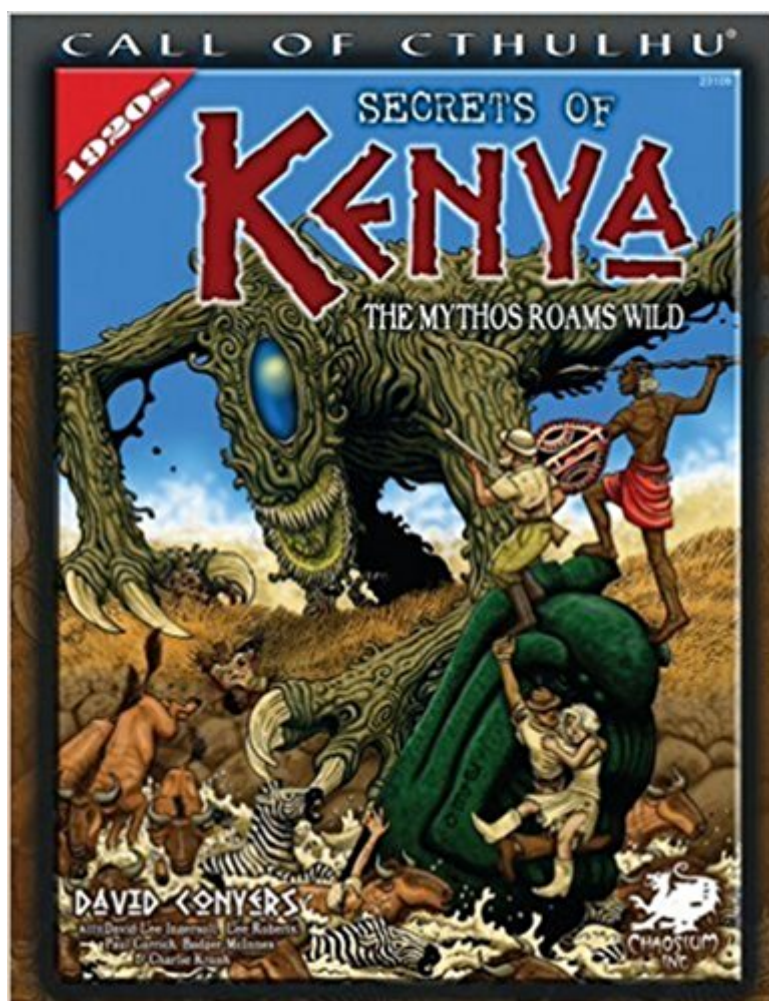


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Secrets Of Kenya: The Mythos Roams Wild (Call Of Cthulhu)



Synopsis

AFRICA: Long known as the Dark Continent, Africa strikes fear in the hearts of civilized Westerners for its savage tribes, fierce animals, impenetrable jungles, vast deserts, lost civilizations, slave traders, contagious diseases--and the unknown. Africa is "dark" because it is a mystery. It is the least understood, most dangerous, poorest, and least explored of the six inhabited continents. Disease, beast, and savage pose effective barriers to exploration. A scarcity of navigable rivers means that the only way to chart the interior savanna, jungle, and desert is to walk. Accurate maps of the Dark Continent must wait until the end of the nineteenth century. Now this mysterious place is opening to the Western world. Railways begin to connect cities. New medicines keep explorers from dropping dead before they make their discoveries. Settlements where crops can be grown are being established in the interior. Africa is becoming accessible, yet much remains mysterious and still very dangerous. In America and Europe the Cthulhu Mythos hides in cellars, old houses, crumbling castles, and forgotten caves. In Africa it roams wild, hunting in the wilderness and thriving in lost cities. Cults worshipping the Mythos are more prominent here, and the extent of their powers is vast. SECRETS OF KENYA introduces a portion of this vast and varied continent--three times the size of the United States, with a ratio of four Africans to every American alive during this era. Kenya provides a setting that can be both familiar and foreign. Settled by Great Britain in the 1900s it is an English-speaking colony where all the trappings of home can be found in the capital of Nairobi. Beyond Nairobi's limits, much of Kenya remains unexplored and virgin territory for investigations, and hidden horrors.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Don't let the three stars fool you - this is a pretty good Call of Cthulhu resource book. I do recommend it, and enjoyed it for the most part. David Conyers is one of the better CoC writers - I particularly enjoyed Devil's Children, published by Pagan a number of years ago. He clearly has a great imagination, and it is interesting to see the Mythos portrayed in a non-western setting. He is also clearly enamored with Nyarlathotep because that deity figures prominently in virtually all of the stories throughout the book. This is not a bad thing. I just hoped for a little more variety. The first half of the book is excellent. It consists of a guide to Kenya along with a detailed history of European infiltration and, later, conquest of the African continent. It is a must for any Keeper who plans to run a scenario in Kenya. And despite the fact that the book describes itself as limited to Kenya in the 1920s, I can see this book as being useful to any Keeper who plans to run an African scenario regardless of the locale or time period. Sub-Saharan Africa is a wonderfully evocative setting for roleplaying, and Conyers provides lots of excellent ideas for how to incorporate encounters with wild animals, native tribesmen, and other natural hazards such as tropical diseases. The book also contains an excellent appendix with short descriptions of every place in Africa with "documented" Mythos activity. The descriptions of Kenya, Mombasa, Nairobi and the people of Kenya are all well written and provided inspiration to me for various ways to use Kenya and its disparate peoples in my own Delta Green campaign. This book would have been worth 4 stars if not for two factors: the editing and the scenarios. The book contains a lot of serious typographical errors, many of which are so blatant that I wonder whether anyone even bothered to proofread it. This is a major screw up and I feel that the good folks at Chaosium deserve a sharp rap on the knuckles for putting out such an obviously unedited title. Second, the four scenarios included with the book are sub-par. Considering the quality of the rest of the sourcebook, I was looking forward to reading the pre-made scenarios, but found them all unusable. The first scenario, "Madness of the Ancestors," provides the players with essentially no freedom of choice. I will not reveal any spoilers, but the bad guys are required to "get" the characters in order for the plot to go anywhere. After that, it is a one way trip where the players are more like tourists than decisionmakers. The second scenario, "The Cats of Lamu," is a Dreamlands scenario. It is probably the best of the bunch but, being in the Dreamlands, doesn't actually take place in Kenya. The third scenario is "Savage Lands." It is kind of interesting and might be fun for the right kind of group. The opposition, however, is extremely powerful and I find it hard to believe that most groups of investigators (who tend to be intellectuals, not superheroes) would have

any chance of defeating the hordes of supernatural entities they would be forced to confront. If your group is the kind that totes Elephant Guns and Thompson SMGs, then this one might be for you. The final scenario is "Wooden Death." This scenario, like the first one, suffers from the fact that the investigators are kidnapped and put in an impossible position. After being released, they are forced to walk right up to a Great Old One and just hope that they are not all killed. The end of the scenario is kind of cool, though, so I think it could be rewritten and used, in parts, by a creative Keeper. All in all, Secrets of Kenya is a worthy addition to your CoC collection, but it is no Unseen Masters or Masks of Nyarlathotep. Hopefully, Chaosium will republish it at some point in the future with all of the typos edited out.

Africa is wild. This book mixes history, wild animals and horror into one volume. The background is historical and you can play it that way, like me. If you like a very different type of ghoulish scenario, this is for you. It takes you out of your comfort zone into something completely different and enjoyable.

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