

The Reeling Midnight

Trail of Cthulhu Conversion notes

“The Reeling Midnight” is a Call of Cthulhu scenario written by Tom Lynch and published in *New Tales of Miskatonic Valley* by Miskatonic River Press in 2008. *New Tales of Miskatonic Valley*, which marks the return of Keith Herber to writing and editing for Call of Cthulhu, is a new collection of scenarios taking place in the Lovecraft Country of the Miskatonic River Valley in the 1920’s.

This scenario uses locations and characters appearing in Chaosium’s Arkham sourcebook (published as *Arkham Unveiled*, *The Compact Arkham Unveiled*, and *H.P. Lovecraft’s Arkham*). The sourcebook is not required to run this scenario. Keepers can transport it to another urban location easily enough (anywhere where bohemian Jazz culture is in full swing) and can also modify the time period of the scenario to a few years before or after 1928 with minor adjustments.

In Trail of Cthulhu terms, this scenario does not have core clues. The investigators must attend the party at the beginning of the scenario; they can get an invitation either from the Wilcoxes or whatever other hook the Keeper is using. After the death at the party, the investigators continue their investigations in their own fashion, following a variety of leads and building a body of evidence on their suspects. The climax occurs the following week at another party. If investigators are on the scene, they can deal with Ariadne and her spawn.

One aspect of the scenario that Keepers will need to consider is the antagonists’ scant knowledge of Hungarian. They know only a few phrases to get by, of the sort that might be learned in a travel guide. They do not know enough to have even a single rating point in the language.

It is certainly possible that investigators with unassigned rating points in Languages will choose Hungarian and attempt to converse with Zoltan and Ariadne. This can uncover their incomplete knowledge of the language if the conversation is prolonged or complicated. In this situation, Zoltan and Ariadne will make excuses to return the conversation to English (it’s impolite to other guests; they want to practice their English).

The Keeper should also keep in mind that there are many situations where it is difficult to say more than a few words to the pair in any language. The Keeper must decide how this plays out depending on circumstances, and may allow Assess Honesty spends to confirm any suspicions if need be and desired. Since the investigators probably suspect the pair anyway, this situation shouldn’t change the course of the scenario too much.

The avatar of Atlach-Nacha has two spells listed. The first of these, Contact Atlach-Nacha, is used by worshippers of Atlach-Nacha to commune with their goddess in dreams. The details are not necessary to the running of this scenario. The second spell, Summon/Bind Leng Spider, will not be used by the avatar during the course of the scenario. If Keepers want to make use of it, see the “Summoning and Binding Spells” sidebar on page 117 of the Trail of Cthulhu rulebook. Assume that it costs 3 Stability to summon a small one and 4 Stability to summon a large one and that casting takes 15 minutes. Use the statistics for this scenario’s spawn of Atlach-Nacha or the avatar of Atlach-Nacha respectively; both resist binding with an Inertia of 8.

Keeper Information

Zoltan Varga, master con

(Page 9-10)

Athletics 4, Firearms 4, Health 7, Scuffling 1, Weapons 3

Hit Threshold: 3

Alertness Modifier: +2

Weapon: +1 (.38 snub nose revolver), -1 (knife)

Ariadne Varga, nightmare victim

(Page 10-11)

Athletics 2, Health 5, Scuffling 1

Hit Threshold: 3

The Party

(Page 13)

- Most guests are willing to engage in small talk. Point spends should not be required; the Keeper can judge success depending on circumstances and the investigators’ ability ranks.

The Sitting Room

(Page 13)

- A male investigator who joins the choir and makes a **1-point spend** on **Art** while singing attracts the attention of Glenda Barr.

Meet Ariadne Varga

(Page 13)

- **Credit Rating** of **5 or more ranks** to automatically spot Ariadne's etiquette blunder. **Credit Rating** of **4 or fewer ranks** requires a **2-point spend**.

Meet Zoltan Varga

(Page 14)

- **Assess Honesty 1-point spend:** The investigator gets the sense that Varga is sizing the investigator up and manipulating the conversation.

The Library

(Page 14)

- **Anthropology, Archaeology,** or some connection to Miskatonic University allows investigators to recognize Professor Morgan.

The Parlor

(Page 15)

- **Bureaucracy, Law,** or some connection to Town Hall allows investigators to recognize Janet Larkin.

The Dining Room

(Page 15)

- Ana Washburne pays little attention to them unless a male investigator has **3 or more ranks** of **Flattery**.

Reefer Madness

(Page 15)

Marijuana gives users 2 dedicated pool point for Sense Trouble; this pool does not refresh during an adventure. The player should also roll a die to determine the investigator's behavior.

The Conservatory

(Page 16)

- **Assess Honesty 1-point spend:** Gerrhardt Wvinch apparently believes what he is saying.

Ariadne's Boudoir

(Page 18)

- It is a 3-point Stability test to see Eugene Wilcox's body.

The Next Day

Basic Library Research

(Page 19)

- One **Library Use 1-point spend** finds the information on the Varga name, and another **Library Use 1-point spend** finds the information regarding Hungarian nobility following the Great War.

Analyzing the Webbing

(Page 19)

- **Biology** or **Outdoorsman 1-point spend** determines that it appears to be a spider's web, but much bigger than is normal.
- **Chemistry 2-point spend** backs up the hypothesis, though some elements can't be identified. If the investigators submit the webbing for analysis, the Keeper may determine that **Cop Talk** or **Bureaucracy spends** speed up the process, and/or that prior contacts do not require extra effort.

Tailing Zoltan

(Page 19-20)

Shadowing tests against Zoltan begin at **difficulty 6** (4 plus his Alertness modifier). This test is made once a day. If Zoltan has met any investigators involved in the **Shadowing** test, the difficulty increases by 1; if such an investigator makes a **Disguise 1-point spend**, this increase is negated.

On subsequent days, the difficulty of the **Shadowing** test is increased by 1 if anyone involved in the current test has been involved in prior ones. A **Disguise 1-point spend** can negate this increase, but if Zoltan has met such an investigator, there is still an increase because of that, and the **Disguise** spend will not negate both. When **Shadowing** both Zoltan and Ariadne, test only against Zoltan.

- **Thursday:** While Zoltan meets with the photographer, an investigator can make a **Shadowing 1-point spend** to get close enough to overhear Zoltan's name used. Without the spend, investigators can only observe.
- When Zoltan leaves, he will see the investigator. If the investigator is wearing a disguise, it is a **Disguise test against difficulty 5** (**difficulty 6** if they've met) to escape his suspicion. If the investigator continues to follow

him, Zoltan will confront the investigator; the Keeper should not ask for a **Shadowing** test.

A Sleazy Photographer

(Page 20-21)

- **Intimidation** (backed up by actual violence) or **Bargain** (with a bribe of \$50) **1-point spend** gets Zoltan's real name and point of origin. A **2-point spend** (with even more violence or \$100) gets the information about the blackmail and Ariadne's name.

More Boston Information

(Page 21)

Library Use 1-point spend to find the information on the Ponzi scheme after searching all day. A **2-point spend** or an additional **Flattery 1-point spend** to solicit help gets the information after a half-hour search.

Tailing Ariadne

(Page 21)

Shadowing tests against Ariadne are much easier than against Zoltan. They begin at **difficulty 3**. This test is made once a day. If Ariadne has met any investigators involved in the **Shadowing** test, the difficulty increases by 1; if such an investigator makes a **Disguise 1-point spend**, this increase is negated.

On subsequent days, the difficulty of the **Shadowing** test is increased by 1 if anyone involved in the current test has been involved in prior ones. A **Disguise 1-point spend** can negate this increase, but if Ariadne has met such an investigator, there is still an increase because of that, and the **Disguise** spend will not negate both. When **Shadowing** both Zoltan and Ariadne, test only against Zoltan's difficulty.

The Two Graves

(Page 22)

- **Library Use, Flattery, or Reassurance** digs up the articles at the *Advertiser*.

At the Arkham Morgue

(Page 22)

- If the investigators don't have a prior relationship with Sprague, the Keeper might allow a **Flattery 1-point spend** if they share convincing evidence.
- **Roger Hudson:** It is a 1-point Stability test to see the photographs.

- **Biology** or **Outdoorsman 1-point spend** causes the investigator to question Sprague's report.
- **Bradford Taylor:** It is a 1-point Stability test to see the photographs.
- If an investigator made the spend on the Hudson photographs, similar wounds are spotted in these photographs.

The Victim's Families

(Page 22)

- Roger Hudson's Family: **Reassurance 1-point spend** gets Edwin to open up.
- **Roger Hudson:** It is a 1-point Stability test to see the photographs.
- **Biology** or **Outdoorsman 1-point spend** causes the investigator to question Sprague's report.
- **Bradford Taylor:** It is a 1-point Stability test to see the photographs.
- If an investigator made the spend on the Hudson photographs, similar wounds are spotted in these photographs.

A Séance with Gerrhardt Wvinch

(Page 23)

- When Wvinch sprouts fangs, it is a 3-point Stability test.
- Wvich's treatment lasts 2 or 3 months.
- **Cthulhu Mythos** recognizes Atlach-Nacha as a Hyperborean spider-goddess; with a **1-point spend**, it is also learned that she is said to live at the center of the universe, weaving the webs of time, and she was contacted through dreams.
- If they try to research the name, **Library Use** at Miskatonic University Library finds Tales of Mythic Hyperborea. Skimming it reveals the story of the young woman and Atlach-Nacha.

Odds & Ends

Professor Francis Morgan

(Page 24)

- **Flattery** or **Reassurance 1-point spend** gets Morgan to meet in a diner.

Gerrhardt Wvinch

(Page 24)

- **Assess Honesty** shows that Wvinch is genuine regarding the events of the Varga séance and that he is almost fearful.

The Last Waltz

Ariadne's Boudoir

(Page 25)

- Seeing Zoltan requires a 5-point Stability test.
- When Zoltan vomits, it causes a 1-point Stability test.
- If an investigator poking his or her head out the window looks up, a **Sense Trouble test against difficulty 5** senses Ariadne's attack in time to duck back inside. Otherwise, Ariadne attacks with two leg strikes (+1 damage each). If both strikes are successful, she immediately pulls the investigator up and attacks with two more leg strikes and a bite (see statistics for effect). It is a 2-point Stability test to see the investigator dragged out the window by two giant spider legs.

Avatar of Atlach-Nacha, formerly Ariadne

(Page 26)

Paralyzing Poison: The poison is administered by bite with a Scuffling test. The bite itself causes no damage but also ignores armor. The victim must make a Difficulty 9 Health test. If failed, the victim is paralyzed.

Ensnare in Webbing: This can be used at point-blank or close range with a Webbing test; the victim must make a Difficulty 8 Athletics test to escape.

Strike: When attacking while standing, roll damage 1D6 times. When attacking while crawling, she can attack twice, targeting up to two opponents

Pounce: She must make an Athletics test against the target's hit threshold. A successful pounce causes +5 damage.

Game Statistics

Athletics 15, Health 15, Scuffling 23, Webbing 15

Hit Threshold: 5

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: +1

Weapon: +1 (strike, see above)

Armor: -2 vs any (hairy spider chitin)

Stability Loss: +2

The Attic Nursery

(Page 27)

- The Keeper should call for a **Sense Trouble** test. Anyone making a **difficulty 2** hears faint scrabbling up above. Anyone who makes a **difficulty 5** also swears that there are children's voices up there.
- The Stability test to initially see the spawn is included with their statistics below. Recognizing their heritage requires a separate 2-point Stability test.
- If the spawn are attacked, the Keeper can roll a die and add 4 to determine how many of the Health 5 spawn attack. The Keeper can do the same to determine how many Health 6 spawn attack.
- Setting the house on fire and hearing the child-like cries causes a 2-point Stability test.

Spawn of Atlach-Nacha

(Page 27)

Paralyzing Poison: The poison is administered by bite with a Scuffling test. The bite itself causes no damage but also ignores armor. The victim must make a Difficulty 5 Health test. If failed, the victim is paralyzed.

Athletics 10, Health 5 or 6, Scuffling 16

Hit Threshold: 4

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: +1

Weapon: +2 damage (strike)

Armor: -1 vs any (hairy spider chitin)

Stability Loss: +1

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