

# He Who Laughs Last

## Call of Cthulhu Conversion notes

The following notes will help convert the modern Cthulhu Dark scenario, He Who Laughs Last, to the Call of Cthulhu system. This scenario tells the tale of a comedian who has gained access to ancient magic, which he then uses for fame and fortune that come with the requisite horrible costs.

These notes were written using the 6<sup>th</sup> edition CoC rules, but should be easily converted to 7<sup>th</sup> edition when that becomes available. Call of Cthulhu is fundamentally different than Cthulhu Dark (which the scenario was written for), as CoC demands PCs pass a skill check to find a clue, while CD assumes that the PCs will automatically gain that clue, regardless of die rolls or skills. As such, a Keeper running HWLL with CoC will have to be flexible with the story to keep the PCs on track with finding clues.

As part of the CoC conversion notes for the amazing Trail of Cthulhu campaign Eternal Lies, Andrew “Tigger” Nicholson has written up a system for helping bridge the gap between the two systems regarding finding core clues, and I have used those conversion notes as the basis for my own.

When an investigator needs to make a skill roll to find a clue (pretty much any time the text lists a skill in **bold**), apply the following rules:

- **Success** : The clue is found without any issues
- **Failure**: The clue is found, but a minor complication arises. This minor complication requires the investigator(s) to do an additional task, but is not in itself dangerous.
- **Fumble**: The investigator finds the clue, but with a major complication. This major complication requires the investigator(s) to do additional tasks which may be dangerous.

Also, note that I have created a new skill for playing CoC in modern times: **Pop Culture**. As popular culture has become such a strong force in modern civilization, I do believe it is valuable as a skill described below. If you don't want to add it to a modern campaign, just replace it with History where noted.

- **Pop Culture**: The ability and knowledge to not only navigate the multiple avenues of modern communications and media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Reddit, BuzzFeed, etc.), but to be in-the-know regarding the latest happenings and any fallout from them (viral videos, flame wars, doxxing, etc.). This includes knowing about the latest movies, performances, pop stars, and anyone else deemed “famous.”

## Back at the Hotel

(pg 15,17)

- A successful roll in **Law, History, or Pop Culture** will gain one of the background clues on Becca.
- Watching Bryan's video requires a **Sanity check (1/1d3)**.
- Finding the clues on Becca's phone requires a success in **Electronics or Spot Hidden**. Failure means that the clues are still found, but the PC is overcome with a sense of dread as they look through their dead friend's phone, which is a **Sanity check (1/2)**.

## Becca's Apartment

(pg 17-18)

- Entering the house and smelling Becca's death requires a **Sanity check (0/1d2)**.
- A successful **Chemistry check** notes the presence of the gasoline smell, and a second successful **Chemistry roll** notes the smudge marks are some sort of graphite composite.
- **Check Occult** to recognize that the smudge marks resemble some sort of spell.
- Successful **Fast Talk, Persuade or Computer Use** determines where the appropriate Home Depot is located with an hour of research. A failure would indicate that finding the Home Depot takes a day instead of an hour.

## David Lee – Coroner

(pg 18-19)

- **Check Law** to determine that Lee is the head person in charge of the death and where to find him.
- **Persuade or Fast Talk** is needed to get the PCs past the receptionist to talk to David Lee. Failure means that the investigators must wait a long time to meet Lee.
- While a **successful Psychology check** determines that Lee is hiding something, PCs will have to inflict 1-3 HP of physical damage, or show firearms they intend to use, to reduce Lee to a blubbering mess where he will divulge Ares' name.

## Janey Lassiter

(pg 21-22)

- **Persuade or Fast Talk** will get Janey to open up and talk with the PCs.

## Susan Ortega

(pg 22-23)

- **Persuade or Fast Talk** will also get Susan to open up, though she is less susceptible to blatant flattery and may eye the PCs with suspicion of they go that route. Failure in the skill will require a second roll and creative role-playing as this clue is critical to the story.

## Ralph Ares, Future Self

(pg 23-24)

- After unsuccessfully confronting Rafe and finding themselves locked in a dumpster, a **Sanity Check (1/1d3)** is required.

## Bryan's House in the Hills

(pg 24-28)

- **Electronics** can get a PC to open the front gate, while **Climb** can get them over it. Failure in either means it takes a long time to get past the gate.
- Seeing the Hyena through the window costs a **Sanity Check (0/1)**.
- Meeting Bryan requires a set of Sanity checks of growing intensity. Start with a **Sanity check (0/1)**, then continue to **1/2, 1/d3 and 2/1d4+1** until the PCs fail two rolls.
- A series of **Sanity Checks (1/1d3)** are required as the PCs are first dumped into the tank, then find the scorched bodies, then sit inside the dark tank for hours, wondering if they'll be rescued.

## Laughing Hyena Spell

Incantation (pg 28)

- An **Archaeology or History check** can be used to date the old pages.
- **Magic Points:** 3
- **Sanity Points:** 1-6, depending on severity of the spell
- **Time:** 1 round to begin
- Causes listener to **check Sanity** in growing severity (**0/1, 1/2, 1/d3 and 2/1d4+1**) until they fail two checks and are overwhelmed with laughter.

## Detective Jim Wrigley, Rtr.

(pg 29-31)

- **Persuade** gets Wrigley to help the PCs, but Fast Talk has no effect on him. Failure here would mean that Wrigley does not trust the PCs but feels he has no choice. It will take creative role-playing to get all of the clues here.

## Medallion of True Sight

(pg 31-32)

- Removing the medallion costs a **Sanity check (0/1d2)**.
- Seeing Bryan with the medallion costs a **Sanity check (1/1d3)**.

## Hollywood Bowl Gig

(pg 32)

- Allow the PCs to pass a **Disguise, Hide, Sneak, or Stealth** check to gain access to the Hollywood Bowl.

## NPCs

David Lee

STR 8	DEX 10	CON 7	SIZ 11	INT 17
EDU 19	APP 14	POW 10	SAN 30	HP 9

**Skills:** Law 55%, Medicine 65%

**Weapons:** None

Janey Lassiter

STR 9	DEX 13	CON 11	SIZ 10	INT 16
EDU 17	APP 16	POW 8	SAN 40	HP 10

**Skills:** Art (Acting) 45%, Disguise 35%, Persuade 50%

**Weapons:** None

Susan Ortega

STR 14	DEX 14	CON 14	SIZ 13	INT 16
EDU 15	APP 14	POW 12	SAN 60	HP 13

**Skills:** Martial Arts 65%, Other Language (Spanish) 90%

**Weapons:** Fist 65%

Bryan Tobler

STR 8	DEX 11	CON 10	SIZ 12	INT 15
EDU 17	APP 13	POW 12	SAN 0	HP 11

**Skills:** Art (Comedy) 55%, Credit Rating 45%

**Weapons:** Laughing Hyena spell

Ralph Ares

STR 13	DEX 15	CON 14	SIZ 12	INT 20
EDU 22	APP 18	POW 20	SAN 0	HP 10

**Skills:** Credit Rating 75%, Spot Hidden 75%, Psychology 75%

**Spells:** Any Ancient Magics Necessary