



# Horror Stories

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Tsathogghua's curse awaits the unwelcomed investigators of the occult and unknown. What grim secret lurks on the sterile Greenland icecap?

What living horror grows behind the "Bigfoot" legend? TRAIL OF TSATHOGGHUA contains a mini-campaign in two scenarios as well as a third, unconnected, scenario—"The Haunted House."

This scenario pack is suitable for beginning keepers and investigators. It serves well as an introduction for the game and exposes new players to both the Cthulhu Mythos and the occult.

## For Keepers Only



# Trail of TSATHOGGHUA

By  
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*This work is respectfully dedicated to  
Edgar Allan Poe*

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This supplement is best used with Chaosium's *Call of Cthulhu* roleplaying game, available separately. For a free catalog of Chaosium games and supplements, write to Chaosium Inc., PO Box 6302, Albany CA 94706-0302.

The names of persons actually living have been used referentially in this book but any resemblance of a text character to person living or dead is strictly coincidental.

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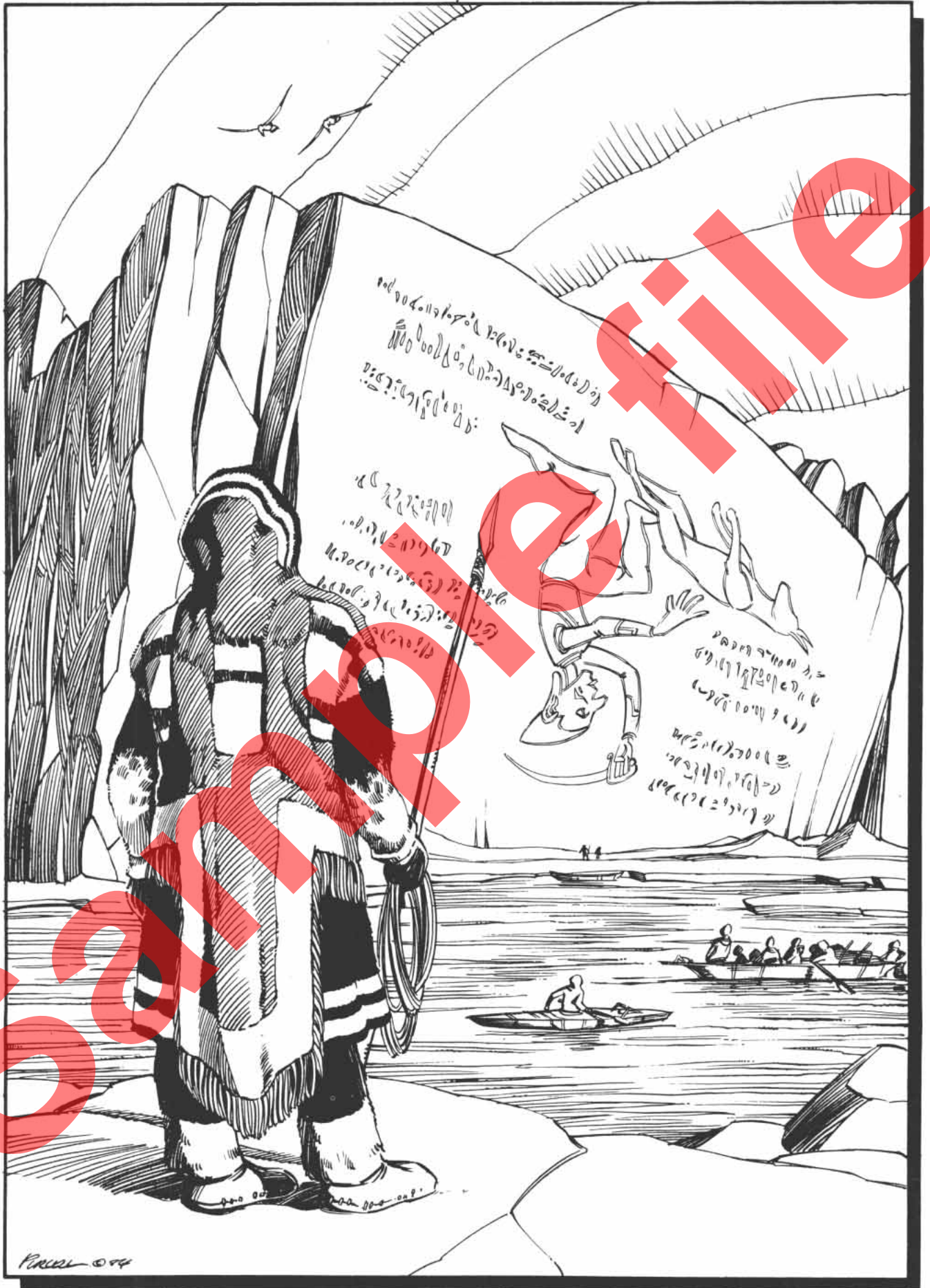
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CALL of  
CTHULHU<sup>®</sup>  
ADVENTURE



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# Introduction

## "The Writing on the Wall"

This book contains three loosely-connected adventures for the *Call of Cthulhu* roleplaying game. The first, "The Trail of Tsathogghua," is involved with the prehistory of Greenland and the beings who lived there before the coming of man. The investigators will be given the opportunity to join an expedition from Miskatonic University and together they will attempt to trace the history of this frozen continent back through the first Viking settlers, prehistoric man, and even farther back in time, to the entities who came before man.

This adventure is tailored for the physically-fit investigator; the challenges include an expedition to the icy interior, the climbing of dangerous glaciers, and encounters with hostile humans and others. At the end of the journey the investigators will find themselves faced with an ancient stone temple guarded by an inhuman sentinel. If the investigators can gain entry to this building, they will find clues to the disappearance of the strange race that once worshiped here. For the less physically-fit, more-scholarly investigator, opportunities for quieter studious adventures also exist while in Greenland.

The second adventure, "The Curse of Tsathogghua," takes place mostly in British Columbia, Canada, where a strange hairy foot from an unknown type of animal is found in a hunter's trap. Purchased by the University of Vancouver, it first comes to the investigators' attention by means of a newspaper clipping. The investigators will find a trail that leads to the Canadian Rockies, here to learn the rest of the story that began in Greenland. Once again, physical skills could make the difference. Both this adventure and "The Trail" take place outdoors in cold weather.

In the third adventure, "The Haunted House" has

stood unoccupied for over a decade and the owner is offering a substantial reward to anyone who can exorcise the premises, making the property once again salable. Tempted by this lucrative offer, the investigators will travel to Grand Rapids, Michigan. While trying to unravel the mystery of the house they will be confronted by a growing mass of evidence against a well-respected, monied family—hints of suicide, murder, madness. In the old mansion itself, they will be terrorized by an entity who wants them to leave; wants them out before they can learn the real secret of the house.

The amount of physical danger in this adventure is rather small, but the investigators may be frightened away by the myriad horrors that confront them; deciding that no reward could be worth going mad.

Each adventure revolves around a rather complex history of events and it is necessary that the keeper read and understand the background before beginning play. Each adventure is complete but the investigators may follow up on a spurious clue or two. This is more likely in "The Haunted House" where a surviving relative of Maurice may be discovered. This character has no helpful information other than his or her role in the history of the house. If the investigators arrange an interview, the keeper will want to be at least a little prepared in advance. Other possibilities exist. The keeper may want to add extra material to the adventures presented.

In Greenland and British Columbia, investigators may suggest the use of dogsleds or other forms of transportation. It is not beyond imagining that a bush-pilot-styled investigator may want to employ a seaplane or other aircraft in Canada. Individual keepers should be prepared for these eventualities.

# Greenland

## I. The Trail of Tsathogghua

*Investigators join a scientific expedition to Greenland to examine a strange wall found protruding from a glacier.*

### INTRODUCTION

This adventure is linear; the investigators are required to move from one phase of the adventure to the next almost regardless of their individual actions (a day-to-day synopsis of events is included). The investigators are not in charge of the expedition and are expected to follow the direction of its leaders. Also, this adventure secretly serves as an introduction to "The Curse of Tsathogghua" also contained in this book. It is intended that the investigators not realize the connection between these two stories until well into the second one so the keeper should plan a short adventure or two between "The Trail" and "The Curse."

Due to the location of this adventure (the edge of the Arctic Circle), it should begin about the end of May or beginning of June with an eye towards beginning "The Curse" in the fall of the same year.

### INVESTIGATORS' INFORMATION

A startling discovery has been made: Eskimos hunting walrus on the east coast of Greenland have sighted a huge block of dark stone protruding from a glacier. The stone is thought to have been exposed during this year's spring thaw. The report is somewhat sketchy, but apparently the massive slab of stone is carved with a giant *bas-relief* representing what could be a god or hero surrounded by odd hieroglyphics. The stone protrudes from the end of the glacier, over a fjord.

Miskatonic University, which has a research vessel off the eastern seaboard, has announced plans to outfit an expedition to the area. The scientific team will be headed by Professor Curtis Mathieson, an archaeologist. The Miskatonic has already received permission from the Danish government to explore and conduct research in the area.

The investigators may read of this event in a newspaper or scientific journal and, assuming that they have connections at Miskatonic, offer their services to the expedition. More likely, the investigators could be contacted by a member of the University or the expedition and their participation requested.

### KEEPER'S INFORMATION

The huge slab is actually a portion of a stone wall, broken loose from its foundations hundreds of millennia ago by

the slowly creeping ice, and pushed, inch by inch, toward the distant sea. The layer of ice that has covered it for thousands of years has recently broken off and fallen into the sea, exposing the wall, nearly vertical but upside down, to the first sunlight it has seen in ages.

This wall portion, two hundred feet long and nearly one hundred feet high, is a remnant of a culture that once lived on the land mass now comprising Greenland, then called Hyperborea. The hieroglyphics written on the wall will provide the expedition with clues to the location of an ancient, unknown city called Commorium. They also warn of some of the dangers of the place.

Throughout this adventure, the investigators will come across clues about the extinct Hyperboreans and a strange race of furry pre-humans that dwelt here before the coming of man.

#### "The Trail of Tsathogghua"

#### SYNOPSIS OF EVENTS

- Days 1-7: Voyage to Greenland.
- Day 8: First scaffolding installed.
- Day 9: First transcriptions made.
- Day 10: Attack by Hyperboreans.
- Day 11: Quiet.
- Day 12: Wall shifts abruptly.
- Day 13: Quiet.
- Day 14: Wall falls into sea.
- Day 15-19: Voyage to Godthab.
- Day 20: Arrival at Godthab.
- Day 21: Eskimo song duel. Meeting aboard ship.
- Day 22: Mountain-climbing lessons.
- Day 23: Quiet.
- Day 24: Expedition to the interior departs.
- Day 25: Sighting of Hyperborean tracks.
- Day 26: See Hyperboreans at a distance.
- Day 27: Difficult climb. Attack by Gnoph-keh?
- Day 28: Discovery of the temple.
- Day 29-32: Return to Godthab.

## HISTORY

Millions of years ago, before the dawn of man, there walked upon the earth a race of ape- or dog-like beings. Possessed of an intelligence almost equal to the humans that were to follow them, these furry, fanged creatures, called Voormis, developed a primitive culture based upon the worship of a god who came from the bowels of the Earth and was called Zoth-Aqqua. With knowledge given them by their god, the Voormis built crude cities among the forests and jungles of prehistoric Greenland. These semi-apes spread across the face of the land mass and inhabited most of the high, central plateau of Greenland.

The most ancient ice yet found in Greenland is 1.7 million years old, and it is thought that it was at this time that the climate of the central plateau cooled and glaciers started to form. Accompanying this intense cold (or possibly bringing it) came a being that was called Adukwu, a monstrous horror bound to the frozen regions of the world. Some of the Voormis turned from their ancient deity, Zoth-Aqqua, and began to worship this new being. This worship called for bloody sacrifices and soon the followers of Zoth-Aqqua, led by their priests, began a zealous persecution of the heretics. A long period of civil war ensued with the followers Adukwu finally driven from the cities and forced to take refuge high in the frozen mountains. Some of those forced into the wilds left their home continent, some fleeing to the southeast, others to the southwest. Some remained, to grow fierce and savage in the frozen wilderness.

After this period of strife, the Voormis began a slow decline. Weakened by their internal wars, they were left to the mercy of the ever-changing climate. As the ice ages came and went between 1,000,000 and 100,000 years ago, they slowly succumbed to the encroaching glaciers.

During this period, perhaps a half-million years ago, the first humans arrived on the shores of Greenland. At first they lived in primitive huts and subsisted on a diet of fish and foraged plants. It was not long before the now-degenerate Voormis made contact with the people on the shore. Soon they were aiding the humans with their everyday endeavors, even taking some of them back to their remaining cities in the mountains, there to teach them half-forgotten arts and sciences, sorcery, and religion.

As the humans flourished and the Voormis continued to decay, contact between the two species declined until the Hyperboreans, as the humans now called themselves, came to consider themselves the rulers of the land. The dog-like Voormis dwindled to little more than a myth. Finally, the only Voormis left in Greenland were scattered tribes descended from the expelled followers of Adukwu, grown cruel and monstrous in their harsh environment. These beings dwelt among the high peaks while the advancing civilization of the Hyperboreans spread inland during the between-ice-age warming of the climate. The Hyperboreans eventually built their own great cities atop the foundations of ancient ruins that they found there.

The Voormis were almost totally forgotten by the Hyperboreans when, with the coming of the last great ice age, roving bands of the shaggy beasts, forced out of their high mountain retreats by the intense cold, began to raid and pillage small villages. The war against the beasts lasted for twenty years. It was a guerilla action; the humans pursuing roving bands of monsters through the twisting

passes and up and down the faces of glaciers, mercilessly slaughtering and being slaughtered in turn. Eventually, almost all of the ancient race were slain. Only a few pockets of survivors remained in frozen caves in the highest mountains.

The Hyperboreans has weathered the great beasts, but their victory soon meant little as the cold again worsened and the glaciers started to push toward the sea. Eventually the Hyperboreans were engulfed by the freezing ice age and were forced to change, though a few migrated. Most moved inland to the icy surface, hunting what few animals still survived. Resembling primitive Eskimos, the last handful of living Hyperboreans enter into this adventure.

These were the Skraelings encountered by Erik the Red; the last, dwindling remnants of what was once the first great human civilization on Earth. Some came into contact with the Eskimos, who were at that time entering Greenland from North America by boats and from the continent via ice bridges.

The Eskimos proved friendly to the Hyperboreans, helping them with the construction of small boats and teaching them what they knew of fishing and hunting, but eventually the Eskimos took offense to the Hyperborean practice of performing human sacrifice on the shores of the sea and once again the Hyperboreans were forced inland.

Early in the 10th century, Greenland's eastern coast was landed upon by Gunnbjorn, a Norwegian. In 982, Erik the Red, exiled from Iceland for three years for complicity in a murder, began exploring the coast and in 986 set out from Iceland with 25 ships laden with potential settlers. Only 14 of the ships survived the four-day voyage to finally reach the southwest coast where the first settlement, near present-day Julianhaab, was formed. Eventually other settlements were begun and at its peak the population is thought to have reached nearly three thousand.

When Erik first landed on Greenland, no evidence of humans was found, and it was not until the 11th century that Eskimos were encountered on the northwestern coast, apparently having entered Greenland from North America about the same time that the Norwegians were settling in the south. However, the first settlers did report meeting Skraelings, an unknown word thought to have meant fairies or elves, later interpreted to mean 'barbarian' or 'weakling.'

The Norwegians eventually came into close contact with the Eskimos and it is thought that the colonies survived at least into the early 15th century. When a ship arrived at the coast in 1490, the colonists had not been visited for over eighty years. The crew of the ship found little evidence of the colonists and only Eskimos inhabiting the shores. The fate of the settlers remains a mystery and the discovery of the frozen body of a Norwegian near a fjord in 1540 by a Dutch whaler did little to explain their fate. Some have blamed disease or emigration to America while others have thought that they began to intermarry with the Eskimos and were assimilated.

Under joint Danish-Norwegian control, a Lutheran mission was established near Godthab in 1721 and settlers were once again drawn to the island along with a number of criminals sent there by the government. In 1917, an oversight in an agreement with Norway gave Denmark full authority over the island which led to a heated