


Accursed



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The Setup

After years of The Chimera's activities within and about the moving fortress of Turrís Atra, some of her experiments have begun to migrate to and coalesce in several different locations, wreaking more havoc than usual. People in affected areas have been forced to abandon their homes and livelihoods. In many cases, the experiments stripped the land around them of edible plants and game, then moved in to attack the residents once their resources were depleted.

The Valley of the Moon

The PCs have been made aware of this situation happening in a nearby village, Moon Valley, and investigate like good PCs do. Upon arriving at the village, they are greeted by Paredes, village Elder. He spins a great yarn about the historical importance of the village, how it was the first settled in the region, and so forth. He explains that several square blocks of the town contain the most important properties (including a small farm), and that their sanctity must be kept. In addition, the town's Moonlight Festival is scheduled for the next full moon, and Paredes would like to run the festival as planned.

In addition to fending off Banes as necessary—both reactively and proactively—the PCs are tasked with setting up defenses, digging a perimeter, and other such grunt work. While this is going on, they find out that Moon Valley has more going on than an invasion from the Chimera's experiments.

The Experiments

Depending upon where your PCs are in Morden, they encounter a variety of banes near and around the town—some as detailed in *Accursed* (p. 120–121), but GMs are encouraged to create several of their own to be resonant with the player characters and their fears and experiences. One of experiment types that is massing around Moon Valley is the cenelaph.

Other Residents

Within hours of arriving and meeting with Paredes, the PCs encounter other residents. As a town in peril, Moon Valley is bustling with nervous energy. The townsfolk are doing their best to go along with life as normal while defending from the banes. Townsfolk that the characters are likely to bump into will include:

- Nieves, the town gossip, almost certainly already knows why they are in town. Any information shared with anyone is likely to come back to Nieves' ears, and then out of her mouth again.
- Reyes is well-loved by all the townsfolk, and will attempt to get the PCs on her side to help roust Paredes from his position if widespread suspicion about him spreads.
 - Elonso joins Reyes in her efforts, but will not take an active stance unless asked or provoked. He is more intent on helping set up the town for defense.
 - Nina is in favor of fleeing Moon Valley, but is unable to convince those older than her that it is worth giving up.
 - Lucio is young, eager, and is full of hare-brained ideas. He can be used to inject levity, but his absurd ideas can also guide the PCs, as Paredes often uses Lucio to do dirty work.



The Valley's Center

While spending time in Moon Valley helping shore up their defenses, it should become obvious to the PCs that something beyond the banes is amiss. Beyond the townsfolk rumors, Paredes' capricious behavior is notable. Particularly, he becomes extremely paranoid when the PCs get close to his personal property, and insists on being nearby if they help with any repairs to it.

Inquisitive PCs may decide to investigate further without much provocation, but if they need a nudge, try the following, depending how much of a push they need.

- Paredes accuses a townsfolk of trying to break into his house and steal food. When the PCs talk to said townsfolk, his side of the story is he was carrying out Paredes' repair instructions when Paredes arrived suddenly and exploded for no known reason. No evidence of theft is found.
- A townsfolk turns up dead on the outskirts of the village, allegedly from an experiment attack. Paredes seems intent on burying the body quickly "to prevent further attacks," at the expense of normal funeral customs. An examination of the



body shows that while it does have wounds from an animal-like creature, they are not fresh, but there is a fresh wound at the base of her neck.

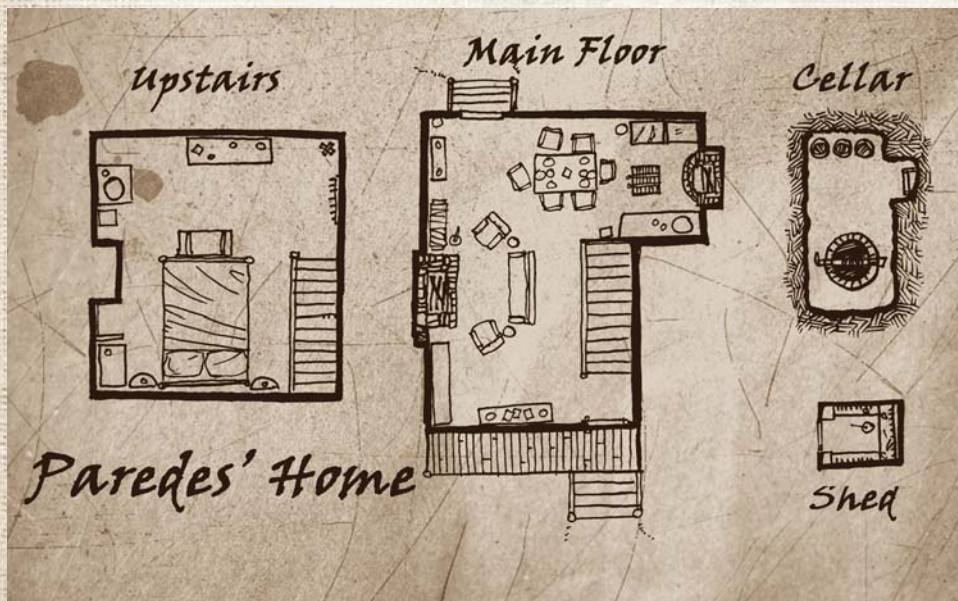
The player characters may investigate by speaking to other citizens or directly with Paredes. Paredes is evasive, but under no circumstances will he allow the party to fully investigate his residence. This likely makes the player characters want to get in the house even more!

Under the House

Paredes is hiding a tome of Witchcraft that he does not know how to extract and use, but he knows that he cannot figure it out while the village is paying attention. He has decided that the attacks are a perfect time to find out...hopefully by distracting the townsfolk and giving him enough time to learn its secrets. But if events come to Paredes staying alive at the expense of all the townsfolk, he has gone mad enough with power to consider it a good idea.

The tome is unspeakably ancient and badly stained and marked. It left Turrus Atra when it was inadvertently sewn inside of one of the Chimera's banes. She has sent the cenelaphs to the city in the hopes of recovering it. Paredes recovered it from the remains of another bane when he was travelling through the nearby forests. At the GM's discretion, the tome can include the directions for performing up to three particular Witchcraft powers as rituals.

Paredes also has a stash of valuable jewels, not recorded on the village's ledger. If the village is destroyed, they are a reward for the PCs. If the village survives, ethical PCs have the opportunity to use them to help rebuild the village.



Moving Beyond

If Moon Valley is protected and Paredes' magical item is never discovered, he continues to try and unlock it.

In the long run, the Chimera's experiments attempt to blight Moon Valley so that she can recover the tome. Surrendering it to her agents cuts off the attacks abruptly. Alternatively, if the characters leave the city with it, they are likely to continue to hold her attention until they surrender it or she recovers it from them. In any case, once the book is no longer in the village, it ceases to be a high priority target for the Witch or her agents.

Cenelaphs

Built from the bodies of deer, elk, or other cervidae merged with tortured humans, cenelaphs are the most intelligent of the Chimera's banes, as they still have some access to their human memories and skills. Their twisted expressions and guttural screams are the things of nightmare, especially as they have a unique way of invoking the inner fears of humans.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Subterfuge d8, Taunt d10

Charisma: +2, **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8
Special Abilities

Fleet-Footed: Cenelaphs roll d10s instead of d6s when running.

Low Light Vision: The cenelaph's human eyes have been modified so that they can see clearly through even the darkest forest. They ignore penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.

Natural Weapons: The horns and cloven hooves of the Cenelaph are sharp and deadly, allowing them to gouge and kick for Str + d6 damage with +1 Reach.

Size: +2, the Cenelaph is larger than a deer.

Witchline (Chimera): Banes of the Chimera can be sensed by Mongrel Accursed within 25 feet.