TV ODYSSEY

LAYER ONE: THE OLD RELIGION

This layer is unlocked after the Latchkeys watch their FIRST Odyssey tape.

Read the following to the players at the end of the session of play in which the first Odyssey tape is watched:

> *There is a TV somewhere. It's an old CRT—boxy and heavy—on one of those gray TV carts like the teacher used to roll into the classroom on Movie Day. Except this is no classroom and we're not here to watch* Charlotte's Web *for the third time. This TV is in the desert, the blasted landscape where old gods made war on each other. It blinks to life. On the screen is a man so big he fills the flickering frame. He's wearing a creamy yellow suit, a cowboy hat, and a bolo tie shaped like the Sun. He's looming over a table that is comically small in front of his vastness; tarot cards are spread across it. He looks at the camera and speaks:*
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> *"It might surprise you to learn that I am an enthusiast of the tarot. The first card in the Major Arcana is The Fool. It depicts a young man, blind to the realities of the world, stepping off a precipice. The Fool is said to augur a new beginning in life—a new journey—and, importantly, on the need to trust the hidden forces of the universe to guide you on your way... I do wonder what will happen to these new fools... these beautiful fools who have traveled all the way back to the enchanted land of their youth in search of the truth. What will happen now that they have stepped off the precipice? Will the universe set them down gently... or will they simply plummet into oblivion?"*
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> *The TV turns off, leaving a hot, white dot in the center of the screen.*

You now have a new Keeper reaction available to you: **The Big Man**.

Between sessions, write down an initial theory about the truth of TV Odyssey.

Then, write down your initial theory about who the Big Man is, and how he connects to the TV Odyssey mystery.

LAYER TWO: THE STRANGE HISTORY OF DEGOYA COUNTY

This layer is unlocked after the Latchkeys watch TWO Odyssey tapes. You may reveal these details (in any order) as the result of a 12+ on the Meddling Move, or as a new Keeper reaction you now have access to: **Reveal the history of Degoya County.**

- ☐ Approximately 690,000 BP: The Great Render of Flesh, pleased with the wanderers for making copious sacrifices of blood and bone before his impossible altar, gifts them with a titanic pillar made of screaming skin, infused with ancient magicks—a weapon they can use to destroy the fire cults once and for all.
- ☐ Approximately 28,000 BCE: The first pact is made between the Flame Keepers and the Sky-Stone Dwellers, activating places of power in the desert wastes that will keep the bone-wolves and other Great Hungers at bay, so that no harm will come to the children and that the people would sleep at night again, dreaming the Dream of their bright future under the watchful stars.
- ☐ Excerpt from the diary of an unknown conquistador: *Saturday, May 25th Anno Domini 1540. A traveler has entered camp. His clothes are pale blue, frilled and tight fitting. He speaks in quick and harsh English about needing to "get back to the school dance." Father Gonzalo attends to his burns but I fear he may not live.*
- ☐ July 7th, 1812: Ezekiel Rodenbecker and a small but dedicated band of religious pilgrims embark on their crusade to "rid The Holy Degoya of Serpents and Make It Unto a New Eden." They will eventually flush, kill, and publicly display 666 snakes over the course of the next seven years.
- ☐ 1933: The first known appearance of the Big Man—a tall, wide, jowly old man in a cowboy hat and pale yellow suit—at a community picnic, where he can be seen standing in the background of several photos that were taken. No one from that day can recall him, but many folks in Degoya County—right up to the present day—have a story about meeting him. He usually offers witnesses a cigarette and then tells them a little-known secret about the community... just before vanishing completely.
- ☐ Christmas Day, 1962: Nearly every occupant of every home on Murphy Street in Rio Canyon disappears without a trace—over 250 people. No bags are packed, no cars are missing, and, in most cases, Christmas dinner is still in the oven. The only person accounted for on Murphy Street is little Tommy Vallejo, who police find carefully unwrapping his presents near his family's Christmas tree.
- ☐ November, 1977: The construction of the TV Odyssey/Channel 94 studio is complete. Inventor and TV Odyssey owner Phineas Whateley promises his new camera technology can capture footage so clear, it's like you're right there in the studio. The first program to air is *Fireside Chats with Phineas Whateley*. While no one in modern-day Deep Lake can remember TV Odyssey, *everyone* remembers *Fireside Chats*, even if they weren't alive when it originally aired.
- ☐ 1986: The La Fresca Senior High prom ends abruptly when a fire breaks out mid-dance in the school's gymnasium. Over a hundred students and teachers lose their lives. Curiously, not all the victims die of burns or smoke inhalation. Several die from blunt force trauma, two from wounds that suggest an animal attack, and one is decapitated. The Latchkeys will remember this event, as they were little kids in Deep Lake when it happened.
- ☐ March 13th, 1997, a few years after the Latchkeys left Deep Lake: Nineteen students at La Fresca Senior High climb to the top of the four-story school building and recite the Pledge of Allegiance, after which they jump in unison, plunging to their deaths.

Between sessions, write down the name of a Side Character you'd like to see return during the TV Odyssey mystery.

Take some time to revise your theories about TV Odyssey and the Big Man.

LAYER THREE: THE GREAT HUNGERS

This layer is unlocked after the Latchkeys watch FIVE Odyssey tapes.

Read the following at the end of the session in which the fifth Odyssey tape is watched:

> *The Big Man is walking in the desert; the sun is high in the sky, bright and hot. He looks different than you remember: the flesh of his face hangs in long, saggy flaps; his eyes are milky and occluded; his cowboy hat is nowhere to be seen. Perhaps most interesting of all, his great bulk is no more. Now he is just a tall, gaunt, yellow thing wandering the waste; a king of ghouls. He walks to the yawning mouth of a cave, and cries into the blackness: "Come forth, if you must, Great Hunger! Devil of the ancient world! Render of flesh! You have followed the signal to this place, followed it home! Show yourself, then! Show yourself... and do what thou wilt."*

Conclude the above scene by describing a character from a previously-viewed Odyssey tape stepping from the cave. Note that character below as a Great Hunger. You now have access to a new Keeper reaction: **Found Footage**.

At the end of each session when the sixth and seventh Odyssey tapes are watched, narrate a short scene showing a second and third Great Hunger arriving in Deep Lake; note them below.

THE GREAT HUNGERS

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Between sessions, revise your theories about the Big Man and TV Odyssey.

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LAYER FOUR: THE NIGHT OF THE BONE-WOLVES

This layer is unlocked after the Latchkeys watch EIGHT Odyssey tapes. At the start of the next Dawn phase, suspend any countdowns that might be happening on other mysteries for a single Day/Night cycle. The Night of the Bone-Wolves is now the only active mystery, and it lasts until the end of the Night phase.

Read the following to the players at the start of the mystery:

> *The Big Man came to you all in a shared dream. He was impossibly tall, long-limbed, and gangly; his head was engulfed by a ball of white-hot fire. He explained to you that a trio of beings called the Great Hungers are going to invade the house on Rodenbecker Street tonight in order to "make you touch the pure-white signal." You don't have much time to prepare a defense.*

Question: How can we defend the house on Rodenbecker Street from the Great Hungers? (Complexity: 8)
Opportunity: Resolve the mystery by first capturing the Great Hungers during their assault, and then destroying them.

Let the Latchkeys know that investigating this mystery means finding ways to defend the house from—and devising traps for—supernatural creatures that want to kill them. Clues can be any of the following (and can be used more than once):

- A good spot for an ambush.
- A good place to put a lookout.
- A good spot for a trap.
- The Latchkey writes their own idea for a clever trap.
- Materials to make a barricade.
- A Side Character volunteers to help you.
- A Side Character reveals a hidden talent for hand-to-hand combat.
- A Side Character reveals a working knowledge of creatures from the Other Side.
- A cache of weapons.
- Instructions for performing a banishing ritual.

No matter the result of Answer a Question, the Great Hungers will invade the house on Rodenbecker Street during the Night Phase. On a 10+, the Opportunity can be pursued in a straightforward and decisive way; have the Latchkeys narrate their great success, and only trigger another move if part of their plan is particularly risky. On a 7-9, the fight is much tougher, and should trigger more moves to be successful. On a miss, the Latchkeys will have to make a few tough Night Moves in order to survive, and the house on Rodenbecker Street is destroyed, forcing the Latchkeys to set up a new base of operations.

After The Night of the Bone-Wolves is resolved, make one final revision to your theory about TV Odyssey. Take into consideration everything that has happened in the story up to this point.

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LAYER FIVE: THE TV ODYSSEY MYSTERY

This layer is unlocked after the Latchkeys watch TEN Odyssey tapes.

You can now create the TV Odyssey mystery using the guidelines in the rulebook and your notes from this sheet. At this point, you may cease presenting new mysteries. You may present this mystery once all other active mysteries are resolved. After the TV Odyssey mystery is resolved, ask each player to narrate an epilogue for their Latchkey. We hope you enjoyed your stay in beautiful Deep Lake, New Mexico.

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