Tong



# (Alternate) La Police du Quartier Français

**Date:** Autumn, 1928

**Location:** The French Concession, Shanghai, China

**Lead Ins:**

- Sassoon's Invitation
- John St. John
- Admiral Stockton

**Purpose:** The investigators have turned to Inspector Mazenq and the French police for help. This scene can payout in a variety of ways depending on why the investigators have come to visit Inspector Mazenq. For example, Inspector Mazenq can provide information as to the whereabouts of the missing American archaeologists. Alternatively, he could also pass vital information about the criminal organizations operating in Shanghai. He also knows that the Wo Hop To gang has recently experienced a "change in management".



The Station is located at Joffre Avenue (Huai Hai Zhong Lu) and Pottier Route (Baoqing lu); its French architecture chose a utilitarian design once common in Marseille. Inspector Mazenq enjoys a large corner office on the fifth floor.

Inspector Mazenq is a proud Frenchman with an excellent understanding of the Shanghai criminal underworld. Inspector Mazenq respects Victor Sassoon and is friends with Victor's bodyguard, Gupta. Inspector Mazenq will respond to name dropping and investigators using

**Flattery, Cop Talk, and Language (French)** (a successful **Charm or Persuade** roll or a **Hard Language (French)** roll).

Inspector Mazenq "directs traffic" by adding direction to the investigator's inquiries. The below information and leads that the Inspector may provide is organized by topic:

•**The Americans** - If the investigators ask Inspector Mazenq about the locations of Dr. Harris and/or Dr. Bones, the Inspector will reply that: "the Americans are not as discrete as they think; sticking out like sore thumbs in the French Concession. Dr. Harris checked into La Lune Bleu a few days ago, and Dr. Bones is hiding out in the triad operated House of Clouds." The House of Clouds is owned and operated by the 4 Seas Gang. (See Dr. Mitchell Harris, Dr. Bones.)

•**The Morgue** - If the investigators come to Inspector Mazenq after discovering the poisoned body of John St. John, he will mention that the city has recently seen an unusual uptick in the number poisonings. After flipping through some files and notes, he will mention a dozen autopsies performed by Doctor Maybell of the St. Marie Hospital. In all cases, the cause of death has been arsenic poisoning, and foul play is suspected. Victims have included a few "down and out" foreigners (archeologists and grave robbers) and half-a-dozen Chinese gangsters, all of whom were identified as members of the Wo Hop To Triad, including the former boss, "Iron Head" Zhang. If the investigators come to Inspector Mazenq before discovering John St. John (but after the Auction House), GMs can save the players the trouble of running the John St. John scene by having Inspector Mazenq inform them of John St. John's demise. This scene can also enable "off screen" discovery of other victims.

•It is something of a leap, but if an investigator with **History** (a successful **Extreme History** roll) specifically inquires, Empress Cixi was thought to have used poison





as a means of enforcing her will at the imperial court. By one account, Cixi is thought to have poisoned her own son because she thought him too weak to rule.

•**Crazy Cow** - Inspector Mazenq can inform the Investigators that his men recently apprehended a Wo Hop To gangster named "Crazy Cow". "Crazy Cow" was a gangster lieutenant loyal to "Iron Head" Zhang. He was found in an alley delirious and exhibiting symptoms of arsenic poisoning. He was taken to the Ward Road Gaol, and is in the care of the city's leading alienist, Dr. Aue. (See Crazy Cow.)

•**Triple Triads** - If Investigators come to Inspector Mazenq seeking help identifying the triad responsible for robbing Sassoon at the Dacha Tea House, Inspector Mazenq can provide them with the lay of the land, namely there are currently three rival triad organizations vying for control of Shanghai's markets for prostitution, gambling, drugs, and extortion. Inspector Mazenq can also inform the investigators that the Wo Hop To recently underwent a dramatic "change of management". Basic information about the 3 triads operating in Shanghai may be divulged.

**Lead Outs:**

- Crazy Cow
- Dr. Mitchell Harris
- Dr. Bones

和合圖

Wo Hop To

**Hideout:** The Union.  
**Bosses:** unknown.

四海幫

4 Seas Gang

**Hideout:** The Hip Sing Tong Business Association Building.  
**Bosses:** Lao Che and his three sons, Roy "Little Cart" (小车); Lu Kai (陆凯); and Lu Chen (陆晨).

青幫

Green Gang

**Hideout:** The Crystal Garden.  
**Bosses:** "Big Eared" Du Yuesheng



## (Optional) Crazy Cow

**Date:** Autumn, 1928

**Location:** The Ward Road Gaol, Shanghai, China

**Lead Ins:**

- La Police du Quartier Français

**Purpose:** The investigators have decided to interview or interrogate “Crazy Cow”, a Wo Hop To gangster who is the victim of multiple cloud memory spells and arsenic poisoning.



The Ward Road Gaol is a prison, it holds criminals, lunatics and the destitute.

You finally manage to make your way to the Ward Road Gaol. It is a dull looking building, and outside is a small crowd of people – possibly waiting to see their incarcerated loved ones, or simply bored people reveling in the misery of others. The place is miserable and shabby even by local standards; it is obvious that no one here cares. Oddly, however, you notice one cheerful spot among the otherwise sea of despair. An odd-looking European man saunters in the door ahead of you, a jaunt to his walk and a smile of satisfaction. As you start to follow him, the guard at the door stops you: “Ni Chew Na’r?” (“Where are you going?”) His accent gives him away as a northerner, assigned obviously one of the lowest tasks among the police: door guard.

**Cop Talk or Law** (a successful **Law** or **Persuade** roll) allows the investigators past the guard without incident. After making it past the guard, the investigators are met by the smiling Dr. Aue, who visits the prison on a weekly basis to work with some of the more “challenging” prisoners.

After getting past the “security”, you make your way inside to the holding cells. They are much worse than expected. Although there are guards, they are mostly huddled together chatting and smoking. Little attention is actually given to guarding the prisoners. Ahead, you see Dr. Aue sitting on a stool in front of a holding cell. He is taking notes as he observes the man in the cell. As you approach, Dr. Aue greets you with a friendly smile, “Guttentag, gentleman. Welcome to purgatory!” he says with a smile and tip of his hat. He has an obvious Swiss accent.

Dr. Aue is a Swiss professor. He has taken an interest in the case of a gangster known as “Crazy Cow”, a former member of the Wo Hop To gang who was the victim of one too many cloud memory spells. Crazy Cow is verifiably insane. He wasn’t when he earned his nickname, but he most certainly is now. Dr. Aue does not know the cause of the insanity, but his medical commentary might sound something like this:

- “He has lost his identity, jah. Picked up in the Public Gardens; suffering from acute arsenic poisoning. He didn’t even know where he was.”
- “His body is badly damaged by the consumption of arsenic; he will never make a full recovery, but he is unlikely to succumb to it anytime soon.”
- “Jah, it reminds me of post-concussion syndrome. In layman terms, ‘shell shock’. Like many soldiers from the Great War, but much worse.”
- “His prognosis is not good. I do not expect a recovery of memory. Personality, perhaps, but the memory is gone for good.”
- “He displays a unique mania. He has an insatiable desire to drink tea and eat moon cakes.”



Ward Street Gaol



Dr. Aue is not directly involved in this investigation at all, but he is an acquaintance of both Victor Sassoon and Inspector Mazenq, and he will be as helpful as possible. **Assess Honesty** (a successful **Psychology** roll) provides that Dr. Aue is providing his honest assessment of the patient. Dr. Aue is happy to escort the investigators to the prison cell holding Crazy Cow; he has been isolated from other prisoners.

Inside the cell is a hollow shell of what was once a triad man. You can tell he was a triad by his tattoos. His body, much like his mind, seems to have wasted away. He is naked, and the tattered remains of his clothes are discarded to one side. He is dirty, unwashed in every sense of the word, and his hair is completely wild. He is softly muttering something, and as you lean in to make it out, you realize it is the same phrase over and over again: "Wo shi shei?" (我是谁?) "Who am I?"

Investigators with **Medicine** (a successful **Medicine** roll) are able to immediately identify Crazy Cow's swollen hands and changes to fingernail pigmentation as symptoms of arsenic poisoning. Further inspection of Crazy Cow's body confirms Dr. Aue's diagnosis and prognosis. Investigators can also identify scar tissue on the trunk of his body associated with multiple stabbings and gun-shot wounds. Inspection of his tattoos and **Streetwise** (a successful **INT** roll) provide that he is a member of the Wo Hop To Triad.

Investigators with **Cop Talk**, **Oral History** or **Streetwise** (Investigators with a **Criminal Occupation** or **Police Detective Occupation** or a successful **INT** roll) have heard the name "Crazy Cow"; his reputation is that of the loyal right-hand man of the boss, "Iron Head" Zhang. At the beginning of his career, he saved "Iron Head" Zhang from certain death by murdering a dozen rival gang members in a fit of rage. He was fiercely loyal to his boss and was one of the toughest thugs out there. Investigators with **Cop Talk**, **Oral History** or **Streetwise** (Investigators with a **Criminal Occupation** or **Police Detective Occupation** or a successful **INT** roll) have heard that the boss of the Wo Hop To Triad was found dead several weeks ago.

The patient is somewhat childlike and forgets things that were just told to him or that he just said. He will demand moon cakes, and if he believes that the investigators are law enforcement, he will tell them that he is too thirsty to talk, and will need some tea before he has anything to say to them. Getting him to talk requires bribing him with tea and/or moon cakes. Once tea and/or moon cakes have been provided, investigators may derive the following:

• **Assess Honesty** or a **Psychoanalysis** test difficulty 4 (a successful **Psychology** roll) provides that the patient genuinely finds it difficult to recall his name, his Wo Hop To Triad career or the reason why he is locked in a prison.

• A **Psychoanalysis** test difficulty 4 (a successful **Psychoanalysis** roll) provides that the patient is displaying an extremely rare form of amnesia and dissociative fugue. Although he is having trouble remembering his identity, his raw and naturally thuggish predilections remain. He has some confusion regarding his surroundings, and from time-to-time is convinced he is at a jazz club or on riverside docks. 'Post-concussion syndrome' sometimes displays the same symptoms, but there are no signs of physical trauma or injury to the head, as is common in more severe cases. A diagnosis of 'Psychogenic Amnesia' would be most accurate; the patient is genuinely insane, most likely the result of a series of traumatic psychological events. Crazy Cow shows no signs that a recovery is possible.

• **Interrogation** (a successful **Psychology** roll) is able to confirm the Crazy Cow was loyal to "Iron Head" Zhang, and he knows that "Iron Head" Zhang was killed; he blames Roy "Little Cart" Lu. The one fact that Crazy Cow is certain of is that Roy Lu is a member of the 4 Seas Gang, a rival Triad that operates behind the cover of the Hip Sing Tong business association. Investigators with **Streetwise**, **Bureaucracy** or **Library Use** (a successful **INT**, **Law** or **Library Use** roll) can find the address for the Hip Sing Tong offices in the Shanghai International Settlement. (See *Hip Sing Tong*.)

• In a Pulp game, an investigator may successfully hypnotize Crazy Cow with a **Hypnosis** test difficulty 4 (a successful **Psychoanalysis** roll). During hypnosis, Crazy Cow will provide a jumbled recount of a triad meeting presided over by the Empress Dowager Cixi. The investigators are unable to use **Assess Honesty** or other investigative abilities to confirm the accuracy of Crazy Cow's story; the practice of hypnosis suggests that this story comes straight from Crazy Cow's subconscious; the person he identifies as Cixi could be either Cixi or somebody he loosely associates with the Empress Dowager or the power she possessed in life. The investigator placing Crazy Cow into a trance would likely discover more than a few implanted suggestions and compulsions, including the desire to eat mooncakes and drink tea.

• **Mythos** (a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll) would provide, at a cost (a **Sanity** roll, 0/1d2), that Crazy Cow is the victim of "magic" that clouds his mind and deprives him of memory. It will also tease out from Crazy Cow a memory of the resurrected Cixi laughing off an assassination attempt that involved a now deceased gangster pumping three bullets into her chest.

#### Lead Outs:

• Hip Sing Tong



## (Optional) Dr. Mitchell Harris

**Date:** Autumn, 1928

**Location:** La Lune Bleu, French Concession, Shanghai, China

**Lead Ins:**

- (Alternate) The Auction House
- (Alternate) La Police du Quartier Français

**Purpose:** The investigators have tracked down Dr. Mitchell Harris to the La Lune Bleu; so, too, have the Wo Hop To thugs.



The tip leads to La Lune Bleu, a small hotel on the outskirts of the French Concession. The hotel is quiet and clean, just like the neighboring buildings. It is a fairly well-kept part of town. The single oddity is a black car parked further down the street, with a man obviously chain smoking inside. There is smoke coming from the window, and a small pile of Lucky Strike cigarettes by the car door.

The investigators can confront the thug in the car. He is a member of the Wo Hop To and serves as the lookout. The rest of his "team" is entering La Lune Bleu to find Dr. Harris. Assuming the Investigators also enter La Lune Bleu, they will enter into a three-way standoff.

You enter into a sparse but tastefully decorated hotel. White-washed walls are decorated with a few landscape paintings. The sitting room has the requisite sofa and coffee table, and in fact, there is even what

looks like a fresh pot of coffee on the table. This is made clear by the black liquid dripping from the table onto an expensive oriental rug covering a hardwood floor. The black of the spilled coffee is a vivid contrast to the terrified, white-faced Mrs. Silvian, the owner of the hotel.

To the back of the room, Mrs. Silvian is cowering away from three Chinese men, two of whom are currently brandishing long knives and scowling in the direction of a man ducking behind the previously mentioned sofa with a six-shooter in his hand. This man could only be Dr. Harris.

### Wo Hop To Thugs

Athletics 6, Health 6, Scuffling 6, Weapons 4.  
[Fists (-2), Kicks (-1), Light pistols (0)]

### Wo Hop To Thugs

STR 60	CON 60	SIZ 60	DEX 50	INT 40
APP 50	POW 50	EDU 30	SAN 50	HP 12
DB: 0	Build: 0	Move: 8	MP 10	

Brawl:	60%, unarmed 1D3
Handgun:	70%, luger 1D10
Dodge:	25%

**Armor:** None

**Skills:** Climb 72%, Throw 60%, Jump 60%,  
Intimidate 50%, Psychology 20%, Spot Hidden 25%  
**Languages:** Chinese 30%, Shanghainese 30%





The thugs are obviously from Wo Hop To and are here for the Vermillion Bird of the South. They will leave if they get it but they are not afraid of a fight. The lookout from earlier will join if he was not “dealt with” previously. The Wo Hop To thugs will also negotiate if needed, their only job is to get the hand cannon and nothing else is a concern. They will fight to the death, as they know what punishment awaits them if they fail. If a Wo Hop To thug is taken alive, an **Interrogation spend** (a successful **Extreme Persuade** roll) will trick him or her into divulging the location of the Wo Hop To boss: San Yuan Warehouse. If asked about the identity of the boss, the thug will only call her an “old scary bitch”.

Dr. Mitchell Harris is an American archaeologist on contract with the Smithsonian Institute. He purchased the Vermillion Bird of the South, an ornate bronze hand cannon dating back to 1294, and he has every intention to collect the promised “recovery fee” upon its delivery to the Smithsonian. If the Investigators save Dr. Mitchell Harris, he can provide some or all of the following information:

- “I’ve figured it out. Those gangsters are looking for six artifacts taken from the tomb of the Empress Dowager Cixi.”
- “I don’t know who is seeking the artifacts or why they would want them.”
- “Dr. Bones, another American archeologist, is holed up at an opium den known as ‘the House of Clouds.’” Dr. Harris knows the location of the House of Clouds and is willing to escort the investigators there if he survives this scene.

#### Dr. Mitchell Harris, 27, Archaeologist

Athletics 8, Health 6, Scuffling 7, Weapons 5, Firearms 6  
[Fist (-2), Medium pistol (+1)]

Anthropology 2, Archaeology 2, Credit Rating 4, Filch 2, History 1, Library Use 4, Reassurance 1, Sanity 5, Stability 6

#### Dr. Mitchell Harris, 27, Archaeologist

STR 55 CON 70 SIZ 65 DEX 50 INT 70  
APP 55 POW 45 EDU 65 SAN 45 HP 13  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP 9

Brawl: 45%, unarmed 1D3  
Handgun: 50%, .38 1D10  
Dodge: 25%

Armor: None

Skills: Archaeology 67% Credit Rating 50%  
Fast Talk 20% Firearms (rifle/shotgun) 40%,  
Library Use 50%, Listen 50%, Science, Geology 51%,  
Spot Hidden 50%  
Languages: English 65%, Chinese 10%

**Keeper’s Note:** In the event an investigator dies, consider introducing Dr. Harris as a replacement investigator, rather than as an NPC. In such circumstances, give him a full array of investigative and general abilities, using normal character generation rules.

#### Lead Outs:

- Dr. Bones
- Carrots and Sticks
- The Empress Reborn





# Dr. Bones

**Date:** Autumn, 1928

**Location:** The House of Clouds opium den, on the border between the Shanghai International Settlement and the French Concession.

**Lead Ins:**

- (Alternate) La Police du Quartier Français
- (Optional) Doctor Mitchell Harris
- (Floating) Hip Sing Tong

**Purpose:** The investigators track down Dr. Bones, who is hiding out in an opium den.



You find your way to the no man's land of Shanghai. While centrally located, it apparently falls neither in the French Concession nor in the International Settlement, so both sides generally turn a blind eye to what happens along these streets. It is no surprise, then, that one of the businesses here would be an opium den. The infamous House of Clouds is exceptionally easy to find if no other reason than by the scent of the sweet and sour decadence that is the trademark of opium.

The entrance is marked with a simple wood sign, but no one needs the sign to know what is being sold within. Upon entering, you are met with a moment of adjustment; from the light and airy street to the murky smoke-filled darkness of a dimly lit foyer. At a desk sits what may have once been an attractive woman, now well past her prime. She attempts to keep up some façade of beauty, much as the store itself attempts to

do. The wooden interior has a distinguished air, but upon slightly closer inspection, it is obvious that all is in a state of rapid decay and disrepair.

Madame Gao looks up from the book she is scribbling in, smiles and greets you warmly in broken French. "Bienvenue dans mon établissement, comment puis-je vous divertir ce jour?" (Welcome to my establishment, how can I entertain you this day?)

Madame Gao knows her customers, her log book keeps a record of them all, so she certainly can help them find Dr. Bones. Madame Gao best responds to uses of **Flattery**, **Credit Rating**, or **Intimidation** (any successful **Charm**, **Credit Rating**, or **Intimidate** roll yield desired results.)

**Keeper's Note:** this is the same establishment as seen in the scenario "Strange Gates, Hidden Demons") If the investigators are the same as those used in that scenario, they will know this place well. If the original Madame Gao was killed or would otherwise be unavailable for this adventure, assume this "Madame Gao" is a 'sister' who has taken over the business and carries on the trade as usual.

Madame Gao leads you into the back. The darkness of the foyer is bright in comparison, and the sweet sickly smell of opium-laced decay is all that much thicker. A general feeling of malaise settles over you as you see the depressing state of bodies, lost to this world and consumed by the smoke, strewn over decrepit beds made to look well, an elaborate hoax.

In one such bed lies a man you can only assume to be Dr. Bones. He is taking long drags on a pipe as the smoke curls around him and a smile appears on his face. His eyes turn to meet your gaze.

"Been expecting you..." he says to no one in particular...





The Keeper should decide the manner in which Dr. Bones came to be in possession of the White Tiger of the East, albeit briefly, based on the how the story unfolds (or is influenced by the narrative decisions of the players). Was Dr. Bones present at the plundering of Cixi's tomb? Did Dr. Bones steal it from another archaeologist that participated in the plundering? Did Dr. Bones serve as a middle man in a transaction between General Sun Dianying and Herr Gunter Lempertz? Was the White Tiger of the East given to Dr. Bones as bait for Sassoon? The manner in which Dr. Bones responds to questions and interrogation will greatly depend upon the manner in which the investigators became involved.

Dr. Bones is quite "high" and investigators with **Interrogation** or **Reassurance** (a successful **Persuade** roll) can question Dr. Bones with ease. **Assess Honesty** (a successful **Psychology** roll) shows that he is telling what he believes to be the truth. Dr. Bones is generally forthcoming as to the manner in which he came into possession of the White Tiger of the East. He will also likely tell the investigators the details of the deal he struck that lead to Sassoon's robbery at gunpoint in the Dacha Tea House. During questioning, Dr. Bones might, for example, say something like:

- "I was approached by a peculiar Chinese man who spoke with an American accent and called himself 'Roy'. He told me he had a business proposition: if I helped him lure Victor Sassoon into a trap, I would get to keep my life and get paid a little extra." Investigators with **Streetwise** (Investigators with a **Criminal Occupation** or **Police Detective Occupation** or a successful **INT** roll) will know that Dr. Bone's description of Roy is a match for Roy Lu, the son of Lao Che and the putative head of the 4 Seas Gang.
- "They promised no one would get hurt and that I would get rich and famous." **Assess Honesty** (a successful **Psychology** roll) shows that he is filled with remorse.
- "After Triad thugs showed up, I ran away; been hiding here ever since."
- "I can introduce you to 'Roy' if you like. I met him through the Hip Sing Tong Business Association." (See *Hip Sing Tong* and *Carrots and Sticks*.)

How much Dr. Bones knows about the Wo Hop To and their resurrected boss Cixi depends greatly upon how he came to be in possession of the White Tiger of the West. With **Reassurance** (a successful **Persuade** roll), Dr. Bones will share anything he knows (and remembers). Even if it turns out he knows very little, he could be convinced to make atonement by setting up a meeting with Roy Lu or other representatives of Cixi and the Wo Hop To. If the investigators fail to find or reach out to the Wo Hop To, they will eventually track down the investigators and any other individuals in possession of an artifact necessary for the completion of the *Ritual of Heavenly Mandate*. (See *Carrots and Sticks*.)

#### Lead Outs:

- Hip Sing Tong
- Carrots and Sticks





# (Floating) Hip Sing Tong

**Date:** Autumn, 1928

**Location:** The Hip Sing Tong Business Association Building on a side street near East Nanjing Lu.

**Lead Ins:**

- (Alternate) La Police du Quartier Français
- Crazy Cow
- Dr. Bones
- The Empress Reborn

**Purpose:** The investigators have arrived at the Hip Sing Tong Business Association Building, which also serves as a hide-out for the 4 Seas Gang. Here, they will find a classical Chinese assembly hall walled with funeral urns, as well a true copy of a Daoist alchemical treaty on resurrection. Investigators will need possession of this treaty if they intend to reverse the spell resurrecting Cixi.



The Hip Sing Tong Business Association Building is four stories. The first floor is a noodle shop. A large staircase connects the first floor with the other three floors. A couple of armed thugs stand guard at the landing on the first floor. The second and third floor are both owned and occupied by the Hip Sing Tang business association. The second floor is office space, while the third floor is an assembly hall decorated in a traditional Chinese motif. The fourth floor is a garish nightclub known as the Belt King Social Club.

Investigators researching the Hip Sing Tong or the Belt King Social Club with **Library Use** or **Bureaucracy** (a **successful Library Use** roll) find that on paper, the Hip Sing Tong owns the entire building, including the nightclub. In reality, the Hip Sing Tong is just a front for the 4 Seas Gang (**Streetwise**) (a **successful INT** roll).

## 1st Floor, Noodle Shop

Investigators braving the side street to visit the Hip Sing Tong Business Association Building find it underwhelming from the outside. The four-story building, which lacks a proper fire escape, does have a weather-beaten awning over the open front doors of a noodle shop. None of the windows on the first floor have glass, and the stucco walls of the noodle shop are chipped and stained. An older woman stirs a massive pot set on a blazing fire; she sweats into the pot as the steam rises out of it, perpetrating a salty cycle. Two bored looking thugs guard the stair case in the back of the shop.

The guards are mainly concerned with keeping out rival gangsters. During the day-time, they might be convinced or tricked by **Reassurance** (**Persuade** or **Fast Talk**) into letting investigators past for the express purposes of visiting the offices of the Hip Sing Tong Business Association. During the night time, they might be convinced or tricked **Reassurance** (**Persuade** or **Fast Talk**) into believing that the investigators are paying customers seeking a night of revelry at the Belt King Social Club. The guards are also susceptible to bribes by investigators using **Bargain** (a **successful Credit Rating** roll).

## 4 Seas Gang Thugs

Athletics 7, Health 6, Scuffling 7, Weapons 4.  
[Fists (-2), Kicks (-1), Light pistols (0)]





## 2nd Floor, Offices of the Hip Sing Tong

The landing on the second floor is of moderate size and lit by gas lamps, even in the daytime. Sturdy oak doors lead to office space. During the daytime, a beautiful Chinese secretary in a qipao greets visitors. Chinese men in scholar jackets perform a variety of business functions, most of which involve accounting. The doors are locked after hours. A **Locksmith** spend (a **successful Hard Locksmith roll**) will unlock the oak doors.

Roy Lu "Little Cart" maintains a spartan corner office that faces south and looks out over red-tiled single-story dwellings. Roy does not spend much time in the offices, and will likely not be present during any visit by the investigators. He keeps his office door locked; investigators attempting to break in need to use **Locksmith** (**succeed on a Locksmith roll**) or force the door with a crowbar or a kick, **Athletics** test of 4 (**succeed on a STR roll**).

### 4 Seas Gang Thugs

STR 60	CON 60	SIZ 60	DEX 60	INT 45
APP 45	POW 45	EDU 30	SAN 45	HP 12
DB: 0	Build: 0	Move: 8	MP 10	

Brawl: 60%, unarmed 1D3  
Handgun: 70%, luger 1D10  
Dodge: 30%  
Armor: None

Skills: Climb 72%, Throw 60%, Jump 60%,  
Intimidate 50%, Psychology 20%, Spot Hidden 25%  
Languages: Chinese 30%, Shanghainese 30%

4th Floor,  
The Belt King Social Club

3rd Floor,  
Hip Sing Tong Assembly Hall

2nd Floor,  
Offices of the Hip Sing Tong

1st Floor,  
Noodle Shop



Once inside Roy's office, **Evidence Collection** (a successful **Spot Hidden**) allows investigators to collect receipts, bills of lading, and other documents related to (a) the six artifacts necessary for the *Ritual of Heavenly Mandate*, were sold to Lempertz, and (b) the acquisition of funeral urns from various sources, including General Dian Ying.

*Keeper's Note: Roy Lu and his father, Lao Che do not know about the "Ritual of Heavenly Mandate", nor do they understand the importance of the six artifacts.*

### 3rd Floor, Hip Sing Tong Assembly Hall

The landing on the third floor is lit by a single gas lamp that flickers. A pair of stone fu dogs stand guard aside red double doors with iron ringlets for door handles. The 4 Seas Gang uses this assembly hall only for ceremonies and other special occasions; it is therefore kept locked most of the time. Investigators will need to **Locksmith** (a successful **Locksmith** roll) to pick the lock.

Given time, the doors could also be forced open or taken off their hinges. The Hip Sing Tong Building gets enough foot traffic that it would require a fair amount of luck (an **Extreme Luck** roll) for this type of effort to break-in to go unnoticed.

A person scaling the walls outside with **Athletics** test of 4 (a successful **Climb** role) outside could also break in through a window; a **Stealth** test of 4 (a successful **Stealth** roll) would also be required to enter the assembly hall unseen.

Once the investigators have entered the assembly hall, read the following:

You have entered what is presumably a Triad assembly hall. It is decorated in a traditional Chinese motif; the walls are painted a dramatic crimson red; the columns and rafters are lacquered black timber. The shelves set back in the recesses of the walls support thousands of earthenware funeral urns. An aisle between wooden stools leads up to a simple podium. A dusty, yellowing book sits on the podium.

Keepers should call for **Sense Trouble** checks, difficulty 4 (a successful **Group Luck** Roll). Upon a failure, the break-in has been discovered; investigators must act quickly before machete-wielding gangsters attempt to block their exit.

Inspection of the urns will provide that the urns are from many different locations throughout China, and include a variety of names, including a fair number of dukes, minor royalty, and warlords of some renown. Lao Che keeps his personal collection of urns and "essential salts" here in the assembly hall.

The book on the podium is a "true" copy of the *Folio of Perfection*, containing the secret teachings of Master Zhang Boduan. **Archaeology**, **Anthropology**, or **Religion (Chinese)** (any successful **Archaeology**, **Anthropology** or **Occult** roll or an **Extreme Know** roll) are required to properly identify it as a Daoist manual believed to focus on longevity, immortality, and alchemical processes.

### The Folio on Perfection; Wuzhen Pian (悟真篇)

The *Folio on Perfection* is a bound book of Daoist alchemical traditions and practices allegedly written in 1075 A.D. (Song Dynasty) by Master Zhang Boduan (張伯端), who is said to have been an immortal. The *Folio of Perfection* is comprised of poems teeming with ambiguity, metaphors, symbolism and secret instructions. The copy that is located in the Hip Sing Tong assembly hall is a "true copy" which contains secret teaching on internal and external alchemy. A strong understanding of Daoism is required to decode the meaning of the *Folio of Perfection*. Performance of rituals and spells set out in the *Folio of Perfection* are performed as a dance and chanted in rhythmic patterns.

**Sanity Lose:** 1D8

**Cthulhu Mythos:** +3/+8 percentiles

**Mythos Rating:** 33

**Study:** 2 weeks

**Spells:** Resurrection, Reverse Resurrection

Zhang Boduan (張伯端; 1082)





Attempting to cast the Resurrection Spell or the Reverse Resurrection spell requires an investigator to make a **Stability** check difficulty 4 and cost a loss of 1 **Sanity**.

#### **Resurrection Spell from the Folio of Perfection**

**Cost:** 3 magic points; 1D10 Sanity points

**Casting Time:** 2 rounds

This spell uses a target's essential salts to return the deceased back to life. Targets resurrected with this spell lose 1D20 Sanity points.

#### **Reverse Resurrection Spell from the Folio of Perfection**

**Cost:** 3 magic points; 1D10 Sanity points

**Casting Time:** 2 rounds

This spell causes a target resurrected by the Resurrection Spell from the Folio of Perfection to return to their essential salts. For the spell to succeed, the caster must succeed in an opposed **POW** roll with the target. If the caster wins, the target returns to dust.

**Keeper's Note:** During two of the campaign test plays, some players opted to resurrect beloved investigators who were killed in previous scenarios. In one case, the investigator came back, "Pet Cemetery-like." In another instance, a deeply religious investigator came back to life and was quite perturbed that he didn't see what he expected in the afterlife, resulting in a large sanity loss.

#### **4th Floor, The Belt King Social Club**

The Belt King Social Club takes up the entirety of the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the building. The jazz club is an impressively large, but ostentatious jazz club. The furniture is gold gilded and upholstered in pink and white. The bar is chrome, as are all of the fixtures.

It is recommended that over the course of this scenario, neither Lao Che nor Roy Lu be found at their Jazz club.

#### **Lead Outs:**

- (Antagonistic) Carrots and Sticks
- The Empress Reborn





## (Antagonistic) Carrots and Sticks

**Date:** Autumn, 1928

**Location:** The Union, Dacha Tea House or other meeting point in Shanghai, China

### Lead Ins:

- Dr. Mitchell Harris
- Dr. Bones
- Hip Sing Tong

**Purpose:** At some point, the investigators will discover that the Wo Hop To is the triad gathering artifacts that once belonged to the Empress Dowager Cixi. Alternatively, the Triad will find out that the investigators are looking for them (and possess at least one artifact). In either case, the Wo Hop To, as agents for the resurrected Cixi, can use incentives or disincentives to influence the behavior of the Investigators. Likewise, the investigators can drive the behavior of the antagonists by cleverly using various carrots and sticks.



The Wo Hop To are willing to negotiate and should such negotiations fail, will resort to violence. In either case, they will attempt to dictate the location for negotiations or battle. Their favorite “go-to” is the Dacha Tea House in the Jewish and Russian slums bordering Suzhou Creek; however, they are *persona non-grata* as of late because of the stunt they carried out against Victor Sassoon.

The Union, a smoke-filled mahjong parlor near Yu Garden (豫园), is another preferred location, as they secretly own and control the Union and neither the French police nor the Shanghai Municipal police has any jurisdiction over

crimes committed in the predominately Chinese “old city” (城内). Savvy investigators would avoid meeting in the Union at all costs, as the Triad would have no problem arranging for an ambush there, and the Investigators would be unlikely to escape with their lives.

Investigators could propose neutral ground or look for middlemen to broker the deal or perform escrow services. These strategies could offer varying levels of success depending on how well thought out they are, further influenced by the relative skill possessed by the investigators.

Keepers are reminded that this scene is intended to lead to the climax of the story. (See *The Empress Reborn*.) This can occur in a number of different ways. For example, Investigators with **Shadowing** (a **successful Stealth roll**) could follow a Wo Hop To thug back to the hideout at the San Yuan Warehouse. If violence ensues, investigators could coerce information from a captured thug using **Interrogate** or **Intimidate** (a **successful Intimidate roll**).

While the Wo Hop To thugs are willing to duke it out, Roy Lu, whose statistics are provided below, will most likely flee. Roy Lu is on “on loan” to Cixi and the Wo Hop To, and he doesn’t believe that it is worth it to risk his life for them.

Keepers who are planning on running the scenario, “There is this One Girl”, should consider allowing Roy to escape (using the benefits of foresight provided by the avatar of the Bloated Woman).

### Lead Outs:

- The Empress Reborn





**Roy Lu "Little Cart Roy" (小车),** age unknown, son of Lao Che and 4 Seas Gang lieutenant

Roy Lu is Lao Che's oldest and most capable son. Although technically a member of the 4 Seas Gang, Lao Che uses Roy for special operations and pet projects, including the project that set off the chain of events in this scenario. Roy is a cunning and evil mastermind in his own right. He is difficult to pin down or corner and he always seems to be one step ahead of the game.

Archaeology 1, Athletics 8, Assess Honesty 4, Firearms 8, Health 12, History 1, Intimidate 4, Cthulhu Mythos 3, Scuffling 6, Stealth 4, Weapons 4 Alertness +3

Weapon: +1 Mauser semi-auto, -1 knife

Spells: Resurrection, Reverse Resurrection, Shriveling

**Roy Lu "Little Cart Roy" (小车),** age unknown, son of Lao Che and 4 Seas Gang lieutenant

STR 45 CON 80 SIZ 50 DEX 80 INT 80  
APP 60 POW 70 EDU 80 SAN - HP 13  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 12

Brawl: 50% unarmed 1D3  
Knife: 50% bonus 1D4+1  
Handgun: 85% Mauser semi-auto 1D10  
Dodge: 65%

Skills: Archaeology 25%, Cthulhu Mythos 30%, History 20%, Intimidate 80%, Psychology 80%, Spot Hidden 70%, Stealth 80%

Languages: Chinese 80%, Shanghainese 80%, English 50%

Spells: Resurrection, Reverse Resurrection, Shrivelling

### Shrivelling

**Cost:** Variable magic points; variable Sanity points

**Casting time:** Instantaneous

A powerful offensive spell causing physical injury to a target. The caster invests as many magic points as desired and the number halved in Sanity points. For the spell take effect the caster must succeed in an opposed **POW** roll with the target. If successful, the target is subjected to a sudden and terrifying blast of energy, causing flesh to blacken and wither. The target loses 1 hit point per magic point invested in the spell.



### Wo Hop To Gang Enforcers

Athletics 6, Health 6, Scuffling 6, Weapons 6.  
[Fists (-2), Kicks (-1), Light pistols (0)]

### Wo Hop To Enforcers

STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 60 DEX 50 INT 40  
APP 50 POW 50 EDU 30 SAN 50 HP 12  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP 10

Brawl: 70%, unarmed 1D3  
Handgun: 70%, luger 1D10  
Dodge: 25%  
Armor: None

Skills: Climb 72%, Throw 60%, Jump 60%, Intimidate 50%, Psychology 20%, Spot Hidden 25%  
Languages: Chinese 30%, Shanghainese 30%



# The Empress Reborn

**Date:** Autumn, 1928

**Location:** San Yuan Warehouse, Shanghai Warehouse District

**Lead Ins:**

- Hip Sing Tong
- Dr. Bones
- Carrots and Sticks

**Purpose:** This scene is intended to be the climax of the scenario. As written, it assumes that “Little Cart” Roy is present. Adjust the scene as necessary.



The trail has led to the San Yuan warehouse. The warehouse district is quite busy, with a constant stream of trucks, wagons, and rickshaws running along the crowded thoroughfare.

You slowly make your way along the winding streets, getting closer to the San Yuan Warehouse. The warehouse is finally in sight. It stands a bit off to the side of the main roads, almost a lone island in the sea of madness that is Shanghai commerce.

As you carefully approach, you see several small delivery trucks being loaded up with what looks like urns. A familiar face, the young “cowboy” Roy Lu, is supervising the loading. He then goes inside the large warehouse that serves as the front for the Wo Hop To headquarters. You also notice several thugs on watch, this is definitely the right place.

If the trucks are inspected, they have the characters Lao Che (老车) written on the side and indeed are full of funeral urns. If the investigators attempt to disable or otherwise tamper with the truck, they will be discovered and forced to deal with armed thugs.

Investigators peering through any of the windows see crates containing moon cakes, tie guan yin (“Iron Goddess of Mercy”) tea, printed calendars and packages of rat poison. For the most part, the crates block the view of the warehouse interior, but there are people clearly moving about inside and the warehouse is well lit.

Generally, security is lax. While there are a few guards on duty, they seem to not be particularly afraid of people breaking in and are easily avoided. A **Stealth** test of 3 (a **successful Stealth roll**) is needed to break in unnoticed. Those who break in can hide behind crates and watch the following discussion unfold:

If you woke up inside this warehouse, you wouldn’t know that you were actually inside a warehouse. It looks and feels like a trip back in time, to the time of imperial China. The dressings are like those of an imperial palace, right down to the throne room.

And sitting on the throne is an elderly woman, with several young thugs cowering nearby in fear of her. Next to her is a more senior Wo Hop To gangster and the young cowboy. The three are in conversation.

“Your majesty” starts the cowboy in Chinese “it seems our business has come to a successful conclusion.” (It is noteworthy that Roy Lu, while being respectful, is in no way fearful or intimidated.)

“Yes, yes. I am sure your father will be pleased. Be on your way. But note that I am not entirely pleased





with the way Lao Che has handled this. Much as we appreciate his help in restoring me to my rightful place, his support has not been entirely forthcoming.” The woman says in a slow and deliberate tone, in Chinese.

Roy does a small bow, and the older gangster cuts in “the Empress’ displeasure is not something you or Lao Che would want, is it Xiao Che?”

Roy smiles, knocks his hat slightly back with a flick of his finger, and says in English “I reckon ya’ll also wouldn’t want to displease my pop. Perhaps that which has been given can also be revoked...what a pity that would be, would it not, partner?”

The investigators can overhear this conversation and can make point spends based on **Oral History**, **History**, or **Archeology** (a successful **History** or **Archeology** roll) to figure out that the woman on the throne is the Empress Cixi. This realization requires a 5-point **Stability** test (roll **Sanity**, 1/1D10).



At this point, the investigators have several options, including direct confrontation or negotiation. If it is a fight, Wo Hop To gangsters will spring into action, while Cixi uses her spells to confuse the investigators and turn them against themselves. Meanwhile, Roy will likely sit back and observe. If the investigators go for negotiations, Cixi is “vulnerable” to **Flattery** (a successful **Charm** role) and will welcome new supplicants if presented in such a light. It should also be noted that the threat of reversing the resurrection spell is indeed a legitimate concern for Cixi. Lao Che or any sorcerer who is capable of raising the dead is also capable of reversing the spell.

#### Lead Outs:

- Wait, There’s More!

#### The Resurrected Empress Dowager Cixi

**Abilities:** Cthulhu Mythos 3, Occult 6, History 2, Assess Honesty 2, Bargain 6, Psychoanalysis 1, Hypnosis 6, Interrogation 6, Intimidation 4, Health 11, Sanity 0, Stability 10

**Hit Threshold:** 3

**Armor:** all physical attacks do minimum damage.

**Alertness Modifier:** +1

**Stability Loss:** +1

**Spells:** Cloud Memory, Dominate, Ritual of Heavenly Mandate

#### The Resurrected Empress Dowager Cixi

STR 40	CON 100	SIZ 40	DEX 70	INT 80
APP 50	POW 170	EDU 80	SAN –	HP 14
DB: -1	Build: -1	Move: 7	MP: 34	

**Armor:** all physical attacks do minimum damage.

**Dodge:** 35%

**Hypnotic Gaze:** If Cixi succeeds in an opposed **POW** roll with a target, the target becomes hypnotized and can be made subject to simple compulsions and instructions.

**Skills:** Cthulhu Mythos 30%, Occult 60%, History 20%, Intimidate 80%, Psychoanalysis 20%, Psychology 60%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 80%  
**Languages:** Chinese 80%, English 50%

**Spells:** Cloud Memory, Dominate, Ritual of Heavenly Mandate

The Empress Dowager Cixi and Procession







### **Cloud Memory**

**Cost:** 1D6 magic points; 1D2 Sanity points

**Casting time:** Instantaneous

The spell blocks the target's ability to consciously remember a particular event. The caster must be able to see the target and the target must be able to receive the caster's instructions. The spell takes effect immediately if the caster succeeds in an opposed **POW** roll with the target. If the caster wins, the target's mind is mentally blocked regarding one specified incident.

### **Dominate**

**Cost:** 1 magic point; 1 Sanity point

**Casting time:** Instantaneous

Bends the will of the target to that of the caster. For the spell to take effect the caster must succeed in an opposed **POW** roll with the target. If successful, the target obeys the commands of the caster without exception until the next combat round concludes.

The spell can affect only one individual at a time and has a maximum range of 10 yards. Obviously, the command or commands must be intelligible to the target and the spell may be broken if a command contradicts the target's basic nature (such as instructing a human to fly).

Dominate can be cast and recast as many times as the caster finds possible, allowing a target to be controlled without interruption for several minutes. Each cast of the spell has the same cost and limits. Recasting is instantaneous.



# Wait, There's More!

**Date:** Autumn, 1928

**Location:** Just outside the San Yuan Warehouse, the streets of the Shanghai Warehouse District

**Lead Ins:**

- The Empress Reborn

**Purpose:** This scene is intended to serve as a hook or foreshadowing into the next scenario, "There is This One Girl". In this scene, the investigators realize that humanity is facing a Mythos threat greater than the resurrected Empress Cixi.



As you look upon the smoldering corpse of what was once the reincarnated corpse of the Empress Cixi, you see the trucks that were being loaded out the window. They seem about ready to depart. In fact, the first trucks are already moving out.

Assuming the investigators give chase, use the following description of the chase. If they fail to give chase, modify the description to include the truck vanishing into the sunset part.

You are gaining steadily on the truck, and you know you will be able to cut them off at the next turn. Despite the crowded streets, you have been able to maneuver onto a parallel course, at the next turn you will be able

to intercept "Little Cart" Roy...

As you round the corner, focused on your path to block Roy's escape, suddenly a black automobile pulls up in front of you, causing you to brake and swerve to avoid a collision. Roy's truck slips past you.

As you look on helplessly, the flatbed truck with the "cowboy" on the back speeds away, almost perfectly in time with the setting sun. Laying comfortably on the back, silver-tipped cowboy boots propped up on one of the cases, cowboy hat sitting slightly back, chewing on a piece of straw, is that odd young man. He smiles, and you can almost hear him saying: "Happy trails, ya'll!"





## Sven "DOC" Berglowe

In 1898, Sven enlisted in the U.S. Navy at the age of 18. He was trained and made a Corpsman. Sven was then shipped off to China, just in time to participate in the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion.

In May of 1900, the Boxers advanced on Beijing. The diplomatic Legations in Beijing asked their respective nation to send additional men to protect them. On June 10<sup>th</sup>, the Seymour Expedition made up of more than 2,000 sailors and marines from the Eight-Nation Alliance, set out from Tianjin in an attempt to relieve the foreigners besieged in Beijing. Sven was a member of the ill-fated Seymour Expedition, which suffered a crushing defeat before ever making it to Beijing. With more than 1 in 10 men dead or injured, British Vice Admiral Seymour lead a retreat south, following a river, where they unexpectedly found a near deserted Qing fort and munitions cache. The badly battered soldiers

quickly seized the fort and dug in. For days, Seymour's men fought off Boxer and Qing troops, waiting for rescue which came just before Seymour's men were overrun.

Although the Foreign powers were ultimately successful in putting down the Boxer Rebellion, they had learned a valuable lesson, as did Sven. The foreign powers learned not to underestimate the resolve of the Chinese. Sven learned to never underestimate any person's resolve, including his own.

Years later, Sven would be shipped to Europe, where he saw significant action in the Great War. In 1916, Sir Victor Sassoon, who was serving in the British Royal Flying Corps crashed his plane behind German lines. Sven's unit found Victor, and Sven dressed his wounds in the field and carried him back to safety. Sven saw other action during the Great War and was wounded twice, including suffering artillery shrapnel wounds to his face and torso. After the war, the Navy offered Sven an Honorable Discharge, but Sven could not see himself living the life of a civilian, so he reenlisted and asked to be sent back to China.

Sven, a member of the American Expeditionary Forces, now provides security to the United States consulate on the north end of the Bund, just past the Whangpoo river. When Sven is not on duty, he works side jobs for Victor Sassoon, which often involve sewing up wounded troubleshooters and administering treatments for various strange ailments.



### Occupation:

Military (Navy Corpsman) / Navy Corpsman

### Drive / Trait:

Duty/ Sven is driven by duty, and is the very definition of "salty".

### Pillars of Sanity / Ideology:

- True grit
- The importance of friendships
- The good samaritan

### Source of Stability / Significant People:

- Victor Sassoon (friend and employer)
- Tang Bao Hu (friend)
- Joseph Armand Saint-Pierre (friend)



Sven DOC Berglowe

Occupational Benefits: You can spend 2 points from your Reassurance pool to steady panicking or erratic Characters as long as your own Stability is above 0. Because you are a combat veteran, the Difficulty Numbers (including opponents' Hit Thresholds) of your combat abilities (Athletics, Firearms, Scuffling, Weapons) do not increase by 1 until either your Stability or your Health drops below -5. Some threats to your Stability may be made at a lower Difficulty number.

Sven DOC Berglowe

HP: (10) Sanity: (45) Luck: (45) MP: (9)

STR 75      DEX 55      INT 60  
CON 55      APP 40      POW 45  
SIZ 50      EDU 80      Move 8

Skills:  
Credit Rating 20  
Dodge 37  
Fighting (Brawl) 70  
Firearms (Handgun) 70  
Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) 60  
First Aid 80  
Language (Own) English 80  
Language (Other) Chinese 21  
Mechanical Repair 20  
Navigate: 40  
Psychology 20  
Spot Hidden 45  
Stealth 40  
Survival 40  
Swim 50

DMG Bonus: +1d4 Dodge: 37 Build: +1

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	70	35	14	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
.45 revolver	70	35	14	1d10+2	100	1(3)	6	100
.303 Lee-Enfield rifle	60	30	12	2d6+4	110	1	1	100
Combat knife	70	35	14	1d4+2+db	-	1	-	-

Sanity: 9 Stability: 10 Health: 10

Investigative Abilities

Academic Abilities

Astronomy: 2  
Language: 1 (English, Chinese)

Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty: 2  
Credit Rating: 2  
Intimidation: 8  
Reassurance: 6

Technical Abilities

Evidence Collection: 2  
Medicine: 4  
Outdoorsman: 6

General Abilities

Athletics: 10  
Firearms: 8  
First Aid: 10  
Mechanical Repair: 1  
Preparation: 6  
Scuffling: 8  
Sense Trouble: 4  
Stealth: 4  
Weapons: 8

Field uniform, combat boots  
Holster

.45 service revolver  
.303 Lee-Enfield rifle  
Electric torch

Waterproof matches  
Combat knife  
Medical pack and kit  
Canteen and other standard issue  
Dress blues  
Medals (China Campaign medal, 2 Purple Hearts, Navy Distinguished Service medal)

Cash: \$40      Spending Level: \$10      Assets: \$1,000



## Francesca Aphelia Benoit

Francesca is working as a baccarat dealer at the Great World Amusement Arcade in Shanghai. She is not without experience dealing cards. Francesca worked a few months as a dealer in Monaco (Monte Carlo), but her real trade is in cat burglary. Francesca is an accomplished cat thief. She is relatively well off and is working at the Great World Amusement Arcade to stem the boredom. It's a big plus that she likes the people at her place of work. She originally planned on only staying in Shanghai a few months; after the last heist a little vacation far away became a safety imperative. However, Francesca has had a change of heart. While planning to steal some rare and valuable antiquities from Shanghai's social elite, she was befriended by her targets, Victor Sassoon and Henry E. Morris. She is certain that Victor knows that she was casing the joint, and he still welcomed her into his social circle. Victor seems to see something in her that she didn't know was there; nobody has looked upon

her or treated her the same since her father passed away. Although she hates to admit it, she is a bit smitten with Henry. She is finding it hard to bring herself to rob either Victor or Henry. Maybe instead, she should set down roots?



### Occupation:

Criminal (Cat thief) / Criminal (Burglar)

### Drive / Trait:

Adventure / Francesca is an adventure seeker

### Pillars of Sanity / Ideology:

- Love of Fine Art

- People are at their best when they are at their worst

### Source of Stability / Significant People:

- Laurie O'Malley, "Strongest Woman in the World"

- Victor Sassoon

- Henry E. Morris

### Additional Notes



Francesca Aphelia Benoit

Occupational Benefits: Criminals with point pools in Conceal, Filch or Shadowing may spend points after rolling the die for a test. For every 2 points you spend after rolling the die, you increase the die result by 1. This only applies if you are undistracted and not directly observed. It never applies during a contest. You must describe the thing that almost went wrong, and how you caught it barely in time or succeeded through sheer luck.

Francesca Aphelia Benoit

HP: (9) Sanity: (50) Luck: (50) MP: (10)

STR 50      DEX 80      INT 60  
CON 50      APP 60      POW 50  
SIZ 40      EDU 70      Move 9

- Skills:**  
Accounting 25  
Appraise 25  
Charm 60  
Climb 30  
Credit Rating 40  
Disguise 25  
Dodge 42  
Fast Talk 50  
Firearms (Handgun) 40  
Language (Own) French 70  
Language (Other) English 40  
Language (Other) German 20  
Language (Other) Italian 20  
Locksmith 70  
Sleight of Hand 70  
Spot Hidden 50  
Stealth 70

DMG Bonus: none Dodge: 42 Build: 0

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	25	12	5	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
.22 short, automatic	40	20	8	1d8	10	1(3)	6	100

Sanity: 8 Stability: 10 Health: 10

- Investigative Abilities**  
Academic Abilities  
Accounting: 1  
Languages: 12 (French, English, German, Italian)  
Interpersonal Abilities  
Assess Honesty: 1  
Bargain: 4  
Cop Talk: 1  
Credit Rating: 4  
Flattery: 6  
Streetwise: 4  
Technical Abilities  
Evidence Collection: 2  
Locksmith: 6
- General Abilities**  
Conceal: 8  
Disguise: 2  
Driving: 1  
Filch: 6  
Firearms: 3  
Preparedness: 1  
Sense Trouble: 6  
Shadow: 4  
Stealth: 8

- Chic French designer dress  
Parisian spiked heels  
Black stockings  
Fancy handbag  
Hairpin  
Bobby pins  
Electric torch  
.22 short, automatic pistol

Cash: \$80      Spending Level: \$10      Assets: \$2000



## Tang Bao Hu

Tang Baohu is from North China and is a friend of Zhang Xueliang, the most powerful warlord of Northern China. Tang Baohu became the “fixer” for his childhood best friend, working against the warlord’s enemies. Both Baohu and his patron are China nationalists, opposed to both the Japanese and Soviets, both of which encroach on the warlord’s territories. Tang Baohu’s jobs were not limited to behind the scenes work; Baohu also flew planes for the warlord’s “Great Wall Airforce.” Baohu and Xueliang are mutual friends with the newspaper man William Henry Donald, who introduced Baohu to Victor Sassoon.

Zhang Xueliang’s father was recently assassinated by the Japanese. Xueliang is now busy filling in the shoes of his father and realizes that he needs to make new friends. Zhang asked Tang to go to Shanghai to keep an eye on Soviet sympathizers within the KMT. Baohu often serves as a go between Zhang Xueliang and Chiang Kai-shek, who could easily become an ally. Baohu’s task is to build better relations between himself, his friend and the right-wing of the KMT



### Additional Notes

#### Occupation:

Military / **Military Officer**

#### Drive / **Trait:**

Friendship / **Tang Bao Hu is fiercely loyal to his friends and willing to go to great lengths on their behalf.**

#### Pillars of Sanity / **Ideology:**

•Unification of China

•Friendships

•Modern technologies

#### Source of Stability / **Significant People:**

•Victor Sassoon

•Zhang Xue Liang

•Sven “DOC” Berglöwe



Tang Bao Hu

Occupational Benefits: You can spend 2 points from your Reassurance pool to steady panicking or erratic characters as long as your Stability is above 0. You can gain entrance into KMT facilities. The Difficulty Numbers (including opponents' Hit Thresholds) of your combat abilities do not increase by 1 until either your Stability or your Health drops below -5. Some threats to your Stability may be made at a lower Difficulty number based on prior experiences with war.

Tang Bao Hu

HP: (10) Sanity: (50) Luck: (50) MP: (10)

STR 50      DEX 75      INT 60  
CON 50      APP 50      POW 50  
SIZ 50      EDU 75      Move 8

Skills:  
Credit Rating 30  
Dodge 37  
Fighting (Brawl) 70  
Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) 80  
Intimidate: 42  
Language (Own) Chinese 75  
Language (Other) English 40  
Language (Other) Japanese 20  
Language (Other) Russian 20  
Navigate 50  
Persuade 50  
Pilot 26  
Psychology 33  
Science: Cryptography 30  
Science: Explosives 10  
Spot Hidden 35  
Stealth 30  
Survival 50

DMG Bonus: none Dodge: 37 Build: 0

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	70	35	14	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
Saber	70	35	14	1d8+1+db	-	1	-	-
.303 Lee Enfield rifle	80	40	16	2d6+4	110	1	10	100

Sanity: 9    Stability: 9    Health: 9

Investigative Abilities

Academic Abilities

Cryptography: 4

Language: 2 (Chinese, English, Russian, Japanese)

Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty: 2

Credit Rating: 4

Intimidation: 6

Reassurance: 6

Streetwise: 2

Technical Abilities

Astronomy: 2

Outdoorsman: 6

General Abilities

Athletics: 8

Explosives: 2

Firearms: 12

First Aid: 3

Piloting: 2

Preparedness: 2

Sense Trouble: 1

Scuffling: 12

Stealth: 2

Weapons: 12

Western suit  
Belt and suspenders  
Oxford shoes  
Field uniform  
Utility belt  
Officer's overcoat  
Combat boots  
Pen light  
Cigarettes, waterproof matches  
Saber  
.303 Lee Enfield rifle  
Mirror, shaving kit  
Waterproof map case  
Compass

Cash: \$60      Spending Level: \$10      Assets: \$1500



## Julien Gilford

Julien, originally hailing from New York, has always been in his older brother's shadow. Julien was interested in the medicine of the mind, he studied with the finest alienists in Paris, France. When he returned to New York, his older brother, John, scoffed at him and his chosen field of study. John completed his medical degree at Cambridge and had since become one of New York's wealthiest and best-known doctors. According to John, psychology is not "real medicine" and has no legitimate practical applications in modern medicine.

Julien relocated to Shanghai to set up a practice and escape his brother's ridicule. Julien opened a private office on the Bund, where he sees wealthy patients, most of whom are lonely housewives. In his spare time, he provides his services *gratis* at various places around the city, including the Ward Road Goal, the city's roughest prison and madhouse. Julien's practice has grown considerably, as has his reputation.

Julien's relocation seemed to be working well for him until his brother decided to move to Shanghai. John now works at the St. Marie hospital in the French concession, and Julien can no longer bring himself to work at St. Marie's mental ward. Julien loves his brother, but he does everything within his power to avoid his brother. What good could possibly come from confronting his brother?

### Occupation:

Alienist / **Alienist**

Drive / **Trait:**

Insecurity / **Julien overcompensates for his insecurity.**

### Pillars of Sanity / **Ideology:**

- Reductionism; the mind is an organ like any other organ found in the body.
- Psychological disorders are predominately self-induced; therefore, the most effective therapies begin with self-acknowledgement of the disorder and involve resolution through self-healing.
- Altruism is good for one's soul, and to the extent there is no such thing as the soul, then good for one's mind.

### Source of Stability / **Significant People:**

•Victor Sassoon (friend)

- Doctor Frank Maybell, Chief Physician at St. Marie's hospital (friend)



### Additional Notes



Julien Gilford

Occupational Benefits: By using Medicine or an Interpersonal ability, you have access to mental records and sanitarium wards generally off limits to the public. If you are a licensed MD (a Medicine rating of 2 or more), you can do the same for medical records and hospital wards. You make Psychoanalysis tests for Psychological Triage at a Difficulty of 3 instead of 4. It costs you only 1 Psychoanalysis point instead of 2 to stabilize an erratic character. You can recover your own Stability, but you only recover 1 point for each Psychoanalysis point you spend. You can use Assess Honesty as forensic psychology. From the details of a crime scene, you can, based on past case studies of similar offenses, assemble a profile detailing the perpetrator's likely personal history, age, habits and attitudes. You will probably need to remind the Keeper of this use of the ability. You may put build points into and use the Hypnosis ability.

Julien Gilford

HP: (10) Sanity: (50) Luck: (50) MP: (10)

STR 50      DEX 50      INT 70  
CON 50      APP 60      POW 50  
SIZ 50      EDU 80      Move 8

Skills:

Credit Rating 40  
Dodge 25  
Firearms (Handgun) 50  
First Aid 50  
Language (Own) English 80  
Language (Other) French 40  
Language (Other) German 20  
Language (Other) Chinese 20  
Library Use 50  
Medicine 70  
Occult 15  
Persuade 50  
Psychoanalysis 75  
Psychology 75  
Science: Biology 13  
Science: Chemistry 15  
Spot Hidden 50

DMG Bonus: none Dodge: 25 Build: 0

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	25	12	5	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
.22 Short automatic	50	30	12	1D6	10	1(3)	6	100

Sanity: 10   Stability: 8   Health: 10

Investigative Abilities

Biology: 2  
Language: 2 (English, French, German, Chinese)  
Library use: 4  
Medicine: 4  
Occult: 2  
Assess Honesty: 4  
Credit Rating: 4  
Interrogation: 3  
Reassurance: 6  
Chemistry: 2  
Evidence Collection: 3  
Forensics: 3  
Pharmacy: 4

General Abilities

Athletics: 8  
Firearms: 5  
First Aid: 6  
Hypnosis: 4  
Preparedness: 2  
Psychoanalysis: 8  
Scuffling: 5

Tweed suit  
Light blue cotton long-sleeved shirt  
Silver cufflinks  
Oxford loafers  
Attaché  
.22 Short automatic  
Note pad, pencils  
Silver snuff box  
Silver pocket watch

Cash: \$80      Spending Level: \$10      Assets: \$2,000



## Sophia Volkov

Sophia's last name, Volkov, means "wolf" in Russian. Her family line has long been part of the Russian aristocracy. Her parents and her husband were staunch allies to the Czar, but the bloodline includes savage Cossack. The Cossacks are a battle-hardened people practically born on a horse; Sophia's great grandfather was a fierce Boyer prince. While none would admit in public, the bloodline can be traced through Subutai of the Golden Horde, all the way back to Genghis Khan. The secret familial practices of the Volkov family have always originated from the Far East, and in stark contrast to the more Occidental traditions that have weakened the Russian empire. Sophia is well aware of her lineage, and it is what primarily motivates her to act. When cornered, Sophia is more than willing and able to let her Cossack blood fill her with rage and power.



Sophia is the wife of a White Russian who was killed in the "civil disruption". Sophia has retreated to Shanghai, where she will await the defeat of the Bolsheviks and her family's righteous return to power. If that doesn't work out soon enough, then maybe she will regroup, build her own little private army and kingdom. When Sophia left Russia, she brought her family's impressive and immensely valuable collection of antiquities. Willing to part with the Napoleonic war trophies, she set up a lucrative antiquities business in the French Concession. Through savvy bartering, her collection has grown to include a substantial number of interesting Oriental pieces, as well.

### Occupation:

Antiquarian / **Antique Dealer**

### Drive / **Trait:**

In the Blood / **Savage Cossack blood runs through Sophia's veins.**

### Pillars of Sanity / **Ideology:**

- The importance of lineage
- The love of loyal friends

### Source of Stability / **Significant People:**

- Victor Sassoon (friend)
- Sam Duvall (another Russian dealer of antiquities)
- Petra (Sophia's teenaged son)

### Additional Notes



Sophia Volkov

Occupational Benefits: Once per adventure and subject to the Keeper's approval, you may have a text or relic that pertains to your current needs back at your shop.

Sophia Volkov

HP: (10) Sanity: (60) Luck: (60) MP: (12)

STR 50      DEX 50      INT 70  
CON 50      APP 50      POW 60  
SIZ 50      EDU 80      Move 8

- Skills:**  
Accounting 50  
Anthropology 70  
Appraise 25  
Archaeology 25  
Art/Craft (Forgery) 55  
Charm 26  
Credit Rating 50  
Dodge 30  
Fast Talk 25  
Fighting (Brawl) 76  
Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) 50  
History 25  
Intimidate 50  
Language (Own) Russian 80  
Language (English) 40  
Language (Chinese) 20  
Language (Mongolian) 20  
Library Use 40  
Riding 20

DMG Bonus: none Dodge: 30 Build: 0

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	76	38	15	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
Antique Cossack Saber	76	38	15	1d8+1+db	-	1	-	-
M91 Rifle	50	25	10	2d6+4	110	1	5	99

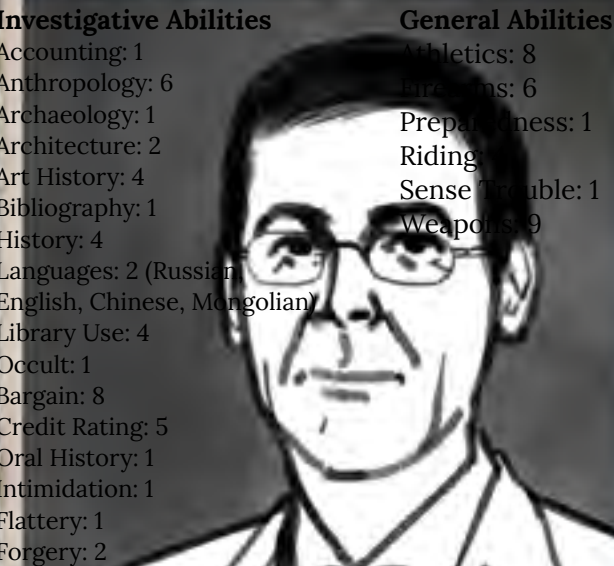
Sanity: 8 Stability: 8 Health: 10

**Investigative Abilities**

Accounting: 1  
Anthropology: 6  
Archaeology: 1  
Architecture: 2  
Art History: 4  
Bibliography: 1  
History: 4  
Languages: 2 (Russian, English, Chinese, Mongolian)  
Library Use: 4  
Occult: 1  
Bargain: 8  
Credit Rating: 5  
Oral History: 1  
Intimidation: 1  
Flattery: 1  
Forgery: 2

**General Abilities**

Athletics: 8  
Firearms: 6  
Preparedness: 1  
Riding: 2  
Sense Trouble: 1  
Weapons: 9



Wool dress and cream blouse, red scarf  
Half pumps  
Grey trousers, blue blouse  
Riding Boots  
Outdoor coat; wolf skin lining  
Jade hair pin  
Expensive platinum, silver and gold rings  
Mosin-Nagant M91 "Dagoon" bolt action rifle  
Antique Cossack Saber  
Pen light  
Magnifying glass  
Note pad, pencils

Cash: \$250      Spending Level: \$50      Assets: \$25,000







# 有一个姑娘 There is This One Girl

By Jason Sheets

“Wer mit Ungeheuern kämpft, mag zusehn, dass er nicht dabei zum Ungeheuer wird. Und wenn du lange in einen Abgrund blickst, blickt der Abgrund auch in dich hinein.”

-Friedrich Nietzsche

## HORRIBLE TRUTH

Shanghai, early 1929.

Lao Che controls the 4 Seas Gang; his son Lu Kai (陆凯) is a prominent lieutenant in his organization. Kai has fallen in with the Order of the Bloated Woman, a cult that venerates an avatar of Nyarlathotep. Kai has a kept woman that he loved very much; her name was Mary Xie and she was a performer at the Belt King Social Club. Mary Xie was particularly known for her rendition of the song, “You Yi Ge Gu Niang” (有一个姑娘) or “There is this One Girl”. Kai found Mary Xie to be disobedient and difficult to control; as a result, Kai chained Mary Xie to a wall in her row house. Under the guidance of the Order of the Bloated Woman, he fed Mary large quantities of the Drug of the Liao, which he sourced from Sichuan. Over the course of months, she transformed into what she is now: a bloated tentacled beast with the power of foresight. The Bloated Woman, hiding behind a silk screen appears to be a dainty woman to most, but many members of the 4 Seas Gang know her to be a monstrosity. She is known as “Er Nai” or “the Second Wife” (二奶), or mockingly as “Yi Ge Gu Niang” (一个姑娘) (also known as “Y’Golonac”), and she offers prophecy in return for being fed brains. The Order of the Bloated Woman “protects” the Bloated Woman from outside influence and otherwise promotes its own cult interests, which are not necessarily consistent with the interests of the 4 Seas Gang.

Kai and the 4 Seas Gang have been using the prophecies of the Bloated Woman in a number of ways to make money. Their schemes thus far have included or will include (1) a run on a rival gang’s casino, (2) a series of wins at the Canidrome, (3) a trifecta at the horse track, and (4) the seizure of a rival gang’s opium delivery. The 4 Seas Gang, eager to make a fortune, pushed the Bloated Woman for bigger results; she told them they need to find the Lost City of Golden Sands and recover the Eye

of the Peacock. With the Eye of the Peacock, she says she will be able to stare into times and places further than previously available; she has not disclosed what she will do with that power. The part of her that remains Mary Xie would like the investigators to go back in time and prevent the Order of the Bloated Woman from summoning Y’Golonac; the part of her that is the avatar of Y’Golonac wants to usher in the apocalypse. The gang has used their criminal proceeds to fund an expedition to Sichuan, in search of the Lost City of Jinsha and the Eye of the Peacock.

## THE HOOK

After series of losses to a gangster at the Canidrome, Shanghai’s elite hire the investigators to uncover the mechanics of the assumed scam.

## SPINE

- Casino Run!
- Trifecta!
- (Optional) Beating the Competition
- (Floating) The Belt King Social Club
- (Floating) Brains for the Bloated Woman
- The Bloated Woman
- (Antagonistic Reactions) The Enemy of My Enemy?
- A Proposition



# Casino Run!

**Location:** Great World Amusement Arcade (大世界) at the corner of Edward VII Avenue (now Yanan Lu) and Yu Ya Ching Road (now Xizang Zhong Lu), near the polo fields.

**Purpose:** This scene is an appetizer for what is to come. Any investigators that have a reason to be present at the Casino may play their characters. Otherwise, they should sit back and enjoy the show; Keepers should run this scene at a fast tempo and keep it short.



Close your eyes. Fade from black.

The air is filled with the buzz and hum of excited people; like bees in a hive that has just been kicked. You hear bells ringing and the mechanical whirling wheels of a multitude of one-armed bandits. Coins drop in tin bins. Outbursts of joy are followed by a chorus of moans and curses.

Your eyes come into focus over a green felt table; poker chips spread over a checkerboard of black and red boxes with numbers; a roulette wheel spins.

A single ivory sphere bounces up and down, as the wheel spins round and round. Until finally settling on red 14.

You are on the first floor of the Great World Amusement Arcade, and a middle-aged Chinese man in a traditional Chinese scholar's uniform has just won his 3rd consecutive bet at the roulette table. He manipulates a single black poker chip through the fingers of his left hand; you notice he is missing his pinky. There is a mound of black chips in front of him, and the pit boss is looking very worried.

Details to emerge from this short scene:

- **Streetwise** (a successful **INT** roll) tells an investigator that the gambler is "Four-Fingered" Zhou, an enforcer in the 4 Seas Gang. He works for Kai's crew. Kai Lu is the son of the famous mobster Lao Che.
- It is common knowledge that the Great World was built and owned by the Ningbo magnate, Huang Chujiu, who made his money in dispensaries (pharmacies). Anybody with **Streetwise** of 2 or greater (a successful **INT** roll) and anyone employed at Great World knows that it was recently rebuilt in 1928 using the money of Huang Chujiu's old friend, Huang Jinrong. Huang Jinrong is also known as "Pockmarked Huang" of the Green Gang.
- **Accounting** (a successful **Accounting** roll) provides that Zhou has won roughly 2,000 silver dollars in 10 minutes of play.
- **Bargain** (a successful **INT** roll) or another similar investigative skill tied to gambling provides that Zhou is not using a strategy or "hedging" his bets; it is as though he knows exactly what color and number are coming up next.
- **Mechanical Repair** (a successful **Mechanical Repair** roll) or an **Evidence Collection** spend (a **Hard Spot Hidden**) provides conclusive evidence that he is not using a physical means of manipulating the roulette table.
- A **Mythos** spend, while costing **Sanity**, (a successful **Hard Cthulhu Mythos** roll) would provide that that Zhou was acting on information provided by somebody who can peer into the future.
- **Asses Honesty** (a successful **Psychology** Roll) indicates that there are no psychological indicators suggesting that he is cheating or being deceptive; however, he is clearly a sociopath who would not show guilt or shame. **Asses Honesty** further provides that he is watching





his surroundings as much or more than he is watching the table.

- **Assess Honesty** spend of 1 (a **successful Hard Spot Hidden roll**) provides that he occasionally checks a little notepad that he keeps in his jacket pocket.

If the scene begins to drag or shortly after the **Assess Honesty (Psychology)** ability is used to assess Zhou's behavior, read the following:

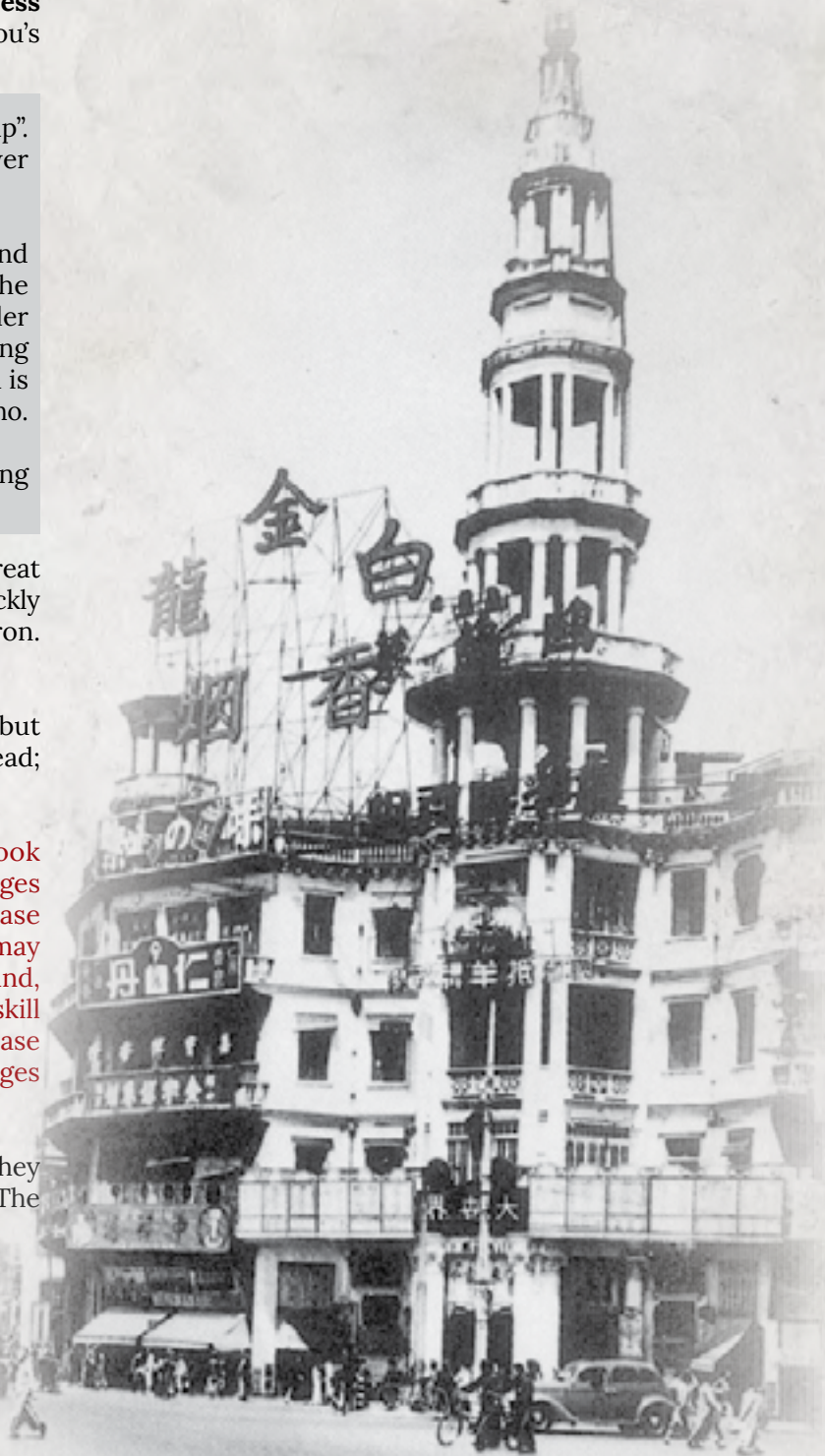
The gambler starts to stack chips and asks to "chip up". The pit boss complies; chips are counted and lower denominations are exchanged for black chips.

Quite a few spectators have started to crowd around the roulette table. Some are speculating about the events as they unfold, some are cheering the gambler on, while others are trying to piggyback on his betting choices. The hum of the spectators is growing and is threatening to overtake all other activities at the casino.

Suddenly, the gambler turns into the crowd, plunging into the masses. He's making a break for it.

A chase will ensue. At least one member of the Great World's security team will give chase, but they will quickly be thwarted by crashing into an unsuspecting patron. Important information for the Keeper:

- The investigators may recover Zhou's notebook, but they will never catch him. He is always one step ahead; his precision in action is uncanny.
- The Call of Cthulhu 7<sup>th</sup> Edition Keepers Rulebook includes new and innovative Chase Rules (see pages 130-149) Please use these rules as part of the chase scene, with the following caveats: (1) the Keeper may call for a sudden hazard group **Luck** roll each round, but (2) "Four-Fingered" Zhou always succeeds on skill rolls to move through a hazard, and (3) if per the Chase Rules the investigators "catch" Zhou, he still manages to escape, but drops his notebook in the process.
- The notes in the notebook are written in Chinese; they contain a list of colors and numbers in sequence. The



Great World Amusement Arcade

Largest and most popular entertainment center in China during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.



notes also say “STOP when Y occurs”, where Y is an action by the investigators or casino security to intervene. “Four-Fingered Zhou” always escapes as a result of the Bloated Woman’s ability to peer into the future.

The architecture and features of the Great World Amusement Arcade, which make a great obstacle course for a chase, are as follows:

- On the first floor, patrons can find gaming tables, slot machines, birdcages, acrobats, magicians, and pick-pockets.
- The second floor is occupied by fighting crickets, pimps and barbers.
- The third floor has stage actors, sword swallowers, practitioners of qigong, ice cream parlors, a medical dispensary, and young girls wearing qipao.
- The fourth floor has fan-fan tables, dance platforms, and a tea house.
- The fourth floor features a stuffed whale, a maze of mirrors, prostitutes, peep shows, two love letter booths in which the scribes guarantee results, and a shrine to general Guan Yu, a red face hero with a mighty glaive.
- The fifth floor includes tightrope walkers, acrobats, jugglers, and seesaw walkers stacking bowls, plates, and cups upon their heads, marriage brokers and mahjong tables.
- Connecting all floors, and on the backside of the building is the infamous “stairway to heaven”, where destitute gamblers have been known to leap to their deaths. Consider whether or not Zhou escapes after being cornered at the top of the stairway; does he pull out his notebook and jump into a passing hay cart?

If the investigators are able to successfully chase Zhou through the Great World obstacle course, he will take to the streets. There is a red trolley that runs up and down Nanjing road and can be used to help Zhou escape.

### “Four-Fingered” Zhou, 26, 4 Seas Gang Enforcer

Athletics 10, Health 8, Scuffling 6, Weapons 6, Firearms 6, Intimidate 2 Stealth 2.

Alertness +3

[Fists (-2), Kicks (-1), Knife (0), Light pistols (0)]

### “Four-Fingered” Zhou, 26, loyal 4 Seas Gang Enforcer

STR 70 CON 70 SIZ 60 DEX 70 INT 50  
APP 40 POW 50 EDU 50 SAN 40 HP 13  
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 9 MP 10

Brawl: 70%, unarmed 1D3 +1D4  
Knife: 70% knife 1D4+1 +1D4  
Handgun: 70%, .32 revolver 1D8  
Dodge: 50%  
Armor: None

Skills: Climb 72%, Throw 60%, Jump 60%, Intimidate 50%, Psychology 20%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 40%

Languages: Chinese 50%, Shanghainese 50%, English 25%

### Lead Outs:

- Trifecta!



Great World, in 1930s, before the Second Sino - Japanese War



# Trifecta!

**Location:** Shanghai Race Club, at Huang Pi Lu and Nanjing Lu, a short walk to the Great World Amusement Arcade.

**Lead Ins:** Casino Run!

**Purpose:** This scene serves as the hook to the scenario. Victor Sassoon engages the investigators to look into the possibility that someone is cheating at Shanghai's casino and Canidrome. While discussing the terms of the engagement, a gangster hits a trifecta. A chase ensues.



The investigators are summoned to the Shanghai Race Club to meet with Victor Sassoon, Henry E. Morris, Jr., and Dr. William Jardine, who retain the investigators to look into the "Canidrome Incidents". During the engagement briefing, "Four-Fingered" Zhou hits a trifecta.

The Shanghai Race Club is the social focal point of Shanghai. People from all walks of life, from the bon vivant to the Chinese proletariat, meet here to watch the Shanghai Derby. Even from the back side of the stadium, you can hear the cheering crowds. Just past the gate, people have queued up before stands that take wagers and sell raffle tickets. You walk around the side of the stadium, which is an impressive work of modern architecture, although the track is itself is little more than a muddy field. Your instructions are to meet Sir Victor Sassoon at the paddock, where owners are showing their horses and jockeys.

Today, Victor is wearing a tailored suit, a top hat, and a smile; he walks with a gentlemen's cane. He will warmly greet each investigator by name. He will then introduce his jockey, David Kimmel, a German Jew who immigrated to Shanghai with the help of Victor, and he will speak

about his horses and the Sassoon family stables known as "Leviathan". It is readily apparent that he loves his horses and the Derby more than anything else in life. This is an opportunity for the players to impress Victor, if they know anything about horses (**Riding**) or Judaism (**Theology**) (a successful **Ride** or **Know** roll).

After some small talk, Victor will indicate that two of his colleagues. Henry Morris and William Jardine are anxious to meet with the investigators and are waiting in the clubhouse that overlooks the track. Victor will then escort the investigators to a private elevator.

The doors of the elevator open up to a luxury clubhouse. The great windows looking out over the horse track. The walls are covered in luxurious oak panels with fixtures of polished brass. Plush leather couches are placed on a Persian rug with red tones. The room smells slightly of cherry and pipe tobacco.

Sitting to left is Henry E. Morris, a thin man with bushy eyebrows. To his right is Dr. William Jardine, an older man in bearing with thick white lamb chops and wearing a brown suit.

Extending the palm of his hand to the left, Victor says, "Please allow me to introduce you to Henry Morris of the North China Daily".

Henry responds, "Nice to meet you", in a mild English accent, weathered by time and distance from England.

"And this is Bill Jardine of Tartan Stables." You know the man with the prominent chops to be Dr. William Jardine, and although he does indeed own Tartan Stables, he is also a Jardine. Making him quite possibly one of the wealthiest men in the world.

"It is a pleasure", says Dr. Jardine, in a Scottish baritone voice.





All of the investigators are here by invitation, as the three men intend to formally engage them to investigate the “Canidrome Incidents”. Some, if not all, of the investigators, already know at least one of three patrons, and may even have them as a source of **Stability**.

This is an opportunity to allow the players to roleplay; encourage this by asking questions like:

- What are you wearing?
- Where do you sit, or do you remain standing?
- Who do you speak to first, and what do you say?

**Victor Sassoon** is an extremely wealthy bon vivant who backs the Shanghai Race Club and developed much of the Bund. “Eve”, as his friends call him, enjoys socializing primarily at the horse track, polo field, and the Canidrome, and he enjoys a gentlemanly wager. A **Bargain** spend (a successful **Hard Credit Rating** or **Luck roll**) when used in connection with a wager, or a **Riding** spend (a successful **Hard Credit Rating** or **Ride roll**) in connection with his horses is a good way to earn favor with Victor.

**Henry E. Morris**, a Shanghai bon vivant with strong ties to England, inherited the North China Daily from his father. He largely financed the construction of the Canidrome, which was completed last year (1928). Like Victor, Henry enjoys a gentlemanly wager, and a good way to curry favor with him is a **Bargain** spend or **Oral History** spend (a successful **Hard Credit Rating** or **Know roll**) made in connection with a wager. Henry, sometimes called “Harry” by his friends, is not particularly susceptible to **Flattery**, but as the owner of Shanghai’s best-established newspaper, he is interested in all things dealing with reputable journalism and **Oral History** spends (successful **Hard History** rolls) produce positive results. Sensationalism is also fine, as long as it doesn’t involve any of his interests or the interests of friends. He specifically wants the investigators to ensure that their investigation does not make it to print.

**Dr. William Jardine**, who never married, is a curmudgeon. The Jardines, like the Sassoons, made their money in the opium trade in the late 1800’s. After fortunes were made (and lives destroyed), most of Asia’s foreign elite understood that the sun would and should set on the opium industry. Dr. Jardine, however, is a remaining holdout, advocating a return and expansion of the opium trade. It is suspected that he continues to profit from opium trade through his connections with the underworld, such as the Green Gang. “Bill” or “Doc” as his friends sometimes call him, holds a diversified investment portfolio that includes shipping, construction, mining, and pharmaceuticals. Dr. Jardine is a major contributor to the Shanghai Race Club and is the standing chairman. He owns Tartan Stables. Unlike Henry, he is very susceptible to **Flattery** (a successful **Charm roll**). He enjoys smoking cigars and wagering with other men who he believes are his equal. **Medicine** or **Pharmacy** (a successful **Medicine roll**) has the potential to gain favor, but only if it is used in a way that paints drug use in a favorable light.

Victor Sassoon will explain the matters that the three gentlemen want investigated, as well as the terms of the engagement. Victor, who has been funding the fight against the Mythos for many years, does believe that more sinister forces are at work. He is willing to ensure that the investigators have access to sufficient funds and resources to be effective in their investigation. He does, however, expect results.

Henry says, “Eve, shall we discuss the “Canidrome Incidents?”

“Yes, I do think that is a good idea” Sassoon replies.



Racetrack seen from bleachers. Japanese tourist in left foreground



Victor conveys the following information:

- Two weeks ago, a Chinese man, missing his left pinky finger, entered the Canidrome and placed a number of bets, including several wagers with very long odds. Each and every wager he placed was without error; it would be nearly statistically impossible to guess correctly the winner of every single dog race. He made off with more than 10,000 silver dollars and left many patrons asking if the races were rigged.
- Because of the missing finger and his numerous tattoos, it is assumed that he “consorts with other unsavory types” and is most likely a member of a triad. Any investigator with **Streetwise** (a successful INT roll) can identify the Chinese man as “Four-Fingered” Zhou of the 4 Seas Gang based on description alone.
- He came back again last week and did it again.
- It is presumed that “Four-Finger” Zhou has cheated in some way, but preliminary investigations by the staff of the Canidrome have not turned up anything.

Dr. Jardine will say something like, “We can’t afford to have this type of thing reoccur; it will shatter the confidence of our patrons and reverberate throughout our community.”

Henry will say something like, “I for one do not want to see the Canidrome fail, and something like this could be fatal to our economic interests in the Canidrome. Having said that however there is no way for us to be certain what your investigation will turn up. It is imperative that whatever you find not make it to print!”

The investigators will, of course, be compensated for their services but use their drives and sources of Stability to tie them to the investigation and compel them to continue on with the investigation, even in the face of their worst fears. For example, an investigator driven by bad luck may be deeply indebted to a racetrack bookie; he needs money to pay off the debt, but it isn’t money that is driving his actions, it is fear of broken kneecaps and cement shoes that keeps them going. A dilettante investigator is not compelled by money at all; rather they

will be driven by their relationships to these three men or their personal interest in the macabre. Perhaps they are compelled to join the investigative party because they lost a wager to Dr. Jardine; perhaps they lost the wager on purpose. A journalist character with the curiosity drive might be tied to the investigation through his relationship with Henry E. Morris; their drive compels them to investigate and learn the truth, but their personal relationship with Henry E. Morris means that they are sensitive to Henry’s interest in not creating headlines related to the investigation. Keepers, please take the time to discuss with your players each of their investigator’s ties, drives, and motivations in this scene.

Once the discussion with the three patrons has played out, their meeting will be interrupted by an out-of-breath teenaged Sikh wearing a magenta turban. The runner brings news that a four-fingered gangster has just hit a trifecta. If the investigators hurry, they might be able to get a jump on their investigation.

By the time the investigators begin to close in on “Four-Finger” Zhou, he has already collected a promissory note for 16,000 silver dollars from the cage at the horse track. He already has a rickshaw waiting for him.

The investigators may attempt to shadow Zhou or otherwise corner him. **Shadowing** requires a successful test of 3 (a successful Stealth roll), but each investigator attempting to shadow must succeed, or “Four-Fingered” Zhou will have already been warned by the Bloated Woman.

If the investigators successfully shadow Zhou, he jumps into a chartered rickshaw and retreats to The Belt King Social Club. See The Belt King Social Club.

If the investigators attempt to corner Zhou or fail a Shadowing test, Zhou will run for it. He begins by darting quickly to the right, just past a vendor pushing a stinky tofu cart. Any investigator leading the chase must make an **Athletics** test 4 (a successful Dexterity roll), or crash into and topple the cart. Zhou will then jump into the chartered Rickshaw which will take off down the road towards Nanjing Road and the Great World Amusement Arcade.

Inside the Racetrack Park Entrance







Investigators who want to give chase have the option of running after the rickshaw on foot (**Athletics** test 4) or quickly negotiating a fare with another rickshaw (**Bargain**). As Zhou passes the oversized clock in the tower of the Great World, he will look up at the clock, check his notebook, and then jump into the back of a military jeep going the other direction. Allow the investigators to make an **Athletics** test of 6. Like the first scene, Casino Run, Zhou will ultimately escape, after checking his notebook and receiving the benefit of a seemingly serendipitous event. If the investigators succeed in the last test, they may recover Zhou's notebook. **Keepers should again use the Chase Rules set out in the Call of Cthulhu 7<sup>th</sup> Edition Keepers Rulebook (see pages 130-149) The following caveats remain applicable: (1) the Keeper may call for a sudden hazard group **Luck** roll each round, but (2) "Four-Fingered" Zhou always succeeds on skill rolls to move through a hazard, and (3) if per the Chase Rules the investigators "catch" Zhou, he still manages to escape, but drops his notebook in the process.**

The notebook contains the following information:

- Information used to place wagers at the casino and horse track.
- Dates and times for serendipitous events used to escape.
- An entry about an opium delivery to the Green Gang on the docks in the Warehouse District, scheduled for early tomorrow morning. The information about the opium delivery can lead the investigators to (Optional) Beating the Competition.

Investigators who fail to successfully shadow Zhou may use a **Streetwise** spend of 1 (**a successful INT roll**) to find out that (a) "Four-Fingered" Zhou is an enforcer in the 4 Seas Gang, and (b) the 4 Seas Gang use The Belt King Social Club as a base of operations.

#### **Lead Outs:**

- (Optional) Beating the Competition
- The Belt King Social Club



## (Optional) Beating the Competition

**Location:** Warehouse District docks

**Lead Ins:**

•Trifecta!

**Purpose:** This scene demonstrates to the investigators how the 4 Seas Gang is leveraging the benefit of foresight. The investigators should feel as though the bad guys are always one step ahead of them.



### A) The Opium Shipment

The way this scene plays out depends heavily upon the actions of the investigators. The dock workers and two Green Gang overseers sleep in the warehouse during the night and work all day. The shipping vessel is filled with large bags of rice; every 5th bag contains opium. All bags are marked with a serial number; those bags with an 8 in the serial number contain opium. If it were not for the plans of the 4 Seas Gang, all bags would be unloaded into the warehouse; thereafter bags of opium would be distributed to the Green Gang's opium houses spread throughout the city. The 4 Seas Gang, however, has other plans for those bags of opium.

Just before the crack of dawn, the 4 Seas Gang will sneak into the warehouse, kill the Green Gang overseers, and then chase off the other dock workers. The shipment is scheduled to arrive shortly after sun-up. From there, the 4 Seas Gang will load up the bags of opium onto a half-ton truck, bound for a warehouse controlled by the 4 Seas Gang.

The sun is slowly rising over the horizon. The morning air smells of mud and gasoline. The river slaps against the dock in a steady rhythm that is occasionally interrupted by the wake of passing tugboats and shipping vessels. The docks are wood and concrete and are obviously designed purely for utilitarian purposes; as they are something of an eye-sore on the Huangpu.

The reeds of marshland, which provide a breeding ground for mosquitoes and hiding spots for countless turtles and frogs, grow out of the soggy earth on the far side of the river. Rotting sandbags line this side of the river, protecting the banks from further erosion. Warehouses follow the bank of the river as far as the eye can see in both directions. The closest warehouse is only 15 yards from the dock; the portion of the warehouse facing the docks has been set on stilts and pylons that lift it above the mud and clay of the riverbank. A few primitive cranes have been set up along the piers and just outside the warehouses; block, tackle, and pulleys move cargo from the docks into the warehouses.

Prior to the arrival of the 4 Seas Gang, there are 3 dozen Dock Workers, 3 Green Gang Overseers, and 2 Green Gang Enforcers.

#### Dock Workers

Athletics 6, Health 3, Scuffling 2, Weapons 2.  
[Fists (-2), Makeshift weapons (-1)]

#### Green Gang Overseers

Athletics 6, Health 6, Scuffling 4, Weapons 2, Firearms 4  
[Fists (-2), Kicks (-1), Light pistols (0)]





### Dock Workers

STR 60 CON 35 SIZ 40 DEX 40 INT 40  
APP 40 POW 35 EDU 30 SAN 50 HP 7  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP 7  
Brawl: 40%, unarmed 1D3  
Fight: 40%, makeshift weapon 1D4  
Dodge: 20%  
Armor: None

Skills: Climb 50%, Throw 40%, Jump 40%  
Languages: Chinese 30%, Shanghainese 30%

### Green Gang Overseers

STR 60 CON 50 SIZ 50 DEX 50 INT 45  
APP 50 POW 50 EDU 30 SAN 50 HP 10  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP 10  
Brawl: 60%, unarmed 1D3  
Handgun: 60%, .32 1D8  
Dodge: 25%  
Armor: None

Skills: Climb 50%, Throw 40%, Jump 40%  
Languages: Chinese 30%, Shanghainese 30%

### Green Gang Enforcers

Athletics 7, Health 6, Scuffling 6, Weapons 4, Firearms 6.  
[Fists (-2), Kicks (-1), Light Pistols (+0), Lee-Enfield Rifles (+1)]

### Green Gang Enforcers

STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 60 DEX 60 INT 45  
APP 55 POW 50 EDU 30 SAN 45 HP 12  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP 10  
Brawl: 70%, unarmed 1D3  
Handgun: 70%, .38 1D8  
Rifle: 70%, Lee-Enfield Rifle 2D6+4  
Dodge: 30%  
Armor: None

Skills: Climb 72%, Throw 60%, Jump 60%, Intimidate 50%, Psychology 20%, Spot Hidden 25%  
Languages: Chinese 30%, Shanghainese 30%

The 4 Seas Gang sends a motivated group of gang enforcers equipped with rifles, a couple of Tommy guns and a bundle of dynamite. This group will be led by "Four-Fingered" Zhou and will consist of 10 or more enforcers; Keepers should feel free to add more enforcers if the investigators are well armed and unlikely to find this force sufficiently threatening, or overwhelming if that is the preference of the Keeper. Aggressive investigators could get to the warehouse before the 4 Seas Gang and alert the overseers. In this case, the Bloated Woman foresaw this possibility, and the 4 Seas Gang uses a Japanese gunboat to intercept the shipping vessel before it makes it to the dock.

### 4 Seas Gang Enforcers

Athletics 8, Health 6, Scuffling 6, Weapons 4, Firearms 6.

[Fists (-2), Kicks (-1), Lee-Enfield Rifles (+1) Thomas submachine guns (+1) for full auto add 2 to Firearm pool; gun jams on a roll of a 1, even if a hit. Bundle of Dynamite (+4)]

### 4 Seas Gang Enforcers

STR 60 CON 70 SIZ 60 DEX 60 INT 45  
APP 55 POW 50 EDU 30 SAN 45 HP 13  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP 10

Brawl: 70%, unarmed 1D3  
Rifle: 70% .303 Lee-Enfield Rifle 2D6+4  
SMG: 70% Thompson Submachine Gun 1D10+2  
Thrown: 60% dynamite 5D6 / 2 yard radius  
Dodge: 40%  
Armor: None

Skills: Climb 72%, Throw 60%, Jump 60%, Intimidate 50%, Psychology 20%, Spot Hidden 25%  
Languages: Chinese 30%, Shanghainese 30%

Investigators intervening as the 4 Seas Gang assault the warehouse are likely to spark a bloodbath. Again, the Bloated Woman foresaw the investigator's intervention and the 4 Seas Gang thugs have now been armed with Thompson submachine guns and a few sticks of dynamite. The 4 Seas Gang might not get the opium, but neither does the Green Gang. A high body count should ensue, and the shipping vessel should be blown up and sink right off the peer.

If the investigators successfully manage to achieve a result that would have been undesired by the Bloated Woman, then assume that the Bloated Woman's prophecy occurred before the investigators got involved and that she did not foresee them acquiring Zhou's notebook.



Investigators whose plan involves intervening after the 4 Seas Gang have absconded with the opium are more likely to be successful, and if successful, chalk it up to the foresight not reaching beyond the delivery of opium to the docks. Investigators **Shadowing** (a **successful Stealth roll**) the 4 Seas Gang thugs will ultimately be led to the 4 Seas Gang hideout at The Belt King Social Club.

The Shanghai Municipal Police Department will respond to explosions or shots fired. It takes the police 10 minutes to get a patrol car and a paddy wagon to the area. If sufficiently warned, the Green Gang can mobilize a dozen well-armed thugs; it takes them 15 minutes to get to the warehouse. The Green Gang will not confront any uniformed police officers.

#### B) Headline News!

Explosions and gunfights are heard in Shanghai's warehouse district, are hard to suppress, and will make the headlines. Enterprising investigators can probably spin the news or write cover stories, but explosions and gunshots are not the kind of thing that goes unnoticed.

After the well-timed attack, the Green Gang assumes that one of their own sold them out. The gang identifies the crew members responsible for the opium shipment and executes them in a particularly brutal fashion. The bodies will be discovered and the executions will make headline news.

Additionally, the news should include eyewitness accounts of decapitations and public executions carried out by roaming patrols of Chinese soldiers in the predominately Chinese old city. These soldiers are described as wearing "traditional Chinese garb, armed with Chinese broadswords and are loyal to a local warlord.

#### C) Opportunistic Attacks

At an appropriate time, the 4 Seas Gang will use the Bloated Woman's foresight to conduct another attack against the Green Gang. Keepers should determine if such attacks occur "on screen" or "off-screen", as well as the outcome and impact of any such attack.

Keeper's may use such antagonistic reactions to lay a trail of clues leading to the 4 Seas Gang and the Belt King Social Club (See The Belt King Social Club). Additionally, Keepers should consider the introduction of the optional rules on Campaign Drivers.

Lead Outs:

- The Belt King Social Club





# The Belt King Social Club

**Location:** The Belt King Social Club, the 4 Seas Gang hideout on a side street near East Nanjing Lu.

**Lead Ins:**

- Trifecta!
- (Optional) Beating the Competition

**Purpose:** The investigators follow “4-fingered” Zhou to the 4 Seas Gang hideout, where they find out about Lu Kai, the putative leader of the 4 Seas Gang. Investigators discover that Lu Kai is heartbroken and has fallen in league with the Order of the Bloated Woman. The investigators also potentially find seeds of information related to the scenario, “The Curse of the Peacock’s Eye”. The scene likely concludes with the investigators being thoroughly spooked out by Lao Deng Bing, an old cultist that has taken up to living in the triad’s ceremonial meeting hall.



The building that houses The Belt King Social Club is four stories. The first floor is a noodle shop. A large staircase connects the first floor with the upper floors. Armed thugs stand guard at the landing on the first floor. The second and third floor are both owned and occupied by the Hip Sing Tong Business Association. The second floor is office space, while the third floor is an assembly hall decorated in a traditional Chinese motif. The walls are painted dramatic crimson red, the columns and support beams are lacquered black timber, and a fat, laughing Buddha is enshrined in the golden shrine in the center of the room. The fourth floor is the club level; a garish nightclub painted in silvers, whites’ and pinks, and filled with gold gilded furniture and chrome fixtures.

Investigator research could yield results. **Law** or **Bureaucracy** (a successful **Law** or **Library Use** roll) will reveal that on paper, The Belt King Social Club is owned by the Hip Sing Tong, with offices and a meeting hall on the second and third floor of the building. The Hip Sing Tong is a front for the 4 Seas Gang. A **Streetwise** point spend (a successful **Hard INT** roll) will provide that the head of the 4 Seas Gang is called “Lao Che”. His three sons, Chen, Roy and Kai also frequent the joint. “Four-Fingered” Zhou works for Kai as an enforcer.

## 1st Floor, Noodle Shop

Although the signs outside identifies this building as “The Belt King Social Club”, the first floor is a greasy noodle shop; its patrons are exclusively Chinese. A thin and fragile looking Chinese man in a dirty old linen shirt is yelling in Shanghainese at the top of his lungs; the target is his wife, who, except for the very expensive looking evening hat pinned to her head, wears drab peasant’s clothes. At the back of the restaurant is a wide set of stairs up; two bored looking Chinese men in grey western suits stand guard. Everybody in the noodle shop tries their best to ignore you.

The guards are mainly concerned with keeping out rival gangsters. Their instructions are not to turn away paying customers. They can generally be bypassed by investigators using any appropriate ability or skill.

## 4 Seas Gang Thugs

Athletics 6, Health 6, Scuffling 4, Firearms 5. [Fists (-2), Kicks (-1), Light pistols (0)]





#### 4 Seas Gang Thug

STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 60 DEX 50 INT 40  
APP 50 POW 50 EDU 30 SAN 50 HP 12  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP 10

Brawl: 60%, unarmed 1D3  
Handgun: 70%, luger 1D10  
Dodge: 25%  
Armor: None

Skills: Climb 72%, Throw 60%, Jump 60%, Intimidate 50%, Psychology 20%, Spot Hidden 25%  
Languages: Chinese 30%, Shanghainese 30%

#### 2nd Floor, Hip Sing Tong Offices

The landing on the second floor is of moderate size and lit by a gas lamp. Save for the oak doors that lead to office space, the landing is devoid of people and furniture. You can hear jazz music emanating from the floors above.

During the daytime, a beautiful Chinese secretary in a qipao greets visitors. Chinese men in scholar jackets perform a variety of business functions, most of which involve accounting. The doors are locked after hours. A **Locksmith** spend (a **successful Hard Locksmith roll**) will unlock the oak doors.

**Evidence Collection** (a **successful Spot Hidden**) allows investigators to collect a set of books and related records. **Language (Chinese)** and **Accounting** (a **Chinese Language skill of 25% or more** and a **successful Accounting roll**), if used together to review the books and records will reveal:

- Entries attributed to revenues and expenses of The Belt King Social Club
- The collection of “insurance premiums” from local businesses, which are in reality extortion payments;
- The collection of “membership dues” from local opium dens and houses of ill repute;

- The tracking of “warehouse inventory”, which is likely to be a variety of different contraband;
- Entries for gambling proceeds from Great World, Canidrome, and the Shanghai Race Club;
- Lu Kai a lieutenant in the gang, and takes home a monthly draw; and
- Enough collective evidence to conclusively demonstrate that the Shanghai Hip Sing Tong is a front for the 4 Seas Gang

Kai maintains a corner office. Rummaging through his filing cabinets with **Evidence Collection** (a **successful Spot Hidden roll**) finds a contract with a prominent archaeologist for an expedition to Sichuan in search of Jinsha, the Lost City of Golden Sands. **Evidence Collection** (a **successful Spot Hidden**) finds an annotated copy of volume 3 of the *Chronicles of Huayang* (華陽國志) inside the desk drawer.

*Chronicles of Huayang*, Vol. 3, annotated (華陽國志)

#### Classical Chinese, Compilation

The *Chronicles of Huayang* dates back to 355 CE (Jin Dynasty) a gazetteer containing history, geographies, tribes and maps. Volume three includes maps of Western China and historical accounts of related to the San Xing Dui (“Three Star Mound”) people, the fabled city of Golden Sands and the Peacock’s Eye. This copy has been extensively annotated by the sorcerer Lao Che, and contains information on a tribe of Tcho Tcho known as the “Lotus Eaters”, or alternately as the “Navigators”.

**Sanity Lose:** 1D6

**Cthulhu Mythos:** +3/+8 percentiles

**Mythos Rating:** 33

**Study:** 10 weeks

**Spells:** Find Jin Sha, the lost city of golden sands



The landing is lit by a gas lamp. A pair of stone fu dogs stands guard aside red double doors with iron ringlets for door handles. A set of stairs continue to the fourth floor, the sounds of big band jazz reverberate down.

The double doors to the assembly hall are typically kept locked from the inside using a brass and wood bar lock. A **Locksmith** (a **successful Locksmith roll**) spend could unlock the doors, by wedging something like a coat hanger between the doors and lifting up or using looped string to lasso the bar and pulling up. Given time, the doors could also be forced or taken off their hinges.

A person scaling the walls outside with **Athletics** test of 4 (a **successful Climb role**) outside could also break in through a window; a **Stealth** test of 4 (a **successful Stealth roll**) would also be required the enter the assembly hall unseen.

The Hip Sing Tong Assembly Hall is typically used by the 4 Seas Gang for important meetings and festivals, such as the election of a new leader or Lunar New Year. As of late, Kai has allowed it to be used by members of the Order of the Bloated Woman, and Lao Deng Bing has taken up residence on a bench inside the hall. If Lao Deng Bing is in the assembly hall, he may very well be sleeping; he walks with some difficulty and is not particularly active. If for some reason Lao Deng Bing is not present, the assembly hall will be locked from the outside using a chain and a crude lock; use **Locksmith** (a **successful Locksmith roll with a Bonus Die**) to open.

You have entered what is presumably a Triad assembly hall. It is decorated in a traditional Chinese motif; the walls are painted a dramatic crimson red; the columns and rafters are lacquered black timber. Shelves set back in the recesses of the walls support thousands of earthenware funeral urns. An aisle between wooden stools leads up to the pedestal of an enshrined fat, laughing Buddha.

Investigators with **Anthropology** (an **Anthropology skill level of 50% or above**) identify the room as a Triad assembly hall.

**Anthropology** (a **successful Anthropology roll**) would provide that the laughing Buddha is an odd choice for the centerpiece; you would expect a Chinese triad to enshrine the Chinese God of Wealth or some other Daoist deity.

**Archeology** or an **Anthropology** spend (a **successful Archeology roll or Hard Anthropology roll**) would know that the shelved funeral urns would typically be the interred remains of members of the Hip Sing Tong; however, there are far too many urns given the roster of the Shanghai Hip Sing Tong. Inspection of the urns will provide that the urns are from many different locations throughout China, and include a variety of names, including a fair number of dukes, minor royalty, and warlords of some renown.

Lao Che keeps his personal collection of urns and “essential salts” here in the assembly hall. (Please see the Scenarios “Let Sleeping Dogs Lie” and “Curse of the Peacock’s Eye”).

If Lao Deng Bing is in the hall, read the following:

An old Chinese man lying on a wooden bench stirs; his dirty cotton shirt is open revealing his rib cage; he is all bones and angles, and based on his humpback, he is suffering from a severe calcium deficiency.

This is Lao Deng Bing. He does not speak any English; he only utters sentences in a very thick Sichuan dialect. Even most Chinese have a hard time understanding him. To the extent anybody is able to make out anything he says, it will all be the ramblings of a madman. Lao Deng Bing might say things like, “I saw you fifty years ago”, “the Stars are right for a new dynasty!”, and “it was prophesized by the Bloated God”. Keepers should use this as foreshadowing to eerie effect.

Lao Deng Bing is too weak and fragile to pose a physical threat to the investigators, at least directly. His motivations are to worship the Bloated Woman and bring about the apocalypse.





Keeper's Note: Lao Deng Bing convinced Kai to chain his unruly girlfriend, Mary Xie, to the wall. Then, Lao Deng procured a "cure" from a pharmacy in Chengdu. The cure was, in fact, the Drug of the Liao, which was mixed into brain soup and fed to Mary, until a horrible transformation took place. Although Lao Deng remains the high priest of the Order, he is neither very active, nor the focus of the Order. The focus of the Order is now on feeding and protecting the Bloated Woman.

For more details on the Order of the Bloated Woman or for cultist statistics, please see (Floating) Brains for the Bloated.

A search of the room yields a wooden crate containing mismatched milk bottles filled with a yellow dust. Inspecting the crate with **Evidence Collection** (a successful **Spot Hidden** roll) yields smeared and splattered blood on the sides of the crate; the crate was at a scene of violence. **Chinese Language** (**Chinese Language** skill of 25% or more) provides that the crate was originally built at a tobacco farm near Chengdu, and many of the milk bottles were manufactured in Chengdu.

### Lao Deng Bing

Three things: (1) all bones and angles, (2) both fears and reveres women, (3) rambles on about prophecy in a very thick Sichuan accent that is even difficult for other Chinese to understand.

Health 3, Sanity 0, Stability 5, Athletics 2, Flee 4, Scuffle 1  
[Fists (-2)]

### Lao Deng Bing

STR 30 CON 20 SIZ 35 DEX 30 INT 40  
APP 40 POW 40 EDU 20 SAN - HP 5  
DB: -1 Build: -1 Move: 5 MP 8

Brawl: 60%, unarmed 1D3  
Handgun: 70%, luger 1D10  
Dodge: 15%  
Armor: None

Languages: Chinese 10%, Sichuan dialect 30%

### Drug of the Liao

"The dust is a powdery yellow substance, with a faint smell of earth and flowers."

If the drug is consumed, the user first feels a warmth wash over their body, but the warmth grows to an uncomfortable heat. Thereafter, the user's eyes will roll back and they will enter a fugue state that is not quite hallucination and not quite prophetic vision. The fugue state lasts about 8 hours, and those humans under the influence are highly susceptible to suggestion during this period of time. The resulting visions or hallucinations are often philosophically disturbing. The vision may be an attack on a pillar of sanity. It may involve viewing different times and places, such as the Sunken City of R'lyeh, or it may invoke a vision of an apocalyptic future. Viewing a Great Old One this way would still have a devastating effect on sanity.

**Pharmacy** or **Chemistry** (a successful **Medicine** or **Science: Chemistry** roll) identifies the yellow dust as a drug with psychoactive properties.

**Biology** (a successful **Science: Biology** roll) provides that the yellow dust is actually pollen from a flower; likely to be in the lotus family.

### 4th Floor. The Belt King Social Club

The stairway opens up into a well-lit antechamber and an impressively large jazz club. Posters and flyers of the recent acts have been posted in the entrance. The house band appears to be Mary Xie and Big Pepper Swing Orchestra.

The inside of the club is painted in silvers and whites. The furniture is gold gilded and upholstered in pink and white. The bar is chrome, as are all of the fixtures. The room is surrounded by booth seating and filled with large round tables covered in white tablecloths. Many of the tables have a feast of fruits, nuts, dried meats and other delicacies set on lazy-Susans. The food, however, goes mostly neglected, as patrons are fixated on the grand stage and dance floor.

A big band jazz orchestra is belting out standards and hybrid Shanghai jazz. Dancing girls complete the spectacle. In the center of this carnival is the infamous gangster, Kai. He is balling his eyes out.

Scenes in The Belt King Social Club play out differently depending on when the investigators arrive and what they do while at the club. Notwithstanding the foregoing, investigators are likely to observe and potentially participate in the following:



- “Four-Fingered” Zhou meets with Kai. Zhou needs to report to Kai and deliver any ill-gotten gains. In some cases, Zhou is receiving a new set of instructions; which he will write in his notebook, assuming he still has his notebook.

- Upon Kai’s request, the band plays the song, “You Yi Ge Gu Niang” (有一个姑娘). During the song, Kai breaks down in tears. **Assess Honesty (a successful Psychology roll)** tells an investigator that the members of the 4 Seas Gang are at a loss and have no idea how to respond to their boss’ tears.

**Keeper’s Note:** “You Yi Ge Gu Niang” (有一个姑娘) is the name of a real Chinese folk song. Although it is unclear as to when the song was composed and first performed, there have been many recorded performances, including pop versions of the song.

Important information for the Keeper:

- Although Lao Che is the putative head of the Hip Sing Tong and the 4 Seas Gang, he rarely visits The Belt King Social Club. Lao Che handed over many of the responsibilities of running the business to his son Kai.

- Although Kai has fallen in with the Order of the Bloated Woman, the 4 Seas Gang is not part of the Order, and most members of the gang are fearful of the Order.

- Gaining an audience with Lao Che requires a **Streetwise** spend of 2 points (**a successful Extreme Fast Talk roll**). He is always flanked by armed bodyguards.

- Gaining an audience with Kai requires a **Streetwise** spend of 1 point (**a successful Hard Fast Talk roll or Extreme Persuade roll**). He is often flanked by armed bodyguards. Occasionally, a table girl will attempt to please him, but that always ends in thrown ashtrays and tears. Kai is unstable (and driven mad by grief) so it is difficult to predict how he will react to investigators. It should also be noted that Kai has acquired some unique perversions, including a predilection for overweight prostitutes and eunuchs.

- “Four-Fingered” Zhou refuses to speak with investigators. He is loyal to Kai and has become a member of the Order of the Bloated Woman.

(CORE CLUES): Although “Four-Fingered” Zhou refuses to meet with the investigators, **Streetwise**, **Bargain**, **Flattery** and **Reassurance** coupled with **Chinese Language (any successful Credit Rating, Charm, Fast Talk, or Persuade roll)** will be sufficient to speak with other gang members, who might share all or some of the following information:

- Kai’s girlfriend, Mary Xie, used to be the club’s headlining act. Her rendition of the song, “You Yi Ge Gu Niang” (有一个姑娘) was famous.

- A gangster might say, “Kai called her “Er Nai” (二奶), or second wife. She was disobedient and difficult to control. We all hated her and called her “Yi Ge Gu Niang” (一个姑娘). My advice to you, however, is never utter those words around Kai! Anyways, we haven’t seen or heard from her in a month or so, and Kai is heartbroken.”

- “We are very worried about Kai. It’s hard to appear tough if you are crying all the time. How can you lead a gang if you are crying all the time?”

- If the investigators offer to look into or fix the issue with the Er Nai, and they make an appropriate point spend (**or skill roll**), they may talk a gangster into providing them with the address of Mary Xie’s residence, which is a row house near Jukin Road (瑞金路). See The Bloated Woman.

- “Kai has fallen in with some strange people called the “Order of the Bloated Woman”. He’s been acting weird, but he keeps saying he has a vision the future of the gang, and “Four-Fingered” Zhou has gone from being an enforcer to an earner. We don’t know how he’s doing it.”

- Kai has recently been talking about going to Sichuan to meet with the “Lotus Eaters” gang for the purpose of acquiring drugs. We have no idea why Kai thinks that a Sichuan gang would have access to drugs or that they would be cheaper than what we can get from our own ports.

- If an investigator asks: “what is on the 3rd floor of this building?”, “where does the Order of the Bloated Woman hideout?” or other specific question or appropriate prompt, the gangster will say the following: “We used to hold business meetings in the assembly hall on the third floor. That was before the Order. Now, that senile old man, Lao Deng Bing, sleeps there. How he ever convinced Kai to let him move in, I don’t know!”

Lead Outs:

- The Bloated Woman

- (Floating) Brains for the Bloated



**Lu Kai (陆凯), age unknown, son of Lao Che and 4 Seas Gang lieutenant**

Kai is a cunning and dangerous man with an entire gang at his disposal. To make matters worse, he is very unstable and suffering from severe tests to his sanity. Kai has developed a predilection for overweight prostitutes and eunuchs; he struggles to hide other perversities as well.

Athletics 8, Assess Honesty 2, Firearms 7, Health 12, Intimidate 4, Cthulhu Mythos 1, Scuffling 6, Stealth 2, Stability 3, Sanity 1, Weapons 6  
Alertness +0  
Weapon: +1 Mauser semi-automatic pistol, -1 knife

**Lu Kai (陆凯), age unknown, son of Lao Che and 4 Seas Gang lieutenant**

STR 60 CON 80 SIZ 60 DEX 60 INT 70  
APP 60 POW 50 EDU 60 SAN 8 HP 14  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 10

Brawl: 60% unarmed 1D3  
Knife: 60% 1d4+1  
Handgun: 85% Mauser semi-auto 1D10  
Dodge: 50%

Skills: Climb 60%, Cthulhu Mythos 10%, Intimidate 80%, Psychology 50%, Spot Hidden 25%, Stealth 40%, Throw 60%, Jump 60%  
Languages: Chinese 60%, Shanghainese 60%, English 50%

**“Four-Fingered” Zhou, 26, 4 Seas Gang Enforcer**

Athletics 10, Health 8, Scuffling 6, Weapons 6, Firearms 6, Intimidate 2 Stealth 2.  
Alertness +3  
[Fists (-2), Kicks (-1), Knife (0), Light pistols (0)]



**“Four-Fingered” Zhou, 26, loyal 4 Seas Gang Enforcer**

STR 70 CON 70 SIZ 60 DEX 70 INT 50  
APP 40 POW 50 EDU 50 SAN 40 HP 13  
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 9 MP 10

Brawl: 70%, unarmed 1D3 +DB  
Knife: 70% knife 1D4+1 +DB  
Handgun: 70%, .32 revolver 1D8  
Dodge: 50%  
Armor: None

Skills: Climb 72%, Throw 60%, Jump 60%, Intimidate 50%, Psychology 20%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 40%  
Languages: Chinese 50%, Shanghainese 50%, English 25%





# (Floating) Brains for the Bloated

**Location:** The streets of Shanghai

**Lead Ins:** Varies

**Purpose:** Investigators witness the atrocity of the Order of the Bloated Woman first hand.



The Order of the Bloated Woman roams the streets of Old Shanghai looking for “criminals” and other marginalized individuals. Using Dadao (大刀), or Chinese broadswords. The Order performs public beheadings, collects the heads and takes them back to the Bloated Woman for consumption.

As a floating scene, a Keeper should find an opportune time to launch this scene. If the scene occurs before the investigators visit The Belt King Social Club, then it is best to run the scene as though the Bloated Woman foresaw the encounter, and like the earlier scenes, the cultists will always escape if the investigators give chase.

If the scene happens after The Belt King Social Club, then investigators could follow the lead to the residence of the Bloated Woman. Shadowing a cultist and a basket of heads (**Shadowing** test of 4) (a **successful Stealth roll**) is the best bet. Interrogation and other methods are unlikely to work, as the cultists are true believers willing to die for their cause. In any event, Keepers should reward ingenuity.

Keepers should note that it is possible to run this scene multiple times until the investigators catch the lead. Imagine the headline news: rampaging Chinese violently behead hundreds in attacks across the city! Keepers should also note that it is possible to run the scene after the investigators first meeting with the Bloated Woman. If the investigators don't understand the true nature of the Bloated Woman, this scene could be a jarring, eye-opening experience.

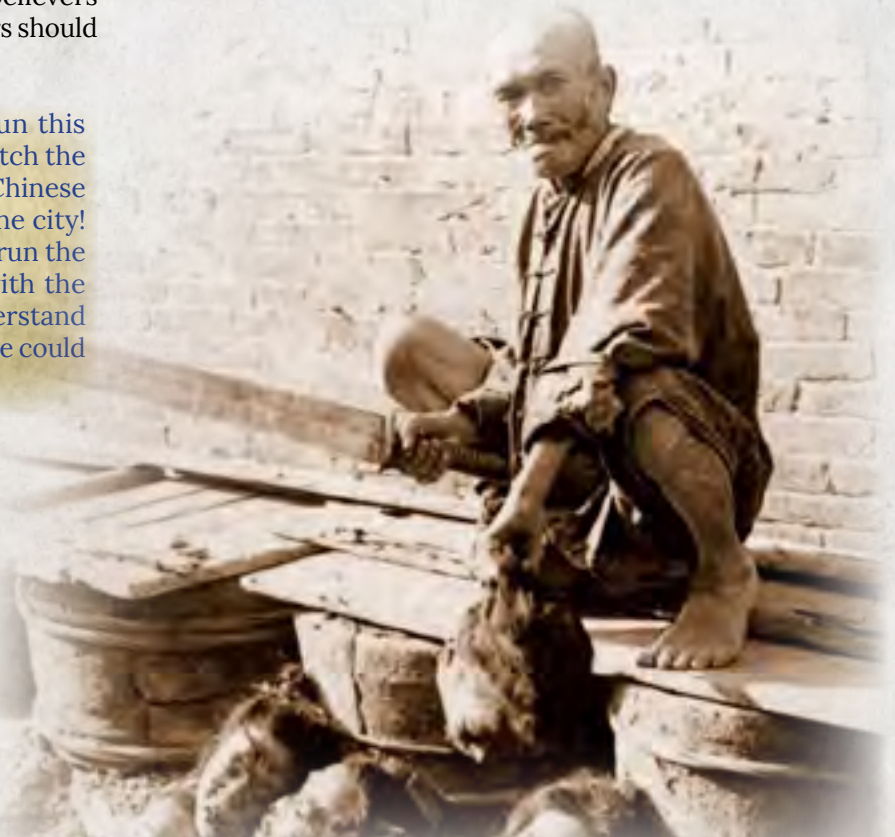
## Order of the Bloated Woman

The Order of the Bloated Woman is a cult dedicated to manifesting, protecting and feeding an avatar of Nyarlathotep in the form of Y'Golonac. The Order was critical in starting the Panthay Rebellion and spreading the plague; it also played a role in the Boxer Rebellion.

The Order of the Bloated Woman traces its roots back to the Yufu Clan of the San Xing Dui (“3 Star Mound People); their creation stories tell of 3 meteorites that fell from the heavens and landed in the plains of Sichuan (Tian Fu Zhi Guo). Many of the members of the Order have prominent or protruding eyes; presumably, because they carry Deep One blood.

The Order is led by Lao Deng Bing, a decrepit and perverted old man from Yunnan, who joined the Order back in 1856, during the Panthay Rebellion and the 3rd Plague Pandemic.

As Lao Deng Bing is fragile and relatively feeble, day-to-day management of the Order's affairs are left to a loosely linked network of administrators known as the “Matron's Ministers”. The Matron's Ministers are all eunuchs of varying age, all committed to furthering the interests of the Order. Each Minister bears the scars of self-inflicted mutilations and are host to a variety of various communicable diseases, including syphilis, tuberculosis and leprosy.





The Order's soldiers are fanatic cultists that roam the streets in search of victims and converts. These cultists take orders from the Matron's Ministers, and when those orders are in conflict, they follow the Minister they fear the most.

#### Matron's Minister

Athletics 8, Health 10, Scuffling 2  
Bureaucracy 2, Library Use 2, Mythos 2,  
Intimidation 2, History 2, Assess Honesty 2  
Alertness +1  
(Punch (-2))  
Spells: Cause Disease, Flesh Ward

#### Matron's Minister

STR 50 CON 70 SIZ 70 DEX 50 INT 70  
APP 50 POW 80 EDU 50 SAN - HP 14  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP 10

Brawl: 70%, unarmed 1D3  
Armor: None

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 25%, History 25%,  
Intimidate 50%, Library Use 25%, Listen 30%,  
Psychology 50%, Spot Hidden 50%  
Languages: Chinese 50%  
Spells: Cause Disease, Flesh Ward

#### Order of the Bloated Woman Cultist

Athletics 8, Health 6, Scuffling 2, Weapons 6, Stealth 1  
Alertness +0  
(Kick (-1), Chinese Broad Sword (+1))

#### Order of the Bloated Woman Cultist

STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 50 DEX 70 INT 40  
APP 50 POW 50 EDU 30 SAN - HP 11  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP 10

Brawl: 70%, unarmed 1D3  
Sword: 70% Chinese Broad Sword 1D8+2  
Dodge: 70%  
Armor: None

Skills: Climb 80%, Throw 60%, Jump 80%,  
Intimidate 20%, Spot Hidden 25%, Stealth 30%  
Languages: Chinese 40%

#### Cause Disease

Cost: 8 magic points and 2D6 Sanity points  
Casting time: 1 round

The target contracts debilitating communicable disease. The spell costs 8 magic points. For the spell to take effect the caster must first succeed in an unarmed brawl attack, then the caster must also succeed in an opposed POW roll with the target (automatic success if the target is consenting). The contracted disease may be cured by either magical means or medicinal means, provided that such medicinal cure exists at the time.

#### Flesh Ward

Cost: variable magic points; 1D4 Sanity points  
Casting time: 5 rounds

Grants protection against physical attack. Each magic point spent gives the caster (or the chosen target) 1D6 points of armor against non-magical attacks. This protection wears off as it blocks damage. For example, if a character had 12 points of Flesh Ward as armor and was hit for 8 points of damage, the Flesh Ward would be reduced to 4 points, yet he or she would take no damage. The spell lasts 24 hours or until the protection is used up. Once cast, the spell may not be reinforced with further magic points, nor recast until the old spell's protection has been used up.









# The Bloated Woman

**Location:** Former residence of Mary Xie, a row house near Jukin Road (瑞金路)

## Lead Ins:

- The Belt King Social Club,
- (Floating) Brains for the Bloated

**Purpose:** The scenario comes to a climax with the investigators coming face-to-face with Y'gononac.



## Obtaining an Audience

There are a number of ways for the investigators to arrive at this scene: Do they shadow a grieving Kai, who pays a visit to his former lover? Does a low-level gangster reveal the address in a bid to help Kai? Do the investigators follow a member of the Order of the Bloated Woman holding a basket of severed heads? Does the Bloated Woman, Mary Xie, specifically ask the Order to arrange for an audience? Is their arrival expected?

A Keeper is encouraged to think about the pacing and tone of this investigation before deciding how to run this scene. It is not a foregone conclusion that violence will ensue. First, what exactly do the investigators know about Mary Xie by the time they obtain an audience? They may not realize that she has the gift of prophecy; they might not even realize that she is the Bloated Woman. Second, what are the motivations of the Bloated Woman? Mary Xie has always been something of a difficult woman to control. The Bloated Woman may be seeking to be unchained from the wall and relieved of the oppressive oversight of the Order. Certainly, the Bloated Woman is

interested in tasking the investigators to obtain the Eye of the Phoenix, which is located in the Lost City of Jinsha. Does she outright ask them to do this for her? Does she play on each investigator's drives and motivations to pursue her desires?

## An Order of Minders, Guards and Servants

A contingent of the Order of the Bloated Woman watches over, guards, and attends to the Bloated Woman at all times. They will not admit investigators into the rowhouse unless expressly told to do so by the Bloated Woman herself. The Bloated Woman might purposefully orchestrate an opportunity for the investigators to slip into the house without the Order being present. Violence, although possible, would be unlikely unless the results of that violence were exactly as the Bloated Woman foresaw and intended.

## Row House

Jukin Road is busy at all times of the day and night. It is an artery that pumps commerce into and out of the French Concession. A brick and wood row house wedged between other row houses is your target destination. It has recently been painted white with maroon trim, but little patches of green and black lichen common to humid Shanghai have already popped up on the corners and edges of the building.

The potted plants under the marron trimmed window have been allowed to grow wild; the front door is simple and heavy looking. The brass door and lock could be easily picked, but there would be some difficulty doing so without attracting the attention of passing pedestrians. The row house is a simple "shotgun" design, and likely has a back door leading into an alley.





The row house is two stories tall. The front door opens out to Jukin Road, a busy Shanghai street in the French Concession; the back door lets out into an alley walled by other row houses.

The first floor consists of a living room, kitchen, and a washroom. The washroom is equipped with a western toilet and bathtub and is tucked underneath a set of stairs. **Evidence Collection (a successful Spot Hidden roll)** would reveal that the bathtub, although fully equipped with soaps, shampoos, and sponges, has not been used in months.

A woman's voice sings out a sad Chinese ballad from the second floor. The person singing the song is obviously talented.

The second-floor windows are kept shaded at all times. A few oil lamps provide limited light on the second floor, which consists only of a bedroom and a small closet.

Flickering lamplight sneaks past a folding silk screen depicting a magnificent peacock with emerald and golden feathers. The screen is set up strategically to provide the room's occupant with a modicum of privacy and modesty. Behind the screen, you can make out the shadow of a dainty woman. She finishes the refrain, picks up a fan and spreads it out, before turning in your general direction...

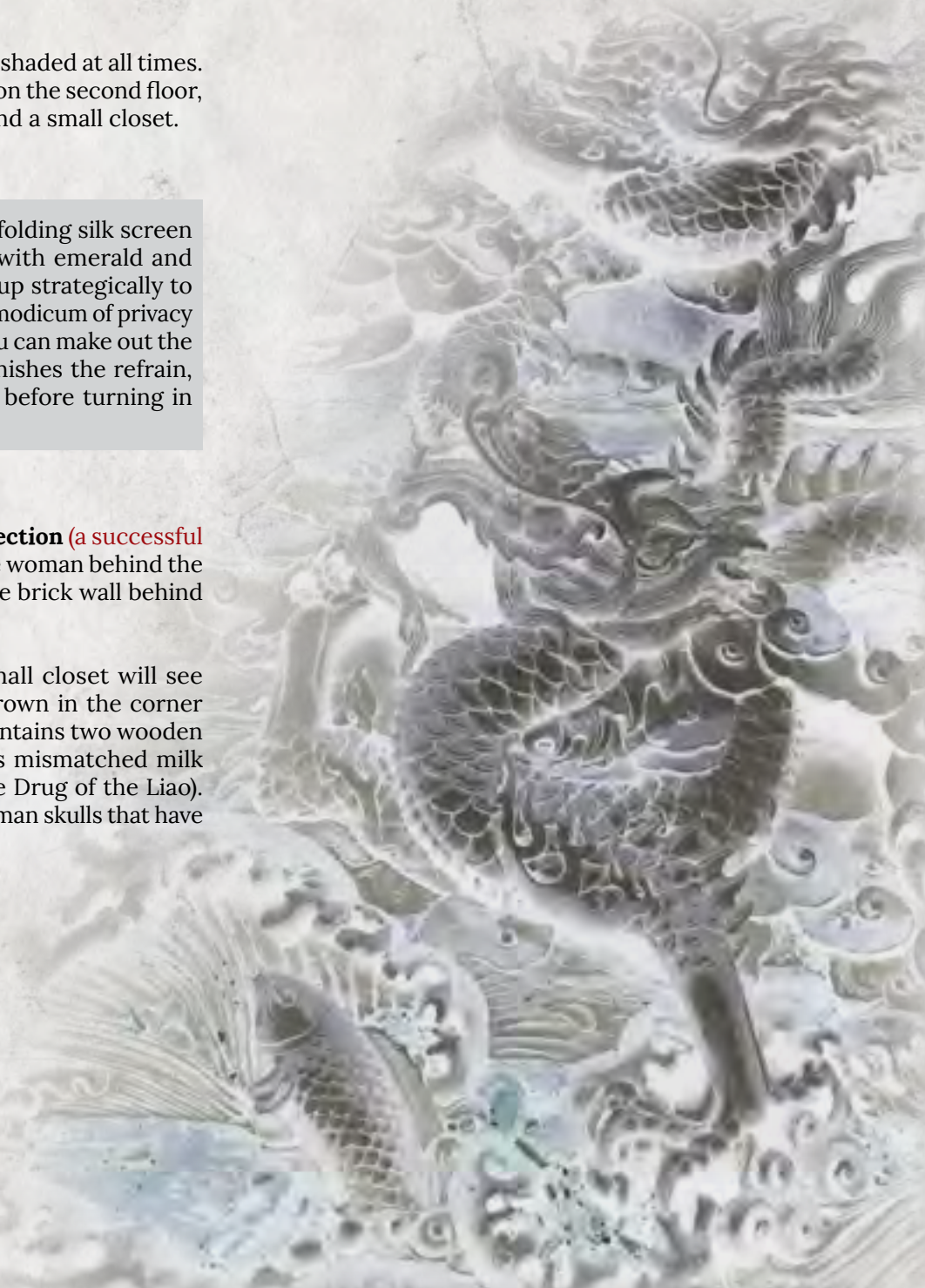
An investigator using **Evidence Collection (a successful Spot Hidden roll)** will notice that the woman behind the screen has her ankles chained to the brick wall behind her mattress and oversized pillows.

Any investigator looking in the small closet will see that a heap of clothes has been thrown in the corner of the closet, and the closet itself contains two wooden crates. One wooden crate contains mismatched milk bottles filled with a yellow dust (the Drug of the Liao). The second crate contains empty human skulls that have been sucked dry.

An investigator using **Library Use (a successful Library Use roll)** to research old tomes for anything matching the description of a bloated woman chained to a wall might turn up a reference to a text called "Revelations of Glaaki", which was written by a British cult in the Severn Valley. It mentions Y'Golonac, a glowing, bloated god chained behind a wall in a vast underground dungeon.

Lead Outs:

- (Antagonistic Reaction) Enemy of my Enemy?
- A Proposition





## The Bloated Woman - Y'Golonac

Health 38, (slowly regenerates unless reduced to -10 Health; Health pool refreshes at 1 point per hour)  
Alertness +6, Scuffling 12  
Hit Threshold: 3

- **Traces of Mary.** The Bloated Woman or Y'Golonac is an incarnation of Nyarlathotep but retains many of the traits and memories of Mary Xie. She answers to the name Mary Xie and will ask the investigators to call her Mary. She very much loves (and hates) Kai, the man who chained her to the wall. She likes to sing the song, "You Yi Ge Gu Niang" (有一个姑娘) or "There is this One Girl. The creation of the Bloated Woman was tragic, and her story should compel investigator sympathy. Mary has retained a good amount of self-loathing; this is the avatar's weakness and could serve as the hinge for ending the Mythos threat.
- **Glamour.** The Bloated Woman's real form is hidden by a magical glamour; there is no Sanity loss associated with being in the presence of the Bloated Woman unless her true form is revealed or perceived. An **Assess Honesty** (an **Extreme Psychology** roll) point spend by an inquiring investigator would reveal the true form to that investigator, resulting in a **Stability** test of 6 and a loss of 2 **Sanity** (**Sanity** roll 1/1D20). There are other ways for the investigators to perceive Y'Golonac's true form. An investigator spending 2 points of **Evidence Collection** (a **successful Extreme Spot Hidden** roll) when inspecting the restraining chains, for example, might see a massively bloated ankle, before fully understanding the monstrosity that is Y'Golonac.
- **Transformation.** Mary can transform into her god-form, which is over 500 pounds of naked, glowing flesh and fat, with mouth-like stigmata in each hand. A transformation most certainly results in a **Stability** test of 6 and a loss of 2 **Sanity** (**Sanity** roll 1/1D20) for any investigators who have yet to perceive the vile form of Y'Golonac. Upon any such transformation, Y'Golonac's health pool refreshes. Mary can also transform or reconstruct herself into the forms of people whom she has consumed. Killing the avatar of Y'Golonac doesn't kill Y'Golonac; it just deprives the Old One of a vessel to occupy; it is infinitely easier to imprison Y'Golonac, then it is to rid the universe of its vile existence.
- **Tentacle Maw or Mouth-like Stigmata:** +1; **Health** test 4 (a **successful CON** roll) or contract bubonic plague. (For the particularly cruel Keeper, the symptoms of bubonic plague include chills, malaise, high fever, muscle cramps, seizures, lymph glands swelling; commonly in the groin, gangrene in extremities. If untreated, death in half of all cases within 10 days.)

- **Foresight.** Consumption of the Drug of the Liao grants the Bloated Woman the gift of prophecy and foresight. This vision is not absolute, but the power of prediction is a powerful edge. The Bloated Woman has a voracious appetite for human brains and "trades" visions to Kai and the Order for fresh brains.

- **Perversions and Possession.** Y'Golonac thrives on human misery and her behavior is designed to maximize the spread of such misery. Sexual perversity, drug addiction, slavery, and communicable diseases are Y'Golonac's primary modus operandi. A user of the Drug of the Liao is susceptible to possession by Y' Golonac.

- **Mary's Plan.** As mentioned before, traces of Mary remain in this avatar. If given the opportunity, Mary would use the Eye of the Peacock to undo the curse that has befallen her.

- **A Vile Plan.** Although Y'Golonac is the great corrupter, this incarnation will forego her own sick pleasures if it leads to the acquisition of the Eye of the Peacock. Y'Golonac's ultimate endgame is to use the Eye of the Peacock to usher forth the apocalypse. It may do this in any manner the Keeper prefers, such as spreading a plague that wipes out humanity or peering into R'lyeh to wake sleeping Cthulhu. Y'Golonac intends to use the investigators as a means of acquiring the Eye of the Peacock. She would affect this by compelling the investigators to go on an expedition in search of the Lost City of Jinsha. An investigator using a **Mythos** spend (a **successful Cthulhu Mythos** roll) would have an epiphany into both the vile plan and Mary's plan. This could help investigators evaluate the dangers of allowing the avatar of Y'Golonac to find the Eye of the Peacock.

### Y'Golonac

STR 125 CON 625 SIZ 125 DEX 70 INT 150  
APP - POW 140 HP 75 DB: +2D6 Build: 3  
Move: 10 MP: 28

#### Attacks per round: 1

Fighting: 100% (50/20), damage bonus

Bite: 100% (50/20), damage 1D4 non-healing damage. Make a **successful Constitution** roll or contract bubonic plague.

Spells: Summon/Bind Tcho Tcho, other spells as the Keeper sees fit

Armor: None  
Sanity Loss: 1/1D20



## (Antagonistic Reactions) The Enemy of My Enemy?

**Purpose:** This section contains antagonistic responses triggered over the course of the story, as well as the delivery of a proposition or propositions to the investigators. The scene(s) are intended to be dynamic, and not forced, and they should be reasonably predictable reactions by rational actors, or mostly rational actors, or maybe just the actions of actors most of whom are rational?



### Green Gang Vs. 4 Seas Gang

From the very beginning of the scenario, Kai and the 4 Seas Gang have used the benefit of the Bloated Woman's foresight to aid them in an undeclared war against their greatest rival, the Green Gang. At some point, the Green Gang is going to realize that the 4 Seas Gang's activities have been harming their economic interests, and they will strike back.

if the investigators have become enemies of the 4 Seas Gang it is possible that the Green Gang will approach them for help. If the investigators appear to be working with the 4 Seas Gang, then it is possible that the Green Gang will target the investigators.

### 4 Seas Gang Vs. The Order of The Bloated Woman

Generally speaking, the 4 Seas Gang is distrustful of the Order of the Bloated Woman, and investigators who exploit this lack of trust may find themselves caught in a power struggle between the 4 Seas Gang and the Order of the Bloated Woman. If Kai is still alive when this occurs, it would essentially be a coup. Otherwise, the 4 Seas Gang will be cleaning house.

### The Bloated Woman Reacts

It is important to recognize that the Bloated Woman is neither an agent of the 4 Seas Gang nor a puppet of the Order of the Bloated Woman. She has her own agenda, and to the extent that part of Mary remains, she despises those that have created her, imprisoned her or otherwise benefited from her miserable condition. Mary may very well lash out at Kai, the 4 Seas Gang or the Order of the Bloated Woman. Enterprising, if not foolish, investigators may turn Mary against their own enemies. Additionally, Mary could employ the investigators to do her bidding. Imagine, for example, a situation where Mary gives the investigators information on the whereabouts of Kai in an attempt to have him assassinated. Mary may create roadblocks, impediments, and deadly traps for the investigators. Or she could just as easily find ways to assist the investigators.



# (Floating) A Proposition

**Purpose:** The purpose of this scene is to advance to the story and serve as a hook for “The Curse of the Peacock’s Eye” scenario.



At the opportune time, the investigators will receive a serious proposal or proposals by one or more NPCs to embark on an expedition to Sichuan, in search of The Lost City of Jinsha, The City of Golden Sands, the source of the Drug of the Liao, and the home of the cursed Eye of the Peacock (sometimes also referred to as the Eye of the Phoenix). The nature of the pitch and the target changes depending on the source of the pitch. Investigators can choose their own reasons for embarking on such an expedition, but Keepers should feel free to lean on sources of stability, pillars of sanity and hard drivers. Although opinions will differ as to what can be found at Jinsha, everybody agrees that it is potentially world changing.

**By Victor Sassoon**

Depending on what information this principle investigation uncovers, Victor Sassoon may be willing to fund an expedition and charge the investigators with the task of doing so successfully. There should be little doubt that Victor would be very interested in securing the fabled “Eye of the Phoenix”, particularly if it could be used to view remote places like R’lyeh, or otherwise be misused to the detriment of humanity.

**By Kai**

If the investigators manage to align with the mentally disturbed Kai, he may invite the investigators to join his expedition. Although they are searching for the Lost City of Golden Sands, they are specifically seeking out

the source of the Drug of the Liao. Supplies for Mary Xie are dwindling, and the Lotus Eaters have thus far been unwilling to sell any reserves. Obtaining the Peacock’s Eye, or whatever Mary called it, would just be an added bonus. The expedition is made up of members of the Order of the Bloated Woman, a few low-level gangsters, and led by one rather prominent archeologist, a Nazi-sympathizing French rival to Dr. Bones.

**By Lao Che**

At some point, Kai’s father, Lao Che is going to find out what his son has been up to. Lao Che is no dabbler in the Mythos arts, rather he is a fully fledged necromancer in his own right. Lao Che would of course be interested in obtaining the Eye of the Peacock and would be willing to sacrifice even his own son if he thought he could end up with this powerful artifact in his possession.

**By Dr. Bones**

Dr. Bones, from the Scenario “Let Sleeping Dogs Lie”, would be interested in finding the Lost City of Golden Sands. He’s also heard rumors about the Curse of the Peacock’s Eye. He doesn’t believe in curses; he would like to see the piece of material anthropology find its way to where it belongs, namely a museum willing to pay him a hefty grant in the name of further scholarship.

**By the Bloated Woman**

The Bloated Woman wants the Eye of the Peacock for herself. She knows exactly what to do with it. Now, she only needs to talk somebody into taking her to it.





## Vitas Varnas

Vitas is an eccentric actor with an interest in the occult.. Vitas has always wanted to be an actor. Through acting, Vitas has a chance to live a spontaneous and exciting life, to always be on an adventure, to meet new and interesting people and to be able to help those who are in need.

Seeking adventure, Vitas decided to travel to Shanghai, with the hopes of raising funds for a cinematographic masterpiece, in which he will star in the lead role. Although Vitas is not a man without monetary resources, the project he would like to embark on could be quite costly. While he builds a personal network of possible financiers and backers, he practices his art on the 4th floor of the Great World Amusement Arcade, a large and well-equipped stage.

Currently, Vitas has received some critical acclaim for his vaudeville show "Arin & Danny - The Two Grumps." He plays Arin and his pugilist friend, Lauri O'Malley (who doubles up as the "Strongest Woman in the World") plays Danny. It was here that Vitas met Victor Sassoon, a very wealthy businessman and real estate developer. Victor enjoyed the show so much that he pitched the possibility of collaborating with Vitas on a movie. The two have kept in touch, and as a result, Vitas has been exposed to Shanghai's secretive occult scene, in which Victor plays a prominent role.

Vitas' interest in the occult will soon lead him to the Mythos. The intrigue and excitement associated with strange and supernatural things, will be too much to pass, and Vitas will view these experiences as an opportunity to be a part of something greater.

### Occupation:

Artist (Stage and screen actor) / **Actor**

### Drive / **Trait:**

Adventure / **Eccentric and holds an unhealthy interest in the occult**

### Pillars of Sanity / **Ideology:**

- Humor takes the sting out of injury
- The arts bring joy and relief from the Human Condition
- When life deals you lemons, make lemonade.

### Source of Stability / **Significant People:**

- Victor Sassoon (friend and investor)
- Lauri O'Malley, "Strongest Woman in the World" (friend)
- Wilhelm von Mises, illusionist at the Great World Amusement Arcade (friend)



### Additional Notes

Additional Notes



## Vitas Varnas

Occupational Benefits: You may refresh one pool point in Art (Acting) during any significant downtime in a scenario, up to a maximum of four times per session. This represents time spent rehearsing.

**Sanity: 9 Stability: 9 Health: 10**

### Investigative Abilities

Architecture: 2  
Art History: 2  
Languages: 2 (English, Lithuanian, Russian, Chinese)  
Library Use: 1  
Occult: 8  
Assess Honesty: 6  
Credit Rating: 6  
Flattery: 2  
Oral History: 2  
Art (Acting): 8  
Evidence Collection: 1  
Photography (Cinematography): 4

### General Abilities

Athletics: 8  
Conceal: 3  
Disguise: 7  
Filch: 3  
Preparedness: 2  
Sense Trouble: 2  
Stealth: 2  
Weapons: 4

## Vitas Varnas

**HP: (10) Sanity: (50) Luck: (50) MP: (10)**

STR 50      DEX 50      INT 60  
CON 50      APP 80      POW 50  
SIZ 50      EDU 70      Move 8

### Skills:

Art/Craft Acting 60  
Art/Craft Cinematography 30  
Charm 55  
Credit Rating 50  
Disguise 50  
Dodge 35  
Fast Talk 50  
Fighting (Brawl) 50  
Language (Own) English 70  
Language (Other) Lithuanian 35  
Language (Other) Russian 20  
Language (Other) Chinese 20  
Occult 50  
Psychology 50  
Sleight of Hand 25

**DMG Bonus: none Dodge: 35 Build: 0**

Tailored suit, dress shoes  
Cufflinks, initials engraved  
Gold pocket watch  
Cigarettes, matches

Rolls Royce – Silver Ghost

**Cash: \$250      Spending Level: \$50      Assets: \$25,000**

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	50	25	10	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
Sword Cane	50	25	10	1d6+1+db	-	-	1	-
-								



## Malcolm Gordon

You were the second boy in a Scottish Australian family of four boys. You started off your career as a police cadet in Melbourne. After a year of training, you answered an advertisement for a role as a beat cop in the Shanghai Municipal Police Department in the Shanghai International Settlement. You really enjoyed your job until one day when you busted James Keswick Jr. for discharging a firearm inside a brothel. Little did you know then that James Keswick was a member of the prominent Jardine family of the Jardine Matheson Holdings Company. Since then, your life has been a living hell. It started when Inspector Everson relieved you from duty on trumped up charges of asking for a kickback; and it ended at the bottom of a bottle. Only recently, have you started to turn your life around. You've given up the bottle and taken up a role as the head of security at Great World Amusement Arcade. Hopefully you can leave the last couple of years behind you.



### Occupation:

Police Detective (Head of Security at Great World Amusement Arcade) / **Uniformed Police Officer**

### Drive / **Trait**:

Bad Luck / **Bad Luck**

### Pillars of Sanity / **Ideology**:

- Catholicism
- Personal resilience
- The utility and accuracy of modern forensic science

### Source of Stability / **Significant People**:

- Victor Sassoon (friend and part-time employer)
- Huang Chujiu (owner of the Great World Amusement Arcade)

### Additional Notes

Additional Notes



## Malcolm Gordon

Occupational Benefits: With judicious use of Cop Talk, you can not only put the police at ease, but gain access to case files, evidence rooms, and prisoners, among other things not accessible by normal civilians. If you're far outside your jurisdiction, you may need Cop Talk and a really good plan. Within your own jurisdiction, any points at all in Cop Talk will get you access to, and use of, police laboratories (for forensics and ballistics tests, or for more abstruse purposes) and even the morgue.

Sanity: 9 Stability: 8 Health: 10

### Investigative Abilities

#### Academic Abilities

Languages: 1 (English, Chinese)

Law: 2

#### Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty: 6

Cop Talk 6

Credit Rating: 3

Interrogation: 4

Reassurance: 4

Streetwise: 2

#### Technical Abilities

Evidence Collection: 6

Forensics: 6

### General Abilities

Athletics: 4

Driving: 2

Firearms: 10

Preparedness: 2

Scuffling: 6

Sense Trouble: 2

Shadowing: 6

Stealth: 1

## Malcolm Gordon

HP: (11) Sanity: (40) Luck: (40) MP: (8)

STR 75      DEX 55      INT 60  
CON 60      APP 45      POW 40  
SIZ 50      EDU 75      Move 9

### Skills:

Credit Rating 20

Dodge 27

Fighting (Brawl) 75

Firearms (Handgun) 66

Intimidate 75

Language (Own) English 75

Language (Other) Chinese 20

Law 50

Mechanical Repair 50

Persuade 75

Psychology 60

Spot Hidden 80

Stealth 25

DMG Bonus: +1d4 Dodge: 27 Build: +1

Wool suit

Worn out loafers

Shoulder holster

.45 revolver

Billy club

Handcuffs

Electric torch

Note pad, pencils

"Lucky Strike" Cigarettes, matches

Cash: \$40      Spending Level: \$10      Assets: \$1,000

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	75	37	15	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
Billy club	75	37	15	1d6+db	-	1	-	-
.45 revolver	66	33	13	1d10+2	100	1(3)	6	100



## Lauri O'Malley, "The Strongest Woman in the World"

Lauri is a black sheep, among a long line of black sheep. In the old country, her people are referred to as the "Black Irish". It has been speculated that the black-haired O'Malley's are decedents of a line of sea-faring Atlanteans who traded up and down the coasts of Iberia and North Africa. Lauri is not sure, but she is certain that she is no typical Irish lass. Standing at 6'6, and weighing in at 260, Lauri is quite possibly the strongest woman in the world. Lauri has spent most of her adult life as a Carny. Her acts have ranged from weight lifting to pugilism, and she is currently employed as the "Strongest Woman in the World" at the Great World Amusement Arcade in Shanghai.



### Occupation:

Hobo (Circus Act; Pugilist)/ **Boxer**

### Drive / **Trait:**

In the blood / **Lauri is black Irish through and through.**

### Pillars of Sanity / **Ideology:**

- Loyalty among friends

- The strong should protect the weak

- Karma

### Source of Stability / **Significant People:**

- Dai Xu Fei (Daoist monk)

- Malcolm Gordon (Head of Security at Great World Amusement Arcade)

- Francesca Benoit (Baccarat Dealer at Great World Amusement Arcade)

### Additional Notes



## Lauri O'Malley

Occupational Benefits: You are a member of the Carny community. You can use Sense Trouble and Streetwise to understand a crowd's receptiveness to a particular act. You can use Streetwise to activate fellow Carny contacts, including for example acrobats, sword swallowers, animal handlers, tight-rope walkers, and conmen. Other contacts available to you might include hobos, Communists, and people who subsist on the edges of society.

Sanity: 9 Stability: 9 Health: 11

### Investigative Abilities

#### Academic Abilities

Occult: 2

#### Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty: 2

Bargain: 2

Credit Rating: 0

Intimidation: 10

Streetwise: 6

#### Technical Abilities

Craft (Camp): 3

Evidence Collection: 1

Locksmith: 4

Outdoorsman: 2

### General Abilities

Athletics: 16

Conceal: 4

Filch: 2

First Aid: 3

Preparedness: 2

Psychoanalysis: 2

Sense Trouble: 5

Shadow: 2

Stealth: 2

## Lauri O'Malley

HP: (12) Sanity: (45) Luck: (45) MP: (9)

STR 90      DEX 45      INT 70  
CON 45      APP 40      POW 45  
SIZ 75      EDU 50      Move 8

### Skills:

Credit Rating 9

Dodge 50

Fast Talk 50

Fighting (Brawl) 90

First Aid 40

Intimidate 85

Language (Own) English 50

Locksmith 50

Occult 50

Psychology 30

Psychoanalysis 30

Sleight of Hand 40

Spot Hidden 30

Stealth 30

DMG Bonus: +1d6 Dodge: 50 Build: +2

Patch work trousers, burlap shirt  
Combat boots  
Mallet

Cash:      Spending Level:      Assets:  
\$9      \$2      \$90

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	90	45	18	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
Mallet	90	45	18	1d8+db	-	1	-	-
Wood Axe	90	45	18	1d8+2+db	-	1	-	-



## Zhang Jing

Zhang Jing grew up in a large merchant-class family in Shanghai. Her father was a compulsive gambler, but not particularly good at it. Zhang Jing learned from the mistakes of her father and became a professional. She is so good at gambling, in fact, that she is able to stay alive and live in relative luxury. She's smart enough not to cross big guys, like Big Eared Du, but that hasn't stopped her from taking money from the well-backed casinos.

A few years back, she was approached by a very interesting Westerner, Henry E. Morris. She was shocked to discover that Henry could speak Shanghai dialect. She was even more surprised when Henry paid her for a bit of gossip on the dealings of local import-export company. Zhang Jing continued to sell and Henry continued to buy information, and over time this business relationship turned to friendship. It was through Henry, that Zhang Jing got to know Victor Sassoon, the wealthy entrepreneur known for his stable of racing horses. At the horse tracks, one of the few places where people of all classes and races are welcome, Zhang Jing befriended Victor Sassoon. That friendship deepened when Victor bailed Zhang Jing out of jail one time after she took Police Inspector Martin's purse in a card game. Zhang Jing now feels that she owes a debt to Victor, and Victor knows that he can use Zhang Jing as a troubleshooter.



### Occupation:

Criminal (Professional Gambler) / Gambler

### Drive / Trait:

Adventure / Zhang Jing is an adventure seeker

### Pillars of Sanity / Ideology:

- Friendship

- The Laws of Probability

### Source of Stability / Significant People:

- Victor Sassoon (friend)

- Henry E. Morris

### Additional Notes

Additional Notes



## Zhang Jing

Sanity: 8 Stability: 8 Health: 10

Occupational Benefits: Criminals with point pools in Conceal, Filch or Shadowing may spend points after rolling the die for a test. For every 2 points you spend after rolling the die, you increase the die result by 1. This only applies if you are undistracted and not directly observed. It never applies during a contest. You must describe the thing that almost went wrong, and how you caught it barely in time or succeeded through sheer luck.

### Investigative Abilities

#### Academic Abilities

Accounting: 2

Languages: 1 (Chinese, Shanghainese, English)

#### Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty: 6

Bargain: 4

Credit Rating: 3

Intimidation: 2

Streetwise: 6

#### Technical Abilities

Locksmith: 4

### General Abilities

Athletics: 8

Conceal: 6

Filch: 10

Firearms: 6

Preparedness: 4

Sense Trouble: 6

Shadow: 2

Stealth: 6

## Zhang Jing

HP: (10) Sanity: (50) Luck: (50) MP: (10)

STR 50      DEX 80      INT 60  
CON 55      APP 50      POW 50  
SIZ 45      EDU 70      Move 9

### Skills:

Accounting 30

Credit Rating 30

Dodge 50

Fast Talk 75

Firearms (Pistols) 50

Language (Own) Chinese 70

Language (Own) Shanghainese 70

Language (Other) English 40

Intimidate 50

Listen 25

Locksmith 40

Psychology 55

Sleight of Hand 80

Spot Hidden 50

Stealth 50

DMG Bonus: none Dodge: 50 Build: 0

Khaki trousers  
White linen shirt  
Deck shoes  
Hair pins  
Deck of cards  
Handbag, large  
Model P08 Luger

Cash: \$60      Spending Level: \$10      Assets: \$1500

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	25	12	5	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
Model P08 Luger	50	25	10	1d10	15	1(3)	8	99



## Wilhelm von Mises

Wilhelm was born in a small village near the Black Forest in 1889. Wilhelm was the third child in a Catholic family with six. His parents were originally clockmakers from Austria who moved to south eastern Germany in search of better economic opportunity.

In 1907, Wilhelm witnessed Harry Houdini perform an inverted straight jacket escape in Munich. It would be a life altering experience, as Wilhelm would aspire to be an illusionist and escape artist of the same caliber as Houdini. In 1908, he read Houdini's book, "The Unmasking of Robert-Houdin", in which Houdini would debunk the famous French illusionist and spiritualist, Jean Eugene Robert-Houdin (a son of a watch maker). Again, Wilhelm would look up to Houdini not only as a master illusionist, but as a scholar interested in ripping the veil off of the hidden world.

Wilhelm had little desire to be a clock maker, so he worked hard and saved as much money as he could to support an education in mechanical engineering at the Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich. At university, he was exposed to a variety of writings, including those of Kant, Hegel, and Nietzsche. Nietzsche's writings, in particular, spoke to Wilhelm, including the material that warned of the coming Great War and against anti-Semitic sentiment. Wilhelm is not a Jew, but he finds anti-Semitism anathema. His idol, Harry Houdini, is after all, a Jew.

Wilhelm became interested in Buddhism after reading Hermann Hesse's "Siddhartha", published in 1922. In spite of his parent's protests, Wilhelm moved to China in pursuit of Buddhist knowledge. He is currently employed as a stage magician and escape artist at the Great World Amusement Arcade in Shanghai.



### Occupation:

Parapsychologist ( Illusionist, Debunker ) /  
Parapsychologist

### Drive / Trait:

Thirst for Knowledge / The world is full of illusions; some of them perpetrated by tricksters, some of them a function of the laws of the universe. Wilhelm wants to know what lies behind the facade of the world.

### Pillars of Sanity / Ideology:

- Buddhism
- The Philosophies of Friedrich Nietzsche
- Science

### Source of Stability / Significant People:

- Victor Sassoon (friend)
- Harry Houdini
- Nikola Tesla



## Wilhelm von Mises

Sanity: 9 Stability: 9 Health: 9

Occupational Benefits: Like the Alienist, you may put build points into and use Hypnosis. (Pulp games only.)

### Investigative Abilities

#### Academic Abilities

Anthropology: 2  
Languages: 1 (German, English)  
Library Use: 4  
Occult: 4  
Physics: 1

#### Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty: 6

Credit Rating: 2

#### Technical Abilities

Craft (Stage Props): 4  
Evidence Collection: 4  
Photography: 2

### General Abilities

Athletics: 8  
Electrical Repair: 4  
Filch: 5  
Locksmith: 6  
Hypnosis: 4  
Mechanical Repair: 6  
Preparedness: 2  
Sense Trouble: 2  
Stealth: 1

## Wilhelm von Mises

HP: (10) Sanity: (50) Luck: (50) MP: (10)

STR 50      DEX 65      INT 70  
CON 55      APP 45      POW 50  
SIZ 45      EDU 80      Move 9

### Skills:

Art/Craft Stage Props 50  
Credit Rating 20  
Dodge 32  
Electrical Repair 25  
History 25  
Language (Own) German 80  
Language (Other) English 40  
Library Use 50  
Locksmith 50  
Mechanical Repair 50  
Occult 50  
Psychology 50  
Psychoanalysis 30  
Sleight of Hand 80  
Spot Hidden 70  
Stealth 50

DMG Bonus: none Dodge: 32 Build: 0

Suit, oxford leather shoes  
Top hat  
Wrist watch, handmade in Germany  
Electric torch  
Note pad, pencils  
Silk rope  
Marble  
Small mirror  
Deck of cards  
Silver dollar  
Lockpicks  
Magnifying glass  
Box of waterproof matches  
Straight jacket (stage prop)

Cash: \$40      Spending Level: \$10      Assets: \$1000

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	25	12	5	1d3+db	-	1	-	-







# 凤凰眼之诅咒 Curse of the Peacock's Eye

By Jason Sheets and George Sibley

## HORRIBLE TRUTH

### The Trail of Lao Che

Investigators are hot on the trail of Lao Che, an evil necromancer who is capable of performing the rights of resurrection, and who buys, trades and steals cremated remains for various nefarious purposes, many of which involve some form of blackmail. Lao Che is perhaps the cleverest, if not maddest, antagonist the investigators have ever faced. He is well aware that he is being pursued and comes up with a solution that will result in not just the death of the investigators, but the death of millions upon millions of people.

### Lao Che's Evil Plan

In 1855, a virulent strain of the bubonic plague emerged from Western China and wiped out more than 12 million in China and India before it spread across the globe and later became known as the "Third Pandemic." The evil necromancer Lao Che hatched a plot to use this strain of the plague to decimate humanity and usher in the apocryphal return of the Great Old Ones. He would accomplish this task by tricking the investigators into following him back in time, where they would contract the plague and return in August of 1929 as carriers of the infection. He, himself, would have his body burned and returned to essential salts, prior to being resurrected by Roy "Little Cart" Lu (or if Roy is deceased, one of his other sons, Chen or Kai) in September of 1928. If by August of 1929, the investigators had not yet returned from the past, he would reset the trap and once again fold time back to 1855. If the investigators fall into his trap, he will wait out the spread of the contagion in a doomsday bunker built in the basement of the Methodist Church in Chengdu.

To fold time, Lao Che will need pollen from the black lotus, a powerful mind-expanding drug also known as the "Peacock's Eye". In addition to the Peacock's Eye, Lao Che needs a skilled "navigator" to fold time accurately. Lucky for Lao Che, he knows that Jinsha, the Lost City of Golden Sands, is a source of black lotus pollen and that an indigenous tribe of Tcho Tcho, known as the "Lotus Eaters", are skilled navigators.

The Lost City of Jinsha is hidden in a remote mountain range in Sichuan, not more than 40 km from Chengdu. Wedged between two rocky peaks is a field of black lotus growing in mounds of yellow pollen. To get to the black lotus field in Jinsha, enterprising expeditions must pass through a series of tests in the form of physical traps.

Once past a series of basic traps, visitors will be greeted by a few lackadaisical Lotus Eaters. The Lotus Eaters have tended this field for over a millennium, and have grown accustomed to a sedentary lifestyle, which includes the use of copious amounts of the mind-bending Peacock's Eye. Unlike other tribes of Tcho Tcho, the "Lotus Eaters" rarely consume humans or other meat and are generally less malign than their brethren.

The Lotus Eaters have experienced many different timelines and have seen almost every imaginable way that life on earth ends. They see themselves as transcendent observers, subject to none of the Great Old Ones, save perhaps Yog-Sothoth, a mindless God that forms the glue that binds the universe together. The Lotus Eaters are generally agreeable to requests to navigate by outsiders; however, they will warn the investigators about the "Curse of the Peacock's Eye". It seems that the real traps are not the physical ones set up outside of the lotus field, which are only intended to dissuade too many intrusions into the quiet lives of the Lotus Eaters.







## SPINE:

- Flashback – Expedition in Search of the Peacock's Eye
- Breadcrumbs
- (Floating) Following the Two Trails of Lao Che
- The Chongqing Express
- Obligatory Encounter with a Cult
- A Hike in the Mountains
- Folding Time
- The Third Pandemic
- Resolution
- (Optional) The Future Cure

## A Brief and Confusing History of Time

The very first time Lao Che set the trap and went back in time, it did not work because the investigators never followed Lao Che to Sichuan, and never found Jinsha. Therefore, Lao Che “hit the reset button”, this time leaving better instructions on how to find Jinsha, and then returning to the lotus field for the purposes of folding back time again. This scenario begins during Lao Che’s second attempt to kill the investigators and devastate the World’s population.

- Timeline 1 – Lao Che 1 goes back to July 1, 1855, has himself killed and reduced to ashes and is then resurrected by Roy (or one of his other sons) as Lao Che 2
- Timeline 2 – Lao Che 2 goes back to July 2, 1855, has himself killed and reduced to ashes and is then resurrected by Roy (or one of his other sons) as Lao Che 3. [This is the timeline in which the investigators begin the story.]
- Timeline 3 – Lao Che 3 goes back to July 3, 1855, unless he is stopped in Timeline 2.

So, what happens if you bump into another version of yourself? Can a paradox exist? An indirect paradox is generally not a reality destroying event, but a direct paradox is not possible and will result in a voided timeline. In other words, the navigator failed to put you in a time that was stable enough to form a coherent timeline.

A direct paradox is an event such as self-conception; it includes an earlier version of yourself taking advice from a later version of yourself. If a Direct Paradox occurs, a Keeper is encouraged to force their players to “retcon” the scene. A player whose drive is **Bad Luck** must retcon in a way that is averse to his own interests (but not necessarily the group’s interests). **Investigators must make a successful Group Luck test or retcon the scene in a way that is adverse to the interest of the party.**

In 2001, a San Xing Dui archeological site was uncovered in the Qingyang District of Chengdu and named “Jinsha” after a nearby street, which itself was named after the Jinsha River. Don’t let these facts get in the way of a good story. If you ask Dr. Bones, he will tell you the “real” Jinsha is hidden near Qing Cheng Shan (青城山).



# Flashback: Expedition in Search of the Peacock's Eye

**Date:** September 1928

**Location:** Near Qing Cheng Shan, Sichuan, China

**Purpose:** This scene sets the stage and tone of the entire scenario with a disorienting frame change. Death and dismemberments should warn the investigators about what not to do when they arrive at Jinsha, the Lost City of Golden Sands, later in the scenario.



Unlike the flashback in the scenario “Let Sleeping Dogs Lie”, this flashback is critical to the story. Players should use their own character sheets and not be told that the scene is a flashback. The players should believe that the fatal traps really are the end of the line for some, if not all of them. This flashback is actually just one of a potentially infinite number of timelines, a timeline where all or many of the investigators succumb to the traps set outside of Jinsha.

It is not necessary to determine which alternative timeline this scene takes place in, and it is not necessary to explain to the players that this is an alternate timeline. If they play through the scenario, they will find themselves again in front of the same traps. Hopefully, they took some notes and did some research this time.

As you run through the traps, target players with **Bad Luck** as a drive, followed by players with the lowest **Sense Danger**. Reward characters with **Flee**. **Keepers should call for individual Luck rolls, and rank order the investigators as targets from lowest roll to highest roll.**



## A) Stone Marker

The song of the cicada is a constant, alien cacophony that permeates the thick and humid air. Sweat drips down the side of your cheek and your cotton shirt clings to your back. The Sichuan autumn is warmer than expected and the hike into the mountains has been even more arduous than originally anticipated. You have been heading in a westerly direction and the sun is directly overhead. You are near the top of a small mountain ridge when the guide puts his hand up, “What is this?” he says pointing to a toppled stone marker laying on the path.

The guide traces his fingers over the ancient script carved into the stone, “this place is Jinsha, under the protection of the Empire of the Three Star Mounds people. Be warned of the Curse of the Peacock's Eye.” The guide's face now beams with excitement, but you feel a foreboding sense of danger; you can't shake the feeling that you have been here before and now you are wishing that you had spent a few more days in the university library preparing for this expedition in search of the fabled City of Golden Sands.

The rocky path winds up towards a space between two ridges. The guide quickens the pace now.

As you cross over a small mountain ridge, you can see a ravine wedged between mountain faces. You have an elevated view and are looking down upon a marvelous site: a field of black flowers on mounds of yellow pollen. The field is the size of a cricket pitch; the black-blue, iridescent blooms remind you of a peacock's plumage.

“This is it!” Your guide announces. “A field of black lotus on golden sands! Jinsha!”



Encourage players to ask questions, roleplay and use investigative abilities.

The path down is narrow, steep and covered with loose gravel, but it is well below the tree line and white oaks grow abundantly here. The oak leaves offer little respite from the sun; you make every effort to walk in their shade. Up ahead, there is a gap at the base of the two mountains. The guide is convinced that this path leads to the grotto you spotted from above nearly 15 minutes ago.

### B) White Tigers of the West

You stand before a giant stone gate cut from slabs of limestone at the base of the cliff.

On either side of the opening are life-sized stone tigers. The tiger statue on the right side has a dial on its forehead. There are three Chinese characters on the dial, each character designating a possible setting. The settings on the right dial, in ancient Chinese script, reads: king, subject or slave. The tiger on the left side has a dial in its mouth. These settings are the Chinese characters for fire, water, wood, metal, or earth. Neither of the dials are locked in place and both dials can be easily rotated.

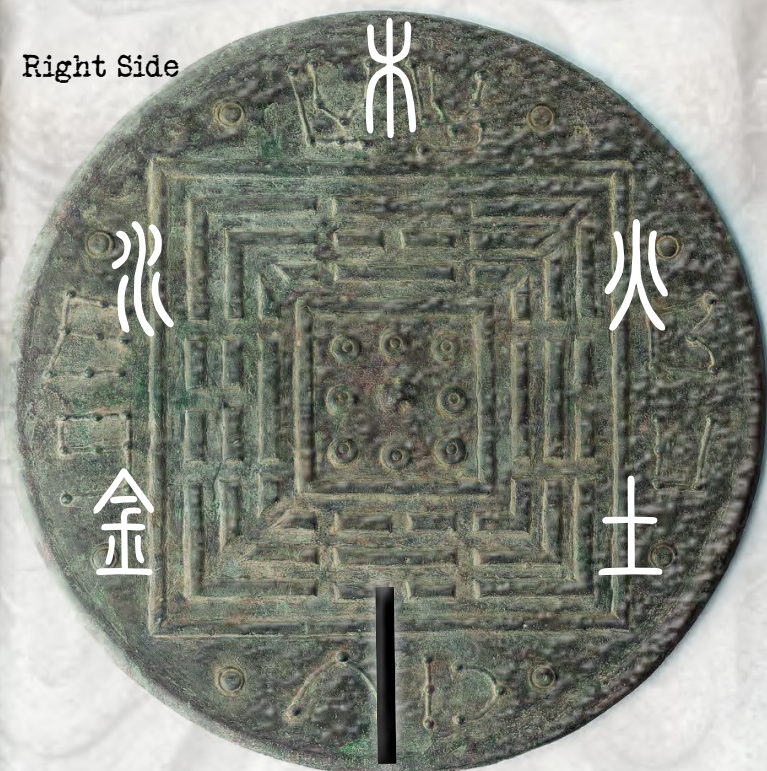
The stone tigers are stylized and blocky; all rectangles, squares, and cubes. Although clearly Asian in origin, these are not typical of statues developed among the people living and trading near the Yangze River region. **Anthropology** or **Archaeology** (a successful **Anthropology** or **Archaeology** roll) would allow the investigators to hazard a guess that the original artist was influenced by certain tribes in French-Indochina.

The dial on the left should be set to “King”; failing to do this will mean that heavy stone blocks will fall on any person attempting to walk through the gateway. Victims subject to falling stones are likely to be killed or left with severe head injuries for which recovery is not possible.

An **Anthropology** spend (a successful **Hard Anthropology** roll) provides that the White Tiger represents the West and is connected to the “Earth” element or movement.

The dial on the right should be set to “Earth”; a person turning the dial to a different element will trigger a spring-loaded trap, causing the tiger’s mouth to shut, crushing the hand of the poor victim, and leaving him

Right Side



Left Side





trapped until either a successful **Mechanical Repair** test of 6 is passed (a successful **Extreme Mechanical Repair**) or the hand is amputated. A successful amputation requires a **First Aid** test 4 (a successful **Medicine** roll) or the patient bleeds out. Later, a subsequent **Medicine** test 4 (a successful **Medicine** roll) is required to stave off life-threatening infection. High fever may cause the investigator to become delirious and act strangely.

**Keeper's Note:** Do not be afraid to dock **Stability** and encourage the player to roleplay appropriately. **Stability** lost during flashbacks or flashforwards will not refresh until the scenario is complete.

A point in **Evidence Collection** (a successful **Spot Hidden** roll) can allow an investigator to find traces of Lao Che's expedition. Perhaps the investigators find a Ruby Red cigarette butt, the kind of which Lao Che is known to smoke, or perhaps they find a match that has been used by Roy "Little Cart" as a toothpick and discarded. Have the player explain what they find and why they believe it means that Lao Che has already been here.

#### C) The Test of the Black Tortoise

You go deeper into the mountain, almost certain that this path will cut through the mountain and deliver you to the lotus field grotto. The pathway takes a turn to the North. Who is going first?

**Keeper's Note:** Have players formulate and explain the investigators' plans for moving forward.

The floor is solid, unadorned rock. The walls are smooth and cold stone. The hallway terminates at a well-kept iron gate. It looks like somebody polishes this gate on a regular basis; there are no cobwebs and no rust. The gate is locked by an ancient mechanical lock that is also in outstanding condition.

To your immediate left, is a small alcove with a big ceramic jar. The mouth of the jar is just big enough to put your hand into it; if you put your whole arm into it, you could reach the bottom of the jar. Upon closer inspection, you realize the jar is cemented into place.

To your immediate right is another small alcove with a red lacquered chest only a bit bigger than a breadbox.

At the bottom of the ceramic jar is the key that is necessary to unlock the gate. The ceramic jar is filled with black pit vipers, and their bite is deadly. An investigator

with **Preparedness** (a successful **Luck** roll) has an electric torch necessary to peer into the jar.

The red chest contains 4 clay vessels in the shapes of mythic creatures; a blue dragon, a black tortoise, a red bird, and a white tiger. **Anthropology** (a successful **Anthropology** roll) provides that the Black Tortoise of the North is a symbol for longevity; the black tortoise vessel contains the pit viper anti-venom.

#### D) The Chamber of the Vermillion Bird

The corridor turns to the West for a while, before abruptly turning South. The hallway opens up into a chamber that would allow five people to walk abreast. The roof is covered in a mosaic of a great vermilion bird.

**Sense Trouble** (a successful **INT** roll) tells the investigators that the chamber is trapped.

The floor in this chamber is tiled. Each tile is about a square meter, and each row of tiles has five Chinese characters: fire, water, wood, earth, metal. There are six rows in total. Between each tile is a thin trough about 2" wide and forming a grid. The trough is filled with an amber-brown liquid. A set of simple stone stairs on the other side of the cave leads up and out.

**Chemistry** or **Outdoorsman** (a successful **Science: Chemistry** or **Survival** roll) provides that the brownish liquid is kerosene. The floor is rigged with a pressure plate trap. Stepping on the wrong tile causes a steel wheel to strike flint and ignite the kerosene. Anybody caught in a kerosene fire loses 1d6+2 **Health** (lose 2D6 hit points).


An **Anthropology** (a successful **Anthropology** roll) spend provides that the Vermillion Bird represents the South and is connected to the "Fire" element or movement. The five symbols are the 5 elements or movements (五行), and each movement gives rise to a different movement until the cycle is completed. Since this is The Chamber of the Vermillion Bird, a visitor must begin on a tile with fire and end on a tile with fire.

The proper order is as follows: Fire, Earth, Metal, Water, and Wood, then followed by Fire.

Like before, a point in **Evidence Collection** (a successful **Spot Hidden** roll) can allow an investigator to find traces of Lao Che's expedition. Let the player explain what they find and why they believe it means that Lao Che has already been here. This bought clue can also be used to help solve the trap.

Once the investigators leave The Chamber of the Vermillion Bird, they will enter the grotto and be





禾	火	土	金	水
禾	火	土	金	水
禾	火	土	金	水
禾	火	土	金	水
禾	火	土	金	水
禾	火	土	金	水

greeted with the site of the black lotus fields. When the investigators went into the cave, it was mid-day. Decide what time it is when they exit and describe the field accordingly and dramatically. The Black Lotus grows in iridescent purples, blues, and greens, like a peacock's eye.

#### E) Bridges of the Azure Dragon

The Lotus Field is encircled by a great river that moves in an almost imperceptibly slow fashion. The surface of the river is an iridescent silver mirror with an occasional ripple. There are no birds nearby, and no animal tracks near the river. Nothing grows on its banks, and although the river is not transparent, you are certain that it has no fish.

There are four narrow stone bridges that cross the river; each bridge sits at a cardinal direction. The bridges are intricately adorned with dragons carved in a unique style. The eyes of the dragons appear to bulge out, and the bodies are thick and contorted knots with various appendages and tentacles.

In the field, you can see the shapes and shadows of reclining men in the distance. They pay you no mind.

A long time ago, the San Xing Dui diverted part of the Jian He river to Jinsha and enclosed it before pouring gallons and gallons of mercury in it. **Chemistry**, or a clever use of **Photography** (a **successful Science: Chemistry** or a **Hard INT** roll), provides that the river is made of nearly pure mercury. **Medicine** (a **successful Medicine** roll) provides that mercury is highly toxic and people falling into the river or otherwise coming into excessive contact with the river will most certainly suffer from mercury poisoning, for which there is no cure. Symptoms include tremors, sensory impairment, mental impairment, red skin, and death.

**Archaeology** or **Architecture** (a **successful Archaeology** roll) provides that the bridge engravings are not stylized in any common Yangze River tradition, but rather is of a different tradition, chiefly of the San Xing Dui (三星堆) people.

An **Anthropology** spend (a **Hard Anthropology** roll) provides that the Azure Dragon is said to have come from the land of the rising sun and is therefore, representative of the East. Only the East bridge is safe; the other bridges have stone tiles that swivel or open, thus dropping unsuspecting intruders into the river for a mercury pickling.

This scene should end just as abruptly as it began.

#### Lead Outs:

- Breadcrumbs



# Breadcrumbs

•**Date:** July 1929

**Location:** Shanghai

**Lead Ins:**

•Flashback – Expedition in Search of the Peacock's Eye

**Purpose:** Our intrepid investigators set out on an expedition in search of Jinsha, the Lost City of Golden Sands and the location of the Eye of the Peacock. Additionally, they hear that Lao Che, the patriarch of the 4 Seas Gang, has already set off on a competing expedition. This scene sets the action in motion and should give the players a sense of urgency.



## A Cordial Invitation

You receive a cordial written invitation from Victor Sassoon. It reads: 'You are cordially invited to spend a relaxing evening at the Hotel Cathay. Please arrive at his manor at eight o' clock promptly, formal attire not required.' You remember the last time you received such an invitation. It sparked a series of events that left you at odds with the resurrected Cixi. You are almost tempted to refuse the invitation, but then you remember how you are tied to Sassoon; a type of commitment that does not go unattended, a debt that does not go unpaid. Upon arrival at the Hotel Cathay, you are led into a Grand Dining Room, where you find Victor already situated comfortably in an overstuffed chair. Across from him is Doctor Bones, a man in need of a bath and a shave.

The table is dressed in only a simple white tablecloth; a variety of archeological pieces have been substituted for flatware and silverware. You see a couple of masks, a ceremonial ax, a fertility statue, some gold bells, pieces of a metal belt, and some coral and conch shell necklaces. You hope that your hunger does not overcome you before the business part of tonight's discussion is complete.

Looking up, Victor says, "I believe you are already acquainted with Doctor Bones. We were just discussing some recent pieces discovered in a field just outside of Chengdu, Sichuan." Victor waves his hand over the artifacts being discussed.

"Go ahead Dr. Bones, please continue."

"Well, this piece here," holding up a bronze mask, was pulled out of the ground by some farmer. It's a very interesting piece, because it represents a different set of traditions and art style, different than the Yellow River cultures that we are so familiar with. This piece, with the bulging eyes and elongated earlobes, was crafted by the San Xing Dui, or "Three Star Mounds" people. It is a Bronze Age piece, so...probably around the 11th century BCE? The Chronicles of Huayang (华阳国志) tells us that Cancong (蚕丛) was the first king of the Kingdom of Shu. Cancong is something of a mythical figure; he is described as having protruding eyes, a feature that is exhibited in this mask."

Dr. Bones: Hook or Guide? The Keeper must decide if Dr. Bones will serve as the hook or the guide. If the investigators are hot on the trail of Lao Che or if they have agreed to help the Bloated Woman recover the Eye of the Peacock, then it is probably not necessary to use Dr. Bones as the hook. Under these circumstances, the party already knows that it should look for the Eye of the Peacock in the Lost City of Golden Sands; Dr. Bones will only serve as a guide. If, however, the investigators are not actively in pursuit of Lao Che or the Eye of the Peacock, then use Dr. Bones as the Hook: Victor and Dr. Bones both want to find the Lost City of Jinsha and recover the Eye of the Peacock before Lao Che gets there.

The discussion should proceed, with investigators teasing out relevant information. Dr. Bones can provide the following information:

- Farmer Liu was working his field a few months ago and started to uncover these interesting artifacts.
- Farmer Liu's field is about 3 miles North East of Chengdu. The unique bronze work and artistic styles accentuating strange facial features is solid evidence that these artifacts were created by the San Xing Dui (三星堆) people, or "Three Star Mounds" people. The San Xing Dui people likely founded the Kingdom of Shu.
- "I cross-checked Volume 3 of the Chronicles of Huayang (华阳国志). Based on the Chronicles and these archeological finds, I think the Lost City of Gold Sands can't be that far outside of Chengdu. 'Gold Sands,' I like the sound of that." The real Jinsha must be hidden on nearby Qing Cheng Mountain (青城山).



- “Lao Che also started acquiring some of these newly discovered relics in Sichuan. He asked me to lead an expedition to Sichuan in search of Jinsha. But after that last stunt he pulled, there is no way I would work with him!”

- “Lao Che mentioned that we would need to procure a piece of meteorite prior to the expedition. I thought it was a rather odd thing to say at the time, but the cryptic text of the Chronicles suggests that the San Xing Dui hid Jinsha using eldritch magic that can only be overcome by those in possession of a piece of one of the three ‘fallen stars’”. This clue assumes that the investigators played through the scenario “Let Sleeping Dogs Lie” and are in possession of the Meteorite of Heaven pendant. If this is not the case, either eliminate the clue and the requirement of a meteorite or find another way to be sure that the investigators are in possession of meteorite.

- “According to the Chronicles of Huayang, Jinsha is the home of the Peacock’s Eye. I think Lao Che is seeking the Peacock’s Eye. But I’m not sure what it is. I figure it might be a very large gem, like a ruby? Maybe it is a sculpture? Professor Granet has speculated that the Peacock’s Eye is a set of technologically advanced goggles used when smelting bronze.”

- Professor Granet has pointed out that some scholars have incorrectly translated the term “Peacock’s Eye” as “Eye of the Phoenix” and has thus introduced some confusion into the archaeological discourse. Dr. Bones assures the investigators that the correct translation is the “Peacock’s Eye”

- [CORE CLUE]: “Lao Che has a variant copy of the Chronicles of Huayang, which he recovered from the sealed cave at Mogao, Dunhuang, Gansu. Lao Che’s version includes extensive annotations on the Kingdom of Shu. Lao Che made the mistake of leaving me alone with his copy of the Chronicles of Huayang; I had just enough time to copy the more important passages.”

- According to Lao Che’s version of the Chronicles, Jinsha is occupied by a clan of original San Xing Dui descendants known as the “Lotus Eaters”. The

occupants claim to be great travelers and navigators and are willing to trade their knowledge and secrets with outsiders. They generally do not like to be disturbed, so they surrounded Jinsha with traps to discourage all but the most committed visitors. Maybe the fact that it is trapped is the reason why it has never been rediscovered.

- Legend has it that the Eye of the Peacock is cursed. Those who possess it possess great power, but at great expense.

- A **Library Use** spend (a **Hard Library Use** roll) can produce a copy of the Chronicles of Huayang. The player spending Library Use in this way should explain how it happens that she came into possession of such work. Alternatively, any antiquarian can use their profession’s special benefit to retrieve a copy from their personal collection.

#### Dr. Henry Bones, 26, Archaeologist

Athletics 8, Health 9, Scuffling 4, Weapons 6, Firearms 6

[Fist (-2), Medium pistol (+1)]

Anthropology 4, Archaeology 8, Architecture 2, Astronomy 2, Bargain 2, Credit Rating 2, Driving 2, Filch 4, History 1, Languages 4, Library Use 6, Occult 4, Oral History 2, Outdoorsman 2, Pilot 4, Preparedness 4, Reassurance 2, Riding 2, Sanity 7, Stability 9, Stealth 2

Victor Sassoon & Friends



### Dr. Henry Bones, 26, Archaeologist

STR 50   CON 80   SIZ 50   DEX 60   INT 70  
APP 60   POW 50   EDU 70   SAN 50   HP 13  
DB: 0   Build: 0   Move: 8   MP 10

Brawl: 50%, unarmed 1D3  
Handgun: 80%, .38 1D10  
Dodge: 50%  
Armor: None

Skills: Archaeology 60%, Archaeology 80%, Credit Rating 20%, Fast Talk 20%, Driving 25%, Sleight of Hand 33%, Library Use 75%, Pilot 30%, Spot Hidden 50%  
Languages: English 70%, Chinese 10%, Ancient Egyptian 10%, Aramaic 20%, Latin 25%

### Lao Che Plants Leads

Lao Che's plan involves the investigators following him to Jinsha and then into the past. He therefore, goes great lengths to make it easy for investigators to find the information they are seeking about the location of Jinsha or Lao Che's expedition.

The investigators may already know that The Belt King Social Club is the 4 Seas Gang hideout; if not **Streetwise** (a successful **INT** roll) will readily provide this information. The 4 Seas Gang's front, the Hip Sing Tong, maintains office space on the 2nd Floor and an assembly hall on the 3rd floor of the same building as The Belt King Social Club.

During this scenario, if the investigators visit the office space during the evening, they will find the front door unlocked and the offices empty of personnel. An annotated copy of Volume 3 of the Chronicles of Huayang (華陽國志) will be left on the desk in a corner office. If the investigators visit the office during the daytime, a very beautiful Chinese secretary wearing a formal qipao will greet them. Although Lao Che and his sons are not present, the investigators will be treated very well, and they will find it easy to inspect, snoop or otherwise conduct "clandestine" investigations which turn up a copy of Volume 3 of the Chronicles of Huayang with little to no resistance.

Anytime during this scene, the investigators visit the assembly hall on the 3rd floor, they will find the front door unlocked and the hall devoid of occupants. A copy of Volume 3 of the Chronicles of Huayang has been placed on the podium at the front and center of the hall.

[CORE CLUE]: Finding Volume 3 of the Chronicle of Huayang should feel "too easy". The tome contains information regarding:

- The Kingdom of Shu.
- Jinsha, the fabled city of golden sands and its location.
- The requirement that travelers be in possession of meteorite in order to find Jinsha.
- The San Xing Dui ("Three Star Mounds") people - the Lotus Eaters or "navigators".
- The four symbols of China and the related tests, including the White Tigers of the West, the Black Tortoise of the North, the Vermillion Bird of the South, and the Azure Dragon of the East.
- The curse of the Peacock's Eye.

### Outfitting an Expedition

Now that the investigators have decided to embark on an expedition of their own, they will need to plan a route and then outfit the expedition. Sassoon will agree to provide "all reasonable" funds necessary to outfit their expedition. In return, he would ask that the Peacock's Eye, if recovered, be given to him. He intends to add it to his private collection for safekeeping; although he does not know what it is, he knows it is dangerous.

The best way to get to Chengdu is via riverboat; foreign steamers of all nationalities cruise up the Yangze River as far as Chongqing. From there, it's over 200 miles to Chengdu on a filthy regional train. The fastest an expedition could get to Chengdu is in a little less than 3 weeks.

If riverboat arrangements are left to Sassoon, he will book the investigators passage on the Intrepido, a riverboat flying the Italian flag and as tramp a steamer as you'd ever find. The Intrepido is inconspicuous, thankfully, and a perfect way to get to Chongqing without anybody noticing.

### Lead Outs:

- (Floating) Following the Two Trails of Lao Che
- The Chongqing Express



# (Floating) Following the Two Trails of Lao Che

**Purpose:** This floating, but mandatory scene (or scenes) should give the investigators a disconcerting feeling that something is amiss.



Lao Che has paid off several Chinese newspapers – of the filthiest and most muck-racking degree, the kind that are read out-loud to bystanders – to circulate stories about how Lao Che and Roy “Little Cart” are preparing an expedition to Sichuan in search of the Lost City of Jinsha. The articles state that they will first travel by riverboat to Chongqing, and then by train to Chengdu, before setting out on an expedition into the wilderness. These stories attract investors to invest in an archaeological expedition, but they also serve as bait for the investigators.

An investigation into Lao Che’s expedition would turn up records that he chartered the flat-bottomed “Qing Long” to depart Shanghai on July 15th, and the steam tramp known as “The Carp” to depart on July 16th. Neither of the riverboats have returned, but various contradictory eyewitness accounts will swear with absolute certainty **(Assess Honesty)** (a successful **Psychology** roll) that they saw Lao Che and one of his sons aboard either of the two riverboard headed for Chongqing.

**Keeper’s Note:** If the dates don’t match up quite right, massage them. The idea is that Lao Che’s expeditions should have a head start, and the investigators should be arriving in Chengdu some-time in August.

When the party is finally ready to board, read the following:

The Intrepido idles at its jetty, waiting for its final cargo – the party – to come aboard and set them off. The most charitable way to describe her would be as a contemptible wad of garbage; it must be at least 60 years old and it’s been badly maintained. The crew is mostly Chinese, with European officers. One such, Captain Andra Marcetti, greets the party as soon as they come on the ship.

“Welcome to my floating chalet,” he jokes, “the second of the same name. Oh, not half so fine as the first, the Intrepido! Terror of the Austrians. My ship. Sunk the Tegethoff at Ancona. That was me. Her spirit lives on, you know. We have the plaque and everything. Va’ffunculo Teodiscos!” He spits.

“Special service to Chongqing, no scheduled stops but for fuel and ration. We’ll be there in two weeks.”

In short, the crew of the Intrepido is a party of investigators for another game. If the Keeper wishes to create a moment of levity – either to balance previous events or to lull the party into a false sense of security – then it could be good to “play up” the Intrepido as a ship of fools; its officers are all Munchausen-esque iconoclasts, with melodramatic backstories full of heroism, grief, and adventure. Otherwise, the ship gets them there on time.





When they arrive in Chongqing, read the following:

Chongqing is like Shanghai but scaled down and worse in every way. It is muddy, hot and crowded by peasants who don't share your sense of psychological distance. The masses press up against you. After half-an-hour, you forget that you are in need of a hot bath.

Once they arrive in Chongqing, **Streetwise** (or **Oral History**) (a **successful INT** or **Chinese Language** roll), will reveal that Lao Che has been passing around lots of money – presumably the money he raised in Shanghai – and that he has been funding religious missionary activity; in particular, he has been funding missionary Laura Walker's work on behalf of the Methodist Church. Lao Che and his entourage stayed at the "Grand Hotel" in the city center. Laura Walker can also be found there.

The best, and perhaps only accommodations in Chongqing are to be found at the "Grand Hotel" a poorly managed but beautiful and newly constructed hotel. The Grand Hotel serves as a hub for all visiting foreigners, which includes anybody who is not from Chongqing and doesn't work a field. A hotel manager or bellhop can provide information on either Lao Che or Laura Walker with through **Reassurance**, **Flattery**, **Bargain**, or **Credit Rating** (an **Easy Persuade**, **Fast Talk**, **Charm** or **Credit Rating Roll**). The lobby is spacious and reasonably comfortable. The tea served at the Grand Hotel is exquisite, but most of the foreigners prefer the well-stocked bar.

"Mr. Ramsey? I have a letter addressed to you" - During one of the playtests of this scenario, the investigators repeated this scene at the hotel when they botched the Obligatory Encounter with a Cult scene below. The second time around, the investigators received letters from themselves on hotel stationery, written prior to their arrival in Chongqing. The replay of the scene marked the beginning of a hasty descent into madness, and the scene came off as downright eerie.

If the party locates and speaks to Laura Walker, she will come off as ditzy; she knows next-to-nothing about the situation in China or the source of her funding and is fixated on bringing as many adorable Chinese children to Sunday school as possible. She does, however, know that Lao Che's next stop is Chengdu, where her church has a regional base of operations. She has never been to Chengdu but knows that the Reverend J. Hudson Taylor and his "lovely" wife Margie have a sizable congregation.



# The Chongqing Express

**Date:** August 1929

**Location:** Train, Chongqing to Chengdu

**Lead Ins:**

•Breadcrumbs

**Purpose:** This scene foreshadows the threat of bubonic plague. Chengdu is about 200 miles from Chongqing as the crow flies. Although it is possible to travel from Chongqing to Chengdu on foot, the easiest way to get to Chengdu is by regional train. The regional train is in bad shape and subject to delays and stoppage; in all, it takes nearly a full day. The GM should describe the poor conditions and an environment in which a virulent disease would spread quickly. This scene assumes that the investigators elect to take the train; if the assumption is incorrect, alter the scene as necessary.



Investigators who buy tickets will enter the train, finding their "assigned seats" in cars crammed with people. They might sit around expecting a train conductor to come to punch their ticket, but one never arrives.

The train car is made out of rusted steel and wood; in many places, the varnish is peeling. The seats are little more than hard benches, less than a handspan wide. The car is already crowded and people are still cramming into the remaining spaces. An old lady with a scarf wrapped about her head coughs loudly, and a man in drab blue cotton clothing hocks spit onto the floor. The train starts moving, and surprisingly, people continue to climb aboard; nearby somebody is wriggling his way through a window.

Almost everybody on the train is either ethnically Chinese (Han) or a member of an Asian minority group, including Miao, Bai, and Uighur peoples. Caucasian people stick out like sore thumbs.

Although the room is limited and the beginning of the trip involved some jostling for space, the atmosphere is quite jolly. A neighbor opens a bottle of a strong sorghum spirit and offers you a sip. Steamed bread is being passed around by the other occupants in your car. A bold black rat runs over your foot, and under a bench, before stealing crumbs.

At some point, an adolescent beggar, covered in dirt and scabs will make his way into the investigators' car and will demand money from any investigators with a **Credit Rating** over 2 (a **Credit Rating** over 30%).

Unless the Keeper has other plans, this scene can be wrapped up in relatively short order.

**Lead Outs:**

•Obligatory Encounter with a Cult





# Obligatory Encounter with a Cult

**Date:** August 1929

**Location:** Chengdu Methodist Church  
**Lead Ins:**

•The Chongqing Express

**Purpose:** The Reverend Taylor spooks the investigators. Clues made available in this scene hint at Lao Che's end game. The purpose of this scene is not to pose a physical challenge or threat, but rather to weird-out the players and give them critical clues as to Lao Che's plan. As such, the Reverend Taylor and his wife Margie will welcome the investigators, offer them refuge and even help resupply their expedition; he only asks that they attend a sermon in return.



## Sermon by the Reverend Taylor

In 1929, Chengdu is the last vestige of civilization prior to setting out in search of Jinsha. It is a predominately Chinese city and the few foreigners who call Chengdu home are missionaries. The Methodist Church of Chengdu represents the last opportunity to refresh and resupply, and it just so happens that Lao Che has visited the Methodist Church (every time he has attempted to set the trap).

The Methodist Church of Chengdu, unfortunately, has fallen into a state of heretical degeneracy. Reverend Taylor and his wife Margie, have established relations and regularly consort with the Order of the Bloated Woman. Reverend Taylor has taken to preaching from a set of prayer books procured from the Church of Starry Wisdom and has converted his parish into a doomsday cult. In his brimstone-filled sermons, he has substituted a protestant God with an ancient Egyptian characterization of Nyarlathotep, the Virgin Mary with the Bloated Woman, and Lao Che as the second coming of Jesus. Keepers should feel free to adjust the Reverend's heretical theology as they see fit.

The Reverend is dressed from head to toe in a black frock and hood that looks more Greek Orthodox than Methodist. He has a stern face and strokes his mighty beard before launching into his sermon.

"Brothers! Sisters! We welcome new guests into the house of God! We offer them refuge from a world of sin and sickness! And a world of sin and sickness it is!"

"It is already foretold in Revelations that those with the mark of the beast will suffer a break out of ugly and painful sores. Plagues to rid the Earth of the unfaithful. We must prepare ourselves!"

"Nay, Brothers and Sisters, the end-times are near! I have looked to the Heavens and I know the stars are right! The prophet has returned. He has walked among us! The resurrected Son of God has graced this Church with his very own presence!"





The crowd gasps with excitement and enthusiasm.

“From Revelations 1: ‘I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending! What thou seest, I beseech thee to record in writing, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Chengdu and unto Chongqing, unto Lijiang and unto Dunhuang, unto Shanghai and unto Beijing. And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And being turned, I saw seven seals: the seal of the White Lion of the West and of the Black Turtle of the North; the seal of the Azure Dragon of the East and of the Red Peacock of the South; the seal of Heaven, of Earth and of Hell. And in the midst of the seven seals, the Chosen One and the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot. And though he was old, his eyes were as a flame of fire. And his feet like unto fine brass as if they burned in a furnace. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp sword. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, and I hold the keys of hell and of death.’ Amen.”

“And from Revelations 15: ‘And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And they sing the song of the Black Goat, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest. And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.”

“The ‘End of Days’ is upon us, and a final judgment will be made.”

**Theology** (a **successful Know roll**) provides that the quotes from Revelations are close to known publications of the New Testament, but some liberties have been taken, and some odd words have been inserted. For example, the seven cities in all known versions are not Chinese cities. The seven seals have never before been described with Chinese cosmological concepts. The reference to a “lamb” has been replaced with a reference to a “black goat”.

The emphatic Reverend’s sermon picks up fervor. Members of the congregation stand and sway in religious ecstasy, while some are seemingly possessed, writhing on the floor and speaking in tongues.

“And how do I know these Revelations to be true? By the hand of the prophet Enoch, the seventh from Adam, and the grandfather of Moses!”

“In the Book of Enoch, it is written: The Lotus Eaters perch on the edge of the Nephilim, watching all of time fold and unfold before them. No act, no speech, no sin goes unobserved. They have been watching over the ‘End of Days’ for all of time. They wait for the Chosen One to cometh with the mother goat of ten thousand to execute judgment upon all, and to destroy all the ungodly: And to consume the flesh of the ungodly and destroy all words that the sinners have spoken against Him!”

**Theology** (a **successful Know roll**) provides that the Book of Enoch is a Jewish text, but non-canonical to Methodists and nearly all Christians and Jews. A **Theology** spend (a **successful Hard Know roll**) would, in addition to granting the player limited narrative control, provide that Sir Walter Raleigh, in his History of the World (written in 1616 while imprisoned in the Tower of London), makes the curious assertion the Book of Enoch “which contained the course of the stars, their names and motions” had been discovered in Sheba, Ethiopia. In 1906, and again in 1912, Robert Henry Charles published a version of the Book of Enoch, based on Ethiopic text, seeming to prove Sir Walter Raleigh’s much earlier assertions.

### Discussions with a Man of the Cloth

After the sermon, Reverend Taylor, his wife, and other members of the flock are happy to answer questions and enter into discussion with the investigators. They are true believers and **Assess Honesty** (a **successful Psychology roll**) will prove as much.

[CORE CLUE]: If the investigators ask about and describe Lao Che, the Reverend will identify him as “the Prophet”, indicating that he was last in the Church a week ago, and a week before, and will most certainly return. The Reverend never refers to him as “Lao Che”. To the Reverend, he is only “the Prophet” or “the Promised One”.

We call our congregation the ‘Watchers’ because we wait, we hold watchful vigil, for the coming of the ‘Chosen One’, the ‘Messiah’, the ‘Son of Man’. Though



we have sinned, we seek redemption in our vigil.

"The Prophet has been and will be resurrected."

"The Prophet seeks the golden lands of Jinsha, where he will take communion with the Lotus Eaters."

If asked about the location of Jinsha, the Reverend does not have any firsthand knowledge; he may indicate that the Prophet resupplied at the Church and headed west. He took enough food and water for about two weeks' time.

With a **Theology** point spend (a **successful Hard Know roll** or **Persuade roll**), the Reverend Taylor will identify the Lotus Eaters as one of the three tribes of the San Xing Dui. He will further describe them as 'peaceful visionaries' and 'navigators of the seas of time'.

If the investigators ask about the San Xing Dui, the Reverend will answer, "You know the origin of that term, don't you? It refers to the first people to receive the teachings of God. Three stars, the father, the mother, and the holy ghost, fell from the Heavens, to transmit the word of God. These people are the direct descendants of angels."

The Church maintains a basement bunker, wherein the Prophet and true believers will wait out the apocalypse and the wrath of God.

If the investigators ask the Reverend about the Order of the Bloated Woman, his response depends on how the Investigators dealt with the Bloated Woman in the scenario "There is This One Girl".

If the investigators did not align with the Bloated Woman, he will respond: "We know of the Bloated Woman and her Order. The Order is a branch of the Knights Templar of old. It traversed the Himalayas and met up with one of the three tribes of the San Xing Dui in Yunnan, where it established a monastery. We regularly consort with the Order; they are faithful."

If the investigators initiated the expedition at the request of the avatar of the Bloated Woman, wittingly or unwittingly, the Reverend says, "You are with the Bloated Woman, I have heard. Revelations 2, 'thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication, and she repented not.' You would do well to leave her influence and repent."

Reverend Taylor never uses the word "Nyarlathotep", as he believes it is blasphemous to utter the true name of God. Any investigator who mentions aloud "Nyarlathotep" will not be received well; **Assess Honesty** and **Theology** (a **Hard Psychology roll**) together would reveal that the

Reverend Taylor thinks it is a sin to speak the true name of God and is fearful of retribution.

Despite Reverend Taylor's extensive knowledge of theology, he knows nothing of the "Drug of the Liao" and has never heard the term "Peacock's Eye".

The basement of the Church, accessible outside the Church, is a brick and mortar basement stocked with water, food, cots, and other supplies, including a very expensive field radio. The basement also includes a small bookshelf, containing various worn bibles, hymnals, prayer books published by the Church of Starry Wisdom and a copy of The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament, copyright 1912, by Robert Henry Charles. The text by RH Charles includes a version of the Book of Enoch based on Ethiopic text. The basement is not locked but can be barred from the inside. The Reverend Taylor or his wife, Margie, would be willing to show the basement to the investigators if they ask politely. An attempt to use **Intimidation** on the Reverend or his wife sours the relationship. Neither the Reverend nor his wife is much of a physical threat to the investigators, but their entire congregation would likely form into a mob and tear the investigators apart if enraged.

#### From Chengdu to Jinsha

The trail to Jinsha runs a little less than 40km to the West of Chengdu. The path to the entrance of Jinsha is generally accessible by foot and pack mule. Investigators traveling with Dr. Bones would have no problem finding the path to Jinsha. Additionally, an investigator with **Outdoorsman** (a **Survival** of 30% or higher) and the annotated copy of Volume 3 of the Chronicle of Huayang could find the trail to Jinsha without assistance. If the investigators are not accompanied by Dr. Bones or lack an annotated copy of Volume 3 of the Chronicles of Huayang, then they will need to either hire a local guide using **Bargain** or a **Credit Rating** spend (a **successful Credit Rating roll**) or make an **Outdoorsman** spend (a **successful Survival roll**), and narrate exactly how it is that they found the tracks of Lao Che's expedition on the outskirts of Chengdu.

Investigators looking into Lao Che's activities in Chengdu will turn up that he outfitted a wagon and mule team for his expedition, and bought maps of the surrounding area. Lao Che did not need the maps to find Jinsha but wanted to leave more clues to further bait the investigators.

#### Lead Outs:

- A Hike in the Mountains



### The Reverend J. Hudson Taylor

Health 5, Stability 5, Sanity 2, Flee 1, Intimidation 2, Languages 4, Mythos 1, Occult 6, Reassurance 2, Theology 6, Scuffling 2, Weapons 4

Hit Threshold: 3

Alertness: +1

(Cane (+0), Kick (-1), Punch (-2))

### The Reverend J. Hudson Taylor

STR 50 CON 50 SIZ 50 DEX 40 INT 60  
APP 50 POW 60 EDU 60 SAN - HP 10  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP 12

Brawl: 50%, unarmed 1D3

Cane: 70%, 1D4

Dodge: 20%

Armor: None

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 5%, Intimidation 30%, Occult 80%, Psychology 50%, Spot Hidden 50%

Language: English 60%, Latin 30%, Chinese 15%

### Margie Taylor

Health 7, Stability 4, Sanity 3, Flee 1, Assess Honesty 1, Languages 4, Occult 4, Reassurance 4, Religion 4, Scuffling 4

Hit Threshold: 3

Alertness: +2

(Kick (-1), Punch (-2))

### Margie Taylor

STR 50 CON 60 SIZ 50 DEX 50 INT 60  
APP 50 POW 50 EDU 60 SAN - HP 11  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP 10

Brawl: 70%, unarmed 1D3

Dodge: 25%

Armor: None

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 2%, Occult 60%, Psychology 50%, Spot Hidden 70%

Languages: English 60%, Latin 30%, Chinese 30%

### Typical Cultist

Athletics 8, Health 5, Occult 4, Scuffling 3, Stability 3, Sanity 2, Weapons 3

Alertness +0

(Kick (-1), Punch (-2))

### Typical Cultist

STR 60 CON 50 SIZ 50 DEX 50 INT 40  
APP 50 POW 50 EDU 40 SAN - HP 10  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP 10

Brawl: 70%, unarmed 1D3

Dodge: 25%

Armor: None

Skills: Occult 50%, Spot Hidden 25%, Throw 50%,

Languages: Chinese 40%, English 25%





# A Hike in the Mountains

**Date:** August 1929

**Location:** Near Qing Cheng Shan, Sichuan, China

**Lead Ins:**

- Obligatory Encounter with a Cult

**Purpose:** The investigators experience déjà vu, thus tying the first scene in the scenario to this scene. The investigators discover that the “Peacock’s Eye” is a field of black lotus growing in a hidden grotto. The Lotus Eaters are introduced.



## Déjà vu

The song of the cicada is a constant, alien cacophony that permeates the thick and humid air. Sweat drips down the side of your cheek and your cotton shirt clings to your back. The Sichuan autumn is warmer than expected and the hike into the mountains has been even more arduous than originally anticipated. You have been heading in a westerly direction and the sun is directly overhead. You are near the top of a small mountain ridge when the guide puts his hand up, “What is this?” he says pointing to a toppled stone marker laying on the path.

The guide traces his fingers over the ancient script carved into the stone, “this place is Jinsha, under the protection of the Empire of the Three Star Mounds

people. Be warned of the Curse of the Peacock’s Eye.” The guide’s face now beams with excitement, but you feel a foreboding sense of danger; you can’t shake the feeling that you have been here before and now you are wishing that you had spent a few more days in the university library preparing for this expedition in search of the fabled City of Golden Sands.

The rocky path winds up towards a space between two ridges. The guide quickens the pace now.

As you cross over a small mountain ridge, you can see a ravine wedged between mountain faces. You have an elevated view and are looking down upon a marvelous site: a field of black flowers on mounds of yellow pollen. The field is the size of a cricket pitch; the black-blue, iridescent blooms remind you of a peacock’s plummage.

“This is it!” Your guide announces. “A field of black lotus on golden sands! Jinsha!”

**Outdoorsman** or **Evidence Collection** (a **successful Survival** or **Spot Hidden** roll) will find various clues that Lao Che’s expedition came through here. For example, an investigator might find fresh wagon ruts or a matchstick that was chewed on by Roy “Little Cart”. An **Outdoorsman** spend or an **Evidence Collection** spend (a **successful Hard Survival** or **Spot Hidden** roll) will find evidence that Lao Che’s expedition has come through here twice. There is also no evidence that the expedition has returned using the same path.

An **Outdoorsman** spend or an **Evidence Collection** spend (a **successful Hard Survival** or **Spot Hidden** roll) could result in a particular investigator discovering evidence that he or she had previously been on this trail. This kind of revelation requires a 5-point **Stability** test (**Sanity** roll 1/1D8). If necessary, Keepers should use hard drivers to keep investigators following the path of Lao Che into Jinsha.







Determine the time the party arrives at the Bridges of the Azure Dragon; if it is daytime, the Lotus Eaters can be seen relaxing in the black lotus field; if it is nighttime, the moon is full, bright and seems to shine directly on the field of blooming black lotus.

**Keeper's Note:** Keepers should insert details, evidence, and clues that would have been left behind from the first instance the investigators were here in Scene 1, "Flashback: Expedition in Search of the Peacock's Eye". The investigators do not remember being here before, though the players do. There is no need to go through every trap, once it becomes obvious how this scene is tied to the first scene.

The black lotus field is encircled by a great river that moves in an almost imperceptibly slow fashion. The surface of the river is a silver mirror with an occasional ripple. The golden field of pollen on the other side of the bridge is occupied by the shapes and shadows of men in the distance. If they see you, they pay you no heed. The blooming lotus gives off an iridescent shine in the [sunlight/moonlight]; each bloom is the eye of a perfect peacock feather.

During the first playtest, the Keeper determined that Jinsha is hidden by an eldritch magical vale that can only be pierced by those in possession of a piece of meteorite. This determination explains why other explorers have not yet stumbled upon Jinsha and helps to tie the scenario "Let Sleeping Dogs Lie" to this scenario via the amulet known as the "Meteorite of Heaven".

## The Lotus Eaters

An elderly member of the tribe stands before you; he is leaning on his walking stick and smiles at you with a mouth full of sharp teeth. It looks like he took files to his teeth and then forgot to brush them his entire life. He is naked, save for a loincloth and a leather bag strapped over his shoulder and boney chest. He is about a head-length shorter than the shortest member of your group; his browned and leathery skin is the result of being exposed to the elements. There is a gleam in his eye, and he seems to either be in a permanent state of joy or he is inwardly laughing at some joke he has not shared with anybody, ever.

The Lotus Eaters are a tribe of "benevolent" Tcho Tcho who tend the black lotus fields and consume the black lotus pollen, also known as the Drug of the Liao. The Lotus Eaters are able to consume the Drug of Liao and then "navigate time" by folding it backwards or forwards.

Generally speaking, it is nearly impossible to kill or destroy them, as they are able to "see" many different futures and will act in self-preservation if necessary. Having said that, they have little to no interest in most worldly affairs, such as murdering and eating the investigators. The Lotus Eaters are considered neutral. The Lotus Eaters are ambivalent towards Lao Che, the Bloated Woman, and the investigators. The Lotus Eaters revere Nyarlathotep, but do not fear him or actively do his bidding.

**Keeper's Note:** More vicious Keepers might make these Tcho Tcho a little more malign. One way to do that is for the Lotus Eaters to require a "payment" in the form of a quest or the completion of a "ceremony" prior to offering to fold time. Perhaps the Tcho Tcho require each investigator to engage in an act of cannibalism before they will agree to assist?

Before they sequestered themselves and became those who watch over Jinsha, they were effectively controlled by the Great Old Ones. Perhaps their only other self-interest is to remain free of the bonds of the Great Old Ones.

In many ways, the Lotus Eaters see themselves as agents of or an extension of Yog-Sothoth, the Keeper of the Gates. There are enough Lotus Eaters in the tribe that at least one of them speaks enough of an investigator's language to effectively communicate. They are willing to answer the investigators' questions, though at times, enigmatically. A conversation with a Lotus Eater might sound something like this:

•Q: "Who are you?"

•A: "I am a Lotus Eater. We wait and watch. We tend the fields of time."

•Q: "Did Lao Che come this way?"

•A: "Yes, he has come this way many times; we sent him back to the year 1855."

•Q: "Will you send us back to 1855?"

•A: "Yes."

•Q: "Will you bring us back?"

•A: "If you ask us too."

•Q: "What is the curse of the Peacock's Eye?"

•A: "It is a trap."

•Q: "Can you send us to the future?"

•A: "Yes, but you are already in the trap."



•Q: "How do we get out of the trap?"

•A: "You must first go to the past. After that, there are a multitude of paths to freedom."

•Q: "How does the World end?"

•A: "We have seen it many times."

The Lotus Eaters are willing to send the investigators anywhere they want to go in time, but if some version of the investigators doesn't arrive in 1929 infected with the plague, Lao Che will reset the trap. Lao Che's plan gives him an infinite number of chances in 1929.

If the investigators follow Lao Che to 1855 on their own accord, proceed to the next scene, "Folding Time".

If the investigators ask the Lotus Eaters to send them to any time other than 1855 or earlier, fade to black, and disjointedly "flashback" to the scene "Folding Time". Lao Che has reset the trap another iteration or two until some "instance" of the investigators followed his trail back to 1855; feel free to retcon small events that occurred in scenes 2 through 4.

It is possible to ask the Lotus Eaters to send the investigators to any time before the spread of the Third Pandemic, in a bid to stop the Bloated Woman (Y'Golovac) from ever spreading the plague in the first place. Successfully completing this approach would pre-empt Lao Che's devious plan; Lao Che would never get the chance to set the trap, or reset the trap because there would have been no plague in the first place. The "instance" of the investigators completing this mission would simply cease to exist, the next instance of the investigators in 1929 would have no memory of events as they unfolded in the campaign, and the campaign would effectively conclude. A bid to stop the Bloated Woman in 1855 is deserving of an entire game session or scenario and is not included here with "The Sassoon Files".

Lead Outs:

•Folding Time



# Folding Time

**Location:** Jinsha

**Lead Ins:**

- A Hike in the Mountains

**Purpose:** The investigators experience a drug-induced, Lovecraftian panorama before being delivered to another time.



The Lotus Eater smiles at you as he reaches into his leather bag, pulling out a bronze and glass contraption that looks like a set of aviator goggles. As he straps the goggles over his eyes, you just now notice that his leather bag is made from stitched human faces. Before the thought even registers he blows a yellow dust into your face.

The Keeper should now describe the effects of folding time as he sees fit. What unearthly horrors and non-Euclidean beasts do the investigators experience before being delivered to the past? Be sure that the investigators suffer appropriate losses to their Sanity upon witnessing any eldritch horrors.

You have arrived. If this is the year 1855, Jinsha looks no different than 1929. The fields of black on gold remain; the Lotus Eaters mill about the area. Your navigator gives you a toothy smile and then points up to the sky. In the distance pillars of black smoke reach for the sky. Something in Chengdu is burning.

Lao Che's trail leads back to Chengdu; the Lotus Eaters say as much, the columns of smoke evidence this fact, and **Outdoorsman** or **Evidence Collection** (a **successful Survival** or **Spot Hidden** roll) confirm. At any time after coming into contact with the infectious agents of the plague, investigators may return to these fields and ask the Lotus Eaters to send them forward in time. The Lotus Eaters are happy to oblige. As discussed below, investigators can go back to 1929 (a bad idea) or into the future, where a cure for the plague can be found.

**Lead Outs:**

- The Third Pandemic







# The Third Pandemic

**Date:** 1855

**Location:** Chengdu

**Lead Ins:**

•Folding Time

**Purpose:** The investigators witness the horrors of the “third pandemic”, before becoming infected with bubonic plague themselves. The investigators deduce that they are now snared within Lao Che’s trap.



The trail from Jinsha delivers you to the base of the mountains. Pillars of black, oily smoke rise up from Chengdu; what could be burning?

**Outdoorsman or Evidence Collection** (a successful **Survival or Spot Hidden** roll) find evidence that Lao Che’s expedition has come this way.

The streets of Chengdu are relatively empty, save for a few brazen rats and a bloated body in the street. Some of the residents take the opportunity to steal a peek from out of the shadows and from behind the curtains of closed windows. Groups of dirty peasants are cowering in the alleys.

If the bloated body is examined by an investigator with **Medicine** (a successful **Medicine** roll), they would guess that the body is perhaps a couple of days old. If the corpse is turned over, probed, prodded or otherwise disturbed, it will become obvious that the corpse is flea infested; as the examining investigators will suffer flea bites.

About 20 meters away, a family of merchants pushes a cart down the road. They all have boils and open sores on their faces and arms; an old woman with the caravan is coughing into a bloody rag. A child is laid out in the back of the straw-lined cart, she moans with each traversed stone and bump.

An inquiry by an investigator with **Medicine** (a successful **Medicine** or **INT** roll) would suggest that the family is infected by the plague. Such an investigator examining any member of the family would be able to confirm the diagnosis, but not until after the old woman coughs phlegm onto the examining investigator.

The pillars of black smoke come from mounds of burning bodies; the smell of burning flesh is layered over the stench of rotting corpses. The sounds of chanting men and woman emanate from a garden near the city center.

At the center of the garden is an 8-story pagoda. In the shadow of the pagoda is a recently built rampart supporting a large sacrificial alter supported by several bronzed four-legged animals. Figures in crimson robes and bug-eyed bronze masks chant. Men and women, who are obviously very sick, crowd the area, with some jostling for position in a make-shift line. Near the rampart is a hastily dug pit filled with hot coals and smoldering bodies. The priests are sacrificing willing supplicants and tossing them into the pit. This is the third such pit giving off a foul pillar of smoke.

As the investigators approach the pagoda, their observations reveal the following;

•**Theology** (a successful **Occult** or **Know** roll) reveals to the investigators a ceremony incorporating Buddhist or quasi-Buddhist elements. The pagoda itself is the center of Buddhist worship. The ceremony appears to be leveraged on the idea that the chanting priests can offer the supplicants a rebirth into the next life, one that will be happier, healthier and more prosperous.

•**Archaeology or Anthropology** (a successful **Archaeology** or **Anthropology** roll) provides that the ceremonial masks were fashioned by the San Xing Dui. Masked rituals played a vital role in the San Xing Dui culture and would have been worn by a person impersonating a dead relative. The mask is called “shi” (尸), which literally means “corpse”. The person wearing the mask is a reminder of the ancestor to whom the sacrifice is being offered. If Dr. Bones is present, he would suggest that the mask’s oversized eyes and open mouths are designed to induce hallucinations among the supplicants.

•The Priests believe that are doing a community service. They only sacrifice those who asked to be sacrificed and



will not put up much resistance to any investigators who attempt to fight them.

•If asked about Lao Che in **Language (Chinese)** (a **successful Chinese Language roll**), the Priests will willingly say that he asked to be “sacrificed”, burned reduced into ashes, and put into a funeral urn. **Assess Honesty** (a **successful Psychology roll**) confirms the accuracy of these comments.

•The Priests, under express instructions from Lao Che, have hidden his funeral urn on the 8th floor of the pagoda. With a 1-point spend in **Interrogation** (a **successful Intimidation roll**), the Priests will divulge this information.

Lao Che left one of his 4 Seas Gang foot soldiers to defend his urn; this foot soldier has contracted the plague and is suffering a fever and sore lymph nodes, both early stage signs of an infection. The foot soldier will fight to the death anybody attempting to disturb the funeral urn. As he is not thinking clearly, his strategy is to push or throw assailants off the balcony of the pagoda; if successful, he will in all likelihood also be pulled over and tumble to his death.

**Keeper's Note:** If the Bloated Woman (Y'Golonac) has accompanied the investigators back to 1855, it will fully manifest at the sacrificial site.

Lead Outs:

•Resolution

#### Cultist Priest

Athletics 8, Health 5, Occult 2, Scuffling 3, Stability 9, Sanity 0, Weapons 3

Hit Threshold 4

Alertness -1

(Kick (-1), Punch (-2), Knives (-1), Chinese long swords (Jian) (+1))

#### Cultist Priest

STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 50 DEX 50 INT 60  
APP 50 POW 60 EDU 50 SAN - HP 11  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP 11

Jian: 70%, 1D8+1  
Knife: 70% 1D4  
Brawl: 70%, unarmed 1D3  
Dodge: 25%  
Armor: None

Skills: Occult 30%  
Languages: Chinese 50%

#### Plague-Infected 4 Seas Gang Foot Soldier

Athletics 5, Health 5, Scuffling 6, Weapons 4, Fire Arms 3

Hit Threshold 3

[Fists (-2), Kicks (-1), Light pistols (0)]

#### Plague-Infected 4 Seas Gang Foot Soldier

STR 50 CON 30 SIZ 50 DEX 50 INT 40  
APP 40 POW 40 EDU 30 SAN 50 HP 8  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP 8

Brawl: 60%, unarmed 1D3  
Handgun: 55%, luger 1D10  
Dodge: 25%  
Armor: None

Skills: Throw 60%, Jump 60%, Intimidate 50%, Psychology 20%, Spot Hidden 25%  
Languages: Chinese 30%, Shanghainese 30%

Burning Plague Hospital



# Resolution

**Date:** 1855

**Location:** Chengdu

**Lead Ins:**

- Folding Time
- (Optional) A Future Cure

**Purpose:** The investigators bring resolution to this scenario.



By this scene, the investigators are in something of a predicament. If they do nothing, they will eventually succumb to the plague. If they ask the Lotus Eaters to take them back to 1929, they will carry the plague with them. The only good news is that after going to 1855 and becoming infected with the plague, it is possible to engineer solutions to disrupt Lao Che's plan. If at the time of Lao Che's last resurrection, Lao Che believes that his plan has worked, he will not reset the trap. This gives ingenious investigators a chance to trick Lao Che into thinking his planned worked (by the spread of the plague in 1929, the arrival of the investigators in 1855, for example), and then acting to thwart his ultimate goals.

Consider the following possible outcomes:

- The investigators travel back to 1929. They bring back with them a hypervirulent strain of the bubonic plague. It will kill them in short order, and then go on to kill almost everybody in the entire world. (Lose)

- The investigators obtain Lao Che's ashes and scatter them to the wind. They make the ultimate heroic sacrifice, living out the last few days of their lives amidst the ashes of Chengdu, tended to by the Lotus Eaters until their last breath. Lao Che is conclusively defeated. (Win, Pyrrhic Victory?)

- Investigators obtain Lao Che's ashes and scatter them to the wind. They travel back to 1929, bringing back a hypervirulent strain of the bubonic plague, killing almost everybody in the entire world. (Lose, Lose, as Lao Che is not there to gloat.)

- Investigators succumb to the plague in 1855, never returning to 1929. Their last vision is of Lao Che being resurrected in 1929. (Lose)

- The investigators use the Lotus Eaters to go to the future where a cure to the plague, in the form of antibiotics, is easily made available. Thereafter they return to 1929 to confront Lao Che. (Win)

- The investigators convince the cultist priests to kill them in sacrifice and co-mingle their ashes with Lao Che. The investigators are revived at the same time Lao Che is revived. A fight ensues, but the investigators overcome Lao Che and his necromantic assistant or son. See below for statistics on Lao Che. (Win)

Other outcomes are possible; it is up to the Keeper to fairly adjudicate the decisions and actions of the investigators. If the scene Folding Time is an example of railroading, then the scene Resolution is the exact opposite. This scene is proof that the investigators are masters of their own fate, and that the players, role-playing as the investigators, get to decide how the story ends. Keepers are instructed to allow the players to narrate how this story ends.

Plague Victims in North China, 1911







### "Lao Che"

Lu Xun (陆逊), age unknown, necromancer

Health 16, Stability 10, Sanity 0, Assess Honesty 4, Athletics 8, Flee 12, Scuffling 8, Firearms 8, Mythos 3, Occult 10, Chemistry 8, Anthropology 4, Archeology 2

Hit Threshold: 4

Alertness +4

Weapon: +0 Mauser pistol; deadly poison

Spells: Cloud Memory, Contact Ghoul, Contact Tcho-Tcho, Resurrection, Reverse Resurrection, Shrivelling

### "Lao Che"

Lu Xun (陆逊), age unknown, necromancer

STR 50 CON 100 SIZ 50 DEX 60 INT 90

APP 60 POW 90 EDU 80 SAN - HP 15

DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 18

Brawl: 60% unarmed 1D3

Dodge: 40%

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 30%, Intimidate 80%, Occult 90%, Psychology 50%, Science: Chemistry 80%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 20%,

Languages: Chinese 80%, Shanghainese 80%, English 50%

Spells: Cloud Memory, Contact Ghoul, Contact Tcho-Tcho, Resurrection, Reverse Resurrection, Shrivelling



## (Optional) A Future Cure

**Date:** 1949

**Location:** Sichuan, Near Jinsha

**Lead Ins:**

- Folding Time
- Resolution

**Purpose:** If the game is “Pulpist” and the Keeper is feeling generous, the investigators are given a chance to cure their plague infections by traveling to the future, where penicillin has been discovered. This scene assumes that the investigators ask the Lotus Eaters to send them into the future where they can obtain a cure.



A conversation with a Lotus Eater regarding a cure for the plague might go something like this:

- Q: “Do we find a cure for the plague?”
- A: “Yes.”
- Q: “Can you send us to time where we can be cured?”
- A: “Yes. I will navigate forward in time; for you, the cure is on the road to Chengdu.”

The Lotus Eater take the investigators to December 1949. Once again, should the investigators witness any cosmic horrors in the process, their mental conditions should suffer appropriately. As the investigators remain in relatively the same physical location (Jinsha), they will need to hike the trail back.

After the plague-infected investigators stumble down the pathway, narrate the following:

It's difficult to walk straight while vomiting; blurry vision and explosive diarrhea do not help. Wounds have turned black and pestilent, and death patiently waits.

Out of the bushes jump uniformed men with impressive rifles. They shout in Chinese, “get on the ground!”; they wear the uniform of the “Republic of China”. Laying on the ground sounds like a great idea.

Investigators with the Soldier occupation or **Military Science (Academic)** (any military occupation) will know that the soldiers are well equipped with American made weapons, but that morale among the unit is low and the soldiers are clearly exhausted.

The soldiers are indeed the infantry of the Republic of China; their leader is Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, and they reluctantly do their job. The investigators are dragged or carried to a nearby blockhouse. The soldiers are willing to answer a few questions, to the extent that they understand the question and giving the answers do not generally interfere with their ability to do their job.

### Wearry Soldier

Athletics 7, Health 6, Scuffling 6, Weapons 4, Firearms 6, Stealth 6  
Hit Threshold 3

[Fists (-2), Kicks (-1), M-1 Rifles (+1)]





### Weary Soldier

STR 50 CON 40 SIZ 50 DEX 50 INT 50  
APP 50 POW 50 EDU 50 SAN 50 HP 9  
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP 10

Brawl: 70%, unarmed 1D3

Rifle: 70% M-1 2D6+4

Dodge: 50%

Armor: None

Skills: Climb 50%, Throw 60%, Jump 50%, Intimidate 20%, Psychology 20%, Spot Hidden 25%

Language: Chinese 50%

Small mud and brick buildings sink into the wooded hillside beneath steep mountains. The soldiers drag near-dead bodies past sandbags and a machine gun nest and into one of the pillboxes. The insides of the pillbox are bare; nothing but dirt floors and a roll of barbed wire in the corner.

The investigators are laid out on a bare dirt floor. Although they are not guarded, they are too weak to escape. A few minutes will pass before Captain Cao Gaofeng enters the pillbox, those minutes will feel like an eternity. Captain Gao wears the scar-covered face of a veteran; his epaulets mark him as an officer.

Captain Cao will question the investigators, with a focus on finding out if the investigators are Communists spies or sympathizers and how they came to be here. If the answers are not satisfactory, Captain Cao may resort to torture. He was trained at the Whampoa Military Academy (黄埔校) and many of his instructors were Russian. He speaks Mandarin Chinese, Russian and pigeon English.

Noticing that the investigators are clearly suffering from a nasty sickness, Captain Cao will order the soldiers who dragged in the investigators to dispense penicillin shots, which will cure the plague. These soldiers are well stocked with penicillin, which they received

from American troops who assisted in accepting the surrender of Japanese forces at the end of World War II, 4 years earlier. The investigators will be able to see the soldiers getting injections; investigators with **Medicine** (a successful **Medicine** roll) will deduce that this is a medical cure for serious infections.

Captain Cao is not at all susceptible to **Flattery** but given the beating Captain Cao and his men have taken from the Communists, a 1-point **Reassurance** (a successful **Psychoanalysis** roll) spend goes a very, very long way.

Captain Cao can also be influenced by name-dropping (Dilettante Occupation or **Credit Rating**) (a **Credit Rating** above 70%), but name-dropping can be particularly problematic, as many allegiances and relationships have changed dramatically over the past two decades. For example, Captain Cao will have known Zhou En Lai on a personal basis during his time at Whampoa Military Academy, but as of October Zhou En Lai is a preeminent Communist figure and the first Premier of the newly formed People's Republic of China. Additionally, Zhang Xueliang (a source of stability for Tang Baohu), is currently under house arrest for kidnapping Chiang Kai-shek in 1936, and Zhang Guotao (a source of stability for Liu Bingtie) was completely marginalized and kicked out of the Communist party in 1937, defected to the KMT, and as of this scene, Zhang Goutao has just fled to Hong Kong, where he remains in exile until his death in 1979. Captain Cao is attempting to evaluate allegiances that are murky at best, and in many cases completely turned on their heads.

Investigators who obtain penicillin shots begin to feel the positive effects within the hour and will stage a strong recovery. Those who do not will die the next morning. However, Investigators who recover and remain in this time and place will need to deal with the Communists forces that are staging a sneak attack at midnight. Moreover, Investigators who did not get penicillin shots will have another shot at negotiating with soldiers for a cure. The People's Liberation Army just spent the last two days climbing the other side of the mountain and will launch their attack from above. This attack will be successful and will wipe out all of Captain Cao's KMT forces.







# 坚决打倒克苏鲁帝国主义

(Chinese Communist Propaganda Poster: "Resolutely Overthrow Cthulhu Imperialism")



Liu Bingtie

Liu Bingtie comes from a rich family. He was educated in Shanghai and became enamored with the left-wing nationalist causes. He wants to be part of the force that will bring equality to China while liberating the land from foreign imperialists.

Bingtie grew up in the International District of Shanghai and has been able to straddle two worlds; the world of the rich and the world of the intellectual leaders of the revolution. Although initially educated in a foreign missionary school, Bingtie attended Peking University in 1917, where he became friends with Zhang Guotao, future leader of the Communist Party (and he was also acquainted with Mao Zedong, who was working as a librarian in Peking University at the time). Liu participated in the May 4th student movement. However, after graduation, Liu was forced to return to Shanghai to help run his family's businesses.

Many of Liu Bingtie's friends have been imprisoned or executed by right-wing forces. Bingtie used his family connections, as well as connection to Victor Sassoon, to avoid a similar fate, thus far. However, his friend Zhang Guotao was himself arrested by Soviet Communists for failure to adhere to party policy.

Liu currently interacts with elites within the International Settlement. He downplays his youthful indiscretion and connections with the communists. However, he secretly keeps in contact with Zhang Guotao, providing reports via a handler.

Occupation:

Dilettante / Dilettante

Drive / Trait:

Arrogance / Arrogance

## Pillars of Sanity / Ideology:

- Unification of China

- Communism

- Charity

Source of Stability / Significant People:

- Victor Sassoon (friend)

- Zhang Guotao (friend)

- Liu Bingrong (father)

[illegible]



## Liu Bingtie

Sanity: 8 Stability: 10 Health: 10

Occupational Benefits: You may use your Credit Rating pool to call on personal connections in any field of endeavor. These contacts will generally be relatives, old schoolfellows, and similar people of your social class.

### Investigative Abilities

#### Academic Abilities

History: 4

Language: 1 (English, French)

Library use: 6

Occult: 6

#### Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty: 2

Bargain: 2

Credit Rating: 9

Intimidation: 4

Streetwise: 4

#### Technical Abilities

Outdoorsman: 3

### General Abilities

Athletics: 8

Firearms: 8

First Aid: 2

Preparedness: 2

Riding 2

Scuffling: 8

## Liu Bingtie

HP: (10) Sanity: (60) Luck: (60) MP: (12)

STR 40      DEX 50      INT 60  
CON 50      APP 70      POW 60  
SIZ 50      EDU 80      Move 8

### Skills:

Art/Craft (Forgery) 25

Charm 50

Credit Rating 60

Dodge 25

Firearms (Handgun) 45

History 50

Language (Own) Chinese 80

Language (Other) English 50

Language (Other) Japanese 20

Language (Other) Russian 20

Library Use 60

Psychology 20

Ride 25

Science: Cryptography 66

Sleight of Hand 40

Stealth 50

Cashmere dress suit

Fashionable fedora

Silk batwing bowtie

Overcoat, dress

Italian dress shoes

Leather billfold

Gold pocket watch

Model P08 Luger

Cash: \$300      Spending Level: \$50      Assets: \$30,000

DMG Bonus: none Dodge: 25 Build: 0

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	25	12	5	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
Model P08 Luger	45	22	9	1d10	15	1(3)	8	99



Brian Strye

I grew up on a small farm in the Texas hill country. I took a job working at an airfield in Hondo, Texas, and would eventually learn to fly crop dusters. When the Great War came along, the U.S. Army started using the airfield for training pilots. That's when I decided to volunteer for the British Royal Air Corp. I served with the No. 70 Squadron Royal Flying Corp during the Great War.

I met Victor Sassoon, another ace, during the Great War. We had a friendly rivalry. I won more than a dozen victories, earning the Distinguished Flying Cross (UK) and the Croix de Guerre (Belgium). Victor did pretty good until he got shot down. He survived, but he will forever walk with a cane.

I also got shot down one dusk, and I had to ditch in the ocean. It was a long night before my rescue, and I'm pretty sure I saw something otherworld take down the first rescue vessel. I haven't been the same since.

After the war, things haven't gone so well for me. It's been hard finding and keeping a job. I wrote Victor Sassoon a letter, hoping he might show me some kindness, and I could work for him in some way, as a driver, a handyman or a bell hop in one of his hotels; anything, I'm desperate.

He responded in the positive, and I immigrated to Shanghai.

Occupation:  
Pilot / Aviator

**Drive / Trait:**  
Sudden Shock / I know we aren't alone, something else is at work in the world. I saw something, it touched my mind somehow. I see the world differently somehow.

**Pillars of Sanity / Ideology:**

- We have freewill to create or destroy, but in the end God will judge our decision.
- Freemasonry

**Source of Stability / Significant People:**

- Victor Sassoon (friend and employer)
- Uncle Joe Boardman

[illegible]



## Brian Strye

Sanity: 8 Stability: 8 Health: 10

Occupational Benefits: You own or have regular access to an airplane. Its size and quality depend on your Credit Rating pool.

### Investigative Abilities

#### Academic Abilities

Astronomy: 2

Language: 1 (English, French)

#### Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty: 3

Credit Rating: 2

Reassurance: 4

#### Technical Abilities

Evidence Collection: 4

Outdoorsman: 6

### General Abilities

Athletics: 8

Driving: 4

Electrical Repair: 6

Firearms: 10

Mechanical Repair: 6

Piloting 8

Preparedness: 2

Scuffling: 6

Sense Trouble: 2

Stealth: 1

## Brian Strye

HP: (11) Sanity: (40) Luck: (40) MP: (8)

STR 50      DEX 60      INT 70  
CON 60      APP 50      POW 40  
SIZ 50      EDU 80      Move 8

### Skills:

Credit Rating 20

Dodge 30

Drive 33

Electrical Repair 50

Fighting (Brawl) 50

Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) 80

Language (Own) English 80

Mechanical Repair 50

Navigate 75

Pilot (Aircraft) 70

Persuade 25

Psychology 25

Science (Astronomy) 25

Spot Hidden 50

Stealth 30

Survival 50

Swim 25

DMG Bonus: none Dodge: 30 Build: 0

Overalls, boots

Leather flight jacket, long

Tool kit and wrench set

Electric torch

Double barrel sawed off shotgun, sling

.30-06 Rifle

Bible, worn cover

Cash:      Spending Level:      Assets:  
\$40      \$10      \$1,000

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	50	25	10	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
Sawed Off Shotgun (2B)	80	40	16	4d6/1d6	5/10	1 or 2	2	100
.30-06 Rifle	80	40	16	2d6+4	110	1	1	100



Rabbi Marcel Laurent

Marcel is a Rabbi who traded the growing anti-Semitism of continental Europe for the Far East. He has come to question his faith as of late and finds more solace in his wine than his Torah. He is not a drunkard; he just appreciates fine wine. He is French, after all. Marcel was raised in a small town on the coast near Nice. His family knows the Sassoon family and he is friends with Victor. He has relocated to Shanghai to visit Victor and try to rekindle his faith.



Occupation:

Clergy / Clergy

Drive / Trait:

In the Blood / Laurent comes from a long line of rabbis, many of them considered eccentric by their own brethren. Laurent strives to bring disparate and divided communities together.

### Pillars of Sanity / Ideology:

- The importance of community

- The Torah as a way to live

Source of Stability / Significant People:

- Victor Sassoon (friend)

- Seth Silverstein (friend)

- Elly Kadoorie (friend)

[illegible]



## Rabbi Marcel Laurent

Sanity: 8 Stability: 9 Health: 8

Occupational Benefits: By using Theology or Reassurance you can gain access to religious records not generally or easily available to the public. Once per game session you may freely refresh any Interpersonal ability pool by talking to a Jewish person who maintains the faith (though not a fellow investigator). You make Psychoanalysis tests for Psychological Triage (see p. 79) at a Difficulty of 3, instead of 4.

### Investigative Abilities

#### Academic Abilities

Art History: 1

Language: 4 (French, English, Hebrew, Yiddish, Aramaic, Spanish, German, Arabic)

Library Use: 4

Textual Analysis: 1

Theology: 4

#### Interpersonal Abilities

Assess Honesty: 4

Credit Rating: 5

Reassurance: 4

### General Abilities

First Aid: 2

Fleeing: 10

Piloting: 4

Preparedness: 4

Psychoanalysis: 6

Scuffling: 6

Sense Trouble: 8

## Rabbi Marcel Laurent

HP: (10) Sanity: (60) Luck: (60) MP: (12)

STR 50

DEX 40

INT 70

CON 50

APP 60

POW 60

SIZ 50

EDU 80

Move 7

### Skills:

Credit Rating 40

Dodge 20

Fast Talk 50

Fighting (Brawl) 50

History 50

Language (Own) French 80

Language (Other) English 40

Language (Other) Hebrew 40

Language (Other) German 20

Language (Other) Aramaic 20

Library Use 50

Occult 14

Persuade 66

Pilot 30

Psychology 66

Psychoanalysis 66

DMG Bonus: none Dodge: 20 Build: 0

Simple clothes of a rabbi  
Brimmed hat, black

Family's Torah  
A cellar full of French wines

Cash:  
\$80

Spending Level:  
\$10

Assets:  
\$2000

Weapon  
Unarmed

Reg  
50

Hrd  
25

Ext  
10

Dmg  
1d3+db

Rng  
-

Atks  
1

Ammo Malf  
- -



## Shannon Novak

Shannon is a young and highly intelligent woman, who is by nature a little impulsive. Her strict, religious father kicked Shannon out of the house when she turned 16. Shannon is an archaeologist, of sorts. Although she has little in the way of a formal education, she has been on many digs of archeological significance and she is not afraid of libraries. In fact, after being kicked out of the house, a library was her first refuge. Shannon is a natural at archaeology, or as some would say, grave robbing. She has made a good living recovering notable antiquities of both historical and economic value. Currently residing in Shanghai, Shannon often sells recovered antiquities to Sophia Volkov, a White Russian antiquities dealer. Shannon is good at finding practical solutions to life's challenges, including problems in her own chosen profession. When she is unable to solve an archaeological puzzle, she turns to Professor François de Luc, a well-known Sinologist who befriended Shannon after he caught her attending his lecture without enrolling in the University. Shannon's dream is to save enough money to attend and graduate with a college education.



### Occupation:

Archaeologist / **Archaeologist**

### Drive / **Trait:**

Adventure / **Shannon seeks adventure.**

### Pillars of Sanity / **Ideology:**

- Pragmatism

- Equality of the sexes

- Human ingenuity

### Source of Stability / **Significant People:**

- Victor Sassoon (friend)

- Sophia Volkov (antiquities dealer)

- Professor François du Luc (mentor)

### Additional Notes

Additional Notes



## Shannon Novak

Occupational Benefits: By using Archaeology or a suitable Interpersonal ability, you can get access to museum storage areas or be allowed to handle artifacts. (You will likely not get to carry them away with you legally, regardless.) If you have academic credentials (both Archaeology rating of 2+ and a Credit Rating pf 3+), you can get access to closed stacks at a university library.

**Sanity: 10 Stability: 9 Health: 10**

### Investigative Abilities

#### Academic Abilities

Archaeology: 6  
Anthropology: 1  
Architecture: 4  
Geology: 1  
History: 2  
Languages: 4 (English, French, Chinese, Vietnamese, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Mongolian)  
Library Use: 2  
Occult: 1

#### Interpersonal Abilities

Credit Rating: 4

#### Technical Abilities

Evidence Collection: 4  
Locksmith: 1  
Outdoorsman: 4

### General Abilities

Athletics: 8  
Conceal: 2  
Explosives: 2  
Filch: 6  
Firearms: 8  
First Aid: 2  
Mechanical Repair: 2  
Preparedness: 5  
Riding: 2  
Scuffling: 3  
Stealth: 2

## Shannon Novak

**HP: (10) Sanity: (50) Luck: (50) MP: (10)**

STR 50      DEX 60      INT 70  
CON 50      APP 50      POW 50  
SIZ 50      EDU 80      Move 8

### Skills:

Anthropology 25  
Appraise 50  
Archaeology 75  
Credit Rating 30  
Dodge 50  
Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) 50  
History 40  
Language (Own) English 80  
Language (French) 60,  
Language (Chinese) 60  
Language (Japanese) 30  
Language (Russian) 30  
Language (Vietnamese) 15  
Language (Mongolian) 15  
Library Use 50  
Mechanical Repair 25  
Psychology 10  
Science: Geology 25  
Spot Hidden 50  
Stealth 25

**DMG Bonus: none Dodge: 50 Build: 0**

Wide-brimmed wool-felt hat  
Khaki knicker and white blouse  
Hiking boots  
.30-06 bolt action rifle  
Backpack  
Hemp rope  
Electric torch  
Note pad, pencils

**Cash: \$60      Spending Level: \$10      Assets: \$1,500**

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	25	12	5	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
.30-06 Bolt Action Rifle	50	25	10	2d6+4	10	1	1	100



## Vilhelm C. Karlsson

Professor Karlsson is a tenured professor at Uppsala University in Sweden but is on an extended sabbatical in the Far East. He is searching for specimens of the legendary “black lotus” said to be cultivated in Jinsha, the Lost City of Golden Sands.

The Professor is extremely well-traveled. However, he hasn't been quite the same since returning from a disastrous expedition to Tibet which saw him fall into a hallucinatory fever, and most of the rest of the expedition dead or disappeared. Professor Karlsson is unable to remember what happened although it does come back to him in flashes.

Professor Karlsson is in his early 50's; bearded and hearty; resembles a cross between Brian Blessed and Simon Callow. Dark rings under his eyes. Occasionally breaks eye contact to stare into the corners of the room.



### Occupation:

Professor (Botany and Biology) / **Professor**

### Drive / **Trait:**

Arrogance / **You are the best in your field. You got here through vigilant application of the scientific process and conducting every promising experiment you could imagine. Now, others seek you out to hear what you have to say about Botany and Biology. People bring you their insoluble problems, their Gordian Knots of Biology, and you cut through them like an intellectual cleaver.**

### Pillars of Sanity / **Ideology:**

- Scientific method
- Darwin's theory of evolution

### Source of Stability / **Significant People:**

- Victor Sassoon (friend)
- Huang Chujiu, pharmaceutical magnate and owner of Great World Amusement Arcade (friend)

### Additional Notes

Additional Notes



## Vilhelm C. Karlsson

Occupational Benefits: As long as your academic credentials are intact (a Credit Rating of 3+), using Bureaucracy lets you enjoy nearly unrestricted access to closed library stacks, research laboratories, and even many private and government archives. If you have a Credit Rating of 5 or better, you have tenure and cannot be removed from your professorship without clear, public, evidence of moral turpitude.

**Sanity: 7 Stability: 8 Health: 10**

### Investigative Abilities

#### Academic Abilities

Biology: 8  
Language: 1 (Swedish, English, Spanish, Chinese)  
Library use: 4  
Medicine: 2  
Cthulhu Mythos: 1

#### Interpersonal Abilities

Bureaucracy: 2  
Credit Rating: 4  
Interrogation: 3  
Oral History: 4

#### Technical Abilities

Chemistry: 4  
Evidence Collection: 2  
Outdoorsman: 3  
Pharmacy: 4  
Photography: 1

### General Abilities

Athletics: 8  
Firearms: 8  
First Aid: 2  
Pilot: 2  
Preparedness: 4  
Riding: 2  
Scuffling: 8  
Sense Trouble: 2

## Vilhelm C. Karlsson

**HP: (12) Sanity: (50) Luck: (50) MP: (10)**

STR 50      DEX 50      INT 70  
CON 60      APP 45      POW 50  
SIZ 60      EDU 75      Move 5

### Skills:

Credit Rating 40  
Cthulhu Mythos: 10  
Dodge 25  
Fighting (Brawl) 60  
Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) 60  
First Aid 40  
Language (Own) Swedish 75  
Language (Other) English 32  
Language (Other) Chinese 25  
Language (Other) Spanish 26  
Library Use 60  
Natural World 70  
Psychology 30  
Ride 15  
Science: Biology 51  
Science: Chemistry 30  
Spot Hidden 36  
Survival 40

**DMG Bonus: none Dodge: 25 Build: 0**

Chesterfield overcoat  
White cotton long-sleeved shirt  
Belt and suspenders  
Trousers  
Hiking boots  
Pipe, tobacco, water-proof matches  
Various botany guides  
Sketch pad, pencils  
Elephant gun  
Pack, canteen  
Binoculars  
Kerosene Lantern

**Cash: \$10      Spending Level: \$10      Assets: \$2,000**

Weapon	Reg	Hrd	Ext	Dmg	Rng	Atks	Ammo	Malf
Unarmed	60	30	12	1d3+db	-	1	-	-
Elephant Gun	60	30	12	3D6+4	100	1 or 2	2	100





May 30th, 1925 "Nanjing Road Incident"



# Factions

Within the Mythos-world of 1920s Shanghai exists (at the very least) the following factions:

- The Locals
- The Communist
- The Green Gang
- The Four Seas Gang
- Genyosha
- The Order of the Bloated Woman



## “The Locals”

The “Locals” represent the notable ex-patriots who have made Shanghai their home. These people have made or inherited vast fortunes from the opium trade in the 19th century. Their “goal” is to protect and develop Shanghai, or at least their colonial vision of what Shanghai could be.

Generally speaking, the interests of the Locals are not in alignment with the interest of other factions active in Shanghai. Foreigners in Shanghai mostly live in a bubble of wealth; they consider themselves insulated from the factional fighting that is hitting Shanghai.

## Sir Victor Sassoon

Sir Victor Sassoon (1881 – 1961), in the main campaign settings, serves as the hook and the organizing force that binds the investigators together. All investigators must be, in some way, beholden to Victor and his interests. However, Victor Sassoon may be viewed as an important and interesting arch-antagonist when playing a Communist or Green Gang campaign (see Investigator Factions Optional Rules). Victor Sassoon uses his inherited opium fortune to support the foreign-controlled Municipal Council, which is both anti-nationalist and anti-crime. Furthermore, who is to say that Victor Sassoon is not himself an accomplished (and twisted) magic user, beholden to Mythos forces?

## Lawrence Kadoorie

Victor Sassoon's best friend and business partner is another Sephardic Jew named Lawrence Kadoorie (1899 – 1993). Kadoorie was educated at Clifton College and worked for Victor for many years before becoming an equal partner. Lawrence's father was Sir Elly Kadoorie, a famous industrialist with holdings throughout Asia.

## Henry E. Morris Jr.

Henry E. Morris was a media mogul who purchased and ran the North China Daily News; he passed it to his son Henry E. Morris Jr. in 1920. Henry E. Morris Jr. shared many interests with Victor Sassoon and ran with the same crowds.

Henry financed the construction of the Shanghai Canidrome, a clubhouse and greyhound race track (near modern-day Mao Ming Nan Lu), completed in 1928. The clubhouse became a beacon of Shanghai nightlife, hosting the Shanghai Ball and jazz performances by Buck Clayton. The Shanghai Municipal Council shut down the Canidrome in 1932 to stem gambling (made





illegal by Chiang Kai-shek), it was repurposed as an amusement park. The park was closed during the Japanese occupation. Immediately after the Chinese civil war, the Canidrome served as a mass execution facility.

The Morris family manor, located in the French Concessions, was an impressive collection of beautiful red brick buildings and a lush Western garden. In 1927, Chiang Kai-shek asked for Soong Meiling's hand in marriage in the garden.

Henry E. Morris Jr. remained at the family manor until his death in 1951. The Morris family manor was converted into the posh Ruijin Hotel in 1979.

## The Soong Sisters

The Soong Sisters – Ailing, Meiling, and Chingling – are three of the most powerful women in the world. Daughters of the missionary, businessman, and Sun Yat-sen ally Charlie Soong, all three of the Soong Sisters were educated in the United States.

In China, of the Soong Sisters it is said: "One loved money, one loved power, and one loved her country." This is a reference to the fact that Ailing married the wealthy banker H.H. Kung, Meiling married the ruthless Chiang Kai-shek, and Chingling married China's first President Sun Yat-sen. However, this description of the Soong Sisters is not fair; all three of these women were passionate about an independent and strong China. All three used their connections and intelligence in the service of a great cause.

The Soong Sisters are together until 1927. After the White Purge, Chingling accused the KMT and her sisters of betraying Sun Yat-sen's vision. The sisters would reunite during the Second Sino-Japanese War but be forever separated by the resumption of the Chinese Civil War. Meiling went on to be a power-broker within KMT politics, while Chingling would hold senior leadership positions in China.

The Soong family, has their own estates in Shanghai, although Chingling often stays at Sun's former residence in the French Concession.

As well-connected Shanghai-native nationalists, the Soongs are well connected with the "upper-crust" of Shanghai society and with many factions. Ailing, in particular, talks with Victor Sassoon about the preservation of important Chinese artifacts which Victor brings to her attention. Meiling is abreast of developments with the KMT and the Green Gang. Chingling is acquainted with Zhou Enlai and the budding labor-rights movement in Shanghai.

## The Communists

The Communist Party of China (CPC) was officially founded in 1921 by Chen Duxiu and Li Dazhao (both of whom were leaders of Beijing University, and teachers of Mao Zedong). The party supports the principles espoused by Sun Yat-sen: nationalism, republicanism, modernity. However, the Communists also believe in the teachings of Marxist-Leninism. Which is to say that Communists believe the workers of the world will unite and land should be controlled by the farmers instead of landlords.

Within the CPC, there was a great debate on whether to cooperate or not with the Kuomintang Nationalist Party (KMT). The Soviet representatives to the CPC demanded the CPC join with and cooperate with the KMT. Hence, between 1921 to 1927, the leading representatives of the CPC were also representatives of the "left side" of the KMT. During this time, the CPC received substantial guidance and material support from the Soviet Union. This situation changed in 1927, after the Shanghai Massacre and the start of the Chinese Civil War. Mao Zedong would rise to prominence, leading peasant conscript armies in rear-guard actions to establish a base of control.

After 1927, the activities and goals of the CPC in Shanghai are focused around counter-espionage against the KMT, organizing secret worker labor unions, provoking labor strikes and protests, and assassinating KMT officials and traitors to the CPC. The Communists will become the sworn enemies of the KMT.

The CPC is generally against "The Locals", who are viewed as imperialists, however, they are not committed to outright violence against foreigners. The CPC faction is opposed to all criminal gangs.

The CPC are unlikely to pursue worship of the Great Old Ones or practice of Mythos magics. They will likely see Mythos knowledge as superstitious fiction and will rarely, if ever, actively seek out Mythos tomes and artifacts. In the event the CPC comes into possession of unexplained Mythos weapons and artifacts, it will employ scientists to conduct further examinations and research. The CPC has many contacts and resources within the scientific community of Shanghai and abroad.





## Zhou Enlai

Although Mao Zedong (毛泽东) is referred to as the “founding father” of the People’s Republic of China (“PRC”), it was Zhou Enlai (周恩来) for whom the Chinese people felt genuine affection. Zhou Enlai (周恩来), the first Premier of the PRC, was instrumental in creating the modern state of China.

Zhou Enlai (周恩来)’s story begins with many similarities to Sun Yat-sen. Zhou was a great student in his youth; a budding intellectual in a family of minor government bureaucrats. He developed a particular passion for drama and the arts and developed a reputation as friendly and conciliatory. Like many other future leaders of China, Zhou went to study in Japan. In Japan, however, he was discouraged by Japanese racism and militarism and he ran out of money. Upon his return to China, Zhou spent several years as a student and political activist. By day he attended classes and by night he organized protests and revolutionary study groups.

In 1924, Zhou took a position in the newly formed, Soviet-supported, Whampoa Military Academy, as the Deputy Director of the Academy’s Political Department. In that position, he reported to the school headmaster, Chiang Kaishek. Zhou instructed cadets on the political and ideological thoughts of the KMT (国民党), but heavily flavored with communist ideology.

At Whampoa, Zhou was instrumental in placing communists and communist-friendly cadets in key positions throughout the school and the newly growing KMT (国民党) army. In the early days of the academy, communist ideology seemed to complement the philosophy of national liberation and democracy that was at the heart of the KMT. However, as the KMT (国民党) gained success in early anti-warlord expeditions, the communist and left-leaning sympathizers within the KMT started to come under suspicion. Eventually, Zhou was removed from Whampoa in 1926. Outside of the academy, he continued to recruit people to the communist cause. He organized communist cells in Guangzhou, before moving on to Shanghai.



In 1927, Zhou Enlai, who was in Shanghai at the time of the White Purge. He was captured by KMT soldiers but won his release with the help of well-placed allies. It is fair to say that by the time he returned to Shanghai in 1929, he had changed. Whether that change was a gradual process caused by his involvement with the cause of revolution, or a sudden shift caused by the “betrayal” of Chiang Kaishek, no one knows. Zhou Enlai, the handsome, idealistic, and gentle organizer had come to run the “teke” (特科) special forces of the Chinese Communist Party.

Later in life, as China’s chief foreign diplomat during the Cold War, Zhou was credited for helping prevent nuclear war with the United States and ending hostilities between China and the Soviet Union. He also worked to mitigate some of the chaos from Mao’s Cultural Revolution. Near his death, he maneuvered to end the political clique that promoted the Cultural Revolution.





## The Green Gang

China's greatest engineering feat was not the massive (and mostly useless) Great Wall which consistently failed to repel Northern invaders. For more than a millennium, the most important infrastructure project was the Grand Canal. The Grand Canal linked China's fertile and temperate southern region to the arid north, allowing grain barges from as far south as the resort city of Hangzhou to travel up to Beijing and beyond. It linked the mighty Yangze River with the Yellow River. Millions of boatmen, soldiers, granary managers, accountants, dredgers, lock-workers, and general laborers worked on the Canal.

For many years, Luoists (罗教) preached their heretical Buddhism-Daoism mystical teachings to the boatmen who pulled the great grain shipments along Canal. They preached about the divinity of the "Great Void" that created and binds the universe. They beseeched members to open their eyes to the glory of unified enlightenment and take comfort in the Mother who reveals the truth. The Luoists also opened schools, orphanages, hostels, and meeting halls.

In 1768 the Qinglong Emperor banned Luoism. The religion went in hiding where it grew, splintered and mutated.

Several times over the course of its rule, there were signs that the Qing had lost their Mandate of Heaven. The Yellow River Flood of 1855 was one such time. The mighty river overflowed from its built-up banks and inundated tens of thousands of square kilometers as it sought a new path to the sea, drowning or starving hundreds of thousands of peasants. This flood broke the Yellow River's connection with the Grand Canal. As a result, an army of laborers left the Canal, many to join ranks with the Taiping "Kingdom of Heaven". Many more traveled to the coast to work the salt smuggling trade. Some went to the coastal cities to work the docks, loading grain shipments for the north, while transferring opium imports to river barges headed for China's interior.

In Shanghai, the remnants of the Luoist reformed into aid societies for salt smugglers, dock hands, and migrant laborers. In the early 1900s, one of these aid societies evolved into the Green Gang; a secret criminal organization that came to control all "vice" in Shanghai.

Shanghai was the perfect environment for a secret criminal organization; multiple jurisdictions (the International Settlement, the French Concession, Old Town) to hide in; a massive influx of desperately poor people looking for work, and a port of entry for opium. Through successive generations of leadership, the Green Gang expanded its control of prostitution, gambling, opium dens, and extortion rackets.

### Huang Jinrong and Du Yueshang

Huang Jinrong ("Pockmarked Huang") learned his trade in his father's Shanghai tea house, where he overheard the conversations of schemers, gangsters, con-men, and others on the make. In 1892, at the age of 24, Huang Jinrong left his father's tea house to work for the French Concession police as a detective. He was an excellent detective, able to solve many cases because of his connections from his father's tea house. Pockmarked Huang was also a leader of the Green Gang.

As a leading detective for a foreign power's concession as well as an underground crime boss, Pockmarked Huang used his power to further expand the Green Gang's business while using an "underworld court" to feed unruly gang members and competitors to the French Concession Police.

Huang Jinrong married Lin Guisheng, a clever woman from Suzhou. Lin Guisheng enthusiastically helped her husband manage their growing crime business. She created a special crime squad dedicated to stealing opium from the docks to sell at discount through a legitimate company.

Du Yuesheng ("Big Eared" Du), an orphan at 9 years of age, went to Shanghai to work as a bodyguard in a brothel. He joined the Green Gang at 16, and soon met





Lin Guisheng and Pockmarked Huang. Lin Guisheng and Pockmarked Huang took a liking to Big Eared Du, and through that relationship, Big Eared Du soon became a lieutenant in the Green Gang.

Big Eared Du was an up-and-coming gangster when the Qing dynasty fell in 1911. For a brief period, Shanghai was controlled by National Revolutionary Forces led by Chen Qimei, who pledged support for Sun Yat-sen. At that time, Chen had reached out to the French Concession police through Pockmarked Huang. A relationship was formed between Chen and Huang. The two also introduced their favored disciples; Pockmarked Huang brought Big Eared Du. Chen Qimei brought Chiang Kai-shek, the future ruler of China.

In 1924, Pockmarked Huang took a romantic interest in Lu Lanchun, a young and beautiful opera singer who often performed at one of Pockmarked Huang's theatres. Lu Lanchun was also romantically pursued by Lu Xiaojian, the son of a prominent Zhejiang warlord Lu Yongzhang. When Lu Lanchun spurned the advances of Lu Xiaojian, Lu Xiaojian heckled her during a performance. Pockmarked Huang, who was also in attendance, ordered his lieutenants to "educate" Lu Xiaojian.

Pockmarked Huang was subsequently arrested for the embarrassing beating that Lu Xiaojian suffered at the hands of Big Eared Du and his men, as the leaders of the French Concession sought to appease Lu Xiaojian's father. Big Eared Du negotiated with all the parties involved to secure the release of his mentor, and after this episode, Pockmarked Huang retired from business, giving control of the Green Gang to Big Eared Du.

At the age of 36, Big Eared Du ran a large share of the opium dens, protection rackets, brothels, and casinos in Shanghai. He also owned Shanghai's largest shipping company and two banks, and effectively asserted pressure on the city's labor unions. He lived in a four-story house in the French Concession, with his 4 wives, 12 concubines, and many children. He dressed in the best clothes, frequented the best night-clubs and sing-song houses, and socialized with all of Shanghai's elite (Chinese and foreigners alike). He was frequently spotted at events with a retinue of White Russian bodyguards. Big Eared Du also had some peculiar practices; he had dried monkey heads sewn into his clothes and carried spell inscriptions with him at all times for protection.

Big Eared Du maintained a friendship with Chiang Kai-shek. The two shared a common vision for a unified China. Chiang Kai-shek and Big Eared Du also both distrusted the Communists. Chiang Kai-shek was suspicious of the influence of his own Soviet benefactors, who Chiang suspected of plotting his own assassination. Likewise, Big Eared Du viewed communism as contrary to Confucian

ideals and viewed communist leaders as potential rivals to his influence in the city's labor unions.

In March of 1927, Shanghai labor union workers led by Zhou Enlai initiated a citywide protest and labor strike. Chiang Kai-shek decided it was time to rid the city and the KMT of Communists. Big Eared Du invited the local Communist Party labor leader to his residence; on arrival, the labor leader was strangled to death. Big Eared Du then ordered his Green Gang enforcers to attack labor union offices and hunt down the city's Communists. In the weeks that followed, thousands of Communists and labor union leaders were rounded up and violently executed during the "White Purge", also known by locals as the "Shanghai Massacre." The Shanghai Massacre would be the starting point of a decade-long civil war; a conflict in which the Green Gang fired the first shots. In return for his loyalty, Big Eared Du was appointed as the president of the Opium Suppression Bureau.

## The 4 Seas Gang and Lao Che

The 4 Seas Gang is one of the most powerful Chinese gangs in the World; although they have a presence in London, San Francisco, and Osaka, their headquarters are based in Shanghai. The head of the 4 Seas Gang is Lu Xun (陆逊), commonly known as "Lao Che" (老车). Lao Che, the main antagonist in the Sassoon Files campaign, is a 400-year-old Mythos sorcerer. Lao Che's modus operandi includes blackmail and extortion made possible through the collection of funeral urns and remains that may be resurrected at his whim. Although Lao Che still trades in necromancy, extortion, and blackmail, he leaves the day-to-day management of the 4 Seas Gang to his three sons, Lu Chen (陆晨), Lu Kai (陆凯), Roy "Little Cart" Lu.

Lu Chen is Lao Che's youngest son. He is clever and dangerous, but not as deeply involved in the business of the 4 Seas Gang as his other brothers. Lu Chen has does not play a central role in the scenarios written for the Sassoon Files, and as such is readily expendable.

Lu Kai is Lao Che's second child, and he is currently responsible for leading the 4 Seas Gang on a daily basis. Kai is a cunning and dangerous man with an entire gang at his disposal. Lu Kai, and his girlfriend the jazz singer Mary Xie play a central role in the scenario "There is this One Girl".

Roy "Little Cart" Lu is Lao Che's oldest son and is the most knowledgeable in the ways of the cosmos. Roy spent a number of years in San Francisco and fluently speaks English, albeit with an American drawl. In "Let Sleeping



Dogs Lie" Roy Lu is sent on secondment to support the Wo Hop To gang and look out after his father's interests; he likely makes many other appearances over the course of a full campaign.

Some notable enforcers in the 4 Seas Gang include Xu Li Sheng the Monkey and Four-Fingered Zhou.

The "legitimate" business front of the 4 Seas Gang is the Hip Sing Tong, which holds itself out as a benevolent association of Chinese businessmen. The 2nd floor of a nondescript building near East Nanjing Lu houses the business offices of the Hip Sing Tong, and the 3rd floor of the same building is dedicated to a formal ceremonial meeting hall. Lao Che keeps his massive collection of funeral urns on display in the ceremonial hall. The gang socializes in the Belt King Social Club, a ritzy jazz bar on the 4th floor.

The 4 Seas Gang engages in all the typical activities of an organized criminal enterprise, including racketeering, extortion, burglary and the operation of houses of prostitution and opium dens, like the infamous House of Rose.

## Genyosha - Dark Ocean Society

The Dark Ocean Society (玄洋社), is a secret, ultranationalist Japanese cult dedicated to the veneration of the Great Old Ones. Its leader, Toyama Mitsuru directs global operations from his personal residence in Tokyo, but his reach is long. In addition to its significant ties with the Tcho Tcho tribes of French Indochina, the Dark Ocean Society has brothels in Paris, opium dens in San Francisco and a massive network of spies in China. The Dark Ocean Society has over a hundred agents in China, including many who have successfully infiltrated the Chinese triads via the "consume likeness" spell.

The Dark Ocean Society pursues Japanese military expansion in the region for the purpose of paving the road for the return of the Great Old Ones. In Shanghai,

the Dark Ocean Society operates in conjunction with the Japanese consulate and Japanese military intelligence in Shanghai. Of interesting note, the Dark Ocean Society is viciously anti-Communist; the reason for the opposition to Communism is not outwardly apparent.

The Dark Ocean Society "playbook" includes prostitution, blackmail, sabotage, and assassination. Members of the society are told to be on the lookout for artifacts of mythos origin which might be used as secret weapons for the coming wars. The Dark Ocean Society's current operations include a concerted effort to infiltrate the Whampoa Military Academy in Guangzhou.

## The Order of the Bloated Woman

The Order of the Bloated Woman is a militant society that worships an avatar of Nyarlathotep in the form of Y'Golonac. The Order of the Bloated Woman traces its roots back to the San Xing Dui (or 3 Star Mound) people of ancient Sichuan and Yunan. Many of the members of the Order have prominent or protruding eyes; presumably, because they carry Deep One blood. The Order is led by Lao Deng Bing, a decrepit and perverted old man from Yunnan, who joined the Order back in 1856, during the Panthay Rebellion and the 3rd Plague Pandemic. The Order was critical in starting the Panthay Rebellion and spreading the plague. They also played a role in the Boxer Rebellion.



Toyama Mitsuru, one of the founders of Genyosha (left). Chiang Kai-shek is on the right.



# Investigator Factions Optional Rule

The base scenarios included in The Sassoon Files assume that players take on the role of investigators who fight against Mythos threats introduced to them by Sir Victor Sassoon. However, there are other ways to approach these scenarios. For example, you may run the same scenarios from the viewpoint of members of the Communist or Green Gang factions.

With the Investigator Factions Optional Rule, you can potentially run multiple player groups simultaneously, with each group existing in the same “world-space”. These Investigator Factions also allow you to explore more of the non-Mythos stories existing in 1920s Shanghai.

## Playing the Communist

In a Communist Faction campaign, the investigators are now Agents, belonging to the TeKe (特科). They are responsible for intelligence gathering and assassinations. Agents report to Zhou Enlai, the Communist leader, who is mostly in hiding from 1927 to 1948. We recommend that Keepers allow players to explore roleplaying historical figures who are members of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the Comintern, or left-wing sympathizers. Such as Li Daozhao (李大釗), Qu Qiubai (瞿秋白), Mikhail Borodin or even Soong Ching-ling.

In a Communist Faction campaign, the KMT, the Green Gang, the Genyosha and the Locals are natural antagonistic factions. For example, Keepers could portray the Locals as a group of degenerates that have fallen into the worship of various Great Old Ones. Bored Dilettantes have taken to abusing the Drug of Liao and unwittingly work to summon the King in Yellow. Diplomats and foreign intelligence agents seek to weaponize Mythos artifacts. Powerful shipping magnates worship Mother

Hydra, Father Dagon, and Cthulhu; in return for sacrifices to the Ocean, Deep Ones provide various treasures and economic boons. The Green Gang can be positioned as a Luoist (罗教) cult and its leadership can be portrayed as sorcerers. The KMT are interested in weaponizing Mythos artifacts and the Genyosha is a tribe of Japanese Tcho Tcho that venerate Nyakathotep.

## Playing the Green Gang

In a Green Gang Campaign, the investigators are “Brothers” of Big Eared Du. They are responsible for carrying out criminal activities on behalf of the gang and receive missions from Big Eared Du or his Godfather, Pockmarked Huang. Keepers may allow players to explore roleplaying as historical figures who were members of the Green Gang, such as Zhang Xiaolin (張嘯林) or Ying Guixin (应桂馨); Keepers and players could also explore roleplaying as prominent Chinese bankers and industrialists with ties to the KMT, including, for example, Liu Hongsheng (刘鸿生) and T.V. Soong (brother of the Soong Sisters).

In a Green Gang Faction campaign, it is possible to explore morality and ethics. A key theme or question for such campaigns is whether the investigators pursue their own selfish interests or rise above their character flaws to protect humanity from Mythos forces. The lines between good and evil get tested quickly in a Green Gang Faction campaign, and such campaigns are not for every table. We recommend that Keeper’s carefully consider the implications of a Green Gang faction campaign before embarking on this path.

When playing with alternate Investigator Factions, consider using the hooks in the following section.





# Communist Hooks

## Strange Gates, Hidden Demons

- KMT officer Captain Zhou, who was killed by the Demon Kun during the ritual at the House of Clouds, was a secret Communist agent tasked with spying on Ling Wei of the Green Gang. The Agents are tasked with finding and eliminating Ling Wei.
- Agents are asked to organize and “radicalize” hotel workers within the Sassoon House. While doing this, they may pick up information about Sassoon’s imperialist plots to gain control over “advanced technologies” and weapons to use against The People.
- Agents will be tasked with finding the Demon Kun and destroying it, along with any superstitious materials and objects associated with it. Green Gang and 4 Seas Gangs may intervene in an attempt to capture the Demon Kun for their own purposes.

## Let Sleeping Dogs Lie

- Agents are tasked with kidnapping Lawrence Kadoorie, a friend of Victor Sassoon and imperialist stooge whose family helped facilitate the opium-enslavement of China. If they are successful in kidnapping Lawrence Kadoorie, Investigators will be ordered to ritually murder Kadoorie as part of the ritual of resurrection.
- Agents are approached by a senior representative from the Soviet Union, Mr. Grigori Voitinsky. Voitinsky explains that Zhou has adopted methods based on superstition, and therefore Zhou must be stopped for the good of the Revolution. He requests the investigators turn against Zhou and collect all the “superstitious material” to be brought back to the Soviet Union.
- If Zhou is killed (by investigator action or otherwise), Agents are tasked with taking a funeral urn to a remote location on Chongming Island (about 20KM East of

Shanghai). Agents participate in the resurrection of Zhou Enlai. Resurrected Zhou Enlai will be crueler and emotionally volatile. He will order his agents to carry out assassinations on the family members of anyone who betrays him.

- Cixi will become aware of the Communists and attempt to learn more about this faction through the Agents. She may attempt to charm or befriend the Agents if Cixi believes the Agents have any of the items she needs. However, Cixi is inherently opposed to everything the Communists stand for.

## There is This One Girl

- CPC Agents will be tasked with capturing Mary Xie, also known as the “Bloated Woman”, and take it to a secret base (See the scenario, “There is This One Girl”).
- If the Bloated Woman is captured, Zhou Enlai gives the Agents exceedingly specific instructions (e.g. Go to the corner of Nanjing Road and Fuxing Road at 13:07, wait there until 14:20 and 10 seconds, then proceed across the street. Enter the building to your right, breaking the lock with a hammer that weighs 1.5 kg). If the Agents are unaware of the Bloated Woman, Zhou is conducting a scientific experiment on the limits of foresight. If the Agents are aware of the Bloated Woman, then the Bloated Woman is attempting to escape. Zhou and his wife are in disguise at an apartment in the French Concession. Agents are tasked with facilitating the relocation of Zhou and his wife each day for the next 3 days.

## The Curse of the Peacock’s Eye

- Zhou will task Agents to kill Big Eared Du, Lao Che, and Victor Sassoon using the power of foresight. Following the path of Lao Che follows a course similar to Investigators working for Sassoon. (If playing with another concurrent group of Investigators, this sets up a Player versus Player (“PvP”) scenario with potential time-travel “do-overs”).





# Green Gang Hooks

## Strange Gates, Hidden Demons

- Ling Wei is making a power play inside the Green Gang, using the Demon Kun to remove rivals and make unsanctioned hits. The Brothers must track down Ling Wei and bring him to heel or feed him to the fishes.
- Big Eared Du will personally task trusted “Brothers” to find the Seal of the Demon Kun.
- Brothers are tasked with testing out the power of the Demon Kun on a wayward Brother who is suspected of skimming too much.
- Any Brothers who presented evidence of Soviet or that the CPC faction attempts to gain possesses the Seal of the Demon Kun, they will be offered an assassination and theft mission.
- Brothers will be tasked with killing a Japanese factory manager while making it look like communist workers were responsible.

## Let Sleeping Dogs Lie

- Brothers are instructed to obtain the resurrection spell used on Cixi; Cixi herself is not relevant to this mission but would probably be encountered. Finding this is of the utmost importance to Du and Du’s Godfather Pockmarked Huang.
- Brothers will be tasked with assassinating a few choice enemies of Big Eared Du during the commotion of the White Purge. This includes Zhou Enlai. They will be asked to bring the enemies back to Du for resurrection. Assuming all of this is successful, a resurrected and somewhat less stable Zhou Enlai will escape.

- Cixi’s existence and relationship with the rival 4 Seas Gang is revealed. Brothers will be tasked with finding and killing Cixi. They will be instructed to work with any and all other factions in order to ensure the success of this mission.

## There is This One Girl

- Big Eared Du** chains Pockmarked Huang to a wall in his French Concession flat. Pockmark Huang is fed a steady diet of the Drug of Liao and human brains. Thereafter, Pockmark Huang is transformed into an avatar of Y’Golonac, thus gaining knowledge of the future, and becoming known as the “Pockmarked Patron”. The Pockmarked Patron will demand that the Brothers kill the Bloated Woman (a competing avatar).
- While the Pockmarked Patron and the Bloated Woman still live, Brothers may experience shifting realities as they are aware of two sets of competing predictions.

## The Curse of the Peacock’s Eye

- Either Big Eared Du or the Pockmarked Patron will ask the Brothers to kill Lao Che. Following the path of Lao Che follows a course similar to investigators working for Sassoon. (If playing with another concurrent group of investigators, this sets up a PvP scenario with potential time-travel “do-overs”.)





# Campaign Drivers Optional Rules

Campaign Drivers are lists of goals that various factions will attempt to accomplish. Factions will most likely accomplish these goals if the investigators do not intervene. Campaign Drivers give players a sense of urgency and efficacy. Investigators who fail to foil the antagonistic plots of hostile factions must face the consequences of their failures. For Keepers, Campaign Drivers assist in introducing new challenges, threats, and dangers. Campaign Drivers are a particularly useful tool for Keepers who run “sandbox” games because they add dynamic structure and direction to a campaign.

Each Driver has Activities and Reactions. Activities are specific actions that members of a faction will take in pursuit of their goal; these can be used to develop scenes. Reactions are actions that a faction will attempt to take in response to a “trigger” set off by the investigators.

To use a Campaign Driver, a Keeper may foreshadow or present information about the relevant faction. They may also develop scenes based on the Activities and Reactions. If investigators fail to do anything about the Driver, the Keeper may explain the results in a separate scene or off-screen. For example, the results of failing to combat a Campaign Driver could appear in the morning daily newspaper.

You can keep track of Campaign Drivers by marking them off when they have been “activated”. Note that you can use or not use some or all of the Campaign Drivers listed for each faction.

Note that using these rules will require the Keeper to improvise and run “on the fly” scenes based on what is already happening in the game world. Groups who are used to “sandbox” style games will be familiar with this requirement.

Campaign Drivers can be used in different types of campaigns, but they have a greater impact on gameplay within long-duration campaigns wherein the players and Keeper wish to explore other investigative “hooks” in addition to the ones provided in this book. Various factions and related Campaign Drivers are described in the sections that follow.



## Communist Campaign Drivers

**1925 Driver:** Chiang Kai-shek hears reports of a triad-controlled assassin known as the “Demon Kun” (see the scenario “Strange Gates, Hidden Demons”). The Demon Kun is said to be nearly invisible when he strikes and swift in dispensing death upon his targets; he is also said to be unfalteringly committed to his mission, and once given the order, he never fails to kill his marked target. Chiang Kai-shek asks Zhou Enlai to track down the Demon Kun and recruit him to their cause. Zhou’s agents will find the Demon Kun (a Shambler from the Stars) and kill it, rather than give it to Chiang, who Zhou does not trust. Meanwhile, the CPC will infiltrate various worker groups and promote continuing labor action in response to the deadly May 30<sup>th</sup> in the International Settlement.

- Activity:** Investigators will be followed by various civilians (beggars, factory workers, students, etc.) who are reporting on player actions to Zhou.

- Activity:** Non-Chinese investigators will get some dirty looks; Chinese students and workers will chant anti-Imperialism slogans on the Bund.

- Reaction:** If investigators fail to dispatch with the Demon Kun, another faction will gain control of it.

**1926 Driver:** Zhou Enlai obtains intelligence about the procedure for resurrecting people using their “essential salts”. However, Zhou will be ordered to discard and destroy the instructions. Instead of complying, Zhou will have one of the Kadoorie family members (friends and allies of Victor Sassoon) murdered and then resurrected.

- Activity:** CPC agents attempt to kidnap and murder Lawrence Kadoorie.

- Reaction:** If Zhou is successful in kidnapping Lawrence Kadoorie, Kadoorie will be ritually slain and then resurrected. As the resurrection spell is reversible, Kadoorie will submit to Zhou’s control.

**1927 Driver:** The KMT launch a surprise attack against CPC members in Shanghai, killing approximately 5000 people. Investigators who are known to be communist or communist sympathizers are hunted. Zhou Enlai goes “underground”. Assuming Zhou did not find the ritual of immortality in 1926, he will find it now and prepare a “back-up” plan for him to escape capture through death and resurrection.



•**Activities:** Everywhere on the streets, there are sudden outbursts of violence and gunfire. In some places, even in the Concessions, Chinese people are dragged out of their houses by KMT soldiers and Green Gang members.

•**Reaction:** If for whatever reason, Zhou dies, he will be resurrected. Resurrected Zhou Enlai seems crueler than before; he will task his Special Forces to find and execute several of his former students from his days at Whampoa Academy, as well as Victor Sassoon. Zhou will then use the resurrection spells to bring his targets back, under his control.

**1929 Driver:** Zhou Enlai's agents capture Mary Xie, also known as the "Bloated Woman", and take it to a secret base (See the scenario, "There is This One Girl"). Zhou attempts to use the power of foresight to murder Chiang Kai-shek, Big Eared Du, Victor Sassoon, and other political rivals.

•**Activity:** CPC undercover agents stake out key locations of the Four Seas Gang. They may attack investigators.

•**Reaction:** If Zhou Enlai is "resurrected" he will be mentally unstable. Zhou Enlai uses the Bloated Woman to gain knowledge to kill Mao Zedong, among others.

**1930 Driver:** The CPC will use all supernatural assets, including controlled Shamblers, resurrected puppets and avatars of Great Old Ones, to destroy the Genyosha, the Green Gang, the KMT, and anyone else in its way. These acts will be framed as a "patriotic struggle." As a result of this struggle, various Mythos entities will battle in the streets of Shanghai, destroying the city.

•**Reaction:** If Shanghai is destroyed, a faction leader - either Zhou Enlai or Big Ear Du - will ask the investigators to find the Tcho Tcho "Lotus Eaters" and go back in time to assassinate the other faction leaders. (See the scenario "The Curse of the Peacock's Eye")



## Genyosha Campaign Drivers

**1925 Driver:** Genyosha works with 4 Seas Gang provocateurs to promote anti-Japanese protests at Japanese owned factories so as to build support for anti-Chinese factions within the business community and in Japan. This culminates in a secret Genyosha cultist shooting dead a 4 Seas Gang fall-guy, sparking the protests and riots that lead to the May 30<sup>th</sup> Incident. Meanwhile, agents of the Genyosha search Shanghai for Mythos technology.

•**Activity:** Genyosha operatives approach investigators about handing over the Seal of the Demon Kun should they get a hold of it.

•**Activity:** Various people, including students, workers, and factory managers, have been reporting feeling uncontrollable compulsions to attack others during protests and at work.

•**Activity:** Japanese embassy worker found dead with a note, written in Japanese, about a plan to use a resurrection spell on the Emperor (it is not clear which Emperor this refers to)

**1927 Driver:** Genyosha agents provide the Green Gang with lists of suspected Communists who worked in Japanese factories.

•**Activity:** A Japanese messenger is intercepted carrying a list of names written in blood. It is a target list, the names determined by communion with a Great Old One.

**1929 Driver:** Genyosha agents run an underground lab with 20 women chained to walls, all with manacled feet. They are all forced to eat human brains. However, as of yet, the Genyosha are not quite able to summon a full incarnation of Y'Golnag.

**1930 Driver:** The Genyosha plan to use the mass death caused by either a) Lao Che, or b) fighting between Mythos-powered Green Gang and CPC to resurrect a Great Old One. They will then use their unique relationship with the Great Old One to take over the world under the flag of a Global Japanese Empire.



## Green Gang Campaign Drivers

**1925 Driver:** KMT agents secretly task Big Eared Du to find the Seal of the Demon Kun, which Du will accomplish. Meanwhile, Green Gang member will shake-down Chinese business managers who do not pay protection money by threatening to provoke labor strikes and student protests.

•**Activity:** Green Gang squads will rough up people who may have clues to the whereabouts of the Seal shortly before investigators meet with them.

•**Activity:** Green Gang squads will go searching for the Seal, coming into contact with investigators.

•**Reaction:** If Green Gang gets a hold of the Seal, Du will use the Demon Kun to kill a few under-performing gang members. Investigators will discover the bodies.



•**Reaction:** The 4 Seas Gang and the Green Gang are all trying to gain control over the Demon Kun while Sassoon and the CPC are trying to kill the Demon Kun. If the investigators fail to kill the Demon Kun, determine whether the Green Gang or the 4 Seas Gang secures control over it.

**1927 Driver:** The KMT will launch a surprise attack against CPC members in Shanghai, killing around 5000 people. Green Gang will act as a primary force in this attack. Meanwhile, Big Eared Du will seek out the same resurrection technology used by the Four Seas Gang. He will use the resurrection spell to resurrect and control certain labor organizers.

•**Activity:** Openly communist or communist sympathizing characters will be hunted.

•**Activity:** Green Gang carries out a hit on half a dozen labor organizers near the docks, South of the Bund. Each organizer had recently rallied workers against “the corrupt Triads in-league with Imperialists”.

•**Activity:** Throughout the non-Concession areas of the city there will be riots with intermittent gun-fire. In the Concessions, acting on orders given by Chiang Kai-shek, Green Gang squads will initiate attacks against certain prominent Chinese people. This could include the investigators.

•**Activity:** Investigators will notice that the Green Gang are not just killing their enemies, but are also carrying away the bodies.

•**Activity:** Big Eared Du can trade the life of a communist (the captured Zhou Enlai or an investigator) for the secret to resurrection.

•**Reaction:** If investigators save some labor organizers, they will introduce the investigators to Zhou Enlai.

•**Reaction:** If the Green Gang gets hold of the resurrection spell, some of the people they killed will be found alive again, although quite shaken and possibly insane. All of them will be subservient to the Green Gang.

•**Reaction:** If Cixi is alive, she will become the enemy of the Green Gang. In future interactions, she may enlist the investigator’s help in defeating Du.

**1929 Driver:** Big Eared Du chains Pockmarked Huang to a wall in his French Concession flat. Pockmarked Huang is fed a steady diet of the Drug of Liao and human brains. Pockmarked Huang is transformed into an avatar of Y’Golonac, thus gaining knowledge of the future, and becoming known as the Pockmarked Patron.

•**Activity:** Pockmarked Huang, to the extent that he exists, will allow himself to be kidnapped by anyone so as to get away from Big Eared Du.

•**Activity:** Due to the alliance between the Green Gang and KMT, all known communist investigators will be viciously hunted. Known associates of said investigator will be brought in for questioning.

•**Reaction:** If Resurrected Cixi has not been destroyed, she may attempt to coerce the investigators into finding the Pockmarked Patron. If this is somehow successful, Cixi will control the destiny of China and reestablish the Qing. She will psychically dominate a faction leader to set up as her puppet.

•**Reaction:** If Pockmarked Huang is allowed to live, Du will kill Mao Zedong, thus ensuring Chiang Kai-shek becomes the leader of China, with the Green Gang morphing into into a business conglomerate that also handles political enforcement.

**1930 Driver:** The Green Gang turns its attention to the Genyosha and uses its supernatural knowledge and assets to destroy it. These acts will be framed as a “patriotic struggle.” As a result of this struggle, various Mythos creations will battle in the streets of Shanghai, destroying the city.

•**Activity:** The Hounds of Tindalos will attack investigators who have come into contact with either a Tcho Tcho or an entity which makes predictions (the Bloated Woman or the Pockmarked Patron)

•**Reaction:** If Shanghai is destroyed, a faction leader – either Zhou Enlai or Big Eared Du – will ask the investigators to find the Tcho Tcho “Lotus Eaters” and go back in time to assassinate Toyama Mitsuru.



# Lore Sheets

Lore Sheets are handouts that provide players with extra background information about their investigators, story settings and the game world. The Sassoon Files also provides optional rules that allow Investigators can gain “mechanical” advantages through the use of a Lore Sheet.

Here is an example of a Lore Sheet:

□□ “My father is Huang Jinrong”: My father is Huang Jinrong, former leader of the Green Gang and one of the most powerful crime figures in China. Huang Jinrong (“Pockmarked Huang”) learned his trade in his father’s Shanghai tea house, where he overheard the conversations of schemers, gangsters, con-men, and others on the make. In 1892, and at the age of 24, Huang Jinrong left his father’s tea house to work for the French Concession police as a detective. He was an excellent detective, able to solve many cases because of his connections from his father’s tea house. Pockmarked Huang was also a leader of the Green Gang.

I’m the scion of one of Huang’s mistresses. Huang has accepted me as his prodigy and I will be a virtuous son. Therefore, I’m also loyal to the Green Gang. However, no one else knows about this relationship nor my allegiance; not even other members of the Green Gang. I must secretly report back to my father about anything that should be of interest to him.

In the above example, the character would have a secret role related to a faction (the Green Gang). Working with the Keeper, players can modify and personalize this Lore Sheet. Note that the Lore Sheet also provides some settings information, so that players can better understand what is happening in the world of The Sassoon Files. This is one of the main benefits of using Lore Sheets with The Sassoon Files campaign setting; Lore Sheets give small pieces of information to players to help them understand this time and place.

One benefit of Lore Sheets is that complex information about the setting can be distributed quickly and without the need for including a tedious history lesson as part of the game. This optional rule is best used when playing an extended campaign, where the Keeper and the players are comfortable with investigators pursuing “secret goals” as part of the campaign gameplay. If you do not want to use this Optional Rule, please consider all Lore Sheets in this book as handouts, which the Keeper may handout when appropriate.

## How to Use Lore Sheets

The Lore Sheet mechanic here is adopted from the “Rational Magic” RPG for use in both GUMSHOE and Call of Cthulhu systems.

In GUMSHOE, Lore Sheets act exactly like investigator Abilities, with a level equal to the number of □. In the above example, an investigator may use the Lore Sheet to make a point-spend to hire a Green Gang clean-up crew. Or use it to narrate about a Green Gang safe-house he has heard about. This can be used to influence gang members, pay bribes to police, and access weapons through gang contacts.

In the Call of Cthulhu system, spending a point from a Lore Sheet can be used to add a Bonus Die to a roll which is directly related to something on the Lore Sheet. Players need to describe or narrate the special skills, knowledge, or relationship that is utilized by the point-spend.

The Lore Sheet points are refreshed at the end of each game session.





## Giving Out Lore Sheets

As Keeper, first, you should decide with your table if this is a mechanic you wish to use. We advise that you use this if your table is unfamiliar with modern Chinese history or if you would like to include some secret roles and goals into the campaign. A Keeper may also use Lore Sheets as a means of introducing inter-party conflict or player-versus-player (“PvP conflict”) into the campaign.

Lore Sheets should be handed out secretly. However, each player must be able to independently decide whether or not to accept and use a Lore Sheet. Lore Sheets should not be forced upon a player, EXCEPT for Lore Sheets that are added to a pre-made investigator prior to being taken on by a player. Therefore, this mechanic is best utilized when there is a “Session 0” and the Keeper can communicate with players in private before the campaign officially starts. At the very least, the Keeper will need the ability to have a private conversation with each player.

Feel free to copy, cut out and use any Lore Sheet provided in The Sassoon Files. When you are ready to talk with players one-on-one, select a Lore Sheet to generally describe to the player; it is important to explicitly alert the player to any faction allegiance described in the Lore Sheet. However, feel free to obfuscate specific details. Ask the player if they would like to take on this additional secret role which comes with additional details about the campaign settings.

If a player does not like a Lore Sheet – or does not like any Lore Sheets – you can work with them to write their own. But be sure that any newly created Lore Sheets are in some way related to campaign background information and settings. In some cases, additional research may be required prior to writing the Lore Sheet.

Once a player has selected a Lore Sheet, have them staple it to their character sheet. Remind them that there may be consequences of sharing the contents of the Lore Sheet with other players.

Included in The Sassoon Files are “Campaign Lore Sheets”. These Lore Sheets do not have check-boxes (☐). They contain background settings information that may be

handed to players. In this game, Campaign Lore Sheets have no “mechanical” value and the Keeper may give them out to all players. Or, if the Keeper wishes, the Keeper can be selective about which player receives which Campaign Lore Sheet. This might encourage the players to talk about their knowledge and share notes while reducing the amount of time spent silently reading the settings material.

## Changing Lore Sheets

Each Lore Sheet included in this book has a “Resolve” condition; a portion of text that is underlined. If the player manages to accomplish what is described as the Resolve condition, they gain a reward.

In Call of Cthulhu, investigators resolving a Lore Sheet may check the box next to a skill during the development phase, even if the character never successfully used the skill during play. Only 1 “free” box may be checked in this way per game session.

In GUMSHOE, investigators resolving three Lore Sheets gain a Build Point. However, only 1 Build Point may be given out at the end of a session.

Keepers should speak with the players about updating Lore Sheets to reflect current relationships and goals after any scenario in which a Lore Sheet is Resolved. Here, players can describe the motivations of their investigators and other human NPCs described in a Lore Sheet.

Keepers may offer new Lore Sheets any time after a Lore Sheet is Resolved. These Lore Sheets can be pre-generated and provided as part of this book or they may be written by the Keeper with input from the player.





# The Sassoon Files Campaign General Lore Sheet

Time: Mid to Late 1920s.

Location: Shanghai City

At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Shanghai was a small town located in a swamp near the mouth of the Yangzi river. Then the foreigners came with their gunships to force open China. For the foreigners who sold opium and traded in the interior of China, Shanghai was a natural base. Transport ships carried raw materials and opium into the city, and finished goods and wealth out of the city.

By the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were tens of thousands of foreigners taking up residence in Shanghai, the "Pearl of Asia." The foreigners brought supporting institutions, such as schools, churches, and synagogues. They created rail and telegraph systems, newspapers, schools, hospitals, jails. They invested some of the massive wealth from the opium trade to make Shanghai into a modern city to rival the world's capitals.

The foreigners lived in Concessions where they enjoyed extra-territorial jurisdiction; the laws of China did not apply to them. In Shanghai, there was the International Settlement (controlled by the British and Americans) and the French Concession. Together with Chinese-controlled neighborhoods, these extra-judicial districts with their separate law enforcement and legal systems created an ideal environment for criminals and revolutionaries to escape from the arms of the law.

For most of his adult life, Sun Yat-sen struggled to overthrow the corrupt and degenerate Qing dynasty. After the last Emperor, 6-year old Puyi, was overthrown by a coalition of warlords in the Xinhai revolution, Sun became the first President of post-Imperial China. Soon after, however, China was split apart by warlords. Sun's protégé, Chiang Kai-shek, developed and lead the armed forces of the Kuomintang ("KMT") or "National People's Party". The KMT was heavily supported by the Soviet

Union, although within its member ranks were people of many different political outlooks, unified only by an overwhelming desire for Chinese independence. Through a series of campaigns between 1926 and 1929, the KMT managed to unify China.

Sun Yat-sen passed in March of 1925. In 1927, Chiang Kai-shek, who did not trust the KMT's Soviet advisers, moved against the Communists within the KMT. In Shanghai, Chiang entered into an alliance with "Big Eared" Du Yuesheng, leader of the Green Gang, to rid the city of Communists. Together, they killed thousands in an act known as the "Shanghai Massacre". The Shanghai Massacre marks the beginning of the Chinese Civil War, which would last (on and off) until 1949. As a reward for his help, Big Ear Du was granted monopoly rights to the opium trade in all of China.

Zhou Enlai, a leader in the KMT, was an amazing recruiter for the cause. Zhou Enlai was also an excellent diplomat and extremely successful Communist labor union organizer. Zhou Enlai escaped the Shanghai Massacre to later return (with his wife), sometime in 1929. There, for the next two years, Zhou Enlai led the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) secret recruitment operations. He also came to control the Special Services (or "Te-Ke"), which performed counter-espionage operations, conducted intelligence gathering, and carried out assassination missions. In Shanghai, Zhou and his wife never slept a night in the same bed. They wore different disguises and traveled between the separate jurisdictions of the French Concession and the International Settlement every day.

During this time, the Te-Ke secretly hunted KMT officials, while the Green Gang and KMT spies hunted Communists. Meanwhile, Shanghai's foreigners and well-to-do only heard rumors of this secret war within their city. Shanghai offered the foreigners an illusory refuge and the promise of big business.



□□ **Sam at The Long Bar:** The “Long Bar,” on the second floor of The Shanghai Club, is the world’s longest bar at this time at 39 meters in length (110 feet). The position at the bar is determined by one’s place in society, with the Tai-pans and bank managers nearest the Bund and going down the social ladder from there. The club has a grand hall in the Italian fashion on the first floor with elevators going to the floors above which contain libraries, guest rooms, a smoking room and dining hall, billiards, and the other necessities of a proper men’s club.

Samuel “Sam” Reed is the master bartender at the Long Bar, always ready with just the right cocktail for any occasion. He is enjoying a bit of fame at the moment for the invention of the Shanghai Sling, a fruity cocktail made with 白酒, a local liquor made from sorghum. Sam does a brisk trade in gossip, and any club member in good standing can glean a nugget of information from him by providing him with one of their own – tit for tat.

Sam is my buddy. I’m the guy who got him that job at the Long Bar in the first place! I may not be at the top of my game right now with everything going on now, but Sam is there to help me out. He can tell me things and find things for me. He can make the right introductions. Sam approached me the other night. He told me there was a special bottle of Baijiu that used to belong to the late Empress Dowager Cixi herself. Sam said he would be particularly grateful if I could get my hands on this bottle of vintage spirits.

□□ **The Librarian at the Shanghai Club:** The Shanghai Club is an exclusive English Social club located on the Bund and as such is THE place to rub elbows with the rich and powerful. Terrance Cavendish is the club under butler and de facto librarian for the Shanghai Club’s extensive library (famously larger than that of the Shanghai Public Library). If you are in possession of a Shanghai Bibliophiles’ Club membership card, Cavendish will escort you to the Club’s “special collection” – a secret library of occult books, including such titles as *Myst’ries of thee Oriental* and *Return to the Hidden* (歸藏). As to how to get such a card – that is a further mystery. The only person I know who has one claims he got it off the body of a hideously deformed cultist.

I have been casing Cavendish. I know where he sleeps and who he sleeps with. I know about the little pistol he keeps tucked in his belt. I know about the old knife wound on his right arm that causes him pain. I need to get into that Library... what I know about Cavendish might help.

The above Lore Sheets were created by David Vronay.

□□ **The Warlord:** Yan Xishan was a powerful warlord controlling Shanxi province throughout the 1920s and 30s. Unusually for many warlords, he tried to avoid conflict and often looked for ways to adopt modern medicine and scientific techniques. This thirst for the modern leads him to admire the Japanese and the West as sources of knowledge and expertise to be hired and used, or exploited, wherever they can be of benefit to Yan and his power-base. Yan is above all a pragmatist and those who serve him effectively are rewarded, but those who get distracted or fail to advance his interests, are discarded.

I am a trusted agent of Yan Xishan, operating in the city of Shanghai. From my office in Shanghai near the Bund, I run an outwardly respectable business as shipping agent (which I have points in), but in reality, I am arranging coal and iron ore shipments to be transported to the Japanese over several potentially hostile borders. Because of this, I’m not unacquainted with Shanghai’s gangs, to which I sometimes need to pay protection money. Looking after the interests of my patron has given me a raft of experience and a number of contacts among labor leaders in need of sponsorship, as well as customs officials and local police who are willing to overlook my activities. Through my contacts, I became aware of a huge desire for ancient Chinese artifacts found on the Loess Plateau. Many westerners believe the Loess is evidence of the great flood from the Bible; they will pay good money to reinforce their beliefs. However, this has brought me into contact with some people with genuinely strange worldviews that most people try to avoid altogether.

□□ **The Warlord’s Son:** Zhang Zuolin. As the ruler of Manchuria and much of Northern China, Zhang Zuolin has considerable influence and reach. As the ruler of some of the key regions of the Boxer rebellion, Zhang is also keen to recover any ancient artifacts that he could use to increase the support of those regions for his rule. Although Zhang has never asked for any occult artifacts because of his own beliefs, he believes in the power of objects to make other people believe things. Zhang Xueliang is Zuolin’s son. Xueliang serves as enforcer, recruiter, organizer, and general to his father’s domain.

I have been hired by Zhang Xueliang to hunt for investors in Shanghai in support of the region’s railway. We are doing this as part of a broader project to oppose the growing Japanese influence in the North East. As a result, I have been living something of a double existence, throwing parties and organizing social events to get investors interested in Manchurian railways, and at the same time having to deal with increasingly shady characters who have some very worrying beliefs, as they try to unearth artifacts that will help keep Zhang in power.

The above Lore Sheets were created by Ben Sanders



□□ **The SMP.** The Shanghai Municipal Police protect and serve the Shanghai International Settlement. Founded in the mid 19th Century, the SMP currently employs more than 2000 fulltime police officers. The ethnically diverse and integrated SMP is recognized throughout the world as on the forefront of police training and operations; its members practice combat pistol drill, hand-to-hand combat and riot control techniques. However, in addition to the SMP's regular duties of managing traffic and solving crimes, the SMP also regularly surveilled and harassed labor leaders and anti-British agitators. The Shanghai Municipal Police only operate within the International Settlement; they will not pursue criminals into the French Concession let alone the Chinese City.

I'm friends with Leftenant York in the SMP and we cooperated on a professional basis. We have a "I scratch your back and you scratch mine" relationship. I can count on him to help me out - with force if necessary. York asked me to report on any communist or Chinese nationalist sympathizers I may encounter. That's an easy task, as it seems that everyone is against the Brits nowadays. Nevertheless, if I encounter anything noteworthy, I need to tell him.

□□ **The Garde Municipale.** The Garde Municipale polices the French Concession. Founded in the mid 19th Century, the Garde Municipale currently employs more than 2000 fulltime police officers, including Chinese and Vietnamese officers. Unlike the Shanghai Municipal Police (SMP), the Garde Municipale is involved with the promotion of "Republican" principles. Regulating and preventing crime is of less importance than showing the superiority of French Culture. Therefore, the Garde is infamous for its corruption and is heavily infiltrated by the Green Gang. Perhaps somewhat paradoxically, the Garde more resembles a paramilitary organization than a police force. They own and operate a large fleet of armored cars equipped with machine guns. The Garde Municipale only operates within the French Concession.

My uncle is sub-commander Jean Lafleur of the Garde Municipale. We have a good relationship. I am able to call on my uncle for help; I know if I do, he will bring in the cavalry. My uncle also introduced me to his Chinese coworkers, many of whom are members of a local charity organization called "The Green Gang". Members of the Green Gang can provide information and other services to me. However, my uncle wants me to report on Chinese nationalist organizer activities as well as any news about the comings and goings of the SMP.

□□ **The Currency Trader.** Every area of China used different currencies. Spanish Pieces of Eight - which had come into China for the last several hundred years, were still used. All currencies were measured and compared based on their weight in silver, with prices often quoted by "taels" of silver, although different banks and trading houses had different definitions of what constituted a tael.

I work for a Mercantile Bank of India, London, and China as part of the currency exchange department. From this position, I have knowledge of the comings and goings of most of the big traders and bankers in Shanghai, although they mostly see me as little more than an administrative clerk.

□□ **Shanghai Jazz** - Li Jinhui (黎錦暉) (5 September 1891 - 15 February 1967) was a Chinese composer and songwriter who founded the Bright Moon Song and Dance Troupe (明月歌舞团) and pioneered the development of Shanghai jazz, a fusion of modern jazz with Chinese folk songs. Although Li's music was extremely popular, it was branded degenerate and pornographic "Yellow Music".

I am an amateur musician with an interest in jazz. Li Jinhui provides me with private piano lessons in his spare time. Many different interesting people populate Jinhui's social circle. Wealthy Chinese benefactors, actors and actresses, Black American Jazz artists, and wealthy expatriate house wives are among Jinhui's many contacts. Jinhui is happy to causally introduce these individuals to me, should I ask. He is even willing to introduce me to people who prefer not to be associated with his "Yellow Music". However, I must repay those favors.





□□ **The Abbot's Right Hand Man:** Shaolin Temple 少林禪寺 An important center for Chan (Zen) practice in China located over 600 miles west of Shanghai on Mt. Song in Henan. Since the sixteenth century, it has been famous for the martial arts prowess of its monks. The otherwise peaceful monks fight to protect their temple and local villagers from bandits. In the post-Revolution chaos of the 1910s, Abbot Henglin 恆林\* organized a self-defense force at the temple armed with guns from Shanghai. Unfortunately, they sided with the wrong warlord (a man who had trained at the temple as a youth\*), and the temple was destroyed by opposing soldiers on March 15, 1928. The survivors now seek to raise funds to rebuild and to find out who betrayed them.

My cousin Fashan 法山 is a monk from Shaolin Temple and the new abbot's right-hand man. He comes to the city on secret temple business. He finds working with the Shanghai underworld distasteful but sometimes necessary. When he is in town, he stays at the Temple of the Jade Buddha 玉佛寺 as a guest of Abbot Kecheng 可成\*. I must help Fashan find out how his temple was betrayed.

□□ **Wudangshan Quest:** Wudang Mountain 武當山 Wudang means many things: It is the name of a cluster of mountains 750 miles west of Shanghai; it is the name of the Daoist monastery complex built in those mountains, and it is the name of the major school of Chinese martial arts developed at that monastery. But for the monks and nuns of the Wudang Clan, the martial arts are merely one element of the total path of self-cultivation. This path, which involves the arts, Inner Alchemy meditation, and rigorous moral discipline, leads to the transcendence of the mortal body.

I've spent many years around Mt. Wudang, and came to know some of the monastics there well. Here in Shanghai, I am neighbors with Ms. Gu, a subtle player of the guqin 古琴 and a doctor of Chinese medicine. Single, and of indeterminate age, Ms. Gu knows a lot about current events at Wudang, and we often spend afternoons chatting about them over tea. I only approve of orthodox Quanzhen 全真 Daoism and are also suspicious of Western medicine. I must work to discredit doctors of Western medicine and practitioners of heterodox Daoist practices.

Above three Lore Sheets were created by Erik Hammerstrom.

□□ **Shanghai Lay Buddhists' Lodge** 上海佛教居士林: Operating as a modern, Western-style voluntary association, the Lodge is a gathering place for the city's elite Buddhists. It boasts a large clock in its central courtyard, a modern lecture hall, and dorm rooms for short-term stays. Morning and evening devotions are performed daily in the shrine hall, but there is no resident monk, so these are led by lay people. Within the Lodge, political and intellectual elites meet for tea and rub elbows at lectures, study groups, and in the Lodge's reading room, which holds an impressive library of exoteric and esoteric Buddhists texts in several languages, alongside a selection of the most current periodicals from around the world.

I am a card-carrying member of the Shanghai Buddhist Lodge, though I may keep this fact private. I can use the Lodge's facilities. Through the Lodge, I may make political and academic contacts necessary for my investigations. Like most Lodge members, I support the KMT. I am suspicious of the Communists' anti-religion rhetoric and must work to thwart them through spying or direct action.

□□ **Anton and Igor:** Political and social upheaval in Russia has seen a flow of White Russian and Jewish migration into Shanghai since the turn of the century. With the downfall of the Tsar and the ongoing Russian Civil War, this trickle of traders and families has risen drastically. The area south of Julu Road, around the Jing An Temple, has become a focal point for new arrivals and their meager belongings. Residences are often over-crowded and poverty abounds; many refugees lack skills in English and French, greatly restricting opportunities in the International Settlement. Slum residents can often be found on Joffre Avenue, hawking wares near the Cathay Theatre. Some women from the community find work as taxi dancers; effectively hired dance partners, while men with military experience enlist in the Shanghai Russian Regiment, part of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps.

The Russian Slum has no shortage of desperate people; the right amount of money can turn up mercenaries, fences for the quick exchange of stolen goods and forged documents, something the Green Gang knows well. Anton and Igor Khrabkhin, brothers originally from the Russian Far East, command some degree of notoriety as fixers, enablers and black marketeers. I know how to find them...and I think they owe me a favor. That said, favors are never free; the key is to make a deal that benefits all interested parties.



□□ **Big Eared Du's White Russian:** Many White Russians arrived in Shanghai with nothing more than the clothes on their backs, having fled the Red Terror and the Russian Civil War by boat or overland through Mongolia. Big Eared Du, leader of the Green Gang, quickly recognized the unique skill sets possessed by some of these emigres and particularly valued their intimidating physical size.

Aleksandar Verkhatsky had been a soldier in the Imperial Russian Army during the Great War, seeing action on the Eastern Front against the Germans. His gambling habits in China, combined with his prowess in brawling and intimidation, soon draw the attention of Big Eared Du, who found a much better use for him in his entourage as hired muscle. I have seen Aleksandar and his goons on three occasions, two of which saw me fleeing as fast as I could. One day I'll make him pay for his bad attitude, but I'll definitely need help.

□□ **Genyosha: The Dark Ocean Society** 玄洋社: Named after the Genkainada Strait that separates Korea and Japan, the Genyosha is a Japanese secret society that seeks to support the expansion of Japan across Asia, developing a network of spies, informants, and double-agents to harvest information and undermine critics and opponents of Japan. Active in China for more than half a century, the Genyosha have established links with numerous underground groups across East Asia, finding common allies in nationalist groups and political dissidents. In Shanghai they hold business interests in brothels, using them as informal meeting houses and an ongoing source of hard currency, as well as a potential honeypot for the blackmailing of higher officials.

Genyosha members themselves hold something of a mystique among those who have encountered them. Supernatural strength or speed, unblinking eyes and uncanny influence hint at almost unnatural powers. The dead body of a worker from the Tramway Car Sheds, rumored to be a Genyosha informant, was recently found drained of blood, adding to their infamy. Interfering with their work, intercepting their communications and actively seeking them is the ongoing task of local police, although both locals and foreigners have been known to reach out with the intention of establishing mutually beneficial understandings. I've had something of a love-hate relationship with them since I arrived in Shanghai. There are definitely strange goings-on within and I'm always extra careful not to upset them, but I just can't walk away; their tentacles run deep across Asia and the information they can dig up is just too damn valuable.

Above three Lore Sheets were created by Phillip O'Brien.





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 Marcus "Nerdflyer" Luft  
 Marina  
 Mark Grehan  
 Mark James Featherston  
 Mark Sable  
 Mark Solino  
 Martin Blake  
 Martin Herles  
 Martin Oakley  
 Martin Schindegger  
 Maru  
 Masayuki Sakamoto  
 Matt Duffy

Matt Ryan  
 Matthew Ruane  
 Max Moraes  
 Michael Barnes  
 Michael Bowman  
 Michael C. Mihalecz  
 Michael Lane  
 Michael O'Connor  
 Mikael Engstrom  
 Mike A. Weber  
 Mike Davis  
 Mike Domino  
 Mike Douglas  
 Mitch Harding  
 Morgan Davies  
 Mr. Shiny (Jeff Carey)  
 Munchezuma  
 Nathaniel Janick  
 Necrothesp  
 Ngo Vinh-Hoi  
 Nicholas J. Corkigian  
 Nigel Clarke  
 Oliver Kidd  
 Oliver Von Spreckelsen  
 Olivier Lefebvre  
 Ols Jonas Petter Olsson  
 P.s.ryan  
 Patrice Mermoud  
 Patrick Chandler  
 Paul Leary  
 Paul Lilley  
 Paul Salisbury  
 Paul Sudlow  
 Paweł Opara  
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 Pegana  
 Perry Tatman  
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 Philip Wiles  
 Pookie Uk  
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 Qian Fite  
 Rachael B. Randolph  
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 Sue Hare  
 Tdraket  
 Terry Herc  
 The Rangdo Of Arg  
 The Twin  
 Thomas Dahmen  
 Thomas Powell  
 Todd W. Olson  
 Tom Van Hee  
 Tomasz Cybulski  
 Tony Parry  
 Trevor Sponagle  
 Uwe Schumacher  
 Wade Mans  
 William Fisher  
 William Stowers  
 Ying Xu  
 Zak Kendrick  
 Zhengran Wang  
 Ziggwam

## Investigator

Aaron Adams  
 Adamultraberg  
 Afbeer  
 Alberto Barrantes Cano  
 Aleksi Martikainen  
 Alex Moore  
 Alfredo Amatriain  
 Álvaro  
 Ana Christina Dahlberg  
 Andrew Mclean  
 Anthony Williams  
 Antonin  
 Austin Whitespace  
 Bordinistarling  
 Breon Halling  
 Bryant Durrell  
 Carl Walter  
 Cesareborgia  
 Charles  
 Chris Braun  
 Chris Furness  
 Chris Kirby  
 Chris Miles  
 Chris Skuller  
 Chris Tutt  
 Chris Westbrook  
 Cody  
 Contesse  
 Craig Earl  
 D. Lybarger  
 Dag Torleif Petersen  
 Daniel Clements  
 Daniel Lattner  
 Daniel Williams  
 Darin Dumez  
 Darío Tórtola Navarro  
 Darren Kerr  
 Dave Gross  
 David  
 David Bagdan  
 David M Jacobs  
 David Mascari  
 David Queen  
 David Robinson  
 Dawn  
 Dennis Pogarch Jr.  
 Dnice Nicole  
 Eleanor Mchugh  
 Ep  
 Eric Moore  
 Eric Stolar  
 Ezradenney  
 Flow  
 Frank Yu  
 Fred Kiesche

Frederic Moll  
 Gandash  
 Gerald Udowiczenco  
 Ginger Stampley  
 Gottardo Zancani  
 Guest 724240975  
 Guest 744609505  
 Hao Zhang  
 Harald Zubrod  
 Helene Creusot  
 Helge Hudel  
 Henrik Hellbom  
 Ian Mcfarlin  
 Ibon Presno Gonzalez  
 Incandescens  
 Jake Cook  
 James Sarver  
 James Winward-Stuart  
 Jamie  
 Jim Clunie  
 Joe Adams  
 John Daly  
 John Doran  
 Jonas Karlsson  
 Jonasb  
 Jonathan Korman  
 Jordi Rabionet Hernandez  
 José Manuel García Presa  
 Justin Spath, Space Daddy  
 Games  
 Kacper Nosarzewski  
 Kat  
 Kenneth Hite  
 Ki Nala Alysar  
 Kierlik Edouard  
 Kim Haling  
 Kyle Amezcua  
 Kyler  
 Levi Smith  
 Liangcai  
 Lloyd Moore  
 Lucn  
 Luis Andrade Rios  
 Magnus Gillberg  
 Malarky  
 Mariano Rico  
 Mark  
 Martin Jungeblut  
 Mary Henry  
 Matt Bleasdale  
 Matt Kohls  
 Matthew  
 Michael Feldman  
 Michael J. Dulock  
 Michael Klein  
 Michele Facco  
 Mike & Paola Garcia



Mpk  
Nate Ng  
Nbaer  
Neil Mahoney  
Nethescurial  
Nick Melchior  
Nicolas Fuentealba  
Odyssey  
Oliver Korpilla  
Orin Mayer  
Owlglass  
Paul H  
Peter Allen  
Phill Massey  
R. Eric Vannewkirk  
Reaching Moon  
Recrispi  
Regis  
René Mellema  
Richard  
Richard Ing  
Rik Cameron  
Robert Carnel  
Robert G. Male  
Robert Kim  
Robet Rasmussen  
Roger Haxton  
Rom Elwell  
Ross Payton  
Sami Merilä  
Samuel González  
Scot Ryder  
Scott Uhls  
Sean Mcfadden  
Sean Mclaughlin  
Seasonedcampaigner  
Seth Cooper  
Shane White  
Sjbrown  
Stephan Hamat-Rains  
Stephane Gelgoot  
Steve Wright  
Steven Ward  
Stuart Miller  
Süli Péter  
Svend Andersen  
Tahd Inskepp  
Tangys  
Thomas Anderson  
Thomas Iverson  
Thomas Janny  
Thomas Pheister  
Tomako  
Tomoki Ishii  
Vitasoy  
Wes Kruse  
William David Miller

Yukihiro\_terada  
Zulua  
みぎひだり  
甘党料理人

### **Communist Agitator**

Alex Guertin  
Darren  
Michael G. Palmer

### **Other Backers**

Barry Hollywood  
Bayt al Azif  
C Chris Foos  
Chaosium Inc.  
Guest 1868170946  
Guest 2106223690  
Guest 216760007  
John Napiorkowski  
Rare Roleplay  
Sam Genoese  
The Creative Fund

### **FLGS**

Francis acquarone  
temo  
Boris Jjvc  
david wynn  
Roland Bahr  
L. J. McBeetlehead  
Guest 1856298704

### **Playtesters**

Adam Faccenda  
Alan Kahn  
Albert Boada  
Andrej Agacevic,  
Ben Sanders  
Cody Sawyer  
Colin Lee-Chee  
Dan Bass  
David Beggs  
Debbie Chen  
Dominik Nax  
Francesco Petrozza  
Francis Acquarone  
George Sibley  
Hoshino Hiroko,  
Jacob Hardin  
Jesse Covner

Joey Oosting  
Katie Oh  
Kevin Kerr  
Mara Ledda  
Maxime Sale  
Pau Pitarch Fernandez  
Shaiwling Lai  
Steven Daly  
Trevor Sponagle  
William Hoppes  
Zhang Hao

### **Moral Supporters**

Akiva & Kenaz Covner  
Ikuko Haga  
Bruce, Sue, Micah & Rachel  
George & Ruth Covner  
Irving & Sophie Friendman  
Malena Sheets  
Everyone on r/RPDdesign



# Shanghai Jazz

Below is a list of Shanghai Jazz songs written and performed in the 1920's:

A Night in Shanghai 夜上海

The Cocktail Song 雞尾酒

Let's Love Tonight 今宵多珍重

Rose, Rose, I Love You 玫瑰玫瑰我爱你

Lovers' Tears 情人的眼淚

The Song You're Hearing 你聽到的歌聲

Magic Love 奇異的愛情

Jasmine Flower 茉莉花

The Old Teahouse 老茶館

Give Me a Kiss 給我一個吻

Buck Clayton

