

Utatti Asfet

The Eye of Wicked Sight

Sample file





H. P. LOVECRAFT 1890-1937

Utatti Asfet

The Eye of Wicked Sight

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Introduction

Welcome to *Utatti Asfet*. We hope you will enjoy it. It is the direct result of many endless hours at the Airport Way Pizza Hut (because they're open till 3:00 a.m.) rehashing the exploits of Dr. Hans Dieter, Miles Wilmington, and Riley Maxwell. Those memories led to speculations on games which ought to be written. Finally, in December of 1992, all of that energy simply overflowed into the campaign that you find here. It is composed of largely new material, though some scenes arise from our early days of gaming. We wrote it with our favorite campaigns ever published (*Masks of Nyarlathotep* and *Pursuit to Kadath*) in mind.

We started with the basic idea of writing a campaign. Mostly we wanted to see if we could get published, hopefully in ten languages, and pick up a pile of cash. We had each written scenarios and campaigns of various lengths before, but they were composed of pizza-stained pages of cryptic notes, rather than a publication-ready document. As we talked and tossed around ideas, slowly things began to coalesce into a rough plot outline. We then spent many hours in libraries nurturing our creation with research. Daily we exchanged excited stories at how neatly history or geography played into our favor. In creating this campaign, this was the best part. Next came the first writing, also very enjoyable, as we sat hunched over our keyboards, now and then cackling with fiendish delight. But soon that too ended and we were left with rewrites and edits, again hunched over our keyboards, now mumbling and drooling. Time was spent hammering out the rough spots, stupid corners, boring NPC's, and meaningless meanders of the plot.

This campaign is meant for people who like clue-scrouring, non-violent, campaigns (though the Sudan section will be very difficult), as well as people who like red-hot-barrel, damn-not-enough-ammo firefests (though the Sudan section will be even more difficult). For most obstacles there lies an elegant path to the solution as well as the .45 caliber, full-auto path.

We have been playing *Call of Cthulhu*® since the introduction of the boxed set in the early 1980's. Our early *CoC* characters were heavily armed and trigger happy. Those were some of the best games we ever played, if you evaluate quality by the amount of enjoyment received. Now the preoccupation with detail has smothered the gaming experience. If a character is running down rue Descartes in Paris and makes a left turn on Grenoble, is he now headed toward the Seine or away from it? Answer: It doesn't matter. Who cares what the street names are or which way they one-ways go? If you break up a tense action scene where the investigators are chasing down an evil NPC and you stop to check your Paris street map, you have thrown sand in the gears of the best part of the game.

Action scenes should go down as fast as you can reload. Try not to use miniatures or detailed maps during a game until after hell breaks loose. If the players are about to enter an old house and the Keeper begins drawing and giving dimensions you know that you had better start searching (read: making Spot Hidden rolls). It is more important to have detailed descriptions in your head that you can give verbally. Describe the cherry paneling, four portraits along the right hand wall, antique brass light fixtures, and mahogany roll-top desk. The more details the better; investigators look for key words (book, desk, nightstand, drawer, painting, etc.) which should be avoided to keep from falling into a *CoC* cliché.

As a Keeper a great deal of responsibility falls upon you to be intimate with the scenario. By that I do not mean what is written here (knowledge of the adventure goes without saying), but with the location, the country, the culture, some bits of language, etc. It is not necessary to commit the street map of Algiers to memory, but if an investigator jumps in a cab and asks to go to the largest library in town, then the cab driver better say, "Oui, la bibliothèque de l'université," instead of, "Hunh," or, "Okay, get me a Pepsi while I look one up."

Make up a list of names to use so that when the investigators meet an extraneous NPC you can pop off a name and some personal information (smells bad, fat, greasy mustache, etc.). There should be no hollow NPC's; make them important. It is the Keeper's job to do some reading and pregame work before running any adventure. If you do not have a feel for Tonga or Mardi Gras, then you can not pass it on to your players convincingly. As with any game, the Keeper will be well off to make good use of the local library to augment the already heavily researched background material for each section.

Players can tell that they are on the right track when you can not answer any questions that do not pertain directly to the adventure. If someone asks when high tide is tomorrow, and you don't have a clue, tell them anyhow. Make it authoritative and make it snappy. Whenever you say, "I don't know," the players know that it doesn't matter and another part of the world becomes gray. The world is a huge, complex place. The investigators do not know how the phase of the moon relates to the events taking place, but let them think it might. Maybe it does.

Whatever you do, make it seamless. I highly recommend "cheat sheets" paper-clipped to the inside of your Keeper's screen. Keep NPC names and other crucial details handy there, along with place-names, travel dates, times. These are the facts that make the fabric of your universe real to the players. The only thing better than having your few facts handy is having lots of extra facts handy. The fabric of your universe should be both very dense and very encompassing. It should spread well beyond the confines of your campaign. When asked a question about how to use a Tongan nose flute, treat it with the same importance as though it were a question regarding Lenny Stroeker.

Overall this campaign is a horror mystery, and the point is to enjoy playing it. Every clue does not have to fit and every mystery can not be resolved. Some do not even have answers, and that is all right. The real world is the same way. It is disappointing to us when a game comes to a giant climax where everything you've done is wrapped together at the end. This presupposes that everything is related, which it is not. In *Utatti Asfet* the climax resolves the case of Labib/Amun-Shaklal, but the Tongan cult of Hina may still be functional, as may be Washington's group in Louisiana. The players will probably never have figured out the whole story behind Lenny Stroeker, though some of his activities do come to light for all but the most myopic of investigators.

Utatti Asfet was fun to write. The drool cleaned up easily. We can't wait to hear your comments in the newsgroups, or overhear them some night in the Airport Way Pizza Hut.

Owen Guthrie

Toivo Joakim Luick

Background

That which has led to the events of this story

Ancient History

The Bedouins of northern Africa tell many stories, and if you join the right camp on a doleful night, sitting up late around a smoldering fire you may hear some of the older tales, tales of the gods. Not Allah, nor the Hebrew god Yahweh, but others far older. Known is the dread name Kthuluhu, and some tell of Azathoth the great, though these names are only spoken in whispers between long-time companions who share great trust. One name, possibly that most rarely heard (and only slightly less rarely forgotten), is mighty Shaklatal, the god who is bound beyond death.

The Old Gods have a special position in the lives of the Bedouin (at least for those that remember). While most Bedouin are faithful Muslims, and count the Old Ones as enemies of Allah, none too few pay them homage first and foremost. Kthuluhu and Shaklatal were worshiped by the first tribal peoples of northern Africa and by their fathers. During the rise of Egypt, Shaklatal became associated with the god Amon. Priests of ancient Egypt gradually blurred the two deities into one, calling it Amun-Shaklatal.

Kthuluhu and Shaklatal, it is said, were rivals in the game of collecting the souls of men. Their loathing for one another was legend, and clever Kthuluhu used Shaklatal's greed and spite to draw it into a cunning trap, where it was imprisoned for thousands of years.

Dread Kthuluhu lies dreaming under the sea, and its worshipers are still today mostly people of the sea. Its influence spans the globe and faithful followers (human and others) have built many shrines and temples. Many temples predate not only humanity, but mammals and even reptiles. Built by creatures that have been absent for over a billion years, they hold great power for the human priests who worship in them today.

One such temple exists in the South Pacific near the islands of the kingdom of Tonga. This temple is sundered into two parts, and is a gateway to another plane which the ancient Egyptians called the underworld (Duat) and which the Tongans call Pulotu. While the Tongans believe that souls are contented in Pulotu, the Egyptian legends are less alluring. Seven gates bar entrance from Duat back to the world. These same gates imprison Shaklatal until it can physically bring itself through using a living host.

In ancient Egypt Shaklatal took a mortal form with the intention of freeing itself. But in this it was tricked by

Kthuluhu. Once it was so confined Kthuluhu took advantage of a moment of overexertion and had its followers seal Shaklatal away in a tomb forever. This is the story of Maleqereabar, and it goes like this ...

The Rise and Fall of Maleqereabar

About 700 B.C. there was great trouble all throughout the Middle East. It is the period of the Old Testament of the Bible. The Hittites in Asia Minor had been ousted by the Sumerians and the Phrygians. They in turn were under attack from the Assyrians, Cimmerians, Medes, and Scyths. Wars were essentially continuous, with battles raging in Iraq, Iran, the Caucasus, and throughout the eastern Mediterranean. It was a time ripe with chaos and laden with blood.

At this same time, in northern Sudan (ancient Kush or Nubia), the pharaoh, Piankhi son of Kashta, was exercising his birthright to the throne of Kush. The Kushite king was expanding northward over Egypt, defeating an uprising that grew from restive nobles in the Nile delta. In an effort to obtain more favor and support from the deities and to aid his king, the high priest Maleqereabar began experimentation in his rituals. Maleqereabar followed tales and superstition. He brought in shamen from the east and sent explorations south and west. From among the many spells and rituals that this quest brought, one name with one ritual rose above the rest.

It came from beneath his very feet, a ritual that was older than the rise of the Kushite empire. It came from dark corners, back alleys, and starlit hilltops, from the lower castes and from Bedouin nomads, who clung to ancient and powerful secrets. The god was Shaklatal. Legend had it that Shaklatal's Ka (soul) festered in the underworld (which is called Duat). It was said that rewards beyond all those in the afterlife awaited he who brought Shaklatal forth from his prison. Maleqereabar studied the ritual to summon Shaklatal.

In order to worship Shaklatal openly, Maleqereabar proclaimed that Amon, worshiped by Egyptians for centuries, was not the truest form of the god behind the lineage of great Kushite kings. He declared that the Egyptians were misled years before, and that he would now set things to rights again. With this return to truth would come prosperity, greatness, and righteous victory to the people. The "true god", as he called it, was named Amun-Shaklatal.

At the same time, Pharaoh Piankhi had returned to Napata, the ancient capital of Kush, and mere days after

his return news came that a rebel prince in the delta had raised an army and sailed north to take Mendes. The eve before Piankhi was to sail for Mendes, Maleqereabar set out burning stakes on top of the sacred mountain. Though he was not ready, the ritual was performed and all the priests of Amon were in attendance, standing in a ring around the hollow top of Jebel Barkal. One hundred slaves and captives were sacrificed, which brought wind. Another hundred brought storm. It was the third hundred that called the attention of Shaklatal.

Unfortunately, the ritual that Maleqereabar received was not quite complete, and he was left vulnerable to Shaklatal's evil ways. This was Cthulhu's will, and the ritual was learned from one of its priests. Summoned unbound, Shaklatal was free to do as he wished, and (as Cthulhu foresaw) it was his pleasure to combine all his earthly will to take Maleqereabar with the Utatti Asfet, "The Eye of Wicked Sight."

Shaklatal took Maleqereabar because he knew that the only way to escape Duat was through the use of a living vessel. It was necessary to take a living body into Duat to carry out the formless Ka of the imprisoned god.

Maleqereabar was not possessed entirely by Shaklatal; instead the two spirits were mixed to form one. They became one terribly evil spirit with the mind of an Egyptian high priest and a soul of purest evil, intent on bringing the Ka of Shaklatal forth from the underworld. As Maleqereabar eventually became Maleqereabar the old, and served three pharaohs, he never ceased to search for the entrance to Duat.

It is written on the walls of Piankhi's tomb that on his departure from Napata to throw down his challengers favorable winds blew from the south and never ceased until he came down upon his enemy at Mendes a week before he was expected. Maleqereabar rode on the prow of the royal barque, eager for the battle. The forces clashed and, after a short skirmish, the rebels were sent into retreat. Maleqereabar instructed Piankhi that Amun-Shaklatal wished for the enemy to be pursued and crushed in his name. Piankhi balked at Maleqereabar's request, being mainly interested in collecting taxes and not desiring excessive bloodshed, and within days he grew ill and died.

Shebako, Piankhi's brother, inherited the throne of Kush. He was much more ruthless in his response to the revolt. He sailed north, crushed the rebel army, and followed them to their homes. He captured a thousand men, including the leaders of the revolt, and burned them alive. Maleqereabar approved.

During this time Assyria was pursuing a course of terror and massacre from one rich land to another. They overwhelmed Babylon, conquered Damascus, sacked Samaria, and deported the ten tribes of Israel to Iraq. Moving southward the Assyrian king, Sennacherib, had only small Judah blocking his path to the wealth of Egypt and Kush.

Shebako came to the aid of Hezekiah, King of Judah. He sent thousands of soldiers, priests, chariots, weapons, and supplies. Even though Maleqereabar was getting to be very old, he retained an appearance of youth that did not go unnoticed. As before, he stood at the front of the procession. On hearing of the Pharaoh's approaching

army, Sennacherib sent a taunting message to Hezekiah: "Now behold thou trustest on the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will drive into his hand and pierce it; so it is with the Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him."

That night Maleqereabar called the commander of the armies to bring him many of the less productive slaves (prisoners from previous battles) and a huge, fiery ceremony was carried out in the hills above Judah. The next morning Sennacherib awoke to find one hundred and eighty-five thousand of his men dead and thousands more with shattered minds. Sennacherib retreated and Maleqereabar marched victoriously back to Egypt.

Shebako's next act was to move the capital of Kush and Egypt to Thebes, site of Luxor and Karnak's temples and of the Valley of the Kings. This new location, however, was five hundred miles from Napata. From such a distance it was difficult for Shebako, a military king, to maintain control.

Famine, drought, and pestilence had plagued Egypt and Kush for several years. People had less faith in their lords and priests, and Maleqereabar's patience grew short for Shebako's inaction. Finally some of the tombs near Napata were looted by a nomadic band and the temples of Jebel Barkal were sacked. Maleqereabar was furious and, within hours, Shebako grew ill and died.

Shebako's successor, Pharaoh Taharqa, came to the throne in 690 B.C. A week after the ceremonies for pharaonic succession were over, the rains began. Pharaoh Taharqa described it: "It penetrated the hills of Upper Egypt, it overtopped the mounds of Lower Egypt, and the land became a primordial ocean. ... Moreover the sky rained in Nubia, it made all the hills glisten. Every man had an abundance of everything, Egypt lay in festival, and the like of the flood was not found in any writing in the time of the ancestors and none said 'I have heard from my father of such a flood.'"

Taharqa did not exaggerate. The high water mark of the flood reached three hundred feet at Thebes and it is still visible today. It has yet to be surpassed or even closely matched. This massive flood irrigated a huge area, drowned rats and vermin of all kinds, and led to a great harvest. The result was a massive rise in the people's support for the new ruler and widespread belief that the new reign was blessed by the gods.

The reign of Taharqa was prosperous. The largest temples during the history of Kush were built at and near Jebel Barkal. One massive temple was hewn out of the rock of Jebel Barkal itself. All were dedicated to Amun-Shaklatal.

During this time Maleqereabar succumbed further to the influence of the Utatti Asfet. His need to locate Duat surpassed in importance his service to Taharqa. Again he sent his agents afar in search of knowledge. He studied oracles, divinations, and astrology. He learned how to locate the entrance to Duat, but at the time travel to the South Pacific was impossible. He recorded his knowledge on a pair of stele that were later entombed with Taharqa.

The Assyrians were not finished, however. In 671 B.C. the Assyrian Esarhaddon attacked Egypt and succeeded in taking Memphis, totally destroying it. He then

returned to Assyria confident of his victory. When Taharqa counterattacked, things went well for him again and he cleared Egypt of the remaining Assyrians.

Like his predecessors, Taharqa did not follow the advice of the now ancient Maleqereabar to pursue the Assyrians. Instead, still jubilant with his victory, Taharqa dared Maleqereabar to follow the Assyrians himself. Enraged by his defeat, Esarhaddon mounted a campaign to return but died only hours after leaving his palace gates.

Esarhaddon's successor was Ashurbanipal. In 664 he marched on Egypt and crushed Taharqa's army outside of Memphis (near modern Cairo). Taharqa retreated to Thebes along with Maleqereabar. Taharqa blamed Maleqereabar for the loss, citing unfulfilled prophecies of plague among the Assyrian army. Forty days later, with Ashurbanipal and his great war barges only miles downriver from Thebes, Taharqa was stranded without an army.

As Taharqa orchestrated plans for a retreat up the Nile, Maleqereabar approached him, demanding he engage the Assyrians again and promising Amun-Shaklal's blessing. Taharqa had been pressed too far by his mysterious advisor, however, and cut off his head. As Maleqereabar was taken by surprise the body suffered a fatal wound. Shaklatal abandoned the damaged body; the Utatti Asfet, along with Maleqereabar's remaining mind, leapt into Taharqa. However, Shaklatal had miscalculated and Taharqa was stronger than he had suspected; he would be no easy pawn to control. He was not strong enough to resist the Utatti Asfet completely. Yet he was able to resist the bound god's bidding to perform another great sacrifice in its name, instead deciding upon another.

The sacrifice was made according to an untried ritual that Maleqereabar had found years before. This ritual was learned from a faithful of Cthulhu. It was meant to "pull the vengeance of the gods from the sea and up the river." Shaklatal knew the peril of such a spell, but the Utatti Asfet could not prevent the mighty pharaoh from trying it.

The ritual was performed in the Ramesseum, a great temple built hundreds of years before by Rameses II on the west bank of the Nile. Taharqa took a place before a great smoldering altar. There were not enough slaves and prisoners, so many peasants were offered as well. Late into the dark night, after hours of ceremony and hundreds of sacrifices, the river began to swell, and the sky grew black. From between the sky and river a deeper blackness began to grow. Suddenly the flames were dampened and a lightless thunderclap crushed the altar. The temple from which the ritual took place was shattered. The crumbled columns and walls remain to this day.

Within an hour the stars shone again and all that remained was Taharqa, seemingly dead, lying on the cloven altar platform. All other priests and acolytes had disappeared. It was believed that Taharqa had lost the favor of Amun-Shaklal and had been punished.

In reality, the ritual had required more strength than Taharqa was capable of controlling, and when the stress of the casting had exposed him sufficiently Cthulhu had sent a curse which trapped Shaklatal in a catatonic state. Temporarily weakened and unable to leave the fallen body of Taharqa, Shaklatal was taken to Napata, em-

balmed, and then magically sealed in a secret, hidden royal tomb by the priest Hobadji. He spent the next 2632 years waiting, fully conscious and fully cognizant of his dark and confining surroundings.

The Kalkhe Expedition

In 1968 a German archeological team, led by Prof. Richard Kalkhe, excavated in the region of Taharqa's pyramid near Napata. Kalkhe and his assistants Oswald Lange, Samantha Heidrichs, Herman Immelman and Max Kleiber hired hundreds of diggers from the nearby town of Karima to remove the sands. Upon baring the western side of the pyramid they found three burial shafts.

At the base of one shaft they discovered a hidden passageway inscribed with pharaonic passages from *The Book of the Dead*. Beyond a heavily inscribed door at the end of the hall lay all the wealth of a king of both Egypt and Kush. Riches and beautiful objects of gold, silver, ivory, and jewels lay about the multi-layered sarcophagus of a pharaoh. The cartouche on the door named the dead pharaoh as Taharqa.

Taharqa's tomb had been discovered earlier by George Reisner, and had included over a thousand ushabti and vast wealth. But Reisner's tomb was a decoy to fool tomb robbers. The real body of Taharqa had lain in the tomb at the base of the shaft since its burial by the priest Hobadji. Hobadji himself had been killed and buried in one of the other burial shafts, under a horrible curse laid by loyal followers of Taharqa upon their discovery of the seal Hobadji had made on the door of the pharaoh's tomb.

Imprisoned for nearly three millennia, the Utatti Asfet sprang into the nearest person when the seal on the tomb was broken. That person was Oswald Lange. As the Utatti Asfet entered Lange he immediately drew ill and was taken back out. As the rest of the party explored the tomb the Utatti Asfet, now strongly infused with the essence of Taharqa, began to gather its strength for an escape. That night a wind storm or *haboob* began to blow in. Sand, blowing hard, began to fill the shaft. As the members of the expedition began to realize their peril they left for Karima, the nearest town.

The only survivor of that expedition was Samantha Heidrichs. As the others were getting into the car she went to get Lange, who was in his tent and supposedly very ill. When she entered she saw him standing in the full regal splendor of an Egyptian pharaoh with his face hideously twisted by the Utatti Asfet. She fled and hid inside a luggage trunk. Having regained his strength Shaklatal/Taharqa/Lange joined the others at the truck and began driving at dangerous speeds. The others asked where Sammy was, but he only laughed and accelerated.

Shortly after starting toward Karima, they suffered a terrible car accident. The storm lasted for two days and by the time the group was found the bodies were horribly desiccated. Their flesh had been partially eroded from their bones by the blowing sand. Miss Heidrichs was found in the trunk, lecturing about the desert sands, by passing Bedouins intent on looting the abandoned camp.

Elated that he might now feel the joy of crushing human lives again, Shaklatal had driven straight into a

sheer-faced rock ridge. He survived the crash, though his (Lange's) body was badly broken. Staggering away from the crash, he happened upon a truck, slowly crawling its way toward Karima. In his greed for the taking of human life, Shaklatal did not bother to possess the driver's body. He gleefully tore the driver apart after beating him senseless. After a while the priest/god drove off to the east, eventually arriving in Port Sudan, with its shipyards, rail-ways, and airport.

In Port Sudan the Utatti Asfet abandoned the body of Lange, which died immediately of its horrible wounds. The Utatti Asfet knew that Cthulhu would begin searching when It learned of the escape, and thus for several years it remained hidden, discovering the secrets of this new world it had entered. After several years the Utatti Asfet came into contact with Ibn Yassin Ibrahim Labib.

Mr. Labib

Labib was a billionaire Saudi prince who, in 1978, had the misfortune of meeting Victor Gremer. Gremer was the then-current bearer of the Utatti Asfet, and Labib was an ideal candidate for resuming the search for Duat. He was taken in an instant and Gremer's body was never found.

With the wealth and influence of Labib, the Utatti Asfet was able to recommence research in order to bring forth Shaklatal from Duat. In 1980 many artifacts were acquired from the Sudanese National Museum that had been discovered by the Kalkhe expedition. Shortly afterward Labib created a perfect servant by raising one of his ushabti. The servant was called Dr. Aziz.

With Aziz's assistance Labib traveled the world searching for the entrance to Duat. He used the stele of Maleqereabar, items which give astral projections for the location of the temple, as well as tracking down other sources of arcane knowledge. The stele led him to the South Pacific, and eventually to the kingdom of Tonga.

The Taking of LeGoullon

On October 8, 1989 Labib bid on a statuette on the block at Sotheby's in London. The statuette had been recovered from the wreck of a sailing ship near Tahiti, and Labib recognized the object as having associations with a cult of his old enemy Cthulhu. His interest grew a hundredfold when he ended up in a bidding war against an enigmatic American. As a result, the nearly insignificant statuette was the high point of the auction when Labib put in a shocking bid of two million dollars.

Labib immediately began investigating the American. His name was Jean LeGoullon, a shipping magnate from Louisiana. Labib was delighted, for it would give him the perfect cover for pursuing an entrance to Duat as well as a chance to vex Cthulhu by damaging one of his secret cults. He only later found out that LeGoullon did not worship Cthulhu, but rather a bayou god in Louisiana.

LeGoullon was invited to join Labib on the *Allah Hu-Akhbar*, his pleasure yacht. There LeGoullon was eaten during a ritual that empowered Labib to take his form at will. Using his new identity, and the resources of LeGoullon Enterprises, he commenced the active search

for Duat. He had the *Proud Ariane*, a marine salvage vehicle, refitted for deep sea operations.

Locating the Temple of Cthulhu

Much research eventually narrowed the area of interest to the kingdom of Tonga, and shortly thereafter to a remote island named Avua'tuopavo slightly east of the main island. The entrance and antechambers to the temple/Duat were located on that island, but the rest of the temple was missing. After a brief scuffle with primitive shark cultists from the neighboring island of Avua'tutu his men were able to calculate the likely position of the remainder of the temple, which had broken off and lay over two thousand feet below the surface in the Tongan Trench.

Frustrated by continuous failed attempts to locate the lower temple, Labib commanded his men to begin using seismic charges to probe the trench wall. The series of explosions eventually did expose the entrance to the temple and give Shaklatal the first scent of freedom.

The blasting also drew some unanticipated attention. Sensors intended to detect underground nuclear testing were tripped worldwide. Though the explosions were clearly non-nuclear, the United States Department of Defense was immediately curious and enlisted the expertise of Dr. Lazlo Volk, a global expert in deep sea seismic activity.

Enter Dr. Volk & the Players

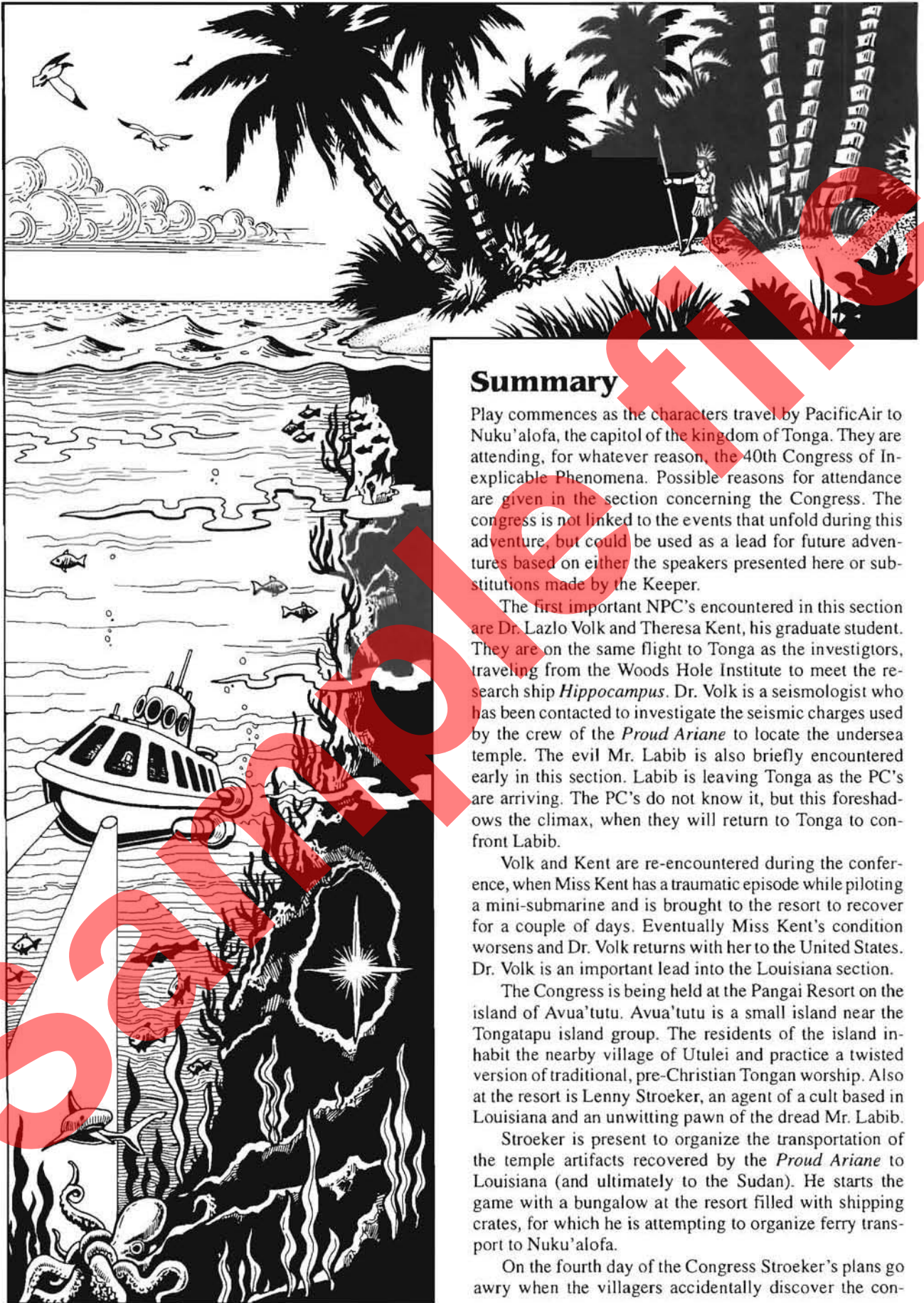
Dr. Lazlo Volk, of the Woods Hole Institute, has sent the research vessel *Hippocampus* to Tonga to prepare to deploy a full array of seismic sensors. As play begins Dr. Volk is flying to Tonga to join his team on the same airplane that carries the investigators.

The Utatti Asfet

The Utatti Asfet represents the earthly manifestation of Shaklatal. It was first brought from beyond the great binding gates by Maleqereabar and it subsequently overtook Taharqa. Thousands of years later it seized Oswald Lange. Moving on, it found its way through many unnamed poor souls until finally it came to rest in the body of Ibn Yassin Ibrahim Labib.

As the Possessor, or Utatti Asfet ("Eye of Wicked Sight" in the language used by the Kushite pharaohs of the 25th Dynasty of ancient Egypt), moves from host to host it retains a small amount of the former hosts' consciousnesses. For instance, a small amount of Maleqereabar and Taharqa resided in Oswald Lange, and now some of each resides in Mr. Labib. The amount of personality that remains is dependent on the POW of the subject. Since Taharqa had the highest POW of any of the Utatti Asfet's hosts, Labib retains more of his personality than of any other.

A side effect of the possession is the loss of control of the left eye. This eye is actually taken over (though not removed) by Shaklatal. The Bound God uses it to look upon the world independently of the wishes of its host. Thus it is prone to wander crazily. It is this wandering eye that earned the name "Eye of Wicked Sight" and it is the same that Samantha Heidrichs fears desperately.



Summary

Play commences as the characters travel by PacificAir to Nuku'alofa, the capitol of the kingdom of Tonga. They are attending, for whatever reason, the 40th Congress of Inexplicable Phenomena. Possible reasons for attendance are given in the section concerning the Congress. The congress is not linked to the events that unfold during this adventure, but could be used as a lead for future adventures based on either the speakers presented here or substitutions made by the Keeper.

The first important NPC's encountered in this section are Dr. Lazlo Volk and Theresa Kent, his graduate student. They are on the same flight to Tonga as the investigators, traveling from the Woods Hole Institute to meet the research ship *Hippocampus*. Dr. Volk is a seismologist who has been contacted to investigate the seismic charges used by the crew of the *Proud Ariane* to locate the undersea temple. The evil Mr. Labib is also briefly encountered early in this section. Labib is leaving Tonga as the PC's are arriving. The PC's do not know it, but this foreshadows the climax, when they will return to Tonga to confront Labib.

Volk and Kent are re-encountered during the conference, when Miss Kent has a traumatic episode while piloting a mini-submarine and is brought to the resort to recover for a couple of days. Eventually Miss Kent's condition worsens and Dr. Volk returns with her to the United States. Dr. Volk is an important lead into the Louisiana section.

The Congress is being held at the Pangai Resort on the island of Avua'tutu. Avua'tutu is a small island near the Tongatapu island group. The residents of the island inhabit the nearby village of Utulei and practice a twisted version of traditional, pre-Christian Tongan worship. Also at the resort is Lenny Stroeker, an agent of a cult based in Louisiana and an unwitting pawn of the dread Mr. Labib.

Stroeker is present to organize the transportation of the temple artifacts recovered by the *Proud Ariane* to Louisiana (and ultimately to the Sudan). He starts the game with a bungalow at the resort filled with shipping crates, for which he is attempting to organize ferry transport to Nuku'alofa.

On the fourth day of the Congress Stroeker's plans go awry when the villagers accidentally discover the con-

Part I: Tonga

Wherein the characters travel to the beautiful South Pacific and embark on their investigation

tents of the crates. The villagers, who control another section of the same temple on the sister island of Avua'tuopavo, seize the cargo and begin hunting Stroeker. That night Stroeker radios the *Proud Ariane* and summons aid. His men, who are well armed, assault the island temple and reclaim the crates, as well as several artifacts sacred to the villagers. Stroeker spends the remainder of this section waiting in Nuku'alofa to get his cargo onto an airplane.

During this section there are ample opportunities for the characters to draw the attention of the local cannibal villagers. The cult becomes active as soon as they learn of the contents of Stroeker's crates. They also follow normal Sunday Catholic mass with their own primitive rites held on Avua'tuopavo.

Modern Tonga

The Kingdom of Tonga is a collection of about 170 islands that are divided into three major groups, plus a couple of outlying islands. The islands are about 400 miles east of Fiji in the middle of the South Pacific. The three groups are arranged north to south and are named Vava'u, Ha'apai, and Tongatapu. The capital of Tonga is Nuku'alofa, on the island of Tongatapu. This is the largest city and the destination of all international flights (because it has the only decent runway).

Tonga observes Independence (from Britain) Day on June 4th, an event which happened in 1970. The United States has no embassy in Tonga. The ambassador to Fiji takes care of American concerns.

A passport and an onward or return ticket are both required to enter Tonga, but no visa is required unless the visit will exceed thirty days. There are no particular health risks in Tonga, but proof of yellow fever vaccination is required for travelers from infected areas (such as the Sudan).

Tongan power is 230 volts at 50 hertz. American appliances work on 110 volts and 60 hertz, and therefore require a voltage adapter to operate. The telephone system is good and there is an AM radio station (no FM and no television). Radios are therefore very common. Hospital

facilities are inferior to those in the United States and the U.S. State Department recommends deferring medical treatment until safety can be assured.

Tongans celebrate Good Friday and Easter Monday (March 29 and April 1, respectively, in 1991), and these are the only major holidays that are likely to occur during the course of this adventure. Nationwide, Tongans are about 88% Protestant and 12% Catholic.

Nuku'alofa is a major port that trades with New Zealand, Fiji, Australia, Japan, and the United States. Exports are mainly agricultural and include bananas, coconuts, coconut oil, fish, taro, copra, and vanilla beans. Imports include fuel, machinery, building materials, food, tobacco, and chemicals.

The Tongan unit of currency is the pa'anga, equal to 100 seniti, and equivalent to about \$1.25 U.S. Throughout the text prices are listed in pa'anga. Exchange rates for foreign currency at other than official institutions can be disastrous for the consumer.

The Tongan government is a constitutional monarchy. The executive branch has both the king (Taufa'ahau Tupou IV) and prime minister (prince Fatafehi Tu'ipelehake, who will be succeeded by Baron Vaea on August 21, 1991). There is a legislative assembly whose duty it is to make the king's word into law without too much delay.

Tonga's national airline is Friendly Island Airways. Each of the two planes holds less than twenty people.

Tongatapu is a large, flat island of boring terrain. It is largely cultivated, producing the export crops listed above. The best beaches and most scenic locales are found on the nearby islets, also the locations of the best tourist facilities. Avua'tutu is the most remote of these islets, and the highest rated by most travel publications. There are many sights to see here including the royal palace (which can be toured) and the king himself, *langi* (tombs for the kings made of enormous blocks of stone), the *ha'amonga* (a stone arch resembling those at Stonehenge), a flying fox sanctuary (the huge bats are protected by royal decree), and some spectacular blowholes.

The king can be seen often in Nuku'alofa being driven in his great black Cadillac or working out, rowing in the harbor or biking around the rugby grounds. He is about 70 years old and weighs 300 pounds (down from 460). The palace was prefabricated in New Zealand in 1867, and seems rather out of place.

The Congress of Inexplicable Phenomena

A foundation was created by the esteemed Sir Graham Westlake in 1887 in London for the purpose of inspiring scientific research in new and innovative ways. The early Congresses served to expose unexplained phenomena to the scrutiny of many reputable scholars, the underlying idea being that various experts would have a range of expertise. Presumably, since the whole exceeds the sum of its parts, they would collaborate to elucidate the answer to whatever riddle had been chosen for that year.

By the turn of the century the conferences no longer had the prestige to assemble a high enough caliber of persons for Sir Graham to continue. There was a long period from 1899 until Sir Graham's death in 1928 when the conferences were discontinued. In 1929 Sir Graham's only son William inherited his father's estate and the defunct, though well endowed, foundation. Sir William recommenced holding conferences when he found that he was unable to pillage the foundation funds. By the charter of the foundation, funds could only be used to pay for research and to hold the once annual Congress of Inexplicable Phenomena. His activities brought the foundation

nearly to ruin. It suffered gravely both financially and in terms of its credibility.

The conferences were extravagant in the extreme, and they held only the vaguest reflection of scientific pursuit. Instead the young Sir William perverted the original intent of the conferences to indulge his curiosity with the occult. He sponsored talks by both charlatans and the expositors thereof, gypsy fortune tellers and magicians, "voodoo" witch doctors and an assorted collection of frauds. All of his friends were invited, of course, and the locations were always exotic and lavish. When Sir William died in 1952, his will entrusted the foundation to his friend Dr. George Baldrey.

Dr. Baldrey, an anthropologist, had been invited to speak at the 18th Congress in 1934 about his experiences with the headhunters of Borneo. Baldrey and Sir William became fast friends, and soon he was helping run the foundation. He wanted to bring credibility to the organization by hosting scientific conferences again, with special emphasis on his own field of study (of course). Careful and inspired financial management brought the foundation back onto firm footing by 1970. He has been funding anthropological research since 1965 and began holding the Congresses again in 1973.

The foundation funds a lot of questionable research, and the Congresses never got the attention for which Baldrey hoped. The 40th Congress is nearly completely overlooked by the serious scientific world, being mainly attended by those who have received money from and donated money to the foundation. The elderly Baldrey will not be present because of health considerations.

