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THANKS

Sarah would like to thank: Chris Birch, for the chance to write this epic campaign; Dim and Michal, for their beautiful art and layout work; and Ralf Schemmann and Simon Rogers of Profantasy (www.profantasy.com), for providing their wonderful Interactive Atlas of World War Two. And, as ever, huge thanks to Chris McWilliam, my husband, for his endless patience and help playtesting the Zero Point campaign.

Chris would like to thank: Sarah, Michal and Dim for the stunning work on this Achtung! Cthulhu series, and my new wife Rita who continues to inspire my creativity and passion for exploring new worlds.

Michal would like to thank: Patrick Kapera for showing me the ropes, Chris and Sarah for giving me a chance, Paul Evans for starting me on this crazy journey, and Fransje for her patience and honesty.

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MODIPHIUS product number: MPS01012S
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...COMING OUT THE WATER

REPEAT, COMING OUT THE WATER!
Foreword by Sarah Newton

World War Two is amazing. By turns terrifying, exciting, tragic, filled with courage and despe-
ration, the appalling spectacle of a civilisation tearing itself apart. And yet it created the world
we live in today—the borders between our nations, the memories and stories our families tell one
another, photographs and medals on walls. We owe our lives, directly or indirectly, to the terrible
sacrifice made by an entire generation in the middle of the twentieth century.

Here in Normandy we dig up bullet casings when we turn over the garden. Our chickens peck
at an old wooden shell crate, whose US Army stencilling is only visible when it rains. We go for
days out in a pretty seaside town where my grandfather desperately unloaded fuel in the days after
D-Day, not an hour away. It’s hard to believe sometimes how close it still is—scratch the surface,
and the War is there, everywhere you look.

Three years ago Chris Birch and I got talking about roleplaying in World War Two. How could
we do it—how could we draw on its awesome tales of heroism, tragedy, and sacrifice, without
trivializing a profound and historical event? Those who know me will know I’ve always loved con-
spiracy theories—and World War Two is filled with them. Together Chris and I talked about how
we could draw out the sinister pulp elements of these conspiracy tales, and use them to create
action-packed roleplaying adventures worthy of the greatest war films. This adventure, and the rest
of the Zero Point campaign for Achtung! Cthulhu, are the result...

Heroes of the Sea takes place during the evacuation at Dunkirk. Like many of us, I knew the
broad brushstrokes of the Dunkirk story—but in researching those terrible days in May and June
1940, I’ve been amazed and humbled. Maybe it’s a feature of war that its events are so terrible you
can never imagine they could ever happen—until they do.

The evacuation of over three hundred thousand soldiers from the beaches of Dunkirk, under
constant attack from land and air, by naval vessels and ragtag flotillas of “little ships” which
themselves were often torpedoed and sank even as they fished soldiers from the sea, the eyewitness
accounts of those who fought—on both sides—and the sheer scale of the devastation, are
breathtaking. I hope in some small way I’ve been able to convey the magnitude of Dunkirk’s events
as the backdrop to this adventure.

Lovecraftian roleplaying thrives off mystery, and the dread that unimaginable inhuman pow-
ers hold sway over our cosmos, before which mere human concerns pale into insignificance. Zero
Point brings those themes directly into World War Two, as our intrepid investigators unveil a ter-
rible conspiracy alongside, between, and beneath its world-shattering events. During this series of
linked adventures, your players will fight a secret war which threatens the future of the world itself.
How they do so—and whether they succeed—may lead your campaign down some very dark and
twisted avenues. Can they thwart this dreadful menace, even as humanity tears itself apart? What
is the true history of that secret war? Play on... this story only you can tell...

Sarah Newton
Normandy, September 2012
Introduction – What is Achtung! Cthulhu?

Heroes of the Sea is the second scenario in the Zero Point campaign, an epic series of adventures for the Achtung! Cthulhu setting—Lovecraftian roleplaying in World War Two. Achtung! Cthulhu allows you to play investigators uncovering the terrible secrets of the Lovecraftian Mythos which threaten the world at a time when humankind is already poised to tear itself apart.

This version of Heroes of the Sea is intended for use with the Savage Worlds roleplaying game, published by Pinnacle Entertainment Group, and the Realms of Cthulhu setting published by Reality Blurs. Additional rules specific to the World War Two era can be found in the appendices, including pre-generated characters, created using the Realms of Cthulhu rules, to get you playing straight away. You can also create your own investigator characters using the Realms of Cthulhu rules.

Overview

This adventure contains material for several sessions of play. It incorporates historical and geographical background; an extensive encounters section; and five complete plot episodes with maps and non-player characters. Extensive appendices provide pre-generated characters, new rules for Call of Cthulhu adventuring in World War Two, new vehicles, an operational briefing for the players, and a handouts section.

The Mission

Following the bizarre events of Three Kings, the first adventure in the Zero Point campaign, the British Secret Intelligence Service has been operating undercover in occupied Europe gathering information on unusual activities in the Third Reich. In recent weeks, a female undercover agent, Agatha Marcham (codename WOTAN) has gone missing in northern Europe after attempting to contact Section D with critical information.

Agent WOTAN had been operating in northern Germany and Belgium. While travelling to British Expeditionary Force territory, she was overtaken by the sudden Blitzkrieg advance of German forces in May 1940. Contact has been lost, and the worst is feared. All that is known is that WOTAN had uncovered a secret German operation named FALL NADEL (“Operation Needle”), and had information vital to the fate of the Allied forces.

The investigators are members of Section D, an arm of the British Secret Intelligence Service. Ferried to the besieged port of Dunkirk by H.M.S. Durant, their mission is to make their way into the warzone of what is being called the Battle of France, contact Agent WOTAN, and take appropriate action based on the nature of FALL NADEL.

The Real Heroes of World War Two

Achtung! Cthulhu presents a fictionalised version of the Second World War, where the Lovecraftian Mythos is real and its agents work to bring humankind to its doom. However, many of the figures behind the larger events of the war which form the background to these adventures were real people, and in many cases national heroes.

In Heroes of the Sea, the historical figures of the Dunkirk campaign are not intended to play major roles. They include: General Lord Gort, commander of the British Expeditionary Force; General Blanchard, commander of the French First Army; and many more.

We dedicate this book to the many forgotten heroes who fought and died across the world, and particularly to the “Little Ships”, which saved so many lives at Dunkirk.

The Tone of Heroes of the Sea

Obviously, how you run your game is a decision for the GM: he knows what does, and doesn’t suit his players style and tastes. However, we envision that most games will use the “Slippery Slope” option found in Realms of Cthulhu. This will give heroic investigators a chance to prevail against relatively large groups of Nazi soldiers, and their commanders, but still be seriously on the back foot when facing the more insidious and lethal servitors of the Elder Gods.

The Real Deal

Agent WOTAN has happened upon a bizarre secret German operation in the Dunkirk region. Operation Needle will require all of the investigators’ resourcefulness to defeat.
During the last glaciation, millennia ago, global sea levels were much lower than today. As late as 6000BC, large stretches of what is now the North Sea were dry land, populated by Stone Age hunter-gatherers of the Maglemosian culture.

The Maglemosians found their coastal lands dotted with ancient, forbidding stones, which seemed to have been shaped by no human hand—temples and carvings of terrifying age. The men and women who set themselves as priests of these “temples” spoke of clammy, antediluvian horrors which still dwelled in the deeps, waiting for the day the sea would rise and claim their lost lands again.

Eight thousand years ago, a catastrophic inundation swamped the low-lying northern European coasts, sweeping away all traces of Maglemosian people. In the early twentieth century, fishing trawlers began to dredge up remains of these rich forests and hunting lands from the seabed, and people became aware of the great flood which had sunk these lands again. Eight thousand years ago, a catastrophic inundation swamped the low-lying northern European coasts, sweeping away all traces of Maglemosian people. In the early twentieth century, fishing trawlers began to dredge up remains of these rich forests and hunting lands from the seabed, and people became aware of the great flood which had sunk these lands again. Eight thousand years ago, a catastrophic inundation swamped the low-lying northern European coasts, sweeping away all traces of Maglemosian people. In the early twentieth century, fishing trawlers began to dredge up remains of these rich forests and hunting lands from the seabed, and people became aware of the great flood which had sunk these lands again.

Their plan is simple: to forge a deadly alliance with this inhuman power. Using a u-boat assigned to the Sondergruppe, they aim to retrieve a hideous statue to a ghastly marine deity from the sunken temple, and transport it to a location south of Dunkirk, where they will perform a ritual to once again cause the seas to rise. This time, the flood will claim the lives of hundreds of thousands of Allied troops on the beaches at Dunkirk as a “sacrificial offering” to the dwellers beneath the sea, sealing with blood an unholy alliance between these unknown “deep ones” and the nascent occult powerbase within the Third Reich. They have dubbed this operation FALL NADEL—“Operation NEEDLE”.

Only the accidental discovery of their plan by an undercover agent of British intelligence stands in their way...
FRAU EDELTRAUD WASSERMEISTER, AGE 45, “THE FISHWITCH”

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d12, Strength d6, Vigour d6

Skills: Dreaming d6, Fighting d6, Knowledge (Anthropology) d8, Knowledge (Mythos) d6, Knowledge (Occult) d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6, Swimming d12+1

Languages Known: English, German

Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Charisma: -8; Toughness: 7 (1);
Sanity: 0 (Totally insane)

Hindrances: Arrogant, Bloodthirsty, Delusional, Mean, Ugly

Edges: Brawny, Killer Instinct, Level Headed

Gear: Leather Greatcoat (+1), Luger PO8 pistol (12/24/48, 2d6-1, RoF 1, Shots 8, Semi Auto)

Spells: Bind Dreamer*, Breath of the Deep*, Contact Deep One, Gate of Oneirology (create gate to the Dreamlands), Maglemosian Ritual*, Mesmerise (puppet), Nightmare*, Raise Night Fog (obscure), Snare Dreamer*, Wandering Soul*, Wave Oblivion*, Wrack*

Appearance: Wassermeister is a big woman given to massive leather greatcoats and startling hats; her round, pallid face houses bulging eyes and a loathsome sneer. Head of SS Sondergruppe KFW2 under Karl Friedrich Walpurgen, far from being a scientist, she is a deranged occult obsessive with a messianic streak, and a believer in Atlantis, astrology, divination, demon summoning, astral travel, and more. Dimly aware of the great inhuman forces in the universe, her affinity for the sea comforts her that she is part of something greater and more eternal than mere humanity. She believes it is her mission to establish worship of the true “gods” of the cosmos in the Third Reich, and will do anything for her cause—human life and suffering have no value when measured against such immense power. Naturally, Walpurgen thinks she’s great...

*These spells can be found on page 43.

OPERATION DYNAMO

Heroes of the Sea takes place against the backdrop of Operation Dynamo, one of the biggest (if not the biggest) wartime troop evacuations in history. Following the German Blitzkrieg invasion of Belgium and France in May 1940, the combined forces of the British Expeditionary Force (the “BEF”) and the French First
Army found themselves surrounded on three sides and in danger of being driven into the sea—a potential loss of almost half a million men.

After trying unsuccessfully to break the encirclement, on the evening of Sunday, May the 26th, the British Admiralty gives the signal: “Operation DYNAMO is to commence”. Over the following week, under heavy attack, British naval vessels and a ragtag flotilla of small private vessels aim to pluck hundreds of thousands of troops from the beaches near the French port of Dunkirk and ferry them to safety in England. In doing so, it is hoped, the British army can be saved to fight another day, and prevent the British Isles from falling under the Nazi jackboot. The timeline above lists the main events of this extraordinary operation, and the key episodes of *Heroes of the Sea*.