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Introduction

“O do not seek to learn or even ask,
What horror hides behind... *The Pallid Mask!*”

~Lin Carter, “Litany to Hastur”

Of all the varied and mysterious Great Old Ones of the Cthulhu Mythos, few ensnare the imagination as easily as Hastur. The image of the silent, deserted city beside a dark, foreboding lake where sinister things lurk is one that stays with the reader. Many of us have walked the twisting streets of that dead alien city in our minds, finding our way into the tall towers to stand before an ancient throne. There sits the King in Yellow, the Lord of Carcosa, who gazes at us from behind his Pallid Mask. It is a journey many of us have taken, whether alone in our dreams or around a table rolling dice with our friends. It is a journey we are about to take again.

Many of us have a favorite writer or musician who spiraled into insanity before taking their own life; artists, poets, dreamers, and madmen feel the hand of the Great Old Ones most clearly. The line between creative genius and abject madness is a thin one. Hastur is the gray area where those two spheres overlap. His play, *The King in Yellow*, has long been one of the most popular of all Mythos Tomes. His triskelion Yellow Sign is a symbol nearly as recognizable as the Elder Sign.

Ripples from Carcosa seeks to expand upon the mythology of “He Who Should Not Be Named” and it gathers much of the varied material on Hastur into one place. The first chapter reviews The Great Old One Hastur and his various avatar forms. It examines the Yellow Sign, the play *The King in Yellow*, the Mythos tome of the same name, and the effects these things have on the human mind. While far from being a comprehensive archive of all that is written on the topic, it should answer the most common questions and provide keepers with a central resource.

Next within these pages is a trio of adventures pitting investigators against Hastur and his human worshippers. These scenarios can be played as stand-alone adventures or as a linked campaign

called “Ripples from Carcosa.” Investigators are provided for each scenario, but keepers should feel free to allow their players to use their own investigators if they so choose.

The first scenario, entitled “Adventus Regis,” takes place during the time of the Roman Empire and uses the *Cthulhu Invictus* setting. The second scenario is called “Herald to the Yellow King;” its events occur during the Dark Ages. This scenario, naturally, utilizes the *Cthulhu Dark Ages* setting. The keeper may find it useful to access these Chaosium titles. The final chapter of the trilogy is called “Heir to Carcosa;” it’s set in mankind’s near future. It uses a possible “End Time” setting (one as detailed in the Chaosium monograph of the same name).

Following the first two scenarios is information on the Great Old One Hastur and his cults during the *Cthulhu Invictus* and *Cthulhu Dark Ages* eras. Keepers who wish to expand upon those scenarios can make use of this source material to present further investigation of He Who Should Not Be Named during those historical periods. “The Servants of the Yellow Sign,” the cult of Hastur within Herculaneum, is presented for the *Cthulhu Invictus* setting. Likewise a cult group called the “Court of the Last King,” is a 10th century Hastur Cult operating in France, and detailed for the *Cthulhu Dark Ages* setting. Before the final scenario, material is included detailing a futuristic society: a coalition of humans and aliens living and hiding in our solar system’s asteroid belt. This is for use during the “End Time” setting, a period set in a future where mankind has lost the Earth to the forces of the Mythos. This last secretive group is not a cult worshipping Hastur but one dedicated to fighting against such forces.

RIPPLES FROM CARCOSA

Playing the scenarios as a campaign:

*"Every Christmas it's the same.
I always end up playing a shepherd."*

~ Shermie, *A Charlie Brown Christmas*

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Together Again and Again

As each scenario takes place roughly one thousand years apart, one might wonder how they can be played as a linked campaign. The eighteen pre-generated investigators included across the trilogy are reincarnations of the same six sets of consciousness. On their first encounter with Hastur in the Roman Era they are marked, branded somehow, and forever after tied to the Great Old One throughout eternity. Once every millennium they are drawn together and once again forced to confront the horror and madness of He Who Should Not Be Named.

From era to era the reincarnated investigators share certain similarities. From lifetime to lifetime these consciousnesses fall back into the patterns and the professions they are best suited for. This should help promote the feeling that they are somehow trapped by fate. The fact that these investigators are continually drawn together into conflict with the various manifestations of Hastur should also reinforce this.

The players may view their investigators as cursed, being doomed to lead the same life over and over, trapped and drawn into encounters with The Great Old One Hastur. They might view themselves as chosen defenders of humanity, heroes who band together, lifetime after lifetime, to thwart the aims of He Who Should Not Be Named. The reason for this, if any, is left up to the individual keeper.

Hastur Lore

All Mythos-related events in *Ripples from Carcosa* are directly tied to Hastur. Therefore, investigators learn little about the overall Cthulhu Mythos but a great deal of specific information about He Who Should Not Be Named. To reflect this knowledge keepers are encouraged to use a skill called Hastur Lore.

The Hastur Lore skill is much like the Cthulhu Mythos skill and directly tied to it. It can be used to uncover information about Hastur, his avatar forms, Carcosa, the Yellow Sign, the Mythos races connected with the Great Old One, etc. For every single percentile point of Cthulhu Mythos tradi-

tionally earned in *Ripples from Carcosa*, investigators gain +3% in their Hastur Lore skill. For example: An investigator reads a copy of *The King In Yellow* in its original French. The investigator gains 6 percentiles of Cthulhu Mythos and also 18 percentiles of Hastur Lore.

Unlike Cthulhu Mythos, an investigator's Hastur Lore skill has no effect on their maximum Sanity value. The Cthulhu Mythos skill remains unchanged with regards to an investigator's possible Sanity loss. Hastur Lore doesn't get checked for advancement after a successful use. The only way for an investigator to gain points in Hastur Lore is by increasing their knowledge of and exposure to Hastur.

Certain encounters also earn the investigators Cthulhu Mythos and Hastur Lore skill points in this campaign. Not all knowledge comes from research; some is gained from experience. Below is a list of things that increase an investigator's Hastur Lore skill. Keepers are encouraged to create new ones on the fly as investigators learn more and more about their powerful and mysterious nemesis.

Experience	Cthulhu Mythos %/ Hastur Lore %
Seeing the Yellow Sign for the first time.	1% / 3%
Encountering a servitor race of Hastur.	2% / 6%
View city of Carcosa or the Lake of Hali.	2% / 6%
Encountering a creature native to Carcosa.	3% / 9%
Visit and explore city of Carcosa.	4% / 12%
Viewing an avatar form of Hastur.	5% / 15%

Déjà Vu, the Yellow Sign, and Past Life Recollections

In the second and third scenarios of *Ripples from Carcosa* the investigators can draw upon past-life experiences. The trigger for this ability is an investigator's initial exposure to the Yellow Sign. While a potent tool for causing and spreading insanity, the Sign also unlocks a psychic echo within the investigator's consciousness. The trauma this powerful and malevolent symbol causes to the investigators creates a scar upon them, which transcends the limits of their individual lifetimes.

Ripples from Carcosa

What this means is that the points of Cthulhu Mythos and Hastur Lore investigators acquire in one scenario can be accessed and improved on during the following adventures. Thus an investigator's Cthulhu Mythos skill grows and is carried over throughout each reincarnation. For example: Videric, a woodsman in "Herald of the Yellow King," sees the Yellow Sign for the first time. After making his Sanity check he suddenly gains 9% in Cthulhu Mythos and 27% of Hastur Lore. These are points he acquired in his previous life as Marcius, a thief who encountered Hastur in the time of the Roman Empire during the scenario "Adventis Regis." Investigators only have access to these points after, and only if, they view the Yellow Sign. Otherwise these memories remain forever locked away.

In "Herald of the Yellow King" these past-life memories manifest as moments of déjà vu or powerful intuitive feelings. The investigators "know" things without any logical way of determining precisely how. They also possess vague feelings of a certain familiarity, as if all this has somehow happened before.

"HERALD OF THE YELLOW KING," DARK AGES EXAMPLE:

Lady Charlotte: "What, I ask thee, is that?"

Redwald, after making a successful Hastur Lore roll: "'Tis the 'Yellow Sign,' my Lady. It bringeth the curse of madness, and 'tis mark of a demon prince of madness."

Lady Charlotte: "How is it that you know this, good sir?"

Redwald: "I have no idea how I know this thing, my lady. But I assure you from the depths of my immortal soul that is the truth!"

Investigators who meet horrible ends, experienced powerful personal loss, or are driven insane during "Adventis Regis" feel these impulses more strongly, as their trauma is more profound. For Example: An

investigator is driven insane by the Yellow Sign in "Adventis Regis." They are then reincarnated and see the Yellow Sign again, during the Dark Ages, in "Herald of the Yellow King." The player of this investigator makes a successful Hastur Lore roll and not only knows what the Yellow Sign is but also receives intuitive feelings that the symbol is very dangerous. They realize something bad happened to them the last time they encountered this symbol, but exactly what occurred and when that was is a mystery to them.

In "Heir to Carcosa" such feelings are intensified. This reflects the greater number of points so far accumulated from two separate investigations. Instead of feeling déjà vu and flashes of intuition, investigators receive visions of their past lives racing through their minds. After seeing the Yellow Sign, investigators in this era universally feel that not only have they all been together and through something similar before, but that it may have happened more than once.

Keepers should play such flashbacks as if they are attacks of post-traumatic stress disorder. The visions should be vivid and realistic memories of terrifying past events. Investigators who experience this should be momentarily stunned, lost in the memory for a moment before snapping back to reality. Each such "memory flash" causes the loss of 1 Sanity point.

"HEIR TO CARCOSA," END TIMES EXAMPLE:

Martin Smith: "What the hell was that thing?"

Andrew Fisk, after making a successful Hastur Lore roll and losing 1 point of Sanity: "It's a byakhee. They can survive in a vacuum and fly through space. They're very dangerous up close."

Martin Smith: "Yeah... okay...and you know this how?"



Andrew Fisk: “Cause one of them almost killed me once. Not now, but once, a long time ago. You’re gonna think I’m crazy, but I think you were there too.”

Damien Gunn, after overhearing this and making a successful Hastur Lore roll and also losing 1 point of Sanity: “Was I there too, maybe in Roman-style armor with a sword?”

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Andrew Fisk: “Yeah, you were! What the hell is going on?”

Keepers can have investigators experience nightmares with two or more of them experiencing the very same dream. This is actually a shared past-life experience, which their unconscious minds are recollecting while they slumber. Such a shared dream could possibly give some clue to a problem the investigators are struggling with.

HEIR TO CARCOSA, SHARED DREAMS, END TIMES EXAMPLE:

Diana Everett: “You didn’t sleep well either?”

Lola Voight: “No, I had a nightmare. We were all on Earth and it was snowing. Real snow, like on the old vids. It was cold; we were trying to get somewhere and this bridge...”

Diana Everett, interrupting: “It just kept stretching on and on! I had the same dream!”

Vincent Delgato, joining in after overhearing the exchange: “And then tentacles came out of the water. Yeah, I had the same dream too.”

Diana Everett: “Okay, we can’t all be going crazy.”

And so we are ready to begin. The star Aldebaran is above the horizon, the mists are rising off the Lake of Hali, and He Who Should Not Be Named is lurking just offstage. I give you *Ripples From Carcosa*.

A Guide to Hastur, The Yellow Sign, and “The King In Yellow”

This chapter contains a compilation of various materials from several different sources. It is included here as an overview for keepers, who may be unfamiliar with the mythos surrounding Hastur. Think of this as a crash course in Hastur’s fundamentals. It is far from complete, as the mythology surrounding He Who Should Not Be Named is both vast and complex. Three areas presented here are as follows:

- Hastur the Unspeakable and three of his avatar forms.
- The Yellow Sign and the effects it has upon the human mind.
- The book entitled *The King in Yellow* and the play of the same name.

The Lake of Hali, the dead city of Carcosa, and the various ways investigators can travel to and from these locations is not covered here. Such information, while interesting and important to Hastur’s mythology, does not come into play in the three scenarios that make up the *Ripples from Carcosa* trilogy. Should keepers wish to learn more about the home domain of Hastur, some classic scenarios are strongly recommended. “Have You Seen the Yellow Sign” by Kevin A. Ross, from the book *The Great Old Ones*, and “Tatterdemalion” by Richard Watts and Penelope Love, from *Fatal Experiments* are both excellent scenarios for anyone interested in the Great Old One, Hastur. Additionally, the campaign *Tatters of the King* by Tim Wiseman provides a wealth of information concerning Carcosa.

The Great Old One, Hastur The Unspeakable

The four entries here are the statistics for and description of Hastur and three of his avatar forms: The King In Yellow, The Feaster From Afar, and The Boneless One. These are taken directly from Chaosium’s *Malleus Monstrorum*. The Boneless One is a manifestation of Hastur, however specific statistics

for it were never provided. As this particular avatar plays heavily in the climax of “Adventus Regis” game statistics have been created.

HASTUR THE UNSPEAKABLE, GREAT OLD ONE

“Utterly alien landscape... Foreground: a deep lake. Hali. In five minutes the water began to ripple where something rose. Facing inwards. A titanic aquatic being, tentacled. Octopoid, but far, far larger twenty times larger than the giant Octopus apollyon of the west coast. What was its neck alone easily fifteen rods in diameter. Could not risk chance of seeing its face.”

~August Derleth, “The Gable Window”

Hastur the Unspeakable dwells near the star Aldebaran in the constellation Taurus. He is connected with the mystic Lake of Hali, the Yellow Sign, and Carcosa, as well as the things that dwell therein. He may be connected in some way with the power of flight through space. His appearance is disputed. In a reported instance of possession by Hastur, a corpse took on a bloated, scaly look, and the limbs became boneless and fluid. The things in the Lake of Hali look octopoid from a rear view and are related to Hastur. They also have unbearably horrible faces. Still, Hastur’s appearance is largely up to the individual keeper. Hastur is served by the byakhee, an interstellar flying race.

CULT: The cult of Hastur is moderately common on Earth, and the abominable Tcho-Tcho people are reputedly among his worshipers, as are the Brothers of the Yellow Sign. Hastur’s cult is particularly loathsome, and is more widely known of than belonged to. Worshipers refer to Hastur as “He Who Should



The King in Yellow Avatar

Not Be Named.” This may be a misapprehension, stemming from his title, “The Unspeakable.”

OTHER CHARACTERISTICS: Hastur is summonable only at night. When Hastur is present, each round three individuals within 20 yards of the horror must successfully Dodge or be grasped by Hastur and destroyed on the following round. Hastur does not normally attack friends or worshipers. He must always leave that portion of the Earth where the star Aldebaran has fallen below the horizon.

Hastur, He Who Should Not Be Named

STR 600 CON 1000 SIZ 500 INT 75
POW 175 DEX 150 APP -- EDU --
HP: 150 DB: +13D6 Build 14 Move 16 / 25 flying

Magic Points: 30

Attacks: 2

Whatever he is, Hastur has tentacles and claws among his appendages.

Fighting 100% (50/20), damage: death

Armor: 30-point thick, scaly, rubbery, baggy hide.

Spells: Brew Space Mead, All Contact and Call spells, Summon/Bind Byakhee, and others the keeper finds appropriate.

Sanity Loss: 1D10/1D100 Sanity points to see Hastur.

KING IN YELLOW, AVATAR OF HASTUR

“He stands in state upon the balcony. He has no face, and is twice as tall as a man. He wears pointed shoes under his tattered, fantastically colored robes, and a streamer of silk appears to fall from the pointed tip of his hood... At times he appears to be winged; at others, haloed.”

– James Blish, “More Light”

The King in Yellow might also be human-seeming, clad in tattered yellow or parti-colored rags and wearing the Pallid Mask. The rags are extensions of the entity’s flesh, while the mask covers horrible pseudopods that can attach to a target and drain the very life from them (POW). Above all, it possesses a loathsome plasticity of shape, able to stretch and change at will. This is the most frequently encountered avatar of Hastur.

CULT: Worshipers often are solitary madmen, artists, and poets, driven mad by reading the haunting play *The King In Yellow*, and inspired by its cruel beauty to create art that renders human experience meaningless. A special symbol, the Yellow Sign, is often stamped on surreptitious editions of the evil book. The Sign is a focus for madness, helping to warp the dreams of those who see it.

Gaze Of The Yellow King—Induces paroxysms of fear by staring at the target, costing the unfortunate 1D6 Sanity points per round while the King in Yellow focuses upon them (costing the King 3 magic points per round). To avoid the gaze for a round, the target must make an Extreme POW roll.

The King In Yellow, Throne Form

STR 125 CON 530 SIZ 70 INT 250
POW 175 DEX 135 APP -- EDU --
HP: 60 DB: +1D6 Build 2 Move 15*

*Or can appear/disappear at will.

Magic Points: 35

Attacks: 1 gaze, 6 razor sharp tatters, or 1 face tentacle

Some say the King has a strange facial tentacle hidden behind his pallid mask with which he kisses his worshipers. Others say when he dances his tattered robes extend as pseudopodia, cutting those around him like razors.

Fighting 100% (50/20), damage by razor sharp tatters is 1D6 + DB + 1D6 POW, or by face tentacle is 1D10 + DB + 1D10 POW per round while attached.

Ripples from Carcosa

Gaze: Target must make Extreme POW roll to resist, special (see above).

Armor: None.

Spells: All Call, Contact spells, and others as the keeper desires.

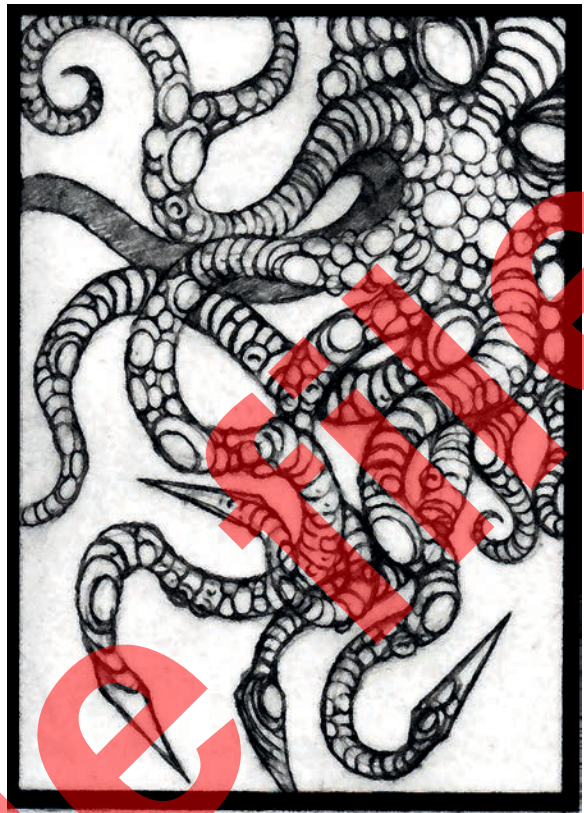
Sanity Loss: With the Pallid Mask upon its 'face' there is no Sanity loss; however in any other form, or with the mask removed, it costs 1D3/1D10 Sanity points to see the King in Yellow.

FEASTER FROM AFAR, AVATAR OF HASTUR

"He felt it coming. The air grew frigid, as if it blew out of the black interstices of interstellar space..."

It glided down out of the icy sky like the final concentrated essence of all nonhuman horror. It was black, infinitely old, shriveled and humped like some kind of enormous air-borne monkey. A kind of iridescence played about it and its fixed blazing eyes were of no color known on earth... As it grew close to the knoll, it extended appendages, which resembled tentacles, tipped with knifelike talons."

—Joseph Payne Brennan,
"The Feaster from Afar"



The Feaster from Afar Avatar

CULT: This strange avatar of Hastur is little worshipped on Earth.

OTHER CHARACTERISTICS: Once called to Earth, The Feaster from Afar can return to the area of its summoning at will as long as Aldebaran is above the horizon and it is dark. Anyone with one or more points of Cthulhu Mythos in the area experiences vivid nightmares of being chased over an alien landscape by an unseen pursuer. The terror in these dreams is so intense that 0/1D2 Sanity points are lost each time the investigator has the nightmare.

The Feaster's approach is signaled by an icy wind that blows out of the night sky. This form of Hastur appears to be independent of attendant byakhee.

The Feaster attacks by puncturing holes in its victim's skull with its knife-like talons and draining out his or her brain. The bodies are left otherwise unharmed. Each round the Feaster can attack a single target with 2D10 talons. Each talon inflicts 1 hit point of damage and drains 5 points of INT. When a victim's INT is reduced to zero the Feaster turns its attention to another victim or departs. If a victim has any hit points left after his INT has reached zero, he or she does not immediately die; if the mindless individual is attached to life support devices within an hour or so of the attack, they may live. Such

mindless individuals live out their lives as vegetables, incapable of thought, movement, or sound.

The Feaster From Afar, Devourer of Brains.

STR 245	CON 525	SIZ 165	INT 50
POW 125	DEX 165	APP --	EDU --
HP: 69	DB: +4D6	Build 5	Move 16 / 30 Flying

Magic Points: 25

Attacks: 1 (4 talons on one target)

Fighting 90% (45/18), damage 1 point + 5 INT drain per talon.

Armor: 20 points of thick, wrinkled hide.

Spells: Any the keeper desires.

Sanity Loss: 1D8/1D20 Sanity points to see The Feaster from Afar.

THE BONELESS ONE, AVATAR OF HASTUR

"His appearance is disputed. In a reported instance of possession by Hastur, a corpse took on a bloated scaly look, and the limbs became boneless and fluid."

This manifestation of Hastur requires a living or recently-sacrificed human body to act as a vessel for

the Great Old One's consciousness. The Boneless One is one of the most loathsome of all of Hastur's avatar forms. Slow and almost completely immobile, the Boneless One usually manifests on Earth for short times while the star Aldebaran is above the horizon. The corpse possessed by Hastur undergoes a startling physical change. It becomes elastic and boneless, bloating grotesquely while its skin becomes thicker and scaly. There is a 70% chance 3–8 (1D6+2) byakhee arrive 1–3 rounds after the avatar manifests, flying out of the cold depths of space ready to serve their master.

OTHER CHARACTERISTICS: The Boneless One is immune to fire, electricity, acid, and non-magical weapons. While this avatar form is the Great Old One's least powerful physically, it commands potent magical and psychic abilities. At will, the Boneless One can unleash a psychic wave of madness. This wave travels 50 feet per magic point expended, causing those within range to make a Sanity roll for 1D6/1D20.

The Boneless One, Avatar of Hastur

STR 75 CON 470 SIZ 80 INT 250
POW 175 DEX 75 APP -- EDU --
HP: 50 DB: 0 Build 0 Move 2

Magic Points: 35

Attacks: 1

Psychic wave (automatic), 1D6/1D20 Sanity check.

Armor: 4 points of leathery skin; immune to fire, cold, electricity, acid, and non-magical weapons.

Spells: All Call, Contact, and Summon/Bind spells, plus any others the keeper wishes.

Sanity Loss: 1D6/1D10 Sanity points to see The Boneless One.

THE YELLOW SIGN

Purported to be the great seal of He Who Is Not To Be Named in his form as the King in Yellow, the Yellow Sign holds great interest and power to those learned in the ways of the occult. No one single pattern can be agreed upon as to the Sign's actual shape and design, with many claiming the Sign somehow changes in aspect whenever its master or His servants are near. For years the innocent and ignorant may pass the sign daily without re-

gard or knowledge of its significance; perhaps only in nightmares does the Sign register. However, once the Sign becomes 'active' the same person will see it where first they did not, and many times thereafter in places unsuspected. Any who has seen the Yellow Sign is considered blessed and chosen.

Perhaps working subliminally, the Yellow Sign is a focus for evil and madness, and essentially a token of high worship for Hastur's cults. Viewing the Yellow Sign causes 0/1D6 Sanity point loss. The Sign seems to swirl, shimmer and squirm, as if reaching for the onlooker. This effect takes but a moment; however, to the person affected it feels as if time has stood still. Those who lose sanity points from seeing the Yellow Sign are cursed; the next time they sleep they should make another Sanity roll and if failed, they suffer terrible nightmares concerning the King in Yellow, Carcosa and Hastur costing a further point of Sanity. Each time thereafter the person sleeps they should make a Sanity roll (0/1) and this is repeated each night until either they succeed in the Sanity roll or madness overtakes them.

THE KING IN YELLOW (THE BOOK)

One of the central themes of the Mythos connected with Hastur is the play *The King In Yellow*. The basic information on this book, in some of its numerous forms, is included for quick reference. Three new forms of this work appear in *Ripples from Carcosa*; a brief description of these works is also listed here. Greater details on these new incarnations of *The King In Yellow* are listed in the individual scenarios.

The Original French—This original edition was seized and destroyed by the Third Republic just after publication. The text is an ambiguous, dream-like play, which opens readers to madness. Sanity loss 1D10; Cthulhu Mythos +2/+4 percentiles; Mythos Rating 18; average 1 week to study. Spells: None.

The King In Yellow English translation—The English edition is a thin black octavo volume across the front cover of which is embossed a large Yellow Sign. Sanity loss 1D10; Cthulhu Mythos +1/+4 percentiles; Mythos Rating 15; average 1 week to study. Spells: None.

Xanthic Folio—A set of ancient tablets found in China, said to be Elder Thing glyphs. This pre-



The Boneless One Avatar

Ripples from Carcosa

human artifact details the King in Yellow and his court. Sanity loss 1D10; Cthulhu Mythos +3/+7 percentiles; Mythos Rating 30; average 7 weeks to study and comprehend. Spells: Create Time Warp.

Yellow Codices—A translation of the *Xanthic Folio*, often found in English and French. A French copy of the *Yellow Codices* was thought to be the inspiration for *The King In Yellow*. Copies of this work have circulated among groups of jaded artists and writers for years. Sanity Loss 1D8; Cthulhu Mythos +2/+6 percentiles; Mythos Rating 24; average 1 week to study and comprehend. Spells: None.

Alternate forms of The King In Yellow—In the three scenarios that make up *Ripples from Carcosa* the investigators won't encounter any of the above books. The story of The King In Yellow is presented in three new forms across each scenario of the trilogy:

- **"Adventus Regis"**—Here, during the time of the Roman Empire, an early version of the play *The King In Yellow* has just been written. It is entitled "Adventus Regis" (Arrival of the King), and the investigators have the opportunity to obtain a hastily-revised edition of the play.
- **"Herald of the Yellow King"**—In the Dark Ages chapter of the trilogy the investigators might listen to story of *The King In Yellow* as told by a wizened bard or read a brief version of the tale from an old priest's journal.
- **"Heir to Carcosa"**—In the far future, the investigators may discover a newly-translated sequel to *The King In Yellow*, a play called *Heir to Carcosa*. This play is not available for review in a written form, but rather has been rendered into a virtual Computer Generated Holographic (CGH) animated work.

THE KING IN YELLOW (THE PLAY)

Various Mythos authors have made attempts at creating version of this play. While details of these different attempts vary greatly, its central themes remain consistent. For our purposes I have included the summary of the play originally written by Kevin Ross in the classic 1920s scenario "Have You Seen The Yellow Sign?" from Chasoiium's *The Great Old Ones*. It is this version of the play which *Ripples from Carcosa* follows most closely.

A Summary of the Play *The King In Yellow*

The work deals with the inhabitants of a decadent alien city, apparently called Yhtill, adjacent to Aldeb-

aran, which is prominent in the night skies. The main characters belong to the royal family of this city (the Queen, Cassilda, Camilla, Uoht, Thale, Aldones and Alar), and most of the play deals with their squabbles over the line of succession to the throne of Yhtill.

During one such squabble the royal folk hear of a stranger in a Pallid Mask who openly wears the abhorred Yellow Sign and who, carried by winged demons, recently arrived in the city (a successful Cthulhu Mythos roll infers that these creatures are byakhee). Coinciding with the stranger's arrival are visions of an illusionary ghost-city on the opposite shore of the lake of Hali, a city whose uppermost towers appear to be obscured by one of the planet's twin moons.

The Queen and her children summon the stranger before them, and their haughty questioning of the masked being elicits much confusing allegory but few coherent answers. He claims to be an emissary of the dreaded mythical entity called The King In Yellow, or Last King. Later, at a masked ball honoring the royal family, everyone unmasks except the stranger, who reveals that his Pallid Mask is no mask at all. The offended queen and her high priest Naotalba imprison and torture the Pallid Mask, who also calls himself the Phantom of Truth, to no avail.

As the Pallid Mask dies, the true King in Yellow arrives from across the lake of Hali. Those who aren't immediately driven mad with fear notice that the dead city across the lake is no longer there. The hoary, tattered Yellow King informs them that only one city now exists on the shores of Hali, and that city is Carcosa, once known as Yhtill.

The Play ends with The King in Yellow having settled the problem of succession and with everyone fearfully awaiting their imminent demise.

Paradoxically, Hastur is referred to separately as a character and as a place.

Each reader invariably singles out a character in the play as representative of himself or herself, usually to the reader's horror when that character's doom becomes apparent.