

## Call of Cthulhu: Dude, Where's My Lab-coat?

### **Before You Begin:**

This campaign is set in the modern day. There are two plot-essential NPCs (NPC1 & 2). All other NPC's are only necessary if players are stuck, and are therefore unnumbered.

It is recommended that at least one character is an athlete/fighter, and one character has a strong computer use skill.

### **Plot:**

#### **Prelude:**

The academic sat at his computer, surrounded by piles of open books & journals, as the cursor blinked on a blank page. Why were study proposals always so difficult to write?

He looked up as the clock on the university tower struck nine, & sighed; he wasn't going to get any more done tonight. As he waited for his computer to shut down, he closed the reference materials & carried them to a cupboard in the corner of his office.

Just as he was about to close the cupboard door, he noticed an old leather-bound book sitting on a shelf that he'd never seen before. The cover bore no indication of what was inside. Curious, he picked the tome up & opened it on a random page.

Arcane symbols swirled before his eyes, seemingly leaping off of the pages, captivating all of his attention.

This book held the answers he needed, & had been searching for all his working life. This book held the answers to everything. It all made sense now...

#### **5 years later:**

You are working in a laboratory in the medical school, going about your various daily jobs. There is only one consistent topic of conversation; the legendary BAST trial. Legendary for the strange occurrences it has been associated with; people disappearing only to reappear moments later with no recollection of what just happened, strange graffiti on the walls that even the strongest chemicals couldn't remove which had vanished by the following day, reported sightings of strange humanoid figures lurking in dark corners. As the trial draws to a close, the tension is palpable.

### **Part 1: The Adventure Begins.**

Start in the respirometer lab on the top floor of the School of Medicine.

An athlete is running on a treadmill, hooked up to respirometer, which is producing various graphs on a computer. There are a lot of people in the room; academics, students, medics, technical support, maintenance etc.

You're all discussing the BAST (Beta-carotenes & Aortic Stenosis Treatment) Program, a study being run by one of the top medical lecturers at the university, Dr NPC1.

Suddenly, the power goes out and you are plunged into complete darkness as all electronics, even phones, switches off. The athlete (Mike), who was a moment ago running on a treadmill, falls over. **Dex/Con check (if fail, take 1 damage).**

Only you are left; everyone else has disappeared. All is quiet, except for the beeping of the respirometer, which has disconnected from the athlete and thinks he's dead.

#### **ALL Spot Hidden check.**

- Calendar shows that Dr NPC1 is currently giving a lecture on the floor below.
- The computer screen is displaying strange arcane symbols.
- **Language (other)** to decipher the arcane symbols. It is showing an extract from the Book of Iod (**1d6 sanity loss**). Gain 4 points in Cthulhu Mythos skill.
- **Computer Use** check to unlock computer; you have an email telling you Dr NPC1 is giving a lecture on the floor below right now.

*If stuck, NPC: Dr's PA bursts into the room, startled by what just happened. "Oh good, I'm not alone. I was going to check on Dr NPC1 lecture downstairs, but everyone's missing & I'm too freaked out. I'm going home early."*

Go downstairs to Dr NPC1's lecture.

#### **Part 2: Going to see Dr NPC1.**

You leave the lab. The School of Medicine is a huge building with seemingly endless corridors, attached to research labs, the hospital, and academic buildings.

#### **All make navigate check.**

*If stuck, NPC: PA points you in the right direction.*

**Make a listen check.** As you approach the lecture theatre, you can hear muffled sounds as if someone was talking, but you can't make out any words.

You enter the lecture theatre, which is two stories high, with tiered seating reaching from the floor to the top of the room. Many of the chairs are hidden beneath coats & bags, & on the tables you can see notepads, pens, water bottles, thermal mugs, & laptops, yet there are no students. It is as if everyone just...disappeared.

At the front, behind the computer & lecture podium, & in front of a scrawled-on chalkboard, is a ghoul wearing an unbuttoned lab-coat, gibbering into a microphone as if giving a lecture, with a PowerPoint slide on display. He pauses to glare at you, displeased with the intrusion. Enter combat.

#### **Roll Sanity.**

#### **Defeat the ghoul (pg. 295 of manual)**

- Check the body: a name badge identifies the ghoul as Dr NPC1. As you search his pockets you find an empty vile with a trace of orange liquid at the bottom, and a phone. A reminder pops up to sort out another batch of beta-carotenes for the experiments in the biochemistry lab. Keep the phone? **Spot hidden (very hard):** find key buried in the bottom of his pocket.

- PowerPoint slide: **science check**. There is a diagram of a heart with aortic stenosis, with some diagrams of various beta-carotene molecules. At the bottom of the slide, it states that experiments are currently ongoing in the biochemistry lab next door.
- Check the computer: **computer use check**. Dr NPC1 has an email asking him to come back to the biochemistry lab immediately, as one of his experiments has gone wrong.
- **Spot hidden**: there are still notepads on the desks of the lecture theatre. One on the front row suggests visiting Dr NPC1 in his office by the biochemistry lab for additional support with their PhD thesis.

*If stuck, NPC: a student dressed hurriedly in jeans and a hoodie, with shoelaces untied, opens the door as quietly as possible to sneak into the lecture late. They are surprised to find a group of adults standing over a body in an otherwise empty lecture theatre and back out of the room slowly. You follow them, catching them up as they stopped to tie their shoelace. **Persuade/psychology** to convince them to speak to you. They suggest that you might want to try visiting Dr NPC1's biochemistry lab to try and discern what is going on.*

Go to biochemistry lab.

### Part 3: The Biochemistry Lab.

The corridor leading from the lecture theatres to the research lab center, where the biochemistry lab is, is just around the corner. The door is magnetically locked with a card scanner.

- If they found it, the key from Dr NPC1's pocket doesn't work.
- Their staff cards don't work.
- If they kept the phone, text "I forgot my key again; can you let me in?" to "NPC2: lab tech". A man appears on the other side of the door. **Persuade**: let them in.
- **Spot hidden (hard)**: a member of staff, NPC, has dropped their card. This opens the door.
- **Computer use (very hard)**: trick the card scanner into opening the door.
- **Navigate (hard)**: find a detour. The detour goes through a corridor with another ghoul.  
**Defeat the ghoul.**
- **Strength (hard)**: break down the door. Take 1d3 damage.

*NPC: you hear an electric whirring noise getting louder, and turn around as someone in a powered wheelchair approaches. "I dropped my staff card again. Ah, there it is!" NPC cannot reach the card from their wheelchair, so one of you must get it for them. In return, they let you into the research lab centre.*

Once inside the research centre, a man introduces himself.

"Hello. I am NPC2, laboratory assistant for Dr NPC1 on the BAST Program. Perhaps you would be able to help me; some of Dr NPC1's...experiments have broken loose in the biochemistry lab. I locked them inside to contain them, but can't do anything more. Perhaps, if you could get to his office on the other side of the lab, you could find out what's really going on here?"

You look through the window of the laboratory, and you spy two ghouls much like Dr NPC1, & a third, larger humanoid with elongated legs and yellowing eyes.

**Roll Sanity.**

**Defeat 2 ghouls and 1 ghast (pg. 294 & 295)**

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Diary of a Disabled Person

- Search the bodies: each one has an empty vile with a trace of orange solution at the bottom.
- **Science check:** ascertain that the orange solution is a solution of beta-carotenes which have been altered slightly. The minute change in molecular shape might interact with DNA.
- **Spot hidden:** lab notes suggesting that the experiments with the beta-carotenes are failing, although they're not sure why.
- **Computer use:** graphs and data showing that so far, the experiments have proved unsuccessful.

With the ghouls and ghastr dead, NPC2 enters the lab and heads towards Dr NPC1's office, but the door is locked.

- If they found the key on Dr NPC1, use it.
- **Spot hidden:** find a key hidden underneath some lab equipment. NPC2 may also find this.
- **Locksmith:** pick the lock.
- **Strength:** break down the door.

Search the office.

- **Book of lod:** initial sanity check of 1d6, gain 4 in Cthulhu Mythos. **Mythos check** determines that the book is open on a page discussing how a molecule seemingly belonging to the Vitamin A class was used in an old ritual in ancient times to address ailments of the heart.
- **Persuade:** ask NPC2 about the experiments taking place in the lab. He won't say much about the experiments themselves, but he will let slip that of late, Dr NPC1's behavior had become increasingly irrational. Dr NPC1 was supposed to be meeting the head of cardiology at the local hospital this afternoon.
- **Computer use:** Dr NPC1 had a meeting with the head of cardiovascular disease at the local hospital to discuss the BAST Program today.
- **Locksmith:** unlock Dr NPC1's desk to find an invoice suggesting that the local cardiology ward recently bought some of the beta-carotene samples involved in the experiments.
- *A calendar on the wall shows that Dr NPC1 was due to meet the head of cardiology at the hospital today.*

Go to the cardiology department. NPC2 decides to stay in the lab to guard it.

#### **Part 4: The Hospital.**

The hospital is also connected to the Research Lab Centre. This time, the door isn't locked.

The hospital is completely silent. Lights flicker in the corridors, and patches of slime have appeared on the floor. You cannot see any doctors, nurses, or patients.

A sign hanging from the ceiling points to the cardiovascular unit. As you approach your destination, you notice that the reception desk is unmanned, and there appears to be no light emanating from the clinic.

Suddenly, the power goes out just as before.

**All make Listen and Spot Hidden checks.**

**Listen:** you hear a sound that can only be described as that of uncorking a bottle of champagne, if the cork just so happened to be a slug. There is a wet slapping sound of something landing heavily, then footsteps and the rustling sound of searching.

**Spot hidden:** something is moving among the shadows, seemingly moving from place to place as if trying to find something. It stops and you can feel it staring at you through the darkness.

The lights come back on. Something akin to a giant cockroach that has never seen a human, but chose to imitate a human anyway, is staring directly at you. It hisses at you.

**Lore/Cthulhu Mythos check:** You recognize the creature as a Dimensional Shambler. **Roll Sanity.**

**Language (own/education) check:** You are disturbed to find that the hiss sounds almost like lisped words. You're not sure, but you think it might have just said "Lab coat."

After a short pause, the creature/Shambler throws its head back and lets out an inhuman screech. The lights flicker as two more of its kind join its side, both wearing lab coats seemingly blinking into existence out of thin air. They attack.

**Almost Defeat the 3 Dimensional Shamblers. Just before they would die, they blink out of existence (pg. 291)**

You're stunned as the almost defeated monsters seemingly blink out of existence. As you gather yourselves, you realise that the sounds of a battle have caught the attention of something else, and you begin to understand why the creatures left so suddenly. **You have no time to prepare.**

Six spider-like legs support a muscular mass with tentacles protruding from the top. Bat-shaped wings stretch out from either side, with vicious hooks at the top. On one of these hooks is a tattered, blood stained lab coat.

**Roll Sanity.**

**Lore/Cthulhu Mythos check:** this is an Elder Thing, a scientist from the dawn of time, no doubt connected to the Book of Iod you found in Dr NPC1's desk.

The monster scuttles towards you.

**Defeat the Elder Thing (pg. 291).**

**Defeat the Elder Thing:** with a dying scream the Elder Thing recoils, withering onto the floor. Everything goes dark once again, and this time when the lights return you are standing in a busy hospital corridor. Medics push past on their way to save lives, and lost-looking patients almost bump into you as they try to find their way. The only evidence that anything you just experienced was even real is the tattered lab coat lying at your feet.

**If all players are killed:** the opposition destroyed, the Elder Thing continues on it's way. With this corner of the city secured, it can begin to make preparations for the arrival of the Great Old One.