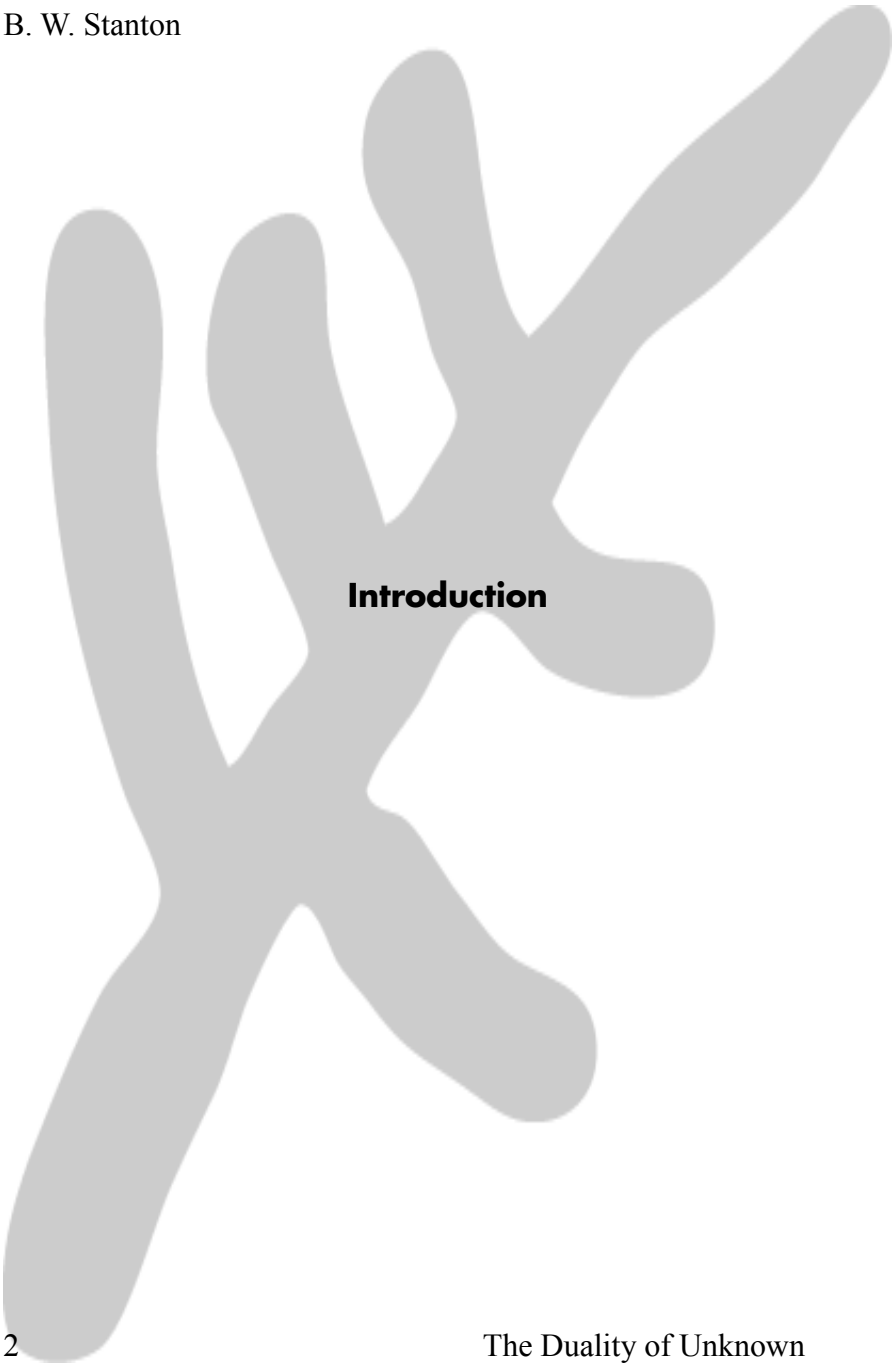


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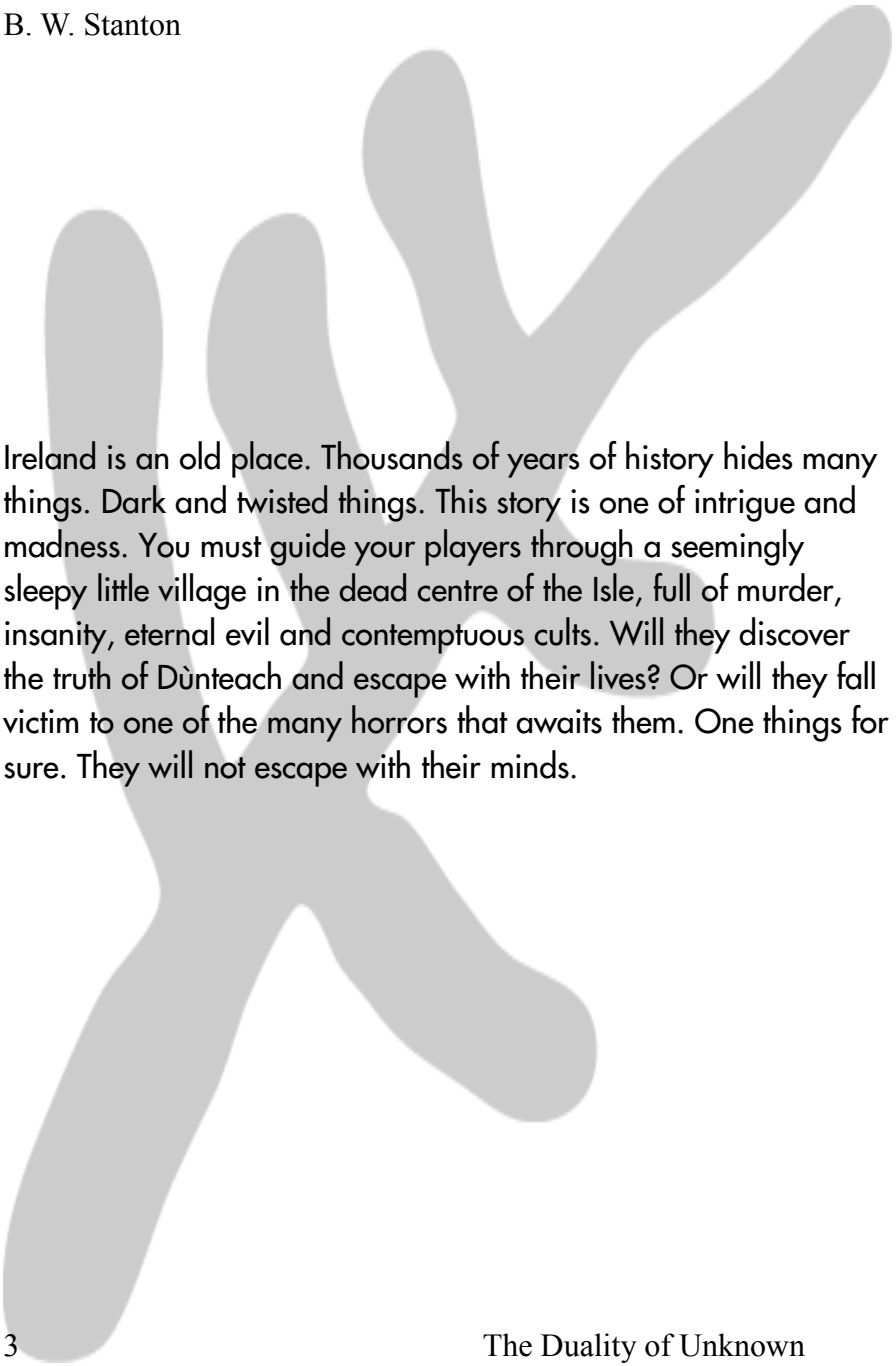
The Duality of Unknown

by

B. W. Stanton



Introduction



Ireland is an old place. Thousands of years of history hides many things. Dark and twisted things. This story is one of intrigue and madness. You must guide your players through a seemingly sleepy little village in the dead centre of the Isle, full of murder, insanity, eternal evil and contemptuous cults. Will they discover the truth of Dùnteach and escape with their lives? Or will they fall victim to one of the many horrors that awaits them. One things for sure. They will not escape with their minds.

The Game

This scenario is written with the Dread rule set in mind. Dread is a role playing game designed by Epidiah Ravachol. It uses neither dice nor stats. Instead difficult actions are simulated with "The Tower of Dread". The tower is essentially jenga. You build it up, remove a few blocks depending on the number of players, and each time the players have to perform an action outside of expected proficiencies they pull a block, with one hand, and place it on top.

The Setting:

A rural village in County Roscommon.
Dùnteach (Dunet'chaa).

The Plot:

The protagonists, each in the town for their own reasons, are led to the church and witness a ritual sacrifice, the Ofráil. Through their investigations they discover a local cult and a doomsday prophesy, The Tairngir. It becomes a race against time to unravel the mystery of the Cult and prevent the end of the world, but is there more going on than meets the eye? Throughout the story hints are dropped of another group at work in the same village. The players dig up information on the Cult of Balor (*a cult of pre-christian druids who believe that through sacrifice the town will be spared destruction like others in the area*) and motifs denote The Touched (*a group of madman devotees of the Elder Mother, slimed and insane they convert themselves into vessels in order to summon her here*) The Touched try to persuade the players to facilitate the coming whilst the Balorians try to murder them. In the end the players facilitate the coming of the mother

The Game

This system is fantastic at building tension. The game piggybacks off of it, using the tension generated by the tower to add to the attempt at tension and atmosphere generated by the scenario.

I first saw the system on Tabletop of Geek and Sundry and was enamored of it. The idea of emotional highjacking two separate experiences was just genius to me. You ever hear that if you take someone you want to like you on a roller coaster they will associate you with excitement? Same thing.

I would ask that you buy the game, \$3 for the .pdf and \$24 for the hardcopy online.

and must resist their personal maddening revelations and escape the town before their immediate death.

Behind the Scenes. The Balorians are performing a ritual sacrifice to a non-existent god. They are lucky because they are killing the touched, people incubating an elder child. When they go unkilld they open a portal to the Elder Mother who enters our reality and destroys. The Balorian ritual takes place on the three days surrounding the full moon, waxing gibbous, full moon, and waning gibbous. If the players stop this ritual the world ends. The key moral choice is to intervene at the end in the church. The scene with Charles at breakfast is the key piece of information, if the players believe it is him being sacrificed they hopefully will help. The information from the priest will tell the players the Cult sacrifice more than just the Touched, but the Ruins depict a touched transforming and opening a portal. The distinction between the two groups of people will be difficult to get across but the motifs associated with each and the music being specific to each

The Game

Asking for a pull of a player will depend entirely on their answers to the questionnaires. If they try to perform an action that their character would be bad at, or just has no experience in that field, they have to pull a block. Even if the action is something that they would be able to do a pull may be required due to emotional state or the surrounding circumstances of the player.

group combined with the lack of mention of the touched or the slime or the occult symbols on the sacrifice victim in the books of Balor will hint at the incongruity

Themes.

1. Investigation.
2. The players being unaware of the two cults for as long as possible.
3. Resisting their personal fall to madness.

Key Players:

The Cult of Balor: Balor was the Old Irish King of the Fomorians and the God of drought and blight. His worship endured the ages in secret and the sacrifices have warded off the destruction that befell other settlements in the area. In reality they have fallen victim to specious reasoning, most of their sacrifices have been of the Touched who are the real cause of the destruction of older settlements. Balor is not real.

Motifs: The color red.

The Touched: The Touched are the loosely organized insane. They are indoctrinated

The Game

The players may choose not to pull, which would make them fail the task, but not die. IF the tower falls they are removed from the game, one way or another, and they also fail the task. The player may also decide to intentionally knock over the tower, they are still removed from the game but accomplish the task, thus making it possible for their team mates to succeed.

devotees to the Elder Mother, an unknowable eldritch abomination seeking entrance to the realm to breed. The bodies of the Touched are portals for the elder. Ritual scars are etched into their eyes and they “die” and awaken covered in slime soon to become a portal for their god. Called the becoming.

Motifs: The smell of ozone/chlorine, haiku and fast slow speech patterns.

Player Questionnaires

The Paranormal investigator will have more information on local cults and various other occult knowledge.

The Paranormal Investigator

1. What is your fondest wish?
2. Most people have a trigger for your level of obsession. Why do you do what you do?
3. Name your core hobby. How good at it are you?
4. Only the host is perfect, tell me, what would you say is your greatest weakness?
5. What tools do you always carry?
6. What is your name?

The linguistics student will notice haiku and understands the ogham runes, with a pull.

The Linguistics Student

1. What keeps you up at night?
2. Tell me something about your childhood, why did that stick with you?
3. Intense study doesn't usually leave much room for sports, how are you physically?
4. What precious heirloom do you never go anywhere without? Why?
5. How are you funding your studies and, by extension, this trip?
6. What is your name?

The Intrepid reporter has no particular purpose, I choose him because I like how it sounded

The Intrepid Reporter

1. What truth do you refuse to believe?
2. What do you think you are better at than you really are?
3. Are you a loner or a team player? Why?
4. Being a journalist can be stressful, what do you do to take your mind off it?
5. They say every one has their price, how did you discover yours?
6. What is your name?

The Relative Relative will help bind the back stories of two of the players, forming a useful core to build the game around. Their answer to question 1 is the easiest to write scene 5 around.

The Relative Relative

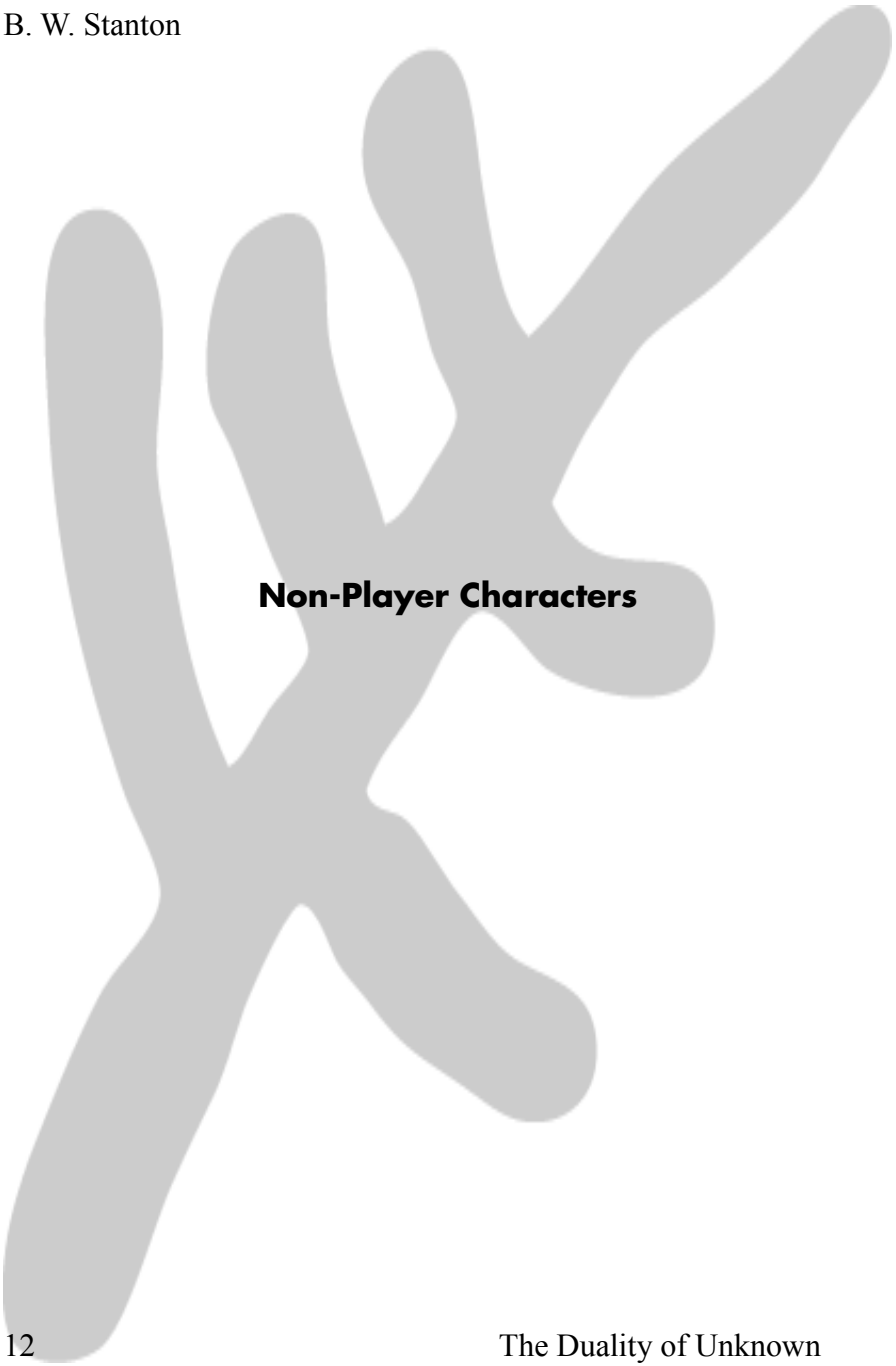
1. What keeps appearing in your dreams?
2. What is the worst thing you have ever done to a loved one?
3. Who from history do you most admire?
4. If you could change one thing about yourself what would it be?
5. What brought you to Dunteah (Dunet'chaa)?
6. What is your name?

This section is useful for team building. While the players are answering this question you should be implementing aspects of their characters into the story. The most important of which is scene 5, the introduction should make it quite clear to the players that they are in a dream.

The Relative relative may choose who they're related to, and thus they both answer the first bonus question. The Remaining two characters are then forced to bunk because of a shortage of rooms at the Inn. The Relatives have **Scene 1: The Inn** to themselves while the remaining two players have **Scene 4: The Warning in the Room** to themselves.

Bonus Questions

1. How well do you get along with your relative?
2. How do you feel about sharing a room with a stranger?



Non-Player Characters

I play the Hotel manager nasal and Irish, more Dublin accent and Roscommon admittedly. She is at first very warm with the players then becomes accusatory and cold later, when she wears the red ribbon.

I play The Red Robed odd. Make him overly inquisitive, again Irish, though closer to Atlas in Bioshock.

The Hotel Manager: Mairead O'Conner.

A woman in her late forties. Has lived in the Hamlet her whole life. She is nominally affiliated with the Cult of Balor but keeps well out of it, intentionally. She ignores any odd occurrence and believes anything either group says to her.

Knowledge:

1. Knows that there is forces at work in her hamlet but ignores them.
2. If pressed will say that she thinks the town has too many bohemian types. Drug users she thinks. Are Actually the touched.

Motivation:

1. Money mostly. She wants the PC's to stay as long as possible. Will offer freebies, maps etc.

The Red Robed: Druid John Hopkins
A member of the Cult of Balor. He is staunchly devout. Truly believes the human sacrifice is required for the safety of the town.

Knowledge:

1. Knows about his own cult. And when the sacrifices are made.

Motivations:

1. To further the goals of his order.

The Dead Man: Dexter Ward

Only has one line, so no acting required.

A man on the path of right gone wrong. He discovered the ruins and places of worship of the mother same as the priest but was corrupted by them rather than going mad he became an acolyte. He returned home and made himself a vessel of the Mother. He awaits her return soon.

Knowledge:

1. Is Dead when the players meet him the first time, then a monster the second.

Motivations:

1. The Return of the mother.

The Porter: Seamus McNamara.

I Play Seamus as a good man, though he is still a Balorian. I use a Belfast accent, my mother tongue.

A young man of sixty. Vitality still in his movements and speech. Is a Cult member in the Order of Balor. Will hold his tongue on all things odd.

Knowledge:

1. Knows the rituals of Balor and their reasons for them. Does not know who the touched are. Believes the town will be destroyed if the sacrifices stop.
2. May reveal this to the players the next day, after the church scene, but no sooner. Is low ranking.

Motivation:

1. To save the town. Will stop any who intend to prevent the sacrifices.

The Slimed Man: Elijah Murphy.

A man of unknown age. His wounds and slime obscure that. He used to work at the library but quit recently. Is close to changing into a Child, the becoming.

He is slow and barely able to communicate. He is dying the second time he speaks, so breathless and beleaguered. Really try and sell the death.

Knowledge:

1. Is a conscious member of the touched.
2. Tricks the players into helping him.

The Touched Man: Edward Derby.

He owns a large manor house a few miles outside of town. He is no longer entirely human, being perverted by the Elder. He

Edward stands too close to the people he speaks to, his speech pattern is all over the place, but his accent is Upper class Irish, so go for a combination of received pronunciation and Dublin.

A madman, so his speech patterns are similar to Edwards but more manic. Generic Irish accent.

speaks both quickly and slowly. Is not slimed.

Knowledge:

1. Knows of the coming of the Mother and the destruction of the town.
2. Knows of the local ruins. Can point the players to them as he lives near by.

Motivations:

1. Wants the Mother to come and cleanse the land. Will not give the players information until after the church. After which he will lie to the players.

The Mad Priest: Father Steve Martin O'Donnell

An old man, he had been a priest at the local parish until he discovered the Balorians, he was put out to pasture shortly thereafter. His research into the cult and their practices recently led him to one of the nearby ruins where he had his maddening revelation. A vision of the Elder Mother in an underground chamber and his knowledge of the destruction to come.

Knowledge:

1. He knows the ruin where it was

revealed. He will only say the mother is coming and we're all dead.

Motivations:

1. Stark raving mad. He only wants the players to leave and be left alone.

The Innocent: Charles O'Reilly

A visiting English professor just traveling through Ireland. His grandmother was from cork and she always told him he should go, he spent the best part of a year in cork city and is now traveling the Irish country side. He wears a tweed jacket, quintessentially professorial, complete with brown leather elbow patches.

He is classic RP accent. A British man, so as English as you can.

Knowledge:

1. No knowledge on the current events. Just a traveler.

Motivation:

1. Is leaving the next day, whilst the players are out.

Seen as Balor was an ancient pagan Irish deity, a bad one for the Celts likely a good one for the pre-celtic Irish. I use Irish words for Balorian practices.

The Touched and the Elder Mother are broadly based on the Esoteric Cult of Dagon and the Eldritch Abominations created by Lovecraft. Their words are then based on a combination of Arabic and Hebrew. Arabic because the Necronomicon was written by a "Mad Arab" and Hebrew because of the animosity between the two groups. I like the way the words clash in your mouth

Glossary

Balor: Irish God of Drought and Blight, does not exist.

Balorian: Follower of Balor, nominally sane.

Cos'jah: A rough Spanish "J". The act of changing from a slimed man into a child and then into a portal. Again, transliterate of Hebrew and Arabic portmanteau of becoming.

D'Visarakh: The Mungah name for a slimed man. One who is undergoing the Cos'jah, a transliterate portmanteau of the Arabic word for spit and the Hebrew word for sticky.

Elder Mother: Earthly name for the unknowable eldritch monster.

Ja'talroug: A rough Spanish "J" Touched word for Kill, a transliterate portmanteau of the Hebrew and Arabic word for kill.

Munagah: The touched name for

themselves. They are insane. A transliterate portmanteau of the Hebrew and Arabic words for touched.

Ofráil: The name of The Ritual performed by the Balorians. Literally means offering in Irish.

Samna'gim: Touched word for non touched, is a transliterate portmanteau of the Hebrew and Arabic words for fish.

Tairngreacht: The Prophecy of the end of the world as told by The Balorians. Literally prophecy in Irish.

Taliett: The monster that a D'Visarakh transforms into before becoming a portal during the Cos'jah. A transliterate portmanteau of Hebrew and Arabic words for child.



The Story

The small town of Dùnteah lies in County Roscommon, dead centre of the Island. A fine location for a quiet getaway, steeped in history with fine fishing and hunting. There have also been an unusual number of missing persons in the area. Each of you are in the here for your own reasons, but are drawn to the mystery surrounding the town. Will you discover what has been happening to the people? And will you escape with your lives?

Scene 1 The Inn

Music: Light rain.

Who: Hotel Manager, Hotel porter, Slimed Man.

What: The Slimed man asks for help of one of the players before being ushered off by the burly porter.

Where: The stairs leading up to the players shared room.

How: One of the players will be forced to make contact with the man as he stumbles. They discover the thin film of gross covering him but do not get a good look at his face.

Why: The man is about to become a portal for the Elder Mother. The Porter, being a devotee of Balor, takes him away to be sacrificed.

Synopsis: We begin with the siblings. They get off a bus outside the Beal Inn. **Outside** description read. They enter the Inn and the **ground floor** is read. The porter takes their bags to their room. After a discussion with the hotel manager they go to their room. **The Slimed man** is read. The players hopefully try to help him up and **the Touch** is read. The porter intervenes and takes the man outside warning the players not to go out this late, wolves he says. And worse. When the players reach their room **The Room** is read. In the room is two beds, a large central window two small bedside tables with one drawer. In the drawers is a copy of the bible. The walls are decorated with Celtic patterns. Once the players have settled **the Church** is read. The players then meet up in the landing of the hotel and decide what to do from there.

Sight: Red Curtains. Rustic. Brass bell.

Sound: The wind and rain, muffled. The turning of pages.

Smell: Barely hidden manure.

Taste: Mints

Touch: Gross man, Slime like milky loogie, silicon lube and ejaculate.

Opening Dialog

The Manager: Oh, Hello you must be the **(Name of relatives)**. We have been expecting you. Seamus! Put down that magazine you old fool, we have guests. Seamus will take your things to your room. Welcome to the Beal Inn.

The Porter: Yes, yes, your bags please. All of them.

Set the Scene:

1. **Outside.** The wind howling and a light rain bothering you as you step off the bus onto a long street. You notice the pungent smell of fresh fertilizer. The Inn lies before you and a line of houses behind. You see red curtains twitch but darkness within the windows. The Inn is less an Inn and more a large converted barn. A few lights lit on the upper floor and only one on the ground. A fine old church sits at the end of the street, a cold glow visible at this distance. A large full moon hangs above.

2. **Ground Floor.** The reception is rustic, a simple counter runs the length of the wall and a small reception area sits on your left as you enter. You notice vaguely religious images adorning the walls. (St Peter's cross and triquetra.) You see the old owner of the hotel flicking through a battered copy of *The Great God Pan* (A. Mahan 1894). In the corner sits a porter reading an *Ireland's Own*, his red boots on a small coffee table. They take no notice of you

The Slimed Man: Help me, he whispers.

as you enter.

3. **The Slimed man.** The stairs leading up to the room are longer than you would have thought from the outside. They creak as you walk. You see a hooded figure begin to make his way down. He does not look too steady on his feet. He trips, but catches himself, still his knee seems to have hit the floor hard. He is not standing up.
4. **The Touch:** You touch him and wish you hadn't. He seems covered in a thin film of slime, unseen until you made contact with it. Your hand comes away, with slight difficulty, fluid ropes dangling like ejaculate. A whiff of something sharp and familiar fills your nostrils.
5. **The Room.** Bunk beds on either side of the room and a low window in the centre. The same iconography from downstairs on the walls. A vanilla candle is fighting a losing battle with the smell but it's better than nothing. A large wardrobe sits on the far right corner with twin nightstands next to

each bunk.

6. **The Church.** A scream in the night. Movement at the window. You strain to see down the street, It is difficult but you make out what appears to be the man you met on the stairs being forced into the church. He is struggling valiantly but four red robed figures seem to be too much for him.

Notes: The Porter must be unchallenged, get the slimed man and get out. Try to slip in a blessed be in his speech pattern, if the players are familiar with modern paganism they may notice the reference.

Plot hooks: The players should take it upon themselves to go after the man being forced into the church.

Useful Items: A book on the ogham alphabet on the coffee table in the reception area. Maps of the area on the counter as they walk in.

Scene 2 The Touched Man

Music: Ambient Horror and Rain.

Synopsis: First **The Street**

description is read. The players have their second encounter with a Touched man. He gives off the smell of ozone, like chlorine but more alien. The conversation should be short and he remains in control. If the players push him on anything he will give you a card with his address and ask you to come and speak with him. He closes all conversation on a Haiku, one of the three clues hinting at the touched.

Who: A Touched man.

What: An unhinged gentleman speaks with the players about the becoming.

Where: The street that leads to the church.

How: He speaks in bursts, his voice flows like the breakers, fast then slow and too close to the player he is speaking to.

Why: To hint at the other side. The cult of Balor and The touched are not so much antagonists as unknown to the other.

Sight: A man sloppily dressed in a fine old suit, three piece. Twitching curtains.

Sound: The wind.

Smell: Stronger manure, a faint hint of ozone/chlorine.

Taste: Whatever they bring with them.

Touch: Whatever they touch.

Set the Scene: The Street: It is still raining lightly when you get outside but there are fewer lights now. You have never seen so many stars, when civilization ends the infinite sky will be breathtaking. You look towards the church and see a man walking too stiffly towards you, dressed in old finery now molding. He sings softly to himself in a language you don't

Opening Dialog: "Oh what is this taste? New samna'gim in the big river, yes? Yes I think. Good to see you on the night of nights, the child beacons. Soon the mother will answer. "

(Haiku) "Soon evil will fall,
Mother will be triumphant,
this child will return. "

Notes: This is a short scene, it's here to set up some of the touched motifs and to give the players someone they can talk to after they become distrustful of the colour red.

recognize, seemingly harmonizing with the wind and the rain and the background music. The smell of fertilizer is strong here but as he approaches, you smell something stronger, something sharp and nearly alien. Almost, but not entirely unlike a swimming pool. He is ten feet away when his wide eyes widen further, smiles and beelines for they closest player.

Useful Items: The card handed to you by Edward has his address on it.

Plot Hooks: Still aiming for the church. Man Provides his home address nearby for later.

Scene 3 The Church

Music: Ambient with odd chanting or discordant bagpipes.

Who: Druids of Balor. The Slimed Man.

What: A Ritual sacrifice, Ofráil, of the slimed man by the Druids of Balor.

Where: An old Church surrounded by oak trees.

How: Inhuman Chanting, a sickle and a single slice.

Why: For the covenant of protection with Balor

Sight: Four red Robed figures moving shifting, surrounding a pitiful man. High Arched windows.

Sound: Inhuman chanting, both the high and low octaves.

Smell: Dust, old cloth and copper.

Taste: Nothing

Touch: Old stone, slimed man.

Synopsis: The players may approach the church in anyway they want. A pull will be required regardless of how they gain entrance. Once they are in the **Scene** is read showing the ritual and the stabbing of the slimed man. He is still alive for a short while longer. In the church is a short manuscript relating to Balor, the historical God of Blight and Drowning, and a small revolver with five rounds under the alter. The slimed man warns the players, a lie, and finishes with another Haiku.

Set the Scene: You see them. The robed figures from before. They surround the pitiful hooded man from the Inn. He is writhing in apparent pain, difficult to judge as you cannot see his face. Worse and weirder, the red robed figures move erratically,

Opening Dialog:

"I know you. Yes, you're the one from the Inn. They have killed me I think, oh mother. "He coughs blood and starts convulsing. **(Haiku)** "They are nearly done. Listen, They need another. They try to summon..." He coughs more blood. "Go to the bookshop. Ask...ask about Balor, you'll see, you'll see, you'll see..."

Notes: The players cannot interact with the first ritual, it's to clue them into the local Balor cult, but also to set up that the victims are linked somehow, the haiku and smell motifs, emphasis that the linguist notices something about the speech pattern. Stress the time and try to push the players back to their rooms for the night.

shifting and changing positions seemingly without passing through the intervening space. A grotesque sound rings through the night, chanting too high and too low, both rhythmic and arrhythmic the very sound hurts your ears and puts your teeth on edge. The robed figures are getting closer to the writhing man. You see one unsheathe a sickle from their belt. The sound stops as he slices into the man on the floor. Cleanly through his stomach. They leave him bleeding and exit through the back of the church.

Useful Items: A Webley RIC revolver with five rounds of .442 ammunition under the alter. A compass under one of the pews.

Plot Hooks: The Players are told to go to the book shop and to ask about Balor. It is late, so the players should be going to bed.

Scene 4 The Warning in the Room

Music: Same as Street but without rain.

Who: The non related players.

What: A message from the touched.

Where: In their room.

When: After they return from the church, before bed.

Why: To balance out the scenes for the players.

Synopsis: This scene is for the remaining two players who who are not siblings. Once the players have made it back to the Inn the **scene** is read There room was broken into and a message has been etched into their door in ogham runes. The smell of ozone and the fact that it translates as a haiku are the clues to its origins as a touched message. If neither of them are the linguistics student or the paranormal investigator then they won't be able to translate it.

Sight: The room, deeply etched ogham.

Sound: Normal sounds for the hotel at night.

Smell: Vanilla Candle.

Taste: Nothing.

Touch: Impossibly slick brown liquid.

Set the Scene: You make it silently back into the hotel, shaking and disturbed by what you have seen. Your rooms are as you left them, red curtains drawn and the beds made. As you close the door you see it. Runes etched deep into the door, each dripping a brown liquid only now approaching the floor.

Opening Dialog: (Haiku) We are pleased you're here, Evil presses down on us, they will kill again.

Notes: The players may decide to go to the same room, in which case it's for everyone to interact with. When the players return to the room later the runes are gone. This is another haiku and if the linguist, or any other player, still hasn't noticed tell them they notice something about the syllables.

Plot Hooks: No literal hooks, this is a balance scene with the opener. It is to clue the players into the Haiku motif, if they haven't noticed it yet.

Scene 5 The Dream

Music: Ambient nightmare.

Synopsis: So write an **opening** that establishes the dreamscape based on their question answers and have the players see each other. They then have a brief moment to try and find their feet before I hit them with **the child**, they try to fight it and before a pull is required I hit them with **the cosmos**, then the light and finally a brief glimpse of **the Elder**, accompanied with a scream.

Who: The Players.

What: A collective dream, touching on aspects and fears of each player character.

Where: Within their minds, familiar locales then the child.

How: The madness and reality warping powers of the Elder Mother.

Why: To clue the players into the fact that there are two powers at work.

Set the Scene:

1. **The Opening:** Describe based on questionnaire answers.
2. **The Child:** You are blinded by low light, a dimly lit infinite, the walls just visible in the horizon. You see each other, realer than real, more solid than everything else you've seen so far. Shadows illuminated by an unseen source paint the odd geometry of where you now stand. A man fades into view,

Sight: Shifting masses of memories, hazy and swirling.

Sound: Echoed conversation, all half remembered voices, all familiar exotics.

Smell: Favorite foods, perfume, fresh cut grass.

Taste: Cookies and cream, tomato and basil soup, roast beef dinner all real and not real.

Touch: Like velvet and Velcro, silk and sandpaper, polyester and a poly cotton blend.

strange, it seems as though he was always there, in the shapes and shadows and merely now coalesced into a solid form. His face is blank, save for a vaguely familiar symbol. A Diagonal line, roughly drawn running up at twenty degree angle from where his nose should be. On the right side of the line are three other lines running down but stopping where they intersect, on the left side are two strokes running up parallel to the spaces left by the right side lines also stopping where they intersect. He convulses and bends and breaks in wrong ways, twisting and cracking and moving towards you slowly.

3. **The Cosmos:** (Attack) slides through thin air as the creature vanishes, replaced with nothingness. You all now stand on the void. The seemingly contradictory infinite now replaced with true infinite. In this space a point forms. A light like no other you've seen, beginning small but growing. The light becomes a hole and though the hole you cannot make sense of what you see.(Pull)
4. **The Elder:** A shape, a figure, miniscule

Notes: You should be writing the opening of this scene with the answers to each players question 1, insist that it be given as soon as they are done. Write something that will tell them it is a dream. The scream can be made in audacity, a combination of a long female scream, a short repeated male scream edited with phaser, audio distortion and feedback. Make it loud. Make them jump.

and gigantic, beautiful and grotesque, deific and diabolic. It seems to pay attention to you. (**Scream**)

5. **Wake up:** Just before you wake you hear a voice, terrible and whispered "Samna'gim lim ja'talroug" (The fish will die.)

Plot Hooks: Again no real hooks, but a nice introduction to the other worldly Elder and a link between the dream they share and the odd language used by Edward the touched man.

Scene 6 The Breakfast

Music: Lounge Jazz

Synopsis: The players come downstairs for their complimentary breakfast and to discuss the events of the previous night. After they order, the gentlemen at the other table asks a question and explains why he is there. He is the innocent. His coat will bear a resemblance to the one worn by Dexter Ward in the final scene.

Who: The P.C.'s, The hotel owner and Charles O'Reilly.

What: The players discuss the previous nights events and have a conversation with Charles.

Where: The dining room of the Inn.

How: Via Conversation.

Why: So the players see Charles ' tweed jacket.

Sight: A clean and cozy eating area.

Sound: A rustling paper.

Smell: Fried food, vanilla and the background of fertilizer.

Taste: Delicious breakfast foods.

Touch: Cutlery.

Set the Scene: You get dressed and make your way downstairs, the smell of cooking bacon and fresh bread wafting from the dining room. The dining room is small, but not cramped, with three tables that could each easily seat four. The corner table has one occupant, a bespectacled older gentleman in a fine tweed suit, complete with elbow patches conjuring the image of the quintessential

Opening Dialog: “Tell me,” he asks, “Do you know the difference between a full Irish breakfast and a full English? Only I’ve just ordered it and am a little worried as to what it might entail.”

Notes: Charles is not involved in any of this. Have him advise the players to visit Dexter at his bookshop, stress his tweed jacket, it will be the red herring later. Have a pleasant conversation. The players might speak with someone in here, the runes have vanished in the night.

professor. He is reading a newspaper, the Times of England.

Plot Hooks: The Players have now got another reason to visit the book shop.

Scene 7 The Book shop

Music: Same as The Street

Synopsis: The players may find out where the shop is in any number of ways, asking the hotel manager, looking at a brochure or a map of the town, speaking with the creepy porter or simply wandering around. A pull may be required depending on who is asking and what method is used. When they find out where it is the **scene** is read. Inside the bookshop is Dexter's Corpse as well as a myriad of information and hooks for the players to find, of particular note is the books on the cult of Balor which make no mention of occult symbols etched into the sacrifice nor of the slime. The main hook is the letter from Father O'Donnell and his diary.

Who: The Corpse of Dexter Ward.

What: The players will investigate the room.

Where: His Bookshop filled with books, scrolls and various maps.

How: Looking through the corpse, the bookshelves, the maps for information.

Why: To prevent the death of another

Sight: A musty old bookshop. A fresh corpse.

Sound: Dead silence.

Smell: Disgusting sweetness cut rank and pungent. The faint smell of ozone.

Taste: None

Touch: Old pages, parchment.

Set the Scene: The door creaks open slowly, insects scurry from the intrusive light. You cast your torches into the shadowed hallway and spy a lamp at the far end of the room. You enter and

are struck by an odd familiar smell. A disgusting sweetness cut rank and pungent and sharp. It reminds you of family gatherings and old pets. You enter the shop.

Plot Hooks:

The Maps: Some of the maps are over a hundred years old and show settlement close to the town, other more recent maps show ruins in the same location.

Dear Dexter,

I read your last letter with acute fascination. I too have come across strange occurrences in our town, beyond the usual madness I mean. These touched you mentioned, I believe they are related to the cult. You also wrote about a connection with some of the ruins on the outskirts of town, I will have to get over to them.. Hopefully they will provide more answers, please, come and see me soon. I miss you.

Stephen.

The Letter: A letter from Father Steve Martin found in the pocket of Dexter. The Father is his lover.

The Books: A book on the cult of Balor. Provides details of a sacrifice, The Ofráil. He is beaten and four druids, two men two women, must surround him. They chant, the men high the women low. One then must draw a bronze sickle laced with mistletoe and open the bowels of the sacrifice. They then must leave him for Balor to take him. It mentions that these

(Haiku) It's Finally done.

My becoming is at hand.
They will not stop me.
A Few pages later. Things
are so much clearer now.
Those who follow are the
monsters.

(Haiku) Mother will
prevail. Those who worship
evil washed, this child will
return.

Notes: Dexter's clothes
should be mentioned in
passing, if the players ask
further questions mention the
tweed. This is the first sanity
pull. My Relative Relative
Claimed she sees a grotesque
marionette in her dreams, I
used this image in the wall
clock on the way out of the
scene.

rituals can only take place on the three
nights surrounding the full moon. It
makes mention of the Tairngreacht, the
need to sacrifice to prevent the towns
destruction.

The Diary: Dexter's Diary. His entries
are mostly amateur philosophy and
speak of his lover, Father Stephen
O'Donnell, but his more recent entries
reference the Touched and the cult of
Balor. He believes they will come for
him. Two Small entries are on the right.
More Haiku

Useful Items: A Webley RIC
revolver with five rounds of
.442 rounds under the alter. A
compass under one of the pews.

Sanity Checks: Confronted with a fear in
the wall clock.

Scene 8 The Search for the Priest

Music: Same as The Church if Mairead, same as The Street if Edward.

Synopsis: Again the players can use any means to find out more information on the Priest. The players may decide to speak to Mairead the hotel manager, Edward the touched man or returning to the church leads to an encounter with Druid John, all of these tend towards the same place, the old priest. Mairead is wearing red now, indicating her allegiance, the Druid, Edward represents the touched perspective. Druid John hints at the Cult knowing they were there the previous night, he mentions that there has been some vandalism recently, and that there are now cameras in operation around and in the church.

Who: Whomever the Players want to talk to.

What: Information regarding the location of Father O'Donnell.

Where: The Hotel, The manor of Edward Derby, The Church.

How: Via Conversation.

Why: To discuss the death of Dexter Ward.

Mairead: Hello my dears, back so soon? Did you find the bookshop alright?

If asked will provide info on Father O'Donnell, calls him a new bohemian, disapproving of him.

Set the Scene:

Mairead O'Conner: Returning to the hotel you find the manager still

sitting at the front desk, she smiles hungrily as she sees you all enter. A fetching red bow tied in her hair.

Edward: (Haiku) Ah, My Samna'gim, pleasure to see you again. How may I help you?

Provides same info on Father O'Donnell, seems indifferent to Dexter's passing, warns of the danger of the mad priest.

Edward Derby: An opulent Manor home nestled in the heart of the countryside. Edward seems more well to do than you had first thought. The long private road leading to the Manor is riddled with weeds, tall overgrown apple trees are scattered haphazardly all around. The cawing of crow and the rustling of leaves the only things you hear as you make your way up to the door. You knock and it opens by itself.

Druid John: Hello? Is there anything I can help you with?

Believes the priest is a poor fellow who succumbed to temptation, implies that he was evicted for deviance. Provides information to the players, implies that there is a camera in the church.

Druid John Hopkins: You enter the church, beautiful in the day, light pouring through stained glass onto the unstained floor. The corpse from earlier is no longer there. The door in the back of the church opens and a red robed man walks towards the players.

Plot Hooks: The players will have the information they need to find the priest who sent Dexter the letter, hopefully they will go and meet him. He is unfortunately mad.

Notes: This is the last chance to get the gun before the chase scene. Not having it cuts the scene short, so the trip is probably required if that's the case.

Useful Items: In Edwards manor. A Webley RIC revolver with five rounds of .442.

Sanity Checks: Catch a glimpse of yourself monstrously altered in a reflection.

Scene 9 The Mad Priest

Music: Same as the Street

Who: Father Stephan Martin O'Donnell

What: To inform of Dexter's Death and find out more about the sacrifices.

Where: His home a few miles outside of town.

How: Via Conversation.

Why: to find out more about the sacrifices.

Sight: An old thatch cottage, piles of turf, a small field of sheep.

Sound: Bleating of sheep, urgent mumblings.

Smell: Manure and ozone.

Taste: None.

Touch: None.

Synopsis: The **scene** is read as soon as the players arrive at the priest's home. They discuss the cult with the man after calming him down. He explains how they chased him out, he is barely coherent even when calmed as he has seen the Elder mother in a vision. Must mention that the Balorians sacrifice anyone, not just The touched. Mention a young person, no slime. He speaks of his dreams and of things hidden beneath the ground, in the ruins. He mentions it was his research into the older settlements in the area that led to his discovery of others. The smell of ozone about him again and a haiku when they first meet. He must mention the word becoming without explaining it.

Opening Dialog:

(Haiku) "Come no closer beasts! I swear by the grace of god, you'll die by my hand." He's backing up slowly. His axe raised.

Notes: A tough scene to run, probably better to drop as many hints about the second group at play as possible, clear in my head, less so in theirs.

Set the Scene: You see a small cottage, smoke rising in wisps from the chimney. The foul smells of sheep and shit and burning turf fill your nostrils. You can all hear faint mumbling nearby broken by loud whacks of metal on wood. A Thicket of trees lies to the north of the cottage, in the opposite direction of the road.

Plot Hooks: He tells the players about the local ruins. The old cults that called the area home. He is mad. He raves about the coming of the Mother and the end of days. The scene ends with a gunshot the priest goes down in a fountain of blood and the PC's see an armed group approaching fast.

Sanity Checks: See a person long dead, smiling and beckoning.

Scene 10 The Chase

Music: Same as the church.

Synopsis: Read **The Shot** when the priest has said enough, he dies. The players then run through thickets jumping over ditches and avoiding getting shot. They should have a gun by this point, maybe one will try to shoot back before they run. Throw in **The Fall** if needed. Their goal at this stage is the ruins of former settlements. If they have the map and the compass this shouldn't be too hard if not then it's likely a double pull.

Who: An Armed group of Balorians.

What: An assault on the PC's and the Priest

Where: Outside the cottage.

How: With Guns.

Why: To Silence the old Priest.

Sight: Red robed figures.

Sound: Gunshots ringing through the air.

Smell: Sulphur and shit and ozone and copper.

Taste: None

Touch: None

Set the Scene:

The Shot: The gunshot rang out, piercing the air and the neck of the old priest, his eyes widen in shock. He goes down in a fountain of blood and disbelief. You turn towards the gunshots and see four red robed individuals. They are moving towards you, and taking aim.

2. **The Fall:** Your foot snagged on something unseen in the undergrowth, you go down

like a sack of spuds, gaining a mouthful of rich soil, a true blessing.

Notes: Here we have our first real risk of death. Make it hard, make it random and make it uncaring.

Plot Hooks: The PC's know of the ruins hopefully they kept the map and have a compass otherwise they'll have to stumble blindly.

Scene 11 The Ruins

Music: Same as The Street.

Who: No one is around.

What: A possibly maddening revelation, a vision of the Elder Mother.

Where: The ruins of a settlement on the outskirts of the town.

How: Reading the inscriptions on the walls clues the players into the touched and their plan, the light causes the maddening revelation.

Why: To clue the PC's into the reason for the end of the world.

Synopsis: It is here that the players gain more information on the touched. When they arrive read **The Ruins**. They must then search for a trap door in the corner of the longest ruin, when they find it read **The Cavern**. Hopefully some of the players will try to make out the wall inscriptions, another may want to try to read one of the ogham scrolls that speaks of the Elder Mother for the first time. One of the players will get too close to the strange ethereal light and receive a **vision** of the Mother they may go mad from revelation. The pictograms depict rudimentary images of The Elder Childs, and people worshiping a hole, dug deep through the rock.

Set the Scene:

1. **The Ruins:** The smell of damp moss and wild flowers in the air. A pleasant thing after

so much horror. You see a free standing wall and upon closer inspection see the outlines of rough stone homes, over grown and old.

Sight: Overgrowth on old stone. A free standing wall covered in moss.

Sound: birds and wind. An odd vibration.

Smell: Damp grass, fresh flowers, ozone.

Taste: none.

Touch: Rough stone, Cold Iron hatch. Warm and wet etchings, brown liquid.

2. **The Cavern:** The symbol before you seems familiar, the trapdoor lies on the corner of a once large building. It resists attempt to open but you eventually fight past it's rust and age to reveal stairs leading down. It is dark and reeks of mold and decay and there in the background that sharp smell of chlorine. You walk down the stairs and reach a black corridor. You see in the distance a very small white light, faint and barely visible. The walls are etched deeply with what appears to be scenes.
3. **The Vision:** The light is mesmerizing, you gaze into it almost lost and you reach out your hand to capture the light itself and it winks out. You see the sky the color of silver flowing like corn starch. You see the red robes, you see the church, you see them walk towards a whimpering figure, then words like ice burn in your mind. **(Haiku)**
Munagah b'jo, D'Visarakh lim cos'jah. Elna

Taliett. (**Translation/Haiku**) Blessed be
the touched, brought into the becoming.
Now a child is here.

Notes: The walls have
images of someone turning
into a monster, the same one
fought in the dream. The
Balorians are seen as the bad
guys here, robed figures
hunting them. Keep it
ambiguous.

Plot Hooks: Knowledge that the
ritual is to be performed tonight.
Certain Knowledge of the history of the
touched, via pictograms.

Scene 12 The Return to the Church

Music: Church Beckoning then Ozone Space.

Who: Four Druids of Balor, a whimpering sacrifice on the floor.

What: The final ritual.

Where: The old church in town.

How: Inhuman Chanting, a sickle and a single slice.

Why: To save the world.

Synopsis: After the vision the players will want to rush to the church to prevent the sacrifice, if they haven't figured out the necessity of it. The players arrive at night, **The ritual** already underway. Four red robed figures all moving erratically and armed with bronze sickles. The players can do what they want. Stress from this distance that they cannot make out whether the man is touched or not. When the druids are dealt with read **The Rescue** and reveal it was Dexter Ward who transforms into a protean monster. The players must fight or run. Either way the Elder is summoned. The End of the world is now. If they succeed in stabbing the beast with the sickle read **The Kill**. If they try to flee read the Final escape. If the players survive their revelation of God they may try to escape.

Set the Scene:

Sight: Four red Robed figures moving shifting, surrounding a pitiful man. High Arched windows.

Sound: Inhuman chanting, both the high and low octaves.

Smell: Dust, old cloth and copper.

Taste: Nothing

Touch: Old stone, slimed man.

1. **The Ritual:** It's late as you arrive at the church, the clouds part to reveal the waxing gibbous. You see a dim light from the windows and hear that same discordant chanting from before. You know someone will soon die. (When inside) You see him, a man lying limp on the floor, dressed in soiled and disheveled tweed. The Four surround him as before, the same ugly noise....
2. **The Rescue:** You roll the man over to check his vitals and see his face clearly for the first time. Those markings are unmistakeable. It is the owner of the book shop Dexter Ward. He thanks you as the skin of his face slides to the floor and his mouth opens too wide. He begins convulsing, his arms rigid to his side, his legs splitting like bamboo. He raises up on the bloody splinters that were once his legs and moves towards you, his face now a bloody smiling mess.
3. **The Kill:** You slice him and out bursts light

Notes: The point of the game is futility. If the players know to not interrupt the sacrifice then fine, but it means you failed.

the likes of which you have never seen before. It wails and falls back. The Wound is growing larger and brighter and soon envelops the creature. You're eyes have trouble focusing on the hole he leaves behind. It is bright, but not blinding, and yet your eyes continue to slide off the sight. Then you see the light moving. Something is coming through the hole, a shimmering mass of eyes and teeth and scales. It is shaped like a hand in the same way that a beak is shaped like a mouth. It shifts in all directions seemingly at once but is moving towards one of the/ the body of the druid which sticks to it. The teeth biting little bites and consuming him by inches.

Scene 13 The Final Escape

Music: Komm Suser Tod

Synopsis: When they try to exit the church the **The Final Escape** is read. They see the Elder Mother in all its horrific glory and must resist going mad. They then can do what they want. Try to escape, futilely try to fight it, go nuts, unless they have a giant magical robot on hand I think this is it for them.

Who: The Players, the unfathomable horror and whatever Gods they believe in.

What: A possibly maddening revelation and an attempted escape.

Where: Outside the church.

When: Late at night.

Why: Unknowable reasons.

Set the Scene: The Final Escape:

Suddenly the windows light as though the sun has risen early. You all race to the door and fling it wide and see a figure on the horizon. Man shaped, tall and bright. Again your eyes have trouble keeping purchase on the sight. It moves like a non-Newtonian fluid, like thousands of tiny damned souls each trying to escape a central core. It is impossible to judge the distance, seemingly a tiny object held close and giant object far away. It pains you to look at it but you cannot look away. Too long a

Notes: No way out. Game over man.

B. W. Stanton

gaze into the abyss. It turns its attention on you. **(Final Game pull for sanity.)**