

CTHULHU DEEP GREEN



Created by
Justin Ford

Licensing

Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0)

You are free to:

Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format

Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially.

This license is acceptable for Free Cultural Works.

The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms.

Under the following terms:

Attribution — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

ShareAlike — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original.

No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.



WELCOME TO THE CONSPIRACY

WHAT IS CTHULHU DEEP GREEN?

In Cthulhu Deep Green, players take on the role of shadowy agents of **The Conspiracy** as they fight to maintain the veil of secrecy standing between the public and the horrors that reside just beyond human comprehension.

WHY PLAY?

CDG's mechanics are designed to focus on the story over individual successes and failures; Agents of The Conspiracy always fail forward.

CDG focuses character building and personal horror with At Home scenes and other mechanics that add an element of work/life balance to every Operation.

CDG is supremely adaptable to your favorite scenario.

WHAT DO WE NEED?

To play you'll need the following:

One Handler (The player who facilitates the game).

Two to five Agents (The other players).

Six sided dice of at least two different colors.

Pencils and index cards for everyone at the table.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to Horst Wurst of The Gauntlet for inspiring and encouraging this project.

Thanks to Graham Walmsley, Kathryn Jenkins, and Helen Gould of Cthulhu Dark 2nd Ed.

To my friends whose faces grace these pages.

To Brie Beau Sheldon for their development of the Script Change tool.

To my love, Al Lukehart, for their endless support and encouragement.

And thanks to Jesse Ross for their own intriguing hack of Cthulhu Dark, Trophy.

Table of Contents

ROLLING THE DICE	05
CONFRONTATION	11
HARM & INJURY	13
STRESS & INSIGHT	14
AFTER THE OPERATION	19
OPTIONAL RULES AND ADDITIONS	23
RECRUITING AGENTS	25
THE HANDLER	29
THE THREAT	35
SAFETY & TONE	39
THE SAFEBOX	40
COMING SOON	48



ROLLING THE DICE

05

THE BASICS

CDG's resolution mechanics are simple: Whenever an Agent does something that risks their life or their emotional stability, the Handler will call for a dice roll.

The Agent in question may roll a Human Die if the action is humanly possible. Usually this is a freebie.

They may roll one Occupation Die if the action falls under their personal field of expertise.

Finally, an Agent may roll a **DARK DIE** if they would risk their physical or emotional well-being to succeed OR if the player would add an element of the horrific to an otherwise mundane task. This die should be visually distinct from the other two.

Perhaps a **Black** die to represent the night sky.

Or maybe a **Red** die to embody the blood in their veins.

If the **DARK DIE** rolls highest AND it is higher than the Agent's current Stress value, Stress is raised by one.

If the action would expose the Agent to Mythos Knowledge also compare their Insight value to the **DARK DIE**, potentially raising it by one as above.

DIE RESULTS

If the highest die is ...

- 1-3** The Agent barely succeeds, but maybe not in the way they intended. The Handler determines how.
- 4** The Agent succeeds competently. They describe how.
- 5** The Agent succeeds and may get an advantage. The Handler decides what it is.
- 6** The Agent succeeds brilliantly and gets something extra. Maybe more than they bargained for. The Handler may confront them with a difficult truth.



STRESS & INSIGHT CHECKS

Even if completing an action in and of itself would be trivial The Handler may call on an Agent to roll a single **DARK DIE** as a test of their Stress or Insight.

Most often these tests will be invoked when an Agent willingly exposes themselves to supernatural forces, disturbing imagery, or moral quandaries. Agents failing this roll internalize harmful information or become disturbed by the grizzly details.

Example:

Agent Cross has an **Insight of 1** and a **Stress of 4**. If they roll a 3 to make sense of a disturbing passage from *The Necronomicon* and the **DARK DIE** is highest, their Insight increases to 2 but their Stress remains at 4.

If they had rolled a 4 or higher, both Stress and Insight would have increased.

FAILING

By design none of the standard die results include objective failure. As a matter of intent, the dangers of a standard Operation fall not in a failed mission but in the drama of a narrow victory.

However, should any Player think the story would be made more interesting by the potential for failure they may describe a worse outcome for the action at hand and take up a **Failure Die** to oppose a roll. If this die comes up higher than the active Agent's highest die, that action fails.

Rolling a failure die is a meta-narrative action; it needn't be played out in the fiction to proceed. For this reason it shouldn't be used to thwart the gathering of plot sensitive information, though one Agent might add a complication to another's success.

As The Handler, use this mechanic sparingly.

TRYING AGAIN

If an Agent isn't happy with the result of their roll they may take up a single **DARK DIE**, along with any other dice already invoked, and try again. Agents may do this as many times as they desire, but they risk Insight and/or Stress each time.

COOPERATION & COMPETITION

To **Cooperate**: everyone acting in cooperation rolls their dice and takes the highest die as the result.

To **Compete**: everyone who is competing rolls their dice. The highest die wins.

On a tie: anyone may reroll so long as they include their **DARK DIE**. If a tie occurs again, the Agent with the highest Insight score wins. If the situation is still unresolved anyone may choose to call for a reroll risking Strain or Insight with each attempt.

Example:

Agent Cross is attempting to enter a secured facility disguised as a delivery person. The Handler calls for a roll and Agent Cross receives a 3 on their single Human die. The Handler warns them that, if they don't get a good success here, they're likely to be stopped and questioned by armed guards.

Cross doesn't like this, so they take up the **DARK DIE** and roll again. This time they get a five on both their Human Die and the **DARK DIE**, ensuring that they won't be questioned.

Because their Stress is 4 and their **Dark Die** was highest, their Stress track advances to 5.

CONFRONTATION

COMBAT

The life of an Agent is dangerous but unlike investigators in other games they can, on occasion, solve problems with violence.

If an Agent attempts an action that risks life or limb their Handler will treat them to a terrifying vision of their inevitable injury or demise. If the Agent rejects this version of events, they may choose to **Rewind** and take a more measured course of action. Their safety is never guaranteed, however: **On a 1 to 3 the Harm might come to pass anyway.**

If an Agent chooses to proceed with their reckless action they roll the dice, accept the consequences, and mark Harm as dictated by the Handler.



EFFORTLESS ENCOUNTERS

Now and then The Handler may decide that an Agent is at no risk of Harm from a confrontation based on superior firepower, training, or other factors.

Dispatching a captured cultist probably won't result in injury or even require a roll to accomplish, but the morality of killing a helpless person in cold blood may necessitate a Stress check.

Example:

Agent Cross is on the run from members of a rival faction. They've holed up in an old work shed but a forward scout is nearing their position. As they ready their gun, the handler describes a prolonged shootout ending in their demise.

Cross' player decides they'd rather escape than go down fighting. As time **Rewinds**, we see Cross holstering their gun.

CROSS: "I look for another way out!"

HANDLER: "Take up the dice. Let's see if you can escape without alerting the Opposition."

HARM & INJURY

If an Agent agrees to the terms of a roll that necessitates Harm they write a brief description of their injury, debility, or impending demise in the appropriate field.

If they would take Harm in an occupied space advance it to the next tier.

Tier 1 Harm: Simple or mundane weapons wielded or operated by an enemy agent or cultist.

A superficial wound inflicted by a supernatural creature. **Results in an Injury.**

Tier 2 Harm: The claws and fangs of a deep one.

Firearms operated by the opposition. A beatdown by a mob of unarmed cultists. **Results in an Debility.**

Tier 3 Harm: High powered weaponry wielded by skilled opposition. A fall from a cliff-face.

Supernatural forces for which there are no defense. The vacuum of space. **Results in a Mortal Wound.**

Without immediate resuscitation, you will die.

Violence exacts a high price in the world of CDG and Agents with violent tendencies may find their time with The Conspiracy cut short.

STRESS & INSIGHT

DISORDERS

When an Agent's Stress score reaches 6 they gain a stress-related **Disorder** based on the experience that pushed them over the edge. Agents may accumulate three disorders in total before **Burning Out** at which point they are forced to retire from their work with The Conspiracy.

Use contextual cues to identify a Disorder's trigger or coping mechanism in play. After choosing a Disorder, the Stress track is reset to 0.

When an Agent would be confronted with their Disorder in fiction they are encouraged to roleplay to their new motivation, perception, or trait.

Agents struggling with a disorder may choose one of four reactions:

Fight the object of their horror or disgust.

Flee from their darkest fears or deepest insecurities.

Submit to the Disorder that consumes them.

Suppress their disorder by rolling a **DARK DIE**.

Disorders can be mitigated through the use of **At Home** activities. If an Agent would **Go To Therapy** to treat a Disorder, they cross it out. It returns in force the next time their Stress track is filled (in addition to the new Disorder).

BURNING OUT

Upon gaining a third disorder Agents suffer a **Burn Out**: they must choose one of the four reactions as a response to The Conspiracy itself. Will they Fight against their fellow agents or will they Submit completely to its control?

Regardless of their choice, the Agent leaves play.

EMBRACING THE HORROR

When an Agent's Insight score reaches 6 their mind is opened to The Mythos. This is their moment and all eyes will turn to them. As The Handler work with that Agent's player to make their exit from reality a spectacular one.

Afterwards that player may retire their Agent or they may continue play as a convert of The Mythos until the end of the current session.

[RECORDING BEGINS]

INTERVIEWER: CAN YOU REPEAT WHAT YOU TOLD ME BEFORE?
ABOUT YOUR FRIEND FROM S-SQUAD.

REDACTED: AGENT SOIREE, YEAH, WHAT ABOUT HIM?

INTERVIEWER: WELL YOU MENTIONED THAT HE HAD BEEN
BEHAVING ODDLY.

REDACTED: LOOK, WE ALL DEVELOP STRANGE HABITS AFTER A
WHILE. IT'S LIKE A COPING MECHANISM.

INTERVIEWER: WORKING FOR THE CONSPIRACY MUST BE A
DANGEROUS LINE OF WORK. WHY JOIN THEM?

REDACTED: BECAUSE NO ONE ELSE DESERVES TO SEE WHAT
WE'VE SEEN. WE'RE THE ONLY THING STANDING BETWEEN

COMMON DISORDERS

Addiction: You participate in a self destructive habit or behavior in order to function. Identify your addiction.

Amnesia: You suffer selective loss of memory if your trigger comes into play. Identify a trigger.

Anxiety: A trigger leaves you unable to process information resulting in nervousness, avoidance, or panic. Identify a trigger.

Compulsion: You have a strong urge that is difficult to ignore. Identify your compulsion.

Depression: You are prone to bouts of depression that leave you despondent. How do you cope?

Dissociation: A trigger causes you to mentally tune out of or retreat from the present. Identify a trigger.

Insomnia: Rest is difficult for you. You may be haunted by terrible nightmares or prone to sleeping fits. How do you cope?

Obsession: You are preoccupied with a singular idea or concept that distracts you from your obligations and responsibilities. Identify your obsession.

Paranoia: You develop a deep and all-consuming suspicion related to a trigger. It may be based in some version of the truth but its symptoms are completely irrational. Identify a trigger.

A NOTE ON MENTAL ILLNESS

Disorders as portrayed here are not to be conflated with the very real phenomena of chronic mental illness. In the parlance of this game, Disorders are severe emotional reactions to stressful experiences and an unhealthy working environment. Given space, time, and therapy they may pass.

Those coping with real life chronic illnesses spend a lifetime learning to live with their unique issues. Despite being villainized in popular media, the mentally ill are no more likely to resort to violence or participate in criminal activity than you or I.

No mechanical consequences are necessary to simulate the conditions of chronic illness.

As the author of this game I'd also urge you to refrain from using words like "crazy" or "insane" when referring to the actions of Agents suffering from disorders or, frankly, anyone. Real mental illness is often invisible. You never know who you might be hurting by using these words thoughtlessly.



AFTER THE OPERATION

ACTIVATING AT HOME SCENES

Exposure to The Mythos is an insidious thing. It's not unusual for Agents to suffer from painful memories of a mission gone wrong. Traumas suffered on the battlefield may seep into an Agent's place of employment, sabotage their relationships, or result in financial ruin.

To mitigate this, and to promote campaign play, Agents have access to At Home scenes: short vignettes that allow players to gird themselves against future horrors.

Agents may receive At Home Scenes in one of two ways.

Once, after a mission.

Anytime they would mark an Anchor.

Example:

Agent Everest has had a bad day. After a hard night's work fighting parasites from another time, she returns home to her studio apartment and engages in some self care.

Everest's player sets the scene and rolls a d6, reducing their agent's strain by the result, Everest spends the night watching serials, eating popcorn, and forgetting all about the horrible things she's had to do to protect the public.

AT HOME SCENES

Care for Someone: You take time to appreciate someone or something you love that anchors you firmly to the mundane. Un-mark an Anchor you've crossed out or craft a new one.

Engage in Self Care: You engage in stress relieving activity by spending time with an Anchor, retreating to the wilderness, or otherwise re-centering yourself. Roll a d6 and reduce your Stress by that amount.

Go to Therapy: You receive help in overcoming a Disorder. Temporarily cross it out. It won't influence you until you receive another Disorder or a harrowing event brings it to the surface. If you choose to tell the truth about the illegal or supernatural events you've witnessed The Handler may advance the Exposure track if it's in play. Is your trust in them misplaced?

Receive Treatment: You are treated at a hospital or some other place of healing. Reduce all Harm to zero. What do you tell the doctor? Agents activating this scene in the field will need to justify their sudden recovery.

Stay on the Case: You investigate some aspect of your operation in order to illuminate unanswered questions or pursue your own ends. Ask a question and take up dice appropriate to the situation.

CONTINUING THE GAME

Cthulhu Deep Green is not a game we play to win. Agents of The Conspiracy should strive to pursue their motivations, perform their duty, and do their damndest to survive, but as players we know that these small victories won't save the world or banish The Mythos to obscurity.

Every mission will test an Agent to their limits. Choosing to retire an Agent whose resources are tapped out makes mechanical sense, but it denies everyone else at the table an exciting exit or horrifying revelation.

When it would be interesting, revel in the drama of your Agent's pain, cry for the loss of their loved ones, and don't hesitate to engage in acts of self destruction if it might make for a more dramatic ending to their story.

CREATING A CAMPAIGN

While most operations work well as one-shot scenarios, Cthulhu Deep Green truly shines as a short 'season' of three to six sessions.

These stories needn't be direct continuations of one another. Instead consider the format of an episodic television show in which each story is largely disconnected from the last.

To tie things together, play up the mystery of The Organization, introduce ongoing issues At Home, and build upon each mission's successes and failures with news commentary or pre-session recaps.

In a finale the table should attempt to wrap up the A-plot or bring back a familiar enemy for a much deserved reckoning. As the Handler, this is the time to throw your players a bone as The Conspiracy's dirty laundry is aired out to dry.

SPECIALTY SKILLS

Occasionally Agents may wish to claim proficiency for actions not covered by their profession. Consider allowing them to claim one option from the following list as their “Special Skill” in the course of a session. Feel free to add your own skills to this list but remember that each Agent may only claim one.

Climbing

Demolitions

First Aid

Hot-Wiring

Lock-Picking

Martial Arts

Operate Heavy Machinery

Pilot Boat

Pilot Aircraft

Ride

Scuba

And More ...

OPTIONAL RULES AND ADDITIONS

COVER & EXPOSURE

Inevitably Agents will procure assets from questionable sources or go loud when discretion is called for. At a Handler’s option they may create an Exposure Track for their cell. This track starts anywhere from zero to three depending on the sensitivity of the operation at hand.

Each time an Agent is caught crossing a line or breaking cover advance the track by one. If Agents try to actively cover their tracks let them make a standard roll.

If the Exposure Track reaches six the operation is compromised and aspects of the mission creep into their civilian lives. Show them how At Home.

0 Exposure: Complete Containment.

3 Exposure: Loose Ends.

5 Exposure: Work Follows Us Home.

6 Exposure: The Threat is Exposed.

An exposure clock can be represented with a six segment circle like this one. As it ticks down consider how the conspiracy might step in to cover an agents’ tracks or trim loose ends.



EXAMPLE PROFESSIONS

Agents come from a variety of backgrounds. Before choosing your Occupation, consider how your area of expertise might prove useful to The Conspiracy. If you're unsure of what to choose, consider an option from the list, below.

CIVILIAN PROFESSIONS:

Anthropologist, Archaeologist, Author, Blogger, Biologist, Criminal, Computer Scientist, Engineer, Firefighter, Hacker, Historian, Journalist, Lawyer, Mercenary, Physician, Physicist, Pilot, Professor, Police Officer, Private Investigator, Reporter, Tour Guide, Security Guard.

GOVERNMENT PROFESSIONS: Auditor, Clerk, Criminal Investigator, Director, Lawyer, Pilot, Intelligence, Hostage Rescue, Project Manager, Officer, Technologist, Scientist, Soldier, Special Operative.

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES: CDC, CIA, DoD, DEA, EPA, FBI, USAF, Army, DOS, USMC, USN, USMS, SOCOM.

RECRUITING AGENTS

STEP BY STEP

Recruiting new Agents is easy:

1st: Choose a Name, Alias, and Occupation.

Your occupation should be general rather than specific; Likely a government agent or a military officer. Your Handler should provide guidance on what professions might be appropriate to the operation though they may work with what they can muster.

Your Name and Alias can be whatever you want. Feel free to detail your age, distinguishing characteristics, and pronouns.

2nd: Choose an Anchor.

An Anchor is something that ties you to reality. Most likely this will be a family member or a close relationship but a support group or an object representing an intimate memory might qualify, too. This is something your Agent cares deeply about so tie them down securely. **Anchors may be marked to flashback and activate an At Home scene** at any time.

3rd: Complete your sheet.

Draw an Insight and Stress track (0/6) and reserve a space to document any Harm or Disorders incurred in play.

N: Rachel Grier **ALIAS:** AGENT HALLOW

O: C.I.A. AGENT

INSIGHT: /6

STRESS: /6

Notes:

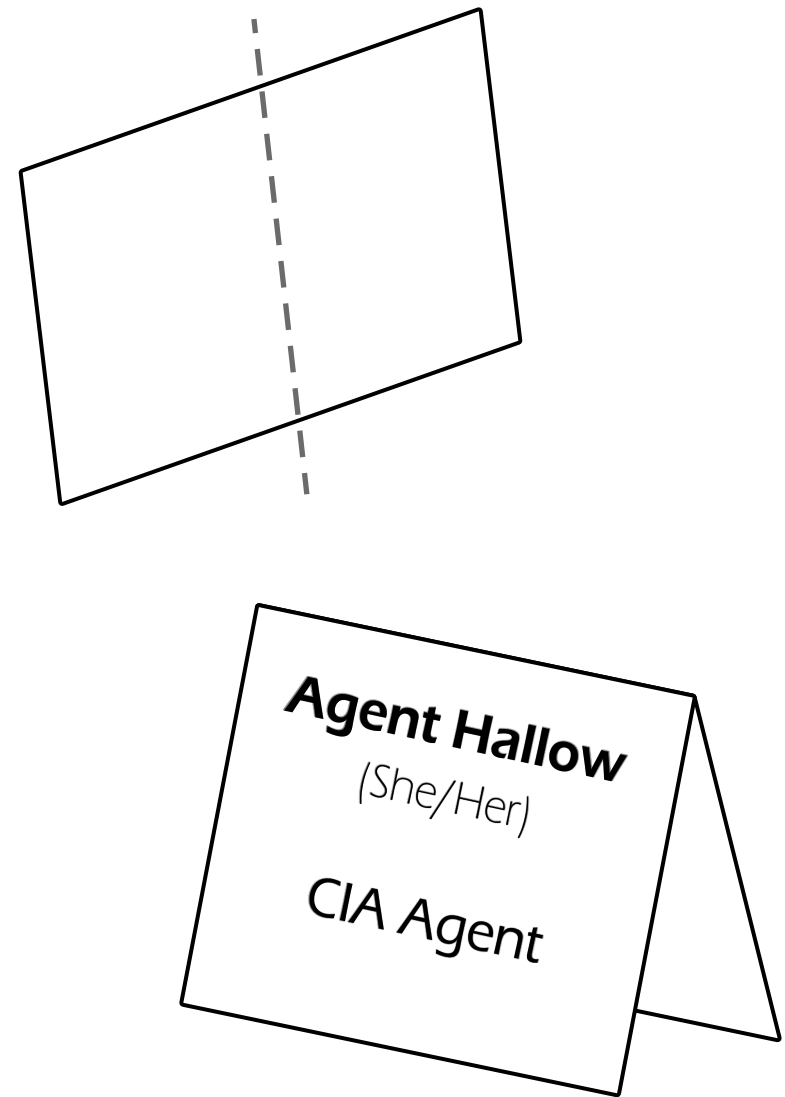
ANCHORS.	DISORDERS.	HARM.
1.	1.	3.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	1.

EXAMPLE CHARACTER SHEET

Everything you need to play this game can fit on a standard note card like this one. I also suggest using name tags or writing your character's Alias and pronouns on a second card folded in half, like a tent. This will be useful to other players when they refer to you in character.

STANDEES & NAMETAGS

Consider folding an index card in half to create a standee. This will help the other players to refer to you in-character. Also include your Agent's pronouns to avoid any confusion over your characters gender identity.



THE HANDLER

DEFINING THE HANDLER

The Handler is a term used to refer to both a player role in the game and an in-fiction leader of a cell of Agents.

As a player, The Handler presents the fiction of the game and reacts to The Agents' decisions. They also make judgment calls regarding the rules of the game. Their job is to make The Agents' lives interesting and confront them with the cruel undying terrors of the cosmos.

As a character, The Handler organizes the team and keeps them on track. They may be in direct contact, (via burner phone), or they may simply relay a set of objectives before going dark. In either case, know that The Conspiracy's primary goal is to contain evidence of the supernatural.

JUDGMENT CALLS

Frequently in an operation The Agents will do things that, whether they know it or not, present a risk to themselves or other members of the team. When this happens it's The Handler's job to determine the roll required and adjudicate the result. Be fair to the rules but don't pull your punches.



THE RULES

1. Aliases only: Your legal name, and those of your cell, are classified.

2. Respect Your Superiors: You may name your cell whatever you want but A-Cell, B-Cell, C-Cell, and X-Cell are reserved

3. Discretion in All Things: Unless otherwise instructed, secrecy is mandatory. It will be easier to cover up an incident if there are no bread crumbs to sweep away.

4. Limit Exposure: To yourself and the public. Trust us, you don't want all the answers.

5. There Are No Witnesses: Only those who know and those who don't. If you judge an illuminated individual to be useful, recruit them. If not, refer to section 11i of your manual for containment procedures.

6. Stay in Contact: A silent Agent is a rogue Agent and a rogue agent risks exposure.

Stick to this script. Order is our only advantage.

- Management

STARTING THE OPERATION

Once The Handler has presented the scenario to the players it's time to get into character.

Start with a short scene At Home as The Agents receive their call to action.

Then jump quickly to the briefing where your cell gathers to receive their instructions. This is a good time to go over what resources will be available to them, any special requirements from The Conspiracy, and to re-establish past relationships between The Handler and The Agents.

From here, Agents have free reign. Let them follow the leads in whatever order they wish.

COLLABORATING WITH YOUR TEAM

Agents rarely stick to the script so don't write one. Evocative and horrific descriptions of people, places, and things are a must but forcing the team down a linear path isn't good horror, it's torture-porn.

There are a lot of tricks one can employ to make sure your most exciting elements get their time on screen but the most effective and direct method will always be to hold an open conversation. If they chose to add a **DARK DIE** to an otherwise innocuous roll, ask the player how their actions might become complicated by Stress or new Insight. Let them surprise you with self-destructive creativity.

CALLING FOR ROLLS

The most significant mechanical decision a Handler can make is when to call for flat Insight and Stress rolls. Sometimes this decision is obvious: if a player catches sight of a Great Old One or studies The King in Yellow they better be ready to roll a **DARK DIE**. No human experience or occupational expertise are likely to apply.

But a shrewd Handler might also have an Agent roll for Stress when they witness shocking violence or tremble in fear. Let their reactions to the fiction, both as a character and as a player, act as a guide.

EQUIPPING YOUR TEAM

While some missions necessitate the allocation of significant resources, most of the time Agents will be left with whatever they've thought to bring along.

When funds are tight, consider directing the cell to their nearest Safe Box: classified storage spaces employed by The Conspiracy to store sensitive material.

A table of Safe Box contents can be found on page 40. Give each a personality and populate it with objects meant to entertain, inform, and empower the team.

CLEANUP DETAIL

For compromised missions a cleanup crew, designated X-Cell, is on call 24/7. This special team is made up of the most grizzled agents The Conspiracy can muster.

While it might be tempting to employ cleanup crews, know that relying on one is likely to result in a demotion or worse.

ENDING THE OPERATION

Most operations won't have a clear-cut victory condition. The Handler can point them in the right direction with urgent texts or phone calls, but should otherwise let Agents find their own solutions. Ultimately the presence or absence of fallout will determine their success.

At Home ask pointed questions that leave players hungry for answers. They'll have to wait until next session to receive their reply.

[RECORDING RESUMES]

INTERVIEWER: HOW IS THE CONSPIRACY ORGANIZED.

REDACTED: WELL, THERE'S MANAGEMENT, BUT NONE OF US TALK TO THOSE GUYS. THEIR DECISIONS ALL FILTER TO US VIA A-CELL.

INTERVIEWER: A-CELL. CAN YOU TELL ME MORE ABOUT THEM?

REDACTED: LOOK, I'M TAKING A HUGE RISK JUST TALKING TO YOU ...

INTERVIEWER: I KNOW, I KNOW. JUST A FEW MORE QUESTIONS. WOULD YOU LIKE A GLASS OF WATER?



THE THREAT

DEFINING THE THREAT

Every operation centers around a threat to the public, The Conspiracy, or to The Agents themselves. Its up to The Handler to bring the horror of that threat to life.

While the threat shouldn't be the only factor working against The Agents, it's important to understand their strengths, motivations, and weaknesses.

A formidable threat needn't be solvable to be interesting or engaging to the players. In fact it needn't be a tangible *thing* at all. Sometimes the best outcome an Agent can hope for is realizing that they can't win.

Ask Yourself ...

What does the Threat want?

What is at risk?

What will happen if the Agents fail?

Once you have an answer for each of these questions you can start narrowing down the specifics. Make sure that other people play a role in the plot, too, whether they be innocent bystanders or Agents of The Opposition.

EXAMPLE THREATS

An artifact that infects everyone who touches it with the urge to recover its missing pieces.

A viral cancer that slowly turns its victims into a copy of its progenitor.

A serial killer whose consciousness is transferred from victim to victim.

An abandoned building with the power to show its occupants a terrifying alternate dimension.

A werewolf set loose in modern day Chicago.

A Mythos creature whose rampage through Mt. Rainier National Park has made its way onto the local news.

An enemy agency whose interference in the team's latest case has set them on edge.

A local gang whose drug deals are unwittingly sending users minds into the distant future.

A mole within The Conspiracy whose revelations threaten to set off a national incident and to reveal an Agent's identity.

A cross-country flight that won't end until The Agents discover the terrible secret at the center of it all.

TOPICS TO AVOID

As tough as it can be to conjure up a compelling threat to The Agents, it's equally important to know what to avoid.

The first and most important elements to avoid are tired tropes and stereotypes. You'd be surprised at how many conspiracy theories boil down to run-of-the-mill racism and xenophobia. These can be discarded out of hand.

Secondly, avoid threats that might trigger your players' unique sensitivities. The following chapter has advice on how to start this conversation gracefully.

Finally, avoid threats that take complete control of The Agents away from the players. Removal of agency is a hallmark of the horror genre, but in a roleplaying game it must be executed with care and with consent. Players who are suddenly told that their Agent thinks or does something without any kind of warning or buy in are likely to react with annoyance or even disgust. Take care.

SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

1. **Classic Movie Monsters** (Give it a twist)
2. **Nihilistic Modernism** (Give it a physical form)
3. **Creepy-Pasta** (Tie it to The Mythos)
4. **The News** (It's OK, this is a horror game)
5. **Conspiracy Fiction** (The X-files, Dark, etc.)
6. **Real Life Conspiracy Theories** (All true!)

USING THE SCRIPT CHANGE TOOL

Choose a rating for your game and discuss the potential content.



Also write the following symbols on index cards and place them where everyone can see. Anyone at the table may hold up a corresponding card. After invoking a script change, say “resume” or tap the appropriate card to continue normal play.

- ◀◀ **REWIND** to return to an earlier point in the story and adjust your approach. Utilized mechanically in combat or to revise the established course of events.
- ▶▶ **FAST FORWARD** to skip over troubling material such as sexual content or graphic violence. The events happen but we draw a veil over the scene.
- || **PAUSE** to catch your breath, process game content, or take a bio break.
- ▶▶| **FRAME BY FRAME** is invoked when a player wants to slow down play or proceed with caution. Use this liberally when you need time to consider whether or not to employ another tool.
- ◀◀ **INSTANT REPLAY** allows players to pause the action in order to review what has just happened. Use this to bring clarity to confounding events.
- ▶ **RESUME** to continue normal play.

SAFETY & TONE

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

In addition to their other duties, a Handler has an important role in setting the tone and mood of the game. This doesn’t just mean playing thematic music or adjusting the lighting, it also involves making important decisions about player safety.

How well do I know the people at this table?

What kind of safety tools will we use in our game?

Is the content of this scenario respectful to all gender identities, ethnicities, and religious backgrounds?

What sort of content warnings might be necessary for this session?

Do I trust everyone at the table to respect the guidelines we set down together?

If you have trouble answering any of these questions, take it as a sign that this may not be the right material, the right time, or the right table for your game.

THE SCRIPT CHANGE TOOL

The Script Change is a powerful and thematic safety tool you can use in your game to maintain player agency and accommodate for your everyone’s unique sensitivities.

With this in mind, consider the Script Change tool as integral to the game as the rolling of dice.

THE SAFEBOX

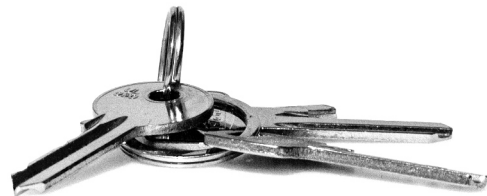
Safeboxes are secure locations maintained by the Conspiracy. They may serve as points of contact for Agents and Handlers, armories for dangerous operations, or disposal sites for Mythos artifacts.

The following tables exist to seed your game with interesting props, intriguing lore, and even a little levity.

ROLL 3d6 TO DETERMINE ...

... its location.

1. A 24/7 storage facility just outside of town.
2. An underground basement warehouse.
3. A cramped tool shed in the middle of nowhere.
4. A 200 sq. ft. "apodment" in a renovated high-rise.
5. The backroom of a seedy pawnshop.
6. A private garage owned by a Friendly.



... how it's secured.

1. A rusty chain and a padlock, (without a key).
2. An electronic keypad, (the code is 37152).
3. A passphrase, (spoken into a hidden speaker).
4. A hide-a-key, (hidden in a planter).
5. A code-word, (flashed into the security camera).
6. A special knock, (no one's to be inside).

... what's in plain sight.

1. Several suitcases and rolls of foam liner.
2. Ten gallon barrels of concentrated HCL Acid.
3. A Ducati Urban Enduro motorcycle.
4. A small flat of Suntory whisky, aged 12 years.
5. One corner of this room is furnished in the style of a cozy living room, love-seat and all.
6. An umbrella stand bristling with small caliber rifles and one ancient pump-action shotgun. A tin can filled to the brim with loose ammunition rests nearby.

ROLL 6d6 TO DETERMINE ITS CONTENTS

Scattered about the workbench.

11. A beat-up black leather wallet containing \$1,000 in small, worn bills.
12. A homemade spyglass. It looks crude but works great. Collapsible down to a 3 inch length.
13. A basic police-frequency radio scanner.
14. A laser listening device capable of picking up conversations approximately a mile away.
15. Three .40 pistols, along with six clips of ammunition. The serial numbers have been filed away,
16. A ten gigabyte memory card titled "Patterns in the System."

The files document odd everyday occurrences but one folder stands out: an audio waveform of a sharp clacking noise like the rapping of two stones. The sound sticks in the listener's mind. From now until the file is destroyed they will recognize it everywhere they go.

Adorning the walls.

21. Clippings from the "missed connections" section of a local weekly interspersed with mentions of a "slim, dark, and dower" individual.
22. A geological survey of a 5 square mile region labeled, "Tanis." GPS coordinates put it somewhere in the Olympic Peninsula of Washington state, though it's not listed on any other maps.
23. A photo series depicting a couple and their children. The entire family resembles one-another to an unsettling degree. Examining the dates reveals the pictures were taken decades apart.
24. A poster for the paranormal investigation show, "Hidden Worlds." The poster has been defaced with sharpie and numerous puncture marks.
25. A neatly organized collection of fortune cookie fortunes mounted with pins to a bulletin board.
26. A commemorative katana mounted above a plaque reading, "Sakura-Con 2012." Beside it is a picture of a woman dressed as a rather salacious crossplay of Jin from the anime series Samurai Champloo. The blade is well balanced stainless steel sharpened lovingly to a razor edge.

In a series of green lockers.

31. Three heavy down winter jackets with fleece liners. The pockets are filled with hand and foot warmer packets.

32. Thirty feet of silk rope and a blood-stained garrote made from the same fabric.

33. Uniforms and props suitable for imitating a road-construction crew including cones, orange hard hats, and reflective vests.

34. A complete set of locksmiths tools. Locals will recognize the “Master of Unlocking” branding.

35. A large duffel bag containing a hundred MREs and three lifestraw filters as well as a hand-drawn map of the nearest mountain range.

36. Every inch of this locker is packed to the brim with postcards from Hope, Washington. You seem to recall passing through, once, but you can't recall the details.

If an agent asks anyone else about the village of Hope they remember these details as well, no matter how unlikely.

In the mini-fridge.

41. Three cans of Miracle Whip in a paper bag. Each expired in June of 1995 but Agents inspecting a can will find a coiled fuse carefully tucked into the red plastic cap.

Each contains a stick of volatile TNT-Dynamite sealed in wax-coated cardboard.

42. A plastic container stocked with syringes, rubber hose, heroin, crystal meth, and enough powdered cocaine to kill an elephant.

43. Several bottles of Oxycontin, an extremely addictive painkiller.

44. Six frozen microwavable TV dinners: Chicken curry with vegetables and samosa.

45. Several doses of mescaline individually sorted in a plastic tupperware container.

46. Someone's middle finger, freezer burnt and left on ice. It seems its owner didn't come back for it. Careful examination turns up bite marks.

Thawing the finger will result in sporadic twitching. If left unattended it eventually inches it's way out of sight.

[RECORDING RESUMES]

INTERVIEWER: ARE YOU TELLING ME THEY JUST KEEP SENSITIVE MATERIAL RIGHT OUT IN THE OPEN?

REDACTED: YEAH, WILD, HUH?

INTERVIEWER: AND A-CELL DOESN'T SEE A PROBLEM WITH THAT?

REDACTED: OF COURSE THEY DO. THEY JUST DON'T HAVE MUCH OF A CHOICE. UNTIL SOME UNLUCKY BASTARD DISCOVERS A BOTTOMLESS PIT IT'S NOT LIKE THIS STUFF IS GOING ANYWHERE AND TRUST ME, BURNING IT DOESN'T

In an attache.

51. A 4k Ultra HD Waterproof Action Camera. There are a few heavily corrupted files on the 1TB memory card but it is in otherwise excellent condition.

52. A long range bolt-action sniper rifle. Many of the parts would have been outdated by 1942. someone has lovingly replaced them with custom pieces crafted with modern tools and materials.

53. A cheap-model specimen microscope with an electronic viewer. Magnifies up to 40x. Suitable for analyzing macroscopic samples up close.

54. A velvet-lined box containing a rod of black cherry wood adorned with metal rings. A crumpled note packaged with this artifact reads, "For emergencies only."

Anyone placing this artifact between their teeth will briefly be possessed by a warrior spirit known in forgotten texts as The Rider of Men.

55. A flare gun and six flares of various colors.

56. An expensive and specialized surveillance drone equipped with night vision and infrared.

Sealed away in boxes.

61. A medical defibrillator and battery pack.

62. A set of high quality kitchen knives straight from the manufacturer. Also included are several deer-leather sheaths seemingly purchased from a novelty gift shop.

63. Three slim kevlar vests, sized SM, M & XL.

64. A VHS cassette, label illegible. Each time it is watched agents are treated to a new schlock horror film re-imagining the events of their last operation.

If researched, the agents discover that these films do indeed exist, though even the most diehard horror fanatic won't have any recollection of ever seeing one.

65. A three-ring binder containing excerpts from occult manuscripts and essays. As a whole they create a sort of encyclopedia of the supernatural categorized into three sections: Occult Beings, Rituals, and History.

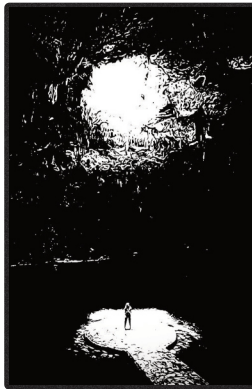
66. A remote controlled toy pick-up truck with a baseball sized lump of C4 in the back.

COMING SOON



Food of the Gods

Follow in the footsteps of agent Soiree, a missing operative hot on the heels of a cannibal chef in S-Cell's premier operation.



Revel in the Dark

Head to Australia on a dangerous cave diving expedition as a team of scientists runs headlong into the arms of an ancient evil.



The Linear Men

Take on the horrors that haunt a city as S-Cell falls deeper and deeper into the land of dreams. Can our agents follow the clues to their singular conclusion or will they be forever lost in nightmare?



Name: Justin Ford



@MothLands

Alias: Dissonance



moth-lands.itch.io

Justin (he/him) is a microscopist, writer, and tabletop game designer living in the Pacific Northwest.

To contact him for collaboration or to submit your photo for use in future operations, send an email to pageofmoths@gmail.com.

If you enjoy Cthulhu Deep Green, please leave a review of the game on my storefront. It means the world.

Be safe out there.

-JF

Every Agent of The Conspiracy knows two truths.

That the supernatural exists

And that it wants nothing more than to see us dead.

Enter the world of Cthulhu Deep Green, an insidious game of conspiracy horror and deep cover in which an Agent's every decision has dire consequences

**Will you lead your cell proudly in its struggle against
The Opposition?**

**Or will a careless misstep allow
work to follow you home?**