

Introduction

The time is...well, anytime. And...anywhere. So much for specifics...

The world our characters find themselves in is mind-bending cosmos where time twists and changes like a swirling eddy. At the core of all this tumult is Fabric, elements that lie within their own periodic chart and operate unlike our better-known elements. Fabric is valuable commodity and is responsible not only for changing the twists and folds of time, but for animating strange beings that hold unearthly power.

Knowledge of Fabric is limited to a small few that hoard their knowledge of it and guard it with deadly force.

Due to Fabric's scarcity, there are people and organizations that search through space and time for Fabric. "Fabric Hunters," "Chrono-diggers" and other names are given to these individuals. They are the mercenaries of the Fabric world, knowledgeable enough of Fabric to track it down, but (usually) more interested in the money they fetch, or--for some--simply the thrill of the chase.

One such Fabric Hunter is Petri, who the party ran into while incarcerated by a Saurian mining colony. Not unusual for a Hunter, Petri displays a general disregard for morality or regard for life. She is also part of a loose coalition of such Hunters, occasionally alluding to others in the organization and suggesting that the party help her with various quests. Petri prefers to avoid doing the "extraction" work herself, and instead relies on spider-like planning to set up conditions under which she can easily extract her quarry.

Setup

Characters are brought into this world with little or no formal introduction; they are either duped into helping a Fabric Hunter's chase or witnessing the effect of Fabric in an otherwise ordinary situation.

Characters in this adventure quickly find themselves in a situation where common assumptions of time, space, and the supernatural are shown to be naive.

Time and Time Again

In this adventure, the party first encounters a pre-revolutionary New England village that is stuck in a time loop--endlessly being "reset" to the beginning of the year, regardless of what has

happened--only that all the inhabitants of this isolated plateau retain knowledge of their previous years. They encounter "witches," a group of falsely accused women who--somewhat to spite their accusers--learned how to harness powers generally not understood by humans. The party finds the time loop to be caused by a binary struggle between "The Man in the Mountain" and "The Man in the Swamp"--two supernatural creatures who, they later find, are powered by polar pieces of Fabric.

In playing this adventure, the party befriended a "young" witch (a girl of 12 but who has lived for innumerable years) and elected to destroy the Man in the Swamp. Destroying him allowed the Man in the Mountain to "win" the battle, by causing the mountain to fall upon the isolated plateau, destroying everything and everyone on it--save for the party and Hecuba, who were transported as rocks fell about them.

What Lies Beneath

After ending or escaping the time-looped village, the party is whisked away to a small station on a distant, barren moon. There the station's residents take them in--confused by their unexplained arrival--but needing help to locate lost crew members. Going down a deep shaft used to perform geological experiments, they find a massive underground "ship" filled with Saurians--lizardmen--who have detained the missing crew members. One of the crew members, Petri, reveals herself to be a Fabric Hunter and describes Fabric to the party. The capture is actually a ruse allowing her to scope out the mining vessel--which is really a large creature with which the Saurians have a symbiotic relationship--and, with the assistance of a mercenary strike team, break into the hold and "retrieve" some Fabric that is in the possession of the Saurians.

In playing this adventure, the party met Jabber, a medic, former soldier, and a crewmember of the Meridian Outpost. As Petri revealed herself and her plan for robbing the Saurians of their Fabric, the team had divisive thoughts about whose side to join. In the end, the mercenary invasion was narrowly thwarted, forcing Petri to retreat to another time and space. The party was healed and cared for by the remaining Saurians--although some of Lillian's "toys" were taken from her for siding with Petri. After a week, the letter Lillian had found from enemy FX(squared) turned into a portal, and the party, along with Hecuba and Jabber, escaped from the Saurian "containment pens."

Nazis at the Mountains of Madness

The party finds themselves in late 1940 embarking on an investigation into a secret German base in Antarctica. Here, they uncover a world- and timeline-changing operation, where the

Germans are exploring ancient alien ruins and tapping into supernatural powers to influence the World War to their ends. Having learned of the scale and scope of this alien complex, the characters find themselves caught in a massive adventure that spans time and space, traversing alternative timelines, with each action heavily affecting the outcome of the world.

Vernon Eldritch, esteemed but eccentric professor at Miskatonic University in Arkham, Massachusetts, has collaborated with US Army Intelligence to plan a mission to pursue a lead provided by a cracked German communique. The message indicates a coordinate deep inside Antarctica and mentioned Dyer, a man from Miskatonic U. who had led a failed mission there ten years previously. The party--transported directly onto an American B-17 carrying a mostly British squad of soldiers--is brought up to speed by Major Bradley, from US Army Intelligence. The team is flown to a temporary airbase constructed by "Sea Bees" brought in covertly by submarine, but they find that the submarine has been mysteriously attacked, with only one crazed crew member remaining.

Pursuing their goal of finding Dyer and unraveling the nature of the German base, they overnigh at the airbase, alert for any hostilities or detection. To reach the German base, the party and soldiers loaded into a large glider, towed by the B-17, and the glider is released about 15 miles from the target, in the hopes of making a silent and stealthy descent.

The base is a geodesic dome, about 60' in diameter, and is largely unfortified. A large antenna array is strung from the base, and a makeshift airstrip lies adjacent to the dome. Cradled next to a mountain range, the dome has only one entrance--a garage-like door that is protected by a few cold and bored soldiers sitting in a half-track.

Inside the doors, the ground floor is largely a garage and loading dock; the center of the floor is a large 18' square platform that can be lowered via heavy chains, operated by a large switch on the platform. Looking from the entrance, to the right is a boiler room, supplying electricity to the facility; opposite the entrance is a general supplies storage area; to the left is a concrete stairway leading up.

The second floor, reached by the stairs, is used for research and for housing the base inhabitants. The scientists working here are likely working against their wishes and have little stake in taking sides one way or the other.

At the top floor, reached by continuing up the stairs, the party is "greeted" by the base commander, Commander Vogel, and the chief scientist, Dr. Kugel. Vogel, speaking English, tries to persuade the team to end their fight "in order to save the lives of millions;" if/when engaged in combat, Dr. Kugel turns on the Elendübertragung ("misery transmission") and attempts various mind controls.

~~Dr. Kugel possesses an 8-sided box, which is the aim of Petri's quest; she materializes to retrieve the box when convenient, and offers the team to come with her on the next step of her~~

~~quest. Doing so will abandon the mission of exploring the German presence and will ensure they are successful in winning World War II in this part of the timeline.~~

Below the base, reached by lowering the cargo platform from the ground floor, is a cave tunneled out of ice. A stone, about 12' in diameter and in the form of an elongated eye and evincing a prismatic sheen. It is clearly of supernatural origin, and may cause severe dread, in the form of a reduction of Sanity, in party members. It is guarded by a Colossus and two very ragged-looking soldiers.

If the party was detected or allowed a transmission to go out, a very large German platoon will arrive 20 hours later, ensuring recapture of the base. Before the platoon's arrival, German fighters will attempt to thwart any form of rescue of the team by air. This may result in the capture of the team and likely the destruction of most of the British squad. The platoon is composed of 2 squads of 10 regular infantry; one squad of "Fleishsoldaten" - constructs made by shoggoths that are entirely flesh, with small rips for eyes and ears; no mouth or nose; two shoggoth trawlers - tanklike vehicles but with a fishbowl front entirely filled by a shoggoth; a tall strider - an insectoid creature mounted by three soldiers, with impossibly tall legs.

If things are grim for the team, Petri may appear offering to transport them - not including the allied troops - to another adventure. If the characters surrender, any weapons, tools, and important possessions are taken.

Kopfüber

The Germans learned of the supernatural findings from Dyer's 1930 mission in 1936 and kidnapped him from Mexico that same year. Since that time, they launched several expeditions, quickly establishing a permanent base and supply chain, primarily built around the large ruins Dyer had found.

The primary base lies at the foot of one of the main ground-level entrances to the cyclopean complex. Inside the labyrinth are several research stations and German installations. To minimize the cost and complexity of building barracks and other facilities, the Germans have most of their quarters inside the alien complex itself, subdividing cavernous chambers into temporary rooms. The Shoggoths and other creatures Dyer had encountered were largely driven from the primary chambers, although their survivors still badger the humans when they stray from the fortified areas. A series of elaborate cranes and elevated platforms provides access to the upper chambers of the complex, but these apparati are hazardous even when the weather is forgiving.

The entrance to the complex is flanked by two taxidermied penguins, of the massive variety Dyer had witnessed in his first voyage. Both their chests have swastikas painted upon them.

Passages of History

The more elevated officers and scientists are housed in the Passages of History, chambers with elaborate renditions of the cosmic history of the halls' ancient dwellers. Even though makeshift rooms are assembled out of hung sheets, the large arcing halls overhang all, and distract all that inhabit the halls.

Crushes Upon the Mind

Characters are held in a set of 12-foot-cubed, unadorned cells with iridescent, smooth, and shifting walls. One side is completely open and leads to a wide and deep chasm, with the nearest ledge 6" (36 feet) down. This can be used as a commode. The entrances, opposing the open side, are controlled by a small cube that one of the captors holds in their palm. The entrance dissipates to open, and reappears as a wall to close. It may also be partially opened, as at the bottom, to allow the sliding of food trays or other devices into and out of the cell.

There are about 20 such cells next to each other, each strung along the side of the chasm. The characters may be separated into cells as appropriate, but some of them will be placed next to a cell with a lone prisoner, calling himself Bombay, who claims to be a fishing boat captain who was taken by the Germans after being rescued from his foundering ship. Although it may take time, he will eventually reveal that you can "melt" the Fleishsoldaten by singing "Tekeli-li" at a very specific pitch (Performance). This does have the effect of melting them, but their collective mass will reform into a Fleishcommandant, one for every 3-4 "melted."

The Tangles

On the periphery of the cyclopean complex, the shoggoths have created a tangled mass of tunnels through deep ice and rock. For navigating this, the Germans have devised vehicles they call "Sliders," in shape and size not unlike bumper cars, but composed of a chitinous matter, like the exoskeleton of a strange insect, and having cilia on the bottom. The Sliders are controlled through a set of yokes and stops, also having the form of insectoid appendages. Each slider holds a driver and two passengers, and provides $\frac{1}{4}$ cover and operates otherwise like any vehicle with Unstable Platform and Chase rules.

Otherworldly Well

There is a large, square stone passage from the landing at the bottom of the Tangles, with a view into a vast expanse seemingly without end. In this void float all kinds of creatures, inanimate and adrift. A balcony slopes gently into this void, and slowly draws any who go

through the passage into the void. Their every essence and held possessions, though intact here, are transported via dimensional projection elsewhere.

The Great Old Order

After the Germans researched the Mountains of Madness in the late 1930s and early 1940s, their discoveries of the ways of the Great Old Ones provided them the power needed to easily subjugate the rest of the world. It also gave them the technology to rapidly explore and colonize worlds far from Earth.

The result of the Last World War (Letzter Weltkrieg) was that England capitulated and her empire was used as a controlling arm over a large part of humanity. The United States' great industrial machine, though failing the war, was used by the Germans to construct the means for the Americas' total subjugation by the Third Reich.

The Germans' success in using the power of the Great Old Ones allowed them to maintain the notion of the Aryan Master Race, but at a price: the theology of the Third Reich became that of the Old Ones, dispensing all Earthly gods for fealty to Cthulhu and his cohort. The Germans' obsession with racial superiority caused them to forbid the use of Germanic languages among the "lesser" subjects of their empire, so English became the *de facto* language of the subjected peoples.

The greater bulk of humanity has been forced into slavery, and colonizing and breeding programs by the Great Old Order have spread humans to worlds flung across the universe. Knowledge of the Great Old Ones and their secrets are guarded fiercely by the Order; but as with any reign of great power, factions, in-fighting, and clandestine intrigue are ever-present. Despite the Order having the guise of a single leader, the sheer span of the Order across the universe demands that it resemble more of a loose affiliation of interplanetary coalitions, sharing at best similar uniforms and holy customs, but having radically different tolerances and structures of government, ranging from the despotic to the democratic.

Within only two centuries since the discoveries in Antarctica, humanity has emerged from the cradle of its home planet, colonizing hundreds of worlds, but under the banner of one of the world's cruelest totalitarian regimes.

The hierarchy of the people and subjects of the Fourth Reich are:

- **Grosse Alten** - the Great Old Ones - Dieties and Demigods.
- **Alten** - Individuals who have transcended their human origins. They are solely devoted to the Grosse Alten and hope only to appease their will through controlling all humanity. Usually have supernatural enhancements or take significantly different form from their human origin. Speak Old Ones but will speak other languages when required.

- **Fourth Reich Elites ("Übermenschen")** - those in the elite of the Fourth Reich who have distinguished themselves as embodying the ideals of the Fourth Reich; speak German but must be trained in the speech of the Old Ones. Only a few elites are chosen to ascend to Alten status, and this is performed through a horrifying ritual that results in their physical transformation.
- **Fourth Reich Citizens** - Citizens of German origin; speak German.
- **Privileged Colonists ("Privs")** - Those of non-German origin, but with rights to interact with Fourth Reich citizens, own property and have other legal recognition by the Fourth Reich. German is forbidden as a language except in the presence of a Fourth Reich citizen. The form of German they learn is intentionally different from Fourth Reich German and they must use this altered form at all times. Colonists can never ascend above this level of the hierarchy.
- **Colonists** - Little more than slaves. Regionally, may have local rights within their autonomous systems, but in the eyes of the Fourth Reich, they have no legal rights and are treated as property. German is forbidden as a language in all cases. Colonists may ascend to Privileged status through a formal process of application through the Fourth Reich.
- **Clones** - Whether human clones or Fleischsoldaten or other constructs, clones are much like Colonists and have no rights, and are treated as property. Clones may speak any language as appropriate to their situation.
- **Aliens** - In general, the Fourth Reich, under the direction of the Alten, has attempted to limit their involvement with aliens, preferring to hold planets that provide short-term benefit to their needs. Although there have been skirmishes, there has not been all-out war as the Alten have guided the Fourth Reich to planets that are either not disputed or offer little resistance. However, this is changing. Aliens are occasionally present in this culture, but they exist on the fringes of society.

Permia

As the intergalactic empire grew, new worlds formed their own character, less from the culture of the Germans, but of those inhabiting it. Permia is primarily a mining planet and although it is ruled by the empire, the colonies are largely populated by English-speakers. Here, the colonists have a high degree of both autonomy and social / economic opportunity - as long as the empire gets its Permite.

Permite is a universally rare mineral crystal that is present in disproportionate abundance on the planet, and thus the planet was named Permia. The possession of permite by colonists is prohibited by law. Permite is generally colorless and the crystals are rarely found above 20 karats. It is used in high-end electronics and manufacturing.

As Permia is in demand, the need for professional colonists is great, resulting in a mobile middle class in addition to the sizable working class. This has led to education and other institutions

that have given rise to a strong anti-imperial movement. As the characters engage Permia, they find themselves in the midst of the early stages of upheaval.

The Fourth Reich's forces have so far been limited to protecting the few properties and government facilities in the main city. However, as other cities and settlements have expanded, the seeds of resistance have grown as well. Settlements far from military control have been building weapons and harboring resistance leaders, and after several major attacks on empire assets, the Fourth Reich has moved further troops into the area and is conducting many attacks.

The attacks have largely come in the form of the Luftwaffe, powered by a kind of massive airship called the Kriegzeppelin. These airships are almost a mile in diameter, can house over 1,000 troops, and have an array of armament such as a gargantuan lightning gun and the ability to launch and dock various air-to-ground vehicles. The lightning gun is powered by fabric and a single pulse can "neutralize" a city block, killing or stunning all within its reach. The buoyancy of a Kriegzeppelin is due to Fabric (still a classified concept) that allows zero-point energy to encapsulate the airship. The rarity of this Fabric means that most other airships must use standard Newtonian physics to operate; only several dozen Kriegzeppelins are currently operating across the reach of the empire.

The characters find themselves on a train from which they can see the Kriegzeppelin (KZ). The train is conventional, having tracks, but it is equipped with 22nd century amenities. On the train, they meet many Privs who give them a sense as to the situation in Permia. Petri is also present and describes to the characters how their actions have influenced the present situation.

The characters find several possible missions for themselves - to possess fabric from the KZ, to locate Dyer, and to disable or destroy the KZ.

New Hamburg

New Hamburg is a medium-sized metropolis, with districts unofficially segregated by caste. Characters have about a week before they can possibly get aboard the Blitzzeppelin, so they need to find a way to live in the city in the meantime. They can live Luxuriously for 2000 marks, Moderately for 500, and in Squalor for 100. The choices they make should affect incidents, etc. For example, luxury living will grant +2 for social interactions throughout the week, or living in squalor makes you a target for being mugged.

Characters should use this time to make connections or find ways to get aboard the BZ. This can be by participating directly or indirectly in the ascension ceremony; for example, Performing in the theatrical event, using Social Edges to be admitted as a guest, or using Electronics to help set up the AV systems.

At some point during the intervening week, a member of the resistance reaches out to the characters in some appropriate way, establishing a meeting with a mysterious leader. The characters are brought to a construction site - a high-rise with only the bare concrete and steel frame, no walls - and are taken to a freight elevator and sent to the top floor. Shortly after, they see wisps of long hair blowing from behind one of the corner supports, and they hear the voice of a young woman who inquires to their "real" story - the whole time revealing only her hair. If they are honest, she will speak to them about Dyer, who she says holds the key to eliminating "everything that is wrong about this universe." Dyer is being held by the Fourth Reich aboard the BZ in their brig. If he can be freed, then "the universe may have a chance to be righted." She abruptly ends their conversation by jumping. If the characters investigate, they will find only a wig and a mannequin head. Resistance members will refer to her as "Wig" as she has never been seen, and only communicates by remote.

The Blitzzeppelin

After finding a way aboard the BZ, characters go about their duties as guests or event workers. They can try to Stealth away, but if they are gone during a period where they are needed, guards will be put on alert and will get +2 Notice to spot the characters while roaming the BZ.

Characters must roll Stealth with a TN of 4 to slip away from the main event. Each failure constitutes 10 minutes of missed opportunity before they can try again.

Once they've spirited themselves away, they must make a single Smarts roll with TN 4 to determine if they can find the room they're headed to. Failure means they lose 10 minutes getting lost. Supporting a Smarts roll is allowed, but each additional supporting player does so at an additional -1 to the roll - having multiple people arguing about how to weave through a restricted area typically makes things harder, not better.

Getting the Blitz Fabric

The "Blitz" Fabric is stored at the lightning gun firing room, which is a restricted area. When the characters arrive, they find the usual soldiers have been disposed of and that Petri's rival fabric hunter, fx^2, is on the scene with a host of Saurians. Each round of combat, a Saurian lackey takes fabric from the gun's power source and places it in a hexagonal container. The Saurians' fate means nothing to fx^2, and if his life is in danger, he will grab the fabric container and use an action to warp himself out, leaving his Saurian comrades behind.

Getting the Buoyancy Fabric and / or destroying the Blitzzeppelin

The Buoyancy Fabric (Luftfabrik) is stored in the Zero Point Room, which is also restricted. The room housing the fabric is only guarded lightly on the outside, but has automated defense systems inside. There are two types of guns: automated turrets that fire magnetic loop flechettes (they loop back to the turret and are re-fed, keeping the flechettes from hitting the walls), and automated kinetic pulse ("push") cannons that attempt to Push characters off the narrow walkway that leads to the fabric receptacle.

Four units of buoyancy fabric are required to maintain the BZ's "vertical integrity." If any of the last four are removed, the BZ begins to fall at rate relative to the number of units removed.

Getting Dyer

Dyer is held in the brig, an efficient but robust holding area for miscreants. The supervision level of the brig is a hexagonal room with a closed control booth. The floor is a honeycomb of human-sized cells that lower into the sub-floor so when all prisoners are locked up, they are not visible at all, but are confined to a 6' hexagonal cell with no windows. Each cell can be individually raised by a large mechanical crane, operated from the control booth.

Dyer is in one of these cells, and the characters must find out either by coercion or trial-and-error where he is located. There are about 120 such cells.

Once Dyer is free, he will impart information to them, but insist that he - at least - leave immediately.

Escaping the Blitzzeppelin

Luckily, due to safety reasons, there are a few easy ways to easily leave the BZ. Characters can either use a "lifeplane" to Pilot or auto-pilot down to a safe, clear place, not necessarily of their choosing if on autopilot. Or they can Parachute, using rules like those from Weird Wars II.

The characters must ensure that they evade any pursuers, and reconnect with Petri or with Dyer as appropriate. Petri will take any fabric and pay them 1000 marks for each unit as promised, but will then abandon the team. Wig and / or Dyer will reach out to the characters, and set them off on their next trajectory.

When the heroes make their escape, they can either take parachutes or life-shuttles to escape the Blitzzeppelin. Either way, they will be attacked by the ascended Kommandant, who has

transformed into a large insectoid creature with gruesome leechlike umbilical cords. If parachuting, the battle takes the form of a Chase (use foot rules for melee, etc.) that lasts 6 rounds before they must activate their parachutes (if still present); or the hideous creature rips through the top of the shuttle and battles the team there.

Dyer, captured by the Nazis in 1938, was pressed into working with them in project Kopfüber, which tried to extract as much capability from the Old Ones as possible. fx^2 helped the Nazis establish the connection with the future Fourth Reich that was enabled by the discoveries and use of the misery transmitter and other artifacts. He realized that the Fourth Reich, in its dark bargain with the Great Old Ones and forming an alternate timeline, would more easily provide access to fabric than the "canon" timeline where the Nazis lost WWII.

During this time, Dyer determined that he could only learn how to undo the timeline damage by going into the future and seeing where things had gone wrong [no, he has to know or have something that can undo all this]. He since has realized that Miskatonic University should have the answers needed. He is convinced that if the team can somehow get back to MU they should be able to piece together a way to go back in time.

The problem, of course, is that Earth is just about to become Hell.

Organizations and Characters

Jericho - Gambler - A pragmatic but laconic older man who wears a worn denim vest and wide-brimmed hat, even indoors. He spends most of his time shuttling between the card table and the bar.

Reggie - Loan Shark / Arms Dealer - A stylish woman in her thirties, always in conversation with several people at a time. She is only slightly evasive about her shady dealings; she seems unworried by law enforcement.

Irma - Administrator - A middle-aged woman whose common looks hide a shrewd intelligence. As a longtime bureaucrat, she knows "the system" pretty well and is often able to bend rules to meet her interests.

Monty - Antique Repairman (Thief) - In his late thirties, a dapper gentleman who possess a wide knowledge of antiques, and sees thievery as an invigorating game.

Hans - 4R Lieutenant - In his mid-twenties, this athletic officer has already become jaded with his post, although he puts up a good front with his military comrades.

Patsy - Socialite - The wife of a construction manager, Patsy flaunts her relative wealth and adopted aristocracy as though it were her birthright. She is empathetic toward others, but only when she is acknowledged as the queen bee.

Biff - Pro Cricketer (Spy) - A relatively well-known individual from his cricket championships, Biff travels in many upper social circles despite his mediocre intelligence. He is a spy for the 4R and is actively rooting out resistance members.

Marshalls - These law enforcement officials may be either badged or plainclothes - usually half-and-half. The public presence is meant to assure wary passengers and the covert presence to dissuade illegitimate ones.

Fabric Hunters - Though Hunters come in all shapes in sizes, they possess some common traits: tenacity, disregard for morals, and intense knowledge of the "slipperiness" of time.

Earth in the Time of the Old Ones

Earth in this timeframe has been "leased" to the Great Old Ones for a strange bargain - those that inhabit it are plagued with an 11-year cycle, four years of which are "decimation" years in which the spawn of the Old Ones will, each year, exact death upon precisely 10% of the human population, causing approximately 35% of the population to be killed over 4 years. Then, after those 4 years, 7 years follow with no activity at all from the Old Ones.

The effects of such a cycle are horrifying. Knowing that each year of the decimation years, that each life is 10% likely to pass puts every soul into a fight-or-flight mode. There are struggles between those who try to fight the Old Ones, those who give in or sacrifice to them, and those that opt out of those options altogether. As a result the attrition rate is much higher than 10% in these years as desperation takes its toll.

In the intervening 7 years emerges a limited hope for rebirth, as the demand for population booms are strong. Yet the sense of being trapped never is relieved. Due to occasional scarcity of people after decimation, tribes are the basis for most humanity, and a ruthless and depraved tribalism at that. Women are forced into childbearing as tribal leaders scheme and scavenge the wreckage of civilization.

To make matters more complicated, Fourth Reich human supply ships occasionally entice or trap Earthbound humans, often with the lure of a better life elsewhere - usually a life of slavery, but for many, this is preferable to the oppression of decimation.

At the time of this campaign, Earth has roughly 20% of the population it did in 1940, so around 200 million people. Of these, nearly all are living barely above a stone age level of civilization, although using the shards of civilization to scrape by.

Why the Old Ones have set up such a horrific cycle is the subject of much debate. Some believe it to be a natural cycle of the Old Ones themselves; others believe it to be a cruel game, solely for that purpose.

A Fishy Situation

The characters make their way to the spaceport, where they can board one of three ships headed to Earth: a penal ship, a cargo ship, or a tour ship.

The tour ship is one that caters to wealthy gamblers who place bets on the Decimation, which is starting the very time they arrive at Earth. The team is given jobs by Lem, a large but soft-spoken individual who seems to give them jobs with only a cursory review. An older gentleman, Mauser Ginley, is the host of "Earth Survivor" and the next installment is "Earth Survivor: Innsmouth." The characters are duped into thinking they will simply be dumped off at Earth, when in fact they are becoming the participants of the show. The show is a basic last-man-standing show in which the survivor is given a modest reward and may be extracted from Earth.

The team is deposited not at Miskatonic U as promised, but at the town square of nearby Innsmouth, which is inhabited by a kind of aquarian / human hybrid following the cult of Dagon. The team is left with all their equipment, although before leaving, any of their Marks can be transferred into gold/jewels, drugs, or various weapons. As they leave their landing pod, characters may Notice a small swarm of insects being released from the pod - these are in fact nanodrones that observe the characters for the show.

In a plot twist, a character who "won" the last Innsmouth adventure - Teenah - a former collegiate track and field star, has returned. Upon winning, she decided to trade her cash for supplies and return to Earth for the peaceful 7-year period of the cycle. During this time she did her "duty" and had nine children, but now that the Decimation has started again, she is back for revenge - and live on television.

The team has been given two electronic tablets. After the landing pod departs, the tablets activate their screen and they see Ginley introducing the new season of "Earth Survivor" and describing the team's situation, including the subplot of Teenah's revenge.

"Welcome to another season of Earth Survivor! I'm your host, Mauser Ginley, and I'm broadcasting live from the Ozymandius, in low-Earth orbit. We're back again at Innsmouth for the infamous Decimation kickoff. Innsmouth needs little introduction - the very name should put terror in your blood. The odds are never good - unless you're gambling! Let's introduce you to this season's contestants, who have just been deposited at the town square."

"Mox13: a murderous mutant with a penchant for revenge; Lillian: a mass-murdering 'Scientist' who was caught on tape crashing the blitzzeppelin, aided by her obese henchman [the screen shows security footage of them removing the buoyancy fabric], Esquire; B's: a drink-swiping bar bum; Raymond: a rising star with a dark secret; Dyer: a fugitive from justice; Reggie: a high-fashion underworld figure who lost it all; and Hans: a disillusioned deserter."

"This season brings back a fan favorite from our last Innsmouth edition: Teenah, the lone survivor, who opted to stay Earthbound in order to avenge the fallen. [The camera cuts to a woman in her late 20s, in a small room with several weapons.] 'I've learned a lot in the last seven years. I have a family - nine children, and if each hopper I kill increases my family's chance to live - I guess I'll just have to kill a lot of them.' Teenah is already hiding in the town as we enter the last hours of daylight before the Decimation begins."

"Odds are currently with Hans and B's tied in the lead, but only by a fraction. Let's follow as they encounter mayhem, and may the luckiest one win! This, as always, is Mauser Ginley."

When the team is landed, they see the shabby shell of a New England shore town. The buildings look largely deserted, although a handful of townspeople - all with "lidless" eyes mill about, seemingly indifferent to the arrival of the characters. If the characters approach individuals, they will mostly run off, except for the really dumb or crazy ones. It's about noon as the team is landed, and if they explore around, they will find that the city is hemmed in on the north and south by marshes backed by craggy hills; to the west is the Manuxet River and a large marsh it winds through; to the east is the bay and far off, Devil's Reef. The marsh has apparently risen, or the village sunk, as the houses on the fringe streets of the town are all falling into extreme or complete decay. Since they arrive around noon and it is the shortest day of the year, there are only about four hours of sunlight left.

The Dagon cult wishes to use the characters for sacrifices or captive breeding. The characters may try to escape the town, via any of the swamps, or they may attempt to stay overnight in the town, or they may attempt to make for the waters. If they get to the swamps, waters up to 3' deep and thick fogs will confuse their path and they will encounter Dagon Cultists. If they attempt to stay in the town, after sundown they will be pursued at first by coercion, and later by force. There are no boats in the town, as all inhabitants can swim as if fish.

The inhabitants have a hive mind, with the first-stage inhabitants being only vaguely aware of voices and only able to communicate emotions. Cultist-stage inhabitants, who only emerge during Decimations, can use telepathy at will and can share any of their senses to the community. Priest-stage can control any one of the inhabitants regardless of their stage, but can only do so one at a time.

The Dagon Priest has a mysterious, unworldly-looking tiara with a massive diadem as its centerpiece. It allows one to see into the hive mind to gather information, and to inquire into the

future, in matters of the Old Ones. However, doing so successfully comes at a cost. The headpiece must be worn for at least one hour before making a request, so that it becomes attuned to the wearer. A Spirit roll - or a Faith roll if appropriate - is required to either see or inquire, with any appropriate modifiers. A Success grants a form of the desired request, but costs the hero a level of Fatigue. A Failure means the request is not granted but the Fatigue still occurs. A Critical Failure means that an Old One minion is summoned to punish the requester for misuse of the diadem.

Back to School

Somewhat luckily, the characters can charter a space freighter - the Last Mark, captained by a sadistic madman named Nero - back to Earth. Earth is within days of entering another Decimation phase, and the freighter is there to pick up a load of "volunteers," basically arrive at Earth empty and fill its bowels up with inhabitants who are willing to pay the captain - and remain "indentured" to shady slave lords upon delivery from Earth. As a result the captain has little problem taking on a few paying customers who want to be housed in their mostly empty cargo holds. He will even drop them off at the coordinates of Miskatonic University if possible.

The space ferrying goes off without much fanfare - the accommodations are quite spare, without even windows or any way to witness the miracle of interstellar travel. Two weeks pass (great time for an Interlude and Healing), and after lots of noise during deorbit to Earth, they are deposited in MU's main quad in a hazy twilight.

The campus has taken on a strange familiarity to those who have been there - most of the buildings are just as they were in 1940, although the campus grounds are overgrown and many appear converted to gardens. The buildings and campus also seem to have been fortified in various makeshift ways. Berms and walls surround the campus, and most buildings have turrets and other fortifications built. Most windows have been converted to slits, and what were once welcoming entryways are barricaded.

Moments after the characters step off the ramp, the freighter lifts off, and once the sound of its thrusters have receded, an eerie silence falls across the campus.

The party must fend off some of the defenses the collegians have constructed. The halls they generally find locked, but just; when into the halls, they have free reign of the buildings. After some exploring, they find where the inhabitants have gone - into cryogenic stasis in the basement of the Biology hall.

The collegians have left some instructions for "emergency de-hibernation," and if the characters follow the directions (Smarts) they can safely recover some of the MU staff and faculty, including the head of the Biology department, Dr. Bev Trantor.

Dr. Trantor explains that the university has kept itself active for the last 200 years despite the Decimations and the fall of civilization, partly spared by local mystique and by a discovery - that the Decimation only comes to those that are sentient and experience some form of consciousness, including dreaming. Those that are in deep cryogenic stasis are ignored - they cannot be tormented, and thus they are as invisible to the executors of the Decimation.

The characters may even attempt to thaw Vernon Eldritch, who has been waiting to deliver much-needed information. [Maybe the following:] He knows only one place that would allow them to return in time - to go to the plateau of His Promise and truly end the curse, bringing all back to 1690. From there they could venture to the interdimensional portal in Antarctica, where they would rejoin their bodies in 1940, and go on to battle the Nazis and end their reign of tyranny.

Vernon gives the party some background. Francis Xavier Ximines - FX(squared) or FX2 - a time-traveling "Chrono-digger" or Fabric Hunter, visited the Miskatonic U library in 1928 and read the Necronomicon, which broke his mind, giving him visions of an Earth dominated by the Old Ones and creating a faster link to the stars, opening up new Fabric extraction opportunities from the timeline. It is much easier to extract Fabric from the universe when the human timeline reaches the stars.

Eldritch had the opportunity to talk with FX2 after he'd become crazed - as he had been found paralyzed on the floor of the reading room, but didn't know how much to believe of his story. [...] Eldritch does not know of Petri, but FX2 had mentioned "assistants" in his time-traveling Fabric Hunting group. FX2 described an Old Ones ruin in Antarctica, and this knowledge - Vernon admits with much regret - is what started the idea of exploring the continent in Dyer's 1929 expedition - although its intention was not revealed to Dyer. As Dyer spoke about his experiences, the Axis powers decided - with no small help from FX2 - to establish the Eisfestungen in their quest to tap into the power of the Old Ones.

The Necronomicon is not only a powerful book in its apparent content - it is imbued with significant energy which can be used to help those with powering time travel. This is how FX2 came to be drawn to the book to begin with. After his mind-bending encounter with it, he was initially reluctant to steal it himself, and would not go back in time for fear of breaking the timeline where Old Ones were awakened. He instead sent Saurians after it, but their tactics were a little heavy-handed, and a battle with them ended up with the a section of the library in flames - and the Saurians included. The Necronomicon survived, but knowing the risks, Eldritch claimed the tome was lost, and performed a ritual to conceal the Necronomicon as a student - so the book would never be far, but be undetectable by most means. Philip "Pip" Slayton was thus invented - and has been a student ever since. Pip is completely unaware of his existence as a biological simulacrum.

Once the Necronomicon is revealed, its power will be detectable to FX2 and he will be drawn to it. Due to the unusual nature of the time loop at Foggy Ridge, they will arrive likely within seconds of its having been revealed, and they will come prepared.

Perchance to Dream

The characters may have been warned that while they exhibit any sentience, they are subject to the terrors of the decimation - that includes dreaming. At some opportunity during their travel to His Promise, the characters fall asleep and are victim to nightmares - custom to their own idiosyncrasies. Each character should have some of their characteristics adjusted for the dream - such as being much stronger, or having powers - but of course at some cost.

The dream takes the form of a classic haunted house - perhaps starting innocuously, but soon becoming weird, then horrifying. The characters cannot escape the nightmare other than by escaping or perishing.

The characters are in a forest at night and become aware of their changed abilities, perhaps being chased by mysterious creatures. They eventually find themselves by a cozy looking hovel, and they enter. There they find a young woman and her grandmother, who offer them choices of tea and shelter for the night. The grandmother is quite feeble and never speaks; her granddaughter always speaks for her. They engage in conversation with the party, extracting a story from each of the characters. After learning of their stories, they offer to put on a puppet show with marionettes in a small tabletop theater. They turn down the lights, and the characters can only see the stage illuminated, and reflections of themselves in the mirror backdrop of the small stage.

mirror selves and marionettes

Back to the Beginning

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A Journey South

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