

Preparation, and Calling to Cthulhu

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First it is needful to awaken the Voice, to plunge into the dream of the Before Time. The Old Ones can often be reached by the proper attunement of the mind to Their symbols, their sonic calls (one can hardly call them words) and to the *types of thought* most pleasing to them. I will reveal what I know of these things, the sorceries of the Old Ones. Think not that I bless you thereby.

It is needful to make contact, first, with great Cthulhu, who lies dreaming in his palace in the sunken city of Rlyeh. In the elder days this island city was the home of the mightiest worshippers of the First Gods. Mighty Cthulhu was their priest, himself of their extradimensional flesh, yet still of our cosmos. Among the black cyclopean towers of his palace temple he made Gates to unspeakable locales, whence he called those races of things who still serve and wait. With angles and planes unknown to our geometries, Rlyeh was a comfort and a haven to Those From Outside.

From the Gates of Rlyeh came Tsathogva the Toad God and Shub Niggvrath the Black Goat of the Wood. Into the gates went uncounted offerings, living beings whose flesh and soul were fodder for the Dwellers. When the Sword of Light was drawn, and Aster slew the mightiest of the War Kings, Rlyeh was sunk deep beneath the sea. The Gods of Earth fashioned mighty spells, sealing the gates with their star-stones. Cthulhu they could not slay in truth, but they bound him with all the laws of their new order. Now the Elder Priest lies dreaming beneath the weight of the sea. Of him it is said:

That is not dead,
which can eternal lie,
And with strange aeons
even death may die.

So it is that, even in his frigid prison, under the locks and guards of the Unnamed, the mind of great Cthulhu reaches out to those who would serve the Outer Ones. It is to him that the first offerings are made.

First, go to a secret place where the Elder Ones have broken through in the past, or to a battlefield, or scene of slaughter, or an ancient burying ground, and there remove a modicum of soil, needing no more than two handfuls.

Then, in a secret place, draw in white flour the sigil of Azathoth, The Blind, Hungry God. Upon that sigil lay a fire of blackthorn, willow and driftwood, and on it place bone and meat, wormwood, asafœtida and coral. This should be lit at sunset on the night of the dark moon, and tended carefully so that all is well burnt. As the fire burns, the sorcerer must hold this image in mind:

In a primal jungle, nine figures tower over a small fire. They are robed in black, their cloaks falling around vaguely alien forms. They circle the fire, its light does not penetrate the shadow of their hoods. As each one in turn adds some matter, some fuel to the flame, the Nine chant rhythmically. Listen to the chant as you watch the flame eat, transform and reduce all that it is given. The flame seems to writhe and congeal, as stinking smoke rolls away. The sorcerer chants thus:

Ia Azathoth,

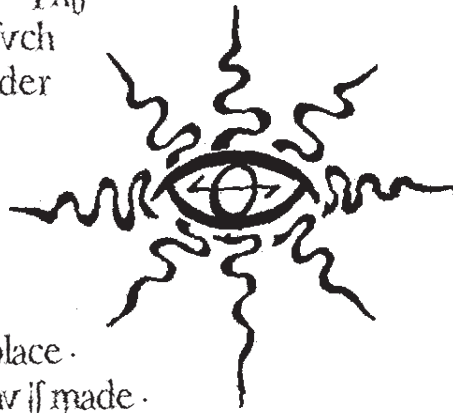
Ia Panphage

or repeats what chants may be heard in the vision, as he carefully burns all the materials, perhaps using oil to insure that all is burnt to ash. These ashes are pounded well, and to them are added nine drops of blood, semen or menstruum. These ashes are thoroughly mixed with the graveyard earth. This is the Summoning Earth, such as sustained the Gates in elder times.

Take you some of this earth and spread it in a round tray, perhaps an inch deep, or upon the living earth in some secret place. Here the offering to Cthulhu is made.

The next part of the Summoning Earth is mixed with clay, and from that clay the image of Cthulhu is made.

The image is a plaque about the size of a human hand, perhaps an inch thick. On it is shaped this full shape of the Great One, along with the signs. This is shaped



and dried without the touch of sun or moonlight. On its back is written or carved

Phinglv mglwnash Cthvlliv Rlyeh wgah nagl shragh which means "In his house in Rlyeh, dead Cthvlliv waits dreaming."

The shaping of this eidolon should be in proportion to the size of the tray or area of the Summoning Earth, for the idol is set up or laid in the center of that area. It is best if the compounded earth be spread on common soil, allowing the image to be larger. If the sorcerer must work indoors, the tray is better, and the image made small. In either case, the idol is then surrounded by fire, using candles of black wax in a ring. The arrangement of these is not important, so long as the image is exalted and all surrounded by fire.

Before this eidolon there are two types of proper devotion. Most common is meditative invocation, the mind turned inward to seek the Dreams of the Old Ones. Beyond this is the Black Revel, where the Outer is called into the flesh. There the celebrants writhe and howl in celebration of the Outsiders. To this Revel are summoned the Outer Kindreds, the Monstrous Self within every human form, and their power is released over the puny cities of men. Ia, The Tribe Within. The joy of the bursting, of the twisting of flesh, the cracking of bone when the Elder Body emerges from feeble mortal flesh. But of this mystery little will be said in this place. When the dark, winged ones make their presence known, when the willow devils come shambling from the wood, when the shapeless ones rise from shadowed pools, all words will be unneeded.

So then, the wouldbe sorcerer strips his body na-

ked to come before the shrine. She might be painted as she wishes, to blur the lines of her humanity, and she must bring a drum or, if possible, an assistant with a drum. The candles or fire is lit, and incense is burned in profusion.

The witch begins to beat the drum quickly and monotonously. She rocks back and forth, seated naked before the shrine, and fixes her eyes on the image. She chants

Cthvlhv shfagn

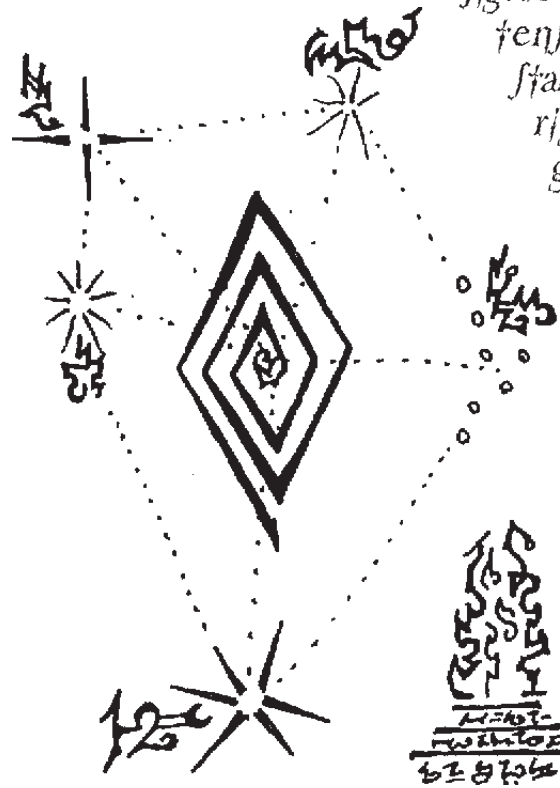
over and over in a voice like the huffing and grunting of



a beast, or like the breaking of waves on rock. As she chats, she follows this vision:

walking ... walking a long time, through streets of black basalt ... gigantic towers, buildings lost in the sea-mist above ... the angles of the buildings and streets seem to conflict, making it difficult to know whether you walk uphill or down ... every face of the buildings is covered with arcane yet suggestive glyphs and pictograms ... walking on toward a great glowing ahead ... hearing now the rhythmic chanting, the sound of a great multitude ... emerge from the path into an open court, so vast to see across ... ringed in cyclopean pillars ... the great roaring of the chanting and the beat of horse-sized drums ... in the center, within a ring of fire, stands the towering

figure of Cthulhu ... many tens of cubits tall ... standing on a plinth, upright on two legs, great wings reaching into the air, four arms making the sorcerous signs of his working ... the billowing darkness from the flames caresses his naked form ... the head of Cthulhu is a writhing mass of tentacles, moving independently, the great one's



voice roaring from it in counterpoint to the chanting... throughout the great square, tall figures robed in black and deeply hooded... Whips cracking... lines of figures driven toward the fire, chanting dully... moving through the crowd, to the edge of the pit... as you watch, beings are driven forward, over the edge and into the smoking mass below... you can now see that it is no common fire that hungrily consumes the flesh of the victims... it writhes and flows like some kind of Other flesh, nearly energy, as the forms of the offerings dissolve and are absorbed... the victims scream and the oily smoke streams up to wreath the chanting head of the Elder Priest, as the eldritch flame emits a mad, thin piping... as you fall to your knees and join the chanting to great Cthulhu...

Letting all of your emotions respond to the vision, chant the name over and over until exhaustion takes you. Then lie down and sleep before the shrine.

This is the Call to Cthulhu. You will know that it has succeeded when the minions of the Old Ones come to you in dreams. These dreams are the key to their prison, their clearest voice to all but the most daring and mighty sorcerers. When a dream of greeting has been given, the seeker of Those Who Wait may proceed to other spells.

In the work of opening the ways to the Old Ones, there is a second Power who may aid the witch. He is the Messenger of the Elder Gods, called the Crawling Chaos.