

Delta Green: Aftershock

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Keepers Background

Aum Shinrikyo, the Japanese cult associated with the 1995 Tokyo sarin gas attack, was led by guru Shoko Asahara. One of the feats he was responsible for was predicting the devastating Kobe earthquake nine days before it occurred, on Japanese radio. It is suspected that Aum was involved at high levels of several world governments, and more than one source has suggested that they were handed 'advanced weaponry' by the Russian government. Indeed, when scientific members of the group carried out experiments at the remote Banjawarn sheep station in the remote outback of Australia, a series of powerful earthquakes was the result.

To this day, few outside of the cult have ever realized that Asahara's charismatic leadership and the powerful earthquakes actually originated from communion with the writhing nest of chthonians beneath Japan, led by one of the few Great Old Ones free on this earth, Shudde M'ell.

Asahara and several of his inner circle were humans with the minds of chthonians. Using their telepathy together with the spell Exchange Minds, allowed them to take over these feeble mortals. They took this radical step in order to allow them to direct human affairs to promote sites for the reproduction of their young.

With the Tokyo subway sarin scandal and subsequent prosecutions of the membership of Aum Shinrikyo, the group renamed, regrouped and splintered across the world. But they are very much, still at large.

Aum in America

One such splinter group is located outside of San Antonio, Texas at a disused farm which the group bought as their commune, off Ranch Road 1784. Known as the 'Church of the Wrath of God', they embody a faith of mixed tenets, making use of Hinduism as well as Christianity to outline its principle beliefs, much like Aum. Their central tenet is that of direct experience of God through contact with the angels, 'the Wraths'.

The leader of the Church is guru Richard Brands, who flew to Japan to learn some advanced techniques about six months ago. Whilst there, impatient for progress, he discovered a secret inner sanctum at a commune, containing a scroll and white sphere, which he took, little realising they were a chthonian egg and the spell Contact Chthonian.

Upon his return, he set about learning the spell and after about a week he succeeded, and has been in contact ever since. He has found that holding the 'key' (the white sphere), aids in his communion. Whilst in one such communion, he asked the 'angel' to show him its power, and a minor earthquake (magnitude 2.2) was the result.

Bear Ridge Shale

Extending his contact further, he learnt that the angels disliked the local practice of hydraulic fracturing or 'fracking' by mining companies. By walking around the various drilling sites of Bear Ridge Shale (BRS), the largest local mining company, he found a site by an old supply shed 'where the angels congregated'.

Mystified, he approached Bear Ridge Shale and offered to make the earthquakes cease if they stopped fracking in a certain area of their field, making it 'sacred'. He also asked for a donation to their Church. The Regional Director, Jennifer Gonzales skeptically agreed as the earthquakes plagued their operations and were causing bad press as they had been attributed to the company's fracking activity, which they stringently denied.

When Brands went to the supply shed to pray, and the earthquakes did indeed cease, she was amazed. When pressing Brands for details, he answered saying that it was the will of God, and this area was now 'sacred' and must never be disturbed. In actuality, the chthonians in the area had made a nest beneath the shed, and a tunnel extends beneath it. Previously, fracking over this area was harming the chthonians, as it involves the dumping of water underground, which harms chthonians like salt on a slug.

Theft is discovered

Meanwhile, the cult seniors in Japan have noticed the missing scroll and egg, and after some investigation, deduced that the likely suspect was Brands. They contacted Brands on the matter about two weeks ago by phone. His guilty response has condemned him. Despite this, the seniors are actually quite pleased with his work, having unknowingly intervened to safeguard a chthonian nest, and successfully contacted a chthonian. However, they do want their egg back. On that account, Brands is still quite naïve.

Unfortunately, Brands has taken their call to mean he is a marked man, and is now paranoid. In addition to spiritual activities, the Church is also a survivalist group, and is very well armed. As a precaution against any unwelcome visitors, he has told the faithful at the Church that the end times are near, and they should stop all trespassers, regardless of who they are. Zealously, they now watch for any approach to the Church with M-16s.

Ignorant of this situation, the Japanese cult leaders have continued to press Brands for the return of their 'sacred items' by email, as he now refuses their calls, and have dispatched Masayuki Ishida, a human with a chthonian's mind, together with his entourage, to retrieve the 'sacred stone'.

Initiation of James

Needing someone to help him with contacting the angels, Brands has taught a fellow devotee, Brian James, the ritual. James is one of his most promising disciples. A couple of weeks ago, Brands gave him some initial tutoring, and then lent him the scroll to continue at home. James is one of the few members who does not live at the Church, due to his schizophrenia.

Initially, James thought he was unsuccessful, but while meditating he was suddenly contacted by an 'angel', and lost his sanity. James was a functional schizophrenic, before joining the Church, so it wasn't far to fall.

Now he is plagued by terrible nightmares and visions. One such vision was the destruction by earthquake of one of the business towers in San Antonio. Beset with fear, he brooded for days, coming off his medication, until Friday, 30th March 2012, when he caused a disturbance at Penick Tower, pronouncing, "You're all going to die!". The police were called and took him away in a patrol car, but he prayed for deliverance and an angel answered, entering the minds of the policemen, leaving them temporarily insane, upon which, James made his escape.

Not much was thought of the incident until three days later on Monday, 2nd April, when a brief earthquake shook downtown San Antonio, bizarrely causing the partial collapse of the tower. The story of the mysterious prophet spread and the local news station, KSAT, picked up on it, and have made an attempt to locate the man who predicted the quake.

Brands recognised the man in the story, and declared that James was either a saint, or a devil come to destroy them. He then ordered his 'Soldiers of God', to bring James back to the Church. They set off to bring James back to the Church, where Brands will test his loyalty, and he will either rejoin the group, or be put through various religious practices to help 'purify' him.

This is where the Agents come in.

A-Cell's Directive

The lead PC for the cell is contacted by A-Cell via an encrypted email dated 04/03/2012, and directed to contact Detective Luis Shears, a friendly of Delta Green, and assist him in apprehending James. They are also to ascertain the true nature of the earthquake, and determine whether James truly predicted it, or this was simply a series of unfortunate coincidences.

The email has several attachments of grainy photos of a wild looking man with long hair and an unkempt beard.

The PCs are on the case officially, the cover story being that Brian James is a 'person of interest' to the Bureau. However, the PCs would do well not to push their authority, else A-Cell could be compromised.

OPERATION CHEMOSH

You are to contact Detective Luis Sears of San Antonio Police Department. He requires discreet assistance in apprehending one Brian James, who he suspects may have some unnatural powers at his disposal. James was arrested by officers after causing a disturbance on 03/30/2012 in the reception of Penick Tower, telling everyone to leave, claiming that the building was due to collapse, and that they would be killed. He never reached the station, as the patrol car was found a distance away, both officers incapacitated, but with no signs of a struggle. One has been admitted to SASH, the State Psychiatric Hospital.

An earthquake then did occur a few days later in San Antonio, magnitude 5.6, which is the highest on record for the city. It occurred on 04/02/2012 at 0916, and the Penick Tower did partially collapse, causing some loss of life.

Objectives

- Assist Detective Sears in safely apprehending the subject, and interview him to assess his accurate prediction of the quake.
- Briefly assess the earthquake and subsequent damage to determine if there is anything unusual about it. Make use of professional resources such as USGS.
- Compile a brief report outlining all findings, and send by return encrypted email.

Possible friendly contacts

- Hank Long, local amateur meteorologist

Aftershock Papers #1

Investigating the Earthquake

The screenshot shows a news article on the KSAT.com website. The main headline is "Earthquake Shakes San Antonio Area" with a sub-headline "United States Geological Survey Measures Earthquake At 5.6". The article is dated April 2, 2012, at 11:48:58 AM CST. It reports that a rare earthquake of magnitude 5.6 struck the San Antonio area on Monday morning. The epicenter was located around downtown San Antonio, causing a partial collapse of the Penick Tower office building, which resulted in two deaths and numerous injuries. The U.S. Geological Survey noted this as the largest earthquake on record for the area, surpassing a magnitude 4.8 shock from November 2011. The article also mentions that the quake was felt from as far north as the Medical Center area to as far south as Pleasanton. A viewer named Sharon Carlin is cited as having reported the quake to the newsroom.

On the right side of the page, there is a "Most Popular" section with a dropdown menu for "SLIDESHOWS". Below it, there are several article teasers: "Mugshot Hall Of Shame Slideshow", "Images: What you should know about malware threat", and "America's coolest water parks". There are also sections for "ARTICLES" and "VIDEOS". At the bottom right, there is an advertisement for "ConnectTV" with a "DOWNLOAD FREE" button and the text "get more... SPORTS".

Aftershock Papers #2

The Agents may wish to contact specialists, to gain quality information. To keep the scenario moving along, you can have some of the contacts not in at the time (determined by a Luck roll), and then return their call during a tense moment elsewhere.

The essential public facts about the earthquake are:

- It was magnitude 5.6 and occurred on 04/02/2012 at 0916 as outlined in A-Cell's directive.
- The epicenter was downtown San Antonio, and caused the partial collapse of the Penick Tower building, killing two, and injuring up to a hundred more.

Library Use (possibly of an Internet database such as the USGS), or contacting the Earth and Environmental Science Department of New Mexico Tech Research University (<http://www.ees.nmt.edu/>) or indeed, Hank Long, will harvest some details about the quake, including a seismograph. The data confirms the publicly declared information.

However, speaking to a seismologist, or examining the data and making a successful Geology roll reveals that the quake was extremely shallow with a depth or hypocenter of 4 km, which is quite unusual, and may account for the damage to Penick Tower. Depths are considered shallow if they are less than 70 km, so 4 km is very shallow. This is probably the only remarkable fact about the quake.

Fracking

A further Geology or Library Use roll will show that this type of shallow earthquake has sometimes been linked with hydraulic fracturing or ‘fracking’, a controversial process using water under pressure to drill for gas, although the evidence is far from conclusive. The media, however, has yet to pick up on this connection, and the oil business would be quick to deny a link if the issue was raised.

Hank Long, however, is something of an environmentalist. He will state this connection as fact, and will say that fracking has even been associated with some unusual illnesses, typically due to emissions and groundwater contamination near to fracking sites.

Bear Ridge Shale is responsible for the fracking operations around San Antonio, and have had several accidents over the last few years, although their legal team has kept the claims to a minimum.

Hydraulic fracturing is the propagation of fractures in a rock layer, as a result of the action of a pressurized fluid. Some hydraulic fractures form naturally—certain veins or dikes are examples—and can create conduits along which gas and petroleum from source rocks may migrate to reservoir rocks. Induced hydraulic fracturing or hydrofracking, commonly known as fraccing or fracking, is a technique used to release petroleum, natural gas (including shale gas, tight gas and coal seam gas), or other substances for extraction. This type of fracturing creates fractures from a wellbore drilled into reservoir rock formations.

The first use of hydraulic fracturing was in 1947 but the modern fracking technique, called horizontal slickwater fracking, that made the extraction of shale gas economical was first used in 1998 in the Barnett Shale in Texas. The energy from the injection of a highly pressurized fracking fluid creates new channels in the rock, which can increase the extraction rates and ultimate recovery of hydrocarbons.

Proponents of fracking point to the economic benefits from vast amounts of formerly inaccessible hydrocarbons the process can extract. Opponents point to potential environmental impacts, including contamination of ground water, risks to air quality, the migration of gases and hydraulic fracturing chemicals to the surface, surface contamination from spills and flowback and the health effects of these. For these reasons hydraulic fracturing has come under scrutiny internationally, with some countries suspending or even banning it.

Courtesy of Wikipedia

Earthquake Prediction

Earthquake Prediction is another topic that may be researched (requiring Geology or a long Library Use) but research will indicate that this is very difficult to almost impossible, even for skilled seismologists.

The Collapse of Penick Tower

Penick Tower is located on Soledad St, and at 28 stories, it is one of the taller buildings in San Antonio. Typical businesses are lawyers, accountants and internet companies.

A Geology or Architecture roll, or a discussion with a professional, reveals that a 5.6 magnitude earthquake is not usually enough to cause a building to collapse, so it is somewhat remarkable that the partial collapse of the building did occur. However, like the issue of possible fracking, this has yet to be raised by the media or the authorities. For now, everyone is content to blame the earthquake.

Architecture

The City of San Antonio Development Services Department is currently investigating the building to assess its safety, but will allow repair work to begin within a day or two. Some businesses will be allowed to return after another week, however, several businesses will be forced to stay away for over a month.

The Agents may contact the Architect's Office responsible for building Penick Tower, however it was built in 1994. A Library Use roll will indicate that this was Holloway Associates. David Ly, a Chinese American will field their questions, once he's discovered their identity and reasons, but he won't have much to say.

In addition, the Agents can pull the blueprints at the Development Services Department, and either examine them themselves with an Architecture roll, or hire a professional.

Casualties

The two casualties of the earthquake were:

- Richard Solomon, a software developer working for an internet company, Lagoon Holidays, who was going outside to smoke when part of the ceiling fell on him.
- Evangeline Johnson, a secretary for a drilling company, HBD Engineering, who fell down the back stairs and suffered multiple fractures around the skull and neck.

Neither of the deaths is at all suspicious, but the PCs may think otherwise.

The injuries of those in the building were mainly due to falls, and to heavy items falling on them. Once again, nothing is suspicious.

Investigating Brian James

Background

A background check on Brian James' indicates that he is a 22-year old, functional schizophrenic, who takes regular medication to manage his condition. He has a history of disturbances with the police, mainly minor infractions which resulted in some overnight stays in the cells, and also in being committed to the San Antonio State Hospital (SASH) by the courts for two months, just over a year ago, when his illness took over. However, he has no history of violence.

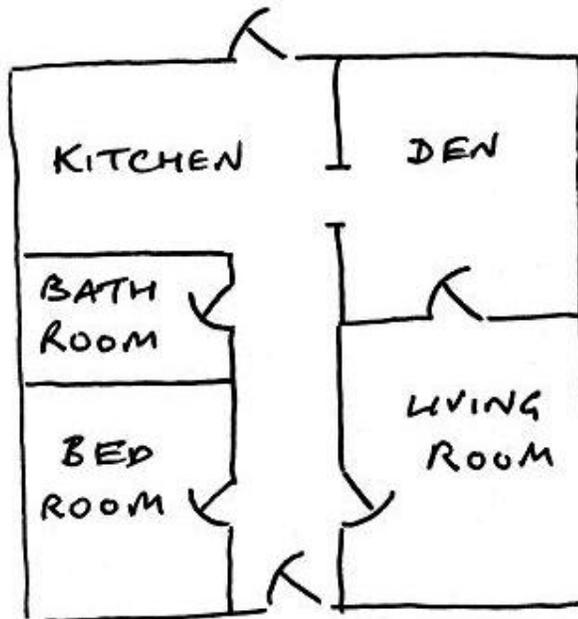
Buckeye Avenue

James lives on Buckeye Avenue in Northwest San Antonio, off Highway 10, in a small house with a back garden. There are plenty of trees at the front, and the back garden is overgrown surrounded by a fence that is falling down.

Spot Hidden will alert the Agents to a car parked outside, with a warm hood. It is a gray Ford Explorer Sport Trac – a four door pick up. It's seen better days. If Detective Sears runs the plate over the radio with central, it turns out to be registered to Paul Plaza, of Ranch Road 1784. He has a clean record.

Inside, Paul Plaza and Daniel Pari (both brethren of the Church) have already pacified Brian James by threatening and beating him to the ground. Both are armed with rifles. If the Agents approach the property quietly (Luck roll to avoid those inside hearing), then events will continue as outlined under 'Abduction', below. As soon as the Agents alert the brethren, refer to 'Siege' for events.

BRIAN JAMES' HOUSE.



Abduction

In the living room, Pari will cover James with a rifle, and make fairly loud threats saying, "You have blasphemed against the Angels. You must be taken to the Church to be redeemed. Only the Savior can lift you up from the Hell where you have fallen." He will use whatever religious language the Keeper sees fit and ensure that James remains on the floor. This may be heard from outside, if someone takes pains to listen carefully (with a deliberate Listen roll)

Meanwhile, Plaza will search the small property for the ritual documents. If given long enough, they could find it within about 5 minutes. Plaza has left his rifle propped up in the hall, near the living room door.

However, before this time James, who is covering his face with his hands, says to Pari, "Don't look at me!" Pari will become agitated, and start pulling James' hands away from his face until eventually Pari will look into James' eyes. At this point, Pari will be confronted with a mental link with a chthonian, and go insane. He will begin by screaming constantly for about ten rounds (which will be heard outside). He will drop his rifle, and collapse to the floor and move away until his back is against the wall. Once he has reached the end of his initial shock, he will realize that he has gone blind (this is psychosomatic), and be reduced to a panicky babble.

Plaza will immediately come running, to see what's going on, grabbing his rifle on the way. When he discovers the situation, he will be wary. James has return to the fetal position on the floor. Pari will warn him not to go near James, saying, "Just get me out of here!" He will concur, and lead Pari back to their car, and they will drive away.

This will all happen inside about 5 or 10 minutes or so from when the Agents arrive at the property.

Siege

The Agents may alert the brethren to their presence either accidentally by noise, or on purpose, by knocking. At this point, assuming that Pari has not yet been driven insane, the two brethren will crouch down by the living room window (Plaza retrieving his rifle from the hall) and look out to see who's there. Their initial tactic will be to stay quiet and not to respond, and hope that

the visitors leave. A Listen roll, however, will hear furtive movements inside. If it is clear that they are law enforcement officials (Sears is in plain clothes), and that they might enter the property, then gunplay will likely result, with the Agents being surprised. To protect the PCs, have the brethren attack Sears in the first instance.

As soon as gunfire takes place, the clock is ticking for the SAPD to descend on the place in force (7 +1D6 minutes). It is up to the PCs how to handle this situation, and a stand-off could easily occur, but this is not essential. Pari and Plaza will surrender to police within about 10 minutes of reinforcements arriving.

The biggest problem with the arrival of non-Delta Green personnel, is that James will be whisked away as soon as the situation is resolved, and that they will have less leeway to search the property and keep what they find.

Interviewing James

Initially, James will be agitated and scared, and in the same position left by the brethren. He will repeat the same advice to the Agents, "Don't look at me!" If they do pry his hands away from his face, and get a look in his eyes, then they risk being contacted by a chthonian, through telepathic contact, as Pari was. Roll POW vs POW to see if Par'shreth'kith'dagon(the chthonian) is able to contact them. If so, then they will feel a powerful alien presence within their mind, and must make a SAN roll (1/1D20).

James is aware of the 'angel' which seems to channel through himself into the minds of others, but only if their gazes meet when he feels threatened, hence he implores those he meets not to look at him. Although James would like to escape this mental contact, he is not able to at present.

Par'shreth'kith'dagon has favored James with his attention because he touched one of the chthonian eggs at the Church, and because he finds James easy to contact due to his schizophrenia. He can in fact telepathically contact anyone who James sees, whether threatened or not; it is simply that Par'shreth'kith'dagon interprets James' fear or excitement as meaning that these people are of import, and their minds worth exploring.

An efficient way to calm James, and to reduce the contact with the chthonian, is to give him a sedative, or to just let him calm down by himself. On a longer term basis, Psychiatric treatment including anti-psychotics might help to block the telepathic contact.

If they can interview James, then a Psychoanalysis roll may elicit each of the pieces of information given below. If a roll fails, then James panics and is overcome with fear, and is unable to answer. Recall that the chthonian, Par'shreth'kith'dagon may still make a psychic intrusion through James at any time, especially if he is agitated.

- He is possessed by an angel of wrath.
- He knew the earthquake was going to happen, because he saw it in a vision. This is how the angel communicates with him.
- It is the angel, through his mind, which took Pari and the policemen who tried to arrest him. It sometimes takes other people who look at him.
- Plaza and Pari are fellow members of the Church of the Wrath of God. He doesn't know why they tried to hurt him, or why they're angry with him. Their messiah, Richard Brands is in direct contact with the angels.
- James became possessed by the angel when he learnt a ritual, taught to him by Brands, and outlined on a scroll which is at his house, and he can show them.

Once the Agents have finished interviewing him, they can either have him committed, possibly via Det Sears, or simply allow him to return to his home, although he is clearly not coping with his schizophrenia at present and should be referred to psychiatric care.

His behavior will become erratic, and he will say unusual things about angels and he will respond to other voices, as well as to the presence of the chthonian in his mind. Once only, he will utter the cryptic phrase (see below). Whether his schizophrenic voices are anything other than hallucinations, is up to the Keeper.

A Cryptic Phrase

Those in contact with the chthonians, knowingly or otherwise, will each utter a cryptic phrase, only once to the PCs. By default this is, "Together in the darkness, we consume you." However, this can be replaced with whatever you wish. James and, later, Manson and Ishida will utter this phrase, but anyone in contact with the chthonians (even a PC) can utter this phrase if desired.

It need not be uttered in a snarling, angry voice. It can be simply uttered as they meet someone, as they are smiling and shaking hands. This incongruity should give a clue that the phrase is uttered involuntarily.

None will remember saying it, and deny it if asked.

Searching Buckeye Avenue

Living Room: Relatively sparse and neglected room, cluttered only with stacks of DVDs and CDs.

* Spot Hidden: Find a scroll of Japanese writing, painted with traditional characters. It is actually a scroll which discusses the angels a little, but also contains the spell Communion (Contact chthonian). Japanese, takes 1D4 days to read, -1 SAN, +1% Cthulhu Mythos, x1 Spell Multiplier. The scroll is located amongst other items for meditation, such as a small copper bowl, incense, and some small, conical candles.

Den: This room is dark and dingy, with no bulb, and a blanket secured crudely across the window. A Dodge roll is necessary as they navigate between the piles of old paperbacks and dirty crockery to avoid knocking anything over. If they do, the stench is unbelievable – it seems that James has been collecting his feces and urine in jars and stores them in here. (This is since he became unwell.)

* Computer Use: Examining his computer finds a useful email from one Ursula Sarabia, requesting an interview (Aftershock Papers #3)

* Spot Hidden: A photo of some oil derricks and some outbuildings (Aftershock Papers #4). A closer examination, perhaps with digital enhancement or a further Spot Hidden roll reveals the name 'Bear Ridge Shale' on a sign, the name of an oil production company, with assets nearby to San Antonio (as well as throughout Texas and the US). He was given this, to 'aid his meditations', by Brands, but without further explanation.

Bedroom: Messy, but bearable.

* Spot Hidden: A photo of James with a group of mostly Japanese people (Aftershock Papers #5). They all look happy, and are dressed simply and practically, possibly out hiking. They are stood in front a plain wooden building, with some breathtaking mountains in the background. An Architecture roll shows that the building is of Japanese design. It will take a Cartography x0.5 roll, and several days of research, to discern the location of the building – it is a commune belonging to the Japanese spiritual organization, Kakusareta Masuta. If anyone makes an attempt to identify the people in the picture, a few hours research and a Library Use roll recognizes Asahara Shoko, the leader of Aum Shinrikyo.

Kitchen: Barely livable.

Handouts

Interview Request
Ursula Sarabia [ursula.sarabia@express-news.net]

Hi Brian,

I'm a reporter for the San Antonio Express, and I hear that you're a member of the Church of the Wrath of God, based outside the city - would you be willing to provide me with an interview? If necessary I can miss out your name, and any other details that identify you. I'd like to hear about your life there, and why you chose this religion.

If you'd like to call me, you can contact me at the Express newsroom 210-250-3171, or directly on my mobile 210-770-5830.

Thanks for your time,
Ursula

Aftershock Papers #3

A photo of some oil derricks and some outbuildings

Aftershock Papers #4

A photo of James with a group of mostly Japanese people. They all look happy, and are dressed simply and practically, possibly out hiking. They are stood in front a plain wooden building, with some breathtaking mountains in the background.

Aftershock Papers #5

To follow up on any of the handouts:

Aftershock Papers #3: For contacting Ursula Sarabia, see 'Investigating the Church of the Wrath of God'.

Aftershock Papers #4: It isn't possible to determine where this photo was taken, see 'Bear Ridge Shale'

Aftershock Papers #5: See text.

Stats

Detective Luis Sears

San Antonio Police Detective, age 32

Race: Caucasian

STR	13	CON	13	SIZ	17	INT	13	POW	9
DEX	9	APP	9	EDU	14	SAN	45	HP	15

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Education: High School, Police Academy

Occupation: Police Detective

Skills: Bargain 15%, Credit Rating 35%, Drive Auto 40%, Fast Talk 55%, First Aid 50%, Law 75%, Listen 65%, Persuade 65%, Psychology 45%, Sneak 40%, Spot Hidden 55%

Languages: English 60%

Attacks:

Fist/ Punch 60%, 1D3+db

Grapple 45%, special

Beretta M92 Pistol 60%, 1D10

Description: Tall and clean cut, he wears smart clothes on and off the job. His dark hair is trimmed very short and slicked back, and he wears aviator shades. His face is slightly long and pale, but otherwise remarkable. He is often mistaken for Hispanic.

Brian James

Religious seeker, age 29

Race: Caucasian

STR	9	CON	16	SIZ	11	INT	11	POW	15
DEX	9	APP	12	EDU	13	SAN	25	HP	14

Damage Bonus: +0

Education: High School

Occupation: Book shop clerk

Skills: Anthropology 60%, Art (Writing) 15%, Bargain 45%, Drive Auto 40%, History 50%, Library Use 75%, Psychology 35%, Spot Hidden 50%

Languages: English 85%, Japanese 65%

Attacks: Fist/ Punch 50%, 1D3+db

Description: Slim build, short brown hair, neatly kept, clean shaven. Quite unremarkable. Although he has a strong internal will, this does not translate externally. He appears quite down at heel, with all his energies focused on contemplation and religious devotion. Although he is currently in a state of panic.

Daniel Pari

Religious fanatic, age 26

Race: Caucasian

STR	11	CON	12	SIZ	16	INT	12	POW	7
DEX	15	APP	12	EDU	12	SAN	5	HP	14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Education: High School

Occupation: Survivalist

Skills: Craft (Survival) 35%, Drive Auto 40%, Electrical Repair 20%, Fast Talk 35%, First Aid 40%, Hide 30%, Law 30%, Mechanical Repair 80%, Natural History 30%, Operate Heavy Machine 31%, Spot Hidden 50%, Track 30%

Languages: English 60%

Attacks:

Fist/ Punch 70%, 1D3+db

Remington Sportsman 74 Rifle 65%, 2D6+4

Description: Strong and weather-beaten. Usually an easy smile, but not today. Slightly long, shaggy hair and a goatee beard growing out. He wears shades, and sturdy outdoor clothes and boots. Rarely without his Sportsman 74 Rifle.

Paul Plaza

Religious leader, age 39

Race: Caucasian

STR 13 CON 6 SIZ 15 INT 12 POW 11
DEX 11 APP 11 EDU 15 SAN 15 HP 11

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Education: Psychology Major

Occupation: Social Worker

Skills: Anthropology 61%, Cthulhu Mythos 2%, Credit Rating 45%, Dodge 42%, Drive Auto 30%, Fast Talk 65%, Law 60%, Library Use 65%, Occult 10%, Persuade 85%, Psychology 65%

Languages: English 65%, Spanish 25%

Attacks:

Fist/ Punch 50%, 1D3+db

Remington Sportsman 74 Rifle 45%, 2D6+4

Spells: Commune with Angel of Wrath (Contact Chthonian)

Description: Calm and assured. 5' 5", he wears glasses, his hair is slightly long, brown, and he has a trimmed, full beard. His clothes are casual. He looks like a college professor. His eyes are somewhat steely, but he is very persuasive.

CHTHONIAN, Adult, Par'shreth'kith'dagon

STR 45 CON 42 SIZ 20 INT 23 POW 17
DEX 10 HP 31

Damage Bonus: +3D6

Weapons:

1D8 Tentacles per round: 75% 1D6 Damage + 1D6 CON Drain

Crush: 80% 3D6 Damage

Psychic Attack: POW vs POW. Typically this causes immobility, even possession of sorts. However, Par'shreth'kith'dagon is capable of entering human minds, causing terror and fear (Roll a SAN check 1/1D10).

Armor: 5-point hide and muscle; regenerates 5 hit points per round.

Spells: Contact Cthulhu, Contact Ithaqua, Contact Shudde M'ell, Contact Nyogtha, Contact Y'Golonac, Contact Yig.

Clues from Buckeye Avenue

AP#	Clue or Lead	Obtained From	Leads To
	Plaza and Pari	Buckeye Ave	Church of the Wrath of God
	Ranch Road 1784	Car license plate	Church of the Wrath of God
	Interview with James	Buckeye Ave	Richard Brands
3	Email re interview	James' computer	Ursula Sarabia
4	Photo of oil derricks	Buckeye Ave	Bear Ridge Shale
5	Photo of Japanese	Buckeye Ave	Kakusareta Masuta/ Commune
5	Photo of Japanese	Buckeye Ave	Shoko Asahara/ Aum Shinrikyo

Investigating the Church of the Wrath of God

Interviewing the Brethren from the Siege

When the brethren are initially taken in, the PCs may think that they have the upper hand, especially if they are from a law enforcement background. However, this is not the case.

Firstly, the brethren will maintain their right to silence until they can make a phone call. At that stage, they will call the Church. Brands will initially be furious, but will quickly take control of the situation, and contact their law firm, Beaden and Murnett, who will send two very expensive lawyers to represent the prisoners. A Law roll will quickly uncover who is paying their tab.

The Police on the case will conduct the interviews, with the PCs listening in, and able to make suggestions to the interrogator. The line of questioning will be to outline why they were in the property, and will largely depend on what happened.

Their story will largely be that they were going to pick up James to take him back to the Church as he seemed distressed over previous days.

The PCs *may* be able to interrogate the prisoners, without police presence, although this will be difficult, and possibly illegal. They could even engineer an interview as they are taking them down to the station. If they can make a successful Fast Talk or Psychology roll, they can get the truth out them, that Richard Brands, their leader, sent them to bring James in, as he needed to be tested.

Depending on the seriousness of the crimes committed, pressure from the Mayor's Office will start to appear within 24 hours to have the case either dropped, or plea-bargained down, that the whole thing was a 'misunderstanding'. Resisting arrest can be ignored, but murdering a police officer cannot. It will take some insistent digging, a Library Use, and a Fast Talk or Persuade roll to uncover that this pressure has come from one of the Mayor's campaign sponsors, an oil company called Bear Ridge Shale (BRS), through their regional director, Jennifer Gonzales.

A further Library Use or Accounting roll will uncover that the Church has conducted consultancy work for BRS.

Researching the Church

Each point below can be gained with a Library Use roll. Each PC can attempt all of the rolls below every 1D6 hours of research that they complete on the Church.

- The Church of the Wrath of God has been running for about twenty years, and is a recognised religion. Their central tenet is that of direct contact with angels, although their overall belief system is a mish-mash of various other religions including Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism.
- An article about the extreme practices of the Church (Aftershock Papers #6). It is written by James White of the San Antonio Star.

- The Church building itself is located South of San Antonio on a dusty and remote side road, at Ranch Road 1784. Google Streetview reveals a collection of old farm buildings, quite some distance from the road, partially hidden behind a dense grove of trees.
- It is an offshoot of the Aum Shinrikyo cult in Japan, that was responsible for the 1995 sarin attacks on the Tokyo subway. Their leader, Richard Brands, is personally associated with the Kakusareta Masuta cult in Japan, which is said to be the new home of many of the senior members of Aum.
- Accounting roll: Independently wealthy. The declared accounts show that the Church is worth about \$3 million, mainly in stocks, bonds and land, as well as a cash-rich bank account of about \$100K. A further Accounting roll attributes most of this wealth to occasional large payments from the Masuta cult.
- Law roll: The ATF are currently investigating the Church in connection with large quantities of weapons purchases. Although none are illegal, it appears that they are all being stored at the same address: Rand Road 1784.

LSD and Shock Treatment to Find God

San Antonio Star, May 21 2010

By James White

LSD, shock treatment, sensory deprivation and inversion are just some of the bizarre practices endorsed by an obscure cult. And it isn't in New York or LA, it is right here in Texas, just outside San Antonio.

This reporter has investigated the Church of the Wrath of God, and interviewed ex-members to uncover the use of these illegal and dangerous methods. The Atascosa County Sheriff's Department has been contacted, and we eagerly await their response.

For well over ten years this twisted cult has been practicing as a recognised religion, masquerading as Christians.

But now, evidence has emerged that the practices of the 'church' are so dangerous, that they could well end up at the State Hospital.

Representatives from the Church of the Wrath of God were unavailable for comment.

Aftershock Papers #6

Inner Circle of the Church

In addition to those listed below, Pari and Plaza are also classed as Inner Circle. Brands is the undisputed leader of the cult, but all the Inner Circle are willing to kill for the Church without hesitation, and likely have. Infractions that would demand torture (in the form of extreme 'spiritual practice' such as inversion) and possibly death include: trying to expose the cult in the press, talking badly about the cult, interfering with cult business, trying to leave the cult, talking about leaving or doubting the necessity of the practice.

Note that the Inner Circle do not view themselves as ruthless enforcers, but martyrs and saviors desperately fighting a rearguard action to literally save souls before the end times come in a matter of months. If they kill someone who is attempting to leave the cult, they simply view this as saving them from descending into the polluted sewer that is mainstream society, and certain destruction of the soul. They often bemoan the necessity of 'sacrificing the lambs', while washing off the blood, and stowing away their rifles.

Only Lee Frost amongst them has much more than a basic level of sanity.

As far as actual Cthulhu Mythos knowledge goes, they know only what has been taught them by Masuta, from Brands visits to Japan. They know that 'Angels' can be contacted to help them, and that the end times, when the stars are right, is at hand. Beyond that, their knowledge is rudimentary or even nil.

The fact that they have a chthonian egg within their main Church building, is something about which they have no understanding whatsoever.

Richard Brands

Insane Messiah, age 28

Race: Caucasian

STR	8	CON	16	SIZ	14	INT	9	POW	18
DEX	8	APP	12	EDU	15	SAN	0	HP	15

Damage Bonus: +0

Education: College Degree

Occupation: Academic (Professor)

Skills: Anthropology 61%, Bargain 5%, Computer Use 21%, Credit Rating 35%, Cthulhu Mythos 16%, Library Use 45%, Martial Arts 11%, Occult 70%, Persuade 55%, Psychology 55%

Languages: English 85%, Japanese 76%

Attacks:

Fist/ Punch 70%, 1D3+db
(Handgun) 60%

Description: Young, awkward looking. He has a goatee, long hair and spectacles, and wears practical clothes for the region. His tanned, rough-looking appearance makes him look like a woodsman at first glance, a hippy at second. However, a glance into his eyes reveals the fanatic that he is. He earnestly believes that the world is about to end in a war of cataclysmic proportions. This is mainly down to his teachings, however, he was a survivalist before encountering Masuta, and now he is a fanatical and paranoid fundamentalist. He has killed several of his own congregation, with the extreme practices at the church, and he honestly believes that he has helped them by doing so, and so do those around him.

Spells: Contact Chthonian, Contact Shudde M'ell.

Mythos Documents:

The Truth Behind The Veil by Shoko Asahara

Language: Japanese; **Mythos Gain:** +5; **SAN Loss:** 1D6; **Spell Multiplier:** x3; **Study**

Time: 18 weeks; **Spells:** Contact Shudde M'ell, Contact Chthonian, Mind Transfer

Notes: Written by the notorious guru of the Aum Shinrikyo cult, he talks about the coming apocalypse, citing various signs, especially star movements. He goes on to explain the various spiritual practices that will allow survival in the end times, including communion with spirits, and mental attunement.

Julie Beloche**Religious seeker, age 38****Race:** Caucasian

STR 14 CON 11 SIZ 12 INT 14 POW 15

DEX 9 APP 16 EDU 10 SAN 0 HP 12

Damage Bonus: +1D4**Education:** High School**Occupation:** Drifter**Skills:** Bargain 35%, Drive Auto 40%, Fast Talk 65%, Hide 30%, Listen 45%, Natural History 15%, Occult 35%, Persuade 75%, Psychology 60%, Sneak 50%**Languages:** English 40%**Attacks:** Fist/ Punch 50%, 1D3+db**Description:** Slim and attractive, with long, dark hair. What separates Julie from her peers is her intensity, which shows in her gaze and her insight. It has led her to progress with meditation and the arts which Brands has readily taught her. Since contacting the angel, her sanity has taken a sharp drop, and she is now somewhat paranoid. Brands is involved with her sexually, and she is now pregnant with his child.**Spells:** Contact Chthonian.**Lee Frost****Religious seeker, age 21****Race:** Caucasian

STR 14 CON 13 SIZ 13 INT 10 POW 8

DEX 13 APP 9 EDU 13 SAN 20 HP 13

Damage Bonus: +1D4**Education:** High School**Occupation:** Farmer**Skills:** Bargain 35%, Craft (Farming) 65%, Electrical Repair 30%, First Aid 50%, Mechanical Repair 60%, Natural History 50%, Operate Heavy Machinery 41%, Ride 45%, Track 10%**Languages:** English 65%**Attacks:**

Fist/ Punch 80%, 1D3+db

Remington Sportsman 74 Rifle 65%, 2D6+4

Description: Young and naïve, Lee is a local farmer who has left his family's farmstead to join the Church. Although not worldly-wise, he is calm, and unlikely to react and get angry, a reason why Brands has kept him close. His calm exterior does an excellent job of hiding his fanatical and fundamentalist nature, and has killed twice for Brands. He is also responsible for farming the small portion of land surrounding the Church, which he handles easily.**Colin Wratten****Religious seeker, age 26****Race:** Caucasian

STR 13 CON 10 SIZ 15 INT 14 POW 12

DEX 10 APP 4 EDU 16 SAN 5 HP 13

Damage Bonus: +1D4**Education:** College Degree**Occupation:** Engineer**Skills:** Architecture 81%, Chemistry 1%, Drive Auto 45%, Electrical Repair 40%, Geology 41%, Library Use 45%, Locksmith 41%, Mechanical Repair 60%, Operate Heavy Machinery 51%, Persuade 25%, Physics 61%, Sneak 45%**Languages:** English 80%**Attacks:**

Fist/ Punch 50%, 1D3+db

Browning 12-gauge Double-barrel shotgun 60%, 4D6/2D6/1D6

Description: Wratten has a narrow, weaselly face, with yellow, blotchy skin and long, brownish teeth. His beard is unkempt, and his hair is patchy. Long rejected for his looks, when he found the Church he found acceptance, and he gladly works for the Church, supervising the maintenance and construction around the Church buildings.

Aum Shinrikyo

Research into this infamous cult reveals the following well-known facts, without recourse to a Library Use roll:

- Formed in 1984 by Shoko Asahara, formerly Chizuo Matsumoto. Aum Shinrikyo began as a yoga and meditation class, but later became a cult which preached a mixture of Buddhism and Hinduism. Its publicly stated purpose was that of universal salvation and Aum communes were set up in dozens of locations around Japan.
- Its mission was not only to spread the word of salvation, but to survive the 'End Times'. Shoko Asahara equated the United States with 'The Beast' in the Book of Revelation. He preached about many other conspiracies around the world, such as the Jews and the Masons.
- The cult is now known to have kidnapped and murdered those who opposed it, including judges, media reporters and members who tried to leave. On several occasions they used sarin over a wide area, affecting hundreds, culminating in the March 1995 attack on the Tokyo subway.
- Upon raiding the cult's facilities they discovered explosives, anthrax and Ebola, as well as sarin, all manufactured in advanced laboratories. There were even facilities for the manufacture of AK-47s. To this day, many world governments list Aum, rebranded as Kakusareta Masuta, as an international terrorist organization.

Each of the following items can be obtained with the requisite Library Use roll:

- Asahara accurately predicted an earthquake in Japan. (Aftershock Papers #7)
- Bizarre experiments were carried out by Aum at Banjawarn Sheep Station in Australia (Aftershock Papers #8, #9)

On the 8 January 1995, Shoko Asahara said on radio, “Japan will be attacked by an earthquake in 1995. The most likely place is Kobe.” Nine days later, a devastating earthquake struck Kobe.

On the 7 April 1995, Aum Shinrikyo’s Science and Technology Minister, Hideo Murai, said at a news conference at the Foreign Correspondent Club, “There is a strong possibility of the activation of an earthquake using electromagnetic power, or somebody may have used a device that applied force inside the Earth.” A couple of months thereafter, he was assassinated by a member of the Yakuza, one of the largest criminal organizations in the world, publicly, in front of a crowd of reporters. The attacker’s motives remain unclear.

Aftershock Papers #7

In April 1993, Aum purchased Banjawarn Sheep Station in Western Australia and installed computer systems and an advanced laboratory. They attempted to import dangerous chemicals which they mislabeled, some of which were confiscated by the Australian authorities.

When the site was investigated, in light of the Tokyo subway attack, evidence of sarin use was found, including soil samples and dead sheep.

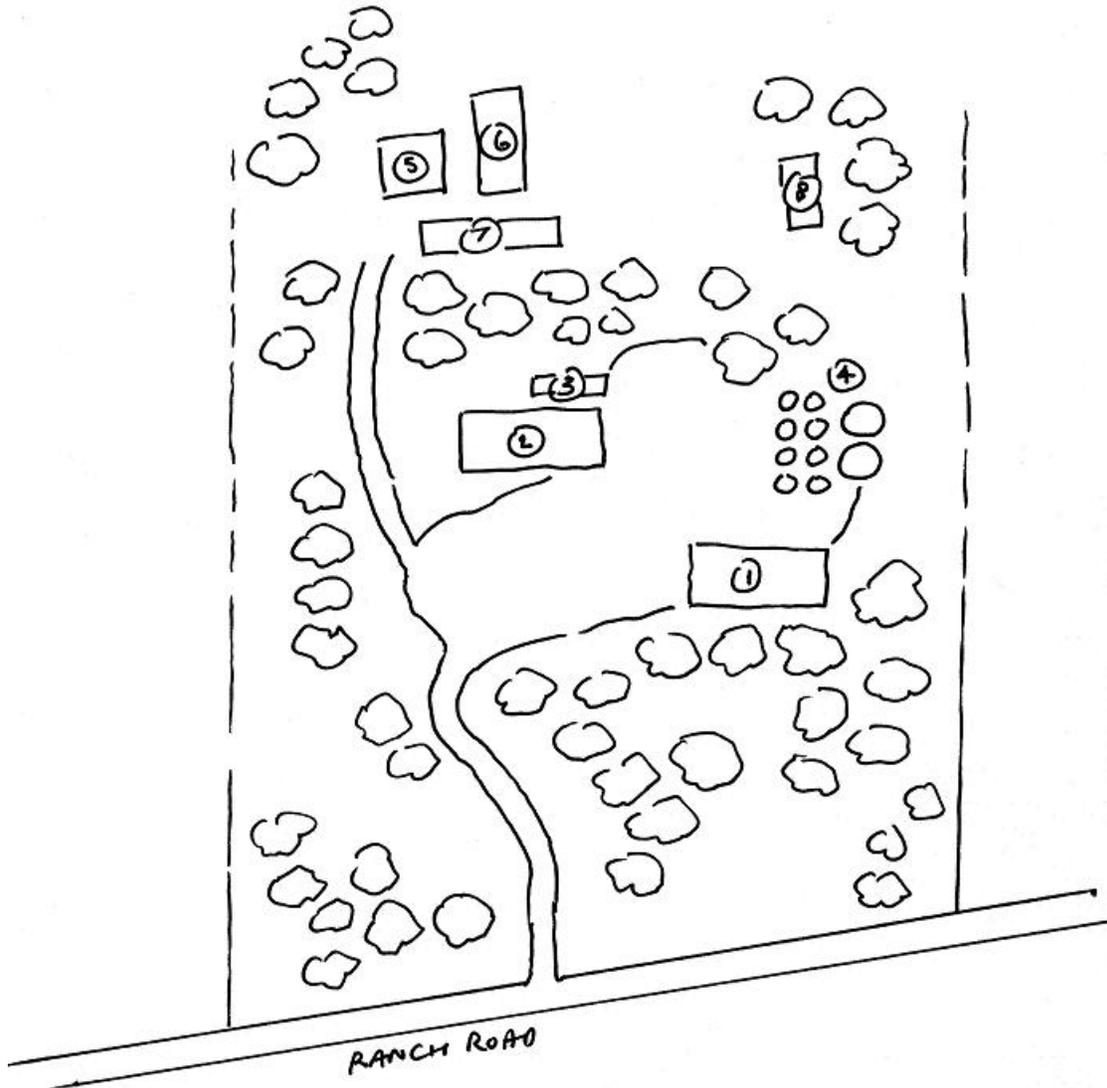
Aftershock Papers #8

On 28 May 1993, a quake measuring 3.7 on the Richter scale rocked Western Australia, with an epicenter close to Banjawarn sheep station. A nuclear physicist was among the Aum scientific contingent present on site at the time.

Strange lights were seen in the night sky for hours on the night of the quake, including a ‘fireball’ and a ‘white dome’.

Aftershock Papers #9

The Church Commune



Key to the Commune

1. Barn, grain store, windmill water pump, corral
2. Church main hall and offices, diesel generator, incinerator, kitchen, satellite dish, computer
3. Weapons store, survival equipment, eg. Gas masks
4. Fuel towers
5. Men's living quarters
6. Women's living quarters, wind turbine
7. Shower and toilet block
8. Inner sanctum, private meeting hall. Chthonian egg, Brands' mythos document

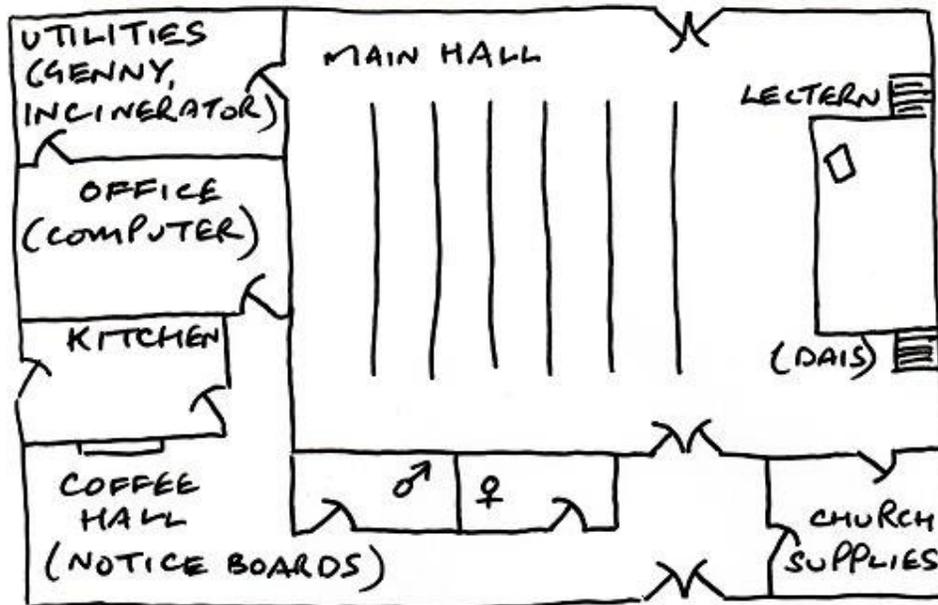
About forty men, women and children live here. The various outbuildings are a mixture of prefabricated farm buildings, and some plain brick buildings. The living quarters are cramped but sufficient.

The commune is not connected to the grid by any means, necessitating kerosene lamps in living quarters and common rooms. Power is supplied by a large wind turbine next to the living

quarters, and a diesel generator in the main hall for a more consistent power source. Water is pumped by a windmill to a water tower next to the barn. Heating is sparse, but provided by small oil heaters where required. The oil in the fuel towers is essential for the day to day running of the commune due to its remote nature, but given that they live cheek and jowl with oil fields and refineries, it has never been an issue.

Outbuildings

MAIN COMMUNE HALL



An account of Brands' encounter with the angels in the oil fields (Aftershock Papers #10). This can be found on the commune computer, or as part of a newsletter, pinned up on a notice board.

Today I encountered and communed with the Angels. They dwell in the western field of Bear Ridge Shale. I followed the teaching scrolls, and attuned myself to them, and they led me out there. At first I was afraid, but when I stood there in the fields, a tremendous sense of how ancient they are came to me.

I wandered for hours past the oil derricks, until I came to an old supply shed. It was there, I sensed, that they congregated. Although I could not see them, I could sense them. It was if huge, invisible giants stood right next to me.

Then, in my mind, they showed me men pushing tons of water and other materials deep under the earth, and I could feel that the Angels resented this, I could feel their anger, their Wrath. Then suddenly, I felt a tremor under my feet as the ground shook. I have never doubted the Angels, but when the earthquake struck, I felt a rush of energy and pure happiness through me – our ideas were proven!

I fell to my knees then, and asked the Angels what they wished of me, but I already knew the answer – they wanted the water to go away. It was the fracking. I resolved there and then that I would stop the fracking, and give the angels a place to stay.

Aftershock Papers #10

Visitors

Anyone approaching the commune uninvited, whether uniformed or not, will be assumed to be dangerous. Although hostilities do not commence immediately, the men will arm themselves with rifles and shotguns and the women will hustle the children inside the hall. If visitors approach in a vehicle, then a 4x4 will be parked across the drive, preventing further access to the commune.

Once contact is established, visitors will be hailed, and approached by a mean and hostile group of about a dozen armed men, including Brands and his 'inner circle'. The visitors will be brusksly informed that this is private property, and asked what their business is. Almost no words will mollify the group, and a search warrant will simply anger them, provoking violence. Only the Sheriff himself, Dwayne Holland, who they know, will be allowed to discuss matters with them. If the PCs come in the company of the Sheriff, then they may have a chance of conversation. All others will be threatened, and have guns leveled at them. Anyone failing to leave will have a warning shot fired over their heads.

This is a dangerously insane and isolated cult, well-armed and willing to kill. If anyone starts to threaten them, or say that they know about what the cult has been up to, then the cultists may well seize the opportunity to kill them and incinerate the bodies. Cars will be driven out to the next County and dumped.

If gunplay does ensue, and there are survivors, then things will escalate, and police will be called in, resulting in a siege and perhaps a raid. Wako anyone?

Legal investigations

If the internet records of the commune are pulled, and a Library Search roll is made, then an email account belonging to Richard Brands can be found. This has several emails from Masayuki Ishida. See 'Ishida' below for further information. The emails are from the domain kukusaretamasuta.com (the cult's web page) and cordially ask Brands to return the teaching documents, and the 'sacred stone'. It concludes by saying, 'You do not know what power you wield. 'This information can also be located if the PCs are able to enter the commune, and physically access the computer there.

If Brands' phone records are pulled, there are calls received from a Japanese cell number. It may be possible to find out that this corresponds to Ishida, however, it would require the cooperation of law enforcement agencies in Japan.

Clues from the Church

AP#	Clue or Lead	Obtained From	Leads To
	Political Pressure	Interviewing Brethren	Bear Ridge Shale
	Political Pressure	Interviewing Brethren	Jennifer Gonzales
6	Article of Extreme Practices	Library Use	James White
	Research of Church	Library Use	Aum Shinrikyo
	Research of Church	Library Use	Kakusareta Masuta
7	Research of Aum	Library Use	Earthquake Prediction
8, 9	Research of Aum	Library Use	Banjawarn Sheep Station
10	Brands' communion	Computers	BRS Supply Sheds

Ursula Sarabia

Ursula Sarabia is indeed a reporter with the San Antonio Express, and has been following the story of the Church and Aum for quite some time. She will readily meet with the PCs to discuss the Church, and is aware of the first four points, above, under 'Researching the Church'. She will volunteer this information if the PCs are not clued in.

Regarding the journalist James White (see the second point of this list, and Aftershock Papers #6), she has tried to get in touch with him, and he has disappeared, together with his wife and young daughter.

Sarabia tells them that this isn't the first time someone connected with the Church has gone missing. Ronald Havershaw has repeatedly tried to get in touch with his daughter Darleen at the commune out on Ranch Road, and been rebuffed. The Church says that she left several months ago to 'find herself'.

Sarabia suspects the worst for both the White family, and for Darleen Havershaw, and she is right. They are all dead – burnt in the Church incinerator.

In fact Library Search rolls will uncover two other similar stories.

Thomas Hogg wrote letters to his girlfriend, Brenda Mansfield, saying how worried he was about the commune, and about the practices there, and that he was thinking of leaving. When the letters stopped, she went to find him, and was threatened at the commune by man with rifles, and they even tried to get her inside. Fearing for her life, she tried to get away, and it was only when a passing farmer slowed down that the brethren relinquished her, and she ran to her car. She contacted the Atascosa County Sheriff's Department, however, they couldn't find any wrongdoing. The two brethren involved said that there was simply a 'misunderstanding', and that Thomas Hogg had gone abroad, possibly to Japan but he didn't say where. He is another addition to the incinerator.

About nine months ago, Donald Scott, a local businessman who rented out farm machinery joined the Church and agreed to lend them machinery without charge, and also to donate to the Church to help for repairs. However, after staying at the commune for a few weeks, he decided to move back home, but was prevented by the brethren. In the end, he was forced to flee in the night, and even then he was harassed by them, wanting him to return, making vague threats. It wasn't until the law became involved that they finally relinquished. The commune still have his farm machinery, and refuse to return it, saying that it was 'donated'. For his part, Scott is simply thankful to be out of the commune.

Sarabia will offer her services in investigating the various connections to the Church, in exchange for exclusive rights to the story.

Investigating the Victims

The White Family lived a short distance away from the commune at Floresville. Their beautiful family home is currently in limbo until it can be shown that the family are not liable to return, so it stands empty. Relatives in Houston currently keep an eye on the property.

If the PCs somehow get in, one way or another, they can search the property. As it is a likely kidnapping, FBI agents should have little trouble gaining legal access. The main item of interest, is White's computer. It contains files related to the Church. Roll Spot Hidden to search the computer in the first place (unless they state they are looking for a computer), then Computer Use for each of the items below:

- A list of books and documents which instruct the reader in making napalm, homemade explosives, and street drugs such as LSD. There are even plans for manufacturing machine guns.
- An account by an unnamed person (Aftershock Papers #11)

There were no witnesses to the kidnapping. Through diligent forensics work, it may be possible to locate physical evidence related to Pari, Plaza, Brands and Beloche, who were present on the night.

Havershaw is lost, and no evidence of her murder survives. Mansfield can only repeat the information given to Sarabia.

Scott is potentially a mine of information, knowing the layout of the buildings, those present, names, who's in charge, and many other items of interest. Although he didn't see inside the store of

weapons and equipment, he was aware of its existence. The Church only began stockpiling weapons in earnest in the last six months, so Scott had left before this phase.

He can be found at his home in Pleasanton, a small white house, set back from the road. Initially, he will be reticent about talking to the PCs, fearing reprisals by the brethren. A Persuade roll will be helpful with getting him to confide in them, the skill doubled for a lady with high APP, such as Sarabia.

Unfortunately for Scott, the Church will become aware of his indiscretion shortly after the PCs leave, and begin to threaten him. This will take concrete form, by way of a chthonian sent to claim him, likely Par'shreth'kith'dagon. It will use telepathy in the first instance to bind him to the house, even to the very chair, so that he will be unable to answer the door or the phone. Within a day or two a minor earthquake will strike the area, and coincidentally Scott's house will collapse into a fissure in the ground. Despite an extensive search, Scott's body is never found.

The exact timing of this event is down to the Keeper, possibly occurring if they make a return visit (perhaps to investigate why he isn't returning their calls).

I was taken today and locked in an empty room and injected with a drug. A while later, they came back and started asking me questions about my devotion to the Church. They wanted to know my true beliefs. They asked me if I would kill for my Messiah, and other questions to test my resolve. The answers just seemed to come out of me as if someone were speaking for me. I found it highly embarrassing, as my devotion was not nearly as deep as I'd thought.

I felt disappointed that I wasn't able to do exactly as I was told by my Messiah. I wanted to be his servant, to live his ideas, but I wasn't strong enough.

I have determined to increase my closeness to the Messiah

Aftershock Papers #11

Carly Fleischmann

Another victim of the Church, is a 28-year old woman, called Carly Fleischmann. She is currently living at the commune as one of the brethren. She would like to leave, as she doesn't like the aggressive beliefs of the people there, but she has seen what happens to others who try to leave. She was initially drawn to the Church about a year and a half ago, but what started as a liberating experience, has become like a prison.

Fleischmann has contacted Sarabia by email. She managed to sneak in to the office where the computers are and sent out an email to the Express, which got passed to Sarabia. Now Sarabia is in correspondence Fleischmann, and about every day or two a message gets passed between them. Sarabia will enlist the PCs' assistance in helping her escape.

The PCs will probably want to ask her questions about what's going on in the commune, and it is up to the Keeper, precisely what she knows, and what she is willing to divulge. She is so desperate to escape, she might just make up information, in order to get the PCs to stage a rescue. She may press the PCs to commit to some action, before revealing certain pieces of information, or even "I'll tell you when I see you."

This is a very dangerous lure for the PCs, and may entice them into making a rash entry into the commune without backup.

Every time the PCs urge her to reply, there is a 5% cumulative chance that she will be suspected. Sarabia will warn the PCs that they should be rescuing her, not using her as a spy. The first time, she will warn them of the risks, and the second time, Fleischmann will manage to make a call to them, desperately whispering down the phone that she is in trouble, that she is suspected. Then the phone call could be cut off, and Fleischmann disappears... Sarabia will be distraught, and all lose 1D6 SAN.

Possible items of information which could be passed on are:

- The inner circle have their own small chapel. She's heard that that's where the advanced training takes place. One girl says they use a rough, white stone to help their meditation.
- The inner circle use Japanese scrolls to learn their techniques from.
- She will have some awareness of the cache of guns, gas masks, NBC suits, and other survival gear, as well as layout and numbers of people there.

The best plan to rescue her, is to get her to leave in the night, and meet them near the edge of the commune, where they can pick her up. If the PCs are planning to sneak in, this is the best time as well, as the place is pitch black and no guards are posted. However, there is no electricity at night, so there are no light switches, and no power for the computers.

Clues from Ursula Sarabia

AP#	Clue or Lead	Obtained From	Leads To
	Various kidnapping evidence	Different cases	Evidence against the Church
11	Account of brainwashing	White's computer	Evidence against the Church
	West Field Supply Sheds	Carly Fleischmann	BRS Supply Sheds

Sarabia's Secret

At some point while the PCs are with her, she lets slip that she is actually a Physics expert, one of the best in the country. If they ask, she Majored at the top of her class at MIT. She could be living a very different life to a journalist. If pushed on the issue, or if another NPC is asked, it turns out that her father paid for her College degree with money he got from Aum – he was a senior member who left after the raids in 1995. She considers her Physics expertise to be 'ill gotten gains', so she refuses to go into Physics. Researching Ursula directly may also reveal this information, or perhaps through journalistic contacts in the city.

All in all, she is quite a tragic figure.

Bear Ridge Shale

This oil company uses fracking for the majority of its income. It has fields around San Antonio, and elsewhere in Texas, and has offices in San Antonio at 820 NE Loop 410 Loop Frontage Road, San Antonio 78209 where Jennifer Gonzales works.

There were serious issues with earthquakes disrupting their operations, especially in the West Fields, until Richard Brands came to the company and offered to help them. When it actually worked, Gonzales offered the Church a retainer to work for them, and are currently working on investigating other issues with the fields. Library Search can turn up the history of earthquakes which stopped about six months ago.

Jennifer Gonzales

The PCs are likely to want to interview her at some point, but it will likely prove fruitless. If asked about her company's connection to the Mayor, she will deny any wrongdoings or favor by the Mayor, and admit only that BRS is indeed a campaign sponsor, a point of public record.

Asking about the company's connection to the Church will be even less productive. She will admit only that the Church has some geological expertise which is being lent to BRS. Beyond that, the company's dealings are confidential.

In truth, Gonzales is the investigators' least useful lead. Only with intimidation via a Law roll and a Fast Talk roll could she be convinced to tell of Brands' communion with the angels.

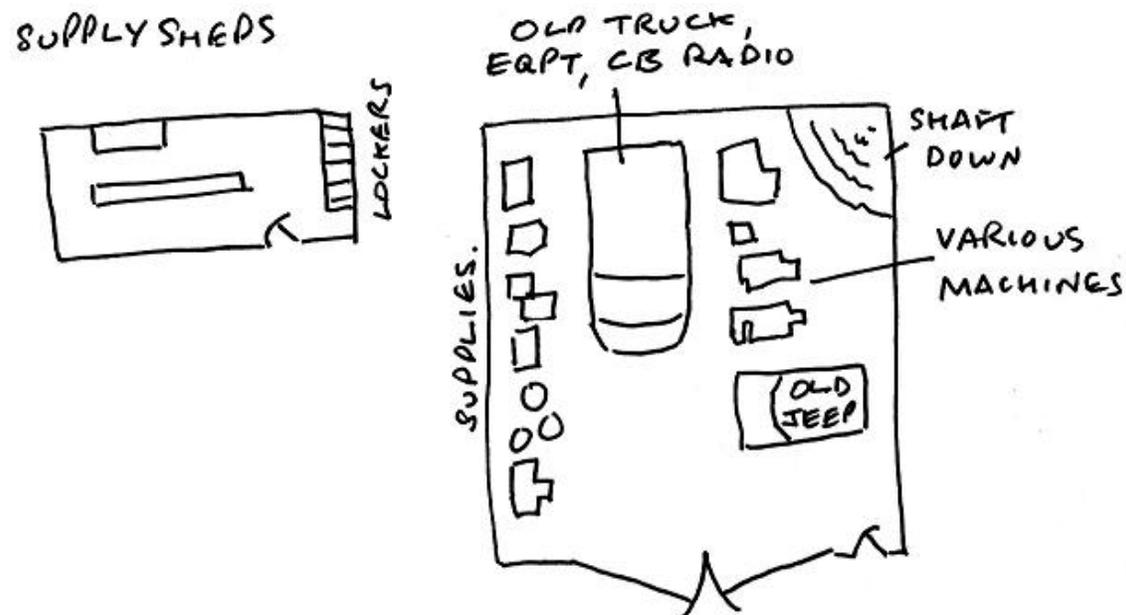
BRS West Field Supply Sheds

This is the place where Brands had his spiritual encounter with the angels, and it is now regarded as a holy place by Brands and his followers, although it is not visited. He tends to tell the brethren about how he communed out here with them, staying in the arid desert heat, meditating until he reached their plane of existence. This information is likely to come from Fleischmann, or perhaps even another follower, or from the account left on the commune computer, which he planned to publish in a Church newsletter.

Alternatively, a knowledgeable person using the photograph of the sheds alone might make a Geology roll (to understand the significance of the sheds themselves) and a Navigate roll (to locate where they might be), could successfully locate them.

Although the supply sheds are technically on private property, this part of the West Field has been shut down for some time, since Brands had his communion with the angels, and informed Gonzales that it was the fracking here that was causing the earthquakes, by disturbing the holy spirits in residence. The chainlink fences here are partly collapsed and the gates lie ajar. A Track roll shows that various vehicles come through here, and empty beer bottles indicate that it is used as a remote place to party. Despite this, law enforcement officials should still need a warrant to gain access and questions might be asked if shots are fired here without a warrant.

The Thing in the Shed



The sheds themselves consist of a small rest hut, with a coffee urn, and old tables and chairs. A huge, greasy spanner and cheap pornography pinned to the locker doors show that this was once used by workmen maintaining the derricks.

The main supply shed is more like a garage, and is lined with various hardware such as winches and vast iron parts for the derricks. In the gloom, at the back of the shed is a smooth, round shaft.

As they are investigating the shed, movement is heard behind one of the piles of boxes. As they watch, a roughly humanoid shape shambles from behind the pile. It is mostly encrusted in the sandy soil that makes up the oil field, but patches of dirty, greenish skin can be seen beneath the dirt. No eyes can be detected, only a gash of a mouth. Haltingly it stumbles out, reaching for them.

The chthonians who nest here have a method of taking the brains of their victims and transplanting them into a type of protoplasm which they partly excrete, and partly synthesize. This is potentially the brain of Donald Scott after his capture. He speaks in a gurgling fashion, and will urge

purchases, the quantity is concerning. Hence the ATF are investigating to ensure that the arms are being held for peaceful purposes.

Heading up the investigation is ATF Special Agent Ben Manson. He intends to contact the local police and the FBI in the first instance to find out what is known about the Church, but of course, this is very little. Sheriff Holland will caution Manson about the group's militant nature, however, this will fall on deaf ears. The only benefit of Manson contacting the FBI, is that the PCs will become aware of this investigation, and be invited to join the group. Presumably the PCs will welcome this opportunity to influence the ATF investigation, and to possibly accompany them into the commune.

Manson is operating out of offices in the center of San Antonio, and can be contacted (by phone or email) and visited. The PCs are welcome to attend briefings. He will listen to any information that the PCs have to offer, but he is somewhat headstrong, a trait which has earned him success and promotions so far, but may cost him his career and maybe his life in a confrontation with the Church.

If uninfluenced by the PCs, he will apply for, and receive, a search warrant for the commune, and the PCs are welcome to join the agents. This will result in a short and bloody confrontation with the Church, killing two ATF agents, and injuring another. From this point on, in a similar vein to Waco, the commune will be surrounded by law enforcement officials and the media.

From here on in, it will be very difficult for the PCs to gain unobserved access to the commune to retrieve items such as the chthonian egg, or Mythos documents.

Having learnt their lessons from Waco, the commune will be peacefully besieged until the occupants eventually surrender.

However, it is at this point, that the Japanese cultists will become involved.

Ben Manson, age 39

Race: Caucasian

STR	13	CON	11	SIZ	12	INT	12	POW	11
DEX	8	APP	12	EDU	19	SAN	55	HP	12

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Education: BS Law Enforcement

Occupation: ATF Special Agent

Skills: Computer Use 21%, Credit Rating 35%, Drive Auto 40%, Fast Talk 55%, Forensics 21%, Law 75%, Listen 45%, Psychology 55%, Sneak 30%, Spot Hidden 50%, Track 80%, Tradecraft 21%

Languages: English 95%

Attacks:

Colt M16A2 Assault Rifle 80%, 2D6 (ROF 1 or 3)

Beretta M92 Auto 65%, 1D10 (ROF 2)

Fist/ Punch 50%, 1D3+db

Description: Manson looks like a grizzled Charles Bronson, but with a big moustache, and a shaggy thatch of hair. At 39 he ought to know better, but he's just as hot-headed as he was in his twenties. Manson leads from the front. He prefers it out in the open, his hobby is hunting, and he is a mean shot with a rifle.

Average Agent, age 24

STR	12	CON	12	SIZ	13	INT	13	POW	10
DEX	12	APP	10	EDU	14	SAN	50	HP	13

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Education: BA Police Administration

Occupation: ATF Special Agent

Skills: Computer Use 31%, Drive Auto 50%, Fast Talk 35%, Law 35%, Listen 55%, Psychology 35%, Sneak 40%, Spot Hidden 55%

Languages: English 70%

Attacks:

Colt M16A2 Assault Rifle 55%, 2D6 (ROF 1 or 3)

Beretta M92 Auto 50%, 1D10 (ROF 2)

Fist/ Punch 70%, 1D3+db

Description: Young men and women on a mission. Tough-minded, no nonsense. Shoot first, ask questions later.

Masayuki Ishida

Ishida is a chthonian mind in a human body. He achieved this incredible state by first telepathically contacting a suitable human in the Kakusareta Masuta cult and teaching them certain rituals. Then, when they were ready to 'ascend', he used the Mind Transfer spell to move into the human host, where he now resides. At first the adjustment was a terrible one. A scrawny little rodent, a bag of bones and meat with constant cravings, it was hard to keep the reins on the domesticated primate. However, eventually, by using meditation, centuries old mental rituals, and a trained prostitute to slake his constant sexual cravings, he managed to gain a semblance of stability.

Now 'Ishida' occupies a senior position in the powerful Japanese cult Kakusareta Masuta, which is worth hundreds of millions of dollars, and boasts thousands of members worldwide. After the unfortunate scandal of the Aum Shinrikyo cult which cost several of its brothers and sisters, Aum transformed into Masuta. Now Ishida is a guiding force behind one of the most powerful cults in the world. Its unspoken purpose is to aid the propagation of chthonians around the world.

As previously mentioned, Ishida has come to the United States to retrieve a chthonian egg, and an important Mythos document. He was not originally displeased with Brands. After all, he has recently helped to foster a nest of chthonians under the Texan oil fields, the very purpose for which the cult was established. However, Brands has become recalcitrant, and refuses to acknowledge his leaders. For this reason alone, Ishida will eventually be forced to destroy Brands.

Masayuki Ishida, age 26

Race: Japanese

STR	14	CON	8	SIZ	10	INT	17	POW	12
DEX	9	APP	6	EDU	15	SAN	0	HP	11

Damage Bonus: +0

Education: Aeronautics

Occupation: Professor

Skills: Astronomy 76%, Credit Rating 35%, Geology 41%, Library Use 65%, Martial Arts 71%, Persuade 35%, Physics 41%, Psychology 25%

Languages: Japanese 80%, English 80%

Attacks:

Fist/ Punch 90%, 1D3+db+Martial arts

Description: Ishida is a young man, but appears somewhat older. He has poor personal hygiene, a beard which straggles from his cheeks, and yellowing teeth and fingernails. Very intelligent and quick-witted, he is very unnerving to be around. He is, of course, a chthonian mind in a human body. Cthulhu Mythos is an irrelevant skill, he is *of* the Mythos. Likewise SAN is somewhat subjective.

Spells: Contact Chthonian, Contact Shudde M'ell, Mind Transfer, Shriveling, Summon/ Bind Byakhee.

Special Abilities: Telepathic Control/ Binding, as per Chthonians in the rulebook (POW vs POW, costs 1MP)

Hisako Tsuchiya, age 19

Race: Japanese

Occupation: Concubine.

Masami Wakayama, age 26

Race: Japanese

STR	12	CON	10	SIZ	10	INT	10	POW	13
DEX	8	APP	12	EDU	14	SAN	50	HP	10

Damage Bonus: +0

Education: Pilot Training

Occupation: Driver/ Pilot

Skills: Drive Auto 60%, Electrical Repair 35%, First Aid 50%, Jump 65%, Martial Arts 40%, Navigate 70%, Physics 26%, Pilot 71%

70

Languages: Japanese 70%, English 30%

Attacks:

Fist/ Punch 70%, 1D3+db+Martial arts

Description: This mustachioed young man has volunteered as Ishida's driver and bodyguard. He fantasizes about being a gangster, but is far from tough. However, he is fanatical, and good behind the wheel.

Sequence of Events

Initially, the PCs will likely investigate the earthquake, visit Buckeye Avenue, and discover the existence of the Church. It would then be prudent to allow the PCs a day or two of unhindered investigation, to perhaps meet Ursula Sarabia, and to maybe to attempt a dangerous approach or two to the commune itself. Indeed, if successful, the scenario could end there.

However, the next step is for the ATF to contact the PCs and ask for intelligence support. After a day or two, the ATF will have a search warrant, and make an approach with agents in two cars to inspect the arms held at the property. The brethren have been told by Brands, fearing the arrival of Masuta, that the end times are near, so they defend the commune, and a gun fight breaks out, forcing the agents back, resulting in a standoff.

If left alone, this would eventually result in the brethren giving themselves up when supplies ran low, after about a month or two.

Ishida

Ishida arrives in Texas roughly the same time as the PCs, hires a black Mercedes with tinted windows at the airport, and books in to the Comfort Suites hotel, 505 Live Oak St with his entourage. His assistant, Wakayama, drives him everywhere, whereas Tsuchiya remains in the hotel room.

They then drives out to the Church to observe the brethren, and to make contact with as many minds as possible. He successfully contacts several, but eventually they are forced to drive off when they are spotted parked up on the road, and several brethren come to investigate with rifles.

Ishida becomes aware of the ATF's initial approach by contacting one or more minds within the commune. With the advent of the siege, this stifles his plans as much as the PCs.

However, taking an interest in the ATF investigation, he drives out to observe the mounting media circus, and to locate the agent in charge. With this, he begins to make telepathic contact with Manson, in order to find out about the investigation, and to influence him.

Each day spent with the ATF at the commune, or at the offices, the PCs can make a Spot Hidden roll to notice the black sedan, and a Japanese gentleman observing the ATF at work. They will recognise the man from James' photograph, and a diligent search of 2D3 hours and Library Use will uncover his identity and position with Masuta. It will also reveal that he travelled to San Antonio from Tokyo in the last few days with two others. A further Library Use roll will locate his hotel room, and the plate of the car he has hired. If they get to speak to Ishida he will, of course, be evasive, however just once he will use the cryptic phrase.

During this time, Manson complains of headaches, dizziness and even bouts of blurred vision, which he blames on stress. At worst, a migraine will cause temporary blindness. A Medicine roll indicates that these are very general symptoms, possibly caused by tumors, hydrocephalus, stress, or epilepsy. An MRI scan or blood works reveals nothing. He also speaks at odd times, and often may say surreal or inexplicable things. He will also utter the cryptic phrase, but once only. A Psychology or Psychoanalysis roll may reveal that he is possibly having psychotic episodes.

If the PCs check Manson's background, a successful Library Use reveals that he is indeed, a bona fide relative of Charles Manson. (He is the son of a cousin.)

In addition, a Spot Hidden, once per day may reveal that he is posting and emailing information to addresses which can be traced to Masuta. This is actually being picked up by Ishida, the address is a PO Box in San Antonio. If he is ever confronted with passing on confidential information, he will initially not remember this, then eventually say it is for a consultant working on the case. He may even phone Ishida at his hotel.

Mind Transfer

Eventually, Ishida decides to force the situation. He and his driver travel out to the supply shed where the chthonian nest is located, and he uses Mind Transfer to take over the body of Manson. (To minimize confusion, Manson in Ishida's body will be denoted as *Manson (Ishida)*, and vice versa.)

Manson (Ishida) suddenly finds himself at a strange old shed, vomiting, with a Japanese man standing nearby with a gun trained on him. Luckily, Manson (Ishida) is able to get away from his guard, Wakayama, and hide amongst the old machinery at the shed.

Finding an old CB radio, he manages to get a message out on the emergency channel, calling for the PCs and the Sheriff, that he is trapped in an old mining shed. However, the noise of sending the message gives away his position, and he is forced to flee, this time down the shaft. Wakayama smiles, knowing that it is a chthonian nest, and holsters his gun and leaves. Manson (Ishida) wanders the tunnels in the dark, until he eventually starts to climb the shaft back up.

If the Sheriff has met the PCs, then he phones them to let them know the message he has heard, and will go over there himself shortly when he gets the opportunity, but with the ATF on the move, he's got his hands full.

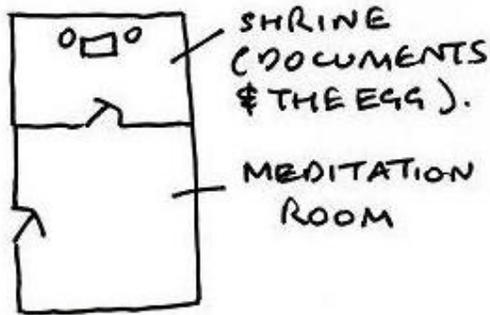
When the PCs arrive, they can hear Manson (Ishida) down the shaft. Obviously, it doesn't sound like Manson at all. However, the voice will confirm that he is Manson, and ask to be winched up. He will say that there's something moving down there with him. 1D6 rounds later, a chthonian will arrive to find out what the noise is, and start coming up the shaft.

If the PCs ignore the message, or if the Sheriff doesn't know them, then the Sheriff goes alone. Roll a D6: 1-2 Both die, 3-4 One dies, 5-6 Both escape. If they escape, one or the other may fall into temporary insanity due to their encounter.

The Raid

Meanwhile, Ishida (Manson) turns up late at the ATF offices, and announces that a full assault has been authorized. A Psychology Roll will show that Manson is behaving erratically, and Psychoanalysis will indicate some sort of mental disorder. Unless the PCs can somehow intervene, the ATF, in typical paramilitary fashion, goes in guns blazing with bloody and predictable results. If the PCs choose to accompany the team, they will end up in some desperate battles with the brethren.

As the raid is coming to a close, Ishida (Manson) will make for the inner sanctum (#8) at the back of the commune to retrieve the egg and the Mythos documents. The PCs may give chase if they become suspicious. Ishida (Manson) will go inside and take the Mythos documents, and the egg, and try to make off with them. If the PCs wish, they can intervene and try to retrieve the items from him, at which point, he will use Shriveling to deter them.



However the combat goes, 2D6 rounds later, an earthquake will begin and the egg will hatch revealing a tiny chthonian. During the quake, anyone who knows the spell Contact Chthonian (apart from the Japanese cultists) will suffer seizures, frothing at the mouth, and may even have brain hemorrhages. 1D6 rounds after the earthquake starts, a chthonian will surface to retrieve the egg, devouring whoever holds it in the process, and possibly those nearby. Afterwards, the quake will be blamed by the authorities for the ground erupting, and the disappearing victim. Anyone mentioning huge, tentacled monsters will be sent to the State Hospital for treatment.

Outside on the road, Ishida's driver waits patiently for his master, but he never returns.

Raid Encounters

When under siege, the brethren will all congregate in the main hall, and keep the blinds shut. Of the dozen armed men in the commune, all but two will remain in the hall. These two remaining scouts will keep watch – one in the trees near the main hall, the other on top of the barn roof. They are armed with hunting rifles and scopes, and carry radios to keep in touch with those in the main hall. If the PCs scout out the area with binoculars, then roll the PCs' Spot Hidden against the brethren's Sneak. If they are both successful, the higher roll wins. Initial encounters are likely to be against these scouts, and subsequently against those who fire from within the main hall, out the windows.

The ATF unit of twenty men and women will use smoke grenades to make their approach, then tear gas in through the windows, then finally flash bang grenades followed by an immediate assault. If the PCs wish to follow, then they will need to support the ATF as they enter, which is a dicey business at best. Have the PCs follow in behind two ATF, who then encounter two brethren. There is no need to make every roll, simply kill off NPCs as you see fit.

Finally, when the initial resistance is overcome, a door will burst open and two women, and a twelve year old girl will burst out brandishing kitchen knives and will fight to the death. This encounter will entail a SAN loss of 0/1D4. Around the building, similar senseless attacks are occurring, and the ATF agents are unwilling to fire on women and children.

In the carnage that follows, some agents will be stabbed to death, and their weapons liberated. The women and children remaining will then attack the remaining ATF agents. The PCs will then encounter a ten year old boy with an M16A2 which he will use in burst, emptying the weapon into the heathens. Use the same stats for all the brethren, except those detailed previously.

Anonymous Brethren

Race: Caucasian

STR	10	CON	10	SIZ	10	INT	10	POW	10
DEX	10	APP	10	EDU	10	SAN	25	HP	10

Damage Bonus: +0

Attacks:

Fist/ Punch 50%, 1D3+db

Knife 25%, 1D6+db

Remington Sportsman 74 Rifle 45%, 2D6+4