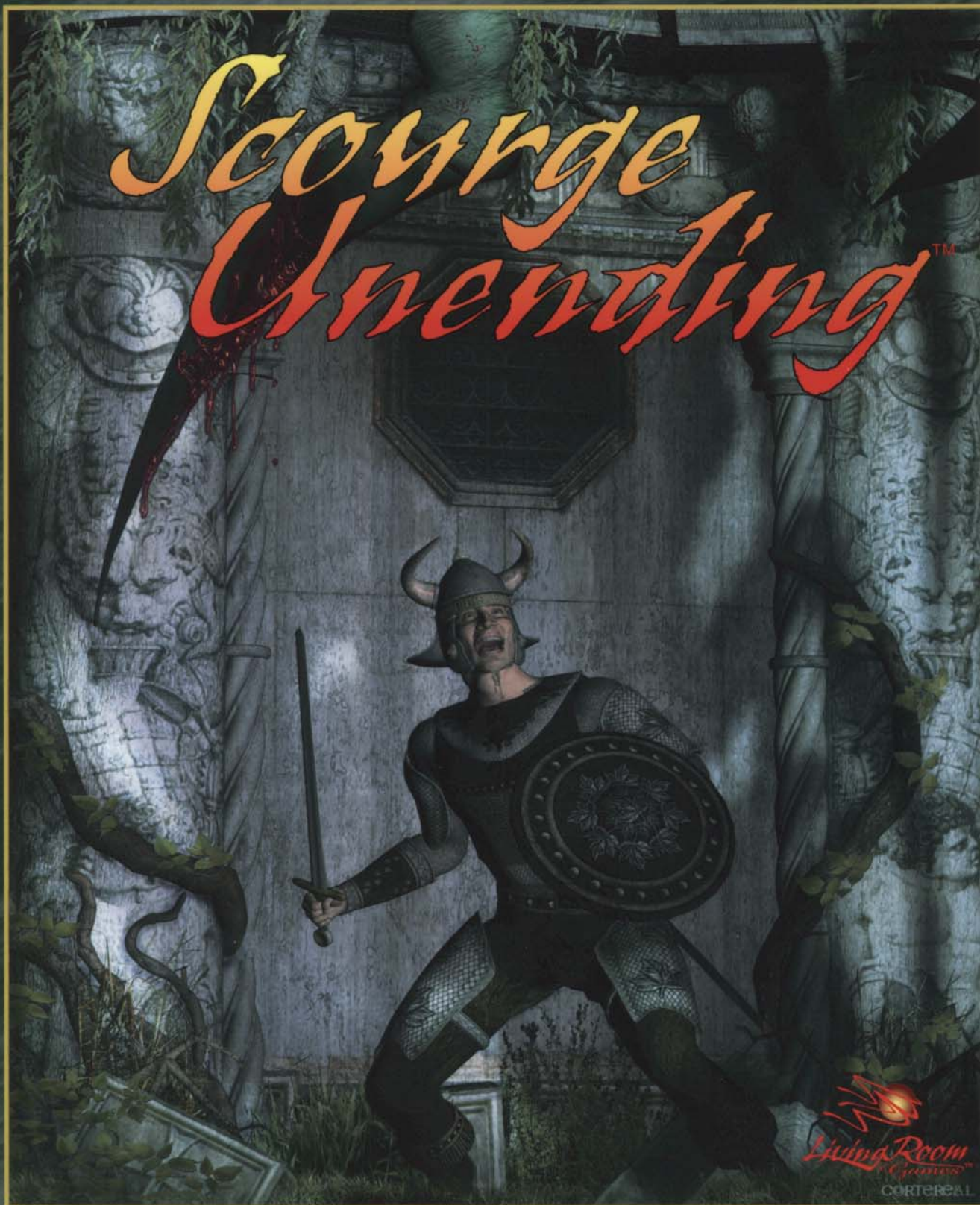


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SCOURGE UNENDING

Writing

Horrors

Robin D Laws, Teeuwynn Woodruff, Greg Gordon, Sam Witt, Allen Varney, Chris McCubbin, Caroline Spector, Fraser Cain, Louis J Prosperi, Rob Cruz, Diane Piron-Gelman, Andrew Raglan, and Rich Warren

Scourge Unending

Damon Earley, Aaron F Johnson, Sean Kelley, Gary McBride, Chris Palomares, Aaron Robb, Marco Soto, Mike Williams

Earthdawn Line Developer

Mike "Woodchuck" Williams

Editorial Staff

Editor

Scot Greisch

Production Department

Art Director

Shirley Soto

Cover Art

Luis Corte Real

Cover Design

Shirley Soto

Interior Illustrations

Oliver Eriksen, Stephanie Folse, David Grilla, Christi Smith Hayden, Denise Jones, Mark Mandolia, Jacob Minor, Kevin Minor, Matthew Minor, Melinda Picard, Shirley Soto, Martijn Vellingier

Layout

Marco Soto

Proofreading

Joe Chan, Aaron F Johnson, Jason Middleton, Aaron Robb, Marco Soto, Shirley Soto, Mike Williams



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116 W. Williamsburg Manor
Arlington, TX 76014

E-mail: info@lrgames.com
Visit us on the World Wide Web at <http://www.lrgames.com>



THE HORRORS REVISITED



Much like its predecessor, this book was born from a meeting between myself and His Highness. However, this time I was not speaking with my dear, departed friend Varalus III, but instead found myself attempting to console his son and successor, King Neden. So much had happened across Barsaive in the last two years, with Throal seeming to serve as the focal point. It had taken its toll on our young king; indeed, the night this meeting took place had only seen him awake and well again for two weeks. The clean-up of the attempted coup was still underway: the repairs to the streets were not finished, an obsidiman Purifier Named Hermod still watched over the old section of the city where the Horror that had haunted our king had hidden, and the funerals for those innocents who had died during that night of chaos still continued. King Neden had made monumental efforts since that night to bring order back to Throal. It was during one of these late-night meetings, when the others had been dismissed, that His Highness asked if I would stay for a time. I agreed.



Once again, the conversation begun was not one that I ever expected would end with the creation of another dangerous tome. In a quiet, mellow tone, the kind of tone reserved for safe firesides, warm drink, and good friends, His Highness asked me to speak of his father. That private conversation is not for the pages of this or any other manuscript. However, it finally led up to the king's revelation, and his other reason for asking me to remain.

After a time, King Neden rose from his chair to look down at the small fire. The flickering light and shadows made me realize how much the previous year's ordeals had aged him. His relatively young face now bore the marks of his trials. Lines of sorrow from the tragic loss of his father and the many others that died in the short, bloody war to oust Thera from our borders were stamped around his eyes. Lines of horror had been etched by the many months of Horror-bred nightmares. The most prevalent lines, however, were lines of resolve not unlike the creases that I had grown so accustomed to seeing in the face of his father. When he addressed me, his voice was still low, but it was filled with strength and purpose.

"Thank you, Merrox, for this conversation. I wish to see the realization of my father's hopes for me and his aspirations for this kingdom. I would not say that my ascendancy was as... smooth... as he had wished..." He paused then, to take a sip from his mug. "... but I think that we are in a better position for seeing the changes he sought. There are two things that I have learned at a very steep price in the past year. The first is patience." He looked back at me, then, before continuing, "The second... the second is the identity of the enemy I fear most."

The visions that the Horror (forgive the superstitions of an old man, but I will NOT write its Name) had left with our king had shaken him, initially. Now, however, he felt that Throal was not doing enough against the Horrors. I tried to point out the many successes of the Exploratory Force – the many, many Horrors and constructs that they had dispatched since our emergence. This was not enough for His Highness. "That is not the same, Merrox. There, we are hunting for our own reasons. Hunting to bring Barsaive back to the surface, to reclaim lost knowledge and legends. True, that very act helps to fight the Horrors. We aren't *hunting* them, however. Like this crusade of Horror Stalkers in Scythia I have heard of. *That* is a hunt. *That* is taking the fight to the Horrors."

I tried pointing out the times the Arm had mobilized to fight back an encroaching Horror from a Throalic community. He replied that it was still a defensive gesture, only upholding the basic rights of the citizens. I pointed out the many heroes, such as those who freed His Highness from the grips of the Horror's mark, that were known for fighting the Horrors. From the sly gleam in his eye, I could tell that I had fallen into the trap he had been waiting for.

"Exactly! Is it right to rest the full burden of that responsibility on the shoulders of those few brave souls who, without the aid of an army and little or no aid from a kingdom, are willing to take the fight to the Horrors? The Exploratory Force has done much; more, even, than I would have dared hope. I do not mean to belittle their accomplishments in any way. However, the main goal for the Exploratory Force is to rediscover Barsaive. Throal needs people whose goal it is to wipe out the Horrors. I wish to give her just that."

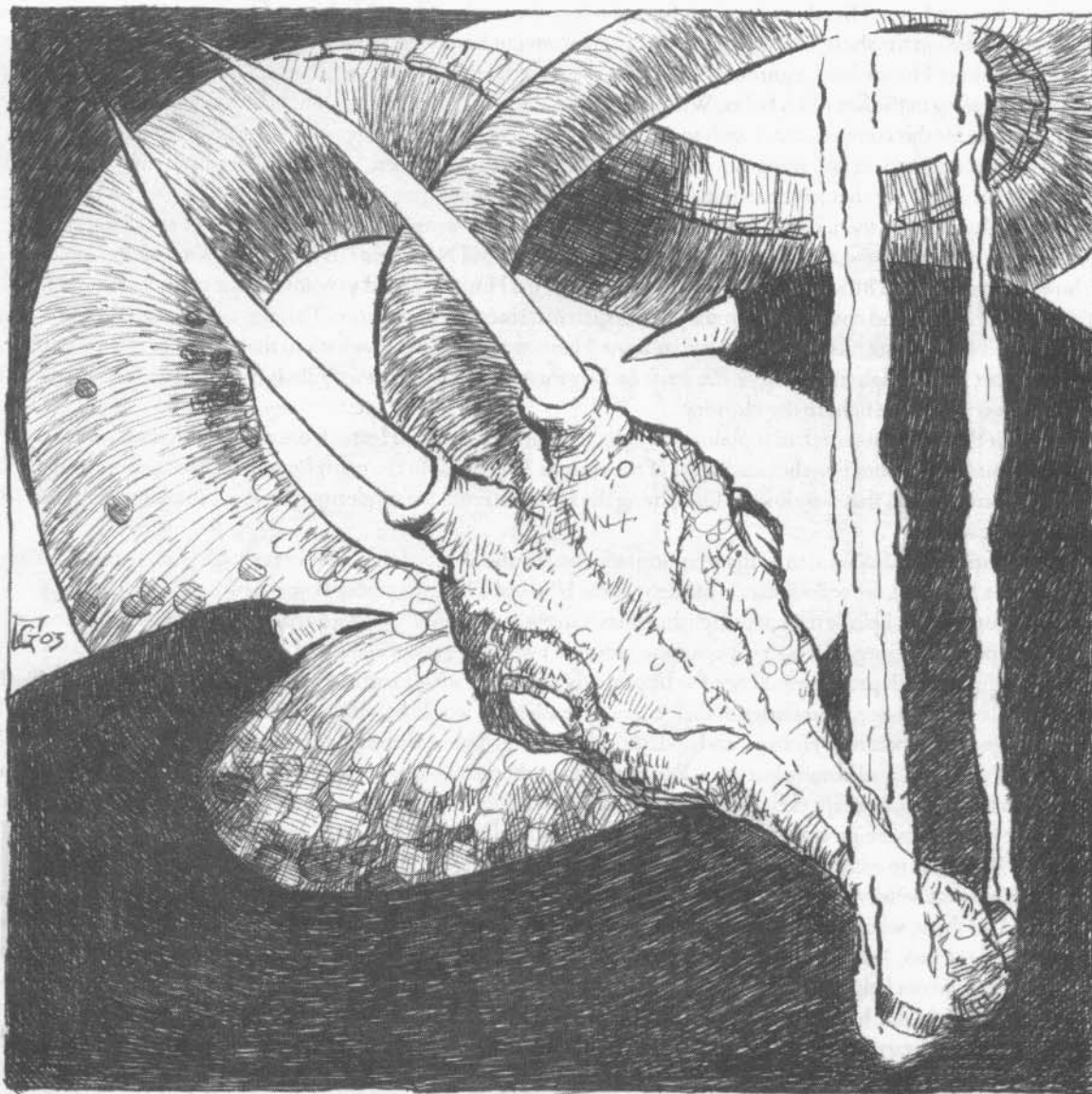
Of course, he continued, such people would need to be properly armed for such a battle. One of their greatest weapons, he claimed, and I could not argue, could be knowledge. Knowledge of their enemy. He asked if I would be willing to find the original tome that the Library had compiled, some years ago, on the nature of Horrors, and update it with what had been learned in recent years. His words brought back the echoes of his father's, and the arguments I had already lost once. Perhaps in the stubbornness of my old age, I tried again. King Neden's arguments were nothing if not equal to his father's, perhaps even more compelling. When King Varalus had argued the need to arm ourselves with knowledge against the Horrors, it was as a sovereign worrying over his nation. King Neden argued as a man who wished to save his very soul.

The king already had hopes to recruit a group of Horror Stalkers, Lightbearers, and anyone else willing to serve under Throal as a legion of Horror hunters. A missive was being written and a messenger was going to be sent towards Scythia to find Name-givers willing to take on such a task. What he needed for them, when they arrived, was something that might better prepare them for the hunt. Something that might just give them an edge. I accepted the task, just as I had accepted it before.

As with the first one, I did not help write this book; I merely found those willing to compile it, for I still refuse to read it. A substantial portion of the work in this tome would not have been possible without the Hunters of Throal (the Name the king gave this new group of Throalic soldiers). Many at the Great Library toiled to make sure that this volume included any changes noted from the original. Again, Adesian Skoln oversaw the creation of this tome, along with Quinn Agair, the leader of the Hunters at the time of this writing. The crew of the *Earthdawn* offered some of their experiences and stories, as well. Since his work on the first book, I do not believe that brave Adesian has had a single restful night's sleep. Despite that, he was still willing to help revisit this tome. He was one of the few willing to work on it again. He paid a price for it, as well. Adesian left us, not three nights ago as I write this. His body was found in his bed, his face a mask of horror. It was not a fitting end for such a good man. He has been our first casualty for this tome. I fear he will not be the last.

I sit, this tome completed, with the ink of my foreword drying as I watch. All together, I cannot help but feel that this work may hurt more than it helps. I hope that this is simply the childish fear of another tired, old man, who has seen the rictus of horror on the face of a dear, departed friend. While Vasdenjas, the Keeper of Secrets, is also gone from this world, I feel that I would be remiss if I were not to include his final advice on this subject, given so many years ago to those who would read the first tome.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records, 1513TH



'Knowledge is a powerful tool in this age of magic and often proves beneficial. Knowledge of the Horrors, however, invites their touch upon your mind and heart. The wise Name-giver will remember this and be wary.'

—Vasdenjas, Master of the Secrets

THE HUNTERS OF THROAL



Let us begin with an introduction. My Name is Quinn Agair, and at the time this tome's creation, I am the Master of the Hunt. Both of these Names probably mean nothing to you. In fact, you probably found this tome by accident, when searching through the Great Library looking for information on lost kaers, hidden treasure, ancient history, or following in the footsteps of some great legend. I could be wrong. You could have been looking for information on how to defeat a particular Horror. Better yet, you could have been looking for this tome to prepare yourself to join the Hunters of Throal. Whatever the reason, this book can help you. For this knowledge, as always, there is a price to pay.

Still with me? Good. First let me say that your curiosity is healthy. Next let me say it can get you killed. How could a tome that the Great Library of Throal carries be a danger to you, you might ask? An item is all a Horror needs to give its mark. Were you aware of that? That is part of the price: fear. If you can sit here with this book in hand and in the privacy of your own thoughts say to yourself, "There is nothing about Horrors that frightens me," then put this tome back and walk away. If you aren't afraid of the Horrors, then you are either in denial or a fool. Either will get you killed if you happen to encounter them or, Passions help you, try to fight them.

Excellent. Sense may seem to be the last virtue you would look for in someone going out to meet the stuff of their nightmares in mortal combat. You'll need it, however. It's what has been keeping Name-givers alive long enough for us to learn how to do it better through skills or talents. You'll need it in abundance if you wish to fight Horrors. They do not play by rules we can understand, and no Named Horror is ever the same as another. You'll also need training of some fashion or another: what to look for, where to strike, when you have the best chances to win, and when you should run as fast as your legs can carry you. You'll need knowledge. It will not help you with every Horror you encounter, but if it gives you the edge over even one, it could save your life and countless others.

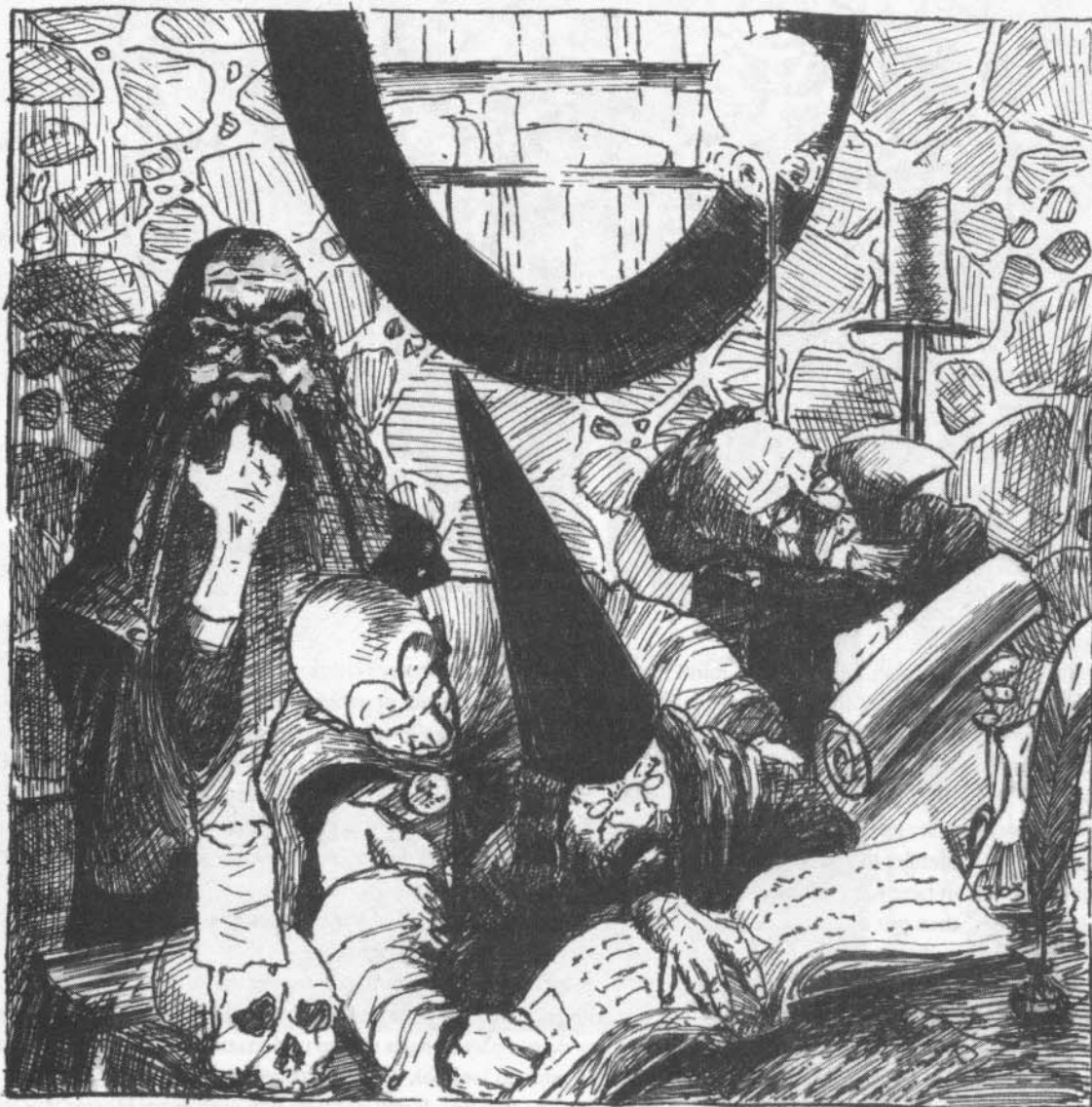
The final thing you'll need are companions. Those who hunt the Horrors alone are dead. It's only a question of time. If you want to live, then you need someone at your back. An army probably won't help you. Any Horror willing to show itself to an army is something you should seriously question battling with anything less than a fleet of airships armed with fire cannons and spellcasters. No, for hunting a Horror, you need a stalwart band of comrades with similar beliefs.

Continue reading, and learn of the Hunters of Throal. They are such a group. In these pages, you will find information on many of the Named Horrors that we are aware of. If you want to build a legend, find a different calling. There are many ways of earning a Name for yourself that are far less dangerous and leave you alive to enjoy it. You **will** gain a legend by defeating a Horror, but it's usually a posthumous one. The only reasons you fight the Horrors should be to cleanse them from our world, or to defend those who can't or won't defend themselves.

Hopefully, this book will leave you better armed against the Horrors. Hopefully, when you have finished this tome, I will get to meet you and welcome you into the Hunters of Throal. If not I, then whoever was willing to take my place. May the Passions bless you and watch your back.

—Quinn Agair, Master of the Hunt, 1513TH

REGARDING THE HORRORS, THEIR ORIGINS, AND THEIR NATURE



To all who read this perilous but still necessary tome, Adesian Skoln again gives you greetings. My fellow scholars and I have again labored extensively to create this book and assure the veracity of the information contained within it (to the best of our abilities, anyway). Some of the sections remain unchanged, reflecting a lack of new revelations or knowledge in those areas. I know that some of the Horrors that we had previously gathered information on have been destroyed. Thank the Passions and the brave souls that hunted them for that. I suppose if even one life was saved by the knowledge we provided, then the nightmares that still plague me have been worth it, and we have truly helped heal a bit of the damage the Horrors have inflicted on our world.

THE DANGER OF STUDYING HORRORS

To safeguard ourselves, my colleagues and I carefully divided the creation of this tome among several trustworthy persons so that no one worked on more than a single section of it. Even the youngest apprentices and scribes who worked on this volume were subjected to rigorous questioning and provided with numerous wards of protection. This time, many of the newly volunteered Hunters (see *The Hunters of Throal*, pp. 89-90) were willing to aid us in its compilation. Again, we kept the tome heavily warded. This time, there were no strange disappearances, and we lost no one to unexplained death. I think it is still dangerous to dwell overlong on thoughts of the Horrors, for they appear to sense attention directed at them. I still highly advise against speaking a Horror's Name aloud, as the chance of attracting the creature's attention grows much greater with every utterance.

A word of warning for readers of this work. We recommend that no one peruse this tome in a single sitting; to lessen the danger, it is best to take this work in small doses. Against such beings as the Horrors, wards and precautions provide only so much protection.

After the first edition of this tome was completed, my dreams were plagued with claws and fangs and of the sensation of floating in a vast sea of evil, my lips only a fraction above the water's surface. I even had visions of being devoured from the inside out, my skin only minutes from crumbling away to reveal my true self as a Horror. Now I think I can hear, in these dreams, faint whispers. I sometimes imagine chills upon my very soul, like the feel of a spider's legs running down exposed skin. This shall be my final work on the Horrors. I hope that it serves you well and that sleep does not abandon you to the nightmares it has given me.

REGARDING NAMED HORRORS

The greatest portion of this work contains various documents concerning those Horrors known by specific Names. Each of these terrifyingly powerful Horrors is unique; different from every other in appearance, activities, abilities, and methods. These Named Horrors run the gamut from Artificer, a Horror that forges ingenious and diabolical traps with which to capture and torment its victims, to Verjigorm, the Hunter of the Great Dragons. The reader should keep in mind that many Named Horrors exist about which we could learn little or nothing, that exist only as rumor and story. Indeed, there are many that we have learned of in the years since originally creating this tome that have been documented and added to it. Fortunately, some of those Horrors that we had discovered and documented in the first tome have been destroyed. Aahzvat Many-Eyes, for example, was destroyed by the group known as Horror Bane, the same group that has helped establish the Hunters of Throal. While we fervently pray that this tome will help that trend continue, it would be foolish to forget an important lesson that could be learned from Aahzvat Many-Eyes, that some Horrors have the ability to mark Name-givers through tainted items.

The Artificer, unfortunately, remains an active Horror. While we have heard no reports of heroes battling the Artificer directly, we have documented dozens of encounters with the foul traps it leaves in shattered kaers. Similarly, even with the warnings presented in the Library's earlier volume, Bone Crown the Usurper continues to lead groups of Name-givers to their doom. At least one group of hunters who had sworn to destroy Bone Crown have fallen under its sway and now serve as its agents. I fear that they may not be alone.

Of Chantrel and her Horror, there has been no word. Perhaps she has finally been granted peace, but I do not believe that is likely. Were it only so that nothing had been heard of Druistadt. Cults worshipping this Horror have become more and more common among pirates along the Serpent River. It would seem that the lesson of the doomed captain Szdanzo Rela'zar, cursed to forever haunt the Serpent River in a ghost ship, has been forgotten.

The village of Kerian may be one of the greatest successes of the first tome of Horrors. A Troubadour in the village had read of the Giftbringer and was able to recognize the signs of its gifts driving people mad with jealousy. The Troubadour sought the assistance of an adventuring company and the Horror was driven out of Kerian before the village was consumed by madness.

Joie has become more cautious since information about its ability to pervert emotions has become available. More than one adventuring group has reported finding a village whose denizens were twisted, feeling pleasure instead of pain when injured, or joy at things that should sicken them, only to discover that the Horror had fled just after they had arrived.

Nebis (how I fear writing that Name) has learned a great deal since we last wrote of it. An unknown hand scrawled, "My thanks for illustrating an area in need of change." in the margin of the prior work and now there are reports that N. no longer appears frequently to a victim as one of the



Passions. He has appeared as legends and heroes, past and present, still trying to mark people with its dark tattoos. There are even rumors that it has taught Name-givers how to give its tattoos to each other in the form of Blood Charms and now marks us through those.

The Horror Nemesis has profited greatly from Barsaive's war against Thera. It has taken control of many of the slavers who once sold their captives to Thera; their airships now provide a steady stream of slaves for the gladiatorial games held at its many strongholds. It continues to offer its dark weapons to heroes that fight other Horrors (the Hunters of Throal spend a great deal of time ensuring that none of their number have accepted such foul offerings).

Taint has claimed a number of adventurers in the last six years. We know this because surviving members of the adventuring groups that battled it have recorded their defeats within the halls of the Library. Taint exists solely in the Astral and it feeds on magicians who, unfortunately, would otherwise be best suited to battle it.

Elberg the Younger remains the thrall of the Tempter. Elberg is now more Horror Construct than dwarf, but stories of a thing that could only be what was once Elberg have surfaced in the outer villages of Throal. There must be something of Elberg left, for the Horror continues to grant him great power. I shudder to think it, but the most obvious reason for it to do so is that it is still feeding off of him.

Ubyr is a colossal Horror, one would think it would be relatively easy to find, providing a Name-giver had the means to navigate beneath the surface of the Serpent River. Still, several expeditions to slay the thing have ended in failure, not due to a battle lost, but because the Horror wasn't found. Aside from the very rare sighting of the giant leech and the only slightly less uncommon disappearances of riverboats attributed to it, Ubyr has been very quiet recently.

Ysrthgrathe, on the other hand, has delighted in being the nightmare of the Library. He continues to write the Library, sending letters describing the suffering he inflicts on the body that he inhabits. Each one contains a story more horrible than the last.

I have saved writing about two Horrors documented in the previous volume until the last. Ristul and Verjigorm. While no appearance of Verjigorm has yet to be documented, the Cult of the Great Hunters continues to grow. Now that the Horror Stalkers are concentrated in Scythia, the actions of this cult have become more overt and, dare I say, appear to be approaching a crescendo.

Ristul has been the topic of a great amount of debate in the halls of Throal. While we agree that Ristul is the corruption of astral space, there are many finer points on which we disagree. Is it truly a Horror? Is it sentient at all, or just a force of corruption? If the Horrors are defeated, will Ristul recede, or will there be Horrors as long as Ristul stains the Astral?



HORROR STORIES



The following pages are dedicated to those unique Named Horrors that the Library of Throal has at least three reports from adventurers or scholars that seem to all point to the same entity. There are doubtless many more Named Horrors out there; there has to be for the Scourge to have been able to be what it was. However, as much as I would like to compile a list of every whisper that has ever been uttered in warning in the hopes that it could lead to the death of a Horror, there are far too many with far too little information. For example, recent word from Jerris says that the Denairastas have awoken some Horror from the Wastes, but there is not enough information to present as to its methods of attack, or more importantly, its Name. The Name Markael has been attributed to a Horror that is said to have a semi-reptilian head with seven eyes and the body of an obsidiman. While I have my suspicions on exactly what that is, we have only the hysterics of a broken ork to base our report on. Just be aware that the Horrors we have listed here in detail are real, and at least two of them have polluted the air of Throal with their vile presence. The Names presented here doubtfully are the creature's true Name, since the majority of the scholars that have compiled the information on them still live. However, even knowing one of the Names is enough to give you an egde; hopefully something in this tome will lead to their destruction.

As was theorized in the original tome, the most important distinction between Named Horrors and those without Names is that any Horror that has a Name also has a True Pattern, and is therefore subject to the same laws of magic that we Name-givers know. Also as it mentioned, using thread magic against a Horror of this power is extremely difficult, even when armed with the knowledge of its true Name. This is a path that many scholars believe is our best hope for driving the Horrors from our world. It was a path I and a dear friend of mine

believed had great potential. Lyric had been a Nethermancer of great power, and we had learned the true Name of Aazhvāt Many-Eyes and based our attack strategy around Lyric beginning the assault through the astral. In the end, we managed to win due to Lyric's initial spells, but his death still haunts my dreams from time to time, and I have witnessed many Horror-bred atrocities in my short life. Understanding the pattern of a Horror is a step closer to the edge of the abyss than even I am willing to go. Does it work? Yes. I am honestly not certain if we could have won that fight without Lyric's sacrifice. However, there has to be a better way. Perhaps Lyric was simply not powerful enough, or quick enough, or strong enough. I cannot say for certain. What I can say is that if you choose to use thread magic against the true Pattern of a Horror, may the Passions have mercy on your soul.

—Quinn Agair, Master of the Hunt, 1513TH

THE TOUCH OF DARKNESS

The following document is from King Neden, who requested it be put into this tome. This, fellow Name-givers, details our enemy. This is the warning that King Neden wrote for us, having felt the awful presence of this Horror in his mind. It attempted to destroy our country by destroying the mind of our king and leading him down the path of darkness. It failed. This is the one we want. This is the Horror above all others that the Hunters should be looking for. If, after reading this document, any of it sounds like something you have encountered before, contact the Hunters. If you do not know where we are, just ask a Librarian, they can direct you to us or take your statement, and pay you for it.

—Quinn Agair, Master of the Hunt, 1513TH

To whomever reads this, my Name is Neden Avalus, and I am the king of Throal. For some time, I carried the mark of a Horror upon me, and was unaware of it. I can only attempt to explain to you what that means to me, the doubts that it fills me with. How long was I under its influence? Was the rush of the war my idea and my impatience, or the careful manipulation of an entity so ancient my mind reels in an attempt to comprehend how much it must have seen and must know? What of my other decisions? Has it lead me down this path? Is it to blame, or am I? I put these doubts aside as best I can. Regardless of where they started, I carried out these things, and they are my responsibility. It is a responsibility that I will not shirk. However, having felt the touch of a Horror in my mind, and having seen the dream it gave me, it is also my duty to share it with you. To prepare you for what I believe is the greatest threat that we face, aside from the Hunter of Great Dragons. On the night of my collapse, while those brave souls battled the evil that held me, I had this vision:

There was pain, sharp and sudden, like blades exploding from my insides to pierce me everywhere. That was when things went dark, but the pain remained. I screamed with the voice of my dream and my pain was answered with a sound that I can only describe as the rattle of an ancient evil. A faint, blood-red luminescence began to fill half the void around me, turning the void into shades of blood and darkness. Between me and the horizon, I could make out a bowled pedestal, with viscous, stygian liquid filling it. There was a form near it. Its silhouette defies my attempts to describe it, except to know it was nothing created by the pattern of our world. As I screamed, I could sense that the sound I heard was laughter, or what passed for it. It was the sound that the creature before me was making, watching my pain. With this realization, I came back to myself, spitting at the creature. It had no effect, but it returned to me my courage, and I addressed the creature. I told it that even now it was being hunted and even if it took me with it, it would be destroyed. This caused a brief heightening of the sound and then it addressed me in return. It spoke to me in something far more than words, something that has no true translation. It spoke to me in a crippling pain I pray never to feel again. This is the best interpretation I can offer of what it conveyed to me:

"Ah, foolish Name-giver. Think you that you can destroy Andokhas so easily? The attempt has been made many times, by many better than you. And yet, here I am. Always, it is I who feast on them. Always, it is their screams that renew me."

There was a brief pause, then, and the fluid in the pedestal began to swirl slowly. I wasn't paying attention to it, so I do not know why my memory recalls it so vividly. I saw flashes, faces, so many faces. Some made no sense, they looked nothing like what I was familiar with. Many, however, were Name-givers. There were even a few dragons amongst their number. All were screaming. And I knew that all of them had been killed by this Horror. It had fed on them. It had used them. It had led them to itself and it had destroyed them. Somehow, I also realized that



what I saw spanned ages. Countless millennia. Not just images from this Scourge, but others. As long as there have been those in our world with the power to Name, this creature has been here during the high cycle of magic to feast on them.

I think, at that point, I began to scream again, in sympathy with the countless thousands that this Horror had twisted and destroyed. I think it started laughing again, but I cannot say for certain. The faces started swirling faster, becoming ones I knew. In hindsight, I think at this point the Horror was simply trying to destroy me with despair, because the faces were of those who have not died, nor ever been marked by this foulness. I saw courtiers, friends, soldiers, and citizens. I saw diplomats, commoners, and enemies. All were its victims. Again, after the dream, I came across some of the faces in my father's old temple to the Passions. I pray that this beast was only attacking all the things I held dear in its attempt to destroy me, but it had shown me the face of Rashamon, as well, the Passion that became Raggok. It made a mistake, however; a mistake that saved my life and, I think, my soul. It showed me the face of my father.

At the sight of my father's kindly features twisted into a rictus more horrible than I had found him with, my rage welled up inside me again. I could feel it, a palpable force, and I lashed out with it. The faces blurred, the pedestal cracked, and the fluid splashed out like molten lead. The creature made a hiss that danced across my nerves like fire, driving me to my knees in pain. I think now that, at that moment, I had broken its power. I do not think it would have been sufficient, however, had its physical form not also been destroyed. I am, even now, uncertain on the time of this. Was I struck with this dream when it lost its physical form, or before? It doesn't matter; I was free. Light began to pierce the dark prison around me and the form of the creature began to dissipate, along with the fluid that slowly dribbled to the floor, like rotting muscle. I felt an echo of pain, like the cold ache in an old wound during a winter freeze, the Horror's last message to me. I think it meant:

"I will return for you and those who have harmed me. You will never be safe..."

This is the Horror I know as Andokhas. This is the creature that managed to live here, in Throal, for an unknown length of time, undetected. This is the Horror that nearly brought our kingdom to its knees, through me. This is our enemy. This creature is the reason why I assembled the Hunters of Throal.

May the Passions preserve us and guide our hands. This is the war we cannot afford to lose.

A MURDER OF CROWS

Excerpt from Scholar Nials Rell's uncompleted study:

Below is a recounting of a conversation which took place in the city of Jerris. The subject, who will remain unnamed, is a male ork Cavalryman of undetermined age and tribe. This is a direct recounting of his experience with a Horror whom he refers to as Corra Kees, which is ork for Raven-hearted. It is my belief that this Horror was in fact Cauthrunne, the Queen of Crows. It should be noted that the subject has had his eyes removed by force and is extremely unstable.

Nials: I am ready now if you would like to begin.

Ork: Yes, oh yes ... I would like to begin ... I ... I will need something to drink, something strong. It is well lit here? Yes ...? As I requested

Nials: It is well lighted here, you are seated near a window and the sun shines in this room. All is as you have asked. I will have some drink brought for you, but you must tell me your tale.

Ork: I want to tell it, I do, but it is hard to loosen the tongue for such a hard tale and it hurts to speak of it...

Nials: Yes?

Ork: Give me a moment, I am thinking about where to begin. Do you like to ride, Nials Rell? Have you ever been on the back of a well-bred mount coursing across the plains of grass as if you were a child of the wind? That is where I would be now if I had made the right choices. One with the wind and a good horse...

I did not make the right choices, though. I was born in a scorcher tribe and grew up with horses. When I showed the mark of being an Adept there was no question I was a Cavalryman. When I was eight I was taken into a mercenary company that was largely Cavalrymen. We fought for Thera, we fought for Throal, we took turns guarding caravans and protecting missions of exploration. The years of my youth passed quickly and I was well into my manhood when I signed on with Thera to fight in Marac. I had my own company by then of 25 veteran riders. Though most were merely soldiers, there were several other Adepts in the unit to give us the polish we needed.

Nials: So you traveled across the sea to the south to fight in the armies of Thera? I am surprised to hear that from a Barsaivan ork.

Ork: Why, because they are slavers? You dwarfs have slaves too, with your taxes and your laws. Sooner or later we all choose to serve something in some way. I simply made the choice to serve money. I did not care whom I worked for as long as the pay was good and the challenge was right. I have spent my life traveling; I have seen more of Barsaive than most Air Sailors. I have no love for any one place more than any other. As a mercenary you learn that it is all just land, empty of all value save that which Name-givers take out of it or place into it.

Nials: I see, please continue.

Ork: Marac is where my life began to go sour. The battles there were horrific. The men fought along side Horrors there, you know. Thera used mercenaries in battles where they did not wish to expend their precious armies. Fat lot of good it did them. My company did well in our initial battles.

Eventually, we were dropped behind enemy lines by a vedette. A group of nearly a thousand cavalry from various units fell in the enemy rear, cutting a wide swath through their rear echelon and reserve. This was, of course, coordinated with a frontal ground assault and aerial bombardment. When we were within sight of their front lines things began to fall apart. Instead of punching through as planned, we became mired in the retreating ranks of Maracan soldiers. Their forces began to rally around a giant, axe-wielding troll and we were surrounded. The Therans, seeing that the day was lost, retreated under the covering fire of a Kila. Then the slaughter began. Knowing we had not enough ground to mount a charge, they simply kept us hemmed in. We never saw the fire cannons they brought to bear on us...

At this point, I offered him a glass of hurlg, which he tossed back with a look of grim determination about him.

Ork: We lasted perhaps an hour, thinking that we could hold out long enough for Thera to regroup and relieve us. We should have known better, but when you only have one hope you cling to it with all your might. By this time, of the thousand who began the battle, there were perhaps three hundred left, many of them Adepts. We had taken refuge in a canyon, which granted us respite from the fire cannons. It was clear that they were massing for a final assault on our position. I gathered up the four remaining members of my company and moved us to the rear of the canyon, hoping we might find some way to escape. We were still looking when the charge came. Our front line extracted a heavy price from the assaulting Maracans, but it was clear that we were doomed. A stray arrow took me in the chest and the fall from my horse knocked me unconscious.

I awoke some time later, being dragged behind my mount by one foot that had tangled in its stirrup. My horse had found its way out of the battle further back in the canyon. I was losing blood quickly and knew I was going to die. Pulling myself to a low boulder I lay on my belly and called out to whatever powers that be. I wanted to live.

At this point the subject stopped speaking and refused to respond for nearly an hour. When he did speak again, his voice was deeper and a disturbing sense of awareness had come over his body. I had to admit that I was very glad he had asked for a well lit room, as the change was startling and spoke of dark magic still at work in this poor ork.

Ork: The sky was dark with smoke from burning fat. I was surprised to see a giant blackbird swooping down through it. Landing on the rock beside me it eyed me with feral intensity. I had somehow ended up on my back and could feel the rock below me sticky and warm with my blood. I thought, "This is how it ends; I will have my life taken by a bird." Even half-dead I started to laugh, the pain was intense and the hissing noise coming from the arrow in my right lung only seemed to make it funnier. Twenty-five years of war I'd faced, to be killed by a giant crow. I laughed until I was on the verge of passing out and then a cold, beautiful, female voice said:

"Would you choose to live and fight on if you had that choice, Name-giver?"

With my vision dimming and my body burning, I croaked out something that sounded like "Yes." My body was filled with ice, I could see a blinding light shining from all around me and the roar of a thousand fire cannons filled my ears. Slowly, from out of the glow, I began to find my body again. I was floating in the air and all around me were the cries of birds as I circled in a vortex of dust and pebbles. As the blood warmed my limbs I realized I was whole, not only whole but healthy, strong, filled with might. I felt as if my *gahad* had been raised but my mind was as cold as the white light around me. I willed myself to my knees, kneeling in the slowly dwindling dust devil of debris and blood-soaked mud.

It was then that my eyes fell on her. If my body was filled with power, then truly my mind was filled equally with lust. A tall, fierce-looking elf woman stood before me. Looking nothing like any other elf I have ever seen, she was wearing black armor accented with faintly luminescent blue gemstones. She carried herself like a skeorx on the prowl. She was beautiful beyond all words and my heart sang. Looking me over with a slow, critical eye, she said, "You will serve me well, ork. Strip yourself of arms and armor, for I would give you gifts to take you far."



I complied as if I was a rank private being told to sweep out the stables and stood before her dressed only in my gambeson and boots. The elf smiled and raised her hands above her head, summoning the swirling wind around us once more. All around us spilled blood began to smoke and sizzle. Running like quicksilver, it gathered between us on the soil and began to rise into the air. It rose up slowly into a long line and then began to glow a deep purple, streaked with greens and reds. A sensation of heat and cold at the same time assaulted my skin and my mind reeled as the blood formed into a large, two-handed blade. Before my eyes a sword of fine lines and deadly design was born. Without cue I reached out for this blade. Grasping its hilt with both hands, I drove it, point down, into the earth at my feet. I felt cleansed of guilt and concern. I was free to use this blade as a warrior was meant.

My armor lay in a pile of unseemly bits and reworked scraps at her feet. With a scowl she looked it over and shook her head. As if her gaze alone was caustic, the armor corroded and smoked. "This will never do for one of my warriors," she said to herself. Walking close to me I could smell the tang of war and salt air on her. She stood before me, close enough that I could feel her breath on my face. Raising her arms to my shoulders I could feel pressure as she ran her thumbs down my collarbones. I never even noticed that she cut deeply into my flesh with her long, black nails. The blood running down my chest was inconsequential. It only piqued my interest, as it did not flow properly, but instead worked itself into a deep crimson, living crystal plate, from head to toe.

After this she stepped back, or perhaps floated back, from me. "Go forth and do your work. There is the battlefield, bring glory to my Name and destroy all who stand before you. Where there is great battle, so shall you be. Drink deeply of the blood of your foes and quench your blade in the hearts of their children. Fear not and you shall never fail, for I am with you and shall provide for you. I am your mother, your lover, your goddess and I will hold you to my bosom." With that there was a burst of cold, white light and the great raven flew from the canyon.

I am not sure how I made it out of that canyon, I simply remember fighting. I must have slain hundreds. Forty-seven Cavalrymen followed me out that day. None of them were of my original company and they simply called me the captain. I spent the next ten years fighting my way across the world. Even as men around me grew old and withered, or lost their will to fight, I continued. I suppose I knew I served a Horror, but the world was a horrible place and I fit the times. On my thirty-seventh birthday, when I should have been an old man, retired and looking to my sons and daughters for the future, I instead found myself aboard an airship bound for battle. I could not tell you where it was. I had ceased to care who, or where, I was fighting. My company was long dead and I was a lone soldier known for my ability to survive any situation. I was in a stateroom, as befitting my rank, gazing into a mirror. I no longer slept, for when I did, I had unending dreams of falling; I ate and drank only rarely, and then only alcohol and, though it pains me to say it, fresh blood. Looking in the mirror I realized my face had changed. I thought perhaps it was the light, but under closer inspection, with a lantern lit, I could clearly see that I had changed. I had the eyes of a bird, my eyes were the black, ebon beads of a crow.

Perhaps there was something living in my breast yet, for the sight of myself with crow's eyes caused my whole body to be wracked with pain. I stripped myself of armor and looked upon what I had become. My hands, talon-like, my hair already with feathers showing, my eyes those of the raven. With clarity I have not felt since, I tore the feathers from my scalp and dug my own eyes from their sockets. I know not what happened after that. I believe I pitched myself off the side of the airship into the sea.

That was 5 years ago by rough reckoning. I have not aged and I rarely sleep or eat. Still I hunger for battle, but I have been able to flee her for a while. I was foolish, however, and now she comes to Barsaive.

At this time the ork stood up from the table. He appeared to be looking for the bottle of hurlg, so I placed it in his hand.

Up to this point, the account is readable. Beyond this point the pages are torn and bloodied. A reconstruction of the events by a Nethermancer suggests that the ork broke the bottle and slit the throat of Nials Rell. His body was found empty of blood with his eye and tongue removed. The windows had been broken open and other than one large, black pinfeather, there was no sign of the ork he had mentioned. The room showed severe astral taint.

—Merel Drin, Dwarf Scholar

THE DEEP

When I was asked to help index and arrange the logs of the Earthdawn, I knew I would run into many strange and wondrous things, but I never thought I would find the following. It is a log which tells of a newly discovered Horror. Any further explorers of our world should be warned of this danger.

—Norstrom Quil, Senior Scribe, Library of Throal

Day 537

It has now been 34 days since we left the lands of Barsaive. The crew is holding up better than I would have expected. We have encountered a number of interesting things, such as the one I am about to describe. This morning, during watch change, one of the lookouts spotted a disturbance in the water off to the northwest. We changed course to take a look. When we got closer, we saw that it appeared to be a whirlpool with several ships circling it. When we tried to call to the crews of the ships they did not respond except to wave us in.

Nailus has suggested that we wait and try to determine what their intent is, but it seems that the crews of the ships are trying to break free of the whirlpool so I've ordered us in. We'll come in low from outside and attempt to tow the trapped ships out of the whirlpool's grip.





Day 538

No one likes a smug elf. It appears that Nailus was right. The whirlpool, we now believe, is some sort of Horror. The ships around it must be tainted or in some way in it's power. When we approached the first ship, they took our tow lines and seemed to be trying to pull themselves out, but their ship didn't move from it's orbit and instead we were dragged in. We tried telling the crew of the other ship to stop their pull but they continued to drag us down. We were forced to cut the ropes.

It was then that the whirlpool reversed its flow and turned into some sort of water spout. The force of the blast hit the bottom of the *Earthdawn* and we were all thrown off balance. One of the crew was actually thrown overboard, but we retrieved him and he seems to have just suffered a little water down the throat.

We pulled back to a five mile distance and the water spout returned to being a whirlpool. Nailus suggests that we cannot battle this Horror on our own and that it would be better for us to gather help at our next stop. Rather than have him proved right again, I've decided to go along with his proposal.

Day 539

We are back on course, but Jamus, the crewmember who was swept overboard, has been acting strangely. Several times last night, the sentries caught him on deck staring back toward the whirlpool's location. I'm afraid that he may be tainted by the Horror and so I've quarantined him in one of the smaller holds and have one of the Nethermancers looking after him.

Day 542

Jamus is dead. Last night, he broke out of the hold, made it on deck and to the wheel, and tried to steer the ship back towards the whirlpool. The pilot was able to wrench the wheel away from him and the sentries were trying to subdue him when he jumped overboard. Unfortunately, we were unable to recover him again as we were too high and it took too long to descend. He must have dived below the waves because we did a spiral search for three hours and found nothing. One of the sentries reports that Jamus yelled something as he dived overboard but he wasn't able to make out what it was exactly.

We are continuing toward Arancia.

Day 573

Many of the provinces here seem willing to be friendly toward both Throal and Thera, but we have not made many inquiries.

On the subject of the Horror in the middle of the ocean (see day 537) we have found that its Name is Corabidose and it has been plaguing trade vessels to Thera since before the Scourge. The local ship merchants are unwilling to talk much about it, but we're continuing our inquiries. We have picked up a guide Named Grotok who says he can lead us around the provinces.

These log entries, along with a few other documents lead me to believe that Corabidose is not held in place and roams the great oceans of the world. As there have been no other reports of this Horror, there is not much to report at this time.

A RELENTLESS HUNGER

The following tale was related to us by an ork Named Tyrke who claimed, at the time, to be a Wizard. Tyrke had been arrested by the Guard within Throal itself on a charge of creating a public disturbance. Once he was taken into custody, he refused to leave the cell until he spoke to a member of the Library staff. This demand might not have been obeyed had the guard sergeant not been a member of my family. In the interest of perhaps calming the agitated ork, I was sent for. As the interview will demonstrate, he did not appear to have the mental facilities to follow



the Discipline that he claimed to follow. Further investigation, however, including confirmation by the Horror Stalker and Nethermancer known as the Crimson Face, has confirmed that Tyrke was a spellcaster. If this is the case, the power of such a Horror as is described here is terrifying, both in its range and subtlety.

—Enid Tral, Librarian

"Name's Tyrke. Tyrke's a Wizard. What's funny?! You laugh at Tyrke?! Better not. Tyrke hurt you bad, if you laugh at Tyrke. Tyrke break your... whatsit... face? No. Nose? Yes.

Tyrke and Tyrke's friends found book. Tyrke read book. Yes, Tyrke can read! Tyrke is Wizard. Tyrke could read, before Devourer. That Horror that book talked about. Not talk, book had... pages? No. Words? Yes. Words about Devourer. Devourer was Horror. Horror with treasure. Words said that Devourer eat all. Meaning of Name. Tyrke and Tyrke's friends brave Adepts. Tyrke and Tyrke's friends decide to find Horror and kill it.

Tyrke look for Horror in Library. What? Tyrke say that Tyrke look for Horror in Library of Throal. Yes, Tyrke look for Horror in books. That what Tyrke said. Tyrke think it pretty stupid if Librarian not know what Tyrke say.

Tyrke find Devourer in Library. Book say Devourer eat people. It also say that Devourer was in Parlainth last. Tyrke tell friends. Friends and Tyrke go. Not long trip. Tyrke not remember most of it. Tyrke spent much time reading about Horror.

Tyrke and friends get to Parlainth after *(subject paused to count on fingers, lost count and gave up, before continuing)* lots of days. Ruins of old citadel, they were. Tyrke's friends look around ruin, but not see Horror. Tyrke say make camp and kill Horror in morning.

Dreams come. Tyrke saw Tyrke lose all he care about. Much pain and *gahad*. Tyrke wake with headache, like *gahad* kept in. Others look tired, too. Fiora, Troubadour, say that it mean that Tyrke and friends nervous. Tyrke and friends believe. Fools.

Ruins of west city full of falsemen, but empty of Horrors. Also have places underground, so Tyrke and friends go down. Gnashers attack right after Tyrke and friends enter first level down. Lots of teeth. Burdor and Yatta fight; Tyrke and Anya use magic. Fiora shoot. Gnashers die, but Burdor hurt. Burdor say bah and try and do Raider smoky-heal. It work, but not well. Burdor grumble and drink potion.

Gnashers attack again and again. Yatta fall in third fight. Tyrke remember think this strange. Yatta was Warrior but her Wood Skin not seem strong enough. Yatta good Warrior. Tyrke remember... Tyrke not remember, but think Yatta stronger than that.

Other strange things happen. Fiora forget how to make map. Fiora always make map, even if just in head. Big maps in little windling head. Fiora also forget favorite song. Forgot in parts, remember music but not words. Tyrke remember he could cast spells that were big. Remember not casting spells like that in citadel, only small spells. Remember that, not remember why. Anya, Elementalist, no use her Fireball and other big spells. Only use spear of ice. Not know why. Don't remember.

Got to center of citadel basement. Many gnashers. One cadaver man. Cadaver man look funny. Look almost alive. Gnashers on us before Tyrke could see though.

Burdor scream and leap, fight and bash. He die first. Too quickly, he die. Like he not remember how fight. Anya fight. Many gnashers on spears of ice, but she die. Remember seeing her stop fighting to think and not think she remember what she should do.

Fiora fly fast. She shoot down into gnashers. Tyrke fight and throw spells. Gnashers die. All gnashers die finally. Tyrke bleed, but have potions. Fiora shoot at cadaver man, but windling poison not work. She get close to try and shoot out cadaver man's eyes.

Cadaver man watch her, watch Tyrke. Tyrke cast Mind Dagger over and over, but cadaver man have much magic. Daggers not hurt. Try to warn Fiora, but Tyrke not know how to say warning. Tyrke forget. Tyrke forget how to do anything but stand and watch. Watch as cadaver man point at Fiora and Fiora go away.

What? Tyrke said that windling go away. Devourer eat her. She go away. Nothing left. Tyrke mad after that. Tyrke throw many spells at cadaver man. Cadaver man fall apart, but keep coming. Tyrke remember *gahad* burning, but nothing stop cadaver man. Tyrke not remember any more.

Next that Tyrke remember, he outside citadel. Tyrke not know how he got there, but he know that he must warn about the Devourer. He return to Throal. He try to go to Library, but not remember the way. Dwarfs laugh at Tyrke when he ask way to Library. Tyrke give *buunda* and break noses. Dwarfs beat up Tyrke; Tyrke not have friends to help and not remember spells. Dwarfs bring Librarian and Tyrke tell story. Tyrke done with story; Tyrke very tired now."

The ork fell into a deep depression at that point and would answer no more questions. He was taken to an olzim of Garlen to be cared for. All charges against him were dropped. The Crimson Face was summoned by Master Merrox and was sent to examine Tyrke. What follows is her report.

The Librarians ask me to make myself known in all documents that I scribe for them, so I am known as the Crimson Face. I am known in Throal and its sister cities as both Nethermancer and Hunter of Horrors. My teacher was Fireziel the Scarred, who was responsible for the destruction of the Shambling Darkness, and who was slain in Braza's Kingdom by the minions of that thing.

I was contacted by Master Merrox who asked me to speak with an ork Named Tyrke, who he said was claiming to be a Wizard who had encountered a Horror. I was preparing for a hunt, a hunt that many of those who read this will already know as the Crusade that my fellow Horror Stalkers have begun, and would have normally refused, but I am familiar with Tyrke Steelthought, Wizard of the band known as the Naelus Five, a Name chosen from their home village. He was said to be a Wizard of some skill and Court Wizard Ajmar once spoke highly of him, which is unusual in and of itself. Merrox did not give me much information (it is unwise to communicate about a Horror through a messenger) and the



strangeness of the information that I had been given convinced me that it required at least a preliminary investigation. I put aside my plans, confident in my brethren's abilities, and set forth to examine Tyrke and prevent the possibility of another Horror-marked Name-giver from endangering Throal.

The ork was kept in a cell within a guard house near the Great Library. He was allowed no contact and was fed through a slot in the door. The guards were clearly nervous about his presence, understandably. The commander let me into the cell with little preamble. My face is well known in this city.

Tyrke was dirty and unkempt, wearing the dirt of the road that he had brought with him from the citadel. He, too, recognized me. The fear that I cause in Name-givers does not give me pleasure, but it is an effective tool for keeping the intelligent civil. However, Tyrke reacted much like a scared child; he leaped away from me and backed into a corner, clearly distressed with my presence.

Some Name-givers would feel it necessary to calm a subject in such a state before beginning examinations. I find such actions unnecessary and time-consuming. I examined Tyrke's pattern carefully, scrying the astral space around him for any signs of a Horror's influence. I found none. What I did find was something of a surprise, even to me.

Tyrke's pattern had lost its stability. Complex weaves that defined his life and experiences, his personality and training, and all things that would define the Wizard Named Tyrke Steelthought were unraveled and frayed. In some places, threads were snapped in half, in such a fashion that, if they had been physical, I would have thought them cut with a knife. This Horror that Tyrke called the Devourer had, literally,

eaten part of his being, as a Name-giver would have consumed part of a loaf of bread.

I examined Tyrke carefully before arriving at this conclusion and found that his pattern, though damaged, suffered no further degradation. The ork had calmed himself during the initial examination, presumably because I had not initiated any violence towards his person, and was capable of responding to interrogation, if only in a childish manner. I inquired as to whether he used Life Magic. After clarifying that I had meant Blood Magic of the conventional sort (a distinction that a Wizard should have known, unless he had been locked in a kaer for a hundred years and was ignorant of the current debates on the subject; a condition that I knew Tyrke Steelthought had not suffered from), he confirmed that he possessed a charm commonly known as a Death Cheat. However, when he lifted his shirt to prove this, the charm was not there. He looked distressed at this absence, but, upon questioning, could not recall what had happened to the charm.

It is my theory that the Horror stripped his pattern of his convolutions, regressing his memories and mental faculties to those of a child, while leaving him physically as he was before it attacked him. This differs from depatterning in that the patterns of Name-givers subjected to this terrible attack are not destabilized, but may recover, after a fashion. That is, provided that the Horror does not consume the Name-giver's mind completely. At that point, their pattern will lack one of its major warps of the weave and will fall apart, causing immediate dissolution of the person. A disturbing thought, to say the least.

However, I found Tyrke to lack any Horror-mark and, with prompting, he could demonstrate his own creativity. While the limerick that he composed extemporaneously was crude, it was a sound piece of poetry. For further proof, I had him examined by a windling, whose astral-sensitive sight found nothing that I had not already perceived. It is my opinion that Tyrke can survive, provided that his pattern is healed of the tears in its weave caused by the Devourer's attack. Due to the massive regression, I suggested to Merrox that a Ritual of Re-Naming be performed. The Librarian replied that he would confer with the ork concerning the possibility.

As for the location of the Devourer, I will look into the research that Tyrke did in the Great Library and attempt to ascertain as to where exactly in Parlainth he and his group journeyed. If I can, I will prevent this Horror from perpetuating its particular sort of suffering on any other Name-givers.

The Crimson Face did, in fact, find the Devourer's last known location. She left Throal briefly, journeying to Parlainth in the company of a group of Adepts. Sadly, they returned far too soon, and empty-handed. The Crimson Face told us that she had entered Parlainth's western undercity and found nothing of this Horror. However, she informed us that dead Gnashers did not decompose as normal animals did, often dissipating into vapor within a day of being slain.

It is the belief of the Crimson Face, as she reported it to Master Merrox, that the Devourer has left Parlainth in search of more prey. She warned the Hunters of Throal that Tyrke's description of the strange cadaver man was not thorough enough to merit treating it like one of the undead, and that the actual appearance of the Horror may be radically different when encountered. However, she did say that it would be



accompanied by many Gnashers. The presence of the large number of the constructs at the citadel seemed to indicate that the Devourer either controlled or created them.

As for Tyrke, convincing him of the necessity of the ReNaming was difficult. It took several long conversations with Master Merrox and a visit from Ajmar to convince him and even then, he had second thoughts during the ritual. However, the ritual was successfully performed and he has returned to the greater populace. In the interest of maintaining the poor ork's privacy, I will not scribe his new Name here, but when I last heard of him he had left Throal, traveling with an ambassadorial party returning to Cara Fahd. It is my sincere hope that, after such a horrifying event, he will find himself a new life and new memories, to replace the ones that had been stolen.

THE HUNT IS JOINED

The following is a journal that was found by the Exploratory Force in the remains of a small village at the northern edge of The Badlands. It is believed that the village was destroyed maybe a month before the arrival of the Exploratory Force. On examination by a Corps Wizard who was on site, there was much less astral taint than usually associated with a site inhabited by a Horror. This may be a great leap in speculation, but some of our Horror scholars think that the account reveals a Horror that feeds on Horror hunters. Though the account refers to a Horror Stalker, they do not believe that the Horror is limited in scope to just that Discipline.

—Leona Sandovahl, Librarian

Teayu 23rd

Harvest is only weeks away and there is still nothing known about what, exactly, is causing the crops to rot. Every day when we go out to the fields, a few more crops have rotted or wilted. Old Mauroth thinks that there may be some sort of Horror influence, but most folks aren't ready to jump to that conclusion yet. I sure do hope that it isn't a Horror, especially with Cheron away. I hope that she returns soon, though I fear she may not return at all. I understand it was her calling as a Horror Stalker to kill Horrors, but it's scary to think that my sister may never come home again.

Teayu 29th

It's so dark. The clouds completely blanket the sky and we haven't seen the sun for a few days now. Just dark, gray clouds. This really doesn't look good. Some of the villagers are talking of leaving, but where would they go? I think some of them have already left. Janna and Rarn haven't been around lately and Kran is sure he saw Rarn walking away from the village just before dawn a couple of nights ago. This is really worrisome. I just know there's something out there, something evil. Cheron taught me a little about using a spear once, but I don't know if that will protect me from whatever may be out there. I am very frightened now. May the Passions watch over us all.

Borrum 1st

After last night, there is no longer any doubt that there is something evil at work. Kran said as he was going in to settle down for the night he saw a figure walking across the field. As it got closer, he could see it was Rarn. He called out to him, but he didn't get an answer. As he got closer, Kran said he didn't look quite right, as if he wasn't all there. When Kran tried to shake him out of it, Rarn turned and started hitting him. When Kran hit him back, Rarn just went crazy and attacked him. The two of them made so much noise that it woke up half the village. From there, things only got worse as all the strongest townsfolk tried to hold Rarn down, but he kept on fighting them without tiring down a bit. By this time, I was out there too.

During the fight, some of his clothes got torn up and we could see wounds in his gut that he couldn't have survived. Rarn was, is, dead, and something had brought him back. Old Mauroth said there was nothing else we could do, we would have to completely dismember the body if we were to put him at rest. This is a painful thing to have to do to someone you've known almost your whole life. I couldn't stay and watch. I wasn't the only one either. Will there be more like Rarn? Or something worse? We can't abandon town because there's no where to go, and look at what happened to Rarn.

Borrum 3rd

Salvation has arrived! But I'm getting ahead of myself. Early this morning, five more cadaver men (that's what Cheron called the undead like Rarn) attacked the village. There was no way that we could hold off that many, so we all fortified ourselves in Therm Oakhollow's home. We could hear them outside, tearing at the walls and the doors, arms trying to reach through windows. They would probably be able to get in eventually. That left us trapped. There was nothing we could do except wait for the cadaver men to break through the door. Then, we heard some fighting outside, and the beating on the door stopped. We didn't dare go outside in case something worse was waiting, so we sat and listened to the commotion. When it was over we heard a knock and a voice telling us it was safe. It was Cheron! She'd returned, and none too soon either.

We poured out of Therm's house to welcome Cheron home and saw that there was a human with her, another Horror Stalker. We didn't think that there were many besides Cheron – this was the first time we'd ever met another Horror Stalker, though Cheron has mentioned a mentor from near the Servos Jungle who trained her. I don't think this is him though. Then Cheron introduced the human as Tourander. He doesn't say much, just smiles a lot. It is a comforting smile, yet sometimes it seems a little eerie the way he never stops smiling. I don't think that they are very friendly with each other, but there is some respect there.



After they disposed of the cadaver men bodies – Cheron says that burning them is the way to be most sure that they won't ever come back, a large meal was prepared and plans discussed. They tell us that they are going to find the source of our trouble and get rid of it. Tourander says that they are positive that it's a Horror and that they'll do whatever it takes to get rid of it. I hope he's right. If there are two Horror Stalkers to fight it, surely all will be well. I am so happy that Cheron has returned.

Borrum 5th

Cheron and Tourander leave tonight to find and slay the Horror. They spent all of yesterday examining the charred remains of the cadaver men from the attack the day before and the crops that have been rotting and decaying in our fields, then they sat in meditation until early this morning. Cheron says they now know where to find it. She has taken a Mark from the Horror and will use it to lead her and Tourander to the beast. I know that all our hopes go with them.

Borrum 9th

It has been three long days of waiting to hear whether Cheron and Tourander were successful or not, but Cheron has returned... without Tourander, who it seems wasn't what he claimed to be. We could tell by her injuries and torn clothing that the battle must have been quite phenomenal. When asked about Tourander, she said that she would tell all as soon as she had rested.

That night a feast was prepared in her honor and there she told us that the two of them fought bravely against the Horror and that with their combined abilities they were able to overcome and destroy it. It was after the fight with the Horror that Tourander revealed himself. He attacked Cheron, challenging her to prove which of them was truly the hunter of hunters. They would determine the answer to that through direct combat in their beaten and injured states. She said something about his pattern not seeming right during the battle, that even with the Horror Marks he was bearing, it looked more corrupted than any she'd seen. The fight between the two hunters was hard and long fought, but ultimately, Cheron came out victorious. After the fight, she collapsed and lay in the mud for almost half a day before she began her trip back to the village. After her story, Cheron just wanted to rest more, but she remained for a little bit of the festivities before retiring to her bed.

Borrum 12th

Harvest begins today and spirits are still high from Cheron's defeat of the Horror. Even with the losses caused by the Horror, there will still be enough to get us through the year. Cheron has recovered rather rapidly, but I guess that comes with being an Adept. It is good to have her back, but with her recovery being such a speedy one, I fear it will not be long before she leaves us again. Oh well, I'm just pleased that my sister is here with us again. I think she is, too. I haven't seen her this happy in a long time. It's nice to see a smile on her face again.



SEEDS OF TIME

I first became aware of them as a small child, running packages through Bartertown for one merchant or another. Their house was down from Tantal's storefront, out of the way except through the back alleys, and I was one of the few who passed there regularly. You couldn't miss Brock, he was one of the biggest humans I ever met, even at his age. I never meant to stare, really, but when someone like that is missing both legs below the knees it catches your eye. That first day he just gave me a wave as the woman who lived there, his wife Julia I found out later, came out onto the porch. I was gone down another alley before she'd gotten the door shut. I didn't need an old redheaded woman, almost as stout as the man, yelling at me. We eventually came to an odd familiarity, Brock always sitting out on the porch when I cut through the alley, sometimes talking with Julia, sometimes with Haupbear, a truly ancient troll who must have lived nearby. Him waving at me, me waving back and continuing on. Until the day he called out to me the first time.

"Boy! Come here!" he shouted. As long as he lived, Brock never called me anything but "boy". I must have looked startled, for Julia called out in that soothing tone of hers "Brock, really, after all these years you still have the manners of a goat." Brock, seeming to ignore her, called out to me "Boy! We have more food than we can manage today and I'm not for it going to waste. Come eat, you look like you could use it!"

Well, two old humans and an even older troll wouldn't stand in between me and a free lunch. You don't live too long anywhere in this world by passing up free food.

"Muf, um, thank you," I said as I scooped a honeyed biscuit into my mouth. The troll chuckled at me and said in a raspy voice, "The human child has a sweet tooth. Julia, I think I have competition for your cooking... good thing for the child that Davin didn't make it today."

"Yes, but it means that we are now the last" said Julia. "If he had succeeded, Davin would have been here today. He has never written that he would be here and then missed the anniversary."

Maybe if I hadn't been imbued with the curiosity and lack of tact that is the gift of the young, my life would have been radically different. Maybe I would have never heard their tale and I would still be running packages for tight-pursed merchants in that slum. But I was young and, mouth full of a reedy cracker and fish paste, I asked whose anniversary they were celebrating.

Brock pushed himself against the rail, rotating his chair to face me. It emitted a creak of protest as the legs scraped across the floor. "It's not a celebration, boy. It's a wake. And Davin's absence means it's over... at least for us."

Julia scowled at him "Stop it, you didn't invite the child over to scare him off his appetite. And we've not even introduced ourselves." She did so, and I found I was in the presence of three Adepts... not unusual in Bartertown, but you never think of them as so... old. They're either young, vibrant, and rushing headlong into the next treasure hunt or caravan run, or they're returning under a tarp to crying parents. Or in my case, children. But that's another story, for another time. I learned Brock was a Swordmaster, Julia a Warrior, and Haubear was a Nethermancer and they were the remnants of a long-forgotten company of Adepts who had braved the wilds of Barsaive together after their kaer first opened to the Scourge-ravaged world. They told me something of their home in the mountains, abandoned now many years in favor of the city that had sprung up around the gates of Throal.

"So who's Davin?" I asked. Oh how the young are forgiven their rudeness.

"Davin was our Archer and our Scout," croaked Haubear. When the troll fixed his rheumy eyes on me I could see a strange sadness there. "We four were the last survivors of an encounter with one of the Horrors. Up in the Caucavic Mountains we met something terrible... it cost most of our friends their lives. It cost Brock his legs." He waved a hand toward where his friend sat. "We drove it off, but it lives still. Davin has hunted it ever since."

They went on to tell me that Davin was an elf and like many of his kind he had not succumbed to the betrayal of age and time like his companions. He would occasionally visit, frequently around the time of the morbid anniversary they celebrated. He had written that he was on his way, but had never arrived. They had been waiting for him for days and finally resolved that they were not going to see their friend again.

"I always thought Davin would be the one placing our Names on the Defender's Wall, not the other way around," said Julia. She looked at my questioning eyes and before I could pry again she volunteered, "Our home kaer honors those of us who first explored for them. Each of our Names are inscribed on the wall leading into the kaer when we die, to forever honor those of us who fought the Horrors. In Davin's case we will wait one year, as is our custom, and then travel there to etch his Name on that wall. Maybe we are wrong and we will see our friend again. There is always hope." The way Julia smiled told me something though. When she mentioned Davin putting their Names on the wall she knew that their time was coming soon. It seemed to give her a sense of peace. Looking back on all of it now I see how hard it was for them to fail, how the Horror had taken more than their friends' lives and Brock's legs, it had taken their hope.

I suddenly became aware of a voice shouting my Name down the alley. Tantal was looking for me, which meant I was late again. I thanked the trio and excused myself from the group quickly, turning to head down the alley. Brock called out as I left, "Feel free to come back boy. Old men know more than just stories!"

Over the next year I did go back, and Brock was right, he had a lot to teach me. While I learned more about how he, Julia, and Haubear had adventured across Barsaive I also learned of his Discipline. To discover that you have the ability to become an Adept is a joy I can barely describe. To have a legless old man in a chair beat you soundly with a birch stick while you learn this is embarrassing. I also learned that the trio supported themselves through training the occasional student. While I never learned just how good my teacher really was—"Good enough for you," is all he would say when I pressed him, I met both the well-dressed and the battle-worn training in that alley along with me. All had one thing in common, an oath to fight the Horrors.

A year passed quickly under Brock's tutelage and eventually he and Julia informed me that they would be returning to their home kaer to honor their fallen friend. Haubear had become increasingly ill in that time, but all were dedicated to the journey. I asked if I could go as well and was told that it was no journey for "an untested boy". But as I've said, I was quite the upstart and elected to tag along behind them. I almost gave myself away before the journey even started when I saw Brock walk out of his home to the wagon they were taking on the journey. Gleaming crystal legs extended from where his own legs ended. I'd heard about such expensive wonders, but never thought of seeing them, especially not on one of such humble means as Brock. With age I would gain wisdom enough to understand that Brock would rather remain in his chair than use the blasted Theran's Blood Magic, but even this pride had practical limits. They discovered me by the end of the first night, of course. One of Haubear's ethereal servants frightened me so badly I passed out and I found myself the next morning in the back of the wagon as we continued onward. The trio said nothing about me following them and we left it at that.

The trip was uneventful and I got to see Haubear use his spirit servants to guarantee the local wildlife steered well clear of us. When we got to the kaer, I at first thought it was little more than a twist at the bottom of an arroyo. Julia dismounted and whispered something to a nearby rock, which parted and revealed a gaping, downward passage. "From here we walk," said Brock, picking a light quartz out of his backpack. The others pulled out light quartzes as well and we began the descent. Haubear pointed out, "This is where the kaer was first breached, back when I was a boy." I saw marks in the rock like runnels where he pointed. "Resealing it cost my father his life, but he saved us all..." Again I saw that faraway look in his eyes, one that I had come to know so well, which meant he was somewhere else, or maybe somewhere else.

We reached the bottom of the winding stair, odd patches of reflected light bouncing off the walls around us. Julia held her quartz up to one wall. "Here it is," she said. Brock added, "Go take a look boy, it's what you came to see, isn't it?"

I wandered up to the wall. Two-score places were marked for inscribing Names. All save four had entries and dates. I looked at the last, half a dozen Names all sharing the same date. And then I understood. Before I could turn and ask the trio to confirm my discovery there was a scraping noise from deeper in the chamber. The sound of Julia and Brock drawing blades. An empty, hollow voice whispered, "So you've come to add my Name have you."

As I turned, I could barely make out the outline of someone in the shadows. Brock and Julia moved to a position in front of Haupbear, who was staring into the darkness, his hand holding his light quartz at his side.

"So good to be remembered after all this time..." spoke the figure.

"It is not Davin, at least not any longer," spoke Haupbear.

"Oh, so easily forgotten. A few changes, yes, a few changes. Nothing so drastic as what it did to you the last time. No, no, no... unlike you it left me with a purpose afterward. I researched it, I studied its other victims. Why did it kill my wife first? Why was it so deliberate in slaughtering those it had already downed? Why did it leave any of us alive? It is worse than you could have guessed... we did not drive it off, it left us. Left you so it would have a source... a source of food! All this time I have been Marked and my hunt for the creature, my grief, has been feeding it. And when I met you for our pity filled celebrations, and you hated me for my youth and hated yourselves for what you had become, broken, uncaring creatures, waiting for the grave to claim you... easy enough for it to feed through me... it doesn't need much..."

The figure moved forward. What I could see told me it had once been an elf, before whatever hid behind it in the darkness had gotten to him. A thick vine lead from somewhere in his back into the pulsing blackness. The figure was suspended a few inches above the floor. The creature wore him like some kind of puppet.

"Isn't it fitting that I found one of its servants here, in our old home?"

Maybe it knew it was time for a new crop, you have worn out and we will need new flesh soon. So kind of you to bring a young one..."

At that Brock leaped toward the creature, blade slashing. The elf's body fell to the ground and appeared to continue to prattle on, even as it lay on its side on the cave floor. The severed stump it had hung on oozed a thick mucus. Out of the darkness another vine-limb shot forward at me. I dove for the floor and it slammed me down onto the stone. My world swam and all went black.

When I awoke Julia was tending to me. "Whaaa..." I said groggily.

"Relax," she cooed, "it is over. We are safe."

"Where are Haupbear and Brock?"

"I am here, boy," came Brock's voice from impossibly far away. My world began to swim again. Then I saw Brock, hammer and chisel carving into the wall. Two forms lay on the ground behind him, covered by blankets.

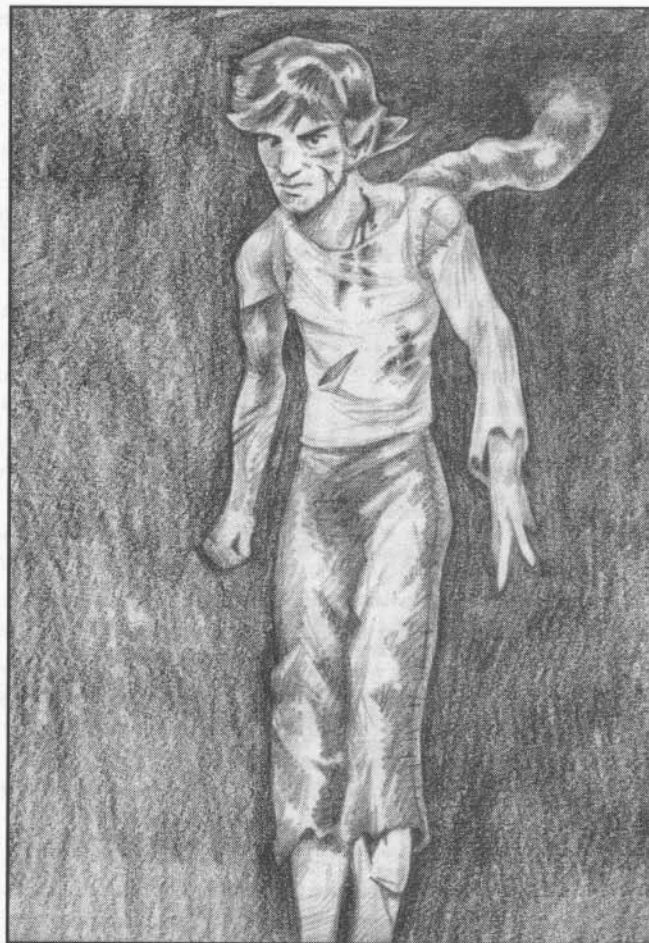
"Haupbear feared this journey might be his last," soothed Julia. "He did not want to die in some Bartertown hovel. It seems he got his wish." If only I could describe for you what I saw on her face at that moment. Maybe it was realization that she would die in a Bartertown hovel, maybe it was sadness at memorializing two friends that day instead of one. I never asked her.

"It is time to go," said Brock, putting away the stone carving tools. I stood up, feeling my legs come back to me. I looked over to the wall, two empty spaces remaining below Haupbear and Davin's Names. Looking at Haupbear's date of birth on the wall told me everything. I turned to Julia as she lead me toward the stairs. "Haupbear... he, he was..." I stuttered.

"Twenty nine years old. Yes. I am twenty eight and Brock is, as well. It started slowly at first, but has gradually worsened. It is too late for us, but the price we paid bought our people time to flee the kaer. That is what counted." We climbed toward daylight.

The traveler who told me this story informed me that Brock and Julia passed away later that year, within two weeks of each other. He reminded me that this tale serves as a warning that Horrors can feed off more than fear and pain, that some dine on sorrow and loss. While the Great Library has had no other reports on this Horror, the scouting party sent to the kaer the traveler described reported that it and the wall do exist, although it is now deserted.

—Journeyman Scholar Tovarus, Great Library of Throal



THE DARKENING SKIES

The following account by Vaare Longfang and the crew of the Earthdawn not only tells of a newly discovered Horror, but also adds credibility to some who have speculated that the level of magic in the world has stabilized and that it did so at a point where the Scourge had not yet ended.

—Apprentice Scribe Ravarus, Library of Throal

Day 700

We have crossed into a province that Grotok refers to as The Cursed Land. Looking at the landscape, it is understandable why he calls it such. I have never seen such destruction and utter devastation. Barsaive is a lush, green forest compared to The Cursed Land. What vegetation exists is twisted and made into grotesque manifestations.

Duridon the Elementalists tried to communicate with the flora and was struck down, unconscious for a full day. He has refused to describe the experience and will not attempt to converse with the plants again while we are in the province.

I have little hope of finding Name-givers alive in this wasteland.

Day 710

We have found three different kaer-like structures that have fallen to the Horrors and contain nothing living. The defenses appear to be Theran in construction.

Day 712

We have discovered an intact kaer but the inhabitants refuse to open the seals. We are going to continue to try and communicate with the Name-givers inside.

Day 713

The Name-givers in the kaer that we have discovered refuse to believe that the Scourge is over. They say that even though the magic has subsided, the Horror activity has not and they refuse to risk coming out.

Day 714

We are leaving the kaer that we have discovered. The scholars inside have declared that we are a trick sent by the Horrors to get them to break the seal. I have decided not to tell the crew as this would set off several *gahads*.

Day 715

The people in the kaer that we discovered were right. We have spotted six Horrors in the last twenty four hours. We've been able to outmaneuver all of them and have not needed to confront any, but I don't think it will be long before we are in a situation that calls for us to face off with another one.

We are continuing through the province in the hopes we will come through this Cursed Land and find an area less infested with Horrors.



Day 716

The main sail is shredded and we're forced to head out of the province. We ran into what we thought was a mass of insects but it turned out to be a Horror, which the crew has appropriately Named Swarm. Thankfully no one has been Horror-Marked, but we've suffered numerous injuries and need to put into port for medical supplies.

The only description I can offer of Swarm is a mass of black spots in the air that sting skin, rip cloth, and tear wood apart. I cannot offer an explanation as to why this Horror did not continue to attack us, but it continued on its path.

Nailus postulates that either it had something else that it wanted to feed off of more, or it was being chased by something even worse. I don't think I want to see what would make something like that run.

THE DENIZENS OF THE NECROPOLIS

The following is a report to the Hunters of Throal by the Journeyman Kaja Lyles. Quinn Agair forwarded the contents of the report to the Great Library.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records, 1513 TH

Let these words show I am not marked:
Cold wind wakes me, the sky turning bright.
Mountains, forests, the whole of Barsaive
Passes my eyes on this grand journey.
I will not fail, I stand with the light.

I have surveyed the ruins of both Sky Point and Vivane and will address each in turn. When viewing Vivane from afar, the most striking feature is the Horror Cloud that looms above it. It does not take an Adept to sense the corruption of the surroundings as one approaches Vivane. There are few places in Barsaive that have been befouled as terribly as these areas. That Barsaive could muster a grand army to drive away the Therans, but the cities and kingdoms will not work together against this greater threat saddens me.

The whole of Vivane has been claimed by Horrors and their constructs. When there are no Name-givers present to feed upon, they turn on each other. The groups, or perhaps factions is a more accurate term, that have the most power in the city are those under the sway of the Cloud and those in the thrall of Twiceborn. This is not to say that those are the only powers in Vivane, but they are by far the greatest. It is perhaps only because these two forces seem to be arrayed against each other that they have not turned on their nearest neighbor, Cara Fahd.

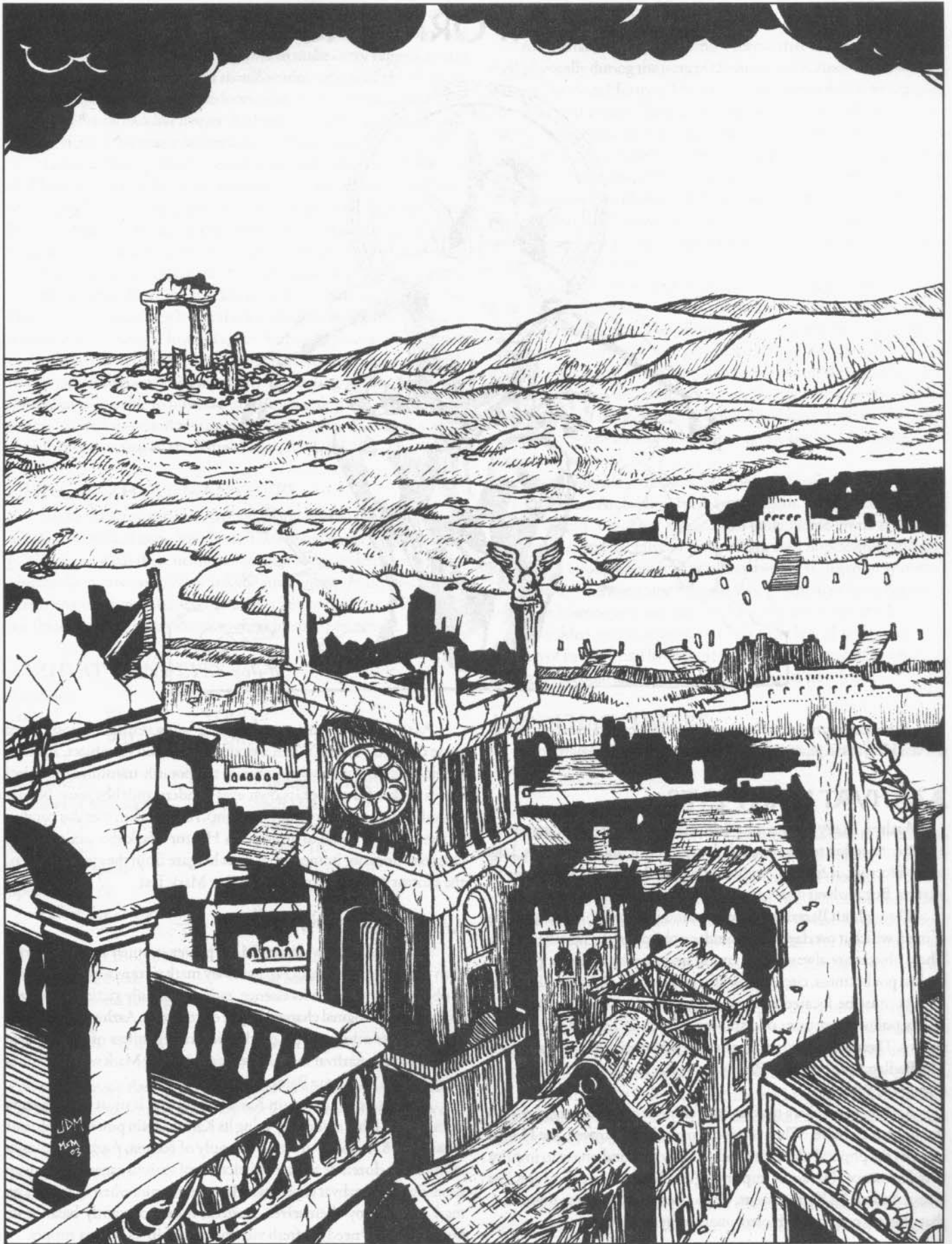
Twiceborn's faction is the one upon which I can speak the most. She is attempting to establish a kingdom of the dead, a nation tied by trade and treaties with Throal, Travar, the Houses of the T'skrang, and the other powers of Barsaive. To my knowledge, only one township has accepted her cadaverous envoys: Haven, on the outskirts of Parlainth. That is a place that I believe has existed too close to the Horrors for too long, but I digress. More disturbing than a single diplomatic contact displaced across the breadth of Barsaive are the number of independent merchants who are accepting her offers of trade. There are still few enough merchants willing to deal with the abomination Twiceborn that she is able to entertain them all in her palace, a former noble's estate at the crumbling walls of the western edge city. She offers these merchants vast wealth, but make no mistake, the trade goods that are piled into their wagons come from a tainted city.

The patrols of Cara Fahd destroy these caravans when they are found, but even then the appetite of the Horrors is fed. Name-giver is turned against Name-giver. And if all of the spoils of the caravan are not destroyed, then the bloodshed is for naught. The tainted items can be carried into the villages of Barsaive by the very defenders who sought to protect their homes. The Crusade of Grathus the Unyielding is misdirected. The Horrors of Scythia were contained. Certainly, the occasional Adept would brave Scythia and through those unfortunate beings the Horrors could spread their influence. But Vivane is far worse. The Horrors have all the foul powers we have come to expect, but in addition Name-givers are willingly taking wagonloads of items, any of which could be a means of spreading a Horror Mark or other touch of the Horrors, and spreading the goods throughout the countryside in the pursuit of pieces of silver.

The northern edge of Vivane, formerly the poorest quarter of the city, is the area of the Necropolis least influenced by either Twiceborn or the Cloud. Both send their minions—Twiceborn a vast numbers of cadaver men and the Cloud a cadre of ghosts, bone wardens, and tortured knights—but the Horrors and constructs there are *too numerous* for either of the two greater factions to control. The eastern edge of the city is firmly in the control of Twiceborn; her constructs work ceaselessly there on a series of six towers. The towers are being covered by blue tiles that when viewed astrally are connected by a sickening web, a mockery of the threads that a Name-giver would weave. The Flamewalk River and the few buildings south have been twisted by the constant rain of the Horror Cloud. The dead who walk in that endless black rain serve the Cloud, indeed in that torrent the ground and buildings themselves seem to radiate malevolence.

Sky Point, while corrupted when it fell, is not nearly as tainted as Vivane. This is not to say that it is safe. At least one powerful bloatform has taken up residence there and there are enough constructs crawling through the ruins that it cannot be the only Horror present. More disturbing is news of the ghost ship that is rumored to journey from the Cloud at Vivane to the top of the central pillar, where a fraction of the shattered Theran fortress still stands. I have not seen this ghost ship myself, but what I can relay with certainty is that the undead remains of Theran nobility, both ephemeral ghosts and the skeletal bone wardens, as well as the armored tortured knights, can be found in Sky Point. It is my opinion that these are once again the pawns of the Cloud, an opinion reinforced because those constructs in particular move through the ruins of Sky Point with a purpose, almost as if they were searching for something.





GAME INFORMATION



This section provides Horror game statistics and ideas on how to use the Horrors in adventures, or as part of your campaign.

AAZH VAT MANY-EYES

Aazhvat Many-Eyes exists solely on the astral plane but maintains a close connection to the physical plane, where it finds its victims. Like many Horrors, it feeds by inducing terror, dread, and despair in its victims. But Aazhvat does so in a very particular manner.

Throughout Barsaive, Aazhvat maintains psychic manifestations of itself, which it overlays onto mundane objects in the material world. These objects are always large, round items such as shields, plaques, broken pot bottoms, circular box lids, and so forth. Additionally, these objects must be located in areas of the physical world adjacent to highly polluted portions of astral space, such as Tainted or Corrupt regions. These areas often retain a heavy Horror taint; examples include The Badlands, the ruins of Parlainth, or any kaer ravaged by Horrors during the Scourge.

Aazhvat maintains a maximum of thirteen of these charged objects throughout Barsaive. When one is discovered or destroyed, the Horror searches the physical plane for another likely spot and object to imprint with its essence. The act of imprinting an object requires no Tests, but it costs Aazhvat 12 Karma Points. Once an object has been so imprinted, that object is considered Horror-marked by Aazhvat.

Aazhvat senses whenever a suitable being ventures across one of these charged objects. When a victim looks upon the object, Aazhvat employs its Corrupt Reality power to temporarily transform the object into a socket for one of its own eyes (understandably, most Name-givers find this a deeply disturbing sight). Aazhvat then uses this conduit to the physical plane to attempt to Horror Mark the victim. If the character does not immediately avert his gaze from the eye of Aazhvat, the Horror gains +3 steps to its Horror Mark Test.

AAZH VAT'S POWERS

Aazhvat's unique Horror Mark power is much more powerful than that of other Horrors. Aazhvat may mark victims who merely gaze at objects charged with its essence, rather than only victims it can see. As long as the original charged object exists intact, Aazhvat may always use any of its other powers on the victim, regardless of the distance between them. Aazhvat may also renew its Horror Mark when it expires by spending 13 Karma Points.

Aazhvat does not regain Karma naturally; it must leech Karma from victims it has marked by using its Karma Drain power (see **Horror Powers**, p. 85). To ensure itself a supply of Karma, Aazhvat typically maintains a dozen or so marked victims of various races at any given time. Because Aazhvat experiences intense pleasure when its victims go mad and destroy themselves, Aazhvat must constantly balance its hunger with its need for fresh victims to sustain its Karma supply.

Aazhvat usually induces insanity in its victims by using the Corrupt Reality power, which enables it to distort the very fabric of reality (see **Horror Powers**, p. 83). It uses this power to make every vaguely round object appear to the victim as a manifestation of one of the Horror's gruesome eyes. It can even transform other Name-givers so that their eyes momentarily look like its eyes. Aazhvat never communicates directly with its victims, because it savors their terrified confusion.

Aazhvat's Horror Mark is exceedingly difficult to break because the Horror can renew the mark without regard to distance. Destroying the original object containing Aazhvat's imprint changes Aazhvat's Horror Mark to a standard one, which forces Aazhvat to occupy a point in astral space no more than ten miles from the Horror-marked character to manifest its powers. However, the only guaranteed way to completely erase Aazhvat's mark is to destroy Aazhvat. Because this Horror dwells exclusively in astral space, characters must fight Aazhvat in astral space to harm it. In astral space, Aazhvat appears as an enormous blob of wet, blinking eyes, rolling and bubbling in a chaotic mass. It has no appendages and fights solely by casting spells. Aazhvat is somewhat vulnerable to physical attacks, assuming that the characters can get to astral space and are carrying weapons that will manifest there as well. (See **Combat in the Astral Plane**, ED2, p. 133)

USING AAZHVAT MANY EYES

While the astral form of Aazhvat Many Eyes has been destroyed, not all of its marked items have been. The Hive of Ashes (see **Andokhas**, p. 27) may seek out these items and attempt to use them to recreate this Horror. An entire campaign could be structured around finding and destroying the dozen artifacts of Aazhvat before the Hive of Ashes can use them in a dark ritual to return this Horror to the world.

AAZH VAT MANY EYES

Attributes

DEX: 7 STR: 7 TOU: 18
PER: 25 WIL: 23 CHA: 23

Initiative: 7 Physical Defense: 9
Number of Attacks: 0 Spell Defense: 25
Attack: NA Social Defense: 23
Damage: NA Armor: 10
Number of Spells: 5 Mystic Armor: 15
Spellcasting: 30 Knockdown: Immune
Effect: See Powers Recovery Tests: 10

Death Rating: 180(300) Combat Movement: 24
Wound Threshold: 18 Full Movement: 48
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Karma Points: See text Karma Step: 15

Powers: Corrupt Reality 20, Horror Durability 20, Horror Mark 20 (special, see text), Karma Drain 20, Spells: Circle 9 Nethermancer

Legend Points: 197,000
Equipment: None
Loot: None

ANDOKHAS

Andokhas is a very powerful Horror that could only manifest itself physically during the peak of the magic cycle. Andokhas, however, was not like most Horrors. There has been a time when it fed on pain, like many of the lesser Horrors. It outgrew that. It fed off of terror, like many of the greater Horrors, but that too became insufficient. Now, what feeds Andokhas best is hopelessness, and despair. Because of this, the Horror has developed some particularly subtle powers and engages in fairly convoluted plans for attaining its sustenance. It can subsist on pain and fear still, but just enough to survive. It can sustain itself on such base emotions long enough to allow its plans to grow to fruition, when it can truly feast.

Andokhas is an ancient Horror and has learned a few tricks in its time. It has learned ways to keep itself active on the astral plane yet still influence the physical. This allows it to continue to feed well past the time it would normally have gone dormant. In their despair, the kaer that Andokhas had fed off of for so long destroyed themselves. The feast left Andokhas well fed for sometime, but the Name-givers remained in hiding for far too long and Andokhas had feasted too quickly on its constructs. When its supply of Name-givers ran out, Andokhas once again went dormant.

Then, Raggok introduced Andokhas' distilled essence into the dwarf, Uilmaz. Andokhas' cycle began again. Raggok commanded Uilmaz to feed Andokhas' essence into other Name-givers as well and so Uilmaz created the Hive of Ashes. Once their hopelessness and pain had grown strong enough, Andokhas awoke. It began to spread its influence and it chose a target that had the potential to bring despair all across the Name-giver-rich land when it fell: the crown of Throal.

Andokhas was thwarted, but this time it had hedged its bets. Enough of its Hive had lived for it to escape and it had them return to hiding, so it could again begin orchestrating its next feast.

ANDOKHAS' POWERS

Andokhas possess a small assortment of unique, disturbing powers. They are described below.

Astral Deception

Astral Deception is the power that Andokhas uses to disguise its presence and that of its followers in astral space. Andokhas can choose to create an Astral Deception over a single entity for the cost of 3 Strain, or an entire area at the cost of 3 Strain per ten cubic feet. Each expenditure of Strain allows the deception to last for twenty four hours, or until Andokhas chooses to release it. The only limit to the number of Astral Deceptions that Andokhas can have active is the amount of Strain it and its constructs can take.

If a character attempts Astral Sight on a creature or place with Astral Deception upon it, it is a Difficulty Number of 26 to see the area as it should be. Once a character has successfully shattered an Astral Deception, it fades until Andokhas renews it. If the test result is a 16 to 25, their Astral Sight will not sense the area in question. This usually makes characters suspicious. If the test result is 15 or less, then the character sees the area as benign.

Dream Worm

Dream Worm allows Andokhas to cause nightmares in its victims by calling on their darkest fears. It requires a Dream Worm Test against

the target's Spell Defense. On a successful test, Andokhas gives the host dreams of such a terrible nature that they are considered to have only gained an hour of sleep for every four that they attempted. The Dream Worm Test must be performed every four hours. During this process, with a second Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense and the cost of 1 Strain, the Horror can steal a point of Karma from the target. This power can only be performed on Horror-Marked individuals.

Hide Mark

The most disturbing of Andokhas' powers is its ability to hide its mark. At the cost of 5 Strain per twenty four hour period, Andokhas can hide its mark on any individual. While Andokhas uses this power, it cannot use any of its powers that require the mark on that particular individual. At the same time, the character can pass any Artisan Test or other ways for detecting a marked individual.

Horror-Mark

Andokhas requires a physical form to make a Horror-mark. Once the mark is made, it can maintain it without a physical form, but only at the cost of 3 Strain per twenty four hour period, until it anchors the mark in a physical form again. Whatever construct Andokhas uses as its physical anchor is what the Horror must use to mark its victims, even when re-anchoring a mark.

Strain Shift

At any time, Andokhas can choose to make one of its Hive members pay the Strain for any of its powers. This requires a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the member of the Hive. However, if a construct is destroyed from the Strain, the power only goes off if sufficient Damage was left to activate the power. For example, if Andokhas wished to use one of its unconscious Hive members that was only 4 points away from death to power its Hide Mark power, it would destroy the construct, but the power would not activate. However, if

the same construct had 5 points left, while the construct would still be destroyed, the power would activate.

Vortex of Despair

The Vortex of Despair is a power that Andokhas can use to outright kill a Name-giver, but more often it chooses to let the Vortex's effects linger. Andokhas may only use this power on victims it has previously Horror-marked. Then, Andokhas performs a Vortex of Despair Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the difference between the victim's Death Rating and their Current Damage. If successful, the victim goes comatose. Each round, the character gets to make a Willpower Test against the amount by which the Vortex of Despair Test exceeded its Difficulty Number. If the character succeeds, not only is the power stopped, but the mark that was on them is destroyed as well. If the character fails, then they take 5 points of Damage. This struggle of wills continues in a dream-like arena as described in Neden's dream until the character is dead, or Andokhas wills it to end. Once a character drops below their Unconsciousness Rating, for every 5 Damage that Andokhas inflicts on them, they gain a +1 step to their Willpower for purposes of resisting the Vortex of Despair.

For example, Kirsti has a Death Rating of 38, an Unconsciousness Rating of 29, and has 22 Current Damage. Andokhas rolls its Vortex of Despair step against a Difficulty Number of 16 (38 - 22) and rolls a 28. He succeeds and Kirsti enters a coma. Kirsti must now defeat a 12 (28 - 16) to regain consciousness and stay alive. Her Willpower is a Step 6 and she rolls an 8 for the first try, which fails. She takes 5 damage, bringing her Current Damage to 27. She rolls Willpower again and gets 7, which fails. She takes 5 more Damage, bringing her to 32 Current Damage. Now that she is past her Unconsciousness Rating, she gains +1 step for every 5 Damage Andokhas has inflicted on her like this, which totals a +2. With her Step 8 (6 + 2) Willpower, she tries again to break free and rolls a 12, just barely succeeding. Andokhas' Vortex is stopped and the mark is destroyed ... for now.



USING ANDOKHAS

Andokhas is not a believer in direct confrontations and will generally manipulate from the shadows. If a group of characters are going to encounter Andokhas for the first time, it would be best if they were given some insight into the Horror by stories heard from Throal, or rumors about the Horror that attacked the king of Throal. The Hive is the prime way for the characters to encounter Andokhas and fight it. If the characters have ever fought Andokhas, it will take chances to see them destroyed or marked.

If the characters have played through **Barsaive in Chaos**, then it might be in their best interest to pursue the destruction of Andokhas, since it will certainly try to destroy them. Andokhas will try numerous and varied methods over a period of months to try and destroy any characters that hunt it or support King Neden.

Andokhas is currently at the top of the Hunters' list of Horrors and they will pay well to anyone willing to hunt it down or bring them location information about this particular Horror.

If the characters never visit Throal, or are immune to gossip, then they could come across a morose village where Andokhas is currently feeding and rebuilding its Hive. If the characters investigate, they will learn of the arrival of the Hive of Ashes in the village and the subsequent tragedies that began to overtake the village: ruined crops, people who committed suicide, and the like. While the original Hive members seemed to pass in their sleep, the wave of despair has not ended (Andokhas killed the old members as it fed off the town, hid its presence, and created new Hive members). It will be up to the characters to discover what has befallen the city, and oust Andokhas from the village before it destroys everyone.

ANDOKHAS

Attributes

DEX: 4 STR: 5 TOU: 18
PER: 25 WIL: 23 CHA: 23

Initiative: 14

Number of Attacks: 0

Attack: NA

Damage: NA

Number of Spells: 5

Spellcasting: 30

Effect: See Powers

Physical Defense: 17

Spell Defense: 25

Social Defense: 23

Armor: 14

Mystic Armor: 15

Knockdown: Immune

Recovery Tests: 10

Death Rating: 180 (300)

Wound Threshold: 18

Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 50

Full Movement: 100

Karma Points: 40

Karma Step: 15

Powers: Astral Deception 26, Dream Worm 20, Hide Mark 20, Horror Mark 20, Vortex of Despair 30, Horror Durability 20

Legend Points: 211,000

Equipment: None

Loot: none

ARTIFICER

During a previous Scourge, a group of dragons summoned a powerful elemental to the physical world to use in their fight against the Horrors. This elemental was summoned from the Realm of Metal, an unearthly plane accessible via the larger plane of Elemental Earth. Unfortunately for the dragons (and countless Name-givers thereafter) the Horrors corrupted the elemental, turning it into a strange hybrid of Horror and elemental that contains certain traits of both.

Artificer feeds in an unusual manner. Whenever the magic level in the world is high enough to permit its entry, it burrows through the earth in search of underground caverns and tunnels. It then uses the Forge Trap power to transform these places into gleaming, metallic mazes strewn with fiendish mechanical traps (see **Horror Powers**, p. 84). When the mystic energies abate and the world becomes hostile to its presence, Artificer retreats to the astral plane and waits. The deformed patterns of its trap mazes are connected to its own pattern and so whenever a living being falls into one of its traps, Artificer can feed on the victim's pain.

During the most recent Scourge, Artificer found breached kaers ideal environments to transform into trap complexes. It also searched for gold, gems, magical treasures and other items valued by Name-givers and placed these inside the complexes as bait.

Physically, Artificer appears as an enormous entity with a vaguely quadrupedal body shape. Gleaming silver, gold, and bronze comprise its body and a chaotic mix of rivets, gears, pulleys, levers, and other mechanical devices cover it. An array of wheels along its underside enables the Horror to propel itself along the ground when necessary and it can burrow through earth as a whale swims through water. The Horror may attack by shooting forth up to four gigantic, spring-loaded spikes from its body per Combat Round.

Artificer's elemental nature renders it immune to attacks by earth elementals and their kin and from the effects of earth-related Elementalist spells such as Earth Darts, Earth Staff, Metal Scream, Stone Cage, Tossing Earth, and so on.

Though terrifying in combat, Artificer has no great interest in fighting. Instead, the Horror prefers to feed on those caught in its traps. Current magic levels prevent Artificer from returning to the material world of Barsaive, though some dread rituals may be powerful enough to summon it back temporarily. The Horror now resides solely on the astral plane, usually in the astral space surrounding one of its trap complexes.

USING ARTIFICER

Artificer provides a rationale for the underground complex full of traps and treasure, a staple plot element of fantasy roleplaying. Gamemasters can use the classic "go in and get the loot" structure or vary the formula by having the characters form a rescue party to find and save someone who has disappeared into one of Artificer's complexes.

Alternatively, the characters may attempt to enter astral space in search of Artificer, in hopes they might destroy it. In this case, locating the Horror becomes the first step in a particularly dangerous, exciting adventure.



ARTIFICER

Attributes

DEX: 10 STR: 20 TOU: 25
PER: 17 WIL: 16 CHA: 10

Initiative: 10 Physical Defense: 13
Number of Attacks: 4 Spell Defense: 17
Attack: 16 Social Defense: 13
Damage: 25 Armor: 30
Number of Spells: 1 Mystic Armor: 30
Spellcasting: 30 Knockdown: 22
Effect: See Powers Recovery Tests: 10

Death Rating: 280(400) Combat Movement: 48
Wound Threshold: 24 Full Movement: 84
Unconsciousness Rating: 260(360)

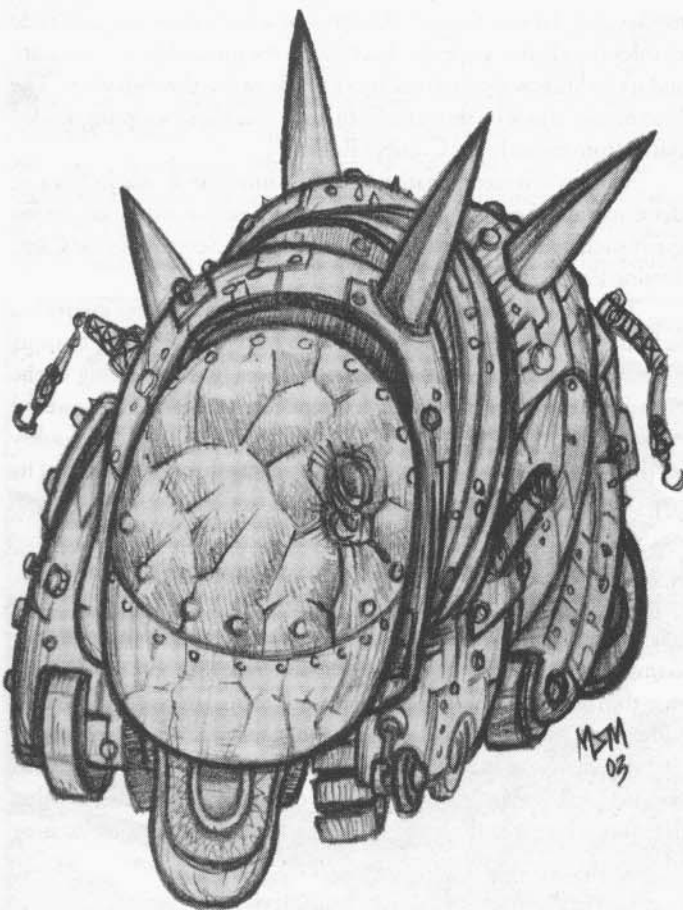
Karma Points: 30 Karma Step: 15

Powers: Forge Trap 35, Horror Durability 20

Legend Points: 96,000

Equipment: None

Loot: None



BONE CROWN THE USURPER

Bone Crown the Usurper cloaks its identity in deceit, passing among Name-givers as one of their own. The more Name-givers who follow its commands, the more mystical power it gains, whether the Name-givers in question obey it wittingly or unwittingly, directly or indirectly. If it wins the fealty of a scorcher chieftain, for example, it gains a magical benefit not only from ruling that chieftain, but from ruling all those loyal to him as well.

Bone Crown usually finds a community of Name-givers in grave trouble for one reason or another. It presents itself to them as a heroic adventurer and surreptitiously uses its powers to end the crisis of the moment, a crisis which it may well have caused. Bone Crown then uses its Aura of Awe power to convince the community to appoint it as their leader (see **Horror Powers**, p. 83). Once it has a grip on the reins of authority, Bone Crown begins to twist people, demanding that they violate their own principles in the name of authority and community stability.

Alternatively, Bone Crown selects one of the strongest-willed, noblest members of a community and methodically corrupts him. The Horror's powers of persuasion are so powerful that many of its followers continue to fight for it even after it is exposed as a Horror.

Sly and articulate, Bone Crown speaks in soft, soothing tones and moves slowly and gracefully. Bone Crown enjoys the pleasures that Barsaive has to offer, having developed a taste for fine food and drink and luxurious surroundings. It loves to be flattered, even though it is seldom fooled by the honeyed words of others.

Though Bone Crown is formidable in combat, it prefers to fight through its followers. Bone Crown may adopt the form of any Name-giver, with the exception of dragons. The Horror must spend 10 Karma Points to transform itself in this manner. For this reason, Bone Crown tries to transform only when necessary. The Horror zealously guards its true identity, revealing it only when presented with no other choice. Bone Crown loathes mirrors, as they reveal its true nature; in their reflection, it appears as a misshapen humanoid figure covered with hundreds of miniature faces.

Bone Crown usually wears chain mail and carries a dagger that has been specially forged to give it a total Damage Step of 4. When wielded by Bone Crown, this dagger does Step 24 Damage.

BONE CROWN'S KARMA

The Horror's Karma step number is based on the number of followers it has under its sway. The Horror has a base Karma step of 12, plus 1 for every 5 followers. For example, if Bone Crown has an army of 100 followers, its Karma step number rises to 32.

USING BONE CROWN THE USURPER

Generally, player characters will encounter Bone Crown the Usurper by coming into contact with a community or group under the Horror's influence. One possible adventure involves Bone Crown assembling a power base in an area of interest to the adventurers. Perhaps it has taken over a scorcher band that controls a crucial trade route or is building a coalition of river pirates. Maybe it has gained authority over a confederation of settlements agitating against the adventurer's political allies, such as the Kingdom of Throal. The player characters can struggle with Bone Crown's minions over a series of



adventures and then infiltrate the Horror's inner circle in an attempt to learn more of the mysterious leader who has been causing so much trouble in the region.

BONE CROWN THE USURPER

Attributes

DEX: 20 STR: 20 TOU: 20
PER: 20 WIL: 23 CHA: 25

Initiative: 17 Physical Defense: 20
Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 20
Attack: 22 Social Defense: 25
Damage: 30 Armor: 7
Number of Spells: 4 Mystic Armor: 15
Spellcasting: 25 Knockdown: 20
Effect: See Powers Recovery Tests: 10

Death Rating: 210(330) Full Movement: 200
Wound Threshold: 20 Combat Movement: 100
Unconsciousness Rating: 190(290)

Karma Points: 60 Karma Step: See text

Powers: Aura of Awe 25, Corrupt Karma 18, Cursed Luck 20, Spells: Circle 7 Illusionist, Horror Durability 20

Legend Points: 95,000

Equipment: Forged dagger (+2) (Damage 24)

Loot: None



CAUTHRUNNE

Cauthrunne has been known to take two forms. The first is a massive raven, nearly as large as a troll. Her second form is a black-haired elf female in form-fitting, reflective, black armor. Hooks and barbs jut forth from the joints of the armor and its gauntlets have the talons of a bird of prey. In the astral she appears as an elf woman with black wings and raven's feet.

Cauthrunne follows battles and war. Where she finds them she will circle the fields, feeding upon the fear. Cauthrunne will fly above the battle cloaked in illusion, corrupting the Karma of Adepts and doing what she can to make the battle as brutal and costly to all sides as possible. If an Adept exhibits signs of despair and calls out for help she has been known to appear on the battlefield to them as the female elf. She often heals them and then gives them armor and weapons of dark powers. Anyone accepting this help will be marked and given abilities to aid them in battle. These reapers often indiscriminately cut swaths through the battlefield, becoming filled with lust for destruction. Those who survive will find that without the constant thrill of battle they are empty of feeling. Those poor souls whom remain in Cauthrunne's sway will eventually turn into one of her supernatural crow servants, but not before the magic that they wield cruelly warps and subverts them into freakish monsters.

CATHRUNNE'S POWERS

Cathrunne has the following unique powers.

Unnatural Life

Cathrunne's version of this power slowly alters the person it is used upon. Instead of decomposing as normal, the victim slowly gains the attributes of a crow. Their eyes become black, their hair begins to be replaced by feathers, and their hands and feet shape themselves into talons.

Create Weapons and Armor

The weapons and armor of Cauthrunne are forged from the blood of battle. She may create a weapon that does Step 1 Damage once per day, but for every person who has died on the battlefield where the weapon is created, she may increase the Damage Step of the weapon by one, up to a maximum of 18. Likewise, she can create armor with a Physical and Mystic armor rating of 1, once per day. For every two people who have died on the battlefield where the armor is created, she may increase both armor ratings by 1, up to a maximum of 18. She may only use a given battlefield once for a weapon and once for armor. Cauthrunne may attempt to Horror Mark any Name-giver wielding her weapons or wearing her armor. Further, she is immune to any attacks made by one of her weapons, and she may ignore her armor if she chooses to attack one who is wearing it.

USING CAUTHRUNNE

During the War against Thera, Cauthrunne marked several promising warriors. They are continuing to kill, only now it is in Cauthrunne's name. One such warrior has gathered a band of Ork scorcher to his banner. They call themselves the Blood Crow tribe and they are carving a path across central Barsaive. The characters could discover a village decimated by the Blood Crows, or be sent by one of the arms of Throal to halt the scorcher's rampage. When the characters

defeat the scorchers, they themselves may draw the attention of Cauthrunne.

CAUTHRUNNE

Attributes

DEX: 15 STR: 12 TOU: 20
PER: 20 WIL: 23 CHA: 25

Initiative: 27 Physical Defense: 20
Number of Attacks: 4 Spell Defense: 20
Attack: 22 Social Defense: 25
Damage: 30 Armor: 18
Number of Spells: 2 Mystic Armor: 18
Spellcasting: 25 Knockdown: 20
Effect: See Powers Recovery Tests: 10

Death Rating: 210(330) Full Movement: 200
Wound Threshold: 20 Combat Movement: 100
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Karma Points: 60 Karma Step: 12

Powers: Corrupt Karma 18, Create Weapon 18, Create Armor 18,
Spells: Circle 7 Illusionist and Nethermancer, Horror Durability 20,
Horror Mark 25, Unnatural Life 25

Legend Points: 103,000

Equipment: Weapon and Armor of Cauthrunne
Loot: None



CHANTREL'S HORROR

Chantrel's Horror has never been observed in the physical world. It has only been observed in the astral in the form of a bloody, demonic humanoid suspended in a metal frame. The edges of the frame comprise hundreds of small whirring blades forged of many metals, including the magical metal orichalcum. If the Horror is killed in its astral form, the frame can be taken from astral space.

While many Horrors use their powers directly against their victims, Chantrel's Horror prefers to terrorize its victims by attacking their family, friends and loved ones.

The true Name of Chantrel's Horror is unknown, even to its victims. It is called Chantrel's Horror because of its relationship to the troubadour Chantrel. As a result, any magic that relies on the power of Names and Naming is useless against this Horror.

CHANTREL'S HORROR'S POWERS

Chantrel's Horror possesses many special powers. Some are possessed by other Horrors as well, while others are unique to Chantrel's Horror. These unique powers are described below.

The Horror Mark of Chantrel's Horror

Many of Chantrel's Horror's powers can be used only against victims the Horror has previously marked. Generally, the Horror only appears in the dreams of its victims, through which it marks them. Chantrel's Horror first seeks a victim whose dreams are vivid enough to be sensed from astral space. To do this, the Horror makes a Spellcasting Test against the dreaming character's Spell Defense. The Horror must achieve an Extraordinary success to sense the victim. The Horror may attempt this test only once per month against any given character. Once the Horror has found its target, it Horror marks that unfortunate character per standard rules.

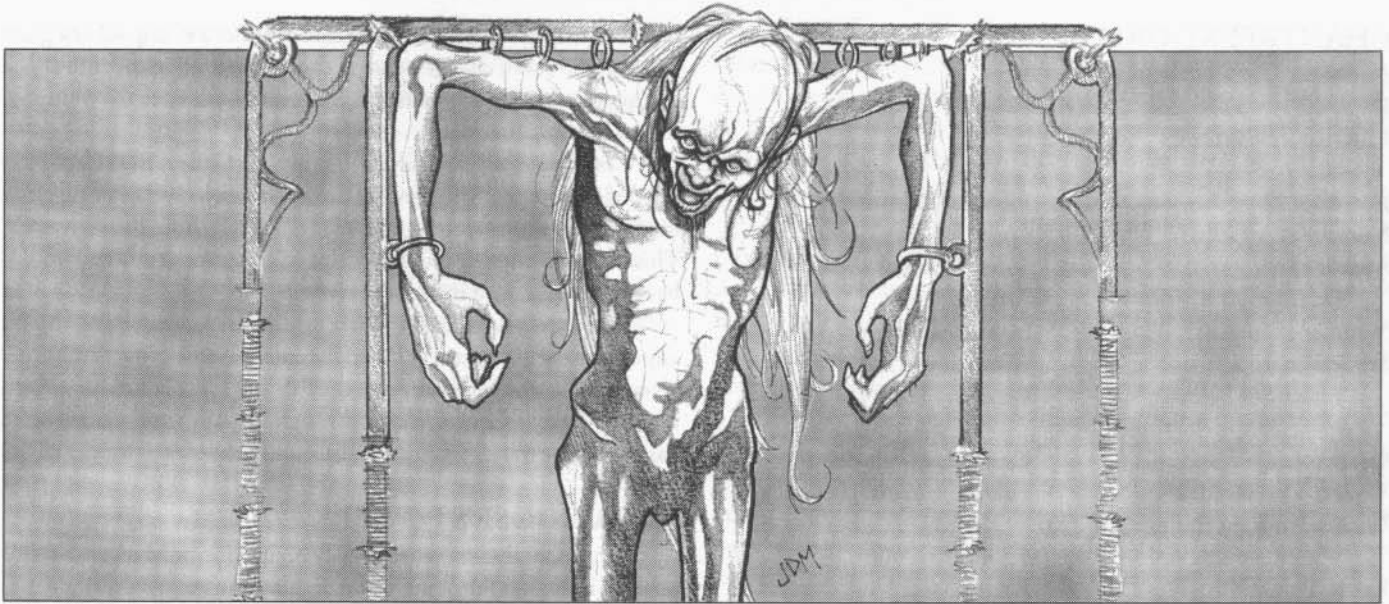
Once the Horror has marked a victim, it can travel the "thread that binds the bones" to attack or mark any other character related to the marked character by blood or friendship. To do this, the Horror makes a Spellcasting Test against the Social Defense of the targeted character. The required success level appears in the Horror Travel Table.

Horror Travel Table

Target Character	Success Needed
Related by blood	Average
Related by marriage	Good
A business associate	Extraordinary
A recent friend	Excellent
A friend for year and a day+	Good
A lover	Good
Connected through a Pattern Item	Average

The physical distance between the marked character and the target character is irrelevant. The Horror can travel from a mother on the Aras Sea to her son in Bartertown by achieving an Average success. Once the Horror has jumped to a new victim, it may mark or kill them. Generally, the Horror does not kill victims it marks. Also, the Horror cannot reach





casual acquaintances of a marked victim. Chantrel's Horror draws sustenance from the pain of separation and loneliness that its marked victims suffer.

According to dragon lore, the Horror revels in a twisted empathy with the victim. The Horror often lies dormant for years, allowing its marked victims to establish new relationships. Dragon lore suggests that the Horror cannot mark more victims than the number of full moons in a given year, but even the dragons do not know why this is so.

Chantrel's Horror can heal or regenerate a marked victim by substituting its own Recovery Tests for those of the victim. If the body of a marked victim has been completely destroyed or is otherwise inaccessible, the Horror must have at least one point of Blood Memory (see **Blood Memory**, following) from someone connected to the victim. The Horror can use the power of the Blood Memory to sculpt a new body for the marked victim from scratch. This new body is identical to the victim's old one.

Chantrel's Horror can also keep a marked victim young by making Recovery Tests for the healthy victim. The Horror makes a number of Recovery Tests and the gamemaster records the results, keeping a total. Once the total equals the victim's Death Rating, the victim loses a year from his physical age. In this way, the Horror substitutes its own immortal essence for that of the marked character, undoing the work of time.

Additionally, Chantrel's Horror can use the Suppress Horror Mark power to bury its mark deep within the pattern of a character (see **Horror Powers**, p. 85).

Astral Slice

To use its unique Astral Slice attack, Chantrel's Horror makes a Spellcasting Test against a victim's Spell Defense. If it achieves an Armor-Defeating Hit (Excellent success), it can make an Astral Slice. In the following Combat Round, the victim takes physical Damage from the Astral Slice. This attack originates in astral space, bypassing any physical protection or armor the target may have. The Damage step of this attack is 30, the Horror's base Damage step. The Horror rarely uses Astral Slice in combat. Instead, it most often uses this power to achieve ghoulish dissection effects, cutting and removing the bones and muscle from its victims while leaving their skin intact.

Blood Memory

The Blood Memory power enables a Horror to keep the essence of the slain character alive in the character's blood. In turn, the Horror keeps the blood in its own whirling, bloody mess of a body. To use this power, the Horror makes a Blood Memory Test against the Social Defense of the victim. A successful result absorbs the blood shed by the victim from attacks made by the Horror. If the target dies during the round in which Blood Memory is used, Chantrel's Horror absorbs a number of Blood Memory points equal to the victim's Death Rating. The Horror may use these points to extend the grief and pain of any victim it has marked through the slain character (see **The Horror Mark of Chantrel's Horror**, p. 32). Once the marked victim has recovered, the Horror expends 1 point of the absorbed blood, starting the pain afresh as if it had just happened. The renewed pain lasts for at least a year and a day each time it is renewed.

Chantrel's Horror may also use Blood Memory points to create a new body for a victim whose previous body has been destroyed.

USING CHANTREL'S HORROR

Chantrel's Horror spreads terror and corruption through its marked victims, who travel Barsaive, carrying death and despair with them. The Horror may use its powers to keep these victims alive for many, many years.

Additionally, it uses its Suppress Horror Mark power to keep many of them ignorant of the mark they carry and the danger they present to others.

The characters may fall under the sway of Chantrel's Horror if one of their relatives or friends is marked by the Horror or by meeting one of its victims or the troubadour Chantrel herself.

Alternately, the player characters may be approached by a victim who realizes he has been marked and is aware of the danger he presents. The victim requests that the characters seek out and destroy any and all records of his existence, in essence making the victim disappear from the minds of all of Barsaive. This could lead the characters to seek out the victim's Pattern Items and attempt to destroy them. Such action might also draw the attention of Chantrel's Horror away from the victim and to the player characters themselves.

CHANTREL'S HORROR

Attributes

DEX: 20 STR: 22 TOU: 18
PER: 20 WIL: 23 CHA: 19

Initiative: 22 Physical Defense: 20
Number of Attacks: 2 Spell Defense: 21
Attack: 23 Social Defense: 21
Damage: 30 Armor: 32
Number of Spells: 2 Mystic Armor: 30
Spellcasting: 23 Knockdown: NA
Effect: See Below Recovery Tests: 10

Death Rating: 220(328) Combat Movement: 100
Wound Threshold: 25 Full Movement: 200
Unconsciousness Rating: 200(290)

Karma Points: 40 Karma Step: 15

Powers: Blood Memory 19, Cursed Luck 19, Horror Mark 19, Horror Durability 18, Karma Tap 15, Spells: Circle 8 Elementalist, Suppress Horror Mark 22, Unnatural Life 15, Terror 15

Legend Points: 151,000

Equipment: None

Loot: Frame contains retrievable fragments of orichalcum, worth 40,000 + (1d10 + 1D6) x 1,000 silver pieces. The orichalcum counts as treasure worth Legend Points.

CORABIDOSE

Corabidose is a specialized Horror that attacks Name-givers on the open oceans of the world, where there is little protection or chance of reinforcement. It drags Name-givers and entire ships down into its whirlpool, drawing sustenance from their fear of drowning. Name-givers trapped by Corabidose relive this terror every day as their ships are held in the rushing waters of the whirlpool, unable to tear free and unwilling to just give in.

Corabidose's physical form is that of either a whirlpool or a giant water spout. It can change between these two forms in order to attack either sea-going vessels or airships, however, it returns to the whirlpool form when not attacking.

Corabidose will also have 3-6 ships (see *Galley*, ED2C, p. 199) trapped in its waters. The crews of these ships are locked in a struggle to keep the ship from capsizing and will call for help from passing vessels. This is a trick, though, and these ships will attempt to pull any would-be rescuers into the waters of the Horror.

The waters surrounding Corabidose carry its taint and should any of them be consumed or otherwise enter a Name-giver, that Name-giver will become Marked. Also, the fish and sea creatures that swim within a mile of Corabidose or through its path within a day of its passing will be transformed into gruesome forms of their former selves.

CORABIDOSE'S POWERS

While Corabidose relies heavily on its Horror Mark and Terror powers, it also has the power to manipulate the water surrounding it. Name-givers who drown in the waters surrounding Corabidose do not actually breathe in the water and die. As they gasp for air, the water will fight to keep from entering their lungs, thus denying them an end to the terrifying experience. The water will also attempt to put the victim on one of the trapped ships surrounding Corabidose, or in the case of an entire vessel being brought down, it will raise the ship with the crew on board.

Any ship, be it water vessel or airship can be trapped in the whirlpool surrounding Corabidose. The waters will keep the airship from lifting off the surface of the ocean.

USING CORABIDOSE

Even though Corabidose exists in the open oceans, there are many ways that characters can come into its influence. With the opening of relations between Barsaive and Arancia, trading houses are considering sending representatives to the country across the ocean. Characters can be asked to make the long voyage as guards to these representatives, or they can be hired to find out why the representatives never arrived in Arancia.



More frightening is that Admiral Hartmallen (see **Barsaive in Chaos**, p. 43) is looking to expand his domination and is studying a way to make Corabidose able to not only survive, but thrive, in the harsh elements of the Death's Sea. The characters could be hired by agents of Hartmallen, either undead or those foul Name-givers that have thrown in their lot with a Horror, to help investigate ways to use water elementals in mining the Death's Sea. They should notice more and more amiss about this research and the adventure should culminate with the characters stopping the ritual of sacrifice magic that would bind Corabidose to the Death's Sea and bring a new Horror to Barsaive.

CORABIDOSE

Attributes

DEX: 2 STR: 40 TOU: 21
PER: 15 WIL: 21 CHA: 15

Initiative: 4 Physical Defense: 25
Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 22
Attack: 24 Social Defense: 27
Damage: 40 Armor: 29
Number of Spells: 1 Mystic Armor: 24
Spellcasting: 18 Knockdown: Immune
Effect: See Powers Recovery Tests: 10

Death Rating: 180 (360) Combat Movement: 100
Wound Threshold: 25 Full Movement: 150
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Karma Points: 40 Karma Step: 15

Powers: Horror Durability 30, Terror 21, Horror Mark 14, Animate Dead 17, Spells: Circle 8 Elementalist

Legend Points: 223,000

Equipment: None

Loot: 6d6 x 1,000 silver worth of cargo on the trapped ships

THE DEVOURER

The Devourer is a Horror of subtle and dangerous power, capable of draining the memories and consuming the patterns of Name-givers that it comes across. Despite the description (see p. 17) of Tyrke, the

Devourer does not, in fact, look like a cadaver man. In actuality, the cadaver man that Tyrke Steelthought and his group encountered was a shell, prepared by the Devourer to allow it to travel. The Horror, outside of its shell, is about the size of a common rat, slimy, tentacled, and colored black. It has no orifices and no apparent sensory organs save for a pair of inhuman eyes.

Rather than feeding off of fear or pain like most Horrors, the Devourer gains sustenance from the memories and, if given enough time, the very being of a Name-giver. The frustration and misery of those who lose their memories also feed the Horror. It prefers to do this over a period of days, so that the drain is subtle enough that by the time the victim notices, there is little that they can do about it.

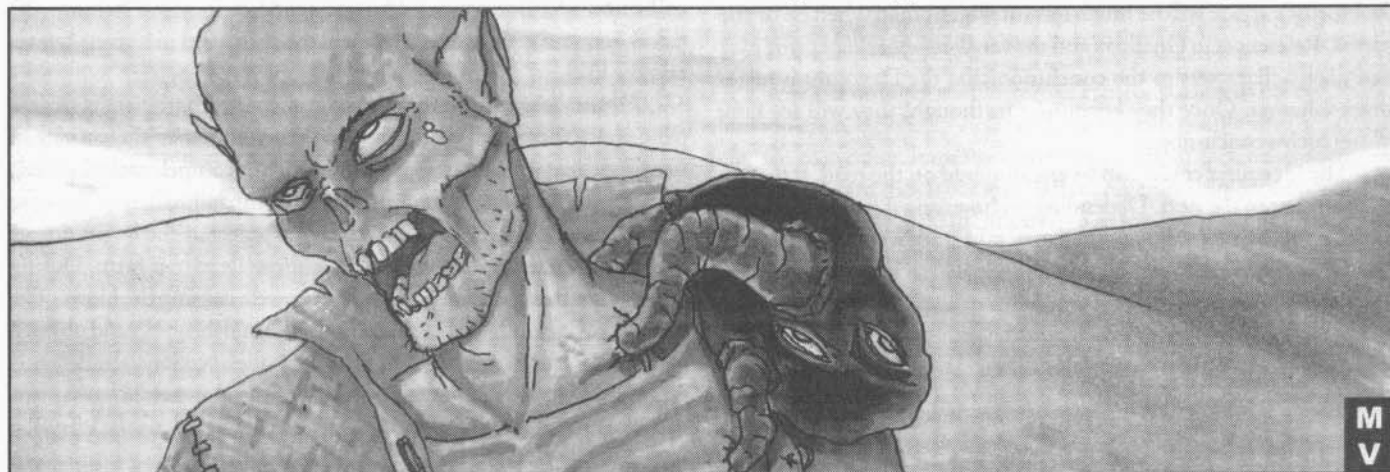
The Devourer also has a very limited version of the Animate Dead power. In addition, it can summon the minor Horrors known as Gnashers (see **Summoning** p. 99, ED2C). These monstrosities are known for their voracious hunger and are dangerous enough on their own. With the guiding intelligence of the Devourer, they become even more of a threat.

As mentioned above, the Devourer uses a special shell, fashioned from one of its victims, to move itself around. This shell is dead, but animated by the will of the Devourer, much in the fashion of a cadaver man. Unfortunately, it lacks the preserved quality of a cadaver man and will eventually decay. When this happens, the Devourer must find another victim to make a shell from. Until it can, it is vulnerable to physical attacks.

The Devourer does not like physical combat, preferring to rely on Gnashers to do that. If it is physically attacked, it will use its ability to cast spells as a Wizard, as well as drain the memories and pattern of the attackers. If the shell is damaged to the point where it cannot flee, it will have one of its Gnashers carry it away and send the rest after its opponents.

THE DEVOURER'S POWERS

The Devourer generally waits for its victims to come to it but will, if the need arises, go hunting. If Name-givers enter its lair and its Gnashers detect them, it will remain out of sight until it can ambush them or they rest. It does this by using its Silent Walk ability, which acts as the talent, at Rank 13. In case of an ambush, it will Horror Mark what it perceives as the strongest opponent. Depending on what it witnesses, this will be the most powerful spellcaster, followed by the most powerful fighter. If no Adepts are present, it will choose the Name-giver that appears to be either the most intelligent, or the oldest



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(more memories to feed off of), or both. It will use this tactic if it is hunting, as well.

If the victims rest within its lair, it will Horror Mark as many as it can within the period that they rest. Once the mark is in place, it will use its Memory Blank power (as the Illusionist spell, ED2C p. 143) on each marked opponent. If this is successful, it will focus its Shatter Pattern (as the Nethermancer spell, ED2C, p. 159) and Corrupt Karma powers on the abilities of its victims, draining them away. It will target dominant abilities first, but prefers to drain Perception (intellect) first. More physical characters will have their physical abilities targeted, unless draining a mental ability will kill them quickly (a low Willpower, for example). If hunting or attacked, it will do this as quickly as it can, but if its victims are hunting for it, it will draw out the draining over a period of hours.

If attacked, the Devourer will always have a number of summoned Gnashers to defend it. In its lair, the Gnashers will harry Name-givers as they explore, keeping their minds off their dwindling abilities. If they survive to confront the Devourer, it will step up its draining and attack with its spells, if necessary. Once the victims have had their memories totally drained, the remnants are fed to the Gnashers, with the exception of the most durable body. This body is used to create a new shell for the Devourer, who will feed its older shell to the Gnashers to dispose of it.

The Devourer prefers enclosed areas for its lair, with passages and at least two exits. It likes its environment to be controllable and easily monitored. Should its shell be destroyed, it will lash out with all of its powers, trying to kill its attackers as quickly as possible.

The Devourer may only use its Animate Dead power to create a single cadaver man at a time and this cadaver man is used as a shell to provide transportation.

USING THE DEVOURER

The Devourer always has a number of Gnashers either traveling with it or residing around its lair. Player characters can be contacted by a village whose livestock and citizens are threatened by these ever-hungry Horrors. Gnashers are well known for their lack of subtlety and powerful magics. A straight fight may appeal to the more physical Adepts. Once they track the Gnashers to where they reside, the Devourer will use its abilities to attack the hunters.

In addition, player characters may also find references to the Devourer in the Great Library or other depositories of knowledge. All references should be couched in simple terms, since anyone who survives the Horror's attack will be much less intelligent than when he or she started. References to Gnashers and the very Name of the Horror may lead player characters to the conclusion that the Devourer is just a larger Gnasher. Once they encounter it, though, they will see how wrong such a conclusion is.

The Devourer could also be encountered on the road, traveling from one lair to the next. Depending on how long it has been since it took its last shell (see above), they may take it for a traveling Name-giver or a solitary cadaver man. It may seek to attack, either to sustain itself with a portion of their memories, or to acquire a new shell. The prospect of being attacked by one cadaver man shouldn't worry a group of Adepts, until it summons Gnashers to assist it in its fight.

THE DEVOURER

Attributes

DEX: 3 STR: 4 TOU: 10
PER: 25 WIL: 23 CHA: 23

Initiative: 3

Number of Attacks: 0

Attack: NA

Damage: NA

Number of Spells: 5

Spellcasting: 30

Effect: See Powers

Physical Defense: 14

Spell Defense: 25

Social Defense: 23

Armor: 8

Mystic Armor: 17

Knockdown: 4

Recovery Tests: 10

Death Rating: 80 (170)

Wound Threshold: 18

Unconscious Rating: 60 (135)

Combat Movement: 10

Full Movement: 20

Powers: Memory Blank 15, Shatter Pattern 15, Karma Drain 10, Animate Dead 10, Summon Gnashers 20, Spells: Circle 10 Wizard, Silent Walk 10, Horror Mark 20, Horror Durability 15

Legend Points: 184,000

Equipment: None

Loot: None

DRUISTADT

Druistadt prefers to operate through stealth, isolating its victims and attacking them after gaining their trust. The Horror usually presents itself to a group as a fellow traveler, assuming the guise of a female t'skrang. However, its spell abilities enable it to assume almost any form circumstances might require. After meeting its victims, the Horror manipulates one of them into repeating its true Name three times. That done, Druistadt may use its Horror Mark power. Druistadt can track victims it has marked by the sound of their heartbeats.

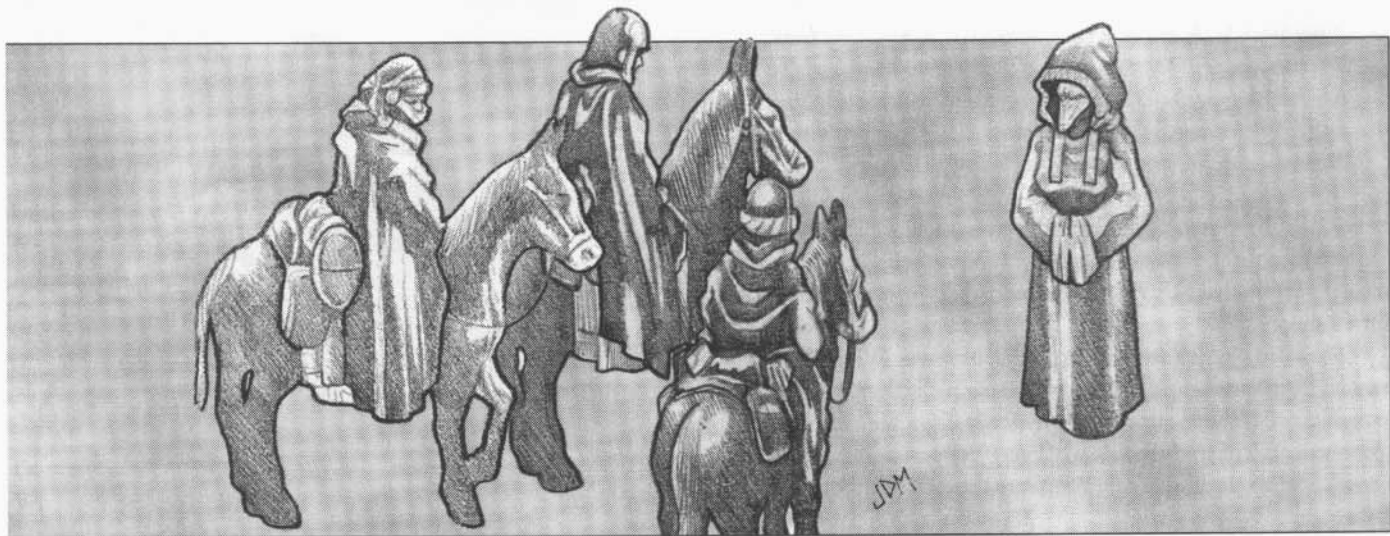
DRUISTADT'S POWERS

Druistadt's Horror Mark power works slightly different than the Horror Mark power described in the Earthdawn rulebook. Once Druistadt has manipulated a member of a target group to speak its true Name three times, the Horror can use this power to mark all the members of the group (For purposes of Druistadt's powers, a "group" is any collection of Name-givers who are together in some fashion: the passengers and crew of a riverboat, all the customers in a given tavern, and the like).

Druistadt uses its Karma Tap power to wreak havoc on its victims from a distance. It may use this power to influence the actions of fleeing victims who are aware of its existence or compel marked victims to commit unspeakable acts against their companions.

Druistadt attempts to use its Terror power at the beginning of every combat, immediately after it manifests in its true form. During combat the Horror uses Damage Shift as well, causing the blows of its enemies to harm other targets. Druistadt's formidable spells and physical gifts are enough to overwhelm most adversaries, but it can be defeated with a tremendous concentration of power. However, Druistadt is





above all a survivor and can blend in well with its surroundings. It knows when to retreat to fight another day.

Additionally, Druistadt can use the Dream Shape power to enter the dreams of any victims it has previously marked (see **Horror Powers**, p. 84). The Horror uses this power to torment victims by causing them to dream of themselves dying, for example, impaled on the burning bill of a ferocious bird with glowing red eyes.

USING DRUISTADT

Player characters most likely encounter Druistadt while traveling on or near the Serpent River. In one intriguing option, the characters begin discovering a number of victims, all found with their hearts ripped out of their bodies. Eventually the characters may realize the victims were all members of some group targeted by Druistadt. They may have all traveled or crewed on a particular riverboat trip or may have frequented a particular tavern. The player characters may even realize that they are members of the targeted group as well. Soon, the characters begin to have nightmarish dreams and eventually Druistadt tracks the characters down.

In another possible adventure, the characters hear rumors that the ghost of Szdanzo Rela'zar still haunts Barsaive, doomed to walk the decks of his ship forever unless he can somehow reverse the terrible evil he committed four centuries ago. This rumor is true. The ghost of the t'skrang captain still haunts the wrecked hulk of his riverboat, the *Scaled Lady*, which lies at the bottom of the Serpent River. The characters may learn of Rela'zar's story, his deal with Druistadt that allowed it to enter the world in exchange for promises of power, and the approximate location of his riverboat from a variety of scholarly or popular works.

Rela'zar's ghost cannot leave the wreck of the *Scaled Lady*, but he remembers the ritual he used to bring Druistadt across the void. The ghost gladly communicates this information to the characters if they promise to defeat Druistadt. Reversing the ritual might enable the characters to drive the Horror out of Barsaive permanently. Unfortunately, the ritual can only be performed in the Horror's presence.

Alternately, the characters may be hired to recover the cargo of a riverboat attacked by Druistadt. The characters do not know who attacked the vessel and so they get a big surprise when they learn the true nature of their opponent. The quest to track down and defeat this powerful adversary could be a defining epic for the career of any hero!

DRUISTADT

Attributes

DEX: 23 STR: 19 TOU: 21
PER: 20 WIL: 26 CHA: 24

Initiative: 20

Number of Attacks: 2

Attack: 26

Damage: 28

Number of Spells: 2

Spellcasting: 22

Effect: See Powers

Death Rating: 150(300)

Wound Threshold: 23

Unconsciousness Rating: 130(255)

Karma Points: 35

Physical Defense: 23

Spell Defense: 22

Social Defense: 22

Armor: 21

Mystic Armor: 20

Knockdown: 19

Recovery Tests: 10

Combat Movement: 65

Full Movement: 130

Karma Step: 14

Powers: Damage Shift 22, Dream Shape 30, Horror Durability 25, Horror Mark 25, Karma Tap 28, Spells: Circle 8 Illusionist, Terror 20

Legend Points: 159,000

Equipment: None

Loot: None

GIFTBRINGER

The Giftbringer is a dangerous Horror that feeds off aggression and violence, especially violence between two people who know and care for each other. It uses gifts to drive people at each other, to kindle their own latent jealousies into hatred, rage, and violence on which it can feast. The physical manifestation of the Horror is described by a victim as follows:

Its shiny, slick skin stretched out on the ends of what were once arms now turned to wings, big enough to blot out the moon as he flew over. I could see all his bones jutting up against his skin just as sharp as knives under parchment. His head had gotten all long and skinny, too, and his nose and mouth had turned into a

shiny black beak. His green eyes were huge, as big as my head, and they seemed about to burst out of their sockets. Those legs of his had been long before, but now they were thin and tapered almost half again as long, ending in clicking claws that could snap around a man's neck without even closing all the way."

When disguised, Giftbringer often appears as a human male (though it can appear as males of other races as well). In Name-giver form, the Horror has a charismatic presence that it uses to entice victims into its shop.

The Giftbringer's astral forms differ, however. When physically disguised as a Name-giver, its astral form looks perfectly normal, masked to perfection. If the Horror is not physically disguised, its astral form becomes a mass of seething knots of energy, all screaming out at once. These knots are the life energy taken from those the Giftbringer causes to die.

The Giftbringer favors small, remote towns because their residents offer the least resistance to its machinations. Larger towns contain more individuals for the Horror to deal with, which increases the chances that its true nature will be discovered.

The Giftbringer cannot change form, but uses illusions to mask its true appearance. Perceptive Adepts may be able to see through these illusions and bring the Horror's dreadful ruse to an end, so the Giftbringer does its best to avoid such individuals.

The Horror is fearsome when fighting and relishes physical combat almost as much as feeding on the pain and misery it causes. If pushed into a fight, the Giftbringer drops its illusory guise and uses illusionist spells to confuse and terrorize its opponents. If the Giftbringer believes it is losing a battle, it may use those same spells to cover its escape as it flies off to the next town to start all over again.

GIFTBRINGER'S POWERS

The Giftbringer usually rolls into town, using Illusionist spells to make its wagon intriguing to the villagers, and sets up shop. Then the Horror uses spells such as Clarion Call to entice customers into his store. The first few customers are offered nothing, but the Giftbringer uses its Gifts power (See Below) to create items they desire. The Horror gives these items to the next customers and uses its Gifts power on these individuals as well. Eventually, everyone in the town receives something that someone else wants.

At this point, the Giftbringer uses its Horror Mark power on individuals and its Karma Tap power to convince them that they have the right to take what they want. Very quickly, the town devolves into a madhouse as neighbor attacks neighbor and husband turns on wife. Once the town has destroyed itself, the Giftbringer moves on to the next town.

Gifts

This power allows the Giftbringer to create an exact duplicate of whatever his target desires by performing a successful Gifts Test against the Spell Defense of the target character. Items created with the Gifts power are real in every way. Such items are always small (less than 3' x 3' x 3'), and generally light (less than 50 pounds). Items created by this power do not disappear unless specifically destroyed, even if the Giftbringer is destroyed.



USING GIFTBRINGER

The Giftbringer always uses the same method of operation, which provides many opportunities for characters to become involved with the Horror. Most simply, the Giftbringer may set up shop in the town that the player characters call home. In this case, the characters may become embroiled in the Horror's violent mind games, causing them to do terrible harm to themselves and those they love.

In another possible adventure, the characters are contacted by someone they know in a distant town, who tells them of strange events taking place there. When the characters arrive, they may find any variety of conditions in the town, from growing tension to murderous mayhem, all sparked by the Giftbringer. If the Giftbringer escapes, the characters may pursue it, if only to ensure that the madness spreads no further. This provides the characters yet another chance to become embroiled in the intrigues of the Giftbringer.

In yet another adventure, the characters find themselves passing through a village as it explodes in a fit of jealous violence brought on by the Giftbringer. In this case, they may well become the object of hatred by people they don't even know, and will have to choose between defending themselves and slaughtering innocents. This scenario may also lead the characters to pursue the Horror in an attempt to stop its destruction of another town.

GIFTBRINGER

Attributes

DEX: 18 STR: 20 TOU: 23
PER: 20 WIL: 23 CHA: 20

Initiative: 25

Number of Attacks: 2

Attack: 24

Damage: 25

Number of Spells: 7

Spellcasting: 21

Effect: 23

Physical Defense: 20

Spell Defense: 20

Social Defense: 19

Armor: 27

Mystic Armor: 30

Knockdown: 15

Recovery Tests: 12

Death Rating: 170 (260)

Wound Threshold: 40

Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 125/170

Full Movement: 250/340

Karma Points: 65

Karma Step: 14

Powers: Damage Shift 14, Gifts 20, Horror Durability 15, Horror Mark 15, Karma Tap 13, Spells: Circle 7 Illusionist, Terror 17

Legend Points: 105,000

Equipment: 2 horses, a wagon, numerous empty boxes

Loot: Usually none

THE HUNTER OF HUNTERS

The Horror known as the Hunter of Hunters has taken many different Names, but it seems to favor the Name Tourander, which it took from the first Horror Stalker it defeated. Tourander was a low Circle Horror Stalker who was overcome in his moment of triumph against a minor Horror, who then managed to possess the body of Tourander and take on the guise of the ill-fated Horror Stalker. It received such sustenance from despair of the Horror Stalker's defeat that it has since acquired a great compulsion for hunting Horror Stalkers and other Name-givers that would seek to hunt Horrors. Horror Stalkers, however, tend to be its favorite prey.

The Hunter of Hunters will almost always appear as a Name-giver that it has defeated, either referring to itself by that Name-giver's Name, Tourander, or just the Hunter of Hunters. If its predecessor used a specific weapon or device, Tourander will use it as well. The Horror does not have a physical form of its own. It is an astral Horror that takes the physical body of another creature, usually a Name-giver. The Hunter's astral form appears as the pattern of the Name-giver that has been heavily corrupted by many Horror Marks. When the Hunter of Hunters is without a physical body, its astral form appears as the shadow of a more solid object.

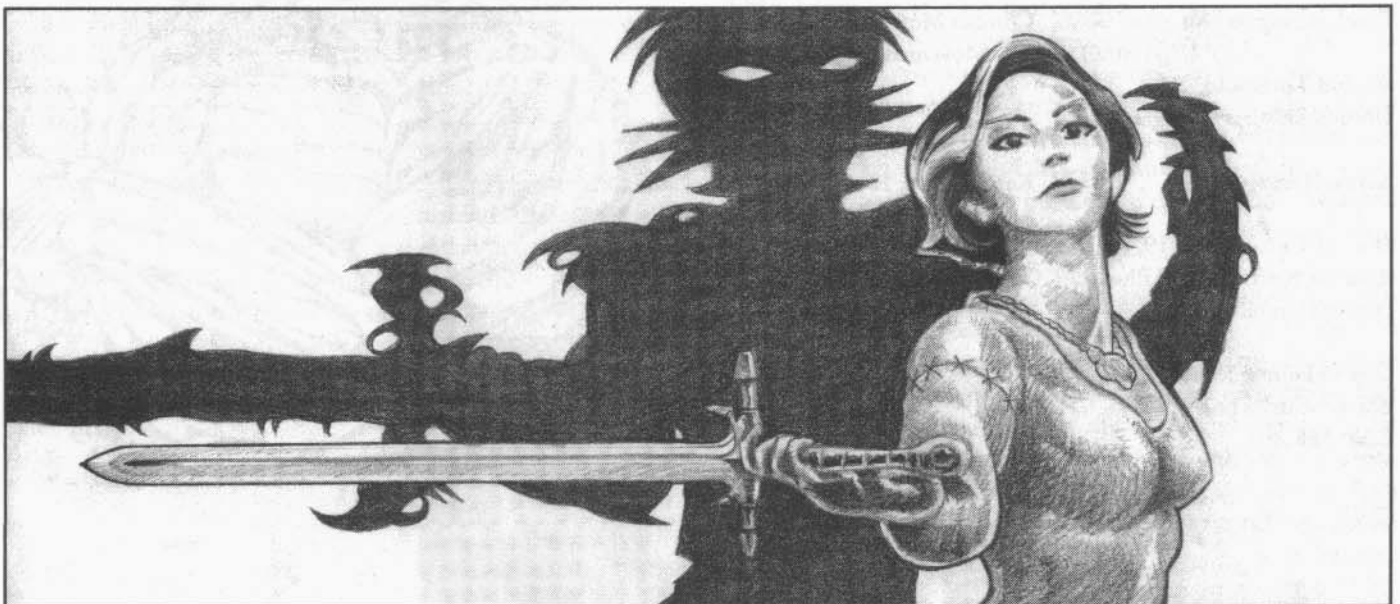
The Hunter of Hunters usually prefers a non-direct approach to hunting its prey. While it can simply track the Horror hunter, it would rather be clever and trap its prey in a situation where he or she has no choice but to fight it. Often, it will join with its prey and journey with them for some time, striking right after its victim has fought another Horror.

THE HUNTER OF HUNTERS' POWERS

Using its Possess Body power, the Horror literally becomes the Name-giver that it has defeated. The Horror does not utilize its Horror powers against marked Horror Stalkers at all. It has been on the receiving end of a Deathstrike once and was nearly destroyed. Instead, it will rely on its host's abilities, which are almost always those of a 5th Circle Adept or higher, and the spells that it has at its own disposal.

Possess Body

The Horror uses this power to possess the body of any physical creature. In order to use it, the Horror must make a Possess Body Test versus the Spell Defense of its victim. An unconscious victim receives a -3 penalty to their Spell Defense. If successful, the Horror can maintain control of the body for a year and a day, however, the Horror must spend 1 Strain per day to maintain this control. During that time, the Horror needs not be concerned about sustaining the body, but if the body does not receive proper nourishment and water, when the Horror's control of the body is relinquished, the host will immediately die of malnourishment.



USING THE HUNTER OF HUNTERS

The Hunter of Hunters is a devious and clever Horror that likes a challenge from its prey. The hunt is the most dangerous game there is and if it is to get any satisfaction, there have to be stakes, and those stakes may as well be its own existence. It knows that if it goes after Name-givers that hunt Horrors, then it is going after prey that is sure to bite back. It will also seek to discredit those that it hunts in order to make life all that much more difficult for them.

The Hunter of Hunters is a good Horror to use against a group of characters that is focused on hunting Horrors, especially one with a Horror Stalker. The characters might be on the trail of a Horror that has been terrorizing a town, while The Hunter of Hunters is, in turn, hunting them, waiting to strike at them at the time that would most benefit it. This would probably be after the group has defeated the other Horror and has not had much opportunity to recuperate.

Another possibility is that the Horror, masquerading as a Horror-marked Adept seeking to destroy the Horror that has marked her, approaches the characters. In actuality, there is no other Horror, but the characters are having their mettle tested while being lead into a trap.

The characters might also encounter the Horror and fail to defeat it before it escapes them only to return in subsequent adventures in order to plague the group. The focus of the Horror has shifted from just hunting prey to toying with and probing the characters for weaknesses.

THE HUNTER OF HUNTERS

Attributes

DEX: 13 STR: 15 TOU: 18
PER: 16 WIL: 23 CHA: 19

Initiative: 10

Number of Attacks: 2

Attack: 23

Damage: 30

Number of Spells: 2

Spellcasting: 23

Effect: See Powers

Physical Defense: 11

Spell Defense: 13

Social Defense: 21

Armor: as host body

Mystic Armor: 20

Knockdown: 11

Recovery Tests: 8

Death Rating: as host (physical)
120(210) (astral)

Wound Threshold: 25

Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 60

Full Movement: 120

Karma Points: 40

Karma Steps: 12

Powers: Cursed Luck 19, Horror Mark 19, Karma Tap 15, Possess Body 20, Spells: Circle 8 Illusionist, Circle 8 Necromancer, Terror 15, Horror Durability 15

Legend Points: 38,000

Equipment: As host

Loot: As host

JOIE

Joie can alter its physical appearance and frequently manifests as a wandering minstrel, a village idiot, or a child with blonde hair and blue eyes. The Horror appears in these forms to the isolated villages that are its preferred prey, seeking aid, shelter, or any other plausible need suited to the form it has taken. Though it prefers to remain disguised whenever possible, Joie's true shape is that of a lithe, man-sized beast of terrible strength, with a thick hide and wicked claws.

The beast has a particularly evil smile; its mouth appears wider than physically possible and it is filled with rows of cracked, yellow teeth. Its tongue, the size and texture of the liver of a small animal, plays constantly across these teeth.

Over a number of days, Joie makes itself wholly welcome in its target community, all the while observing the citizens for weaknesses upon which to prey. After a short time, Joie begins to pervert the emotions of the local folk, usually starting with one or two minor incidents. The Horror gradually spreads its influence until most of the community is firmly under its control and begins drawing nourishment from the warped psyches of its victims. The Horror stays in a given village or town until its dreadful doings are discovered. Once unmasked, Joie departs in search of new victims. Often, though not always, Joie slays the villagers before leaving.

Joie rarely engages in combat, preferring to manipulate its victims from the shadows. However, Joie can be formidable in battle. The Horror can use its huge, toothy jaws to bite an opponent or rake enemies with its powerful claws. Joie's claws inflict Step 12 Damage; its bite causes Step 16 Damage.



JOIE'S POWERS

In Name-giver guise, Joie can use its Corrupt Karma, Horror Mark, and Karma Tap powers, as well as its unique Pervert Emotion power (see below). In its monstrous true form, Joie adds the Terror power to its arsenal.

Many powerful Horrors feed on negative emotions like hatred, anger, fear, and jealousy. Once people realize that these emotions are controlling their actions, they will resist these feelings, thereby starving the Horror. The Pervert Emotion power, unique to Joie, allows the Horror to subvert such resistance by warping its victims' minds so that painful and evil things become a source of happiness to them.

Pervert Emotion allows Joie to change a victim's interpretation of emotions, causing him to act in ways that he normally would not because he no longer sees his actions as wrong or inappropriate. For example, a character who feels joy rather than disgust at physical violence may express his affection for his neighbor by nailing the individual's cap to his head. While under the influence of this horrible power, people can commit truly terrifying acts without realizing it.

To use this power, Joie makes a Pervert Emotion Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, Joie can pervert the target's emotions in a manner that the victim finds pleasing, and that is also appetizing to the Horror. The level of success achieved determines the ease with which Joie can pervert the victim's feelings. Altering strong anger into simple affection requires an Average success level; turning bitter jealousy into euphoria requires an Extraordinary success. The gamemaster determines the power's effectiveness, based on the circumstance of the given situation.

A victim under the influence of this power may realize that his emotions are being manipulated if he makes a successful Perception Test against the result of the Pervert Emotion Test. The gamemaster should make this test for the character. If the test is successful, the character realizes that his emotions are somehow inappropriate, though he cannot control them. To break free of the Pervert Emotion power, the character must make a successful Willpower Test against the result of the Pervert Emotion Test.

USING JOIE

Typically, player characters encounter Joie by coming into contact with the population of a small town or village that has come under the influence of the Horror's Pervert Emotion power. Alternatively, Joie may simply try to use its powers directly against the characters or even attack them outright.

In one possible adventure, player characters on a long journey stop at a village for the night. Soon after their arrival, they notice that the local people are behaving strangely: laughing uproariously when they or others hurt themselves, acting joyful at things that ought to make them angry or sad, and so on. Once the characters realize that a Horror might be causing these bizarre emotional shifts, they may attempt to find and destroy Joie. However, Joie is unwilling to leave its latest meal unfinished and further alters the citizens of the town so that they become less than willing to give up their newfound, constant pleasure.

JOIE

Attributes

DEX: 16 STR: 10 TOU: 17
PER: 20 WIL: 18 CHA: 20

Initiative: 15

Number of Attacks: 2

Attack: 16

Damage:

Bite: 16

Claws: 12

Number of Spells: 2

Spellcasting: 20

Effect: See Powers

Death Rating: 100(220)

Wound Threshold: 20

Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Karma Points: 25

Powers: Corrupt Karma 20, Horror Durability 20, Horror Mark 20, Karma Tap 20, Pervert Emotion 20, Terror 20

Legend Points: 32,000

Equipment: None

Loot: Usually none

Physical Defense: 15

Spell Defense: 20

Social Defense: 22

Armor: 16

Mystic Armor: 20

Knockdown: 12

Recovery Tests: 7

Combat Movement: 40

Full Movement: 100

Karma Step: 10

LIFE LEACH

Described as an eight foot wide mass of vine-like tentacles, the Life Leach prefers to attack large groups. It will select about half the group to attack and kill (to later turn them into Marionettes), and it will use Steal Vitality on the remaining group members. The Life Leach is a rare but not unique Horror which prefers to live in mountainous terrain. Its many limbs make it adept at climbing and it suffers no movement penalties for terrain features.

THE LIFE LEACH'S POWERS

The Life Leach can create constructs from the dead flesh of its victims. The behavior that has been described by those unfortunate enough to encounter a Life Leach as attacking dead or unconscious bodies is actually part of the creation process. The Life Leach can only create Marionettes from dead flesh and thus will continue to attack unconscious creatures. Once the target is dead the Life Leach will implant an egg, about the size of a human fist, in the corpse. Implanting the egg costs the Life Leach 2 Strain.

The effects of the egg will impair the functioning of all Last-chance Salves and similar magics at a -4 step penalty. If a creature is brought back to life with the egg still implanted, the egg dies and rots inside the creature, who takes one step of Damage every day for each day since he has been resurrected (i.e. they take Step 1 Damage on day one, Step 5 Damage on day five and so on). The only way to stop this rotting process is to lance the area the egg was implanted in and drain the infection. This can be done more easily if the egg is located before the creature is brought back to life.



If the egg is not removed from the corpse it will hatch in approximately three days and the unfortunate body becomes the host for a Marionette. The Life Leech can attempt to control Marionettes within one mile of its location by making a Control Marionette Test against the Marionette's Spell Defense.

Steal Vitality

This power allows the Horror to directly steal the life force of its target. While the initial attack causes some negative effects to the character, the long term benefit to the Horror is a gradual wasting away of the body, as though aging, which it can feed off of. Some have described this power as the Horror digesting its victim over a span of several years. To use the Steal Vitality power the Horror makes a Steal Vitality Test against its intended victim's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds the target immediately ages one year and loses half their Karma. If the Horror is not killed, a process of accelerated aging begins. Within the first few days the victim will feel weakened and notice the subtle effects of aging (as appropriate for their race). Within a week noticeable changes begin to take place and by the end of the first year the victim is aging at ten times the normal rate. This accelerated aging effect can be stopped by killing the Horror.

USING THE LIFE LEACH

The characters encounter a Life Leech while guarding a caravan. The Life Leech kills a few of the merchants and implants them with Marionette eggs, then uses Steal Vitality on a number of the players before fleeing. Over the next several weeks the players discover that they are aging rapidly and unless they can research this obscure Horror and figure out how to defeat it, they may be doomed to early retirement. This is a good way for characters to research at the Library of Throal, as

well as an opportunity for gamemasters to introduce the characters to knowledgeable Nethermancers and Horror Stalkers.

LIFE LEACH

Attributes

DEX: 10 STR: 10 TOU: 8
PER: 11 WIL: 11 CHA: 8

Initiative: 13 Physical Defense: 14
Number of Attacks: 4 Spell Defense: 14
Attack: 18 Social Defense: 15
Damage: 15 Armor: 8
Number of Spells: 0 Mystic Armor: 10
Spellcasting: 20 Knockdown: 20
Effect: See Below Recovery Tests: 4

Death Rating: 80 Combat Movement: 70
Wound Threshold: 15 Full Move: 140
Unconsciousness Rating: 70

Karma Points: 16 Karma Steps: 8

Powers: Create Marionette, Control Marionette 15, Corrupt Karma, Cursed Luck, Horror Durability 5-10, Horror Mark, Immune to Fear, Steal Vitality

Legend Points: 5,000

Equipment: None

Loot: None

NEBIS

Nebis presents a slight threat in combat compared to other Named Horrors. The Horror defends its lair primarily with prepared defenses such as the Illusionist spells Alarm, Impossible Lock, and Nobody Here. Though Nebis is physically weak, the destruction of the Horror's physical body does not kill it. Instead, physical destruction of the Horror forces Nebis to retreat to astral space for a year and a day or until it can manifest a new body using its unique Tattoo Claim power (see **Tattoo Claim**, below).

To kill Nebis, characters must destroy both its physical and astral forms. Each form has a separate Death Rating. Physical Damage is subtracted only from the physical Death Rating. Damage from attacks that work against Mystic Armor is subtracted from both ratings.

While on the astral plane, Nebis can use powers that cause Strain or require the Horror to take permanent Damage. When Nebis acquires a new body this Strain and Damage are transferred to its new physical form. Though slow to react to new information, Nebis is profoundly intelligent and deeply vindictive. The Horror develops personal grudges against Adepts who slay its physical body or interfere with its plans. Nebis uses its actions in combat to Horror mark its opponents, then plant Thought Worms and Karma Taps. Once it marks all opponents, Nebis makes physical attacks against them until its body dies.

Nebis is the subject of more than one of the so-called Horror cults and the Horror often uses the members of these cults as pawns in its plans.



NEBIS'S POWERS

By spending 1 point of Strain per round, Nebis can clairvoyantly sense anything of which a previously marked character is aware. The marked character does not sense Nebis's eavesdropping.

Nebis's Thought Worm power enables the Horror to manipulate the dreams of any sleeping character it has previously marked. By making a successful Spellcasting Test against the dreaming target's Spell Defense, Nebis can convincingly impersonate a benevolent Passion, ghost, fictitious spirit, and so on. (These beings need not really exist in Barsaive, as long as Nebis persuades his victim that they do.) The target may experience deep emotions during the dream and always remembers it on waking. After one successful test, Nebis can impersonate the same figure in the character's later dreams without making another test. This use of the Thought Worm power causes the victim no pain or Damage.

Nebis must spend 1 point of Strain per round to send a dream message. The Horror can send the same dream to a group of marked characters simultaneously as long as all the targeted characters are sleeping.

Nebis has an extremely potent, but very taxing, ability with his Horror Mark power. Nebis is aware of every time his Name is spoken or written, and may choose to attempt to mark the speaker or writer. However, Nebis must spend 60 Strain (and receive 2 Wounds as a result) to make such an attempt.

Tattoo Claim

The Tattoo Claim power enables Nebis to place special tattoos on characters it has previously marked and later retrieve the tattooed body parts for its own use. To use the power, Nebis makes a Tattoo Claim Test against the Spell Defense of any sleeping targeted character. If the test succeeds, the target character receives a tattoo on one body part chosen by the gamemaster: arm, leg, chest, head, and so on. The tattoo is recognizably magical and especially visible on the astral plane. A character cannot receive more than one Tattoo Claim and Nebis must take 1 point of permanent Damage for each Tattoo Claim Test it makes. The tattooed character gains a +2 step bonus to one ability or set of abilities, depending on the tattooed body part. A tattooed arm adds +2 steps to Strength; a tattooed leg, +2 steps to Dexterity; chest, +2 to the character's Armor Rating; and a tattooed head, +2 steps to Perception. The tattoo and the bonus last for a year and a day or until Nebis's Horror mark lapses. Nebis can renew the tattoo by making another Tattoo Claim Test whenever the target character is within a hundred miles of the Horror. Dispel Magic and similar effects may remove a character's tattoo as if it were a 12th Circle spell.

If six or more characters bear Nebis's Tattoo Claim, Nebis can manifest a new physical body by persuading its victims to perform the Tattoo Ritual spell.

Tattoo Ritual (Circle 4 Nethermancer Spell)

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: 10 yards **Duration:** See Below
Effect: Gives Nebis body parts from tattooed victims
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: 5

Nebis teaches this spell to its agents and/or victims, usually under the false pretext that the ritual accomplishes something else, such as driving the Horror from the world or destroying Nebis forever. Members of Horror cults devoted to Nebis and others among Nebis' corrupt

servitors often teach the spell as well. The Tattoo Ritual spell is learned and cast as a Circle 4 Nethermancer spell and requires at least six characters with Tattoo Claims, one for each body part (head, chest, left and right arms, left and right legs).

The ritual requires no particular location, materials, or preparation, though Nebis often invents these to allay characters' suspicions. Casting the ritual takes ten minutes. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, Nebis then makes a single Tattoo Ritual Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the highest Spell Defense of any tattooed character present, increased by 1 for each additional character. If the Tattoo Ritual Test succeeds, all the characters tattooed by Nebis are affected by the spell.

Characters with a head or chest tattoo die immediately. Those with limb tattoos take 1 Wound and Step 16 Damage, as the tattooed limb tears away. They suffer extreme pain, with effects similar to the Circle 3 Nethermancer spell Pain, though these characters incur no further Damage. The character also loses the step bonus granted by the Tattoo Claim.

If Nebis receives more body parts than it needs (an extra arm or head, for instance), the parts are incorporated into its new body. Add 10 to Nebis's Death Rating for each extra body part beyond six. Nebis also receives a +4 Step bonus on all Tests it makes against any character who has lost a body part to the Horror.

If Nebis' Tattoo Ritual Test fails, the ritual has no effect. Nebis takes 10 Strain and cannot make another Tattoo Ritual Test for twenty four hours. Nebis cannot use any of these powers on characters it has not personally marked, nor can Nebis sense or use other Horrors' marks.



USING NEBIS

Nebis seeks out Adepts to battle, for it cares little if its physical form is destroyed. If player characters kill its body the Horror stalks the characters in astral space. Nebis uses its powers to mark its victims and eventually tricks them into performing its Tattoo Ritual.

NEBIS

Attributes

DEX: 8 STR: 10 TOU: 18
PER: 20 WIL: 20 CHA: 25

Initiative: 9 Physical Defense: 9
Number of Attacks: (2) Spell Defense: 12
Attack: 10 Social Defense: 25
Damage: 13 Armor: 8
Number of Spells: 2 Mystic Armor: 20
Spellcasting: 22 Knockdown: 9
Effect: See Powers Recovery Tests: 7

Death Rating: 110(170) (physical) Combat Movement: 20
110(170) (astral) Full Movement: 40

Wound Threshold: 25
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Karma Points: 30 Karma Step: 12

Powers: Cursed Luck 12, Horror Durability 10, Horror Mark 18, Karma Tap 14, Spells: Circle 3 Illusionist, Tattoo Claim 14 (see above), Tattoo Ritual 14 (see above), Thought Worm 14

Legend Points: 30,000

Equipment: None

Loot: None

NEMESIS

Nemesis usually uses human agents to contact player characters it wishes to mark. These agents offer the characters the knowledge and weapons they need to destroy a nearby Horror. Nemesis then uses its Horror Lore power (see Horror Lore, following) to provide these weapons. Nemesis also tells the characters the Horror's Name and other information about its weaknesses.

Nemesis also tries to mark at least one of the player characters, more if the adventuring group appears particularly weak or overconfident. Once a player character is Horror-marked, Nemesis tries to implant a thought worm in the individual, slowly turning the character against friends and family and finally forcing the individual to destroy all he holds dear.

Nemesis hates standup fights and uses its spells to kill as many attackers as quickly as it can if things become violent. If it appears that the Horror cannot win, Nemesis uses its Transport power to flee the scene, vowing to return and slay the player characters another day

NEMESIS' POWERS

Nemesis' Horror Mark power only works against player characters who have accepted gifts from the Horror. If a character accepts such a

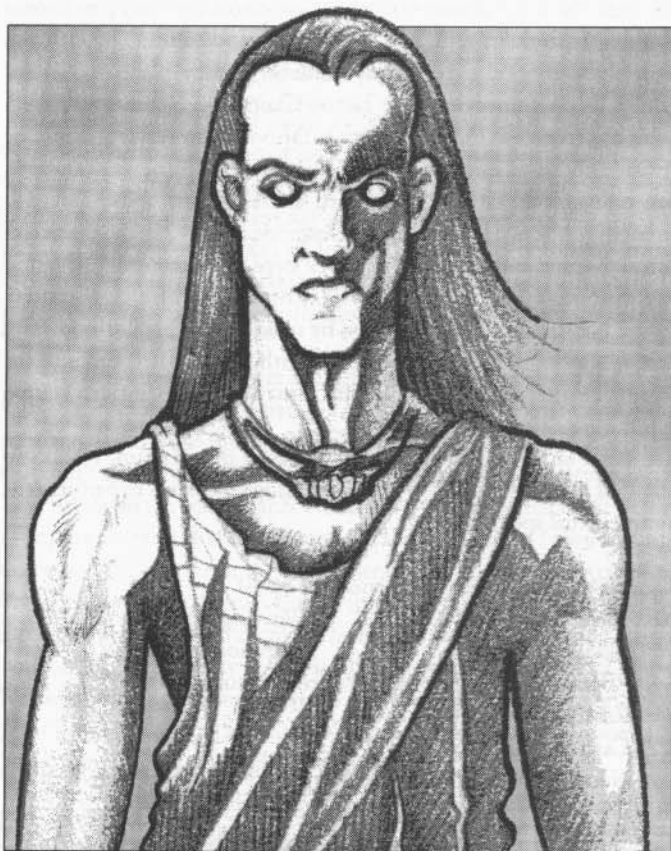
gift, Nemesis may then attempt to mark the character at any time, as long as the character keeps the gift. These gifts are usually the weapons Nemesis gives player characters to destroy other Horrors, but any other item will work as well.

Horror Lore

Nemesis' unique Horror Lore power is the source of the entity's knowledge concerning Horrors. To use this power, Nemesis makes a Horror Lore Test against the Spell Defense of the Horror in question. If the test is successful, Nemesis may spend 1 Karma Point to discover the weaknesses (if any) of a particular Horror. A successful test also enables Nemesis to empower a weapon so that it causes extra Damage to the targeted Horror. Nemesis may spend up to 5 Karma Points to do this. Each Karma Point increases the Damage step of the weapon by +2 when used against the targeted Horror. When used against any other target, the weapon functions normally.

Transport

Nemesis' Transport power enables the Horror to move from one of its strongholds to the next through astral space. To use this power, Nemesis makes a Transport Test against its own Spell Defense. If the test is successful the Horror shifts into astral space and transports to a new location. However, each time the Horror uses this power, it takes Step 10 Damage (reduced by 1 point for each success level achieved on the Transport Test). Though it is unlikely to happen, Nemesis can die from overusing this power. When using its Transport power, Nemesis may travel from stronghold to stronghold in one Combat Round.



USING NEMESIS

Nemesis is an intelligent, cultivated Horror that moves among circles most Horrors do not. Rather than a grotesque monstrosity to be feared on sight, Nemesis is a beautiful, cunning entity that prefers to manipulate its foes and victims into destroying themselves rather than lay hands on them itself.

In one possible adventure, the characters arrive in a small town to find that the streets are nearly deserted and that the remaining townspeople are half-mad with fear. It seems a wormskull Horror has taken up residence nearby and is systematically destroying the town. The survivors tell the characters that they have heard of a Wizard not far from the town who might know how to destroy the Horror, but none of them are strong or brave enough to make the trip. The Wizard, of course, is really Nemesis, who is more than happy to provide the characters with the information and weapons they need to destroy the wormskull.

Alternatively, the characters may be hired by a city official to find out what is happening in the city government. Many officials have begun taking extended vacations and returning with some interesting new thoughts. As a result, the city is becoming a crueler place, with heavier taxes and harsher penalties for crimes. The player characters must involve themselves in the politics of the city to discover that during these extended vacations, city officials have been attending gladiatorial games hosted by someone they refuse to identify. If the characters can wrangle themselves an invitation to one of these events or convince someone of import that the characters should serve as guards, they witness a scene of senseless cruelty and barbarism. Provide subtle clues that the host of the event is a Horror. If the characters try to attack Nemesis, the Horror does its best to calm them down and offers information about other Horrors, trying to persuade them to enter its service. Depending on how the characters handle the situation, it ends in a bloody fight or becomes the beginning of a sinister and uneasy alliance.

NEMESIS

Attributes

DEX: 5 STR: 5 TOU: 19
PER: 21 WIL: 25 CHA: 20

Initiative: 10

Number of Attacks: 2

Attack: 10

Damage: 5

Number of Spells: 10

Spellcasting: 24

Effect: 25

Physical Defense: 7

Spell Defense: 25

Social Defense: 20

Armor: 20

Mystic Armor: 25

Knockdown: 15

Recovery Tests: 5

Death Rating: 50 (170)

Wound Threshold: 10

Unconsciousness Rating: 40 (140)

Combat Movement: 100

Full Movement: 200

Karma Points: 60

Karma Step: 20

Powers: Animate Dead 20, Damage Shift 15, Horror Durability 20, Horror Lore 20, Horror Mark 20, Spells: Circle 9 Wizard, Thought Worm 23, Transport 25

Legend Points: 127,000

Equipment: Loose robes, personal items befitting a noble

Loot: Usually none, though several thousand silver pieces can be found at each of Nemesis's strongholds.

RISTUL

Ristul has no single form that can be seen either astrally or physically. It has no shape that can be attacked or destroyed and so Ristul will remain until all corruption is driven from Barsaive.

Ristul most often manifests as the black, inky substance that pollutes much of astral space. As this pollution is more common in certain areas of Barsaive than in others, so too is Ristul more likely to be an influence in these places. Nightwists and corrupted Name-givers, the Ristular, are additional manifestations of this Horror, as is the Abyss of Aras Nehem, the place where it is rumored that three Passions sacrificed themselves to keep Ristul from consuming all of Barsaive. The Abyss is the only manifestation of Ristul that remains stationary, located on the jagged coastline southwest of Urupa. Through this gaping hole between the physical and astral worlds Ristul spills into the realm of Name-givers.

RISTUL'S POWERS

Though Ristul has no single form, it possesses powers and abilities that aid it in its endless corruption. However, Ristul's powers and abilities also suffer from a number of significant restrictions that limit how and when the Horror may use them. In general, Ristul can only use its powers in areas where it has manifested: regions classified as either Tainted or Corrupt. However, Ristular in any type of region can act as a conduit for Ristul to use its powers.



Ristul's most potent power, Horror Thread, enables it to spread its corruption among Name-givers (See **Horror Powers**, p. 84). However, Ristul can only use this power in places where it has manifested.

USING RISTUL

Nightwist constructs and the Ristular are the most likely ways player characters will encounter Ristul. A confrontation with either of these Horror minions will likely result in one or more of the characters being Horror-marked and eventually falling victim to Ristul's Horror Thread power.

For example, the player characters may enter a small town and discover the bodies of several townspeople who have been ritually slain, the corpses left to serve as a warning to the survivors of what might happen to them. As the characters investigate the deaths, they learn that each of the victims had been seen talking with a group of mysterious men the night before the slayings. As the characters follow up on these leads, they eventually catch up to the Ristular, only to come upon them as they are enacting their ritual. Though the ritual is doomed to failure, it has attracted the attention of Ristul, which marks the players characters in short order. The characters must seek a way to rid themselves of the Horror's mark.

RISTUL

Attributes

DEX: NA STR: NA TOU: NA
PER: NA WIL: NA CHA: NA

Initiative: NA

Number of Attacks: NA

Attack: NA

Damage: NA

Number of Spells: 2

Spellcasting: 18

Effect: See Powers

Physical Defense: NA

Spell Defense: 25

Social Defense: NA

Armor: NA

Mystic Armor: 20

Recovery Tests: NA

Knockdown: NA

Death Rating: NA

Wound Threshold: NA

Unconsciousness Rating: NA

Combat Movement: NA

Full Movement: NA

Karma Points: 40

Karma Steps: 18

Powers: Corrupt Karma 18, Horror Mark 18, Horror Thread 18 (see text), Karma Tap 18

Legend Points: 25,000

Equipment: None

Loot: None

SWARM

When first encountered it might appear that Swarm is a massive swarm of jet black insects, but upon closer inspection the insects are just shadows of non-descript insect-like shapes that have no color. It almost appears that the shapes are cut from astral space, itself. The shapes move with one mind and will surround their prey as they attack.

While it appears that Swarm makes physical attacks, its main attack is actually pattern related. The parts of Swarm that pass through the patterns of Name-givers and other objects cause pattern Damage. The Damage appears as physical and the physical appearance can be healed via Recovery Tests and healing magic, but the Pattern Damage remains. Hence, a Wound caused by Swarm may only be healed after the Pattern Damage is repaired, which requires a successful Thread Weaving Test to be made against a difficulty of 25 for each Wound.

Swarm is also immune to normal physical attacks. While Swarm's presence has a physical manifestation, to harm it requires combat in the Astral. Swarm's physical form looks like a jumble of many different beings, but it's astral form shows signs of one being made up of many parts.

While Swarm usually manifests as a cloud of approximately 50 x 50 x 50 feet, it can squeeze itself through very small openings: if an area is not air tight, then Swarm can get in.

SWARM'S POWERS

Swarm uses its Split Self power to place one of the insects inside a Name-giver. This allows it to extend its Horror-mark capability. Swarm also uses this power in order to extend its reach beyond the normal limit by instructing the marked Name-givers to carry insects with them. In this way the insects are distributed to areas far beyond Swarm's reach. While the insects can't mark the Name-givers they encounter, they incorporate themselves into the new victim's pattern and lay dormant until the unlucky individual comes within 10,000 miles of Swarm. At this time, Swarm may attempt to Horror mark the victim. Using Split Self costs Swarm 5 Strain, and it may only have sixteen insects split from itself at any time.



USING SWARM

If you wish to use Swarm in your campaign, it is easy enough to have a Horror-marked merchant release a bunch of the insects within a crowded marketplace. Thus any number of the characters or other key NPCs can be infected with the insects. Since the insects lay dormant within the pattern of the Name-givers, this will allow you to pull Swarm into your campaign at any point in time.

Also it is possible for Swarm to be drawn to Barsaive by the current conflicts, at which time it will find move about the land much like the Horror Clouds, attacking anything in it's path.

SWARM

Attributes

DEX: 20 STR: 16 TOU: 10
PER: 25 WIL: 23 CHA: 23

Initiative: 22 Physical Defense: 25
Number of Attacks: 5 Spell Defense: 25
Attack: 22 Social Defense: 23
Damage: 24 Armor: 8
Number of Spells: 2 Mystic Armor: 20
Spellcasting: 30 Knockdown: 28
Effect: See Powers Recovery Tests: 10

Death Rating: 80(170) Combat Movement: 240
Wound Threshold: 18 Full Movement: 480
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Karma Points: 60 Karma Step: 15

Powers: Horror Durability 15, Horror Mark 20, Split Self 16, Corrupt Karma 18, Terror 17, Spells: Circle 6 Nethermancer

Legend Points: 135,000

Equipment: None

Loot: None

TAINT

Taint exists solely on the astral plane, where it appears as a huge, bodiless head floating amid swirls of polluted astral energy. Taint's face (if it can be called that) has four huge, dark eyes, a pair on either side, that stare lifelessly into the depths of astral space. Its mouth can stretch to impossibly large dimensions, enabling it to swallow almost any astral prey. A pair of talon-tipped tendrils float at the top and bottom of Taint's body; the Horror uses these tendrils to draw astral victims into its gaping maw.

Taint roams astral space, searching for potential victims to mark. Though the Horror can mark Adepts of any Discipline, Taint most often attacks magicians because their use of magic is much more obvious and easier to corrupt.

Taint favors areas that suffered worst during the Scourge and shows up most often in regions designated as Tainted or Corrupt. Taint occasionally wanders through Open regions as well, but enters Safe regions only in rare circumstances, as these areas expose the Horror to Adepts' astral sensing abilities.

TAINT'S POWERS

In addition to a few unique abilities discussed below, Taint possesses several common Horror powers, including Corrupt Karma and Spellcasting. Taint's affinity for corrupted magical energies makes the Horror comfortable in polluted regions of astral space. When in these areas, Taint is more difficult to detect than normal, as the astral pollution functions as magical camouflage. To reflect this, Taint gains a bonus to its Spell Defense when it lurks in polluted areas of astral space, as shown on the Astral Pollution Camouflage Table. This bonus is added to Taint's Spell Defense for all purposes.

Astral Pollution Camouflage Table

Region	Spell Defense Bonus
Safe	+0
Open	+4
Tainted	+12
Corrupt	+20

Taint can also draw strength from corrupt astral energy. This enables the Horror to recover from Damage and regenerate spent or lost Karma without making Tests. However, Taint cannot engage in other activities while drawing on corrupt astral energy for this purpose. In Open regions, each hour that Taint draws energy gains the Horror 1 additional Recovery Test or 1 point of Karma. In Tainted regions it gains 2 Recovery Tests or 2 points of Karma per hour. In Corrupt regions it gains 3 Recovery Tests or 4 points of Karma. Note that Taint can accumulate more Karma than the listed 40 in this manner.

Taint's Horror Mark power works a little differently than the standard version of this power. When Taint chooses to Horror-mark a victim, the Horror must use its power over and over again until enough corruption has collected in the Adept's pattern to Horror-mark him or her. Unlike normal versions of this power, Taint can only make a Horror Mark Test against a target who is manipulating magical energy in some way: weaving spell threads, casting a spell, using Thread Magic, or improving talent ranks. Magicians are Taint's favored targets because the use of their spellcasting abilities makes them easy prey.

Each time Taint attempts to use its Horror Mark power, it makes a Horror Mark Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, the character receives one point of tainted magic. As soon as the number of tainted magic points is equal to the target's Perception step, the victim is Horror-marked. For example, if Taint attempts to pervert the flow of magic to a Wizard with Perception step 7, the Horror must make 7 successful Horror Mark Tests. On the seventh successful test, the victim is Horror-marked. If a test fails, however, the target may make a Perception Test against the result of the failed Horror Mark Test. If the Perception Test succeeds, the character realizes that some outside force has interfered with his or her use of magic.

Through its Horror Mark, Taint can corrupt a marked victim's use of magic. Victims of Taint's Horror Mark can also serve as conduits through which the Horror can use its other powers against targets in the physical world. For example, it can cast its spells at other targets near the marked victim.





Corrupt Magic

The Corrupt Magic power enables Taint to corrupt any use of magic by a Horror-marked target, such as casting spells and using talents. This corruption can take many forms, ranging from Damage to the Horror-marked character to a perversion of the magic's intent. To use this power, Taint makes a Corrupt Magic Test against the target's Spell Defense. If this test succeeds, the Horror can influence the outcome of the target's use of magic. The gamemaster determines the exact effects of this power. The following examples illustrate possible effects.

If a tainted spell causes Damage to the marked character, the effect is similar to that of casting Raw Magic (*Earthdawn 2nd Ed*, p.155). The target takes Damage based on the success level of Taint's Corrupt Magic Test. An Average success causes Damage as if the character had cast Raw Magic in a Safe region. A Good success Damages the target as if he had cast magic in an Open region. An Excellent success, as if he had cast in a Tainted region; and an Extraordinary success, as if he had cast in a Corrupt region. When Taint uses this power to Damage a character using a talent, the talent rank substitutes for the spell Circle when calculating the Damage taken by the target.

Taint can also cause the effects of a talent or spell to go wrong. For example, a spell that heals a target may do harm, or a talent that improves an object or target character (i.e. Forge Blade) may damage the object or character. Alternatively, the spell or talent may affect the wrong target: a Bone Shatter spell aimed at an enemy might instead strike a companion.

USING TAINT

Taint's method of attack makes it a particularly insidious danger. It prefers to target the most powerful of Adepts, as these offer the greatest opportunities for it to use its corrupting powers. Once the Horror has marked such a victim, it can use its Corrupt Magic power to cause the victim to spread pain, fear, and terror throughout Barsaive. Any Adept marked by Taint will never be able to fully trust his own abilities again.

Taint is a particularly good choice of Horror for a group that has been adventuring together for quite some time, whose members are beginning to think they've seen everything Barsaive can throw at them. During an appropriate adventure, one of the characters (whichever could most do with a little paranoia) begins to sense something wrong

with his or her magic. Each time this character uses a talent, he or she feels a terrible drain on his soul. If the characters dig around for information, they will most likely determine the source of the problem. Once they realize that Taint is responsible, the tainted character has some difficult decisions ahead of him. Does he stop using his talents altogether? Does he keep using them until he is under Taint's control? Or does he confront the creature astrally and attempt to destroy it?

TAINT

Attributes

DEX: 12 STR: 16 TOU: 13
PER: 20 WIL: 16 CHA: 13

Initiative: 15
Number of Attacks: 4
Attack: 13
Damage: 17
Number of Spells: 3
Spellcasting: 18
Effect: See Below

Physical Defense: 15
Spell Defense: 20
Social Defense: 15
Armor: 10
Mystic Armor: 10
Knockdown: NA
Recovery Tests: 8

Death Rating: 75 (195)
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: 70 (170)

Combat Movement: 50
Full Movement: 100

Karma Points: 40

Karma Step: 16

Powers: Corrupt Karma 20, Corrupt Magic 20, Horror Durability 20, Horror Mark 20, Karma Tap 15, Spells: Circle 10 Wizard

Legend Points: 27,000
Equipment: None
Loot: None

THE TEMPTER

The Tempter specializes in the corruption of the most righteous of Barsaivans: it concentrates on questors, Lightbearers, members of warrior bands, liberators, and others who live according to vows or strict



principles of honor. It derives sustenance from fear, pain, and doubt as most Horrors do, but it gains extra power from the despair that results from self-betrayal. It exists to steer unfortunate souls to betray all they stand for. Once its victims are at their lowest ebb, it enjoys the additional cruelty of transforming them into Horror Constructs.

Physically, the Tempter appears as a burr, a thorny seed case no more than half an inch in diameter. The Tempter uses its tiny spikes to latch onto a victim's cloak, boots, or leggings. It may also hide in the hair of a victim's mount. What, if anything, is contained inside the seed case is unknown. It is unlikely that anyone has opened the case and lived to report on its contents. According to legend, however, an ork liberator once opened the Tempter's case in the early years after the Scourge. She found inside it an oozing, half-formed, miniature replica of herself.

Despite the Tempter's small size, harming the Horror physically is extremely difficult. Though the Tempter cannot harm opponents in direct physical combat (it is particularly fond of the Illusory Missiles spell) it typically flees when discovered, for it derives no mystic energy from slaying victims directly. It has no means of ground locomotion, but can fly through the air at high speeds. If it remains interested in a victim from whom it has fled, the Tempter returns later. It uses its illusion spells cleverly to disguise its presence if need be.

THE TEMPTER'S POWERS

After the Tempter has latched onto a victim, it immediately uses its Horror Mark power. Marking its victim allows the Tempter to form a mental link with the unfortunate individual, through which it offers assistance in various situations. The Horror's first suggestions do not

violate any principles the victim believes in. In fact, the Tempter offers aid in the form of its Karma Boost power (see **Horror Powers**, p. 85) in moments when the character truly needs help. It whispers praise for the victim's code of honor and claims to be a benign entity cruelly slandered in legend. If the victim refuses aid, the Tempter merely sniffs its regret. It is a patient Horror and will wait for its victims to betray themselves by asking for that extra surge of Karma when times get rough. After the victim has accepted its help a few times, the Tempter's whispering becomes more frequent and it offers Karma Boosts for increasingly trivial matters. It aims to make the victim completely dependent upon it. Eventually the victim accepts the Tempter's aid one time too many and begins to turn into a Horror Construct.

USING THE TEMPTER

Player characters can encounter the Tempter without meeting the Horror directly. They may fight the Horror Constructs it leaves in its wake or try to bring one of its victims to a Wizard powerful enough to dispel the effects of its Karma Boost power.

However, if you want a player character to be marked by a major Horror, the Tempter makes an interesting choice. Because it provides boosts when the character most wants them, the character might well be tempted to draw upon those 15 extra steps again and again, until it is too late – which leaves the character's doom or salvation in the player character's hands.

THE TEMPTER

Attributes

DEX: 22 STR: 4 TOU: 10
PER: 25 WIL: 23 CHA: 23

Initiative: 22

Number of Attacks: 0

Attack: NA

Damage: NA

Number of Spells: 5

Spellcasting: 30

Effect: See Powers

Physical Defense: 25

Spell Defense: 25

Social Defense: 23

Armor: 8

Mystic Armor: 20

Knockdown: 6

Recovery Tests: 10

Death Rating: 80(170)

Wound Threshold: 18

Unconsciousness Rating: 60(135)

Combat Movement: 240

Full Movement: 480

Karma Points: 60

Karma Step: 15

Powers: Horror Durability 15, Horror Mark 20, Karma Boost 15, Spells: Circle 6 Illusionist

Legend Points: 200,000

Equipment: None

Loot: None

TWICEBORN

AND THE VIVANE FACTIONS

Twiceborn appears to be regal, arrogant, ambitious, clever, and cruel. She is, however, none of these things. Twiceborn is a puppet of a



group of Horrors known as Gharmheks. The Gharmheks control her every decision, action, and impulse. But, the Gharmheks want no one to realize Twiceborn's nature, so they have given her a sort of personality. The result of this is that Twiceborn, as long as the Gharmheks persist, is immortal. If she were destroyed, she would reappear again shortly thereafter, reanimated as a new puppet.

The only way to kill Twiceborn is to kill the Gharmheks, and they are uniquely cowardly. They are invisible creatures who dwell in astral space behind as many of their constructs and followers as they can muster. Their existence is simply not known. Twiceborn's actions will at times seem almost good-natured and forgiving to fulfill the Gharmheks' wishes to remain hidden and to secure their own safety. Still, Gharmheks feed off the fear and revulsion that their creations, the undead, generate. Under their guidance, Vivane will always be a terrifying and sinister place.

THE GHARMHEKS' POWERS

Gharmheks normally exist completely in astral space and thus must be attacked astrally. While in astral space, their attacks ignore Physical Armor, however, Mystic Armor can be used to defend. Gharmheks may manifest in the physical plane at will, but they must use Blood Magic and take 7 points of Damage to return to astral space. When they do manifest, they appear as bizarre reptiles with bony heads and sharp beaks. Their flabby snakelike bodies extend roughly three feet behind their heads. When not in astral space, the Gharmheks protect their bodies by burrowing into the ground, exposing only their armored heads. To pry a Gharmhek out of its burrow requires a successful Strength Test against its Physical Defense, as well as a pole or some other implement with which to pry out the Horror. Though Gharmheks are immune to Knockdown, those pried from their burrows may only strike at ground level targets. Both in astral space and on the physical plane, Gharmheks may cast 5th Circle Nethermancer spells.

Control Dead

A Gharmhek can animate any corpse within 100 yards. To use this power, the Gharmhek makes a Control Dead Test against the Spell Defense of the deceased; a successful result raises the dead man for three weeks, turning him into a cadaver man (ED2, p. 294) under the Gharmhek's control. The Gharmhek may use Blood Magic to extend the animation beyond the three-week limit. By taking 2 points of Damage the Gharmhek can cause the cadaver man to exist for a year and a day, at which time the cadaver man collapses into dust unless the Horror continues the Blood Magic. The Gharmhek can control the cadaver man at a range of 4 miles. Though the Horror must concentrate to control the dead, it need not make any tests to give it orders. Because the cadaver men are telepathically linked to the Gharmhek, its orders to them do not depend on speech or line of sight.

Additionally, the Gharmhek can attempt to usurp control of any undead within 100 feet of them. To take control of an undead being, the Gharmhek uses Blood Magic and takes 1 point of Damage. It then makes a Control Dead Test against the Spell Defense of the undead. If the Gharmhek gets at least a good success, then it can control the undead being for three days. The Gharmhek may use Blood Magic to extend the duration of control to a year and a day as noted above. Similarly, the range and method of control of created cadaver men and controlled undead are the same.



USING TWICEBORN

Twiceborn and the Gharmheks can be used to add an element of Gothic horror to an Earthdawn game. It's very unlikely that Twiceborn would be trying to kill the characters. More often she would want to work with them, to get them to do a job for her, to act as her agents. She has one primary goal, establish Vivane as a kingdom of the dead. To this end, she could use the characters against the other denizens of Vivane, be they the Horror Cloud or independent Horrors. If the characters are motivated by money, she could even pay them to act as her ambassadors to other nations, something she would dearly love to have.

Any adventure involving Twiceborn should have sinister undertones and things that are overtly unsettling. She is not a beautifully well-preserved corpse. She is rotting, as are all of her servants. She wears the finest clothes and can shower the characters with riches and feed them fine food. However, all of the finery should obviously come from the carcasses of the former inhabitants of Vivane. As for the Gharmheks, they should continue to remain the secret puppet masters behind the scenes.

TWICEBORN

Attributes

DEX: 8	STR: 6	TOU: 10
PER: 6	WIL: 8	CHA: 8

Initiative: 9

Number of Attacks: 2

Attack: 13

Damage: 15

Number of Spells: NA

Spellcasting: NA

Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 12

Spell Defense: 10

Spell Defense: 13

Armor: 19

Mystic Armor: 16

Knockdown: 9

Recovery Tests: 0



Death Rating: 58
Wound Threshold: 17
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 25
Full Movement: 50

Powers: Immune to Fear, Damage Shift 10, Terror 10

Legend Points: 3,000
Equipment: Living Crystal Armor, Great Broadsword
Loot: The cash value of Twiceborn's hoard in Vivane is greater than 100,000 silver pieces

GHARMHEK

Attributes

DEX: 4 STR: 4 TOU: 30
PER: 20 WIL: 20 CHA: 4

Initiative: 4 Physical Defense: 8
Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 10
Attack: 9 Social Defense: 4
Damage: 11 Armor: 10 (head)/ 0 (body)
Number of Spells: 1 Mystic Armor: 10
Spellcasting: 20 Knockdown: Immune
Effect: see text Recovery Tests: 5

Death Rating: 58 Combat Movement: 8
Wound Threshold: 17 Full Movement: 16
Unconsciousness Rating: 51

Karma Points: 15 Karma Step: 12

Powers: Control Dead 15, Damage Shift 10, Horror Mark 10, Terror 10, Spells: Circle 5 Nethermancer

Legend Points: 2600
Equipment: None
Loot: None

THE HORROR CLOUDS

Scholars will be able to debate for generations what the Horror Cloud was when it was attracted to Vivane during the War, before it fragmented. However, due to the destruction of a Horror Cloud above the Badlands near Death's Sea, Barsaive has learned what they are currently. The Horror Clouds are indeed both Horrors and clouds, a stormhead of immense proportions. At the heart of the cloud is a ruined Kila, one of Admiral Hartmallen's doomed fleet. The center of the malevolence and intelligence of the Horror has manifested in the undead form of the Kila's former captain.

The only known way to defeat a Horror Cloud is to kill this Horror Captain, but even that does not disperse it. When the Captain is killed, the Cloud settles to the ground, becoming an unmoving area of corrupted fog and a continuing source of undead. Even then, killing the Horror Captain is no easy feat. Horror Clouds have shown themselves capable of easily destroying the most powerful airships in Barsaive and if the Kila cannot be reached, the Horror Captain cannot be killed.

The Cloud is a powerful, destructive storm, and the Kila has been twisted into its heart. The light inside the Kila is red and purple, almost as if it was lit by a bloody fog charged with electricity. Its undead crew members continue to perform their shipboard duties, but stand ready to savagely repel intruders. Within the Kila, at least, the gale force winds of the storm raging outside do not blow, but the undead crew and Horror Captain know every inch of their ship and will use it to their complete advantage during a fight.

THE HORROR CLOUD'S POWERS

The Horror Cloud is first and foremost a sentient, baleful storm. It uses harsh rain, terrible winds, and unrelenting lightning to cut a swath of destruction wherever it goes. Within the storm cloud, visibility is reduced for being in a heavy rain (p. 240, ED). In the Kila, visibility is even worse, acting as a light fog in the halls and most rooms, but a heavy fog on the bridge. Any airships traveling within the Horror Cloud, which they must to engage the Kila at its heart, suffer the effects of being in a severe storm (p. 191, ED2C) while the Kila suffers no ill effects.

Animate Dead

The Horror Cloud's Animate Dead ability can work not only on any corpse within the Cloud itself (and thus touching the Cloud), but also on any corpse that is touched by the Horror Cloud's tainted rain. The rain must still be falling on an area for it to have this effect. A villain could not collect the rain of a Horror Cloud, carry it away in a waterskin, and use that water to create cadaver men. However, if the rain seeps into the ground, and the storm is still overhead, anything buried can be animated as normal for the Animate Dead power.

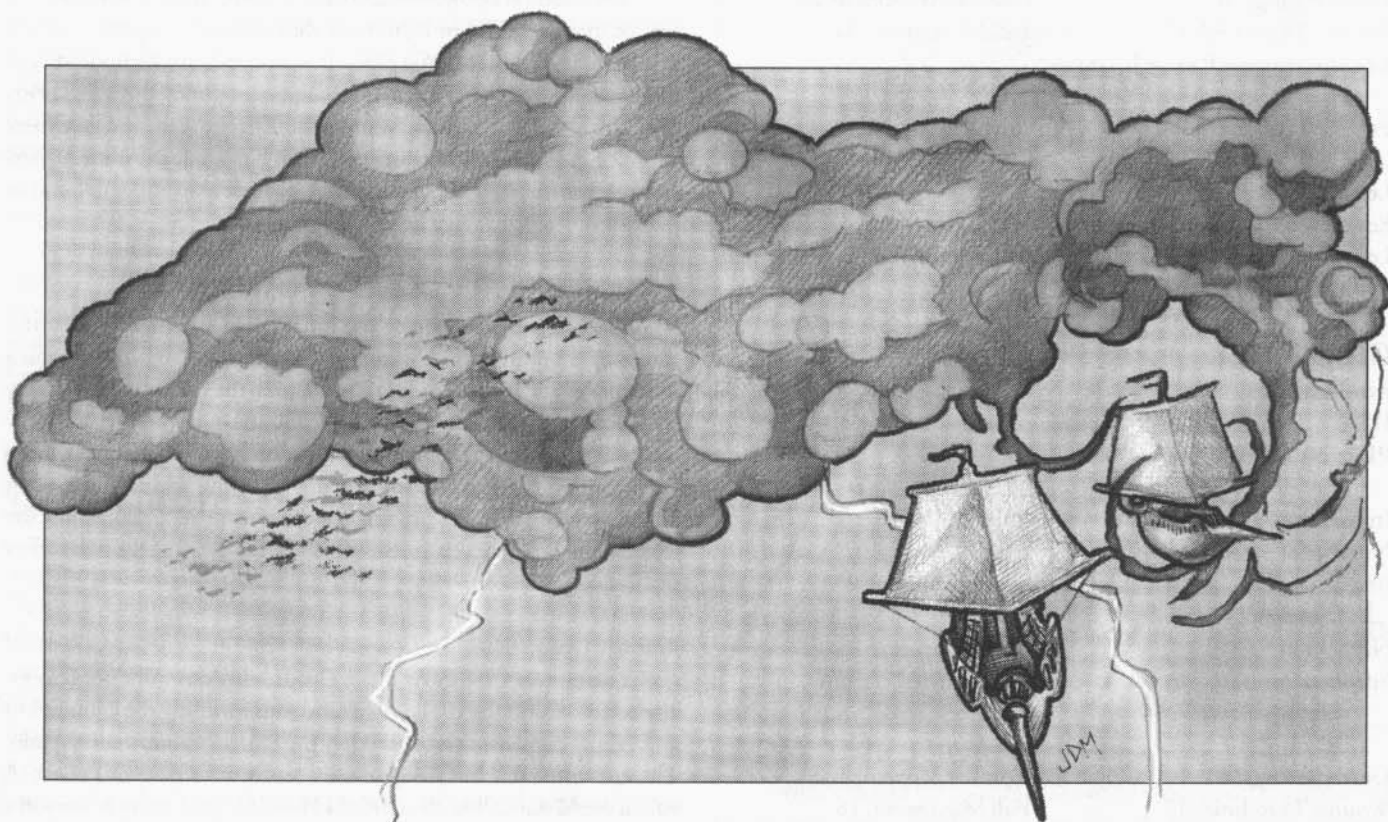
Lightning

The Horror Cloud can use Lightning to obliterate any airships within it, or even those that stray too close. This is reflected in the Horror Kila's Firepower attribute. The Horror Captain, himself, may also make use of this Lightning. The Captain can generate a discharge of 10-foot diameter ball lightning anywhere within the Horror Cloud. The Horror rolls an Attack Test using its Spellcasting Step against the Spell Defense of each of the targets within the area of effect. If the test is successful, then the Lightning Horror Power step is used for the Damage Test.

USING THE HORROR CLOUDS

The Horror Clouds should be used as a force of nature. In almost every case, they are not something that can be fought directly. Instead, adventures involving the Horror Clouds should center around rescuing people that are in the path of one, or are being set upon by the undead created in a Horror Cloud's wake. After the failure of the Horror Cloud that was intent on destroying Travar, the Horror Clouds are avoiding threatening the largest cities. Still, there are many thousands of lives they can feed upon in the villages of Barsaive.

The most ruthless and calculating Horror Cloud captain is the reanimated Theran Admiral Hartmallen. His Horror Cloud remains looming over Vivane. His hatred for Barsaive knows no bounds: His fondest wish is to sweep aside Twiceborn and her plans for a kingdom of the dead and use the vast horde of undead in Vivane to sweep across Barsaive, killing every man, woman, and child in his way. For now, he



is stalemated within Vivane by Twiceborn and the Gharmheks' abilities to usurp control of his undead. But, he is attracting to his cause powerful undead beings that the Gharmheks cannot control and likewise creating an army that is out of the Gharmheks' reach. Hartmallen believes once he has retrieved enough of the magical weapons from the fallen fortress of Sky Point, he will be able to defeat Twiceborn and destroy the whole of Barsaive.

HORROR CLOUD KILA

The Firepower Attribute represents the firepower of a single facing, and if attacked on multiple sides, each facing may engage its opponents without affecting the Firepower Attributes of the other sides.

Speed: 7

Maneuverability: 9

Firepower: 25/65

Hull

Armor Rating: 20

Ramming: 35

Cargo: 500

Damage

Critical: 21

Derelict: 171

Destroyed: 180

Crew

Captain: 6

Crew Size: 170

Crew Skill: 1

Crew Rating: 18

Morale: 174

HORROR CLOUD CAPTAIN

DEX: 8 STR: 10 TOU: 18

PER: 20 WIL: 20 CHA: 25

Initiative: 9

Number of Attacks: 2

Attack: 15

Damage: 15

Number of Spells: 2

Spellcasting: 15

Effect: See Powers

Physical Defense: 9

Spell Defense: 12

Social Defense: 25

Armor: 20

Mystic Armor: 9

Knockdown: 10

Recovery Tests: 6

Death Rating: 170

Wound Threshold: 25

Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 30

Full Movement: 60

Karma Points: 30

Karma Step: 12

Horror Powers: Lightning 15, Horror Durability 10 (figured in), Horror Mark 18, Damage Shift 14, Animate Dead 14, Unnatural Life 14, Corrupt Karma 14, Cursed Luck 12, Immunity to Fear

Legend Points: 25,000

Equipment: Theran Military Uniform, Broadsword

Loot: None

UBYR

Ubyr is a unique, gargantuan Horror that haunted the Serpent River during the Scourge, preying on the crew covenants of the t'skrang and on coastal villages of other races. A leech-like creature of staggering

size, it seems to feed both on blood and on the pure vital energy of its victims. In addition to using its fantastic size and strength to simply smash a victim or object, Ubyr can also completely drain the blood of a human-sized victim caught in its jaws within seconds. Ubyr also has a far stranger and more devastating ability. After encircling a building or other inhabited enclosure, it can drain the vital energy from every living creature inside that structure by using its Siphon Will power (see Siphon Will, following).

Ubyr is usually about four hundred yards long, but can stretch its body to a maximum length of seven hundred yards. This stretching allows it to encircle a square building as long as five hundred feet to a side. Ubyr is blind, but can sense any living being that passes within thirty yards of any part of its body, unless a solid object lies between the being and the Horror. If Ubyr senses a victim about to escape its coils, it usually breaks off its Siphon Will attack and simply crushes or devours the structure and everyone inside. Implacable in its pursuit of escaped prey, Ubyr can unerringly track a victim once it has the target's scent. Nonetheless, intended victims may escape from Ubyr's coils by using underground tunnels, for example, or swimming beyond the Horror's reach.

The ichor that courses through Ubyr's veins is corrosive. Direct contact with it causes Step 15 Damage. When the ichor comes into contact with water it turns even more acidic, causing Step 20 Damage to any who touch it. Neither clothing nor armor provide any protection against the Damage. If Ubyr is wounded in the water (it spends almost all of its time in the water, though it can move just as fast on land) the ichor spreads out from the wound at a rate of one cubic yard per round, to a maximum radius equal to the total Damage taken by Ubyr (maximum radius is measured in cubic yards).

UBYR'S POWERS

Ubyr possesses the Horror Mark and Terror powers, as well as the unique power Siphon Will.

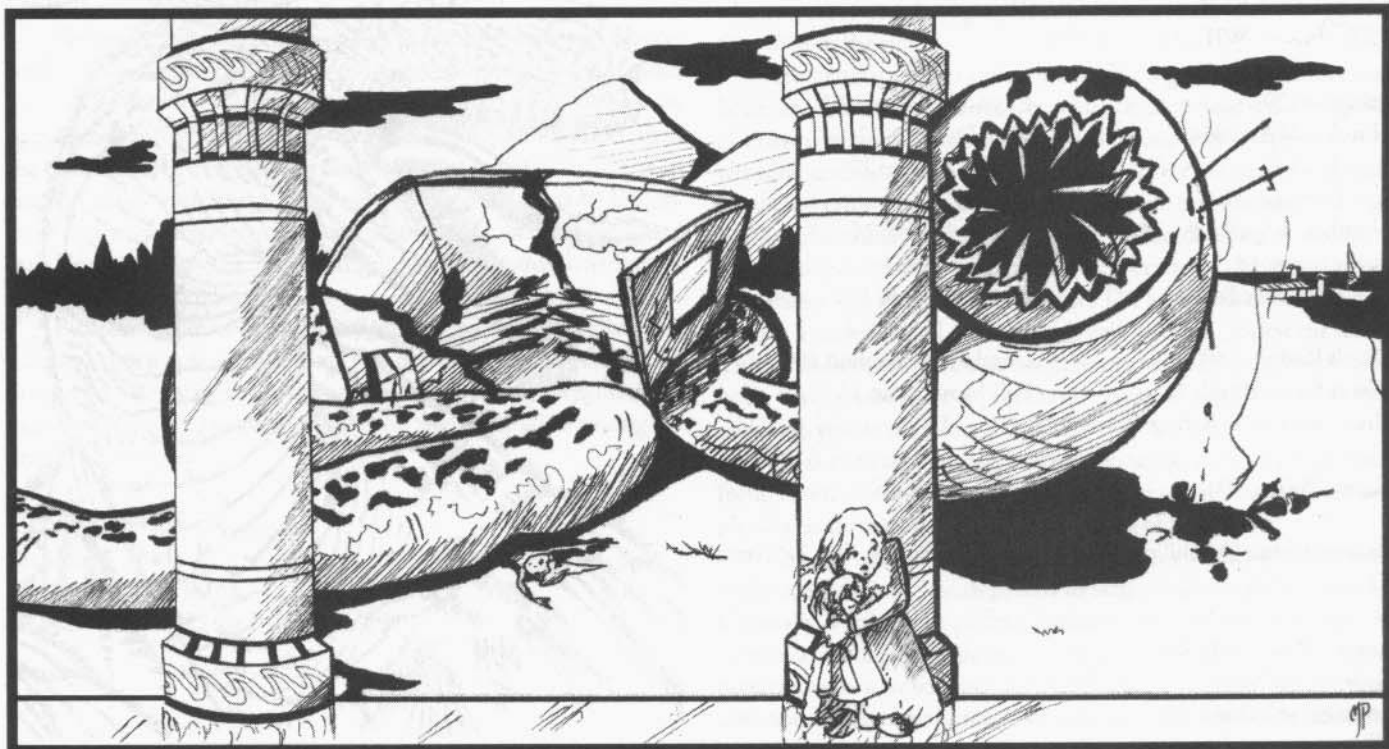
Ubyr can only use its Horror Mark power to track a victim that has escaped its coils. Whenever a victim manages to free himself from Ubyr, the Horror makes a Perception Test. If the result equals or exceeds the target's Spell Defense, Ubyr has sensed the target and immediately attempts to Horror-mark him or her. If the Horror Mark Test succeeds, Ubyr can track the target at a range of up to 100 miles. This tracking is automatic and does not require any further Tests. Few who confront Ubyr ever survive to tell the tale.

Siphon Will

The Siphon Will power allows Ubyr to drain the life force from victims trapped within a structure encircled by the Horror. Once Ubyr has completely encircled the structure, it makes a Siphon Will Test against the highest Spell Defense of any of the targets within the structure. If the test is successful, each individual inside the encircled building loses 1 point from every Attribute value each minute, with an appropriate reduction to all step numbers. This loss cannot be resisted and only stops when Ubyr uncoils. The loss stops for individual targets who escape the circle of Ubyr's body as well. Whenever any Attribute value reaches 0, the character is dead. Any character who somehow escapes Ubyr before losing all his or her vital energy regains 1 point of each affected Attribute with every successful Recovery Test.

Ubyr uses the life energy drained by this power to replenish its Karma Points, as well as heal Damage. For every victim Ubyr kills with this power, the Horror can take 1 Karma Point or heal 5 Damage Points it has previously taken (See **Energy Drain**, p. 86 in the **Horror Powers** chapter, for more information).

Ubyr can use its Siphon Will power against any structure with four solid walls and a roof. The gamemaster determines whether walled compounds, tents, and other reasonably solid enclosures constitute such structures. If Ubyr completely encircles a portion of a much larger structure or complex, its power only affects those in the encircled area. For example, if Ubyr climbed up the wall of a fort and draped itself



around one of the towers, its power would affect everyone in the tower, but nobody in the other parts of the fort.

USING UBYR

In one possible adventure involving Ubyr, a riverboat is found adrift on the Serpent River with all of its crew struck dead where they stood. No marks of violence or sickness appear anywhere on them, and the ship and its cargo are untouched. At first the authorities assume that the crew fell prey to some new form of magical attack launched by river pirates or business rivals of the ship's owners. Then an elder t'skrang remembers childhood tales he has heard of Ubyr, the giant river-leech. This tale prompts others to come forward and tell of a great serpentine body glimpsed in the river at midnight, or friends of friends mysteriously and recently lost on parts of the river thought to be safe from monsters and pirates. The player characters are hired to retrace the drifting ship's last voyage and discover its true fate. The gamemaster determines whether the river killer is some mundane menace or actually Ubyr, awakened from a long sleep at the bottom of the Serpent River.

In another possible adventure, the crews of riverboats begin telling strange stories of shadowy figures seen at night on the rocky dome above the long-abandoned shell of Kaer Javukk, or of mysterious lights flickering in the river below. Some who have passed near the lost kaer report dreams of silent t'skrang coming to them and demanding some sort of unknown service. Because of these manifestations, the river communities decide to re-open Javukk to ensure that the kaer's dead still lie undisturbed. The characters are commissioned to investigate, spending a full night exploring the rooms of Kaer Javukk. The gamemaster determines whether the manifestations are really restless spirits, some lingering and belated manifestation of Ubyr, or some more mundane threat that has come to lair in the necropolis of Javukk.

UBYR

Attributes

DEX: 22 STR: 30 TOU: 21
PER: 15 WIL: 21 CHA: 15

Initiative: 20

Number of Attacks: 1

Attack: 24

Damage: 25

Number of Spells: 1

Spellcasting: 18

Effect: See Powers

Death Rating: 180 (360)

Wound Threshold: 25

Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Karma Points: 40

Powers: Horror Durability 30, Horror Mark 14, Siphon Will 21, Terror 17

Legend Points: 150,000

Equipment: None

Loot: None known

Physical Defense: 25

Spell Defense: 22

Social Defense: 27

Armor: 29

Mystic Armor: 24

Knockdown: 24

Recovery Tests: 10

Combat Movement: 100

Full Movement: 150

Karma Step: 15

VERJIGORM

Verjigorm, the Great Hunter, is perhaps the most powerful and feared Horror in the Earthdawn universe. Dragons especially fear and hate Verjigorm because dragons are the Horror's preferred prey. However, Verjigorm's unmatched physical and magical powers, intelligence, and plans for ruling over the whole world make it a threat to all Name-givers.

Unlike most Horrors, Verjigorm is driven by more than the need to feed on pain and despair. Two obsessions motivate this ancient Horror: an insatiable hunger for power and a fanatical hatred of dragons. Verjigorm views dragons as the creator race of Barsaive and believes they have usurped its rightful place as Barsaive's ruler. During a previous Scourge roughly ten thousand years ago, the Horror aimed to rectify this perceived wrong by hunting down and capturing several hundred dragons, among them a number of great dragons. It then placed the astral forms of its victims in astral cocoons. Some of these cocoons are located near dragon lairs, kaers, or other places Verjigorm found convenient. Verjigorm has used its various powers to corrupt the True Patterns of these cocooned victims in various ways and transform them into powerful, Horror-like creatures.

Ultimately, Verjigorm intends to create a new race of powerful Name-givers that can re-Name, and thus redefine, the world and its denizens according to Verjigorm's tastes. In this new world, all life forms would become corrupted. Orks would become more savage, obsidimen violent and impatient, t'skrang ill-tempered and venomous, and so on.



Most of Barsaive's Name-givers who are not dragons remain almost indifferent to tales of Verjigorm because the Horror remained largely inactive during the most recent Scourge (apparently to avoid drawing the attention of Barsaive's great dragons). However, the incubation periods for Verjigorm's cocooned victims are drawing to a close and many scholars fear these corrupted Name-givers will soon begin wreaking havoc in Barsaive. Some even believe that a few leaders of the so-called Cult of the Great Hunter are corrupted dragons that have emerged from the cocoons. The greatest fear of Horror scholars, however, is that Verjigorm itself will soon reappear in this world.

Verjigorm can manifest in many different forms, though it most often takes on a single physical appearance of horrifying proportions. In its most common manifestation, Verjigorm stands fifteen feet tall at the shoulder. The face of this hideous creature sports six eyes, a wide mouth with three-inch fangs, and spiked horns. Its horrifying head is connected to its torso by a flexible, ten-foot neck. Its skin gleams like metal and razor-sharp spikes protrude from its body. Each of the creature's four legs ends in three sharp talons. The Horror can stand on its rear legs to fight; when it does so, its height rises to a towering forty-five feet. In astral space Verjigorm adopts many different appearances, ranging from an astral duplicate of its physical form to a huge face, surrounded by spiked horns and dozens of staring eyes.

VERJIGORM'S POWERS

The most fearsome of Verjigorm's powers is its Horror Thread power (see **Horror Powers**, p. 84), which links Verjigorm to its captured dragons and enables the Horror to use its other powers against the dragons while they are metamorphosing. By combining the effects of its Corrupt Karma, Horror Mark, Thought Worm and Unnatural Life powers through its Horror Threads, Verjigorm alters the True Patterns of the dragons it has captured to place them completely under its control.

USING VERJIGORM

Verjigorm is perhaps the most powerful of Horrors and direct confrontations with it will almost certainly result in the death of most, if not all, of the player characters in a group. However, characters may oppose the Horror indirectly by confronting members of the Cult of the Great Hunter. The Earthdawn adventure *Shattered Pattern* is an example of one such story. In that adventure, one of the cult's leaders, an elf Nethermancer, attempts to transform a number of dragon eggs into Horror Constructs, mimicking Verjigorm's transformations of captured dragons.

By becoming involved with Verjigorm's schemes, player characters have an opportunity to make some very powerful enemies: the cultists or even the Horror itself. On the other hand, opposing Verjigorm may make the characters some very powerful friends or allies among the dragons of Barsaive.

VERJIGORM

Attributes

DEX: 31 STR: 33 TOU: 28
PER: 35 WIL: 40 CHA: 29

Initiative: 35
Number of Attacks: 3
Attack: 38
Damage: 40
Number of Spells: 3
Spellcasting: 40
Effect: See text

Death Rating: 400(610)
Wound Threshold: 30
Unconsciousness Rating: 375(550)

Karma Points: 50

Powers: Animate Dead 40, Corrupt Karma 40, Cursed Luck 40, Damage Shift 40, Horror Durability 35, Horror Mark 25, Horror Thread 25, Thought Worm 20
Spells: Circle 8 Wizard, Unnatural Life 20

Legend Points: 2,000,000

Equipment: None

Loot: None known

Physical Defense: 34
Spell Defense: 36
Social Defense: 30
Armor: 40
Mystic Armor: 40
Knockdown: 33
Recovery Tests: 20

Combat Movement: 150
Full Movement: 300

Karma Step: 20

YSRTHGRATHE

Ysrthgrathe can disguise its appearance masterfully. When Ysrthgrathe first shows itself to one of its victims, the victim often sees only the Horror's long velvet robes. The hood of its robe constantly shadows its face, which often leads an anxious victim to conjure up terrible ideas of what Ysrthgrathe might look like. Other victims may perceive Ysrthgrathe as beautiful, with a melodic and hypnotic voice and robes richly embroidered with gold and precious stones. Everyone who experiences Ysrthgrathe sees the Horror differently.

In general, the physical form the victim perceives depends on whatever nasty trick Ysrthgrathe has in mind and any desire the Horror may elicit in the victim.

A few characteristics appear in all of Ysrthgrathe's manifestations, however. The most prominent recurring characteristic is the long robe of brown velvet the Horror wears. Often something appears to be writhing underneath the garment. The Horror's long, thin, spidery hands and razor-sharp nails also appear in each manifestation, though Ysrthgrathe usually keeps them hidden within the folds of its robe.

In its most true physical form, the upper part of the Horror's body resembles a well-muscled human torso. The lower half of Ysrthgrathe's body is a snakelike tail covered with yellow-green, iridescent scales. Thick, hard ridges stick out at irregular intervals along the length of its body. Ysrthgrathe's face appears as an elongated skull with black eyes and long, yellow teeth line its mouth.

On the astral plane, the Horror appears as an amorphous black form. Alternatively, Ysrthgrathe may appear astrally in the shape of a physical manifestation it has taken in front of a player.

Though many Horrors seek out groups of Name-givers as their victims, Ysrthgrathe much prefers to target individuals for torment. Generally, Ysrthgrathe prefers characters who are strong enough to withstand its form of punishment over a long period of time. The more powerful a character becomes, the more likely he is to attract Ysrthgrathe's attention. The Horror does not waste its time with low Circle characters

because they are too easily destroyed. Give it a seasoned Warrior, a high Circle magician, or a devoted questor, and the Horror is in its element.

Ysrthgrathe is unimaginably ancient. Long ago the Horror realized that the relatively short life spans and weakness of most Name-givers severely limited the pleasure it could extract from them. Physical pain will drive a human or a dwarf or a t'skrang crazy in a remarkably short period of time and many Name-givers are killed easily. For these reasons, Ysrthgrathe seeks longer-living Name-givers, such as elves and obsidimen. These Name-givers can provide centuries-long banquets for the Horror.

Many scholars who have studied the Horrors theorize that the longer the Horrors are exposed to Name-givers, the more like Name-givers the Horrors become. For example, Horrors begin to experience more human emotions. Though this theory may not hold true for all Horrors, it applies to Ysrthgrathe. Like Name-givers, Ysrthgrathe experiences intense fits of jealousy and anger and can become obsessed with its victims at times. The Horror hates the idea of anyone else hurting one of its victims and becomes quite possessive of them. The Horror will even go so far as to protect its Horror-marked victims from any other that tries to harm them. Ysrthgrathe also prefers victims who have some sort of conscience, because such victims are more likely to feel guilty if the Horror kills someone else because of them.

This intense, human-like bond that Ysrthgrathe builds between itself and its victims has led more than one victim to believe the Horror is actually helpful rather than harmful to their cause. Whenever the Horror senses such beliefs in its victims, it offers them aid of some sort:

power, protection, anything to assuage the victim's fears for the moment. This truce of sorts never lasts long, however, because Ysrthgrathe eventually yearns to rekindle the torment that only it can deliver.

Often, Ysrthgrathe's victims try to divert the Horror's attention from themselves by offering it another victim. Ysrthgrathe usually allows the victim to believe it might work before claiming both unfortunate targets. Ysrthgrathe never willingly lets a victim escape and the Horror adores trickery.

Ysrthgrathe may be encountered in almost any part of Barsaive, with the notable exception of the Blood Wood. Like most Horrors, Ysrthgrathe finds the Blood Wood distasteful, though it can travel there under special circumstances.

Otherwise, Ysrthgrathe goes wherever it can find potential victims.

YSRTHGRATHE'S POWERS

Most of Ysrthgrathe's powers function normally. However, Ysrthgrathe always seeks to use them in the most destructive manner possible. The Horror can cast all of the spells of all the spellcasting Disciplines practiced in Barsaive, but harbors a particular affinity for combat spells.

Ysrthgrathe possesses the Disrupt Magic power as well (see **Horror Powers**, p. 84). This power enables the Horror to disrupt any form of magical force or pattern.

USING YSRTHGRATHE

Gamemasters can introduce Ysrthgrathe into campaigns by enticing player characters to accept favors from the Horror. Ysrthgrathe appears quite beneficial, but the Horror always exploits some psychological tic already present in the targeted character. For example, a character might long to be the most powerful Warrior in Barsaive. Ysrthgrathe might approach such a character and offer to give him the power to achieve this goal. If the player accepts the gift, the gamemaster would then increase the character's powers accordingly.

However, the Warrior character will soon find himself winning a string of impressive, but empty, victories. For example, he will kill a monster only to discover that the person he meant to rescue is already dead. Nobody doubts his prowess or abilities, of course; things just never seem to turn out as planned. Naturally, Ysrthgrathe shows up at appropriate moments to enjoy the character's mounting frustration and eventual despair.

Additionally, Ysrthgrathe provides an excellent tool for adjusting the balance of a game, forcing a player to grow in roleplaying, or simply shaking things up when they become too rigid.

YSRTHGRATHE

Attributes

DEX: 13 STR: 15 TOU: 13
PER: 17 WIL: 21 CHA: 16

Initiative: 15

Number of Attacks: 3

Attack: 15

Damage: 18

Number of Spells: 5

Spellcasting: 23

Effect: See Powers

Physical Defense: 17

Spell Defense: 25

Social Defense: 23

Armor: 8

Mystic Armor: 15

Knockdown: 15

Recovery Tests: 10



Death Rating: 120(240)

Wound Threshold: 19

Unconsciousness Rating: 110 (210)

Combat Movement: 25

Full Movement: 50

Karma Points: 30

Karma Step: 18

Powers: Corrupt Karma 12, Cursed Luck 13, Disrupt Magic 23, Horror Durability 20, Horror Mark 23, Karma Tap 21, Thought Worm 27, Spells: Circle 10 Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, and Wizard

Legend Points: 97,000

Equipment: None

Loot: None

USING HORRORS IN ADVENTURES AND CAMPAIGNS

A close look at the statistics and abilities of the Horrors in this book should make clear just how dangerous these beings are. The Horrors possess incredible powers and abilities that they use to do vile, horrible, and evil things. They manipulate whole populations into killing themselves and each other. They feed off the fear and anguish wrought by the devastation of the Scourge. They torture people and creatures for nourishment, in the form of flesh or emotion. This lethal combination of great power with the worst types of actions makes using Horrors in adventures a delicate business. Carefully consider what type of Horrors to use as well as how to use them.

Should the Horrors be that powerful? Yes, absolutely. The Horrors need to be as tough as they are because they are the cause of the Scourge. The Horrors forced the world's population to live in shelters for four hundred years and left the land decimated. They destroyed forests, corrupted jungles, and laid waste vast stretches of terrain. With rare exceptions, no one save those who accepted Theraid aid survived the Horrors' onslaught.

The evil and powerful nature of the Horrors creates an interesting dilemma for gamemasters. Using any of the Named Horrors in this book will likely result in the death or permanent corruption of one or more of the player characters. When dealing with entities this powerful, those kinds of things are likely to happen. Though the death or corruption of a player character may be undesirable, both are important elements of Earthdawn and the gamemaster should not try to avoid them. If the characters escape unscathed every time they encounter a Horror, the impact of the Horrors on the game universe is diluted because the threat they present to the world becomes less real. The following guidelines suggest ways to present the true power of Horrors without killing large numbers of player characters in each adventure.

First of all, most Horrors (especially Named Horrors) should be long-term opponents. Certain minor Horrors and Horror Constructs may work well in single adventures, but most Horrors should be used over a series of adventures in which the characters encounter the Horror's victims or witness the effects of its powers. Using a Horror in this way

allows the players to encounter the Horror indirectly and gradually learn more about its influence and machinations. This knowledge, as well as the power and experience the players will gain during the course of several adventures, will leave them more ready to deal with the Horror by the time they meet it face-to-face.

Consider the Horrors campaign-level opponents. These are not the kinds of beings that characters fight once and slay. Most of the Horrors in this book are so powerful that only an experienced group of characters has any chance of defeating them. The Named Horrors in this book represent opportunities for many different types of campaigns, using different kinds of adventures and stories. Also, many of these Horrors prefer to use their powers over a long period of time. For example, planning for the characters to learn about, confront, and battle Ysrthgrathe in the course of a single adventure is a waste of a good Horror.

Keep in mind that the characters need not confront the Horror right from the start. Many Horrors work through agents, willing or otherwise. Willing agents might include cultists devoted to a particular Horror or constructs under the Horror's control. Unwilling agents might include the Name-giver pawns of Ristul or the tormented victims of Chantrel's Horror.

Adventures featuring the Named Horrors from this book also need not conclude with the characters actually confronting the Horror head-on. In some cases, characters should consider themselves fortunate to survive any encounter with a Horror, direct or not! A series of minor victories for the characters that disrupt a Horror's activities is a good way to use these powerful Horrors in adventures without risking the lives of the characters too seriously. Of course, if a Horror's plans are disrupted too often, that Horror might consider a direct assault on the party responsible.

Remember also that adventures in which characters die or become Horror Constructs or servitors act as an excellent reminder that the world of Earthdawn is a dangerous one. Adventure after adventure in which the characters succeed against any opponent they face only serves to diminish the sense of danger that Barsaive should hold. An occasional adventure in which the characters suffer losses, either through injury or death, helps maintain a challenging atmosphere in your Earthdawn adventures and campaigns.

It is inevitable that one or more characters will suffer some misfortune at a Horror's hands, so try to work such misfortunes into the story. Make them significant events. Make them mean something beyond the fact that one of the players needs to create a new character. Don't let the death or corruption of a character happen for no good reason. The characters in Earthdawn are heroes; if they are going to die, let them die well.

Finally, consider the importance of the Horrors to the world of Earthdawn. One of the major themes in Earthdawn is battling the Horrors and attempting to drive them from the world. Therefore, the Horrors should be interesting opponents rather than simply invincible ones. Always give your player characters some way to defeat a Horror. Not just any group of characters should be able to defeat any Horror, of course. But the gamemaster must strike a balance between allowing some possibility of success for the characters and maintaining a threat level consistent with the terrible nature of the Horrors.

HORROR CONSTRUCTS AND MINOR HORRORS



The term "minor Horrors" is somewhat misleading. The danger these entities pose is minor only when compared to the threat of the so-called major, or greater Horrors. Indeed, many so-called minor Horrors possess Names and True Patterns, and because these Horrors are much more common than their more well-known brethren, they may actually present a greater danger to Name-givers. Horror Constructs are the tools of the Horrors, created most often from the flesh of the victims of the Horrors. These abominations vary in form as widely as the Horrors themselves.

ASH ZOMBIE

Attributes

DEX: 4 STR: 6 TOU: 9
PER: 3 WIL: 6 CHA: 2

Initiative: 4
Number of Attacks: 4
Attack: 7
Damage: 9
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 5
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 13
Armor: NA
Mystic Armor: NA
Knockdown: 7
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 44
Wound Threshold: 13
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune
Creature Durability: 0-4

Powers: NA

Legend Points: 180
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Combat Movement: 25
Full Movement: 50

Commentary

It is common knowledge in Barsaive that corpses should be burned to prevent their reanimation. Unfortunately, sometimes efforts to burn a corpse are only partially successful and instead of completely consuming the victim, the remains are only partially immolated. When a burned corpse is intact enough or, perhaps, in a place corrupt enough to overcome such a haphazard effort, a particularly horrific and Horror tainted undead known as an ash zombie is created.

Each ash zombie's appearance is unique but always grotesque. They look much like walking burn victims; their skin is blackened and flaking, their hair burned and charred, with perhaps even enough skin



and sinew seared away to reveal bone and organ. One of the most consistent features of an ash zombie is the smell of burned skin and hair that seems to follow the creature. Most are unable to speak as their vocal cords and tongues have perished in the flames.

The result of their terrible mistreatment after death is that all ash zombies attack and frenzy (much in the manner of cadaver men) immediately upon sight of the living. It is this relentless frenzy that gives the ash zombies four attacks a round. Ash zombies also show an amazing durability, fighting on until they have almost been completely chopped to pieces.

Although ash zombies are immune to talents, spells, and skills with fear-based effects, Veteran Horror Stalkers know that all ash zombies still harbor a residual fear of fire and will flee from large, open flames the size of campfire or larger.

Adventure Hook

It is rumored that many ash zombies are not created accidentally. In Horror Stalker camps near Scythia, stories are told of flames pits operated by Horror Constructs where the corpses of the dead are slowly roasted and mutilated with fire to ensure the creation of an ash zombie. A vocal Warrior Adept assembles a group of adventurers to find the location of this charnel nightmare and destroy it once and for all. The pit does indeed exist and is operated by Burning Ghosts (see description p. 61).

Unfortunately, this Warrior's motives are not as pure as they first appear. He has heard rumors that a valuable thread item, a magical sword, was lost when ash zombies killed a well-known Horror Stalker. He is using this crusade as an excuse to get help retrieving the treasure. He will gladly risk the lives of his idealistic dupes to recover the artifact. And once the sword is recovered his loyalty to his "partners" abruptly ends.

ASTRAL NIGHTMARE

Attributes

DEX: 17 STR: NA TOU: NA
PER: 20 WIL: 20 CHA: NA

Initiative: 20

Number of Attacks: 0

Attack: NA

Damage: NA

Number of Spells: 1

Spellcasting: 22

Effect: See Below

Physical Defense: NA

Spell Defense: 19

Social Defense: 18

Armor: NA

Mystic Armor: 30

Knockdown: NA

Recovery Tests: NA

Death Rating: 110

Wound Threshold: 25

Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 25

Full Movement: 50

Karma Points: 30

Karma Steps: 12

Powers: Immune to Fear

Legend Points: 25,000 for destroying it; 500 for driving it away

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Commentary

It is difficult to say whether this utterly alien creature is actually sentient. Indeed, some scholars debate whether this phenomenon is properly classified as a creature at all. Perhaps it is merely a magical by-product of Raw Magic and corrupt astral space. Or perhaps, it is caused by some terrible tragedy in real space that literally scars the astral space near it. Regardless, the astral nightmare is a grave danger to any who frequent astral space.

For those with no connection to the Astral, this creature is almost completely undetectable. It has no physical form whatsoever and is completely unaffected by all physical attacks. The astral nightmare counts as a moving patch of Corrupt astral space anywhere from ten to fifty feet in diameter (see p. 152 of *Earthdawn 2nd edition* for the effects of corrupt astral space on Raw Magic casting).

Windlings using astral-sensitive sight can, with a successful Perception Test against the astral nightmare's Spell Defense, sense that something sinister has moved into the area.

Anyone with the talent Astral Sight (in particular Nethermancers) can truly sense the nature of the astral nightmare. They can see its true astral form: a floating mass of twisted and ever changing raw Horror. Its shape mimics and represents horrible atrocities of every kind. Gazing upon an Astral Horror can cause massive mental trauma. Perhaps it is flooding their mind with some image of the terrible event that led to its creation. Perhaps Raw Magic is being unleashed on a mind unprepared to deal with it. Perhaps the Nightmare is willfully employing some Horror-based mind attack. Whatever the truth, the effect remains the same.



A spellcasting roll is made against the target's Spell Defense. If it succeeds, the target takes Step 23 Damage versus their Mystic Armor. They are then astrally blinded and unable to see into the Astral for a number of minutes equal to the Damage they took.

Astral nightmares seem naturally attracted to Nethermancers and Wizards. When an astral nightmare travels with a group they will be ill at ease and on edge. They will be unable to regain Karma in their rituals. Petty disagreements will escalate easily into fights. A Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of a given character will determine whether they are able to shake off these effects or must play it through.

Destroying an astral nightmare is not an easy task. Some Nethermancer spells, such as Life Circle of One, will perhaps repel the astral nightmare temporarily if they can overcome its Spell Defense. The spell Astral Flare will Damage the creature for a number of points equal to its effect roll minus the Mystic Armor of the creature. When the creature has reached its Death Rating in Damage it will flee from the caster permanently. The only way to permanently destroy an astral nightmare is to draw it out of astral space using the spell Spirit Portal or some similar effect. This is a very dangerous undertaking. Astral nightmares that fully coalesce take on the shape of a Bloatform (see p. 317 of *Earthdawn 2nd edition* for full statistics) and will be enraged at being plucked from its comfortable Astral home. At that point it will fully employ all of its Horror abilities.

Some knowledgeable scholars of the Horrors believe that the astral nightmare and the Named Horror Ristul (see p. 45) are somehow connected. At the least they seem to share a similar nature, both being corruptions of astral space. Some scholars have taken to calling astral nightmares the Children of Ristul. Whether this title is awarded because of some great understanding by the scholars or because they are leaping to conclusions is open to debate.

Adventure Hook

While exploring a ruin or broken kaer the player characters attract the attention of an astral nightmare. It begins to follow them wherever they go. At first its effects are minimal and it often drifts away, leaving them in peace for days at a time. But eventually, especially if they are involved in activities that brings them into conflict with Horrors, Horror Constructs or undead, the astral nightmare is with them constantly.

The characters will eventually discover the creature and then face the task of either driving it away or destroying it completely (if the group is sufficiently powerful). Another option might be returning it to a place of already Corrupt astral space and driving it away there with the Astral Flare spell or an item the emulates the spell. There, at least, the astral nightmare will be in a place where it does little additional Damage.

BONE WARDEN

Attributes

DEX: 8 STR: 17 TOU: 12
PER: 6 WIL: 5 CHA: 4

Initiative: 6

Number of Attacks: 1

Attack: 12

Damage: 22

Number of Spells: NA

Physical Defense: 12

Spell Defense: 11

Social Defense: 17

Armor: 13

Mystic Armor: 6

Spellcasting: NA

Effect: NA

Death Rating: 55

Wound Threshold: 13

Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Creature Durability: 0-9

Legend Points: 1100

Equipment: Broadsword

Loot: Jewelry, mostly rings, worth 1d6 x 100 silver pieces. These items count as treasure worth Legend Points.

Knockdown: 17

Recovery Tests: 4

Combat Movement: 30

Full Movement: 60

Commentary

Bone wardens are the undead remains of the Theran nobility of Vivane. The Blood Magic items that protected them in life reacted spectacularly with the power of the Horror Cloud and the result is the skeletal bone warden. No flesh remains on their bones, yet they still dress themselves in their former finery. While their skeletons are magically animated, no ligaments or tendons hold them together. Instead, the bones levitate in the correct locations. The bone wardens have no voices, but their jaws move as if they talk, and other undead can hear their silent speech.



BREACHER

Attributes

DEX: 5 STR: 15 TOU: 14
PER: 6 WIL: 10 CHA: 5

Initiative: 8

Number of Attacks: 1(bite)

Attack: 12

Damage: 15

Number of Spells: NA

Physical Defense: 10

Spell Defense: 10

Social Defense: 10

Armor: 10

Mystic Armor: 7

Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Knockdown: 9
Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 80
Wound Threshold: 18
Unconsciousness Rating: 73
Creature Durability: 0-10

Combat Movement: 30
Full Movement: 60
Burrowing: 30

Powers: NA

Legend Points: 450
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Commentary

During the height of the Scourge, armies of breachers roamed Barsaive, burrowing into the earth in hopes of digging out improperly sealed kaers. With the decline of the Scourge in Barsaive, these Horror Constructs have mostly vanished from this world. The few that remain are to be found only in the most corrupt and tainted of Horror strongholds.

A breacher appears to be a huge, multi-sectioned worm with four short legs sporting fearsome claws. Its legs can be pulled flush with its body. Its head ends in a snapping circular jaw full of stony teeth. The breacher does not actually bite the stone it moves through. Rather it creates a magical effect at its head that causes even the hardest stone to become soft and pliable as soil, which the breacher then moves through.



like a gigantic earthworm. As it passes the stone re-hardens almost instantly and a small tunnel is created behind the beast.

Some Obsidiman still remember hordes of breachers trying to penetrate their Liferocks and pierce their very cores.

Breachers are immune to talents, spells, and skills with fear based effects.

Adventure Hook

An ancient Horror-made talisman known as the Kaer-Breaker has been discovered that allows even a Name-giver to control breachers. The Horrors used it to coordinate sieges against citadels during the Scourge. Though very powerful, it is extremely dangerous to use, Horror-marking its owner and whittling away at their sanity. Now, it has fallen into the wrong hands. A dwarf dissident with a grudge against King Neden plans to use it to collapse some of the great pillars that support the caves above the palace. He must journey to Scythia to find the remaining breachers and call them to his service. It is there that the characters discover his plan and must stop him before he assembles what breachers remain into an army.

BURNING GHOSTS

Attributes

DEX: 12 STR: 5 TOU: 14
PER: 10 WIL: 8 CHA: 8

Initiative: 14
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 12
Damage: 24 (fire)
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 20
Spell Defense: 14
Social Defense: 8
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 8
Knockdown: 7
Recovery Tests: 4

Death Rating: 90
Wound Threshold: 16
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune
Creature Durability: 0-10

Combat Movement: 45
Full Movement: 90

Powers: NA

Legend Points: 2000

Equipment: None

Loot: When a burning ghost is destroyed it collapses into a glowing kernel of elemental fire equal in value to one Fire Elemental Coin (1000 silver). This counts as treasure worth Legend Points.

Commentary

Some of the Horror Stalkers who have gone deepest into the underground Scythian tunnels have reported seeing huge lakes and rivers of magma. Dancing across these lava fields have been strange and beautifully ethereal creatures that move from eruption to eruption like wisps of flame. Their movements are graceful and almost hypnotic. Unfortunately, despite their beautiful appearance, these beings are a rare form of Horror Construct and their antics disguise their terrible nature.

These Horror Constructs feed off the pain and agony created by being burned alive. Their touch ignores most armor that does not



CLOUD SPAWN

Attributes

DEX: 12 STR: 10 TOU: 12
PER: 7 WIL: 12 CHA: 4

Initiative: 12

Number of Attacks: 1

Attack: 12

Damage: 15

Number of Spells: NA

Spellcasting: NA

Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 15

Spell Defense: 10

Social Defense: 20

Armor: 8

Mystic Armor: 8

Knockdown: Immune

Recovery Tests: 4

Death Rating: 80

Wound Threshold: 18

Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 80 (flight)

Full Movement: 160 (flight)

Karma Points: 10

Karma Steps: 7

Powers: Horror Durability 5-10, Immune to Fear

Legend Points: 700

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Commentary

This strange and alien breed of Horror has been found only in the vortex of Horror Clouds. Their appearance is always shifting, but seem to favor forms streamlined and well-suited for flying. They are always in motion, never touching the ground and never ceasing to fly through the wailing winds of the Horror Clouds. Their skin is utterly transparent, revealing a gray, gelatinous interior full of miniature lightning flashes and strange glowing, seething organs.

The cloud spawns' behavior is unpredictable and this is reflected in a high Social Defense. Sometimes they dance on the prow of intruding airships like dolphins following a ship's wake. Sometimes they savagely mob anything living that invades their territory. Their flesh is acidic and corrosive and they attack by ramming into their targets inflicting horrible chemical burns.

Cloud spawns and storm shards (see p. 77) are often sighted together and could both be described as the children of the Horror Clouds. However, just because their origins are similar does not mean they are cooperative. The lucky few observers who have been inside a Horror Cloud and returned alive and sane relate tales of huge battles between hordes of cloud spawn and storm shards. They talk of the storm shards pummeling the Spawn with lightning bolts while the cloud spawn blast the Shards into pieces by ramming through them. The cause or purpose of these battles remains unknown.

Adventure Hook

Caius the Red, an ork Wizard of no small renown, believes that he can possibly devise a ritual that may disperse the Horror Clouds. But in order to refine his spell, he needs something intimately linked to the cloud: the living substance of the cloud itself. These creatures and the storm shards (see p. 77) seem to both be likely candidates. He hires a group of adventurers to approach one of the clouds aboard an airship and capture (preferably alive) both of these strange beasts in two

specifically resist fire (such as the armor that comes from the Resist Fire spell) and instead is resisted only by Mystic Armor.

A burning ghost's high Physical Defense represents its semi-corporeal nature. They are completely immune to all fire-based attacks, but they take double effect from any ice- or water-based attacks. Burning ghosts are also immune to talents, spells, and skills with fear based effects.

Even though they are called ghosts, these creatures are not in any way undead and are therefore completely unaffected by attacks that specifically target the undead.

Adventure Hook

In Throal a book is discovered that records the unfortunate destruction that befell a dwarf noble house in Scytha. The adventurers learn of an ancient dwarf stronghold deep in the Scythan Mountains that had been flooded by a lava flow during the Scourge. Although much of the structure has been destroyed, the upper levels of the main palace remained undisturbed. If a group could find a way to travel over the lava fields, survive the noxious gases given off by the earth, and open the gates of the palace, there are the lost treasures of a Scythan noble house waiting to be recovered. Unfortunately, a danger not mentioned in the manuscript is that a group of burning ghosts have taken up residence over the lava flows. Their greatest joy is burning Name-givers badly enough to slay them, but leaving them intact enough to form ash zombies. Packs of their former victims roam the edge of the lava fields.





magically sealed glass cages. His research will ultimately prove fruitless, but he may develop as a by-product a spell that is particularly effective against the cloud spawn and storm shards. He would be particularly willing to share this research with the adventurers who helped him collect the specimens in the first place.

CORPSE THIEF

Attributes

DEX: 10 STR: 13 TOU: 8
PER: 6 WIL: 10 CHA: 5

Initiative: 12

Number of Attacks: 2(claws)

Attack: 10

Damage: 8

Number of Spells: NA

Spellcasting: NA

Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 10

Spell Defense: 10

Social Defense: 10

Armor: 5

Mystic Armor: 7

Knockdown: 7

Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 50

Wound Threshold: 14

Unconsciousness Rating: 43

Creature Durability: 0-6

Combat Movement: 60

Full Movement: 120

Powers: NA

Legend Points: 350

Equipment: None

Loot: Whatever was carried by their victims.

Commentary

The corpse thief and the breacher (see p. 60) seem to share a common heritage. They are both vaguely similar in appearance and both seem to have been designed by the Horrors for a particular purpose. The corpse thief swallows any Name-giver corpses it finds and transports them to a secret cache where they are regurgitated and then reanimated at the Horrors' leisure.

A corpse thief resembles a breacher in that it is a large, multi-sectioned worm with four limbs. But it stands on only its two back limbs. Its two front limbs are designed for grasping. At its head is a mouth with a circular orifice that can stretch to a great size, big enough to swallow a troll. Furthermore, the feet of the corpse thief have a magical effect that allows it to cling to walls, even hanging upside down from the ceiling.

The corpse thief is a fast runner who can also employ a chameleon-like blending effect to hide. The corpse thief can only be seen when



moving slowly (no more than 10 feet per round) if a Perception Test beats its Chameleon power (Step 11). Only once it attacks or starts moving rapidly does lose its Chameleon power.

The corpse thief can also swallow a corpse remarkably fast, engulfing a Name-giver in only a single action. Corpse Thieves never swallow moving or resisting prey and if they suddenly start moving, it will quickly spit them out. A corpse thief will swallow only one Name-giver at a time. A corpse thief will only voluntarily swallow dead Name-givers. It can, however, be fooled. One wily adventurer used a knockout potion to track down the lair of a corpse thief.

Corpse Thieves fight only when cornered and then attack by jumping and clawing with their feet. They often follow other Horrors, blending into their environment and waiting until the Horror has killed.

Corpse Thieves are immune to talents, spells, and skills with fear based effects.

Adventure Hook

Corpse Thieves are not particularly intelligent. Sometimes they make mistakes. One of the adventurers' companions is knocked unconscious during a fight with a Horror. The companion is not dead, merely stunned. But a corpse thief pounces, swallows the Name-giver, and speeds away to deposit the "corpse" in its lair. Unfortunately, its lair is a cave beneath a deep pit that the wall-climbing corpse thief can easily negotiate, but that most Name-givers cannot. The stunned and wounded adventurer is trapped in a cave full of rotting corpses and even a few minor undead. The adventurers must rescue their companion from the lair of the corpse thief before their companion ends up an actual corpse.

CYCLOPEAN GHOUL

Attributes

DEX: 8 STR: 13 TOU: 10
PER: 5 WIL: 6 CHA: 4

Initiative: 5 Physical Defense: 8
Number of Attacks: 2(3) Spell Defense: 7
Attack: 10 Social Defense: 8
Damage: 12 Armor: 6
Number of Spells: 1 Mystic Armor: 0
Spellcasting: 9 Knockdown: 10
Effect: Poison(See Below) Recovery Tests: 4

Death Rating: 44 Combat Movement: 45
Wound Threshold: 13 Full Movement: 90
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune
Creature Durability: 0-10

Powers: NA

Legend Points: 350

Equipment: Usually none, sometimes they carry a tattered ancient artifact used as rudimentary armor or clothing.

Loot: Items from victims and the occasional artifact worth 6d6 silver pieces.

Commentary

Throughout the entire world are found the crumbling ruins of some ancient and forgotten race (perhaps a Name-giver?). The ruins are universally gigantic, proportioned for creatures who would tower over a troll. They are also equally intricate and, where time has not completely destroyed them, beautiful and ornate. Who created these ruins is a complete mystery to scholars.

There are some radical scholars who believe that at last the mysterious race has been discovered. Within the bowels of Scythia in some of the great caverns and halls of the old dwarf kingdom lurks a breed of grotesque, one-eyed ghouls of immense size. The smallest of these undead is at least twelve feet tall and ghouls as tall as eighteen feet have been reported. These Horror tainted undead are few in number, but make up for their rarity by being immensely strong and ferocious. They are degenerate, bestial and seem to hunger endlessly for the flesh of Name-givers. Like cadaver men, they eat Name-givers even though they need no nourishment to survive.

Cyclopean ghouls attack with two huge claws perfect for rending and tearing flesh. If both claws hit a single target, they will also bite. This is perhaps their most fearsome attack as their teeth are coated with the vile rot of their previous victims. This rot makes their bite poisonous (Damage Step Number 7, Spell Defense 8, instant, 1-5 Combat Rounds, see p. 232 of *Earthdawn 2nd edition* for details). Treat the bite as a third normal attack and treat the poison attack as the Ghoul's "spell".

Like other ghouls, the cyclopean ghouls are immune to talents, spells and skills with fear based effects.



Given the ghouls' grotesque nature, they seem an unlikely candidate for the ancient architects. But their height matches exactly with the ruins' builders and their most prominent feature, a single eye in their forehead, matches the statues and motifs that have been found at some of the ruins. Many scholars reject this theory entirely, saying that any similarities are likely purely coincidence or perhaps even a parody by the Horrors of the lost race. Whatever the truth may be, the story of how the once-proud ancient architects degenerated into the cyclopean ghouls that stalk the halls of Scythia has been lost.

This is just the sort of thing that a great dragon might know. Of course, if they know the truth, they have been content so far to say nothing. Perhaps this is an indication that they are either ignorant themselves (something dragons hate to admit to) or they were somehow involved in the tale. The truth remains lost among the scattered stones.

Adventure Hook

After defeating a cyclopean ghoul deep in the bowels of Scythia, the characters discover that it is wearing an ornate tapestry as a crude tunic. The tapestry depicts an ancient city peopled by the cyclopean ghouls, but before they were bestial. From this tattered fragment the characters can locate a lost ruin or perhaps even an entire lost city in some distant corner of the world, perhaps even outside of Barsaive. The lost ruin is overgrown and populated by more of these Ghouls than anyone has ever feared existed. It is also home to a few Horrors whose primary power is the animation of the undead. It holds within its walls great treasures and precious hints about the ancient past of the world long before the Scourge.

DOPPLER

Attributes

DEX: 11 STR: 10 TOU: 12
PER: 11 WIL: 12 CHA: 10

Initiative: 12 Physical Defense: 14
Number of Attacks: 2 Spell Defense: 15
Attack: 12 Social Defense: 13
Damage: 11 Armor: Varies
Number of Spells: 1 Mystic Armor: 10
Spellcasting: 10 Knockdown: 10
Effect: See text Recovery Tests: 5

Death Rating: 44 Combat Movement: 27
Wound Threshold: 13 Full Movement: 54
Unconsciousness Rating: 36

Karma Points: 12 Karma Step: 9

Powers: Corrupt Karma 15, Doppler Sting 20 (see text), Spells (see text), Talents (see text)

Legend Points: 3,000; 9,000 bonus for destroying all bodies.

Equipment: Varies by victim

Loot: Varies by victim

Commentary

These bizarre Horrors consist of one or more humanoid bodies. Each doppler appears to be a normal humanoid save for the flexible,



two-foot stinger that grows from its upper arm or hip. The only other clue to a doppler's true nature is the slightly disconnected aura that surrounds the entity's body when viewed in astral space. On careful observation, a doppler's body appears to have shrunk away from its aura. No theorist can satisfactorily explain why doppler bodies emit this oversized aura.

Whenever a doppler kills a Name-giver it uses its stinger to draw blood from the corpse, then detaches the blood-filled stinger and plants it in some hidden spot. Over the course of the following month, the planted stinger grows into a new doppler that is an exact replica of the slain Name-giver. The original "parent" doppler grows a new stinger within a few days after planting the old stinger.

Mystery shrouds the origin of dopplers. Legends describe the original doppler as a large, blighted tree or other plant and the various dopplers now in Barsaive as its astral "seeds", other legends insist that present day dopplers originate from more than one parent. The parent doppler or dopplers are said to know everything ever known by every doppler victim. Various tales place the original doppler tree in the Liaj Jungle or the Blood Wood. Those who claim the doppler tree is located in the Blood Wood also murmur that Queen Alachia knows of it and may even have made a pact with the Horror. If this is true, even destroying all the known dopplers in Barsaive will not end their existence; only the destruction of the doppler tree would stop their insidious propagation.

Each doppler possesses the same Attributes and statistics. However, each doppler is unique in that it possesses the abilities of the Name-giver it was created from. Additionally, each doppler possesses all the knowledge and skills of any other dopplers created by the same "parent" doppler. Note that these related dopplers do not possess each other's talents.

Most of the time, dopplers attack with the talents and skills of their Name-giver form. In addition, dopplers that have been unmasked use their stingers to slash at opponents. When a doppler attacks with its

stinger, it uses its normal Attack step number for the Attack Test, and its Doppler Sting step number (20) for the Damage Test.

Adventure Hook

Dopplers seek to expand their power by creating more dopplers. Related dopplers can serve as cannon fodder, or they can infiltrate an existing community and corrupt it, particularly if the victim was someone of sufficient power to influence other Name-givers. Dopplers are particularly interested in manipulating events on a large scale by taking the place of key persons and so provide an excellent way to introduce conspiracies and intrigue into Earthdawn campaigns.

DREAD IOTAS

Attributes

DEX: NA STR: NA TOU: NA
PER: 8 WIL: 8 CHA: 3

Initiative: NA Physical Defense: NA
Number of Attacks: NA Spell Defense: 10
Attack: NA Social Defense: 10
Damage: NA Armor: NA
Number of Spells: 2 Mystic Armor: NA
Spellcasting: 15 Knockdown: 8
Effect: See text Recovery Tests: NA

Death Rating: NA Combat Movement: NA
Wound Threshold: NA Full Movement: NA
Unconsciousness Rating: NA

Karma Points: 10 Karma Step: 8

Powers: Animate Dead 15, Karma Tap 15, Spells: Circle 3
Nethermancer

Legend Points: 875

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Commentary

The smallest type of Horror known, a single dread iota is invisible to the naked eye and may be found in water, as well as in many plants and animals. Dread iotas are fully intelligent Horrors that exercise a cruel influence over any creature unfortunate enough to ingest them, including Name-givers. When these parasites group together they resemble an intelligent directed disease.

Masses of dread iotas infest streams, ponds, springs, lakes, and even rain clouds in parts of Barsaive that still bear the worst scars of the Scourge. Dread iotas can enter a Name-giver's body if the Name-giver drinks water or eats a plant or animal infected by dread iotas. Questors have been able to cast dread iotas out of victims in some cases, but in general, infected Name-givers slowly waste away and die.

One scholar, the late Yamonis IV of Throal, created a device that combined a number of magnifying lenses. Using this device, Yamonis successfully observed dread iotas. His sketches depict them as humanoid in structure with scaly hides and grinning, malevolent faces.

Once a dread iota has entered a Name-giver, that Name-giver is Horror-marked. The dread iota's primary goal is to reproduce and infect

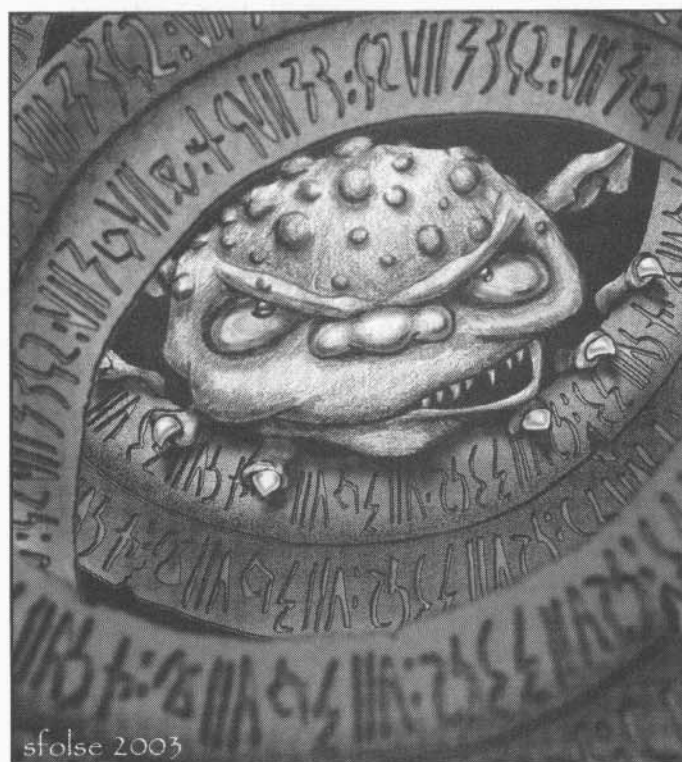
other intelligent victims. One way it may accomplish this goal is to reveal itself to the victim and use its Karma Tap power to reward hosts who help it infect others (Name-givers may become infected by the exchange of the bodily fluids with an infected victim). Dread iotas are also fond of using the Bone Dance spell to temporarily control the movements of their hosts. If a host dies, the dread iotas often animate the corpse and seek out a new host before the old one rots away.

The presence of this parasitic Horror causes tissue degeneration and eventual death. Infected victims must make a Toughness Test each week against a Difficulty Number equal to the number of weeks they have been infected. Each time the test fails, the victim loses 1 point from each Attribute. The victim dies when any Attribute other than Charisma reaches 0. The Attribute loss is permanent, barring the direct intercession of one of the Passions or perhaps the use of legendary healing magical treasures, such as the Butterspider Box (see *Parlainth and Parlainth Adventures*).

Dread iotas are difficult to kill. The Circle 1 Elementalist spell Purify Water (p.157, ED2) will kill dread iotas in water samples, but once a victim has been infected, only the questor power Heal (p. 180 ED2C) is known to be effective against the parasites. Avoiding infection in the first place remains the best way to deal with dread iotas. Fortunately, anyone who successfully uses any sort of astral sensing can spot the distinct astral signature of dread iotas by making an appropriate test against the dread iota's Spell Defense. Any material, animal, or Name-giver infected with dread iotas glows with a greenish-black aura under such observation.

Adventure Hook

Sometimes entire villages become infected by dread iotas. The victims act much like foul folk, though the infection will leave many of them weakened. In one possible adventure, the neighbors of an infected settlement may hire the players to accompany questors of Garlen into the hamlet to heal as many as can be saved ... then slay the rest.



GHOSTER

Attributes

DEX: 10 STR: 10 TOU: 10
PER: 12 WIL: 11 CHA: 6

Initiative: 10 Physical Defense: 12
Number of Attacks: 1 (tentacle) Spell Defense: 9
Attack: 10 Social Defense: 9
Damage: 12 Armor: 10
Number of Spells: 1 Mystic Armor: 8
Spellcasting: 12 Knockdown: 7
Effect: See Below Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 47 Combat Movement: 45*
Wound Threshold: 13 Full Movement: 90*
Unconsciousness Rating: 40 *(levitation)

Karma Points: 12 Karma Step: 10

Powers: Horror Durability 6-10, Immune to Fear, Mimic Talent (See Below)

Legend Points: 300

Equipment: Whatever their victim possessed

Loot: Whatever their victim possessed

Commentary

Few Horrors are as insidious as the ghoster. In their native form, they are barely-visible, floating spheres of transparent protoplasm about three feet in diameter. In this form they can use their Spellcasting Step as their talent step for Silent Walk. They are usually only found where astral space is particularly corrupt. They are drawn to the recently dead and when they make contact with a corpse that has not been dead for longer than one day and one hour, they consume it and assume its form and even, to a limited degree, its very thoughts.

Note: Statistics above are of the creature's natural form. They assume the statistics of the individual they are duplicating and revert to their natural form either voluntarily or when "killed" in their new form. The transformation process effectively heals them of all Wounds. If they are killed in their natural form, they are permanently destroyed.

Ghosters then try to reinsert themselves into the lives the dead once lived. But now they have a terrible new purpose. All ghosters must have a steady diet of the newly dead, needing to consume at least one new corpse a week. They are content to feed upon the incidental dead they may encounter. But when those are unavailable, they turn to murder, feeding and assuming identity after identity.

What makes a ghoster truly difficult to catch is that they can absorb the thoughts of their meals. A dead mind has a residue of its living consciousness and a ghoster is capable of reading and duplicating this residue. They have similar mannerisms and gestures and even know much of what the deceased knew. What the ghoster lacks is the deceased's soul, the deceased's passion and a true understanding of their victim's character. For example, they may know who the deceased's father is, but they do not actually care about the man.

Ghosters can even pass Artisan Tests by exactly duplicating the past artistic activities of its victim. What they cannot do is create new



artistic works. For example, if the ghoster took the form of someone whose artisan talent was singing, they could repeat any song the artist had performed in the past. What they could not do is sing a brand new song.

Consuming Adepts represents a particular challenge for ghosters. When they consume an Adept they use their Mimic Talent power to pick any three talents and gain those powers while in that form. They use their own spellcasting step for the talent step.

Ghosters can, at any time, return to their native form. They are generally loathe to do this, for once they have given up a form they are unable to return to it. They must seek a new corpse to consume and duplicate.

Adventure Hook

A string of bizarre disappearances begin to occur throughout a village. A ghoster has infiltrated the town and is busy working its way through the community. The citizens are now in the grip of fear and all sorts of false rumors (many started by the ghoster itself) are floating around. A persistent rumor is that a Horror or other unnatural presence is stalking the city. The ghoster itself is spreading this rumor because of its confidence that it can pass any Artisan Test posed to it and that this will avert suspicion.

GNASHERS

Attributes

DEX: 5 STR: 8 TOU: 4
PER: 2 WIL: 8 CHA: 3

Initiative: 5 Physical Defense: 7
Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 7
Attack: 10 Social Defense: 15
Damage: 20 Armor: 2

Number of Spells: 0

Spellcasting: NA

Effect: NA

Death Rating: 40

Wound Threshold: 10

Unconsciousness Rating: 30

Karma Points: 15

Powers: NA

Legend Points: 660

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Commentary

Gnashers are the simplest of the Horrors. During the Scourge, legions of these mindless entities swarmed across the face of the world, devouring everything in sight and leaving poisoned wastelands in their wake. Though gnashers prefer sentient victims, these Horrors will eat any living thing and even inanimate matter if no other food is available. The only thing they do not attempt to eat is each other. Unlike most other Horrors, gnashers show no signs of higher intelligence and are indifferent to the pain and suffering they cause. They possess none of the dread powers associated with most Horrors. Gnashers are simple killing machines driven by a blind, insatiable impulse to devour.

Gnashers typically travel in swarms of several dozen. They eat constantly and their gobbling and snarling sounds are usually audible from a considerable distance. Gnashers try to eat anything they can sense and their acute sense of smell enables them to detect prey within a quarter of a mile. These Horrors have no sense of self-preservation and continue to attack no matter how effectively their prey fights back. They never flee, even when large numbers of them are slain.

Gnashers vary widely in appearance. Some are reptilian, others toad-like or mammalian. Some possess features of several different

Mystic Armor: 2

Knockdown: 8

Recovery Tests: 2

Combat Movement: 27

Full Movement: 54

Karma Step: 5

animals and still others are utterly alien or formless in structure. Most are the size of a large dog. The one feature all gnashers possess is a massive set of jaws, lined with dozens of razor-sharp teeth. The jaws of most gnashers represent more than half of the monster's body mass. These terrible jaws enable gnashers to devour the equivalent of their own weight many times over in mere minutes. Examination of slain gnashers has revealed that they possess no standard means of excreting waste matter from their bodies. This has led scholars to speculate that gnashers transform the matter they consume into mystical energy which they expel into astral space.

Though less robust than most Horrors, gnashers pay no heed to Damage inflicted on them and continue to attack until they lapse into unconsciousness or die. Gnashers spend Karma only on Attack and Damage Tests. Up to eight gnashers may engage a single human, elf, ork or t'skrang at once. Up to twelve may attack a troll or obsidian. Generally no more than five will attack the average dwarf. Windlings need worry about only a single gnasher attacker per round.

Gnashers travel by leaping and can hop an average of twenty seven feet in one bound. Some gnashers have powerful back legs that they clearly use for locomotion. Others, however, have no apparent physical means of making these jumps.

Adventure Hook

These Horrors provide an excellent combat challenge for intermediate or advanced adventurers. They possess too little personality to form the linchpin of an entire plot line but may be quite useful for wearing down a group or emphasizing the inherent danger of a Horror-infested area. Because gnashers are virtually mindless, the action-lovers in your group can enjoy a guilt-free, high old time bashing away at them.

GORGON

Attributes

DEX: 18 STR: 14 TOU: 20
PER: 18 WIL: 20 CHA: 12

Initiative: 20

Number of Attacks: 2

Attack: 18

Damage: 15

Number of Spells: 3

Spellcasting: 22

Effect: See Below

Physical Defense: 18

Spell Defense: 20

Social Defense: 20

Armor: 28

Mystic Armor: 35

Knockdown: 10

Recovery Tests: 8

Death Rating: 110

Wound Threshold: 25

Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 30

Full Movement: 60

Karma Points: 25

Karma Steps: 12

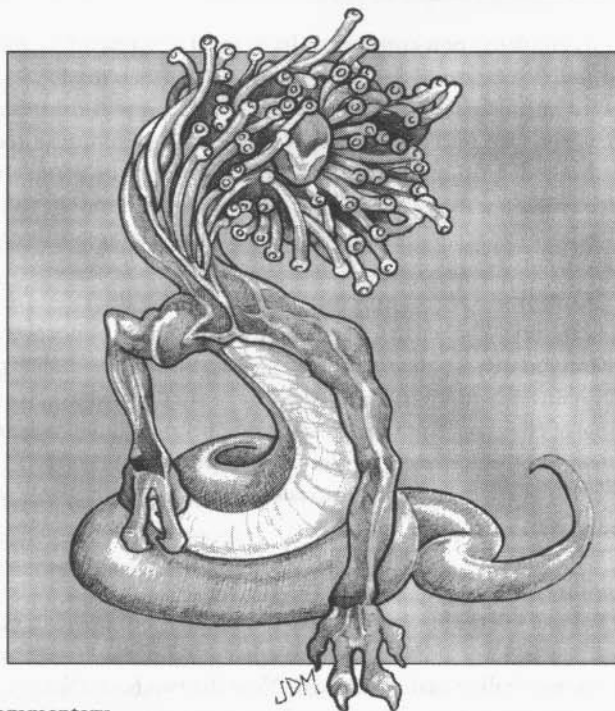
Powers: Horror Durability 8-16, Horror Mark 10, Immune to Fear, Petrifying Gaze (See Below), Spells: Circle 8 Wizard, Terror 15

Legend Points: 30,000

Equipment: None

Loot: Many very lifelike statues with horrified expressions





Commentary

Legends speak of a Horror during the Scourge who could turn Name-givers to stone just with a glance. Many assumed that with the end of the Scourge, those creatures had left this world behind. But with the exploration of Scythia came the terrible revelation that several gorgons yet survived.

The gorgon resembles a long serpent covered in a rubbery skin that perpetually oozes blood and pus. The head is not serpentine at all, but vaguely reminiscent of a featureless human face surrounded by a mass of twisting eyestalks. The eyestalks glow with a red, burning light. Two clawed arms emerge from the trunk.

The Petrifying Gaze of the gorgon is its most terrible and familiar power. The Gaze is not a conscious action. It is always in effect and always on. Anyone who looks upon the face of the gorgon must resist a spell effect of Step 22 or immediately be transformed into stone. They can be transformed back, it is supposed, by certain spells and items. And while transformed to stone the victims are neither conscious nor do they age. This effect can be ignored if the target is blind. However, the gorgon is still a potent combatant and adept spell caster. Approaching it blind enrages and infuriates the Horror.

Some Horror Stalkers relate tales that the gorgons are not true Horrors at all, but once were Name-givers. The exact details of their transformation into gorgons are sketchy, but the stories always describe some sort of treachery against the Passions they served (perhaps as powerful questors) in the struggle against the Horrors.

Adventure Hook

Gorgons are usually found tasked to guard some important location or artifact. It is rare to find a gorgon who is roaming free and without purpose. Why they are guarding these items and places is simply unknown.

Deep in Scythia a single gorgon guards a huge stone portal ornately carved with intricate runes and overlooked by a single great eye. If the gorgon could be defeated, then the massive tunnels and halls beyond the gorgon could be explored for the first time in living memory.

THE HIVE OF ASHES

Attributes

DEX: 8 STR: 8 TOU: 10
PER: 10 WIL: 10 CHA: 8

Initiative: 12

Number of Attacks: 2

Attack: 12

Damage: 11

Number of Spells: 2 (3)

Spellcasting: 12

Effect: See Below

Physical Defense: 12

Spell Defense: 13

Social Defense: 13

Armor: 12

Mystic Armor: 11

Knockdown: 8

Recovery Tests: 5

Death Rating: 80 (110)

Wound Threshold: 15

Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 45

Full Movement: 90

Powers: NA

Legend Points: 1,000 (1,500)

Equipment: Whatever their Name-giver form carries

Loot: Usually none

Commentary

Each of the members of the hive of ashes may select from up to 5th Circle Wizard spells for their spell repertoire, though the anchor may select from up to 7th Circle spells. The anchor also has at least 5 levels of Horror Durability. In addition, for the cost of 5 Strain, Andokhas can boost any Attribute for any Hive member by 5 steps for a single attack.

The hive of ashes is a group that believes they are in the service of Raggok. Many years ago, Uilmaz was a dwarf dying of a horrible wasting disease. Raggok approached her and offered her a cure in



exchange for a pledge of eternal loyalty. The elixir that the mad Passion gave her had been extracted from the astral essence of a dormant Horror, Andokhas, and while she maintained a disguise as an old woman through Andokhas' power, she was in fact the equivalent of a minor Horror. Andokhas only has one type of construct, that of the members of the Hive. Because Andokhas cannot manifest itself in this level of magic, its constructs become its primary anchor to the physical world. The anchor is more powerful than regular versions, and the numbers in parenthesis above represent the anchor's stats. Each Hive member costs Andokhas one point of permanent Strain that is only regained once the Hive member is destroyed.

HORRORFLESH

Attributes

DEX: NA STR: NA TOU: 5
PER: 4 WIL: 4 CHA: 10

Initiative: 0 Physical Defense: 0
Number of Attacks: 0 Spell Defense: 7
Attack: NA Social Defense: 10
Damage: NA Armor: 0
Number of Spells: NA Mystic Armor: 5
Spellcasting: NA Knockdown: Immune
Effect: NA Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 30 Combat Movement: 0
Wound Threshold: 8 Full Movement: 0
Unconsciousness Rating: 25
Creature Durability: 0

Powers: NA

Legend Points: 400
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Commentary

The horrorflesh is a Horror Construct that appears identical (above the surface) to a common variety of berry bush. It gives no indication of its darker nature until its delicious berries are consumed. Anyone who eats the fruit must resist the construct's spell effect of 15 to avoid coming under the thrall of the horrorflesh. As long as another berry is eaten every eight hours, no more Tests are made to resist the effect. Every eight hours that the victim goes without eating a berry they receive another test, each three steps easier than the last (so the first is Step 15, then Step 12, then Step 9, etc.). A full adult horrorflesh produces hundreds of berries at a time and as long as it is well fed it can replenish its supply every few days.

At first, the horrorflesh's only goal is to gain more servants. Eventually, the horrorflesh will also need to feed itself and this is where the true horror of the construct becomes evident. The horrorflesh only thrives on the fresh blood of Name-givers.

Horrorfleshes only grow over a spot where a Horror was slain or a Horror's remains were buried. Beneath the soil, the true nature of the horrorflesh is more apparent. Its roots spread into a pulsing, fleshy tuber that takes on the appearance of the Horror buried there. Even though digging up the horrorflesh is disgusting and gory work, the

bush is completely non-combatant. Its devoted servants, on the other hand, will do everything in their power to defend their master.

If a horrorflesh is cut flush with the earth, it will completely regrow in a matter of two to four weeks. Only by having its roots completely dug up and burned will the horrorflesh be completely destroyed and the Name-givers in its thrall will be released from their servitude. It will seem to these unfortunates like they are awakening from a terrible dream.

Horrorfleshes' are not truly intelligent. They operate at more of an instinctive level. They want servants, food and to remain undiscovered. It is rumored that if horrorfleshes can gather enough blood, then the Horror buried beneath them will develop into a full-fledged Horror capable of emerging from the ground and operating independently. How much blood or how long this takes is open to conjecture.

Horrorfleshes are immune to talents, spells, and skills with fear based effects.

Adventure Hook

A small village has fallen under the thrall of not one, but two, horrorfleshes. They are located where a pair of Wormskulls were slain by a Horror Stalker many years ago. Now the two horrorfleshes are taking over the village. There have been many disappearances and their influence is growing. Some of the villagers have begun to suspect that something is wrong and are seeking aid from Adepts outside the village. Finding and destroying the first bush is relatively easy, as it is in the village itself. The second, though, is hidden in the forest. As soon as one of the horrorfleshes is destroyed, the second will dedicate all of its servants to destroying the Adepts who have "liberated" the town.



KAER LORD

Attributes

DEX: 8 STR: 8 TOU: 8
PER: 7 WIL: 9 CHA: 6

Initiative: 10

Number of Attacks: 2(5)

Attack: 12

Damage: 20

Number of Spells: NA

Spellcasting: NA

Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 14

Spell Defense: 14

Social Defense: 16

Armor: 10

Mystic Armor: 10

Knockdown: 11

Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 40

Wound Threshold: 11

Unconsciousness: Immune

Creature Durability: 0-10

Combat Movement: 30

Full Movement: 60

Powers: NA

Legend Points: 800

Equipment: Weapons and Armor appropriate to former Adept type

Loot: 1d6x100 silver worth of money and jewelry

Commentary

Adepts have been given a greater destiny and a larger part to play in the pattern of Barsaive. Unfortunately, this also means that when those same Adepts are transformed into undead they retain that greater measure of importance. When a high Circle Adept is transformed into a cadaver man, the result is sometimes a kaer lord.

The Name kaer lord originated because almost all of these creatures were the corpses of high ranking members of kaers that had been breached during the Scourge. They appear almost identical to cadaver men (see p. 294 of *Earthdawn 2nd edition*) although they are usually outfitted better.

Kaer lords possess the cadaver man ability to frenzy, but may control it, choosing when to enter into a blood rage. Furthermore, kaer lords may control other cadaver men within sight of them, even being able to cause them to relent from their frenzy.

Unfortunately, for all of their ability to restrain their own and their servant's frenzies, many kaer lords are usually so twisted by hatred of the living that they will attack Name-givers on sight and command their Cadaver Man servants to do the same. There are exceptions. Over time and when not continuously controlled by the Horrors, many kaer lords experience the return of their pre-death personalities. Several such kaer lords, for example, serve Queen Twiceborn in Vivane.

Kaer lords are immune to talents, spells, and skills with fear based effects.

Adventure Hook

In a lost kaer somewhere in the wilderness of Barsaive, a kaer lord and his group of cadaver men have waited since their corruption during the Scourge to pounce upon any living who dared trespass in their domain. A group of young Adepts found the kaer and began exploring it. Unfortunately, the kaer lord and his minions were too much for them. They were defeated and brought before the kaer lord, doubtless they thought, to be converted into mindless undead. But instead the



kaer lord proved more congenial. He wanted to know if the Scourge still continued. He wanted to know the state of Barsaive.

The young Adepts, hoping to escape with their lives, told him everything they knew. The one thing that intrigued the kaer lord above all else was news of the city of Vivane, a kingdom of undead. He made the Adepts a deal. He would release one of them if they would arrange passage from the kaer to Vivane for the kaer lord and his cadaver men. Only once transport was arranged and the kaer lord entered Vivane would the others go free. A young Swordmaster was chosen by his fellows and left the kaer amazed to still be alive.

The Swordmaster locates the player characters. They must decide what to do with the kaer lord's demands. They could attempt a daring rescue of the imprisoned Adepts, but there is no way to guarantee their safety. They could attempt to arrange passage, but this proves almost as problematic. A further complication arises when the young Swordmaster accidentally reveals the player characters' plans to "cooperate" with undead. Suddenly, the adventurers may well be facing a lynch mob.

If they characters can overcome their own suspicion of the undead and the lynch mobs of the locals, the kaer lord is good to his word. If brought to Vivane he releases his prisoners unharmed. To whoever helped him attain passage he awards several pieces of the kaer's wealth as gifts of thanks. He then enters the city, a new resident and noble of dead Vivane.

KNIFE CATS

Attributes

DEX: 8 STR: 9 TOU: 8
PER: 7 WIL: 5 CHA: 5

Initiative: 8

Number of Attacks: 3

Attack: 10

Damage: 12

Physical Defense: 9

Spell Defense: 5

Social Defense: 5

Armor: 3

Number of Spells: NA

Spellcasting: NA

Effect: NA

Death Rating: 58

Wound Threshold: 17

Unconsciousness Rating: 51

Creature Durability: 0-6

Powers: NA

Legend Points: 150

Equipment: None

Loot: The Two "Knives" are made of ivory worth 100 silver each. This counts as treasure worth Legend Points.

Commentary

Originally seen only in Scythia, these creatures have started to appear elsewhere in Barsaive. These creatures appear similar to huge felines such as a mountain lion or a cougar, but larger, being four feet tall at the shoulder. Their most distinctive feature are two large, curved, seven inch long "knives" that jut from their skulls, doubtless the effect of their contact with the Horrors.

All knife cats are undead Horror Constructs. Some have speculated that they may be the animated corpses of mountain lions swollen and warped by Horror magic. But the truth of this is not known. What is certain is that no one has ever seen a living knife cat.

Knife cats retain many behaviors similar to mountain lions. They are very stealthy (Step 12 to be noticed), usually solitary, and often seem like they are hunting their prey even though they don't require food.

Knife cats are immune to talents, spells, and skills with fear based effects.

Mystic Armor: 2

Knockdown: 8

Recovery Tests: 3

Combat Movement: 75

Full Movement: 150

Adventure Hook

A prominent merchant is slaughtered, his belly opened by a large, sharp knife. He has many enemies: some want him dead because of his unfair dealings, some owe him money, and some see him as a hated business rival. Although the community is full of suspects, the truth is that a solitary knife cat who is stalking the local countryside killed him. An adventure that at first seems like a murder mystery turns out to be a hunt for a Horror Construct. As a further complication, some of the suspects in the murder with other secrets to hide may take action to make sure that they not investigated. This can further confuse the search for the merchant's true murderer.

LAKE MONSTER

Attributes

DEX: 14 STR: 10 TOU: 14

PER: 13 WIL: 15 CHA: 12

Initiative: 14

Number of Attacks: 2

Attack: 20

Damage: 26

Number of Spells: 2

Spellcasting: 19

Effect: See Below

Physical Defense: 18

Spell Defense: 18

Social Defense: 20

Armor: 20

Mystic Armor: 18

Knockdown: 14

Recovery Tests: 6

Death Rating: 100

Wound Threshold: 20

Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 20

Full Movement: 40

Swimming: 60/120

Karma Points: 20

Karma Steps: 10

Powers: Animate Dead 20, Horror Durability 10-20, Horror-Mark 15, Immune to Fear, Spells: Circle 5 Nethermancer, Terror 20

Legend Points: 10,000

Equipment: None

Loot: The stomach of a lake monster is often filled with 1d6x100 silver in gems and coins from their hastily gulped victims.

Commentary

Throughout the upper halls and passages of Scythia run many underground rivers and lakes. These winding waterways are used by some Horror Stalkers to explore the depths of the ancient dwarf kingdom. A number of Horrors have adapted to an aquatic lifestyle and roam these dark rivers, eager for Name-giver prey. Among the most fearsome of these Horrors is the lake monster.

Lake monsters are two-headed reptilian beasts who paddle through the water with four flippers. Their two heads full of sharp teeth are attached to their body at the end of long, serpentine necks. Their skin is irregular and tumorous with a stony texture that helps them blend in against the cavernous stone. They effectively have the talent Silent Walk at Step 15 usable only in the water.

In the water, lake monsters can swim with great speed and agility. On land they are far more awkward and ungainly, able to waddle at only a slow walking pace.

Lake monsters possess a gift for mimicry. They use this ability to make sounds like someone drowning and yelling for help at the water's





edge. They prefer to remain out of sight and usually attack only solitary prey.

Lake monsters are immune to talents, spells, and skills with fear based effects.

Adventure Hook

One of the underground rivers emerges in a nearby surface lake at the base of the Scythian Mountains. This peaceful lake is home to the human and dwarf village of Montshadow. Unfortunately, a particularly large and cunning lake monster has taken up residence near Montshadow and has been terrorizing the locals. The creature has Horror-marked a number of residents and has killed a number of solitary travelers to the lake.

The villagers live in terror of the lake, but attribute its foul reputation not to a Horror, but to a grisly unsolved murder that happened on the lake's edge. They believe the ghost of the murdered Name-giver still haunts the lake. They are half right. A ghost does walk these shores, but it is a benevolent spirit trying to warn its still-living friends and family about the Horror of the lake.

MARIONETTE

Attributes

DEX: 10 STR: 12 TOU: 8
PER: 7 WIL: 9 CHA: 6

Initiative: 10

Number of Attacks: 2

Attack: 12

Damage: 20

Number of Spells: NA

Spellcasting: NA

Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 12

Spell Defense: 12

Social Defense: 12

Armor: 10

Mystic Armor: 10

Knockdown: 11

Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 40

Wound Threshold: 11

Unconsciousness: Immune

Creature Durability: 0-10

Combat Movement: 30

Full Movement: 60

Powers: NA

Legend Points: 500

Equipment: Weapons and Armor appropriate to host body

Loot: 1d6x10 silver (from host body)

Commentary

The marionette looks like the body of whatever creature it hatched from, suspended on a long, vine-like tentacle, attached to a four foot wide mass of thick tentacles. It will often squeeze itself into rock ledges on mountains and then speak through the creature, calling for help and trying to lure passers-by to help it. The marionette has all the knowledge of the person it was hatched from, but it is not a reanimated form of that creature. Life Leaches will often command their marionettes to lure creatures to it so that it may continue to feed.



Adventure Hook

While traveling through the mountains north of Throal the characters discover the remains of an overturned wagon. Down at the bottom of a ravine a wounded ork cries out for help. The characters who descend to help risk not only the trap of the marionette but death from falling further down the ravine. A great episode for that Thief that complains they never get to use Climbing enough, or for that Sky Raider that assures you they aren't afraid of falling. Even if the characters succeed in defeating the marionette the terrain should prove troublesome to surmount after the fight.

NIGHTWISTS

Attributes

DEX: 13 STR: 5 TOU: 9
PER: 15 WIL: 6 CHA: 7

Initiative: 15 Physical Defense: 16
Number of Attacks: 3 Spell Defense: 19
Attack: 17 Social Defense: 19
Damage: 9 Armor: 16
Number of Spells: (2) Mystic Armor: 5
Spellcasting: 20 Recovery Tests: 4
Effect: See text Knockdown: 5

Death Rating: 100 Combat Movement: 50
Wound Threshold: 20 Full Movement: 100
Unconsciousness Rating: 25

Karma Points: 25 Karma Step: 10

Powers: Corrupt Karma 16, Horror Mark 16, Karma Tap 13, Terror 12



Legend Points: 7,000

Equipment: None

Loot: A captured nightwist is worth $(10 + D8) \times 100$ silver pieces and is treasure worth Legend Points

Commentary

Nightwists are the most commonly encountered manifestations of the Horror called Ristul (see *Ristul*, p. 45). These Horror Constructs appear as twisted strands of darkness, bending and distorting the night air as they pass through it. They may be as small as a windling or as large as a thundra beast and they may assume any shape imagined in nightmares.

Nightwists appear only in corrupted areas, around astral breaches, or in the proximity of Horror-marked characters.

Because nightwists are made from the corrupt essence of dreams, they may serve as components for blood charms that corrupt Karma, creating an effect similar to the Corrupt Karma power. Only containers that can hold astral or magical material, such as orichalcum jars, can hold nightwists. In a pinch, a Spell Matrix can be used to capture and contain a nightwist. To do so, the character makes a Thread Weaving Test (similar to a Matrix Attunement Test) against the Spell Defense of the nightwist. A successful result places the nightwist in the matrix. To release the nightwist, the character must make another Spellcasting Test against the nightwists' Spell Defense. However, using a Spell Matrix in this manner corrupts the matrix beyond repair. Any attempt to cast a spell using the corrupted matrix results in the same effect produced by a spell cast with Raw Magic.

PLAGUES

Attributes

DEX: 12 STR: 8 TOU: 15
PER: 12 WIL: 15 CHA: 3

Initiative: 12 Physical Defense: 17
Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 17
Attack: 13 Social Defense: 15
Damage: 8 Armor: 10
Number of Spells: 1 Mystic Armor: 10
Spellcasting: 15 Recovery Tests: 2
Effect: See text

Death Rating: 60 Combat Movement: 100
Wound Threshold: 12 Full Movement: 200
Unconsciousness Rating: 50

Karma Points: 10 Karma Step: 12

Powers: Cause Plague 20, Spells: Circle 4 Illusionist

Legend Points: 4,500

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Commentary

Though the heroes of the Scourge documented many Horrors and Horror Constructs, few seem as fearsome or as insidious as the Horror Constructs known as plagues. These vile things first appeared

in southwest Barsaive just prior to the Scourge. According to legend, plagues spread through the vicinity of the ancient Kingdom of Landis and only severe quarantine measures prevented them from spreading illness and death throughout the province of Barsaive. However, various accounts describe plagues in regions as far from Landis as the city of Parlainth.

Plagues most often appear as tall, gaunt men with thin, splotchy hair and discolored blisters covering their skin. They often wear filthy rags and reek of decay and mold. Surprisingly limber, plagues can move very quickly when necessary.

Despite their grotesque appearance, plagues shy away from physical combat and use illusion spells to escape any potential fights. However all plagues possess the Horror power known as Cause Plague.

The Cause Plague power enables a plague to infect Name-givers with a plague-like disease. The plague can infect any Name-giver who approaches within fifty yards of it by making a successful Cause Plague Test against the target's Spell Defense. Within the first few days of infection, victims experience red speckles or rashes on their throats and chest. A few days later the victim suffers dizziness, nausea, body aches, and a relentless dry cough. Within two weeks, fever leaves the victim bedridden and death becomes inevitable. The game effects of this disease are similar to those of a Debilitating Poison (ED2 p. 232).

The disease also acts as a bond between the plague and its victim, similar to the bond created by a Horror mark. This bond enables the plague to monitor the victim's location, as well as his or her physical and emotional states.

A Name-giver infected with the disease may infect others through skin to skin contact and the highly contagious disease remains alive in a victim's corpse long after the victim has died. This latter characteristic led to the spread of plague throughout Barsaive and the decimation of entire kaers and towns in past times. This characteristic also led to the practice of burning corpses, a common precaution still employed by

Name-givers throughout Barsaive to prevent the creation of disease carrying cadaver men.

Few proven cures for the disease exist. An Excellent success or better on a Dispel Magic Test against the result of the Cause Plague Test can cure a victim. Additionally, victims recover from the disease if the plague that caused the disease dies. No other known cures exist.

Adventure Hook

Plagues can be introduced into adventures by simply having the players stumble across an outbreak of a plague-caused epidemic. Alternately, the players might be persuaded to help save a town surrounded by plague-ridden hot spots. Keep in mind that contracting the disease practically guarantees death, so make sure the players know enough about the disease to protect themselves.

Plagues can also be used to inject urgency into a game. If a player becomes infected and no magical healing services are available, the players will have to slay the plague that caused the disease within mere weeks in order to save their comrade.

In another possible adventure, villagers may hire the players to hunt down and kill a plague. Though the Horror Construct may not seem like a formidable opponent at first, keep in mind that as a general rule, players cannot retreat from combat with one and escape with their lives.

QURAL'LOTECTICA

Attributes

DEX: 12 STR: 9 TOU: 12
PER: 5 WIL: 9 CHA: 3

Initiative: 14

Number of Attacks: 4

Attack: 13

Damage: 15

Number of Spells: 1

Spellcasting: 18

Effect: 20 (Paralysis)

Death Rating: 60

Wound Threshold: 12

Unconsciousness Rating: 48

Karma Points: 5

Powers: NA

Legend Points: 1,400

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Commentary

The terrible creature known as the qural'lotectica is one of the most feared Horror Constructs known to Name-givers. The qural'lotectica, or "qural," consists of a small, bulbous body from which numerous tentacles emerge. These creatures hide themselves in trees along forest pathways or along alleyways in cities and towns. They drape their thin tentacles across the passage. As a victim walks by, the qural's tendrils pierce the individual's skin. Then the entity swiftly





draws the blood from its victim, its transparent tendrils and body taking on a deep crimson color. The qural consumes only the blood of its victims, leaving drained, emaciated corpses as a sign of its presence.

According to the stories of Cathan elders, qurals infested the Servos Jungles during the Scourge, preying on the beasts of the jungle as well as the Cathan and other tribes. Apparently, qurals would lie in wait in the subterranean tunnels where the jungle people took refuge during that dark time, feeding in the narrow passageways.

The qural's tentacles are each tipped with a sharp, hollow claw. The base of each claw contains a gland that secretes a paralytic toxin, which the qural injects into the victim. The poison swiftly immobilizes the victim so that the qural will not be damaged by the struggles of its meal while it attaches more of its bloodsucking tentacles. The qural's tentacles are also hollow and carry blood from the thing's luckless prey to its stomach (which comprises most of its bulbous body).

The qural is vulnerable to fire and its tentacles can be broken or severed by a strong hand or a sharp blade, if the adventurer who runs across one is lucky enough to see it before it sinks its tentacles into him. To reflect the creature's vulnerability to flames, add 5 steps to the attacker's Damage Test for any fire-based attacks against a qural. Attacking one of the creature's tentacles requires a Called Shot (see p. 225, ED2). Each of the qural's tentacles has a Death Rating of 15; if a single tentacle suffers Damage equal to its Death Rating, the tentacle is destroyed.

Though most of these Horror Constructs live in Barsaive's jungles and forests, they may inhabit cities and towns as well.

SPINE DEVIL

Attributes

DEX: 12 STR: 8 TOU: 12
PER: 8 WIL: 12 CHA: 9

Initiative: 8
Number of Attacks: 2
Attack: 9
Damage: 14
Number of Spells: 1
Spellcasting: 1
Effect: 1

Death Rating: 80
Wound Threshold: 18
Unconsciousness Rating: 73

Karma Points: 20

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 10
Social Defense: 10
Armor: 5
Mystic Armor: 5
Knockdown: 8
Recovery Tests: 6

Combat Movement: 45
Full Movement: 90
Flight: 80/160

Karma Steps: 8

Powers: Damage Shift 8-12, Horror Durability 5-10, Horror Mark 8-12 (special, See Below), Immune to Fear

Legend Points: 1800

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Commentary

The spine devil is a rare breed of Horror so far only encountered in Scythia. It is a vaguely humanoid Horror standing roughly six feet tall. Its skin is translucent and tumorous, a pale, milk-white in color. Bat-like wings emerge from its back. The beast has a relentless, wicked grin and frequently laughs and chuckles at its victims. The spine devil gets its Name from the many hundreds of sharp quills that emerge from its back and arms.

It usually attacks with its razor-sharp, barbed claws. Whenever the beast scores an Armor-Defeating Hit against a foe, it has implanted



one of its spines and immediately tries to Horror-Mark the foe. If the Horror overcomes the character's Spell Defense then a spine is implanted and burrows beneath the skin of the victim. Otherwise it falls off harmlessly. At this point, the spine devil will usually cackle maniacally and try to flee the encounter.

The spine devil will frequently contact its Horror-marked victims, taunting them and laughing at them via its mental link. Inside the victims the Spine burrows slowly and painfully through their flesh. The victim suffers under the effect of 1 Wound they cannot heal until the Spine is removed. The Spine will duck and dodge attempts to dig it out and even amputation will likely prove futile as the spine works its way into the central torso of the victim. The only way to truly remove the Spine is to kill the spine devil who gave it to the victim. This will cause the Spine to wither and grow still.

Adventure Hook

A famous Horror Stalker is hit by a spine devil's barb while purging Scythia of Horrors. The spine devil escapes and the Horror Stalker is faced with living a life as a Horror-marked servant of his enemy unless he can track down the beast. But the Horror Stalker is badly hurt and his allies are dead or scattered. He needs help immediately to track down this beast. Fortunately, he happens upon a group of adventurers who are perhaps also hunting Horrors in Scythia. He tells them about the spine devil, but instead tells them that his "friend" back at camp is the one infected.

As time progresses, the spine does its devilish work. It becomes harder and harder for the Horror Stalker to resist its effects and it becomes much more difficult to conceal. In the meantime the fiendish spine devil is leading them on a merry chase through the halls of Scythia. If the characters are not quick, they may have to fight the Horror Stalker himself, corrupted and now controlled by the Horrors.

STORM SHARDS

Attributes

DEX: 12 STR: 10 TOU: 12
PER: 7 WIL: 12 CHA: 4

Initiative: 12

Number of Attacks: 0

Physical Defense: 15

Spell Defense: 10

Attack: NA

Damage: NA

Number of Spells: 1

Spellcasting: 12

Effect: Lightning
(damage step 15)

Death Rating: 80

Wound Threshold: 18

Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Karma Points: 10

Powers: Horror Durability 5-10, Immune to Fear

Social Defense: 20

Armor: 8

Mystic Armor: 8

Knockdown: Immune

Recovery Tests: 4

Combat Movement: 80 (flight)

Full Movement: 160 (flight)

Karma Steps: 7

Legend Points: 700

Equipment: None

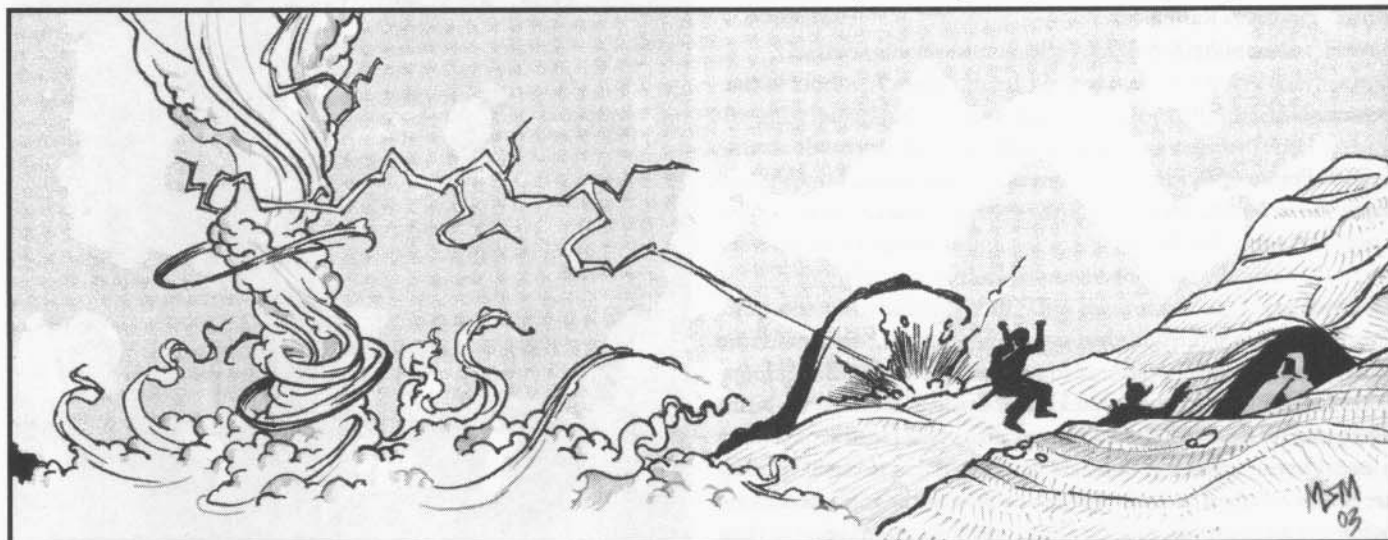
Loot: None

Commentary

The enigmatic storm shards are primarily found in Vivane, although some have also been seen in Stormhead and other locales visited by the Horror Clouds. Storm shards are generally supposed not to be actual Horrors, but Horror Constructs created by tiny fragments of Horror Clouds separating into smaller beings. It is also very difficult to tell if they are truly self-aware. What is certain is that they attack all Name-givers on sight and will only relent when they are destroyed or until all their targets are dead.

Storm shards appear as man-sized columns of storm cloud. Tiny electrical sparks arc throughout this column more or less continually. They have no eyes, ears or any obvious limbs. Instead they attack by shooting lightning strikes at the nearest target. Storm shards are immune to electrical attacks.

Cloud spawns (see p. 62) and storm shards are often sighted together and could both be described as the children of the Horror Clouds. However, just because their origins are similar does not mean they are cooperative. The lucky few observers who have been inside a Horror Cloud and returned alive and sane relate tales of huge battles between hordes of cloud spawn and storm shards. They talk of the storm shards pummeling the Spawn with lightning bolts while the



cloud spawn blast the Shards into pieces by ramming through them. The cause or purpose of these battles remains unknown.

Adventure Hooks

One of the free-roaming Horror Clouds of Barsaive advances towards a small village Named Kalthra near Throal. A patrolling Throalic drakkar Named the *Eraborn* receives word of the plight of the villagers and makes a heroic (or perhaps foolhardy) attempt to intercept the cloud in hopes of deflecting its path. The drakkar's attempts to draw the Horror Cloud away from the village with missile attacks prove fruitless. As the craft is passing perilously near the Horror Cloud, a large swath of the Storm reaches almost like a hand from the mass and slams into the drakkar. The drakkar spirals to earth and crashes in a shroud of dark mist. The Horror Cloud, diverted by this battle, narrowly bypasses the village of Kalthra.

Throal is curious as to what exactly happened to its vessel. They have only sketchy reports from a handful of villagers who witnessed the battle from afar. They send agents or perhaps even hire a trusted group of freelancers to check out the wreckage and search for survivors or corpses of the crew. Amongst the wreckage crawl several storm shards ripped from the Horror Cloud as the *Eraborn* passed through the swath. There is one survivor, the navigator of the drakkar, who claims to have seen the inside of the Horror Cloud and raves incessantly about a flying castle crewed entirely by Horrors and the undead.

TERROR BIRDS

Attributes

DEX: 14 STR: 10 TOU: 10
PER: 15 WIL: 10 CHA: 4

Initiative: 14

Number of Attacks: 3

Attack: 14

Damage: 10

Number of Spells: NA

Spellcasting: NA

Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 12

Spell Defense: 10

Social Defense: 10

Armor: 3

Mystic Armor: 3

Knockdown: 9

Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 55

Wound Threshold: 13

Unconsciousness Rating: 50

Creature Durability: 0-8

Combat Movement: 100 (flight)

Full Movement: 200 (flight)

Powers: NA

Legend Points: 250

Equipment: None

Loot: Their eggs (See Below)

Commentary

Most often sighted in the Scythan Mountains, terror birds are often mistaken for being Horrors, Horror Constructs or somehow Horror tainted. If you ask any hundred Horror Stalkers about terror birds, ninety-nine of them will classify them as allies of the Horrors or perhaps a lesser Horror themselves. They are simply mistaken. In actuality, they are massive natural animals that have dwelt in the mountains long before even the dwarfs arrived. Their poor reputation is due to their

pendant for hunting Name-givers. Windlings in particular face grave danger from these animals.

Terror birds prefer to swoop down upon an enemy, knock him over, and rake with their large claws. This swooping attack adds 7 steps to the Damage Test if the attack hits, but sacrifices the terror bird's other two attacks. Strong fliers, they pick up dead or unconscious enemies man-sized or smaller and return to their nests with the meals. An unconscious opponent might very well awaken to find themselves high in the air above the Scythan mountains on the way to a terror bird nest.

Terror birds are huge birds of prey very similar in build to a condor. They grow in size to huge proportions, reaching a wing span of almost thirty feet. Their coloration is often black or grayish, even stone-like, providing them with excellent natural camouflage. Their eyesight is unrivalled and they can spot prey as small as a fox a mile away.

They often fly on the edge of the storms that crisscross the Scythan Mountains, using the powerful winds that precede the storm line to remain aloft for many hours. The fact that their attacks are often heralded by thunderstorms and storm clouds has not helped to dissuade their sinister reputation.

The intelligence of the terror birds has been much debated among the few scholars who recognize their true nature. Some insist that they are merely dumb beasts. The truth is that they possess a startling degree of intelligence, some scholars even insisting that they possess their own strange and unknown language of squawks and screeches.

The greatest treasure of the terror birds is their eggs. For those foolhardy enough to scale the highest and most treacherous of the Scythan mountains to locate their nests, a veritable fortune in eggs can be recovered. Where the terror birds nest, even a skyship would be of little value thanks to the furious storms and high winds that buffet the peaks. But, even an infertile or cracked terror bird egg would fetch a thousand silver from sages in Throal. A viable egg or even a hatchling



would be a treasure of almost inestimable worth. However, to date, no Name-giver has managed this perilous feat.

Adventure Hook

An aged dwarf scholar of Throal has grown obsessed with retrieving a terror bird egg from the peaks of Scythia. He has tried to mount several legitimate expeditions, but they have only resulted in death and disaster. Now, no one will accompany him on his fool's errand into the mountains, so he must resort to deception. He picks a group of young and eager adventurers and fills them full of stories of hunting Horrors in the Scythian peaks. Stealing the egg will be dangerous enough, but this is only the beginning, as the Name-givers must traverse the dangerous trail down the mountain, pursued by two huge and relentless parents eager to recover their stolen egg.

TORTURED KNIGHT

Attributes

DEX: 7 STR: 9 TOU: 7
PER: 3 WIL: 6 CHA: 4

Initiative: 7 Physical Defense: 8
Number of Attacks: 4 Spell Defense: 9
Attack: 10 Social Defense: 14
Damage: 12 Armor: 8
Number of Spells: NA Mystic Armor: 8
Spellcasting: NA Knockdown: 10
Effect: NA Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 36 Combat Movement: 25
Wound Threshold: 12 Full Movement: 50
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune
Creature Durability: 0-6

Legend Points: 300

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Commentary

Tortured knights are the undead creation of Hartmallen. While Hartmallen had the ability to create cadaver men, they could be easily taken over by the Gharmheks. The tortured knights were his response. To create a tortured knight, Hartmallen fuses a cadaver man into a suit of armor with both inward pointing spines that tear at the cadaver man's flesh and outward pointing barbs to rip at the knight's targets. Blood Magic then bends the constant fury of these undead creations to Hartmallen's will. Because the tortured knights are in a constant state of rage, Hartmallen rarely sends them out without a bone warden to direct their terrible anger.

TRAP SPIDER

Attributes

DEX: 7 STR: 3 TOU: 4
PER: 3 WIL: 3 CHA: 4

Initiative: 7 Physical Defense: 9
Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 4
Attack: 7 Social Defense: 7
Damage: 6 Armor: 0
Number of Spells: NA Mystic Armor: 0
Spellcasting: NA Knockdown: Immune
Effect: NA Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 20 Combat Movement: 50
Wound Threshold: 4 Full Movement: 100
Unconsciousness Rating: 11
Horror Durability: 0

Powers: NA

Legend Points: 30

Equipment: None

Loot: Only incidental loot from their victims

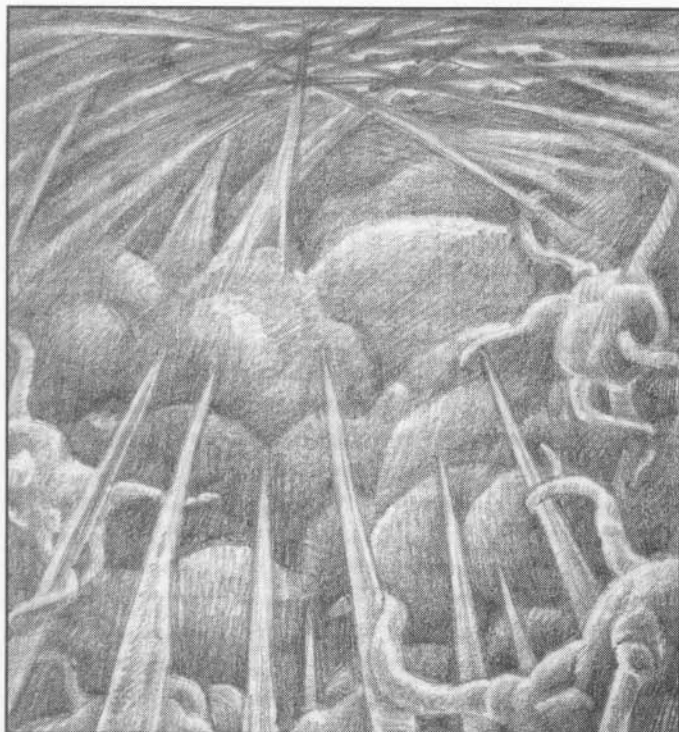
Commentary

The trap spider is not actually a spider at all, but instead a minor sort of Horror. A small, central, bloated mass of rubbery flesh has eight irregular tentacles that sprout from it. These small tentacles are used to scuttle about much in the manner of legs on a spider. This Horror is never found alone, but always travels in packs of at least ten others. Horror Stalkers claim that in the depths of Scythia are cavern complexes infested with these creatures.

Trap spiders weave thick, fibrous webs and cover pits and sudden drop-offs with the sticky stuff. They then attach rocks, stones and bits of debris to the webbing until it is practically identical to the stone around it. The trap spiders then congregate at the bottom of the pit traps where they will viciously mob anyone who falls through the trap.

Trap spiders show an evil genius when it comes to building these pitfalls. The bottoms are often arranged with sharp pieces of glass and metal and even the bones of past victims webbed upright. Sometimes the pit traps are small and shallow with jagged downward curving





blades trapping the foot of the victim. Sometimes the spiders web heavy collections of stones in web canopies to the ceiling that can be dropped by cutting a single line. Whatever the exact nature of the trap, they all have the same purpose, to inflict pain on Name-givers. This is how trap spiders feed. They feed off the pain and anguish of their victims. As the victims writhe painfully on the points of their pit spikes, the trap spiders frolic and revel in the waves of suffering that nurture them like mother's milk.

Trap spiders are immune to talents, spells, and skills with fear based effects.

Adventure Hook

In the necropolis of Vivane there exists a rivalry between two undead rulers, Twiceborn, once of Parlainth and Admiral Hartmallen, once of Thera. These two rulers are involved in a fierce struggle for control of the city. Hartmallen would like to import trap spiders into the city of Vivane so that they will set up defenses against the encroaching hordes of Twiceborn. Twiceborn has discovered Hartmallen's scheme and has no wish for another Horror to be introduced into her city.

The adventure begins with one of Twiceborn's emissaries (see *Barsaive in Chaos* for more details), a Cadaver Man, arriving at a Horror Stalker camp near Scythia. The Cadaver Man is cut down by overzealous Horror Stalkers, but carries with it an ornate scroll case with a written message. The message warns of a group of undead moving into Scythia to collect trap spiders for release in Vivane. The note explains that this will spread the influence of the Horrors and allow trap spiders to spread even further. The note gives specific details of the expedition's location and numbers. The note also urges quick action to prevent this "tragedy".

Of course the assumption by many is that it's a trap. Many Horror Stalkers refuse to help, stating they will not become pawns of one Horror even to thwart another. In fact, the note proves to be completely accurate. However, the adventurers must act fast if they are to stop

Hartmallen's servants. And furthermore, they must pursue the undead through Scythia into the very center of a vast nest of trap spiders. It is here that they can confront Hartmallen's agents while the trap spiders try to ensnare both sides.

VIPERCOIL

Attributes

DEX: 6 STR: 3 TOU: 8
PER: 4 WIL: 5 CHA: 4

Initiative: 6

Number of Attacks: 4-8*

Attack: 8

Damage: 5

Number of Spells: 1

Spellcasting: 5

Effect: See Below

*This value varies with the number of heads in coil.

Physical Defense: 6

Spell Defense: 5

Social Defense: 5

Armor: 4

Mystic Armor: 4

Knockdown: Immune

Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 40

Wound Threshold: 11

Unconsciousness Rating: 32

Creature Durability: 0-10

Combat Movement: 70

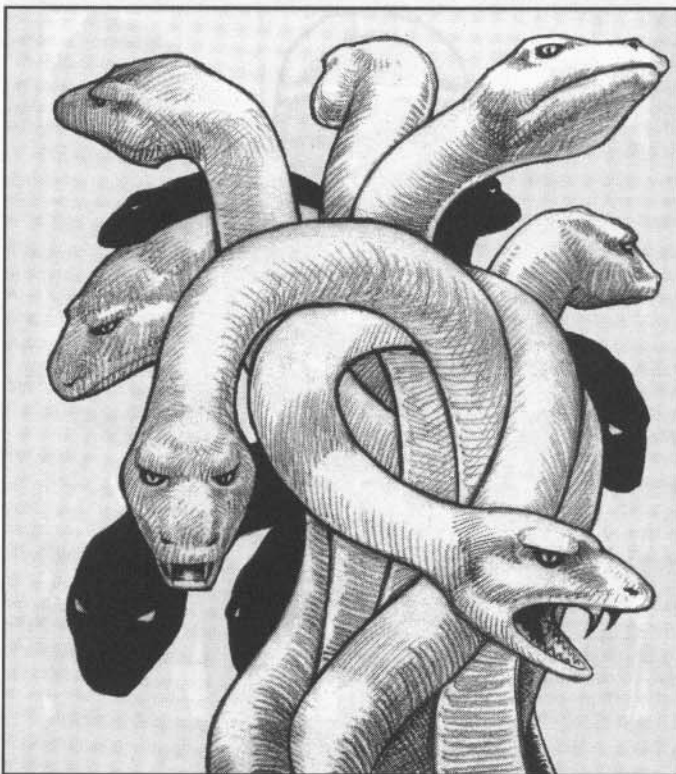
Full Movement: 35

Powers: NA

Legend Points: 400

Equipment: None

Loot: The strangely beautiful skin of the vipercoil which looks like a dozen snake skins melted together is a valuable exotic leather that can fetch as much as five hundred silver for larger specimens. This counts as treasure worth Legend Points.



Commentary

Horrors and their strange warping magics also can touch the animals of Barsaive. It is not uncommon in the wake of a Horror Cloud to see misshapen birds and beasts. Perhaps the most dangerous example of the spontaneous Horror Constructs is the vipercoil. A vipercoil is a rare beast that usually occurs when a Horror Cloud passes over a nest of serpents coiled together. The unfortunate beasts are changed and blended together into a single enraged monster. The result is a coiled rope of serpent bodies merged together and branching into a forest of angry, venomous heads.

A vipercoil's brush with Horror magic usually does more than change its appearance. Their venom is increased in potency. Each bite is venomous (Step Number 8, Spell Defense 6, Instant, 1d4 Combat Rounds, see p. 232 of *Earthdawn 2nd edition* for details regarding poison).

Vipercoils also possess the ability to shift and displace their image. Every round of combat they roll their spellcasting (Step 5) and add this to their physical defense. They may do this and still attack normally. The ball of snakes appears to be blinking from one place to another in a random and confusing manner.

Vipercoils are immune to talents, spells, and skills with fear based effects.

Adventure Hook

An area of Barsaivan wilderness once thought completely free of Horror taint has started to be populated with mutated and twisted animals of every kind. Most are harmless and pitiful, the exception being a dangerous vipercoil that has been wreaking havoc. The source of this new corruption is a fouled spring where a Horror body fell after being slain. Now the animals of the woods are tainting themselves as they drink from the spring or eat other animals that have.

WASTESHADOW

Attributes

DEX: 12 STR: 3 TOU: 6
PER: 3 WIL: 3 CHA: 4

Initiative: 12

Number of Attacks: 0

Attack: NA

Damage: NA

Number of Spells: 1

Spellcasting: 8

Effect: 10

Physical Defense: 12

Spell Defense: 5

Social Defense: 7

Armor: 0

Mystic Armor: 0

Knockdown: Immune

Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 20

Wound Threshold: 4

Unconsciousness Rating: 11

Creature Durability: 0

Combat Movement: 30

Full Movement: 60

Powers: NA

Legend Points: 30

Equipment: None

Loot: None



Commentary

The wasteshadow is the most minor sort of Horror Construct and more of an annoyance than any great threat. However, it seems to have recently become especially common in places like Vivane and Scythia and any competent would-be hunter of Horrors must be aware of the threat they pose. A wasteshadow looks like a small, creeping patch of shadow, no bigger than a square foot. They are remarkably stealthy (Step 10), though not particularly intelligent.

They are almost helpless in combat. Their primary mode of attack is that at a touch they can spoil and foul food, water, and even minor potions such as Healing Potions, Booster Potions, and Last-chance Salves. A mob of wasteshadows can infiltrate a camp of sleeping adventurers and in a few minutes foul every scrap of food, water, and healing supplies to be found.

Wasteshadows are immune to talents, spells, and skills with fear based effects.

Adventure Hook

Deep in the Scythian mountains or far away from civilization, a mob of wasteshadows sneaks into the adventurers' camp and befouls their provisions. Suddenly they find themselves without food, water, and much needed medical supplies. Though the adventurers should be able survive using their magic and ingenuity they will be short on many needed supplies. Just then, they encounter another group of travelers who claim to have fallen on hard times but just happen to have a few extra needed items such as Healing Potions, Booster Potions, and so on. The truth is that the leader of this band is a Thief Adept who happened upon a potent thread item that contains roughly a dozen wasteshadows bound into a bottle that can be commanded by the owner of the bottle.

Unfortunately, this Horror item has tainted the Thief and greatly increased his greed (perhaps "greatly increased" is something of an over

statement). He now roams areas with his group of bodyguards and thugs, conning adventurers out of their hard won valuables.

WINGFLAYERS

Attributes

DEX: 21 STR: 16 TOU: 14
PER: 14 WIL: 13 CHA: 16

Initiative: 16 Physical Defense: 20
Number of Attacks: 6 Spell Defense: 12
Attack: 22 Social Defense: 17
Damage: 17 Armor: 25
Number of Spells: NA Mystic Armor: 10
Spellcasting: NA Knockdown: 25
Effect: NA Recovery Tests: 6
Death Rating: 80 Combat Movement: 40
Wound Threshold: 24 Full Movement: 75
Unconsciousness Rating: 72

Karma Points: 25 Karma Step: 10

Powers: See text

Legend Points: 20,000

Equipment: None

Loot: Usually none

Commentary

Wingflayers are among the strangest of the minor Horrors to plague Barsaive. The unique physical properties of these Horrors have led some authorities to claim that wingflayers never really existed except in the minds of overly imaginative windlings. Those who have studied the matter deeply, however, point to several reliable accounts that seem to establish that wingflayers did exist during the Scourge and may still live.

Wingflayers appear as swirling clouds of hundreds of tiny, airborne slivers, each about half an inch to two inches long and made of some unknown, metallic substance. Usually the cloud resembles a rough cylinder about one yard wide and two high, but wingflayers have been known to take other shapes, including crude parodies of the human form. Wingflayers can also expand themselves. Some evidence suggests that wingflayers can expand to four times their normal size before they begin to lose shape. Also, a wingflayer can insert itself through pinhole-sized openings by sending its slivers through one at a time.

At rest, wingflayers settle into piles of slivers about a foot in diameter and barely an inch high. Resting wingflayers appear to need a certain amount of open air to reanimate themselves; they have been successfully captured inside fragile glass vessels and even in light leather sacks that a fully animated wingflayer could shred in seconds. Wingflayers do not appear to be particularly social Horrors and never form groups of more than two.

The slivers that make up a wingflayer are remarkably light and an entire wingflayer normally weighs less than five pounds. Although this would seem to suggest these entities are insubstantial and weak, wingflayer attacks usually leave their victims little more than



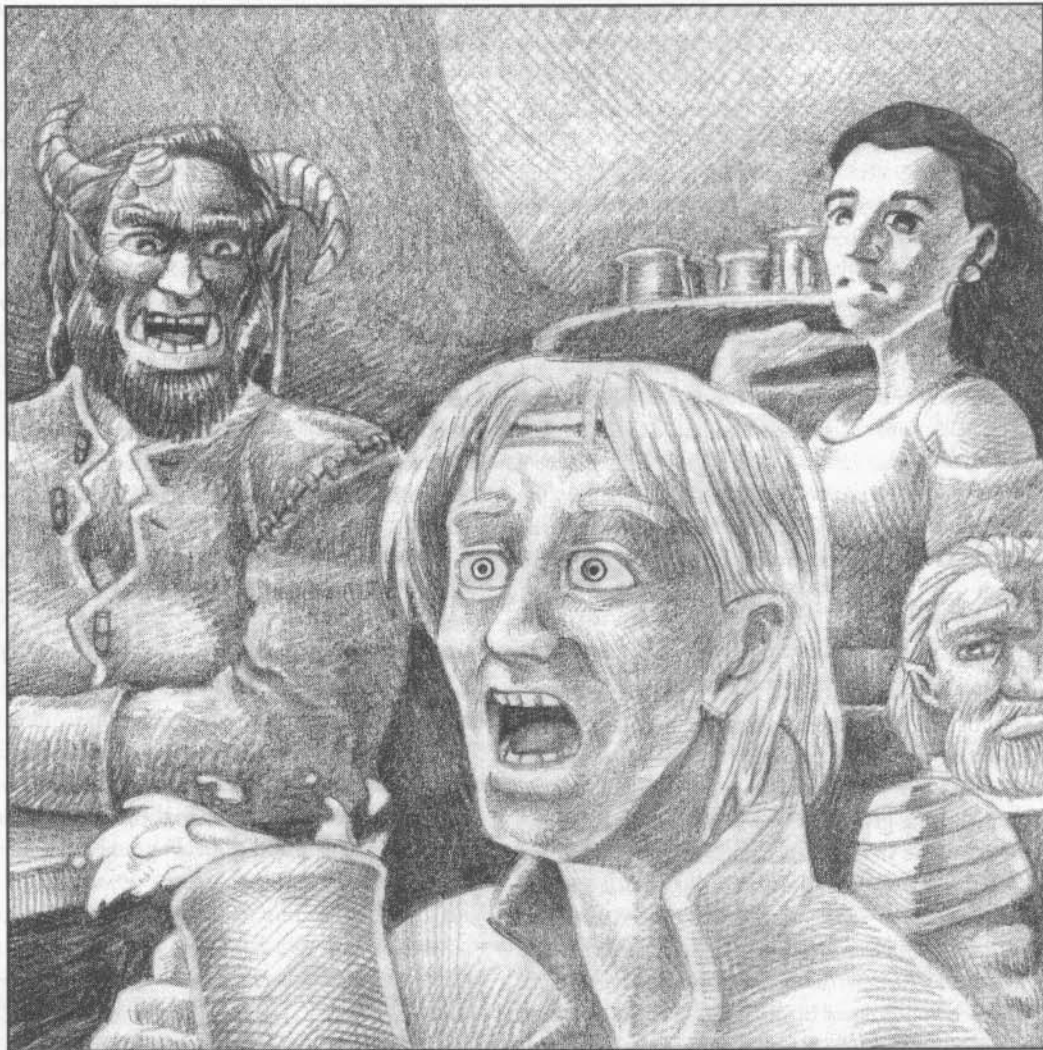
unidentifiable piles of raw meat. Indeed, a particularly intensive or prolonged attack can reduce a victim to a small scattering of bone splinters.

Wingflayers seem to be creatures of almost pure magic. They possess nothing that even remotely resembles sensory, digestive, or reproductive organs, yet they seem to see and hear, take in nourishment, and even reproduce. Some scholars theorize that wingflayers take the vital energy of their victims and convert it directly into mass for their constituent splinters. When the splinters reach a certain size, they divide into two or more smaller splinters.

Surprisingly, physical attacks harm wingflayers. Theorists contend that blows from solid objects disrupt the matrices of the unknown energies that give wingflayers their form. However, streamlined missiles such as arrows, darts, and thrown spears are curiously ineffective against them. When attacking with such weapons, subtract 3 steps from the weapon's Damage.

A armor is ineffective against wingflayers unless it covers the target's entire body. Armor that leaves certain body parts entirely uncovered or contains significant gaps in its structure, such as blood pebble armor or ring mail, which offers only the protection of the leather under layer, is ineffective. Furthermore, most armor made from organic materials (including leather, hide, and fernweave, but not obsidian skin) can be scoured away by persistent attacks from a wingflayer at a rate of 1 Armor Rating Point every 3 Combat Rounds. However, some enchantments may make organic armor impervious to wingflayer attacks. Eye protection is particularly crucial when arming against wingflayers.

HORROR POWERS



This chapter describes the Horror Powers that are not documented in the *Earthdawn Second Edition* main rulebook.

AURA OF AWE

The Aura of Awe power allows a Horror to alter the attitudes of other characters toward it. (See p.330 ED2 for details on attitudes) To use this power, the Horror makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the target. If that test succeeds, the Horror makes an Aura of Awe Test against the target's Social Defense. The success level of the Aura of Awe Test determines the attitude of the target. On an Average success, the target adopts a Neutral attitude toward the Horror. On an Good success, the target adopts a Friendly attitude. On an Excellent success, the target becomes Loyal; an Extraordinary or better success means that the target is Awestruck. The effect lasts until the target has been out of the Horror's presence for a year and a day, or until the Horror directly injures the target.

When a player character is affected by the Aura of Awe, the gamemaster may secretly instruct the player to run the character appropriately or may temporarily take over decisions for the player until the Aura of Awe is dispelled. The Difficulty Number for dispelling Aura of Awe is equal to the Social Defense of the Horror that cast it.

CORRUPT REALITY

The Corrupt Reality power enables a Horror to distort the fabric of reality within sensing distance of a victim it has previously Horror-marked. By distorting reality in this manner, the Horror can alarm and torment the victim and anyone else in the victim's vicinity. This serves to isolate the victim from others, who will typically avoid the presence of anyone who is a focus for such occurrences. Typical effects of Corrupt Reality include the ever-present eye images associated with Aazhvat Many-Eyes, as well as the fouling of food and drink, the creation of eerie sounds or changes in temperature, the transformation of mundane objects into slime-covered monstrosities, and the induced rapid decay of inanimate objects. These manifestations are not illusions, so it does no good to disbelieve them. However, the effects of Corrupt Reality are not permanent. Any transformed object returns to normal at the end of the round and Corrupt Reality cannot directly cause Damage to living organisms. Of course, the fear and dismay the effect induces may cause those beholding it to act in a manner that results in harm to themselves or others.

DISRUPT MAGIC

The Disrupt Magic power allows a Horror to disrupt any form of magical force or pattern, from a sustained spell to the True Pattern of a Name-giver. To use this power, the Horror first makes a Spellcasting Test against the target. If the target is a spell, the Difficulty Number is the spell's Circle. If the target is a character's talent or other ability, the difficulty is the targeted character's Spell Defense.

If the Spellcasting Test succeeds, the Horror then makes a Disrupt Magic Test. If the target of the power is a spell, the Disrupt Magic Test result must equal or exceed the Dispel Difficulty of the target. If it does, the spell is dispelled. If the Disrupt Magic Test result equals or exceeds the step number of the power or talent being targeted, the power/talent is damaged and cannot be used until the target character (or creature) makes a Recovery Test to restore the power/talent.

The Disrupt Magic power can also be used against astral creatures, characters in the astral plane, and other denizens of astral space, such as spirits. To use the power in this fashion, the Horror first makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the Spellcasting Test succeeds, the Horror makes a Disrupt Magic Test to determine the Damage caused to the target. Mystic Armor protects against this Damage.

DREAM SHAPE

The Dream Shape power enables a Horror to enter the dreams of a sleeping Name-giver by making a successful Dream Shape Test against the subject's Spell Defense. The Horror can only use this power against Name-givers it has marked. The Horror can make only one attempt per night to enter a specific Name-giver's dreams. A successful test allows the Horror to manipulate the victim's dreams in any way the Horror desires. For example, a Horror might continuously plant a specific dream instructing the character to go to an undiscovered kaer and perform certain actions that will free the Horror's physical form. Some Horrors use this power to cause particular emotions in their target. Others enjoy driving their victims mad through the sadistically twisted imagery they place in the Name-giver's minds. For example, Druistadt often causes its victims to dream of themselves dying, impaled on the burning bill of a ferocious bird with glowing red eyes.

Once a Horror has successfully entered a Name-giver's dreams, the victim can only rid himself of the Horror's taint by performing some sort of purification ritual or by slaying the tormenting Horror.

FORGE TRAP

The Forge Trap power enables a Horror to transform an earth, stone, or metal passageway so that it becomes a trap or contains a mechanical trap. The nature of the Horror determines the precise type of trap. The Difficulty Number for the Spellcasting Test necessary to use this power is based on the predominant material of the passageway. For a passage of raw earth, the Difficulty Number is 5; for raw stone, 10; for worked stone, 15; and for metal, 20. If the Spellcasting Test succeeds, make a Forge Trap Test and distribute the result between the trap's Detection Difficulty, Disarm Difficulty, Trap Initiative, and Trap Effect/Damage Step. (For more on traps see ED2, p. 235) The Horror may spend a Karma Point to create a link between itself and its traps, which enables it to feed off the suffering of any living being taking Damage from the traps.

Traps may do indirect Damage, for example, by preventing characters from escaping a small room, and may require nonstandard methods to neutralize. Characters might need to solve a riddle or puzzle to deactivate the trap, for instance.

HORROR THREAD

The Horror Thread power enables Horrors to connect to the patterns of magical items and Name-givers. The connection formed by use of this power is similar to that created by a Horror mark but is far stronger. A Horror thread allows a Horror to eventually tap into and use the victim's natural abilities.

Horrors can only use the Horror Thread power on victims they have previously Horror-marked. To use this power, the Horror spends 5 Karma Points and makes a Horror Thread Test against the Spell Defense of the target. If the test is successful, the Horror has woven a thread connecting its True Pattern to the victim's. Once this thread is established, the Horror can attempt to obtain Pattern Knowledge about the victim, just as if the Horror had acquired one of the victim's Pattern Items.

Obtaining this Pattern Knowledge requires the Horror to make a series of Spellcasting Tests against the victim's Spell Defense. These Tests do not require the Horror to spend Karma. With each successful test, the Horror learns a portion of the victim's Pattern Knowledge, which enables the Horror to weave additional threads to the victim. Each additional thread woven to a victim requires the Horror to spend 5 Karma Points. The Horror must study the victim for at least a month before it can attempt to learn any of the victim's Pattern Knowledge and must attach a new thread to the victim each time it learns before it can attempt to gain additional Pattern Knowledge.



The effects of the threads connecting the Horror to its victim grow with the number of threads woven. Each thread grants the Horror a +1 Step bonus to any Horror power or Spellcasting Test made by the Horror against the victim. The first thread woven grants the Horror access to the victim's thoughts and memories. This allows the Horror to taunt and torment the victim.

When the Horror's thread number equals the victim's Willpower step number, the Horror can actually tap into the victim's powers and use them as its own. The victim becomes merely a channel between the Horror and the physical world. This allows the Horror to use the victim's talents, skills, spells, and the like as it desires. When using these abilities, the Horror makes Tests using the victim's appropriate step numbers. The Horror can spend Karma Points on any action taken by a victim via use of this power. The Horror can also use any of its own abilities through the victim.

The Horror Thread power also allows the Horror to take physical control of its victim. For example, a Horror might force a Beastmaster to use his or her Claw Shape and Claw Frenzy talents against an unsuspecting target. In this case, the Horror would physically dominate the Beastmaster as the Horror slashes the victim's claws into its target. In the case of some talents, particularly Spellcasting and Thread Weaving, no physical clues reveal that a Horror is controlling the victim's actions. In all cases, however, the victim himself senses that some alien entity is using his or her abilities.

KARMA BOOST

The Karma Boost power enables a Horror to offer aid to a victim and eventually transform the individual into a Horror Construct. To use the power, the Horror offers to boost the Karma of a previously marked character. If the character accepts the offer, the Horror must spend a Karma Point. The victim may then add the Horror's total Karma Points to his own. Note that the victim must willingly accept the Horror's aid for Karma Boost to be used. The Horror must spend a Karma Point each time the victim accepts its aid.

Keep track of how many times a given character has accepted the Karma Boost. Anywhere from one to six hours of game time after each acceptance, secretly make a test for the Horror against the character's Spell Defense. The step number for this test is the total number of times the character has accepted the Horror's aid to date. If the test is successful, the character begins to transform into a Horror Construct. Three such successful Tests, which need not be consecutive, turn the character completely into a Horror Construct. Until these three successes are achieved, affected characters remain under the control of their players.

After the first success, the character notices minor changes in his body. His skin may harden in places or become discolored, his teeth may elongate or become jagged, coarse hair might begin to grow in unusual spots, and so on. The character also begins to suffer vivid dreams, during which he or she commits terrible acts of carnage upon friends and loved ones.

After the second success, the character's transformation intensifies. The victim becomes visibly monstrous, eliciting negative reactions from other Name-givers. The character's skin hardens permanently, providing 2 points of natural armor. Fingernails lengthen into claws, becoming natural weapons (Damage Step 2) that can be used with the Unarmed Combat talents/skill. However, the character also suffers a -2 step penalty on all Talent Tests. Additionally, whenever the victim is in a situation

the gamemaster deems stressful, the character must achieve an Extraordinary success on a Willpower Test to avoid going into a berserk, killing rage. The Difficulty Number of the test is determined by the gamemaster based on the stress of the moment, but usually ranges from 7 to 11.

After the third success, the victim becomes a Horror Construct and is no longer under the player's control. He or she loses all talents. For each talent rank lost, add 10 to the construct's Death Rating. The victim becomes immune to Unconsciousness and Knockdown. The victim's claws grow larger (Damage Step 4) and his or her body grows increasingly grotesque, although other characters who knew the victim will continue to recognize him. The victim seeks out former allies and loved ones and attempts to slay them. Nothing but his own death will dissuade him from this aim.

The effect of Karma Boost can be dispelled while the victim is still in the midst of transformation. The Dispel Difficulty Number equals the Spell Defense of the Horror responsible for the Karma Boosts. Slaying the responsible Horror also reverses the effect. However, once the victim has been transformed completely, the effect is irreversible.

The only reliable way to erase a number of willing acceptances of the Karma Boost is to slay the responsible Horror. Horrors with Karma Boost may not build on Karma Boosts accepted previously from another Horror. Once a Horror uses Karma Boost on a victim, any previous acceptances of aid from other Horrors are neutralized.

KARMA DRAIN

This power allows a Horror to transfer Karma Points to itself from any of its Horror-marked victims. To use Karma Drain, the Horror makes a Karma Drain Test against the victim's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, the Horror can drain Karma from the victim; the success level achieved determines the number of Karma Points drained. Each level of success above Average drains 1 point from the victim each round. For example, a Good success drains 2 points per round, while an Extraordinary success drains 4 points per round.

Most Horrors have an innate variant of this power that allows them to restore their own Karma by feeding on the emotions and life energy of their victims. This special form of Karma Drain is described in *Innate Horror Abilities* (see *Energy Drain* p. 86).

SUPPRESS HORROR MARK

The Suppress Horror Mark power allows a Horror to bury a Horror Mark deep within the pattern of a marked character. The Horror can only affect one of its own Horror Marks with this power. As long as the power is in use, the Horror Mark has no effect on the character. To use this power, the Horror makes a Suppress Horror Mark Test. The result is the Difficulty Number for detecting the suppressed mark and also the Difficulty Number the Horror must exceed to remove the effects of this power. When attempting to detect a suppressed mark, consult the *Horror Travel Table*, p. 32. The relationship between the marked character and the detecting character determines the success level needed to detect a Suppressed Horror Mark.

INNATE HORROR ABILITIES

In addition to their Attributes, characteristics, and powers, many Horrors also possess certain innate abilities that spring from the Horrors' nature and the manner in which they draw nourishment from their

victims. Because these abilities are common to virtually all Horrors, they are not included in Horror statistics. Almost any Horror can use them at almost any time. However, Horrors that possess no active magical abilities such as spells or powers are less likely to have these innate abilities. The gamemaster decides if a particular Horror has these abilities and can use them.

Most of these abilities require the Horror to make a Spellcasting Test to use them. Each use of an innate ability counts as a spell in terms of the number of spells the Horror can use each round. Horrors can use Karma to augment any of these abilities.

ASTRAL SIGHT

Like windlings and dragons, all Horrors possess astral sight. To use this ability, the Horror makes a Spellcasting Test. The gamemaster then compares the result to the Spell Defense of any object or being within one hundred yards of the Horror and in its line of sight. If the result equals or exceeds an object's or being's Spell Defense, the Horror can see the target's astral image.

ENTERING AND LEAVING ASTRAL SPACE

As described earlier, many Horrors can exist in the physical world, astral space, or both. All Horrors capable of existing in both astral space and the physical world have the ability to enter and leave astral space at will. When a Horror uses its innate ability to enter astral space, its body disappears from the world. If the Horror is attacked and killed while in this state in astral space, it is utterly destroyed.

To use this ability the Horror makes a Spellcasting Test against its own Spell Defense. The Horror cannot voluntarily lower its Spell Defense for this test. The type of region the Horror is in when it

attempts to enter or leave astral space can aid or hinder the Horror. Horrors receive a bonus to the Spellcasting Test when moving into or out of astral space in Tainted or Corrupt regions. Tainted regions add +2 steps to the Horror's Spellcasting Test, while Corrupt regions add +4 steps. Open regions add no bonus; Safe regions subtract -2 steps.

If the test is successful, the Horror shifts into or out of astral space, depending on where it is when it uses this ability.

ENERGY DRAIN

This ability allows Horrors to sustain themselves by feeding on the emotions and life energies of their victims. This nourishment is represented by a Horror's Karma Points, which in turn represent the Horror's raw magical energy. All Horrors regain at least 1 Karma Point per day and powerful Horrors may regain more. The innate Energy Drain ability allows Horrors to gain additional Karma Points beyond the base rate of 1 to 5 per day.

Horrors can gain this Karma by feeding on the negative emotions of Name-givers or by drawing on the victim's life energy. In the first case, fear, anger, hatred, and jealousy are all examples of the types of emotions the Horror finds pleasurable. Most often, the Horror feeding on these emotions has caused those emotions to boil up in its victims in the first place. The Horror essentially manipulates its victims into creating food for it.

The second method allows Horrors to feed on the magical or life energy of Name-givers. As magic and life are so closely intertwined in Earthdawn, these two types of energy are essentially the same. When feeding on life energy, the Horror is usually careful not to completely drain its victims, so that it can maintain its own food supply.

Feeding off emotion requires the Horror to make a Spellcasting Test against the victim's Social Defense; draining life energy requires a Spellcasting Test against the victim's Spell Defense. When draining energy from multiple victims, the Horror makes the appropriate test against the highest Defense Rating among all the victims. In either case, a successful test means the Horror gains additional Karma Points. The success level achieved determines how many additional Karma Points the Horror regains per day. An Average success adds 1 point; a Good success adds 2; an Excellent success, 3 points; and an Extraordinary success, 4 points. These Karma Points are in addition to those the Horror regains under normal conditions. For example, if a Horror normally able to regain 3 Karma Points per day achieves an Excellent success on a Spellcasting Test for the Energy Drain ability the Horror gains a total of 6 Karma Points that day.

Some powerful Horrors can also increase their Karma step using this ability. Each time a Horror achieves an Extraordinary success using its Energy Drain ability, it may increase its Karma step by 1 instead of gaining 4 Karma Points. This increase is not permanent, however. The Horror's Karma step will revert to normal one month after the Horror has increased it in this way.

This ability is related to the Karma Drain power (p. 85), but can only be used once per day. All Horrors have this ability.

FORGING HORROR CONSTRUCTS

Most Horrors can create Horror Constructs from other life forms such as mundane animals, magical creatures, and even Name-givers. Horrors can forge constructs from dead or living bodies, although they prefer living creatures. When using Name-givers, the vilest Horrors



usually leave a bit of the victim's mind intact, so that he will live out his entire existence dimly aware that he is a Horror Construct. To use this ability against living targets, the Horror must have previously Horror-marked them.

The body used must be of sufficient size and weight to form the body of the construct desired. For example, a Horror would need a body at least the size of troll or obsidiman to create a construct as large as a jehuthra. However, as Horror Constructs can be of virtually any size and shape, most Horrors can make do with whatever victims happen to be handy.

To forge a construct costs the Horrors points of Karma. These Karma Points infuse the target body with the Horror's magical energy, initiating the body's transformation. After the Horror has spent the Karma Points, it makes a series of Spellcasting Tests against the Spell Defense of the target body. If the target body is dead, use the Spell Defense the target had when it was alive. Each successful Spellcasting Test allows the Horror to alter one of the target body's Attribute ratings to that of the type of construct being forged or to grant the construct a power or special ability. Each success level above Average on any Spellcasting Test allows the Horror to alter one additional Attribute or add one additional power. The Horror can also alter the target's other characteristics by making additional Spellcasting Tests.

When used against living targets, each successful Spellcasting Test causes Damage to the victim equal to the result of the test. This Damage often kills the target, but many Horrors make a point of leaving the target a living and unwilling pawn in their control. To alter the Attributes of living targets, the Horror must achieve a Good success or better on its Spellcasting Tests. When a Horror uses this ability against Name-

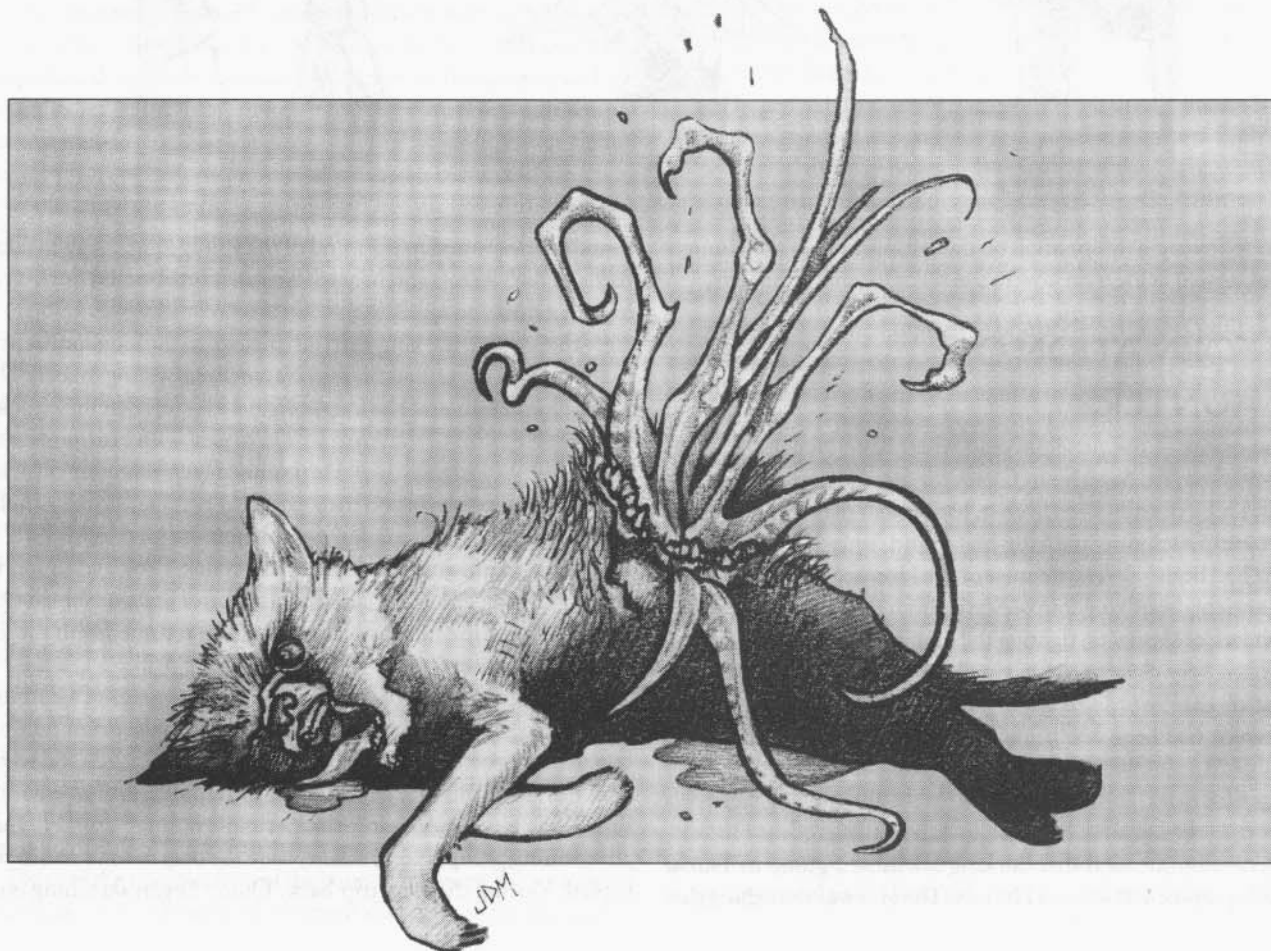
givers, the victim may make a Willpower Test to attempt to resist the effects of the Horror's magic. The result of the Willpower Test can substitute for the victim's Spell Defense when he or she resists in this way. Then the victim makes a Willpower Test for each of the Horror's Spellcasting Tests. If the result of the victim's Willpower Test is lower than his or her Spell Defense, he or she defends using his or her normal Spell Defense.

During the transformation from Name-giver to Horror Construct, a victim undergoes actual physical change. His skin grows hard, creating natural armor that provides anywhere from 2 to 5 points of protection. His hands and feet might develop claws or talons that can serve as natural weapons, usually with a Damage step ranging from 3 to 5.

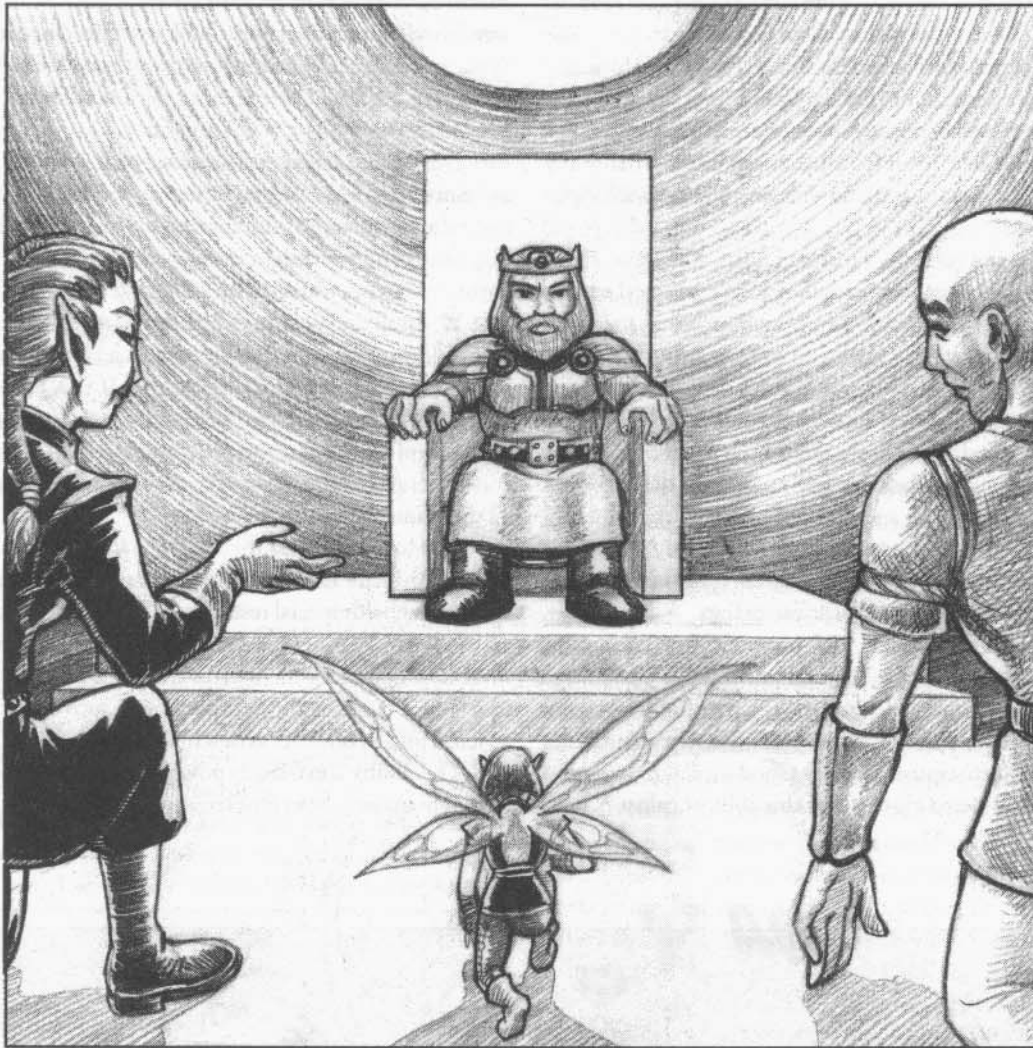
When all the construct's Attributes and abilities have been altered as the Horror wishes, the Horror makes a Horror Mark Test to form a link between itself and the construct. If this test is successful, the construct is complete. Once formed, Horror Constructs remain under the control of the Horror that forged them. Many Horrors forge constructs and let them roam Barsaive, inflicting pain and suffering on all the Name-givers they encounter.

All Horrors possess the ability to forge constructs. The Horror powers Animate Dead and Karma Tap are specialized forms of this ability, each with special restrictions. Horrors that exist in both Astral and Physical space, or Dual Natured Horrors, can also use this ability to forge new bodies for themselves and some Horrors build this ability into Horror-cursed items. When activated, such items begin to transform a victim into a construct as described above.

This ability is extremely powerful and gamemasters should use it sparingly against player characters.



THE HUNTERS OF THROAL



The following is information on the organization of the Hunters of Throal, as well as ideas on how to use them in your campaign.

THE FORMATION OF THE HUNTERS

The events of the previous year, when King Neden had been Horror-marked (see *Barsaive in Chaos* for more information on the mark) and subsequently freed from it, had shaken the king. A Warrior by heart and Discipline, the king had found himself in a situation where he had been helpless. Because of the Horror Stalker crusade to free the ancient dwarf kingdom of Scythia from the Horrors, there was a distinct lack of experts on fighting the Horrors in Throal at the time. Neden came very close to not having been freed at all. Isam Derr, a member of the Swords of Light and one of the leaders of the Lightbearers, had been one of the few to remain behind in Throal during this crusade and, with the aid of a group of brave heroes, freed the king of his mark. In an attempt to help the shaken king regain his confidence in the face of the terrible, invasive abilities of the Horrors, Isam Derr recommended that the king assemble a group in Throal whose sole purpose was to hunt Horrors. The idea was something that

found fertile ground in the mind of the young king, a way to take the battle to the Horrors and help ensure that Throal would not find itself in such a situation again.

To that end, the king sent out missives to the kingdom of Scythia in the wake of the crusade to find Name-givers willing to serve Throal as her Horror hunters. The king's original idea was that they would act like an elite squad of the Arm, sent in to deal with Horror situations when they were encountered. He promised each volunteer citizenship, housing for themselves and their extended families, as well as military pay and bonus compensation per mission. As kind as his offer was, there were surprisingly few takers in Scythia. They had found their crusade already. A small group led by a Horror Stalker Named Quinn Agair did heed the summons, however, and returned with the king's messengers to the capital.

Quinn Agair had been inspired by the urgings of Grathus the Unyielding. He never imagined something with the magnitude of the crusade being orchestrated. Quinn was a Throalic citizen and when he read the king's missive, he was eager to respond. Quinn envisioned something far more versatile than a simple military unit. He and his adventuring group, Horror Bane, were the only ones to return to the capital. During the long trip back, Quinn began sketching out his

ideas for the Hunters of Throal as a distinct entity in the Throalic government.

There was a period of several weeks where Quinn's group, the king, his advisors, and Isam Derr as a representative of the Lightbearers met and hammered out the functioning of the Hunters. The Hunters were established with the express purpose of acting as agents of the Throalic crown for hunting down and exterminating any instances of Horrors and their constructs within the demesne of Throal. In addition, they would be responsible for, when possible, tracking down and seeing to the destruction of known Horror-cursed or tainted artifacts. Name-givers enlisted in the roster of the Hunters of Throal would receive the benefits that King Neden had laid out in his original contract, along with a default of mission payment and compensation to their next of kin in the unfortunate event of death. They would also be granted the same rights and responsibilities of the outlying peace patrols of Throal, giving them crown-recognized authority over civilian governments in the smaller towns of Throal for the purpose of their hunts.

It was agreed that strong oaths of loyalty to King Neden and Throal would be required to keep those who enlisted from abusing their power and badges of authority would only be given to those that swore the oaths. With that final stipulation, the Hunters of Throal were formed as an independent segment of the Throalic government, answerable directly to King Neden.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE HUNTERS

The Hunters were placed as an independent unit so that none of the other Throalic units, such as the Arm or the Eye, could usurp the Hunters directly for their own missions. However, the King wished the Hunters to act in the best interest of all of Throal and not simply become a well-funded, far-ranging group of adventures out killing whatever Horrors they chose. He established a command structure that would allow the key factions of the Throalic government say in the distribution of the Hunters' limited resources.

At the top of the command structure is the Master of the Hunt. The Master's responsibility is to stipulate the worthiness and training of new members, as well as keeping an eye out for the best interest of the Hunters as a whole. The Master has a small staff that serves to balance the books for the Hunters, keep track of personnel, and orchestrate the communication between the Hunters as a whole. The Master also oversees a council that addresses where the resources of the Hunters are most needed. The actual choosing of a particular issue to address with action is decided on by vote. If the Master believes the situation dire enough, they have the right to bring a vote before King Neden to hear arguments on why it should be overturned. The council is delegated to meet bi-monthly to exchange information. If the Master is indisposed by injury or assignment, the meeting can be pushed back once. Only the King can assign the position of Master of the Hunt and only he can dismiss someone from the position. Because of this, the Master is assumed to represent the interest of the king and his court within the Hunters' council. When the issues decided on by the council have been dealt with, the Master may create an agenda until the next meeting so that the Hunters are never idle.

Three of the ten members of the council represent the interests of each section of the Throalic government that can use the Hunters as

operatives: the intelligence-gathering Eye of Throal, the military Arm of Throal, and the Diplomatic Corps. While agents from each branch are allowed to volunteer to join the Hunters, the council seats are only open for members that have not become a part of the organization. Each branch assigns their own representative to the position.

The next three seats are filled by representatives of the trading houses. The major trading houses of Throal all meet to bicker and delegate issues under the auspices of His Majesty's Trading Commission (for more information see *Throal: The Dwarf Kingdom*, p. 39). While it is not an official branch of the Throalic government, it is the only place where the three unofficial factions of the trading houses, the Council Compact supporting Mishwal, the anti-reformist Huari, and the free trading companies, can meet and make some form of coherent decision together. In this forum, they are allowed to choose three members to represent them in the Hunters' council. The balance of power grants one from each faction a seat, since each faction wants to keep the other from having two seats.

Three seats on the council are selected from guildsmen, to give the common citizens and workers of Throal a say as well. This was a very popular move on the king's part among the citizenry and contributed greatly to the bolstered spirits of a people who had started to doubt the safety of their home. The Guild of Guildmasters (for more information see *Throal: The Dwarf Kingdom*, p. 42) is a recent attempt to give a unified voice to the many disparate guildsmen. To further support this attempt, King Neden has granted them the right to assign the three seats on the Hunters' council from the guilds. Generally, the guildsmen seats do not have much input into the meetings; they just feel better for knowing they have a say.

The final seat is reserved for the Lightbearers. All involved in the forming of the Hunters felt that their influence would be invaluable to any group dedicated to wiping the Horrors from Barsaive.

The general structure of the membership in the Hunters is cellular. There are a group of recognized veterans, called sergeants. Each sergeant is considered directly beneath the Master of the Hunt, though they take their orders through dispatch (see *Aiding the Hunters*, p. 90). The orders a sergeant is given are generally very broad and it is up to the sergeant to determine how to execute them. Sergeants sometimes work together in groups as large as five. In those situations, the Master assigns the position of captain to one of the sergeants until the task is complete. Each sergeant usually commands a small group of Hunters, usually numbering from six to twelve in size. When a group has seen severe casualties, the remainder usually become sergeants and divvy up the new members between them. Sergeants are paid more than a standard Hunter, in line with the pay scale of the Throalic soldiers. They also receive larger bonuses for a completed mission. There are some groups active in the Hunters that number fewer than six, but are comprised entirely of sergeants, with a captain in command. These units are considered the elite of the Hunters and carry the scars to prove it.

JOINING THE HUNTERS

The general membership of the Hunters is filled by volunteers. Members already in the pay of the government of Throal generally find their salary increased; this, coupled with the outrage most felt about the invasion of the Horror Andokhas into Throalic soil lead to a surprising number of initial volunteers, many more than the fledgling

Hunters had expected. However, simply volunteering was not the only requirement. Quinn, with the King's permission, developed a particularly brutal training facility out of one of the more run-down sections of old tunnels in Throal. It is a gauntlet of physical and magical challenges and opponents, not unlike what one could expect from a heavily infested kaer. At the end of the test is a battle with a particularly nasty Illusion created by Horror Bane's windling Illusionist, Parin. It quickly became known amongst the Hunters as the Proving Grounds. The test isn't lethal, but it generally leaves all who enter it wounded in some fashion. All wounds are treated at the expense of the Hunters. Those who make it past the first three major challenges are allowed to join. Those still willing to try after their first failure are allowed to train under current Hunters. Once those trainees complete enough of the Proving Grounds, they are allowed to join.

Joining the Hunters requires blood oaths of loyalty to the crown of Throal. The basic principle behind the blood oath is to obey the laws of Throal, defend her against the threat of Horrors, and not to plot against her. These oaths were carefully worded in the hopes that they would not only ensure that the Hunters would not break Throalic law and be poor representatives of Throal as a whole, but would be granted some small defense against the mind tricks of the Horrors. If a spy were to join the ranks of the Hunters, or one of the members was ever to fall in the sway of the Horrors, it was the general hope that the oath would be broken and those members could be imprisoned until the Horror that marked them was found and destroyed. So far, the only cases where a Hunter had become an oath-breaker were all while in combat with a Horror. None of those few cases survived the fight.

Another way to get accepted into the Hunters is by playing a part in the destruction of a Horror or a Horror-tainted artifact. Naturally, one has to be able to convince the Hunters' most experienced Illusionist, Parin, of one's veracity and the oaths still must be sworn before the Hunters will dispense a membership.



One of the controversies within the Hunters is that Quinn wishes to accept Horror-marked individuals within the ranks of the Hunters, so long as they meet the requirements, swear the oaths, and are willing to hunt down the Horror that marked them. With Isam Derr leading the protest, this practice has not been put into place for many practical reasons: the fact that the Horror could spread the mark through that individual, the fact that the person could be a knowing agent of the Horrors, and the fact that Throal cannot offer the guaranty of hunting down every Horror that has ever marked someone. Quinn argues that they have to start somewhere, but the rest of the council agrees with Isam Derr. The king, though personally torn on the decision, sides with what is best for Throal. However, with his ever-growing ability at diplomacy, the king proposed that Horror-marked individuals within the Hunters become top priority. If a Hunter were to ever be marked, they would be placed in a special cell (the same reserved for oath-breakers) while the Hunters were granted permission to form a team of their elite to hunt down and destroy the Horror responsible. Several members of the Hunters have been marked and been saved thanks to this proposal.

The other controversy within the ranks is the acceptance of non-Adepts. There were several non-Adepts within the ranks of the Hunters working as scholars and bookkeepers before this became an issue between the Master and the council. However, through the aid of Blood Magic, non-Adepts can become lethal against Horrors, particularly when given the proper magical support by Adepts. Quinn advocated this cause, wanting to show the people of Throal that the Adepts did not have to be the only ones to fight the fight against the Horrors. Isam Derr was again the main voice against this, since the Lightbearers consider Blood Magic outside of blood oaths to be a dark and dangerous magic. This time, however, the majority of the council sided with Quinn – particularly the guildsmen and the trading houses. Quinn's current cell of Hunters, the Blood Hounds (see *The Huntsmen and Huntswomen* p. 94), are comprised mostly of blood-magic enhanced non-Adepts.

AIDING THE HUNTERS

The Hunters were given a building near the front gates of Throal-proper, in the Grand Bazaar, and their building is easy to locate. The Hunters do not really recruit from this building, though they are willing to try and inspire those curious enough to ask to join the cause. The building acts more like a dispatch, where the various groups of the Hunters check in to report and assignments are offered to adventurers willing to undertake missions against Horrors in the areas where the Hunters aren't active in. Rewards are offered for proof of completion of the assignment, as well as the turning in of cursed artifacts for destruction. The Hunters will not pay for information regarding to Horrors. Instead, they will point the group towards the Great Library and inform them that they can find compensation there. The information that the Great Library gets winds up in the Hunters hands, anyway.

No oaths are required to undertake the missions that the Hunters farm out. However, they also do not pay up front. They will provide any and all the information they have available, which is everything that the scholars who helped assemble the two tomes on Horrors are able to find. They will also grant the adventurers a selection of rewards from the Hunters' Collection (see *The Hunters' Coffers*, p. 91), granted that the adventurers can return with adequate proof of their completion

of the task. The selection of rewards is determined by the acting sergeant at dispatch and is always fair. The last thing a Hunter would do is short someone who killed a Horror for them.

The Hunters are not allowed to offer rewards for the proof of a slain Horror; indeed, they can't really afford to pay for the death of every kreescra or crystal entity. However, if a Hunter overhears a conversation about a group slaying a Horror or currently hunting one, it is usually worth a round of free drinks for the group from the Hunter's own pocket.

THE HUNTERS' COFFERS

Even with his original conception of the Hunters, Quinn knew that the organization would require a larger monetary base than he figured Throal would be willing to afford. In this, he was mostly correct; it wasn't that Throal was not willing to finance the organization, it was simply that they could not. Much of Throal's coffers had been tapped in the wake of the war with Thera to get the Arm back into shape as quickly as possible. A more crippling blow was struck with the exodus to Scythia, which took a noticeable chunk of Throal's population with it. Throal needed its money going to try and bring in more citizenry and workers, offer better wages, better living conditions, and better security. Because of this, the Hunters were originally slated to be no larger than thirty.

However, as he was thinking of the way he would want the Hunters structured, Quinn was also thinking of ways that he could keep the Hunters well funded. The idea he came up with was the unsealing of Braza's Kingdom (for more information see *Throal: The Dwarf Kingdom*, p.157). Braza's Kingdom was an old section of the Throalic kingdom that had been sealed away over six hundred years ago, during the beginning of the Scourge. The core section of the kingdom had been as large as the Grand Bazaar and been central to the honeycomb of tunnels and mines within a greater section of the Throalic mountains. With King Neden's permission, the Hunters were given controlling jurisdiction of Braza's Kingdom.

With this jurisdiction, the Hunters were allowed to conduct well-managed training missions into Horror territory as they began the slow process of reclaiming the tunnels. Treasure and artifacts were often found in the nests of the Horrors, tokens of the families that had owned the tunnels long ago and the foolhardy adventurers that had come seeking it. The Hunters were allowed to charge miners from the trading houses for permission to mine reclaimed sections of the dwarf mines, as well as provide protection from the Horror Constructs that still roamed the tunnels. In addition to that, the Hunters were granted a small percentage of the value of the minerals that the miners were able to extract. If an adventuring group were so inclined, the Hunters would allow them access to Braza's Kingdom as well, provided they paid a fee of one hundred silvers, or the promise of twenty percent of whatever the group found. Groups that took the latter option and used one of the many other exits from Braza's Kingdom to the surface should be very wary of returning, since breaking that promise results in a fee of two hundred and fifty silvers and a warrant for the group's arrest until payment within Throal.

The funds gathered this way, along with what money Throal could budget the Hunters, allowed them to pay well for their members. The magical items discovered in Braza's Kingdom and other Hunter

missions were pooled for distribution amongst the Hunters at the Master's discretion. This pool collectively became known as the Hunters' Collection. Most of the consumable items from this collection are almost immediately turned back out to the active members of the Hunters. Any item that has the potential to help slay a Horror is quickly assigned to a Hunter who's proven worthy or adept with that particular tool. The rest of the items are selected to remain in the collection for payment of adventurers, or for selling to help fill the Hunters' coffers for bonus pay.

THE MASTER AND THE COUNCIL

The Master of the Hunt and the Council determine the main course that the Hunters follow and they do not all see eye-to-eye on exactly where the Hunters should be focusing their attention. Each usually has their own agenda, but they all at least agree on one thing: the Horrors should be wiped from Barsaive.

QUINN AGAIR

Master of the Hunt

Quinn is a human Horror Stalker of high Circle and has only recently seen his twenty third Naming Day. Many believe Quinn to be the stereotypical Horror Stalker, a fanatic bent on the eradication of the Horrors with no sense of self-preservation. While it is true there is a certain lack of self-preservation inherent in hunting Horrors, this isn't entirely the case. Quinn believes beyond the shadow of a doubt that the Horrors need to be destroyed or pushed back into the void. He believes that the reason for the current stable level of magic is the workings of the Horrors and that soon, the magic level will begin to rise again. The only way he believes this can be prevented is by hunting them until the one causing this stability in the flow of magic can be found and destroyed. He believes in the sanctity of life and does his best to see to it that those that serve under him will live to see another day. However, Quinn also isn't stupid. When you dedicate your life to



hunting Horrors, there will come a day where you will not be quick enough, or smart enough, or cautious enough, and on that day you'll die. The young man accepts this fate and considers it a fair price to pay for the time between now and then when he can continue to cleanse his world of the creatures that claimed the life of his father and half his village.

Quinn is rather charismatic for a Horror Stalker and when not currently on a hunt, he is quite jovial. He keeps track of his Hunters as best he can, learning their Names and trying to spot their weaknesses so he can help them overcome them. As a trainer, he has a gift for helping students understand what he teaches and learn from their mistakes when they make them.

Quinn also believes in the power of perseverance and making good use of the tools at your disposal. Because of this, he is a very strong advocate of Blood Magic within the Hunters, which is one of the major sources of friction between himself and the Lightbearers.

Quinn believes that the Hunters' main priority is to clear the kingdom of Throal of all Horrors. Currently, he believes that the Hunters should do everything in their power to destroy the Horror that marked Kind Neden: Andokhas. Unfortunately, after the failed coup, there has been no sign of the Horror, nor any way to track it. His current pet project is the cleansing of Braza's Kingdom. Despite the fact that they have cleared ten tunnels for mining, the operation has only begun.

Attributes

DEX: 6 STR: 6 TOU: 6
PER: 8 WIL: 8 CHA: 7

DWELLEN BRESIE

Representative of the Eye

Dwellen, Bresie to his friends, is an elderly elf Elementalists that was past his prime when the Eye was established in 1484TH. Bresie was assigned this position by J'role, the Senior Gatherer of the Eye, to help his flagging confidence in his own abilities. When he was young, Bresie had attempted to lead the life of an adventurer. He had a knack for getting people into trouble and making it look like it was their own fault. It wasn't a malicious effort on Bresie's part, it was just something that happened. One companion would attempt to stop him from going into a chamber alone with a Horror, only to succumb to the Horror's fear. While Bresie attempted to pull his friend to safety, his other companions would show up and think Bresie was saving the day. He still had this knack when he was first approached to join the Eye. Through the use of this unfortunate ability, Bresie was able to make a very good spy and get into the good graces of any court. Humans were particularly susceptible to his strange luck and inevitably came in at the right time to see Bresie doing something heroic, just after one of his bungles. He lived in Travar for years as an excellent agent of the Eye, until his eyesight began to fail him and he was recalled.

While Bresie was a bungling adventurer, he was a very competent administrator and could keep tabs on thousands of different details. When the position on the Hunters' council was created, Bresie was immediately selected for it. His old mind is still sharp, though no one can rely on his eyesight. He currently represents the wishes of the Eye, who mostly agree with Quinn's current path for the Hunters, that being the cleansing of Throal. When the Exploratory Force runs into a particularly nasty Horror, or they have lost several groups on a particular

Horror troubled expedition, the Eye will try and call on the resources of the Hunters for them.

ISLAN POR'KAROSA

Representative of the Arm

Islan Por'karosa is a *kistalami* t'skrang and an Air Sailor of no small ability. As the captain of the drakkar *The Crimson Lizard*, Islan joined the Throalic navy shortly after the Fall of Vivane. He had only just come by his airship in an old mountain kaer and felt that fate had allied against him since he missed his "Great War." To make up for it, he offered the service of his ship to the Arm.

Islan is as flashy as any Swordmaster and a skilled diplomat, to boot. He isn't the best tactician or combatant that can be found in the skies, but he is an embodiment of the romance the Throalic people see in their airship navy. He was everything that Ilmorian, the General of the Arm's Navy, looked for in a ship's captain, particularly when they were representing the Arm. So, naturally, he was the one chosen to sit on the Hunters' council. As usual, General Quaavami Rockbreaker, the leader of the Arm's infantry, volubly argued against this. However, the Hunters needed access to the airships of the Arm in emergency situations, or in cases where expediency left no time for cross-country travel. Because of this, Supreme General Foellerian reluctantly sided with Ilmorian.

Islan isn't a fop. He serves very well as a representative of the Arm, since politics are an arena he's comfortable battling in. Much like the Eye, the Arm is currently content with Quinn's plan for the Hunters. Also like the Eye, when the Arm encounters the Horrors in patrols, they report it back to Islan, so he can try and procure the help or guidance of the Hunters in dealing with it.

MALONIEL

Representative of the Diplomatic Corps

Maloniel was born in a small village and like most young Adepts, dreamed of adventure, glory, and making her mark on the world. The first group she met up with were the Grim Legion and for awhile she tried to emulate them. However, the young Thief was kept at a distance by the other members of the Legion she was with due to the fact that Thieves rarely lasted long in their particular group, under the harsh Nethermancer Named Moltaa. After a particularly heinous situation involving a village and a little girl Named Aardelea, Maloniel began to question what she was doing. She left the Grim Legion, traveling as she could with different groups of Name-givers, learning for herself just what it meant to be a legend.

Her path eventually led her to Throal, where the now-wiser elf found a place where she fit in. The pulse of this large city was something that Maloniel understood. She eventually found herself joining the local *chav'ao'ros* (for more information see *Throal: The Dwarf Kingdom*, p. 47), which were the forums that Varalus III had established to give the common people some say in government. The issues were carried up to different levels of *chav'ao'ros*, until the issues reached the king. Maloniel found herself championing the cause of a group of ork immigrants to Throal who had poor living conditions due to a pocket of some kind of methane in their tunnel. She personally carried the issue as far as she could, even going so far as to take it to some of the ork-sympathetic trading houses. Her efforts came to the attention of the Diplomatic Corps' Mirial Tramon, daughter of the Ambassador General



of the Corps. While Maloniel was far from the most charismatic speaker, she possessed a certain roguish charm and was a dogged proponent of her cause. Mirial approached Maloniel and shortly after that, Maloniel joined the Diplomatic Corps in the service of the crown.

The relatively young elf was selected for the position on the Hunters' council because of her salt-of-the-earth charm, as well as her experience with the Horrors and the groups that hunt them from her time with the Grim Legion. The Diplomatic Corps wants to make sure that the Hunters do not overstep their bounds with the local governments or with any foreign dignitaries that may come into Throal. Maloniel's main directive is to make sure that the Hunters do not go off on any missions without at least attempting to garner permission from the local constabulary before shoving a badge down their throats.

Because of her tendency to haunt the tavern and ork-populated areas of Throal, Maloniel is well known amongst the Hunters. Unbeknownst to her, the Hunters have nicknamed her the Mouth to go along with the Arm and the Eye, since the Councilwoman of the Diplomatic Corps is too much of a mouthful.

ISAM DERR

Representative of the Lightbearers

Isam Derr is a senior member of the Sword of Light, a group of heroes who lead the Lightbearers. Isam has long since stopped his adventuring days, to keep a watchful eye over Throal and protect the kingdom against Horror activity. When the Horror Stalker crusade began, Isam Derr became doubly watchful for any signs of Horror infestation within the kingdom. Since his assistance in freeing King Neden of the Horror Andokhas' mark, Isam has once again been welcomed into the King's inner circle. He took the position on the Hunters' council because it had been his suggestion that had started the idea that would become the Hunters. Isam believes that the Hunters are a good step towards making all of Barsaive realize that the true enemy, the Horrors, should be the first thing dealt with. While much of Thera is corrupt and cruel, it still pales in comparisons to the atrocities the Horrors commit.

Isam Derr does not like Quinn Agair and while they both believe in many of the same ideals, their methods for achieving them vary greatly. Isam does not fault the king for his choice. Quinn has been ideal in setting up the Hunters and making them feel like they have the power and the ability to do something against the Horrors. The system that the Horror Stalker helped set in place has made the Hunters financially capable of supporting a large number of members and still have resources to pay adventurers for assignments. However, Quinn unabashedly supports the use of Blood Magic, which is anathema to the Lightbearers. The Blood Hounds (see p. 94) are something that Isam strongly disagrees with, since he considers the death of a few Horrors not worth the price he believes the Blood Hounds pay with their souls.

Isam Derr is a high Circle Warrior and a Lightbearer of equal rank.

For more information on Isam Derr, see p. 55 of *Throal: The Dwarf Kingdom*.

Attributes

DEX: 6	STR: 8	TOU: 8
PER: 6	WIL: 6	CHA: 5

THE TRADING HOUSE REPRESENTATIVES

Currently, the balance of power in His Majesty's Trading Commission has kept one representative of each of the factions in the Trading Houses on the Hunters' council.

The representative of the Mishwal faction is Botolomy, of House Sarafica. Botolomy is a grizzled dwarf non-Adept and veteran of both Thera wars. Botolomy had been a good trader for House Sarafica up until his return from the Second Battle of Sky Point. The old dwarf rarely talks about it, but his dreams are haunted by the sight of the Horror Cloud over Vivane and the living death that befell that once grand city. In the year and a half that followed, Botolomy spend most of his time well and duly drunk. Botolomy was one of Zendes', the leader of House Sarafica, greatest supporters, and she did not like seeing him like this. On one particularly bad night, he had confided in Zendes the reason for his problem. When word came to the Houses about the need of members to sit on the council for the Hunters, Zendes used all of her political clout during the meeting to secure that position for Botolomy. Just as she expected, the chance to do something against the Horrors helped shake the old dwarf out of his stupor. Botolomy is a sympathetic voice for those who suffer from Horrors outside of the range of the Throalic borders and will vehemently support any action against undead. Botolomy is well liked among the Hunters and often joins them at the taverns (though his drinking is well under control again).

The Huari faction's representative is a young dwarf trader from House Garson, Aravim Garson. Aravim is the nephew of Lomron Garson, the current leader of that House, and well liked amongst the anti-reformist faction like his uncle. Aravim sees his position on the Council as a perfect opportunity to garner himself some fame, get good recognition and sympathy for House Garson, and to direct the efforts of the Hunters in the favor of House Garson. Aravim is clever and subtle in his attempts to use the Hunters as police along House Garson's trade routes. He also feeds tidbits of information back to his uncle on the activities of the Hunters and the Garsons use this information to set up new trade routes or bolster the defenses of ones that could be running in the direction of known Horror occurrences.

Aeril Seferos of the Circle Path Company is the free trading company's representative. She's a middle-aged, beautiful elf that was selected by Remiel, head of the Circle Path Company, for her ability to smooth over ruffled feathers and generally cut through hours of hot debate with a few soothing words of indisputable logic. She has served the Hunters' council well in this regard and managed to diffuse any ugly moments between Quinn Agair and Isam Derr over the use of Blood Magic.

THE GUILD REPRESENTATIVES

In the opinion of the Guild of Guildmasters, there are three guilds that require the most representation for the people of Throal when dealing with the Horrors. The first is the guild of miners, since much of Braza's Kingdom will be reopened to them the further the Hunters progress. Their representative is Cora, a large troll female that seems to enjoy making the dwarf tunnels expand to fit "decent sized Name-givers." The second is the guild of the Healers, who see much of the Hunters. Their representative is Eir Calmheart, an unusually patient ork female and questor of Garlen. The last guild is the guild of Armorers



and Weaponsmiths. Their representative is a dwarf smith Named Cendric, who's more at home in the forge. In general, the three will comment on certain things, but follow the lead of the more experienced and charismatic members of the council. However, Cora will be against anything that takes the Hunters main focus off the mineral-rich reclamation of Braza's Kingdom. Cendric does not particularly care about the direction the Hunters take, since they will always need weapons and armor. Eir stands against any mission that is ever described as suicidal, a fact that several of the council members use to sway her to their side.

THE HUNTSMEN AND HUNTSWOMEN

The general members of the Hunters refer to each other as Huntsmen and Huntswomen. Even with the king's kind offer of support and housing for family, most of the Hunters have no family to speak. The vast majority have lost loved ones to the Horrors. There is a significant portion that had lost family in the last war against Thera and, after they learned of the marking of King Neden, joined up in anger. Sometimes the Hunters find companionship in one another. However, whenever a Hunter finds the bonds of family outside of the Hunters themselves, they usually retire from the group, or take less dangerous positions. In general, the hunting of Horrors still falls to those who feel they have nothing to lose, or something to avenge.

In the first wave of volunteers, the Hunters grew to about two hundred members. Since then, their numbers have dwindled by attrition down to around one hundred and fifty. Their numbers have stabilized at that point, as the number of new volunteers and mission related deaths both have decreased. As the reputation of the Hunters spreads, the more volunteers come forward. However, by the same token, as the number of Hunters grows, the more dangerous assignments they end up taking on.



Most of the Hunter groups assigned to a sergeant usually end up naming themselves, like an adventuring group. Only the two that contain members of the founding group of the Hunters are listed below.

HORROR BANE

Horror Bane is the Name of Quinn's original adventuring group. In addition to himself, there was also Betony, the windling Wizard, Parin, the windling Illusionist, Kaja Lyles, a human Journeyman, Leonitus, a troll Sky Raider, and Marr, a troll Beastmaster. They have been traveling together now for two years and are all that remains of the original group of twelve. When there is a particularly devious or unknown Horror discovered, Horror Bane is usually the group that assembles to deal with them, bolstered by a second group of Hunters to bring their number back up to twelve.

Betony is a very quiet, purple-haired windling that usually stays with Quinn. While a high Circle Wizard, she rarely does anything else for the Hunters aside from make sure that Quinn takes care of himself.

Parin is a rather good-natured windling and a high Circle Illusionist. He's overweight and the fact that he flies is nothing short of magic. Despite his unassuming appearance and good nature, however, Parin is a devastating Illusionist and very knowledgeable. He keeps an eye over the Proving Grounds when Horror Bane isn't assembled and helps in the training of Adept spellcasters that join the Hunters.

The Lyles family are a powerful merchant clan in Travar and Kaja represents the interests of this city within the Hunters. An experienced Journeyman, the long years of working with Quinn have shaped her and she does not let politics interfere with what she refers to as "the Grand Hunt."

Leonitus lost his kinsmen to the Horror Raspanor and hasn't forgiven their kind since. A high Circle Sky Raider and highland troll, "Big Leo" is the one who showed Quinn the usefulness of aerial bombardment on the peskiest of ground-based Horrors. When not traveling as Horror Bane, Big Leo has found a good friend and drinking companion in Councilman Islan.

Marr is a lowland troll and a very frightening Beastmaster. He's taciturn and usually unapproachable by any except the other members of Horror Bane, to whom he actually acts like a civilized Name-giver. When Horror Bane is not active, Marr usually handpicks a few Scout and Beastmaster Adepts from the Hunters and takes them on patrol. Marr has a pair of wolves that travel with him, Freki and Geri.

THE BLOOD HOUNDS

The Blood Hounds are the Name that the non-Adepts that Quinn took under his wing gave themselves. At their core are three of the members of Horror Bane, Quinn, Kaja, and Betony, who serve as the front-line and magical support for the non-Adepts. The other nine are all grizzled non-Adept veterans from the Arm of Throal, who have seen what the Thera's can do with Blood Magic.

The attrition rate on the Blood Hounds stands at about two per mission. Currently, the rate is a toss-up between depatterning and death against the Horrors. This fact is something that only angers Isam Derr more and usually causes a fresh rash of arguments at the meetings (which Aerial smooths over). However, there are always more non-Adepts willing to volunteer and become members of the Blood Hounds.



There are only two of the original Blood Hounds still alive. Drake, a young human, was a promising agent in the Eye. He joined in the melee at the Second Battle at Sky Point, where he lost his arm. He had it replaced with a Crystal Limb and returned to Throal, still in the service of the Eye. Drake felt that, as a member of the Eye, he had failed his king when he learned that Neden had been marked by a Horror that had lived within Throal's very walls. When he heard of the Hunters, he volunteered to redeem himself. The second one was a highland troll Named Mikael, who also participated in the second war against Thera. However, in the battle with Sky Point his ship was damaged and crashed in Vivane. He and a few others made it out alive, but not without physical and mental scars from what they had seen. After that, Mikael replaced a damaged eye with an Astral Sensitive Eye and traveled back with the unit of Throalic soldiers that had saved him. He had stayed on in Throal for a time, to repay his debt to those soldiers, and was soon invited to join the Royal Guard. When the Hunters were formed, Mikael wouldn't take no for an answer to his volunteering.

THE BLOOD OATH OF THE HUNTERS

The blood oath that the Hunters are required to take can be of two forms. The first form is like any other blood oath, they take a point of permanent Strain for a year and a day. The second form gives the character 2 permanent Strain and represents the character's deep belief in the cause of the Hunters. For this second point of Strain, the character gains a +1 to their Steel Thought Test, though only against Horror magic and effects. If the character does not have Steel Thought, they get it at Rank 1, but again only for use against Horror magic and effects. This applies to non-Adepts. About one-third of the Hunters have the second type of blood oath. All of the Blood Hounds do.

CAMPAIGN IDEAS

Much like the Exploratory Force, the Hunters of Throal offer the characters an organization that can finance an entire campaign against the Horrors. If you are interested in a campaign centered on battling Horrors, the Hunters provide a good vehicle for this. It allows the players a good deal of autonomy in how to accomplish their goals, much like the Exploratory Force.

If your characters were well known in Throal as Horror killers, or they participated in the events of *Barsaive In Chaos* and the freeing of King Neden from his mark, then they would have most likely been approached at the ground level of the construction of the Hunters. If you so choose, the entire Hunters of Throal could have been built around the group and it could be their responsibility to see to the stamping out of Horror activity within the demesne of Throal. This provides a good challenge for higher Circle parties and offers opportunities for combat as well as diplomacy in getting the agreement of the council.

USING THE HUNTERS OF THROAL

With the unsealing of Braza's Kingdom, the Hunters sometimes offer assignments to adventurers to travel into it, where they waive the initial entrance fee. This is one such case. A scrap of information has been recovered from one of the most recent excursions into the caves. A nigh illegible scrap of parchment revealed these five, disjointed words in ancient dwarf: Braza, Crown, Unlock, Hidden, and Kingdom. Braza's Kingdom derives its Name for Braza I, one of the greater kings in Throal's history; he united the kingdom of Throal despite the tensions between the Huari and Mishwal factions and led it into a prosperous new age. Perhaps this scrap of paper is a hint on how to unlock an ancient cache of Throalic treasure that links back to an item unknowingly lost during that turbulent age? Or perhaps it's a trap designed by a Horror to lure adventures to a cursed artifact that it intends to use against the kingdom of Throal?

Another adventure idea takes place in the farthest sections of Throal, where there are few Hunter patrols. A group calling themselves Hunters have begun systematically moving through a particular string of villages, looking for Horror-marked individuals. When they determine someone has been Horror-marked, regardless of whether or not the local constabulary agrees, the Hunters execute the marked individual. The characters get wind of this, or are asked to investigate it by the Hunters, who cannot seem to locate these men. Is there a corrupt group of Hunters that are exacting small village justice on whomever irritates them? Is it a group of Horror-controlled individuals working to destroy the reputation of the Hunters while spreading fear? Or is it the work of Vestrial's cult, the Whisperers, up to similar mischief?

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Live the Nightmare



The war is over. The Therans have been removed from Barsaive. Everything should be fine now, right?

That couldn't be further from the truth. The Horrors are still out there, and their threat is ever-present.

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