

SUNKEN FEARS

THE TEMPLE II

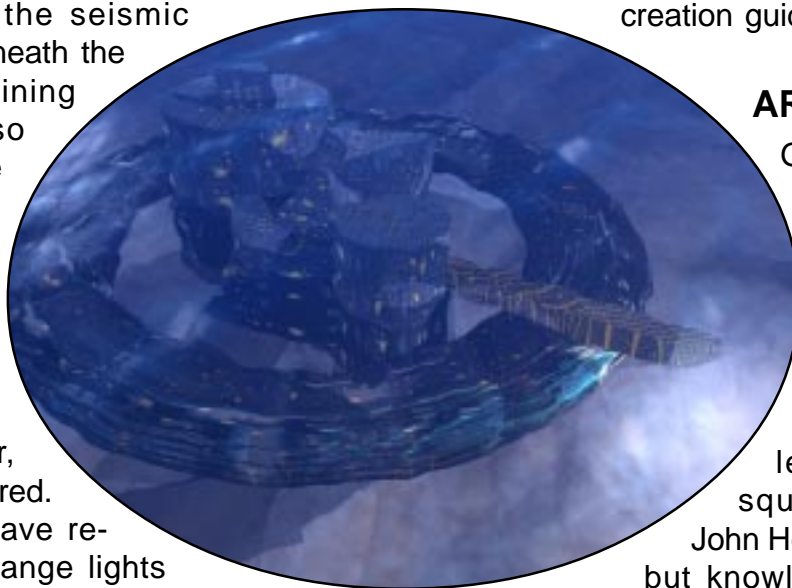
by J.C. Connors

Based on the short story "The Temple" by H.P. Lovecraft

INTRODUCTION

The year is 2045. Hiromatsu Power Systems korp has set up a secret power generation base on the floor of the Atlantic, codenamed HIPSHOT. In addition to mineral mining and algae farming, the base has an experimental hybrid fusion power plant fueled by the seismic plates located beneath the complex. The mining complex has also found traces of the incredibly durable metal hyperiote, and is continuing to search for new hyperiote nodes.

Something unusual, however, has recently occurred. Several miners have reported seeing strange lights coming from beyond the ridge that borders the Mining Complex. Fearing that they come from korp spy submarines, Hiromatsu Power Systems have hired a dozen elite mercenaries to take care of the problem.



Author's Note: This Cthulhupunk adventure is intended as a sequel to the original H.P. Lovecraft short story, "The Temple." Definitely recommended reading for the gamemaster, though not necessary at all.

The last few pages of this adventure are handouts, as well as character creation guidelines.

ARRIVAL

Gamma Squad is an elite section of the Alaskan Special Operations Force, dealing in undersea operations. The leader of the squad is Captain John Henrikson, a stern but knowledgeable man. He accompanies the PCs on this mission.

Upon arrival, the leader of the mining facility, Executive VP Wren Butler greets the PCs. He explains that his men observed a Rio Largo Manufacturing HK sub just over the ridge, and wants the PCs to deal with it.

The PCs will see very few workers around, maybe one or two every couple of hours. If asked about this, Butler simply tells the PCs that the miners are very busy and hard at work deep in their laboratories.

If asked about the HIPSHOT complex, he gives a quick tour. He explains that it is a reasonably large, extremely safe undersea mining facility. It is the deepest Hiromatsu mining facility ever built, and that unprotected humans would die instantly outside in the water due to the incredible benthic pressures. Fortunately, the hard-shelled exoskeleton diving suits the military provided will protect any explorers fully.

Butler begins to explain about the problem they've been encountering. Random lights have been erupting from behind a nearby ridge almost every day now. Several scientists have even spotted seeing dolphins. The pressure, obviously, is too great for these dolphins so Butler will secretly confide that he believes they are actually cybernetic creatures—or perhaps robots—funded by another korp as spy mechanisms.

These “dolphins” need to be eliminated at all costs, although if the PCs can actually recover one, all the better.

Undersea Military Exoskeleton

Twin air tank - 4 hours worth of air; short range communicator; HUD (+1 technical skills, -2 SS) linked to weapon; helmet light; magnetic foot plates; all DX-based skills -2. PD 4, DR 30.

Dr. Hyperron

While discussing the mission objectives, a large, bushy-faced scientist in a torn labcoat runs in to the mercenaries. He cries out, “Will you give me mercy?” and begs the mercenaries to shoot him. He will even go

so far as to grab for one of their pistols (roll his modified DX of 9 against theirs).

Shortly after his loud entrance, a Hiromatsu security guard will grab him and haul him back off to medical lab #3. Butler apologizes profusely, explaining Dr. Hyperron has been under quite a bit of stress lately, and is undoubtedly affected by pressure sickness.

MedLab#3

In the event that the PCs try to check up on Dr. Hyperron, they will discover he is securely locked inside MedLab #3, although people will be hesitant to give out that information.

If the doctor was killed in his first encounter, his body will be taken to this lab and kept secure. If he's still alive, orderlies will explain that the doctor is ill with pressure sickness and needs to rest... alone.

The Truth: Many of the miners of the station have already visited the site beyond the ridge. Most of them were killed by Deep Ones. A week ago, the remaining miners managed to trap 15 Deep Ones and place them in containment units inside Med Lab#4. Driven insane by these creatures and the many deaths, Dr. Hyperron is being contained himself until he can be transferred off the facility.

Outside the Complex

One of the PCs is put in charge of the mission by Captain Henrikson and told to check out the site, eliminate all corporate spies they find and to bring back any technology devices they find for research.

Henrikson wants to stay behind to research the facility and help to beef up security.

Mini-Submarine Troop Transport

This is gamma squad's primary scouting vehicle. The PCs should take good care of it!

F-4/110 B-4/85 L-4/100 R-4/100 T-4/100 U-4/100

Maneuverability: 0

Maximum speed: 20 knots

Weapon #1: Mini-torpedo: RoF 1/10; 1 shot; Damage: Exp 6dx10 (10)

THE RIDGE

It takes about 20 minutes to approach the ridge. The ridge is about 500 meters high, composed of gray, almost marbled rock. Surprisingly enough, the features are utterly smooth, not rough.

A Geology-1 or Oceanography roll will reveal that these features are extremely unusual at these depths.

A Vision-8 roll will reveal what looks to be many eyes looking at the sub from the canyons and gullies of the ridge! PCs will be unable to tell whether these are sea denizens, weird reflections, or something worse. Either way, it's worthy of a Fright Check!

Unknown to the mining complex, there actually *are* corporate spies on this mysterious ridge. They arrived there in a hunter killer submarine just a few days ago and have been quietly observing the mining operations. Funded by Rio-Largo, the spies have heard of secret metallurgy experiments going on in the complex, and are looking for more information.

As the PCs skim over the ridge, their sonar operator will have to make a contest of Electronics Operations (Sonar) roll against two objects: three Rio-Largo mercs (20), and a Rio Largo hunter killer submarine, which

lies still in the water (22). Active sonar adds +10 to the roll, but will alert both groups.

The basin beyond the ridge is extremely deep, and extremely barren. However, if the PCs decide to check out the bottom of the ridge more thoroughly, they will discover an ancient World War I German U-boat. It lies almost perfectly intact along the bottom of the ocean. Unbelievably, it is not crushed by the pressure!

A Vision-2 roll will discover that there are new footprints on the silt-covered sub!

Out of the Submarine

If the PCs leave their sub, they will have a few minutes to examine the area before the hunter-killer and the mercs decide to take action.

A Tracking-2 roll will reveal that the footprints on the submarine are only a few hours old. These were made by the mercs, who recently discovered the artifact. However, anybody closely examining the tracks will find an older pair of clawed footprints. This is not worthy of a Fright Check, but should be unsettling.

Opening the sub is difficult, as the hatch is rusted shut - roll against ST 30 - two people may try at once, combining their ST. It is obvious that this submarine hasn't been opened up in over a century.

The interior of the sub is pitch black. Candle wax can be seen dripped on the floor in many places, however. Furthermore, there are small caliber bullet-holes in many of the bulkheads. No dead bodies remain at all.

Anybody making an Engineering-3 roll (because of the TL difference) will discover that the sub is non-working, and the power is out.

The Captain's quarters, however, contain some things of interest. First of all, many sketches of a mysterious pyramid-like temple can be seen all over the walls. There are some tattered old notes in the garbage, written in German. They describe a power loss, mutiny, and madness of Klenz, who "doesn't deserve to be a German." The Appendix provides more detailed handouts.

A Vision roll will reveal that despite the undisturbed nature of the submarine, there are small drops of water on the floor everywhere.

Several meters outside the U-boat is a human skeleton. A Vision-3 roll will reveal the half-covered remains. Clutched in its bony hand is a small, ivory white statuette. An Archaeology roll will reveal that its origin seems Greek.

Shortly after the PCs explore the U-29, they'll get an emergency message from their transport sub. They are under attack. The hunter-killer sub descends upon Gamma Squad's sub and fires a torpedo at it!

Rio Largo HK Minisub

F-4/120 B-4/100 L-4/120 R-4/120
T-4/120 U-4/120

Maneuverability: 0

Pilot Skill-15

Maximum speed: 25 knots

Weapon #1: Mini-torpedo: RoF 1/10;
1 shot; Damage: Exp 6dx10 (10)

Weapon #2: Modified Blue-green
vehicular laser: RoF 1; Damage: 6d imp; ½
D 500, Max 3000

If the PCs make themselves visible, three Rio Largo mercs will attack them as well.

Rio Largo Underwater Mercenaries

ST 13

Move/Dodge: 6/7

IQ 11

Skills: Beam Weapons-15,

DX 12

Swimming-15, Knife-12

HT 13

Equipment: Armored Underwater Suit (PD 4, DR 30). Blue-green military lasers (2d imp, SS 15, Acc 15, RoF 8)

Anybody whose suit is punctured and exposed to the pressure of being underwater will die quickly.

The Seismic Tremor

In the middle of the battle, the PCs will feel the earth moving beneath them as a minor earthquake is set off. Shortly after this earthquake, a tentacle will rise up out of the sand and grab one of the mercs (preferably a live one). It will shatter his breathing helmet, and a single PC will see his face implode grossly. The tentacle then will drag the man under the silt. This is worth a Fright Check -5.

The mercenaries quickly withdraw after this event.

Returning to HIPSHOT

Upon returning to HIPSHOT, Butler will thank the PCs for eliminating the Rio Largo mercenaries. However, while he is talking to the PCs, he will be asked to immediately attend Med Lab #4. He will rush off to this duty, making sure no PCs follow.

At this point, a young scientist, Leon Vlasky will come running into the briefing room looking for Butler. He tells the PCs that he thinks he found another hunter-killer sub on sonar, and asks them to take a look.

The sonar display shows a very prominent blip on the screen, but an Intelligence Analysis roll will reveal that it does not register as any known subs. Suddenly, another tremor shakes the complex, and the lights increase in intensity. They get whiter and hotter until suddenly, the non-florescent bulbs shatter from the heat! The station is bathed in very dim light. Leon immediately gets to work replacing the bulbs, explaining that this happened once before.

As he's replacing the bulbs, the PCs will see several hundred smaller blips appear on the sonar screen where the German WW I sub once was!

The Search for Commander Henrikson

Attentive PCs will note that Commander Henrikson was nowhere to be found upon return. If Leon is asked, he'll say that he last saw him with Butler going to Med Lab #1.

Shortly thereafter, Butler will re-enter. He has no idea where Henrikson is, and denies ever taking him to Med Lab #1.

Henrikson is, indeed, in Med Lab#1. There's nothing wrong with him, he's fine, and is examining a dolphin. It was not, in fact, a cybernetic creature but a special breed able to take the pressure of this area. The dolphin has been frolicking outside the lab, and Henrikson is examining him through the fiberglass window of the MedLab.

Henrickson insists that he's fine, though thinks it strange that he has not seen many people aboard the station. He will want to be debriefed immediately about the PCs excursion.

The Curse of the Statue

If someone brought the statue back to the complex, this will cause great problems. Anyone carrying the statue automatically has the Unluckiness disadvantage!

Leon will once again approach Butler, whispering to him that a virtual horde of dolphins, originating from the U-boat, has surrounded the complex, ruining the sonar.

Butler is extremely bothered by this fact; he asks the PCs to once again return to the ridge on the look-out for another hunter-killer. He refuses to believe that these are ordinary dolphins. If the PCs minisub is damaged, he'll lend them one of his explorers.

If Butler gets a look at the statue, he will be amazed. It is made out of the metal Hyperite! He'll beg to keep it to examine it closer. Butler will also insist on coming to the site.

Hiromatsu Minisub Explorer

F-3/50, B-3/40, L-3/40, R-3/40, T-3/40,
U-3/40

Maneuverability: +1

Pilot Skill-15

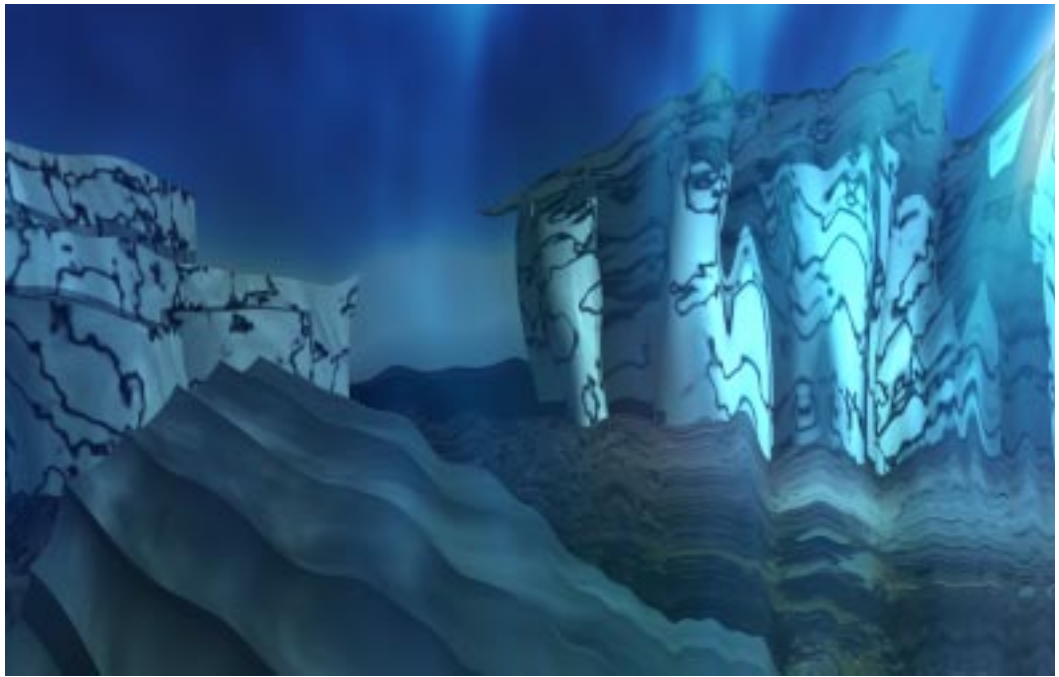
Maximum speed: 25 knots

No weapons.

The Second Excursion

Upon exiting HIPSHOT the second time, the PCs will find something seriously wrong. When they enter the sub bay to board their sub, they will notice sludgeprints climbing out of the launching bay and fading off. It looks as if someone climbed into the complex. Someone with large, splayed footprints.

A Deep One has, indeed, climbed into the complex. It is currently waiting in one of HIPSHOT's Explorers. However, the PCs will hear a clattering sound come from their own mini-sub (or if that was destroyed, the HIPSHOT's other Explorer).



The source of this noise is an engineer, Grigori Tiche, who was taking apart the Explorer or Mini-Sub for repairs. In other words, it currently doesn't work. Grigori isn't entirely mentally stable—if asked why he took apart this sub he'll scream that no one believes in his abilities and that one day he'll own the place.

Anybody with Mechanic skill will realize that the sub has been pretty trashed. Grigori disassembled key components and reassembled them completely wrong.

The Deep One is hiding inside the second explorer fairly well. It has Camouflage-15 if anybody cares to search visually.

Anybody who enters the sub will certainly find it. If it feels threatened, the Deep One will claw the person and run out, diving into the water in the sub bay. A Deep One's claw will do 2d+2 cutting damage. Fright Check-2!

If the Deep One is not found, he will attack as soon as there are 2 or less people on board the mini-sub. Against two people, he will fight to the death.

THE TEMPLE

As soon as the PCs repair their sub and return to the ridge, they will discover a sunken city has appeared in the middle of the basin, just beyond the derelict u-boat! Almost looking like the mythological Atlantis, broken pillars, statues, and buildings have grown up from the silt. Looming in the middle of the city, however, is a huge pyramid temple complete with marble steps heading towards a great door.

Deep One

ST 14 Move/Dodge: 6/7
IQ 13 PD/DR: 0/1
DX 12
HT 13/16

The Statue

If the PCs have the statue with them, they will be in for a shock. Several Deep Ones will exit from the temple and swim towards them, hoping to tear them apart and retake their artifact. Furthermore, the dolphins will follow them if they still have the statue, confusing their sensors but otherwise never directly attacking.

If the PCs left the statue at HIPSHOT, the base will soon be under assault by the Deep Ones, again trying to reclaim their artifact.

The Deep One Attack

If the PCs have the statuette, they will first see three Deep Ones swimming towards them quickly. If these Deep Ones are dis-

Star-Spawn of Cthulhu

ST 70	Move/Dodge: 20/14
IQ 21	PD/DR: 3/12
DX 10	Damage: 11d cut, 5d cr
HT 20/100	Weight: 144 tons, Size 20

patched, they will have a short while to explore the city. However, in a few minutes, a light in the temple will shine, and soon the temple doors will open and over a hundred Deep Ones will swim towards the PCs! Fright Check-4!

Exploring the City

The PCs may get a few precious minutes to explore the city. It looks like an ancient Greek city, and there are many coins, statuettes, and other treasures scattered everywhere on the ground.

While the PCs are exploring, the temple itself will start to bathe the area in light. Figures can be seen moving in the windows of the temple.

Butler begs to enter the temple. Whether or not the PCs do this entirely up to them. If the PCs approach the temple, they will hear an odd, alien chanting sound that disturbs and intrigues them all.

If the PCs open the temple, they will see the leader of the Deep Ones, a Star-Spawn of Cthulhu! Hideously clawed hands, a tentacled face, and glowing red eyes that seem to mirror unimaginable doom itself, the Thing will turn towards the PCs and begin to move its great shape. Mythos Fright Check -5!

Holing Up in HIPSHOT

If the PCs return with the statue, the Star-Spawn and his Deep One minions will seek to destroy them there. If the PCs are smart enough to discard the statue, Butler will pick it up and bring it back with him.

Either way, as the PCs head back to the complex, another tremor will occur. When they get to the complex, they will discover it completely dark... and *flooding*.

The Launch Bay

The PCs will discover Grigori the engineer dead in the sub bay, and one of the Explorers completely torn up.

Butler immediately goes to check Med Lab #4. If confronted, he will actually lash out at the PCs. Upon arriving in Med Lab #4, he'll gasp in horror -- the lab's been completely flooded. Furthermore, the PCs will see twelve cylindrical containers, once holding Deep Ones, shattered.

Repairs

The water has flooded most circuitry in the base, making it unworkable. Any PC making an Electronics roll will discover that they can reroute power to turn on *one* of the four critical systems. If the roll is made by 5+, they can turn on two systems:

Lights: The dim emergency lights give a -6 darkness penalty. Turning on all the lights will relieve this.

Sonar: If the Sonar is turned on, they will see the Star Spawn steadily walking towards them. ETA: 15 minutes.

Communications: If Communications is turned on, the PCs can call in reinforcements or evacuation. ETA: 2 hours. Switching the power back to another system requires an Electronics-3 roll to not blow out the circuitry.



Weapon Defenses: HIPSHOTS' emergency defense system consist of a single turreted torpedo launcher.

THE FINAL ASSAULT

It is important to remember that the Star Spawn and his minions are *extremely* smart. Geniuses, in fact. They will not try anything as simple as a plain assault. The Star Spawn will use his incredible strength as well as the Deep Ones' magic to create another tremor under the ridge. If successful, this will collapse the ridge on top of the mining facility.

This will be revealed on sensors before it actually happens. A Geology roll will reveal that this will occur in about one hour from the minor tremors happening.

Deep Ones are positioned around the complex prepared to kill anybody exiting... if the PCs still have a vehicle to exit with.

If they do, the Deep Ones inside the complex will try to disable the remaining sub as quickly as possible. They ingeniously deplete its fuel so it only has a minute or so left. An IQ-3 roll will instantly detect this once

the systems are turned on. Three Deep Ones will attempt to hide onboard, waiting for it to leave. The rest will stalk any living beings inside the facility.

REWARDS

Actually defeating the Star-Spawn and his minions is extremely difficult—escaping the facility alive should be the main goal of the characters. If they take the statuette with them, they should expect more trouble from the Deep Ones, though its power diminishes as it gets further away from the temple.

Players should receive 1-3 character points for roleplaying and creativity, plus one more if they defeated the Star-Spawn.

APPENDIX

Research Notes and Player Handouts:

Hiromatsu Power Systems Hyperiota Tunnelling-Platform (HIPSHOT)

Built in 2041 at 46-degrees N. latitude, 28-degrees W. longitude. Design specifications by Leopold Katamitski. Primary function: mining experimental metal compound, hyperiota. Secondary function: mineral and algae farming.

Staff: 42 miners and farmers. 8 geologist-scientists.

Power facility: Fusion power plant, supplemented by experimental seismic turbine.

Facilities: 2 labs, medical bay, 1 submarine docking bay, quarters, engineering.

Vehicles: 2 Hiromatsu micro-submarine explorers (crew capacity 8).

Defensive Capabilities: 1 torpedo bay launcher.

Metal Hyperiota Properties

Discovered May 9th, 2044 by Dr. Henry Hyperron by the Hiromatsu Power Systems Undersea Mining Complex #38. Extremely durable metallic alloy, atomic number 126. Atomic weight 292.0983. Theoretical resilience to non-Hy gyro bursts. When combined with Th, makes extremely-deadly radioactive poisoning.

Defensive Potential: 8.778

Offensive Potential: 8.975+??

Journal Notes on the U-boat:

August 15th, 1917

Amazing! A sunken city centered around a magnificent temple! God, it's beautiful. And I, a German to be the first to tread on those con-forgotten ways. I must visit it... once.

August 16th, 1917

I effected an exit from the U-29. Taking a diving suit and a portable light with me, I made my way to the ancient city. I found no skeletons or other human remains, but gleamed a wealth of archaeological knowledge from coins and sculptures.

August 17th, 1917

I wanted to search out the mystery of the great temple, but my portable light had extinguished. All I could do was turn on the dimming lights of the U-29's searchlight and walk up to the steps of the temple.



File photograph of Lieutenant-Commander Karl Heinrich of the Imperial German Navy, U-29 captain, lost at sea August, 1917.

Gamma Squad Character Creation

Gamma Squad is an elite mercenary force that is a branch of the nuclear-capable Alaskan Special Operations Force (AISOF). Gamma Squad specializes in underwater special operations. Composed of 25 team members, no more than ten go out on a single job. Captain Jon Henrikson commands the primary mission force.

Point Total: 100 points, with -40 points in disadvantages and 5 points of quirks. The advantage Unfazeable is disallowed.

Recommended Skills: Swimming, Scuba, non-Combat skills.

Military Rank of at least one level (5 points) must be bought. Further military rank, up to rank seven is available:

- 1) Private
- 2) Warrant Officer
- 3) 2nd Lieutenant
- 4) 1st Lieutenant
- 5) Captain
- 6) Major
- 7) Lieutenant Colonel

Cyberwear is available for character points. It is always detectable on a Vision roll or by touch. Character points are not received for it being detectable.

Starting Wealth: \$5,000.

Standard Equipment: The following equipment is issued free. Additional equipment may be purchased.

- Personal Communicator
- Exoskeleton Hardshelled Armored Diving Suit, with 2 hours air. (100 lbs., most DX skills at -2, PD 4, DR 30). Equipped with standard diving light.
- Combat Infantry Dress (48 lbs, PD 4, DR 40).
- Two frag grenades (6dx2 explosive dmg).

- Blue-green Military Laser Rifle (2d impaling damage, SS 15, Acc 15, ½D 500, Max 2,000, RoF 8, 140 shots, 9 lbs).
- Rocket Carbine (8d (2) damage, SS 15, Acc 7, ½D 1,800, Max 2,500, RoF 10, 10/10 shots, 9 lbs.)

Mission Objectives:

Code Name: Titan Moon

Mission Code: AI45/447218F

Colonel Jon Henrikson Commanding

Hinomatsu Power Systems underwater mining facility #38 (46 N.lat, 28 W.lon) requires immediate counterspy sweep. AISOF Gamma Squad soldiers to report immediately to Hinomatsu transport sub Cadence.

Deadly Force Danger Level: Medium.
Environmental Danger Level: High.

Gamemaster Tips

I originally ran this adventure as a one-shot with three people. I don't think any of them survived (mostly due to an unstable first officer who failed one too many Fright Checks early on...) but a good time was had by all.

For a cool underwater atmosphere, I put a blue gel (clear sheet of plastic) over a table lamp. Whenever the PCs went underwater outside the facility, I turned off all the lights but this one. When back at the facility, I kept all the lights on extremely bright. Great to enhance that Lovecraftian mood.