



**THE SPECIAL STOREROOM:** here Ho keeps any Mythos artifacts passing through his hands. Apart from the sprawling, spitting, and snoozing guards, a stout iron door (STR 75) with a deadbolt lock blocks the way in. The excellent lock can be picked, with difficulty. Reduce any Locksmith roll by 25 percentiles.

From the inside, an Idea roll suggests that the weakened place on the stairs to Ho Fong's office may be part of some uncompleted carpentry repairs. If investigators move the stair runner aside and quietly pry up the risers, they can drop down into the storeroom and examine its contents at their leisure.

There is a third way out of the storeroom: point B on the plan consists of an iron hatch—two 3 x7-foot hinged doors (STR 55) can be pulled up and folded back to reveal the water and pilings below. Bolts lock this hatch; it can only be opened from above and inside. Depending on the tide, the surface of the water is a yard to five yards below. A hoist allows crates to be lowered to small boats tied beneath the pier. Ho chooses this method of transfer when he does not want a particular item to be seen leaving the warehouse.

A variety of artifacts are in the special storeroom—they can be anything the keeper wishes, including statues of deities, friezes from ruins, paintings done by artists under Mythos influence, etc. Paper items are securely insulated against Shanghai's humidity. Nothing is magical, nor are Mythos tomes present. Many artifacts are disturbingly repulsive, costing 0/1D4 SAN while viewing. Successful Archaeology rolls identify most items as ancient Chinese. There are also Japanese, Indian, African, and Polynesian pieces, as well as some which are unidentifiable.

Of interest are six small crates simply labeled AP. They contain extra parts for Sir Aubrey's rocket. If all are laid out and examined, a successful Physics roll reduced by 50 percentiles could define the intended use of the parts. Rocketry is an extremely esoteric study in the 1920s.

Most of the crates have addresses on them. Keepers may freely choose any destination and use those references as jump-off points for other scenarios. As examples, keepers might consider using H.A. Wilcox, 7 Thomas Street, Providence, Rhode Island, USA (see the story "Call of Cthulhu"); Mr. W. Whateley, General Delivery, Dunwich, Massachusetts, USA (see the story "The Dunwich Horror"); Mr. Herbert West, c/o Miskatonic University Medical School, Arkham, Massachusetts, USA (see the story "Herbert West—Reanimator").

**HO FONG'S YACHT:** This large, well-kept, motorized junk is moored near Ho's Shanghai warehouse. Ho has managed to get British registry for the vessel, the *Luxuriant Goddess*, effectively shielding it from inspection by any faction of Chinese government—a useful shield for a ship intended to ply only Chinese waters. Ho uses the yacht mostly for cult business. While moored, it carries nothing pertaining to Mythos matters. Ho keeps 1D4+2 cultist guards aboard the vessel. They (like their warehouse compatriots) are instructed to capture intruders for questioning, not to kill them automatically.

# Ho Fong's Mansion

**H**o Fong lives near the Old City, beyond the aegis of the relatively efficient International Settlement police. His compound walls are thirteen feet high, and his gates are strong (STR 95). Gates and walls are topped by spear points, broken glass, and barbed wire to stymie thieves and snoopers. Subtract 25 percentiles from investigator Luck or Jump rolls needed to clear these obstacles.

The mansion is built around two courts. The outer court faces the main gate, and houses kitchens, servants, store-rooms, etc. Ho lives in the rooms of the inner court; they are luxurious. The mansion roofs are all of peaked red tile. All the rooftops are slippery and steep.

**ROOMS OF THE OUTER COURTS:** uniformly barren, these have only scraps of furniture and dribbles of possessions. Ho does not share his wealth with his cultist followers. At any time, 1D6+3 cultist servants are found working or sleeping in this part of the compound. In the rooms, Mythos statuettes or symbols, often the characters for the Bloated Woman, can be seen. Investigators managing to inspect this part of the mansion understand that the servants are cultists as well as the master.

**THE DOORMAN'S ROOM:** the doorman never gets a day off. His job is to admit or refuse entry to all who knock. If the investigators look shabby, he refuses the round-eyed bandits. If the investigators are well-dressed, the doorman has no choice but to admit them. Another servant hears their wishes and brings them to the luxurious outer sitting room (where they are carefully watched through tiny eye holes).

**LUXURIOUS SITTING ROOM:** the room is furnished with fine couches and chairs. A servant brings tea if the investigators have come in a legitimate fashion. Two fine screens grace one end of the room; behind each stands a guard. If an investigator looks around a screen and sees the guard, the guard smiles and bows.

**THE DINING ROOM:** A luxurious room. Light-fingered investigators could net 25,000 U.S. dollars just by selling the fine porcelains, screens, and tapestries here. A successful Archaeology roll establishes the authenticity and worth of the furnishings, which have no Occult or Mythos significance.

**THE LIBRARY:** about 4000 books are present, a few in English. Most are scrolls, in classical Chinese. They are valuable, being old, but are not magical or related to cult activity. There is a 20% chance that Ho has left one of his five Cthulhu Mythos tomes on the library desk. For particulars, see the section below dealing with the shrine to the Bloated Woman.

**HO'S BEDROOM:** fabulously-furnished, with rare silks, magnificently inlaid, hand-carved furniture, and an enormous bed. There are several white-jade Mythos statuettes, but amid the wealth of furnishings it takes a successful Spot Hidden to notice them, even though they're in the open, resting on a table.

**CARL STANFORD'S ROOM:** if the investigators have met Stanford in other adventures, they'll be dismayed by his presence here. Mighty Cthulhu has sent Stanford to acquire the *Seven Cryptical Books*—a degenerate scholar and collector, Lin Tang-yu, reportedly owned the scroll on which they were written. Jack Brady stole the tome before Stanford could get there. Now Stanford pursues both the scroll and Jack Brady. Having kidnapped Choi Mei-ling, a young woman who knows Brady's whereabouts, Stanford nears his goal.



CARL STANFORD

If the investigators stake out Fong's house, they have a 50% chance to spot Stanford coming or going. Assuming a discreet stake-out, Stanford has his normal Spot Hidden chance to detect the lurking investigators. If the investigators have not met Carl Stanford, they know no more than that an occidental is staying at Ho's.

**THE ROOM OF HO TZU-HSI:** Here lives Ho Fong's only child, Tzu-hsi. She is permanently insane, having witnessed



HO TZU-HSI

the death of her mother during one of her father's obscene rituals. She never leaves this room. A beautiful young woman, she sits here every day, humming in a low voice. She now eats only living things, particularly earthworms, spiders, snails, and slugs which the gardeners catch for her. Entering investigators always see her eating these disgusting natural foods, which entails a 0/1D3 SAN loss to them. She no longer distinguishes anyone but her father, and gives no information of any kind.

**INNER COURT:** the garden seems innocuous. A successful Natural History roll identifies nightshade, peyote plants, etc., in the garden, and in the garden pool two blowfish and tiny blue-veined Australian octopuses, also exceptionally poisonous. These and many other natural things are handy sources for mind-altering drugs and poisons. This garden is one of Ho Fong's arsenals.

**THE PAVILION:** beneath the canopy of the pavilion is a bronze statue of the Buddha. A successful Spot Hidden roll reveals a thin seam around the statue's neck. If the Buddha's head is turned twice in a circle (it only moves clockwise), the entire statue slides out of the wall and to the right, disclosing a dark passageway. This is the entrance to Ho's shrine.

## Shrine to the Bloated Woman

Iron grillwork (STR 35) guards the locked door (reduce chance to pick lock by 20%). Beyond the door is a small room about twelve feet square, with a ceiling ten feet high. This ceiling is Ho Fong's trap and recruiting device. Though Ho is already insane, he never watches the ceiling—even the permanently mad can't get back from where the ceiling takes them.

**THE CRAWLING CEILING:** the ceiling bears large luminescent brush strokes forming the Chinese characters for *bloated woman*. The shapes seem to shift slightly. The investigator can shift away at any time, but an investigator staring at the pattern for more than five combat rounds feels his or her mind being drawn out and into the pattern. The player may then attempt to roll D100 equal to or less than the investigator's INT+POW as a percentage; failing, the investigator's mind is lost to the pattern. The body of a victim continues to stand staring upward, and can be moved like a puppet. Moving a victim of the pattern out of the room is dangerous—while the victim is removed and not looking at the pattern, there is no way for a mind lost to the pattern to be regained.

The mind of a pattern victim understands what has happened, but can't quite get back into its body. It is staggered and bewildered by the avalanche of mental energy from the tormented collective minds—all insane—of everyone already captured. Such an experience is just the thing to drive the new captive insane. For every round within the pattern, the victim loses 0/1D4 SAN points (1/1D4+1 if the keeper is feeling stern). Reaching zero Sanity, the mind is forever captured.

Besides the D100 roll noted above, there is one other chance to come back. If one or several investigators became part of the pattern within a few rounds, their players may meanwhile attempt Luck rolls. Those receiving successful rolls can add together their Power characteristics. The sum represents the number which one of the players must roll equal to or less than on D100. If that roll succeeds, all the participants return to their bodies.

This rescue procedure can be tried just before the first Sanity loss roll. A successful Cthulhu Mythos or Idea roll is needed before the play can be attempted.

Though their minds are linked within the pattern, investigator Sanity losses remain individual and are rolled separately.

**STATUE OF THE BLOATED WOMAN:** Nyarlathotep in that aspect. The workmanship is exquisite and frightening, costing 1/1D4 SAN to view. The statue is eight feet high, and weights about 1000 pounds. Made of a bronze-colored alien alloy, it is impervious to physical damage. Magical attacks reasonably likely to damage an ordinary statue (Dread Clutch of Nyogtha isn't, for instance) can be attempted to damage this representation. The roll must match the statue's current magic points (40 is the maximum) versus the investigator's, on the Resistance Table. Ho knows a spell keyed to the statue which taps these magic points while he touches the idol. The statue regains 2 magic points per day courtesy of Nyarlathotep. It also absorbs the magic points of sacrifices made to it, to its maximum capacity of 40.

Before the statue lay the bone fragments and ashes of incinerated sacrificial victims.

**THE TEAK CABINET:** about five feet high, this Chinese case has hammered gold doors and is carved with strange monsters and alien inscriptions. The locked cabinet can be forced open (STR 10). Ho Fong always carries on his person the keys to both the cabinet and to the door of the shrine. A poisoned needle guards against lock pickers. Roll Locksmith or Mechanical Repair successfully and the door opens with-

out tripping the defense. Failing the roll, the trap is sprung. Match the POT 15 poison on the needle against the target's CON on the Resistance Table. If the victim successfully resists the poison, he or she is temporarily blind for 1D6 minutes; if he or she fails, permanent blindness ensues. The poison is called Essence of Thoughtful Resignation.

The poison on the needle must be renewed daily, or it is ineffectual. Five sealed one-ounce vials of this poison are within the cabinet. Each vial holds twenty applications.

Also in the cabinet is a small flower press, from which Ho extracts fluids for Essence of Thoughtful Resignation and other poisons. If scrapings from the press are examined in a lab, a successful Natural History roll establishes what flowers are used.

Chinese scrolls and several Western-style books record the visitations of the Bloated Woman, monumental occasions in the cult's history. Sometimes the cult sinks ships, or arranges typhoons or earthquakes, plagues or famines. The Pale Viper—the cult name for Sir Aubrey Penhew—and his plan to blast the skies with far-flung poisoned metal is mentioned. Little more is directly said, but if the investigators penetrate and escape from this room, remind the players of these records if the investigators later need direction.

Additionally, there are five books: *The Goddess of the Black Fan*, commentaries on the *R'lyeh Text* and *The Tale of Priest Kwan* in Chinese, the *Livre d'Ivon* in French, and *True Magick* in English. The first two books are gifts from Carl Stanford to Ho Fong. There is an 80% chance that one or the other book has been left open in Ho's library.

**LIVRE D'IVON;** in French, +12 percentiles to Cthulhu Mythos knowledge, Sanity loss to read is 1D4/2D4 SAN points, spell multiplier is x2. As per the *Call of Cthulhu* rules.

**TRUE MAGICK:** by Theophilus Wenn, in English, +6 percentiles to Cthulhu Mythos knowledge, Sanity loss to read is 1D4/1D8 SAN, spell multiplier x2. As per the *Call of Cthulhu* rules.

**THE GODDESS OF THE BLACK FAN;** by Liu Chanfang. Written on a scroll in classical Chinese, +5 percentiles to Cthulhu Mythos, Sanity loss to read is 0/1D4 SAN points. To learn the spell requires the ability to read the scroll plus a D100 roll of INT x5 or less. Spell: Contact Nyarlathotep.

The poems of this book tell how the monk Liu meets a goddess who hides her face behind a black fan. The goddess seduces the author, telling Liu her true name and how to call her from behind the fan. He follows her bidding, and is struck with horror when he sees the Bloated Woman. Losing all reason, he writes a last poem in his own blood after gutting himself with a sickle. This is the foundation for and the most sacred tome of the Order of the Bloated Woman. The cult will do anything and slay anyone to retrieve this book. Though he never mentions the name Nyarlathotep, one of the poems acts as the spell Contact Nyarlathotep in the aspect of the Bloated Woman.

**R'LYEH TEXT COMMENTARY:** in classical Chinese. Spells: Contact Cthulhu, Contact Spawn of Cthulhu, Grasp of Cthulhu, and Wave of Oblivion. The book also contains a sketch map of R'lyeh. +15 percentiles to Cthulhu Mythos