

October 2012 Issue 6

Holidays and Havoc

SAVAGE INSIDER

For All Things Savage

How do you incorporate holidays into your games?

Contest Time!

Checkout the contest we're running for issue #7:
End of Days



A collection of Autumn and winter holiday-themed NPCs, equipment, and adventures for universal use!

MTE



SELECTED SAVAGE SETTINGS

DEADLANDS: RELOADED!

The year is 1876, but the history is not our own.

Pinnacle's flagship product is *Deadlands*, a horrific journey into the "Weird West." Mysterious beings called the Reckoners have given life to monsters and magic, causing history to divert from July 4th, 1863 forward. The South has won its independence, California has shattered into a labyrinth of flooded sea-canyons, and a mysterious super-fuel called "ghost rock" has spawned as much war and strife as it has "steampunk" devices.

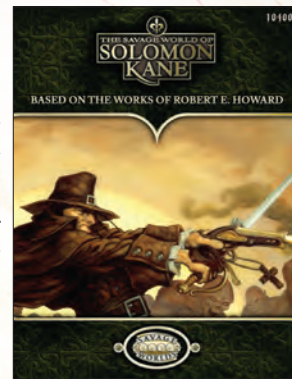
Players are steely-eyed gunfighters, card-slinging sorcerers called hucksters, mysterious shamans, savage braves, mad scientists, and more who battle against evil and attempt to prevent the "Reckoning."



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All of our settings (except *The Savage World of Solomon Kane* and *Pirates of the Spanish Main*) require the *Savage Worlds* core rules.

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SAVAGE INSIDER

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Savage Insider Issue #6 1st Edition October 2012

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LETTERS FROM THE EDITORS



Last year, I realized I missed an opportunity to do a holiday theme for our first October issue. I was bound and determined not to let that chance slip by a second time. We were delighted to get a variety of submissions for Halloween, harvest, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Yule, and New Year's pieces, too.

The Savage Worlds community is a vibrant source of creativity, assistance, and inspiration. The support we get from publishers and fans alike makes every issue worth all the time and effort we put into it. We didn't get much in the way of direct comments on our last issue, but we did get a five-star rating through drivethrurpg.com. We love to hear from our readers about what we're doing well and what you'd like us to do next.

This issue, you'll see some very direct use of what folks offered up by way of the article *Holidays of Miniature Proportion*. Thanks to about half a dozen people who answered via the Pinnacle forum about miniatures, I was able to put together a really neat reference for minis I never knew existed...just for the holidays! Likewise, I picked up a ton of good stories from the Beautiful Brains Books and Games chat one Thursday night by happenstance. You'll see the results of that and others' input in *Holiday Spins*.

We hope to see your feedback wherever you "bought" this issue, on Facebook, or via e-mail. Your public comments are especially helpful when potential new readers consider their choices online.

Thanks for keeping us going!

Vickey A. Beaver,
Assistant Editor

Another wonderful issue released and many more in the works (or at least planned to be in the works). *Savage Insider* continues to grow more and more popular (considering download rate and number of downloads) with each subsequent issue. I couldn't be any happier and I thank the community for their continued support.

With all that in mind, I am stepping up the magazine's support of the Savage Worlds community by recruiting additional members from the Savage World licensee pool. Starting in either issue 7 or 8, you will see a larger amount of regular support from additional licensees to form a solid *Savage Insider* development team. This provides us with a number of advantages such as allowing others to provide input into the development process, presenting regular writers from around the community to give solid content, and most importantly the fact that we won't have to search so hard for contributors. Everyone on the team will have a stake in the magazine and thus will pour even more effort into making it the best it can be! This is really a win-win situation for Mystical Throne Entertainment and the Savage Worlds community.

Next issue, already in development, is titled *End of Days* and will be our post-apocalyptic issue. There will be plenty of survivor content and probably some horror (the apocalypse won't be a walk in the park) to celebrate the fact that we all lived through the supposed apocalypse (you know the Mayan calendar thing?). Don't worry, we'll get that issue out one way or another.

Aaron T. Huss
Editor-in-Chief



CONTEST

A write-in contest for Savage Insider Issue #7

Savage Insider is holding a contest for issue #7, coming in January 2012. Issue #7, titled *End of Days*, is dedicated to the post-apocalyptic genre and will contain a general interest piece titled *Technology Lost* designed to be an accumulation of submissions from the Savage Worlds community.

Technology Lost will be a long list of technologies from modern times and what happens if they no longer function after the apocalypse. We've all seen how quickly technology has changed in the past 50 years and many of us take for granted the technology we currently have available. What would life be like if that technology no longer functioned? Would we go back to the way things used to be? Would we replace it with something from the 1980s? Or would we come up with something completely different to fill the gap?

We at *Savage Insider* don't want to be the ultimate answer providers for those questions. We'd much rather see what the community thinks and what fun ideas they come up with. To support this effort, we are running a contest with three prizes given away to the three write-ins we like the best. Prizes will be given as free PDFs from the following available releases:

- *Mercenary Breed* (Expanded Edition)
- *Judgment Day* (Expanded Edition)
- *Savage Insider Premium Issue #1*
- *Savage Insider Premium Issue #2*
- *Savage Insider Premium Issue #3*
- *Savage Insider Premium Issue #4* (due out the end of November)

1st place will be given the opportunity to choose 3 products from that list as a free PDF.

2nd place will be given the opportunity to choose 2 products from that list as a free PDF.

3rd place will be given the opportunity to choose 1 product from that list as a free PDF.

Participation is easy and free. All you have to do is answer the question and e-mail your response to:

aaron@mysticalthrone-ent.com

Please make sure you use the e-mail subject line "*Technology Lost*" or "*Savage Insider Contest*".



Here's the question to answer:

If after the apocalypse a modern technology is lost, how will it be replaced?

So what does that mean? It means take a technology from today that is common to almost every household or can be easily accessed by the general public, and remove it from the world (or make it non-functional). How would the world compensate for that lost technology? What type of replacement would we have to use?

Here are some examples:

- After the apocalypse, digital televisions no longer work. To watch TV, we have to use old televisions with rotary knobs for VHF and UHF.
- After the apocalypse, remote controls no longer work. We have to go back to using wired remotes with cables around 8 feet long just to change the channel from your chair or couch.
- After the apocalypse, TV stations can no longer transmit color signals and all TV shows become black and white.

These are some of the most basic examples, and I'm sure the greater Savage Worlds community can come up with a lot more possibilities.

All entries will be compiled into the *Technology Lost* general interest piece for *Savage Insider Issue #7* and given as a list of technologies a GM can remove from their Post-Apocalyptic game and slide in a replacement. Be as creative as you'd like for only the top three entries will win a prize package.

Have fun with this and thanks again for your continued support!

Aaron T. Huss
Editor-in-Chief
Savage Insider



ADVENTURES IN MODERN MYTH

Urban witches cast protective spells from their smart phones. Modern Magi delve into lore best forgotten. The restless dead search for closure in a world unaware of their existence. Religious fanatics hunt Fae Blooded mortals. Native Manitou fight to preserve what little is left of their lands.

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CHARACTER GALLERY: HEADLESS HORSEMAN

By Aaron T. Huss

The Headless Horseman is a creature of mythology and folklore. In Celtic mythology, the headless horseman (called the dullahan) is said to be an unseelie fairy (malicious and inclined toward evil). In American folklore, the headless horseman is a storybook character depicting a beheaded Hessian killed by an American cannonball during the American Revolution. While seemingly similar, the two variations of the headless horseman have significant differences according to the cultures that believe in them.

DULLAHAN

Celtic mythology speaks of the dullahan, a headless creature from the fairy realm that carries its head tucked under one arm. This horseman rides atop a black horse with sparks and flames shooting from its nostrils. The head of the dullahan is a hideous monstrosity with a grin that reaches both sides and massive eyes that dart about like flies. The flesh of the head is said to be the color and texture of stale dough or moldy cheese and considerably smooth. The head also glows with a phosphorescence of decaying matter that can be used as a lantern to guide the dullahan's way.

The dullahan possesses supernatural sight so that when holding its head high, it can see for miles around in the darkest conditions. Whatever guides its sight while holding its head under its arm has never been revealed, but it is as if the dullahan is guided by a sixth sense to detect its next victim.

Dullahans are said to be the bringers of death. The dullahan seeks its victim, throws blood in the victims face, speaks the victim's name, and the victim dies instantly. Should the dullahan wish to toy with the victim or fight against one trying to stop it, it wields a skeletal whip made from human spines.

But all is not hopeless against the dullahan. It can speak only once per journey. The creature seeks its next victim and can only speak that victim's name before returning to its unknown den or simply vanishing from existence. The dullahan must then perform another journey should it wish to herald the death of another victim.

Catching the dullahan is a matter of concern. Either traveling by its hellish horse or traveling in a black coach made of candles, skulls, and bones – pulled by six hellish horses – the dullahan travels at supernatural speeds. This is often so fast that trails of fire are left behind from the friction produced by the coach or burning debris left by the flames shooting from the snout of the



black horse. However, the dullahan only journeys out around midnight, under the cover of extreme darkness, when seeking out its victim. Thus, if one were to know where the creature will strike, catching and destroying it potentially becomes that much easier. Of course, one would still have to overcome the creature's strength.

It is said the dullahan is impervious to attack, but seemingly hesitant to the sight of gold. No one has actually been able to kill the creature, but many speculate the use of gold is required, otherwise the dullahan will ride away to kill again the next day.

The dullahan is typically found during late August and early September, around the time of the Celtic feast days. During this time, the creature appears to be demanding human sacrifices to appease it, as if it were a heathen god forcing its worshipers to provide it with a fresh soul. No one truly understands who the dullahan is or where it came from, but they all understand that when the dullahan rides, a human will die.



DULLAHAN

The dullahan is a creature of horror from Celtic mythology that heralds the death of a human.

Attr: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d12

Pace: 12; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10

Skills: Fighting d10, Riding d10, Intimidation d10

Armor: None

Weapons: Bone Whip (Str+d6; Reach 1)

Special Abilities:

- **Fear -2:** The dullahan heralds the death of an individual. Seeing it is a horrific event.
- **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Supernatural:** The dullahan never suffers from Wound Modifiers; it does not suffer from disease or poison; it only takes half-damage from all attacks except those made from golden weapons. Weapons made of or coated in gold do full damage.
- **Supernatural Vision:** The dullahan ignores all penalties for lighting.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; Called Shots do not extra damage.

GALLOPING HESSIAN

American folklore speaks of the Hessian soldier from the American Revolution, a horseman killed in a battle for Chatterton Hill. This headless horseman is slightly less horrific than the Celtic counterpart, but much more malicious. Instead of simply traveling out to herald the death of a single human, reaping the soul afterward, the headless Hessian is a malevolent

ghost-like creature that attempts to sever the head of whoever gets near.

While the depiction may change from one story to another, the Hessian headless horseman carries a head depicted as a pumpkin. This is no ordinary pumpkin for it is a flaming, exploding jack-o-lantern that continually reappears in the hands of the Hessian shortly after impact.

The Hessian horseman is often seen chasing a target throughout the forest, or near a forest, attempting to make the target suffer the same pain it has – the loss of its head. No one knows for sure if the Hessian horseman is attempting to recover its head, find a new one, or simply make those who come near suffer the same demise.

The Hessian horseman rides a similar black horse to the dullahan, although no claims have been made of supernatural speed or the appearance of flames. The Hessian horseman has also been depicted as a ghost that can actually cause physical harm to an individual either through its flaming head or the use of a sword or axe.

Speculations abound as to what the Hessian horseman is, how it came to be, and what it attacks with. As such, the stories become a mash-up of legends, fictional depictions, and standard folklore depicting what is a serious threat to travelers near the area where the Hessian was killed. What little truth is known surrounds the fact that the Hessian always appears near the forests adjacent to where his untimely death occurred and that he is unable to cross any bridges over a river. The only true chance for survival is escape unless a band of brave warriors can stand their ground and fight against this headless horseman.

The Hessian horseman is found between dusk and dawn in or near the forest adjacent to the hill where his human life found its departure. These woods are but miles from a nearby village, safely protected by a river that separates it from the haunted woods. A lone wooden bridge offers passage into the village and the horseman has tried many times to capture its next victim before making it across that bridge.

As the Hessian horseman is an ethereal being, he cannot harm the bridge and thus is thwarted by his inability to cross it for eternity. However, this is not the case when it comes to human flesh, as this ghost can cause physical harm in a magical sort of way.



HESSIAN HEADLESS HORSEMAN

The Hessian headless horseman is the ghost of a Hessian soldier decapitated during the Revolutionary War, seeking victims to suffer a similar fate.

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

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

Skills: Fighting d8, Riding d10, Intimidation d8, Taunt d8, Throwing d10

Armor: None

Weapons: Exploding Jack-o-Lantern (3/6/12; 2d6; RoF: 1; Shots: Infinite; Large Blast Template), Long Sword (Str+d8) or Axe (Str+d6)

Special Abilities:

- **Fear -1:** The Hessian headless horseman is terrifying to see.
- **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Ethereal:** Although completely visible, the Hessian headless horseman only takes half-damage from non-magical attacks.
- **Supernatural Attacks:** The Hessian headless horseman's attacks are considered magical.
- **Supernatural Vision:** The Hessian headless horseman ignores all penalties for lighting.

Alternatives

As an alternate to the storyline of either headless horseman type, the creature could become more powerful on Halloween as the holiday seemingly increases the being's power. This can be done by increasing the creature's Spirit, Strength, and Vigor by one die type when encountered on Halloween (and adjusting Toughness accordingly).

Adventure Seeds

Hiding Out: A small village has come under the hateful eye of the dullahan in the past several days. The villagers have become extremely frightened of the creature's presence and fear they will all be sentenced to death before the creature disappears again in September. To prevent this from happening, those who are able have fled the village and are hiding in either the nearby woods or caves. Their hope is that without being able to find them, the dullahan can never call-out its victim's name as it will not know where they are.

The villagers have implored the region's mightiest warriors to protect them from the dullahan. Every night, the dullahan is seen riding across the land, sometimes through town, sometimes through the forest. It stops only momentarily to speak the name of its next victim, bringing death immediately. However, the dullahan seems to only speak the name of a victim

it can see or is able to find. The past two nights, it has scoured the land to find a new victim, sadly always able to succeed. The hired warriors must defend the village from the dullahan in a single night or become victims of its wrath the following nights.

Each night the warriors are unable to defeat the dullahan, one of them perishes the following night as the dullahan chooses a new victim's soul to feast upon. If they are clever, the warriors will ambush the dullahan on the first night, ridding the village of this terror permanently. If threatened, the dullahan always fights to the death.

Trick or Treat: It is Halloween and a band of teenagers have dared each other to enter the lands in which the headless horseman is known to ride and attempt to escape across the bridge to the village. While seemingly stupid in every possible way, the teenagers have decided to demonstrate their bravery and show they are not afraid of the horseman. Unfortunately for them, none of them are brave or fast enough and five teenagers meet their death upon the hands of the Hessian headless horseman.

Not knowing where their children are, the parents of the teenagers request the village to investigate the disappearance, fearful that the children have become the headless horseman's next victims. The newly appointed investigators must locate the bodies (as they are surely dead) of the teenagers and dispose of this unnatural threat forever.

MODERN TIMES

To bring either headless horseman to modern times is rather simple. Remove the horse and replace the vehicle with a motorcycle, preferably one with a hellish look. The headless horseman does not need to be confined to the folklore and mythology of centuries past for they could easily have survived or "reincarnated" into a supernatural being of today.

Other options to bring the creature to modern times could be to replace the supposed rags or clothing of the past with leather jackets or trench coats of today. This may provide a bit of armor (+1 is enough) or could just be used to represent the styles of today. Options for weapons may include turning the exploding Jack-o-Lantern into a shotgun-type weapon shooting some type of grenade-like projectile or turning the bone whip into a chain whip (although that may remove some of the horror).

Another option is to give the headless horseman psionic powers to overcome the powerful weapons the modern hunters may possess. Suggestions for powers include *puppet*, *havoc*, *confusion*, *quickness*, and *stun*.

DEADLANDS

THE WIERD WEST GOES DIGITAL



Visionary Comics and Pinnacle Entertainment are bringing the star-studded run of Deadlands One-Shots into the digital world. All four of the original issues are here, as well as the four-part backup story, the origin of The Kid, collected into its very own book.

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Derek Tyler (order #9232471)

CHARACTER GALLERY: HALLOWEEN JACK AND HALLOWEEN JILL

By Brett Boyko of Dark Smile Games

*"When Jack and Jill come down the hill,
to fetch your head for laughter,
run for ground, or it will cost your crown
and the devils coming after."*

~ found carved in a cell wall, London Asylum for Orphans, 1888

RUMORS IN THE DARK



Halloween Jack and Halloween Jill are urban legends, and very real menaces. No one knows where they came from, but stories about their gruesome pranks have been around for centuries. Each Halloween the number of sightings seems to increase. Even worse, the creativity and viciousness of their "tricks and treats" escalate. Stories range from buckets filled with sulfuric acid above a doorway to a missing child, replaced with a steaming meat pie with the child's name carved into it. No matter the prank a note, signed "Jack" or "Jill", will be left behind.

Superstitious individuals believe Jack and Jill to be the original assailants, while sceptics insist the current duo are merely the latest in a line of serial killers using the same story for inspiration. Jack and Jill take skepticism of their existence poorly and go to great lengths to correct "disbelievers." One such individual was found in an oversized Jack-O-Lantern, after it exploded into a rain of body parts at a hospital fundraiser.

Those lucky few who survive an encounter with Jack and Jill describe their grinning Jack-O-Lantern masks and bloodied carving knives with horror, crying the true threat is in their twisted brilliance and teamwork.

PLOT HOOKS

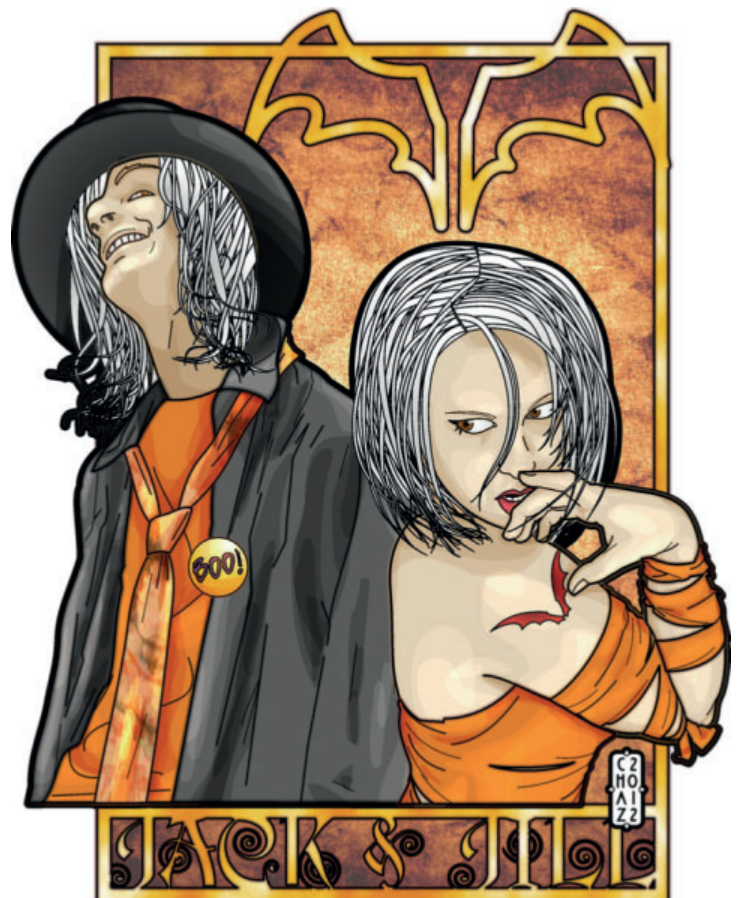
A series of gruesome practical jokes has thrown the fire department, police, and ambulances into complete disarray on Halloween Night. Halloween Jack and Jill are spreading chaos by breaking down infrastructure. This is merely a distraction to keep the authorities and heroes busy while Jack and Jill pursue their real goal: a rare book of fairy tales on display at the Royal Library. This book has the only recorded account of Halloween Jack and Jill's original fairy tale, giving clues to their origin.

Second Encounter

Halloween Jack and Jill haven't forgotten your interference, and this time, you're the prime target. They will do anything and everything they can, going after the heroes' friends, family, and anything they care about. They want to make the heroes angry so they will make mistakes, which the pranksters can use to their advantage. It might be the last Halloween the party sees as Jack and Jill don't relent until either they or one of the PCs is dead.

HALLOWEEN JACK AND HALLOWEEN JILL

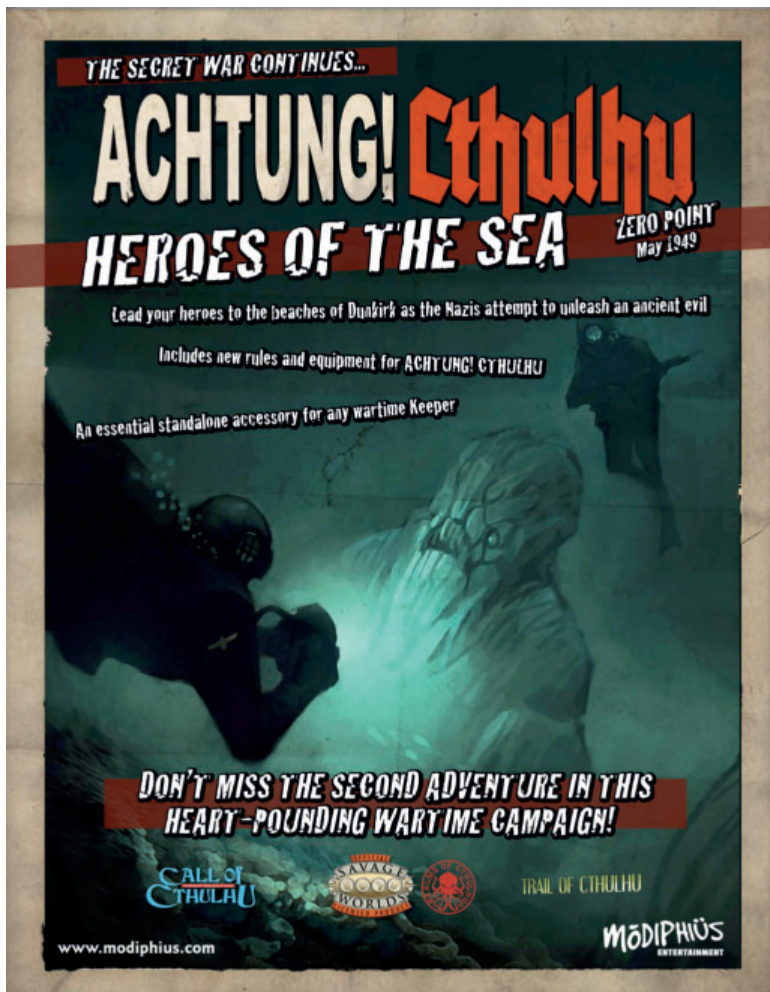
Jack and Jill are fraternal twins and similar in numerous ways. Both are tall and lean, and share the same usually jet-black hair. Jack and Jill prefer to avoid combat, but if cornered, they use their eerily coordinated tactics and gimmicks to disorient, confuse, and harm their opponents in order for both to escape.



Though physically similar (and sharing the same stats!) Jack and Jill have very different personalities. Where Jack is brash and impulsive, Jill is cool and calculating. Their differences show in their targets and pranks; Jack impulsively and randomly chooses victims for his terrible tricks, and Jill will take great time and care to find someone deserving of her attention and painful treats.

Jack and Jill were orphans in the *London Asylum for Orphans* in the late 1880s. The brother and sister protected each other fiercely. During a cholera outbreak Jack, Jill, and many other children fell deathly ill. Many had died within those months, and the brother and sister were growing weaker. On Halloween night, with death walking the Asylum halls, Jack and Jill prayed - one to heaven and the other to hell, though which child prayed to each, neither ever told. A wandering devil overheard them and was moved to make a deal. The devil would cure one of them, and leave the other to die; such misery would be entertaining to it.

"I would have you play a game. Whoever brings the most ruin to their brother or sister on All Hollow's Eve shall be the victor and live. When you are satisfied, return to me and I shall decide the winner."



As the devil had not specified the siblings, Jack declared that the devil was "clearly" using brother and sister to mean all of humanity, that this ruin was meant for everyone else. Jill realized the end of the game was left to the siblings' satisfaction! As long as they were never satisfied with the ruin they brought, they could continue to live in perpetuity, together. The devil gleefully reminded them they could only engage in this contest on All Hollow's Eve, if ever one of them gave up on the contest, it was ended. The devil would then take one of them away and leave the other for heaven where they would be apart eternally. Thus with this threat, the birth of Halloween Jack and Jill began, sowing misery.

Attr: Agility d10, Smarts d12+1, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d12

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 8

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d12, Intimidation d10, Throwing d8, Persuasion d12, Streetwise d10, Knowledge Lethal Jokes d12, Stealth d10, Taunt d8

Gear: Carving Knife (Str+d8, AP 2)

Special Abilities:

- **Acrobat:** +2 to Agility rolls to preform acrobatic maneuvers; +1 to Parry if unencumbered.
- **Fear -1:** Their demonic masks and gruesome reputation cause a Fear check at -1.
- **First Strike:** Once per turn (if not Shaken) make a fighting attack against a foe who moves adjacent to Jack or Jill. This automatically interrupts the opponent's action and does not cost Jack or Jill their action if on hold or not yet activated.
- **Fleet Footed:** Roll a d10 instead of a d6 when running.
- **Improved Dodge:** Subtract 2 from incoming shooting and throwing rolls, unless Jack and Jill are both completely unaware. Add +2 to avoid area effect attacks.
- **Quick:** If dealt a 5 or lower in combat, discard and draw again until the card is greater than 5.



FICTIONAL WRITINGS: UPON THE WOODS

By Vickey A. Beaver



Drought had come again to the north Texas region. Jobs were scarce and food scarcer. The good folk in town had spared all their reserves and were not able to share anymore with those out in the fields. The Moors didn't know what was to come of them. The lady of the house, Gertrude, was growing tired of meals of bread and sour-smelling water. The last bucket had brought up with it something other than the pureness of an underground spring.

She watched her husband's children through a musty drape over a smoke-stained window. They were so lively those two. Harold, the oldest, stood a full four feet with red hair like his father. Gretchen, the skinny girl-child, measured at least a foot shorter. As they played, her brown hair bobbed and swished. If it wasn't for those growing monsters, there would be more food on the table.

Gertrude's dark eyes squeezed together as she fantasized about ways to get rid of them. John would never go for it, that coward of a man. He loved his dead wife's brats and didn't see that they were needless trouble. If she could just make those little creatures, whose hands were always outstretched for food and gifts, just disappear. Wickedness brewed within her and all manner of ideas welled up.

She schemed for the next three weeks while her husband was away, searching for something to bring home to the table. As summer gave way to fall, the coolness of the night returned.

She stared out at the forest from their meager home. It called to her with its tall pines and ever-growing cypresses. The Devil's Walking Stick hedged the place she eyed. Its white flowers had faded more than a month past, early for it since the water was not to be had. The berries it yielded had never made it to their full potential and the birds got to them before the Moors could. At last, as dusk approached she hit upon a winning resolution.

"John, our luck has run out. We have just enough flour to make two more loaves of bread. The cheese has long passed gone and the animals you've sought aren't to be found." She paused to assess what his face might reveal. His once young features were weathered from the heat of the country. Those blue eyes seemed dull and closed in worry as he listened. Gertrude suppressed a smile as she continued. "You've worked so hard and I know we didn't want it to come to this, but we are going to have to do something. Perhaps the children can go into the city and stay on as help up there." She saw his jaw tighten as his cracked lips split to speak. She rushed on, "They'd be well-fed and could earn some money to bring home while they are at it. And we'd need less so you and I wouldn't parish of starvation. Don't you see? It is well for all of us."

"I won't have it." He looked down a bit at the table.

"It is the only way," she pleaded.

"No, woman. You know the only work in the city for a girl in these times

is one without virtue. I won't have Gretchen's innocence stolen from her, the least of which by me." He had managed to look her in the eye by the time he finished.

"Fine then. But they can at least do more to contribute around here. They play all day while I cook and clean and you go off in a vain attempt to come home without your hands empty for once."

He knew that was not all they did, but he hadn't the will left to argue. He sighed and stared at her with her flushed cheeks. "What do you want them to do?"

"They can go into the trees and gather some wood at least. The eves are cooling and we need more than just enough to get a fire for the water. There are plants there, too. They can pluck some for us to eat and..."

"But there are those which we cannot. They'll make us sick, some of them."

"Nonsense, man. I'll show them the ones to pick and the ones to stay away from." She stood rigidly, looking down upon him. Even then she was scheming.

"Fine. They can go out tomorrow."

As the sun climbed up the sky, the shrewd woman roused the youngsters. She bid goodbye to her husband as he went into town and then she took the children to the edge of the forest. She pointed out the oleander with its long, pointed leaves, warning them that eating it would mean certain deaths. Grabbing some

white snakeroot she cautioned, "A bit of this and you'll shake yourselves nearly to death. Stay away from it, ya hear?"

Harold and Gretchen looked sharp and talked to each other to make sure each remembered what was told to them. The big brother reassured his little sister that they'd do just fine. Ma Gertrude had showed them what to stay out of and helped them spot the mesca beans that hid here and there between the trees where the soil was not desperately dry. They followed her directions, going deeper and deeper under the canopy of branches. Time ran away from them and the sun began to hide.

"Where are we, Harry?" Gretchen asked in a small voice.

"Don't worry, sister. Ma will come find us if we don't show up soon." He looked all around them and back and forth at the sound of falling limbs.

"But there are coyotes out here at dark. It's getting cold, too. What if she doesn't find us?" Her brown eyes were watery.

"It will be okay. Here, let's eat some of what we've gathered." The nimble boy made a clearing with his sister's help. Harold made a circle with some loose stones then filled it with

wood for a fire. They sat and eagerly munched on the beans, Harry not noticing Gretchen was giving him more than his share.

Ten minutes passed and she starting squealing. "Harry! What's the matter with you?" Her little face went paler as she watched her dear brother rattle uncontrollably a moment and fall to the ground. As she reached for him, she felt her stomach clench and she held herself about the belly as she, too, was taken over by a brief, terrible trembling. Betrayed by their stepmother's words, the two lay defenseless in the night.

Crunching sounds on the forest's floor gouged at their sleeping minds. They could hear a voice. Gretchen opened her eyes. "Papa!" she shouted although her father could barely hear her. Soon Harold arose from his ill-induced slumber.

"You found us," his voice quivered with the words.

"Yes, dear boy, and now we must make our way home."

"Where is Ma Gertrude?" Gretchen asked.

"It's the strangest thing. I came home and she was not there. I don't know where it is that she went, but I saw her apron near the edge of our

land, as if she'd set it there for her return. No matter, though. I'm sure she'll be home soon enough."

Walking through the darkness they could hear the sounds of coyotes on the hunt. John assured his beloved children that they were safe and he was certain no coyote would get Ma Gertrude either. Since they carried a lantern and a make-shift torch, the creatures of the night would stay away, and surely his wife had done the same. Upon their tired entrance the children lit up. "Papa! You made us soup!" Gretchen's eyes were stars beaming in the night.

"This will last us some days." He smiled. In fact, it lasted them several weeks. It was the highlight of Thanksgiving. They didn't complain of the odd tasting meat since the meal was better than plain bread. With Gertrude having gone lost, there were fewer mouths to feed and everything lasted longer. When the rains finally came, woodland life returned just in time to be snowed in by an unusually cold and wet winter. The white covered everything, including the odd bone here and there throughout the woods.

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PRODUCTIONS





GENERAL INTEREST: HOLIDAY SPINS

By Vickey A. Beaver



Sometimes pulling real-world experiences into a game can provide a fresh vibe. Whether authentic or imagined, ancient or modern, using holidays is a good way to do that. Autumn through winter months are full of great celebrations and observances for inspiration.

Some GMs start with mood music. Maybe it's their favorite track from *Midnight Syndicate's Halloween Music* or Pandora Celtica's twisted Christmas tune, *Santa Claus Got Eaten by the Kracken*. They might also turn their table into a land of unrelenting danger like with Paizo's upcoming *GameMastery Map Pack: Ice Cavern*. An adventurous GM could even serve holiday foods in a decorated room to really get the crew into the spirit of a given season.

The subject came up during a recent chat at Beautiful Brains Books and Games online led by President Jodi Black, a contributor and editor for Pinnacle Entertainment Group (PEG), and Vice-President Clint Black, the PEG Core Rules Brand Manager. The two *Savage Worlds* luminaries graciously let the conversation flow and even helped it along.

Jodi mused about the concept of "special holiday [gaming] episodes a la *Doctor Who*." Not far from the mark, chatter 'Greg' offered up, "I did a Halloween episode for my supers game that involved Freddy Krueger, Dracula, Apocalyptic Biker Zombies, and Weird Science." When asked if that was all in one episode he responded not only that it was, but he'd forgotten to mention that the "key was an episode of *Sliders* and the movie *Dreamscape* but with a twist." That's a lot of screen influence.

Some participants alluded to non-traditional interpretations of holidays,

such as Friday the 13th. Clint quipped, "Beware the 13th of March!" Not quite the same ring as "ides," but certainly close to the fateful date.

Halloween was a popular topic. Jodi relayed that the only holiday-inspired games she's been involved in were Halloween-focused games. That was still "one up" on chatter 'gleepism' who pondered past games, "That's odd. I can't recall a single instance of a holiday being featured in any of my games. As a player or a GM." A possible explanation? "But then, the last long-term group I was in we played at a Books'a'Million and got pretty sick of holiday themes pretty quickly."

David H. took the holiday conversation closer to spring. "I once ran an Easter-themed *Fallout* one-shot. They had to kill the giant mutant rabbit with strange gel inside of oblong plastic containers. Obviously, the containers were hidden."

Clint got us back to autumn, "Horrors of War occurs over Halloween, but I start by describing it as late October." He continued that he ran a similar scenario for a *Savage Buffy* game he described as a "Halloween party in a corn field when animated scarecrows attack."

Proving other times of year can be filled with fright fests, Calvin Thompson advanced us to winter where he said he "did *Silent Night*, *Hungry Night* for [Deadlands]. One of our players was a huge Dr. Seuss fan, and figured it out almost instantly." That just happens to be a free One Sheet adventure available on the PEG website.

Curious as to what else might come out if given more time in the post-chat, Jodi prompted folks for more cool holiday game memories. 'Gleepism's' best

was "was running a D&D game at a Halloween party, with 12 players." Thompson's was having a "player who played a harrowed mad scientist who thought he was Santa and developed a rocket-powered sleigh in [Deadlands]."

Wondering what we'd find out if we had a chance to do a more formal interview, *Savage Insider* asked for volunteers for a Q & A on holiday spins. *Savage Worlds* GM Robert Hudson was one of those who put a hat in the ring.

SI: What are your favorite fall/winter holidays to incorporate into a game (real or created for your game) and why?

RH: I'm running a lot of fantasy games right now, and whether in an established/published campaign world, or in one that I've brewed up myself, I always wind up utilizing both a 'Fall Harvest Festival' and a 'Midwinter Festival' of some sort. If the setting already has one, I use theirs to help tie folks to the campaign world, but if not, then I insert them. The harvest festival is a reminder that most fantasy worlds (like historical, real-world Earth) are, to a much greater degree than we are in the modern world, literally tied to the crop growth cycle, and the midwinter festival is normally a way of getting people together in the traditionally 'dead' part of the year, as well as a way to delineate the passing of the year in the campaign.

Of the ones that I've created, or incorporated into games, two stand out for me, one created, one incorporated:

Incorporated: In Monte Cook's *Ptolus* campaign setting there is a midwinter celebration that hides a secret: the Gods created a hidden month that exists between the last second of the old year

and the first of the new. If you know the right rituals and spells, you can access that month during the celebration and gain a 'free' month that doesn't age your character to perform research, spend time with a loved one, work powerful magic, or whatever, as long as you stay within the confines of the room from which you performed the ritual. It's a secret, hidden within a celebration, that rewards characters not only for reaching the levels of power necessary to cast the spells to utilize it and the effort needed to discover it, but also one that celebrates the passing of the old year and the birth of the new in a new and interesting way. Plus, a free month! =)

Created: Years ago, in the dark recesses of time back when I was in college, I created a harvest festival for a (sadly) short-lived campaign that was an attempt to play with the traditional themes of the season. Instead of celebrating the end of the harvest, the Festival of the Crimson Leaves was concerned with the trees and their symbolic shedding of blood (their crimson leaves) as a sacrifice to the land to help it survive the coming winter. People would ritually cut themselves during the festival to add their blood to that shed by the trees, sacrifice animals to do the same, and so on. Pumpkins with carved faces and flames in them were set out to allow the forest spirits to see that the sacrifice was being performed and that people were honoring the sacrifice of the trees appropriately. Those same pumpkins would form the heads of vengeful spirits

that came to apply corrective action when the sacrifice was judged insufficient. My players never got to that point in the game, but I've always liked the idea, and keep meaning to reuse it simply because it takes familiar themes and looks at them differently.

SI: What are some of the most memorable ways you've incorporated a holiday into a game?

RH: Primarily, I've sited rituals (both ones the players wanted to see performed, and those they didn't) on holidays to help tie the idea that magic can benefit from seasonally appropriate association. So rituals involving death, undeath, and winter/cold/ice are more effective and more likely to be enacted during winter months, while rituals dealing with transformation, growth, and maturity are more likely to be seen/attempted during the fall months.

Memorably, I once set the last adventure of a campaign on Midwinter, taking a nod to the television show *24* by advancing sessions one hour at a time, and adding on problem after problem to the 20th level characters, all culminating in an attempt by the former most powerful living wizard in the world (now the most powerful undead wizard in the world) to harness the energy of the midwinter ceremony to become a god. Everything culminated in a big brawl just before midnight to stop him, where the tired, low on resources PCs had to fight not just the bad guy and his allies, but the cycle of the

seasons until the new year was born and the moment when apotheosis was possible was past. They still mention that one, so I guess it was successful.

SI: Do you do anything at the game table to add holiday ambiance to the session?

RH: For things like that, I usually default to seasonally appropriate snacks and food items, and a small amount of decoration to give atmospheric hints. It's easy to do too much, so I err on the other side.

SI: What advice would you offer to GMs looking to give their games some holiday flare?

RH: Start small and build up to it; whether it's decorations at the gaming table, snacks, or a throwdown for the fate of the world on a holiday, it'll mean more if the players feel like it builds naturally.

SI: Anything else you'd like to add on the subject?

RH: Be conscious of the religious connotations of festivals and your players. Mimicking real world festivals with their real world religious themes and practices in a fantasy environment may lead to a potential point of contention for some players.

More responses will likely be posted online at our site or Facebook page between issues.



DESIGNER'S DIARY: ACHTUNG! CTHULHU

By Chris Birch of MODIPHIUS



Designer's Description

Achtung! Cthulhu is a terrifying tentacle fueled WW2 setting for several major RPGs including *Call of Cthulhu*, *Savage Worlds* (*Realms of Cthulhu*), *Trail of Cthulhu* and *PDQ*. Three core campaigns, each released over the course of several episodic but standalone PDF adventures, will help introduce the secret war to fight the horrors unleashed on the world. Our first campaign, *Zero Point* by Sarah Newton (*Mindjammer*, *Legends of Anglerre*, *Chronicles of Future Earth*), launched this summer with *Episode 1 – Three Kings*, *Episode 2 – Heroes of the Sea* is due out in October. We plan to expand this with mini supplements, a general setting book, a board game, miniatures range, T-shirts, canvas art prints, and much more.

Purpose

Sarah Newton and I had discussed a wartime game back when we were working on *Legends of Anglerre*, but it was one of those great ideas at the wrong time.

When she came to me with the *Zero Point* campaign I realized it was just the right idea to launch the whole *Achtung! Cthulhu* project. That and finally having MODIPHIUS as a vehicle to launch our own projects meant I could have more control over the process and develop it the way I wanted.

Influences

I love WW2 as a setting and have been a WW2 war games fan since I first decided to roll dice when playing with soldiers. As a kid I loved *Sergeant Rock* and *Weird War* and used to pour over the legends of insane Nazis and brave GIs. The opening scene of *Hellboy*, the legends of HP Lovecraft, and the real life crazy inventions the Nazis pursued all joined the melting pot. For Sarah's *Zero Point* campaign, I know she has been inspired by all manner of weirdness in the Nazi camp, whilst I have been exploring the legends of Atlantis and the Nazi obsession with finding this ancient bastion for our second campaign, *Shadows of Atlantis*. For our third campaign we are drawing on HP Lovecraft for our *Assault on the Mountains of Madness*.

Research

Sarah Newton has conducted a huge amount of research to the point of correcting my in-depth knowledge of army vehicles when I thought she has featured the wrong halftrack in a scene. Her research on Dunkirk and the ancient world for *Heroes of the Sea*, *Episode 2* in the *Zero Point* campaign, is amazing and helps to bring the historical background of this secret war to life. I'm currently researching life in Berlin during the war for the opening adventure of *Shadows of Atlantis*, along with the extraordinary attempts by the

Nazis to develop all manner of bizarre wonder weapons and how this technology might have developed given the right direction, funding, and breakthroughs

Gaming Experience

Using various popular rules systems allows players to experience *Achtung! Cthulhu* in a variety of ways. I knew this would be a popular setting, but not everyone loves one system over another, so I set out to make sure we covered our bases with a variety of systems. *Call of Cthulhu* lets you play dark, gritty and desperate, *Trail of Cthulhu* for those who want to think their way out of trouble, *Savage Worlds*, of course, for the action adventure (but with *Realms of Cthulhu* letting you do everything from dark to pulp style), and of course *PDQ* for some storytelling goodness thrown in.

Each episode is developed to be a stand-alone adventure too. This means you don't need the preceding adventures or the next adventures to have a satisfactory game. Everything you need for a one-stop shop of wartime, tentacle-fueled action is packed into each release so you can drop it into an existing campaign, play a one-shot, or indeed take part in the wider campaign.

Comparison

No one has really delved deep into a Cthulhu-inspired version of WW2. There have been plenty of Weird War RPGs (*Pinnacle's Weird Wars* being a great example and we have ensured we are compatible with that book) and there are several skirmish games. Whilst we embrace the obvious weird war elements, we're creating some exciting new mythoi, looking at how the Nazi war machine was progressing and wondering how things

might have developed given the right nudge. How would the influence of Cthulhu affect events, technology, and people?

I think people are going to like our version of events. Story-wise players can explore the secret war fought behind the scenes to let history go the way it did, or they can fight to change the course of history and see what happens when the Nazi war machine unleashes fully operational versions of the dreaded drawing board wonder weapons wreathed in the full horror of the Cthulhu mythos.

Development Process

We have a release roadmap for MODIPHIUS and in particular *Achtung! Cthulhu*, but as writers join the team we work with them to identify which projects they will enjoy the most and try to focus efforts where they will have the best results. I have worked in marketing for the last 24 years and in particular fashion for 12 of them. Fashion trains you to examine trends and create unique work that is also commercial. Marketing trains you to research the audience, what they want, and how to reach them. Using this experience, we created games projects that we are excited about, but that draw

on cool combinations of genres, such as Cthulhu and WW2. Next we match them with commercial game systems to get those great ideas into the hands of the most people.

I'm a big believer in creating inspirational work that drives people's imagination. As an art director, I know the right art is so important to bringing a world to life and I've looked hard to find artists that really 'get' the projects we're creating. We've decided to follow an episodic development process meaning we can get chunks of our settings into the hands of players long before most major books would be released. It speeds up the development, but on the other hand, it does fragment the process somewhat. However, I find that is more than balanced by the huge impact of the team seeing their product on sale, reading the reviews, and receiving positive comments; this is one of the big reasons we can get so many cool projects underway at such a high standard. We now have a team of writers working on different elements of the *Achtung! Cthulhu* project. Sarah Newton is helping the *Zero Point* campaign, and others to be announced are putting the finishing touches to a series of other releases.

When it comes to an actual product, typically we discuss the concept with the writer and look at draft work through the writing process. Sarah Newton does a vast amount of research and cranks out a near perfect manuscript ready for layout. (She is truly a writing machine!). Once any playtesting is complete and the writer delivers the manuscript, it goes into edit, and we discuss any historical, technical, plot, or rules issues. As soon as we are seeing finished chunks of text, we hand this over to the artist and start discussing concepts for key scenes, and this gives them a little more time to start their own creative process. When the final text is submitted we can then short-list a bunch of image concepts with the artist that will be exciting for the book and help evoke the story. For me, one of the most exciting parts is seeing the artwork coming in based on the writing. It's at this point that the project takes on a new life, and everyone involved gets really excited! After the edit, we go into layout and approvals, and then it's just a matter of getting it out on time and, of course, telling the whole world about it. In this particular case, that is *Episode 2 of Zero Point for Achtung! Cthulhu* by Sarah Newton!

Ancient World
A new dark fantasy setting by
Mystical Throne Entertainment
coming in November

Dhuran; a foreboding planet abandoned by the gods. 500 years after the gods rained fire and brimstone upon the land, leaving the few survivors to fend for themselves, secrets are being uncovered. The new civilization of the now godless Dhuran find the malevolent spirits of their long-dead ancestors hunting their descendant bloodline. As if being accosted by the spirits of their ancestors isn't enough, tears are opening between the mortal and chaos realms, pouring demons, enslavers, and the undead into the world. Though the people have managed to live and grow since that apocalyptic event, they now fight against the denizens of a planet that wants them dead.



MINIATURE SPOTLIGHT: HOLIDAYS OF MINIATURE PROPORTION

By Vickey A. Beaver



Miniature figurines have long been used to help bring games to life. In honor of the holidays, *Savage Insider* embarked on a quest for theme-specific minis. Several Pinnacle Entertainment Group forum visitors pointed us in some very useful directions.

Karl Keesle gave us a great list with a large sampling of Reaper, RAFM, and many others. He shared some of his thoughts about minis at his table during the holidays. "Gathering this list helped me out a lot. A *Savage Worlds* Ghostbusters campaign is on my pile of 'Games I want to run', so those Halloween/pumpkin/witch minis would be great for that. Even the evil looking Santa." The concept of the evil Santa got us thinking of putting an *A Nightmare Before Christmas* spin on a game.

There's nothing like random observations to get those ideas flowing.

Reaper Miniatures

By Holiday:

- Yule: <http://www.reapermini.com/Miniatures/%20Christmas>
- Halloween: <http://www.reapermini.com/Miniatures/halloween>
- St. Patrick's Day: <http://www.reapermini.com/Miniatures/owl/latest/03579>
- Easter: <http://www.reapermini.com/Miniatures/easter/latest/01432>
- General undead: <http://www.reapermini.com/Miniatures/reaper%20scythe>

By Item:

- Santa Mousling and Helper
- Santa Claus
- Rotpatch, Pumpkin Golem
- Pumpkin Horrors
- Jack O'Lanterns & Pumpkins
- Elise, The Witch
- Sophie in Cat Costume
- Witch, Cauldron & Cat
- Halloween Mouslings
- Monstrous Snowmen
- Familiar Pack VI (Halloween Familiars)
- Thanksgiving Mouselings
- Abram Duskwalker (Suggested with the idea that he could be a pilgrim with a bit of stretching of the imagination!)
- Native American Chieftain
- Dorly Luckrock, Halfling Scout (Suggested as it looks like he went turkey hunting.)

Keesle added, "The Mouslings from Reaper are great, just don't know where I could use them. My favorite is Rotpatch the Pumpkin Golem from Reaper; I need to use that in a game!" Naturally, the Mouslings would fit for a *Savage* version of Mouse Guard. But this is a holiday issue, and while the focus is on fall and winter, there's no reason to omit all the others. A holiday use for Mouslings? You could do an April Fools' Day joke on your players telling them their characters have all turned into mice for a game.

For those with a little patience, but not a lot of time, Keesle offers one more tip, "Another thing I do is I take old Horrorclix models and cut them off their bases with an Xacto knife and rebase them on some 25mm bases. They are great for instant minis. They are relatively cheap, too, and pre-painted."

Citrine offered some links to Reaper corresponding to specific holidays and one described as "gobs of undead." Meanwhile, Other Mike and Keesle proved "great minds think alike" by suggesting Evil Snowmen by Copplestone Castings. Likewise, Jordan Peacock chimed in, "To add onto Citrine's list, there are also some snowmen [at Reaper]." Gamers being resourceful as we are, Cryonic was thinking outside the box, "LEGO has some holiday themed guys." Sure enough; a search for "Lego Holiday Figures" does return all kind of results as does going to the Lego site and simply searching for "holiday."

We're listing the manufactures and minis without links as we try to avoid embedding links in our publications. For the general categories, we've included them. You may find the extensive list with links on our Facebook page in the Notes section.

RAFM Miniatures

- Scarecrows (Pumpkins)
- Christmas Ghost Scrooge & Halloween Ghost

Foundry Miniatures

- Christmas Single Packs
- Christmas: Santa Hold Up

Scibor Miniatures

- Santa Hunter
- Ogre Santa Bear Eater
- Ogre Santa with Elf
- Christmas Snowman Slayer
- Pumpkin Slayer

Dark Sword Miniatures

- Christmas Honey Badger
- Santa Frog and Tadpole Timmy

Cobblestone Castings

- Evil Snowmen
- Father Christmas (and Lovely Assistant)

Enigma Miniatures

- Bad Santa (Christmas 2009) Seasonal Figure

Horrorclix

- Nightmares #50 Santa
- Nightmares #27 Zombie Reindeer
- Nightmares #24 Jack in the Box
- Freakshow #205 Wacko Jacko Lantern (Limited Edition)
- Base Set #86 Headless Horseman (Unique)
- Base Set #46 Scarecrow (Rookie)

LEGO

Search for "Lego Holiday Figures" in your favorite search engine or go to www.lego.com and enter "holiday."

Fae Nightmares



A Fantasy RPG where you are the adopted "child" of an Urban Fae, sent to wage war on their behalf.

This is a world where long-forgotten legends are real and very deadly adversaries. Here, a wrong word can be as dangerous as any inner-city gang fight, and using your wits is necessary for survival.



Dark Smile Games

www.DarkSmileGames.com



GREAT ADVENTURES: CATCHING THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

By Kevin Rohan of Silver Gryphon Games



This adventure takes place in the Wellstone City setting, albeit almost 130 years before modern times, in 1885. The Wellstone City book from Silver Gryphon Games is not required to run this adventure, but if it is used as a spring board to other adventures, that could change. The map included with this adventure has been graciously provided by Fabled Environments and can be purchased in full, from their store at www.fabledenvironments.com. One inch equals five feet scale. This adventure was written with the *Savage Worlds Deluxe* book, but could be run with any iteration of the rules.

It's Christmas on Wellstone Island. The year is 1885. Far up from the hustle and bustle of the Harbor, an old friend of yours, Madame Josephine Madison, has cordially invited you to her estate in the Parish section of the island. Her house, almost as old as the Grant Plantation, is nestled into a grove of Cyprus trees and when there, you feel as if there isn't anyone else in the world except those at the estate.

Mme. Madison's family has fallen into unfortunate times. Her parents both died of yellow fever only a few years prior, leaving her and her brother the surviving heirs to the Madison estate. They have done well with it, but now Josephine's brother has gone off to the American Southwest to fight in the Apache War. Josephine is more than capable of minding the estate on her own, and she only hires out help on special occasions, taking care of the day-to-day business of the house by herself.

In the past, Josephine's parties have always been fun. They aren't always smashing soirees of drunken debauchery like some of the others in the Parish feel they are entitled to throw. There is usually drink, dancing, and parlor games, and they manage to make even the cold estate feel cozy. The former Doctor and Madame Madison were keen on all the latest technology and avidly followed the work of Edison and his men. Many of these devices have fallen into disuse, but Josephine has made sure to keep the Victrola phonograph in good working order for use during her gatherings.

You know she's invited others, but it is not known who at this time; another great feature of Josephine's gatherings was the constantly evolving guest list. It has become as eccentric as she, and you are sure to know at least one other person there. If not, the other party-goers could become new fast friends, or you may never see them again.

No Guts, No Problem

One of the main changes from the old rule set to the *Deluxe Edition* of the *Savage Worlds* rules is the lack of a Guts skill. This has become a straight Spirit check now. This adventure follows suit, and even if you are using an older edition of the rules, any time any event that would normally call for a Guts check will instead be handled by a Spirit roll.

There is a list of pre-generated PCs that the players may choose from, or they can elect to make some up on the fly. The PCs represented in this adventure are constructed at the Novice level with no advancements. However, each of them is missing a Major Hindrance as well as either an Edge or an attribute increase and five skill points unspent from character creation. This is intentional and the players need to choose these to customize their characters. All of the PCs are Wild Cards.

Any sort of biographical information has also been left off the characters. It is up to the players to choose the name, age, sex, and even enough of the background of their characters to get them going. Included at the end of this adventure are lists of popular male and female names of the time, including a third list of last names that were common in the American South during the latter half of the 1800s.

THE MADISON MANSION

The invitations are for 6 p.m. sharp. It is up to the PCs whether they arrive early to sequester time with Mme. Madison, on time to be respectful, or fashionably late, which wasn't quite in fashion yet. The rooms of the mansion appear as they do in the map provided by Fabled Environments, furnished exactly as they appear on the version of the map that shows beds, tables, chairs, and so on. The bedrooms are comfortable but sparsely populated with useful items on this adventure, even for a crafty player or a lucky character.

The one change to the map is the Parlor, just to the left of the main entrance. In addition to two comfortable couches facing each other, there is a round table between them. Additional couches can be assumed to be around the table, pending the number of characters that need to sit.

Role-playing Suggestions

The adventure takes place in a non-electrified Victorian mansion. Most gamers today don't remember a time before fast-food, let alone electricity; trying to sell the ambiance of this adventure, which takes place in the creepy dark, can be tricky. It is our suggestion that you black out all light in the game room that comes from electric devices: turn off the TVs, cover any tiny lights with tape, and shut off all the lights. Give each of the players a candle, and maybe have a camp lantern in the middle of the table. That should be their only light (unless of course the candles burn out, then have a spare). Take caution with the flames and playing in complete darkness.

Also, the main ghost in this adventure uses the phonograph, a very recent and novel purchase of Mme. Madison, to play Christmas music. See the suggested song list of fitting music for 1885 and before at the end of this adventure. We recommend finding the songs via any one of a number of online radios or music playing services such as Grooveshark.com or Pandora. Even if the players smash the phonograph, it will continue to play, its clockworks moving and twitching if the mechanism is smashed.

The phonograph is not marked on the map, but it is the box between the two chairs on the east side of the main floor of the Two-Story Library.

Madame Madison brings everyone into the Parlor a few minutes before 8 p.m. and invites you all to sit down around a table with a mass of candles in the center that have been fused into a single waxy mass with multiple wicks. Comfortable couches surround the table and the candles have been burning, shedding almost as much light in the room as an oil lamp.

Once everyone is seated, she asks you all to hold hands and explains that she is going to attempt to call out to the spirit of her mother, who passed in this very room, three years prior, at the stroke of 8 p.m., on this very day. Today is the winter solstice, the time when the veil between the spirit and physical worlds is at its most thin. With that explained, she begins to call out to the spirit of her mother, Sarah. After a few minutes of chanting, you all get the feeling that nothing has happened, nothing at all. Josephine stops chanting and

the expression on her face is a combination of sadness, foolishness, and confusion.

"I don't...it should have..." she starts to say quietly, and then sighs. As she does this, a great wind erupts in the room, blowing out all of the candles. Josephine screams in shock, and in the darkness, her eyes can be seen glowing pale blue; her irises and pupils have been completely absorbed by the light.

"Get out of my house!" her voice hisses, thin and papery.

Should the PCs not heed this warning, Josephine becomes more intimidating and tosses the table across the room like it is a child's toy. Unbeknownst to the PCs, or even Josephine, she has become possessed by her mother's spirit. When she tells them to get out of her house, she was not talking to the PCs, but to the former Dr. Madison, whose spirit is also trapped in the house and was awakened by the séance.

Dr. Madison's ghost is very angry. The good doctor, who was normally very mild mannered, had an entire legacy of sins, and all of them were kept in the house with him as his spirit was trapped. These particular sins were manifested by five ghosts of Dr. Madison's other family: his unwanted children that were the offspring of himself and the slaves his family had owned before the Civil War which ended just 20 years prior. They have been tormenting the good Doctor all these years, and now, they too have been awakened by the séance.

The spirit of the doctor is very powerful, and it has locked the exterior doors and windows of the mansion. They, and the walls, cannot be broken, smashed, or opened in any way until Dr. Madison's spirit has been put to rest. From here on in, the adventure is a sandbox; Dr. Madison is running the show, and the possessed Josephine is the only source of help.

As soon as the PCs get to a door and check it, finding it locked and immovable, they start to hear the phonograph play from the two-story library. The ghost of Dr. Madison appears in the main hallway leading to the living room from the front door and charges at the PCs, wild attacking only one of them, just trying to scare them before the real games begin.

The ghost of Madam Madison's father comes at you, screaming a sound that is shrill and yet seems to shake the entire house with a supernatural bass. He swings.

After the attack, he disappears with a second loud, soul-shattering scream. Then, there is silence for a few seconds until the laughter of children starts echoing hauntingly through the house and lamps and candles in adjacent rooms start going out one after another.

Lighting Conditions

Most of the time, the lighting in the house is very poor. At times it could be total darkness. In the living room there is a fire going in the fire place, and it brings the lighting penalty up to -1 for the living room area and -2 for the open areas surrounding the living room. All other rooms of the house are at -4 due to darkness unless PCs carry a burning candle, and then the penalties are -2 in a small burst template around them, and -3 beyond that. Each additional candle in one place pushes the light radius out another inch, and when three or more candles are in the same place at the same time, a new small burst template is formed in the center where the penalty is -1 to see, -2 for two inches beyond that, and -3 beyond that. With five or more candles, this inner circle reduces to a zero penalty, -1 for two inches beyond that, -2 for two inches beyond that, and -3 beyond that 6 inch radius.

There are a few oil lamps around the house, and they work in a similar manner, but they give a -1 penalty in a small burst template, a -2 penalty for 2 inches beyond that, and a -3 penalty for open space beyond that. Multiple lanterns in the same space stack light like the candle example. Candles are overpowered by lanterns unless there are three or more candles being used (which are the equivalent of one oil lamp).

GHOST PHYSICS

The Spirit Lock on the house is just one aspect of Ghost Physics. Ghosts have rules they have to follow; they are the trapped spirits of former people, and as such, the rules of the world that were ingrained in the psyche of the phantasms. Ghosts must use doors and stairs. They can pass through doors that have been shut, but this takes a round, no matter how much movement the ghost has left. Spirits move very quickly, and they seem to flicker in and out of existence as they move. This does not mean they phase in and out of the corporeal world. Instead, they simply turn visible and invisible very quickly. Characters with First Strike and other Edges with similar benefits can attack a Ghost as it moves by, but the attempt is made at an additional -3 penalty due to the Spirit's appearance and method of movement.

Salt and Iron

All Ghosts are vulnerable to salt and iron. They cannot cross a barrier of salt (and due to the Ghost Physics, they cannot bypass it by trying to come down through the ceiling or up from the floor). If thrown salt hits a specter, it will disrupt it, but not wound or shake it. The specter will disappear for the rest of the round. Iron will cause full damage to a Ghost and Shake them if they are made to maintain contact with it for a full round. It will not be able to become Unshaken until the iron is no longer

touching the Ghost. Iron is the only thing in the house that will damage any of the ghosts.

If the PCs directly ask the possessed Josephine how to fight the ghosts, she tells them they need salt and iron and starts mumbling, "Cannot cross the salt," over and over again in a loop until the PCs ask her another question. Salt cannot be reused over and over again; once it has been laid in a line or circle, it has become unclean and cannot be used again. The same can be said for salt that is thrown.

PCs may also have skill points in Knowledge (Religion), Knowledge (Occult), or a similar skill. With that, a successful skill check will remind the character that salt and iron are effective against ghosts.

The Parlor as a Safe Room

The possessed Josephine can keep the Doctor's spirit out of the parlor, but not the children. They will come in to attack the PCs but leave Josephine alone. Once they are properly equipped with iron weapons and salt, this could be an excellent place to hole up or re-group. The ghost of Josephine's mother keeps her possessed until the Doctor is put to rest.

She answers all questions the PCs have, but the answers may be cryptic. She isn't of much help, but knows everything that's going on in the house. She does not know the ghosts of the children are linked to Dr. Madison's ghost.

GHOSTS

There are three types of ghosts in this adventure; all of them are different from the entry found in the *Savage Worlds Deluxe* book. Each has a Weakness for Salt and Iron and is bound by Ghost Physics, as previously stated. Only Dr. Madison can use the Spirit Lock ability making it impossible to escape the house. Dr. Madison is also a Wild Card.

Ghosts can be Shaken and Wounded by dealing damage to them. Dr. Madison is an exception to this, as defined in his section below. Once the children are dealt a Wound, they are destroyed. Once Dr. Madison's Ghost is able to be hit, he can take up to three wounds, and any beyond that does not cause Dr. Madison to roll on the incapacitation table; he simply vaporizes.

Children's Games

The small children ghosts actively play with the PCs. They can each attack the PCs, but some just want to have fun with them, not understanding the fun they are having could be lethal. The children have become very sadistic and go as far as blowing out candles, untying shoe laces and retying them when characters are perched at the top of the stairs, and all manner of things that

are considered normal childhood pranks, but are now very ill-timed.

The Children don't stay and fight if engaged. Instead they try to run away using hit and run tactics. The Twins do a tag-team on the PCs, but the others prefer a one-on-one. Sweetie Pie is playing hide and seek with them, and when they get close, she lunges in a wild attack.

Multiple Ghosts

Dr. Madison will not be in the same room as his children, if he can help it. He prefers to haunt the living room and master bedroom on the second floor, while the children stick to the side rooms. They will "play" with the PCs only if they are cornered and cannot get out of the room.



DR. MADISON

The formerly good doctor destroys anything in his path; his nature has become twisted and evil. He has locked down the house and the inhabitants are his play things. Appearing almost as he did in life, he stands 6'2" in height and sports a great black beard. He wears suit pants, suspenders, and a blue and white pinstriped shirt. He prefers, as all of the ghosts in the house do, to use hit-and-run tactics.

Dr. Madison is not your typical Wild Card ghost. To destroy him, the PCs have to destroy each of his children. Every time one is taken out, it makes Dr. Madison appear to be more solid. It is only after the children are gone that he can be put down permanently. Once Dr. Madison is put down, the Spirit Lock breaks and the PCs may leave.

Attr: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d10, Vigor d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d10, Notice d12, Taunt d10, Stealth d12+4, Throwing d12

Special Abilities:

- **Ethereal:** Ghosts are immaterial and can only be harmed by magical or iron-based attacks.
- **Hardy:** Being Shaken while already Shaken does not result in a wound.
- **Salt and Iron:** Salt can be a barrier to Ghosts or it can disrupt them and stun them for one round.
- **Undead:** Ghosts receive a +2 to Unshake, they do not receive extra damage from Called Shots. Dr. Madison does is not penalized by wound modifiers.
- **And Stay Down!:** Once Dr. Madison's ghost is brought to more than three wounds after his children are all destroyed, he is down for the count and there is no need to roll on the incapacitation table.

- **Spirit Linked:** The Ghost of Dr. Madison can only be wounded with iron after the ghosts of his five children have been put down. Until that time, he can be disrupted by an attack made with an iron weapon or by salt. Each time a child ghost is taken down, the Doctor becomes noticeably less translucent, and with the destruction of his last child, he appears to be solid when he's standing still.
- **Flickering Movement:** Ghosts have a flickering movement which gives them a -3 to be hit while they're moving more than 1 square.
- **Visible at Will:** Ghosts are invisible except when they want to see. They also must become visible to attack. Ghosts must become visible the round before an attack, but they can remain hidden if need be. If a Ghost draws a face card, ace, or Joker for initiative, it can become visible and attack in the same round with no multiple action penalty.
- **Kiss of the Grave:** On any attack roll made with a raise, the target must make an immediate Spirit check, even if no damage is scored. Those who fail this check are shaken even if they wouldn't normally be, as a paralytic cold washes over their body. They may unshake as normal.
- **Claws:** Strength damage

THE CHILDREN

The ghosts of the children are a constant source of worry for the PCs. They are always blowing out candles, untying shoe laces, and pulling other nasty tricks, particularly when it's the worst time for it. They cannot put out the fire in the living room, try as they might. There are five in all (though the GM could certainly add more for larger parties) and they can be found in any room of the house. They must obey Ghost Physics as well.

The five ghosts are the offspring of Doctor Madison and various slaves the family owned before they were emancipated. There are the Twins, a boy and a girl who don't play nicely together at all. She manifests knives to slash with (she cannot throw them); the boy manifests a baseball bat. They have a brother who likes to scare people, sometimes to death, and has a penchant for blowing out candles. Then there is the little princess, a girl in a brilliant pink dress who likes to play hide-and-seek and lash out at those who find her. Finally there is the oldest; a daughter who rules her siblings with an iron hand but also has a creepy cherubic giggle. The weapons they choose to manifest, whether they are knives, bats, claws, or even fists all do Strength damage. None of the Children are Wild Cards,

though some of them could be if the party is going through the adventure too quickly.

Attr: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d10, Notice d12, Taunt d10, Stealth d12+4, Throwing d12

Special Abilities:

- **Ethereal:** Ghosts are immaterial and can only be harmed by magical or iron-based attacks.
- **Hardy:** Being Shaken while already Shaken does not result in a wound.
- **Salt and Iron:** Salt can be a barrier to Ghosts or it can disrupt them and stun them for one round.
- **Undead:** Ghosts receive a +2 to Unshake, they do not receive extra damage from Called Shots.
- **Spirit Linked:** The Ghost of Dr. Madison can only be wounded with iron after the ghosts of his five children have been put down. Until that time, he can be disrupted by an attack made with an iron weapon or by salt. Each time a child ghost is taken down, the Doctor becomes noticeably less translucent, and with the destruction of his last child, he appears to be solid when he's standing still.
- **Flickering Movement:** Ghosts have a flickering movement which gives them a -3 to be hit while they're moving more than 1 square.
- **Visible at Will:** Ghosts are invisible except when they want to see. They also must become visible to attack. Ghosts must become visible the round before an attack, but they can remain hidden if need be. If a Ghost draws a face card, ace, or Joker for initiative, it can become visible and attack in the same round with no multiple action penalty.
- **Kiss of the Grave:** On any attack roll made with a raise, the target must make an immediate Spirit check, even if no damage is scored. Those who fail this check are shaken even if they wouldn't normally be, as a paralytic cold washes over their body. They may unshake as normal.
- **Manifested Weapons:** Strength damage

PLAYER CHARACTERS

The PCs can be made up on the spot, previous characters, or they could use the partially pre-generated characters below. Each of them needs another Edge and a major Hindrance, as well as five more dice in skills to be brought up to Novice characters. It is up to the GM to give out more advancements if the characters need

to be improved. These PCs are sexless, ageless, and represent a decent sampling of the adventuring types in the last years of the 19th century.

ACADEMIC

The Academic could be a student, a professor, or just a bookworm. This character could be an eccentric self-studier, or could have attended some of the best universities in the world.

Attr: Agility d4, Smarts d10, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

Skills: Knowledge (Science) d10, Knowledge (Other) d10, Notice d6

Hindrances: All Thumbs, Bad Eyes (minor)

Edges: Jack-of-All-Trades, Scholar

ADVENTURER

The adventurer is a well-to-do type who goes out and lives larger than life. Safaris, ancient passages, and lost tribes are this character's bread and butter. No matter what the odds, the adventurer believes victory is guaranteed simply because they are an adventurer and winning is what they do. Instead of selecting a Major Hindrance, the player with an Adventurer selects two Minor Hindrances.

Attr: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Skills: Fighting d6, Investigation d8, Notice d8, Shooting d6,

Hindrances: Over Confident

Edges: Investigator

ARISTOCRAT

The Aristocrat could be anything from a character coming from southern money to a carpetbagger that has come down since the end of the Civil War. It is possible that the Aristocrat is a self-made individual, however; either money was made through industry and a good mind, or it was made through wise investments.

Attr: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Skills: Fighting d4, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d10

Hindrances: Cautious, Greedy

Edges: Strong Willed

COWBOY/COWGIRL

The Cowboy or Cowgirl is an icon of the American West. At this time, Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Show was just starting and the Cowboy/Cowgirl image was becoming synonymous with America.

Attr: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Charisma: –; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5
Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Taunt d6
Hindrances: Loyal, Outsider
Edges: Ambidextrous, Two-Fisted, Improvisational Fighter

CYNIC

Cynics believe themselves to be above any sort of religious or superstitious mumbo-jumbo. There is a reason for everything, and they delight in going to side shows to find the hidden wires and in proving magicians and psychics to be frauds.

Attr: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Charisma: –; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5
Skills: Fighting d4, Knowledge (Science) d6, Notice d8+2, Streetwise d6, Taunt d6
Hindrances: Doubting Thomas, Stubborn
Edges: Alertness, Investigator

GYPSY

Gypsies have a bad reputation as tramps and thieves. They have a culture that not a lot of other people appreciate, and they can be very tolerant of that while in other peoples' lands, but it is not tolerated when they are with their traveling groups.

Attr: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Charisma: –2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5
Skills: Fighting d6, Lockpicking d6, Notice d6, Stealth d8, Taunt d4
Hindrances: Outsider, Quirk (Player's Choice)
Edges: Assassin, Thief

INVESTIGATOR

Investigators at this time can work for the railroad or banks, or they could be bounty hunters, independent contractors who help solve cases that the police cannot. They tend to either operate on the fringe of society or be completely immersed in it, but there are few investigators who fall between those extremes.

Attr: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Charisma: –; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5
Skills: Fighting d6, Investigation d8, Notice d8, Streetwise d6
Hindrances: Habit (Minor, player's choice), Vow (Minor, player's choice)
Edges: Investigator, Quick

PC Names

Along with the sex, an Edge, a Hindrance, and other random character details, each character needs a name. The list below contains popular names for males, females, and last names in the South from 1860 to 1880. We have included it for your convenience and to get play moving faster!

Common names for men at the time include: Albert, Arthur, Charles, Charlie, Clarence, David, Edward, Ernest, Frank, Fred, George, Harry, Henry, James, Joe, John, Joseph, Louis, Richard, Robert, Roy, Samuel, Thomas, Walter, and William.

Common names for women at the time include: Alice, Anna, Annie, Bertha, Bessie, Carrie, Clara, Cora, Elizabeth, Ella, Emma, Ethel, Florence, Grace, Helen, Ida, Laurel, Mabel, Margaret, Martha, Mary, Maude, Minnie, Nellie, and Sarah.

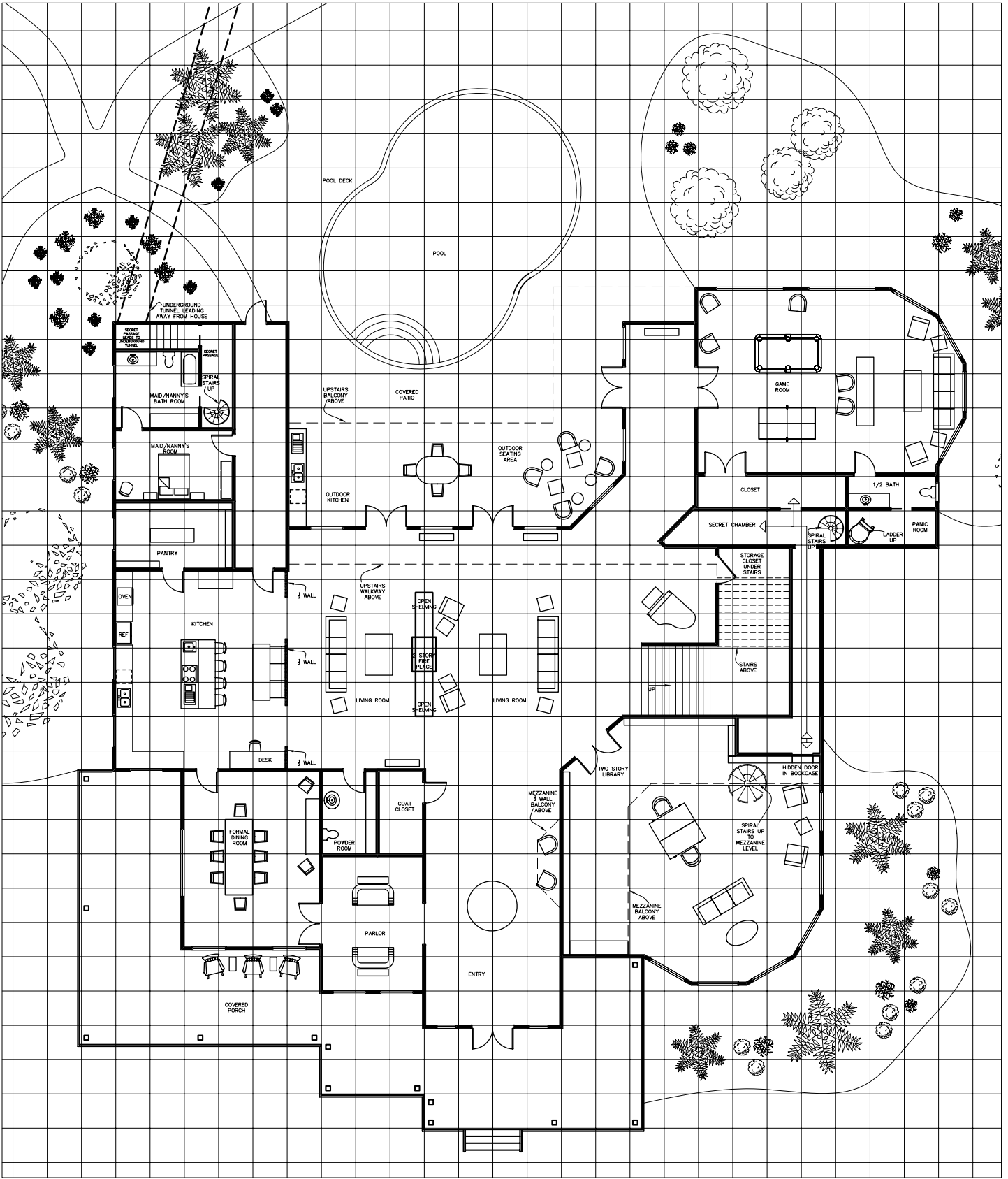
Common last names in the South were: Cambell, Clarks, Darsey, Daughtry, Davis, Dixon, Dupree, Franklin, Garner, George, Griffin, Holden, Jamestown, Jamiston, Johnson, McCutter, Parish, Perkins, Radley, Ross, Sawyer, Thomason, Thompson, and Williams.

Gear

Madam Madison invited the PCs to a party. It seems odd that any of them would be overly armed or be carrying 50 feet of rope. It is more likely that most of their gear will come from the house itself. There are no substantial tools in the house; the handyman work is hired out. There are things like fire pokers in the living room and cast iron skillet in the kitchen. Lamps, candles, matches, and so on are found everywhere, though almost none are currently lit. All of these things are placed appropriately through out the house; every bedroom has a lamp, there are candles in every room, and there are boxes of strike-anywhere matches in the kitchen, pantry, and library, as well as a smaller box of matches in each bedroom.

Christmas Music on the Victrola

- Bring a Torch Jeanette Isabella
- Jingle Bells
- Oh You Silv'ry Bells
- Oh Tannenbaum
- It Came Upon A Midnight Clear
- The First Noel
- We Three Kings of Orient Are
- Down in yon forest
- Coventry Carol
- While Shepherds Watched
- Angels from The Realms of Glory
- Sing O Heavens
- O Come All Ye Faithful
- Oh Little Town of Bethlehem
- Silent Night (instrumental)
- Silent Night (Vocal)
- O Holy Night
- Hark The Herald Angels Sing
- Joy to The World
- Messiah - Hallelujah Chorus
- The Wexford Carol
- Angels we had heard on high



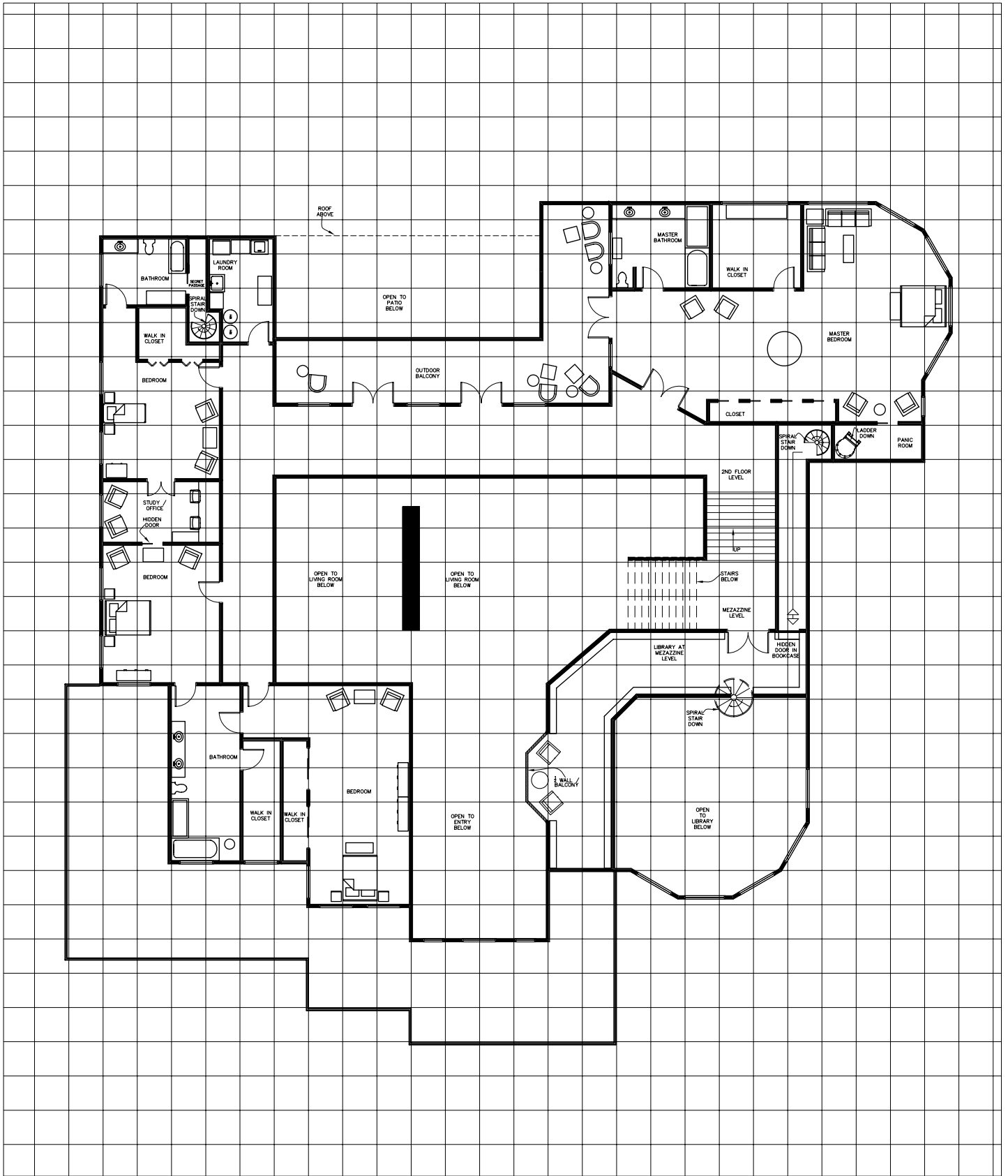
"At Home" map pack
 "Casablanca" - Ground Floor
 An Average Modern Victorian Style Mansion Approximately 10,450 sq. ft.

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12 to Midnight



"At Home" map pack
 "Casablanca" Mezzanine & 2nd Floor
 An Average Modern Victorian Style Mansion Approximately 9,969 sq. ft.

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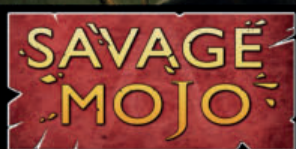
12 to Midnight

DUNGEONLANDS

TOMB OF THE LICH-QUEEN



Old School Killer Dungeon. Savaged.



KICKSTARTER



PRODUCT PREVIEW: ANCIENT WORLD

By Aaron T. Huss



Dhuran: a foreboding planet abandoned by the gods. Five hundred years after the gods rained fire and brimstone upon the land, leaving the few survivors to fend for themselves, secrets are being uncovered. The new civilization of the now godless Dhuran finds the malevolent spirits of its long-dead ancestors hunting their descendant bloodline. As if being accosted by the spirits of their ancestors isn't enough, tears are opening between the mortal and chaos realms, pouring demons, enslavers, and the undead into the world. Though the people have managed to live and grow since that apocalyptic event, they now fight against the denizens of a planet that wants them dead.

Become a warrior and scour the land, protecting your kin and their allies. Fight back against the evil that spills across the land. Raise your sword in defiance; harness the corrupting power of the spirit realm and strike down the chaos; scribe the chaos runes and use the realm's power against itself; use alchemical knowledge to launch grenades in the face of your foe; take on the role of a hunter seeking out the plagued beings that cross the land; or battle in the name of the gods that left you behind as a crusader determined to bring the gods back to Dhuran. In *Ancient World*, you fight for the survival of those around you: drow, dwarf, half-drow, halfling, and human. In *Ancient World*, you either find victory or become a victim of the chaos your ancestors created. In *Ancient World*, everything you don't understand, can and will kill you.

DROW

Drow were crafted from the element of fire. They are a dark-skinned race dwelling in cities located in large, underground caverns. The drow have a matriarchal society in which an empress assumes the throne. In a typical drow society, the males are the workers and warriors while the females are the scholars and high priestesses.

Being forged from fire does not bode well for the drow's temperament. They are easily agitated and often make hasty decisions. However, they have proven themselves time and again to be fierce warriors and reliable allies – as long as one does not get on their bad side. Although they are reliable allies, many drow warriors lean toward the more chaotic side of things, causing many of their allies to frown upon their acts.

The Drow Past

Before the gods decimated and abandoned the people of Dhuran, the drow were a powerful race, feeding on the chaos brewing across the land. They had become power hungry and began abusing the abilities given to them by their gods through the use of their runes. The drow were the main antagonists in the war.

Before the war broke out, the drow were involved in several feuds with various dwarven kingdoms as their cities drew ever closer. The underground drow cities would sometimes expand into dwarven territory, wresting ownership from the dwarves with not even a single thought as to how much it angered the dwarven kings. At the same time, the drow were becoming increasingly hostile to humans through the constant struggle of drow chaos versus human law and order. Although their children were none the wiser, tensions were so strained that the humans often set up embargoes against the drow.

After the war broke out the drow were unable to gain any ground against the dwarves or the humans. The dwarves were simply too fortified, and the humans were simply too well-organized. However, the drow did not relent and repeatedly struck back. When the gods became angry, they sent a message to the drow warriors to regroup and await orders that would crush the dwarves and the humans.

These orders never came and the drow legions were caught completely off-guard as the gods set off explosions of fire within the walls of the cities, nearly killing off the entire population. Only a few youths spending time in one of the many passages leading to the city were spared. Everyone else in every populated drow city was killed.

Racial Template

When choosing drow as a player character race, apply the following racial template:

- **Age:** The average drow lives for 350-400 years. The typical drow becomes a warrior at 80 years old. A young drow is around 40-60 years old. An elderly drow is around 250-300 years old.
- **Drow Temperament:** Drow are naturally easily agitated and have difficulty interacting with those from other races. Due to their temperament, they receive a -2 to Charisma.
- **Knowledge:** All drow characters have Common Knowledge in the following areas: dungeons, caves,

underground navigation, and all creatures that live underground or in caves.

- **Low Light Vision:** Drow live in underground city and are accustomed to dark environments. They ignore attack penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.
- **Quick Feet:** Drow are naturally quick and excellent runners. They gain the Fleet-Footed Edge for free.

DROW CITIES

Drow build their cities in hilly areas where the ground is solid. Cave entrances are built in the side of one or more hills and vast caverns are dugout to construct the city underground. Sometimes these cities are built using preexisting caves and caverns, especially those with underground rivers. The largest cities are built in huge caverns where the ceiling reaches upwards of 100 feet from the floor.

Itha'qua

Itha'qua is currently the farthest drow city from the other races. It is built inside a 50 ft. high cavern with a large number of caverns that spread across the land. There are two rivers that flow around the fortified walls of the urban center and another river that flows around the surrounding cavern abodes.

Miles and miles of bridges connect the scattered cavern abodes to each other along with four bridges that connect to the urban center. This bridge system serves as the main lifeline for all those within the cavern abodes as the marketplace is located within the urban center.

Only two of the web-like caves throughout the area reach the surface. One is large and meant for merchants while the other is small and meant for soldiers. The smaller entrance is hidden within the nearby woods with the large set aside a rocky outcropping.

The Empress All'yesh rules in a fairly strict manner and the urban center is controlled by a cadre of ten warlords, who often feud over control of the people. Itha'qua has the largest drow army, although no one has tested that theory. They are, however, not a very well-organized army as the warlords are constantly vying over control and do not spend enough time training their soldiers.

MONSTERS

Creatures of all types now roam the lands of Dhuran. Besides those from the chaos realm or those possessed by a bloodline spirit, malevolent creatures are able to roam freely as divine warding has failed and the gods are no longer responding. The gods and goddesses of old used to protect the people of Dhuran

from the vicious creatures of the land; now those creatures are uninhibited and kill all those they come across.

TORMENTOR

Tormentors are mindless, cannibalistic creatures that dwell in the chaos realm. Their bodies are hideously deformed and no two seem to look alike.

Attr: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8 (1)

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Taunt d10

Armor: Leathery Skin (All 1)

Weapons: Claws (Str+d8) or Unarmed (Str x 2)

Special Abilities:

- **Arcane Resistance:** Tormentors are naturally resistant to magical attacks due to their chaotic and deformed nature. They act as though they have 2 points of Armor when hit by damage-causing arcane powers and add +2 to their Trait rolls when resisting opposed powers. Relic weapons are not considered magical in regards to a tormentor's Arcane Resistance and thus no bonus is gained against them.
- **Deformed Hand:** Some tormentors have a large, deformed hand they use for fighting. This hand is so large and unnatural that it provides Str x 2 for damage.
- **Demon:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; half-damage from non-magical attacks except from relic weapons. Relic weapons do full damage.
- **Draining Bite:** Tormentors eat their victims and the fresher the meat, the better. If the tormentor successfully Grapples an opponent, they bite into the victim's neck and attempt to "subdue" them through poison-like saliva. Each successful round of Grappling results in this act and the victim gains +1 level of Fatigue.
- **Fear -1:** Tormentors are terrifying to see.





FICTIONAL WRITINGS: LAST NEW YEAR'S

By Steven Dean



Thirty minutes to go, according to the ship's clock. Of course, it had been synchronized with planetary time, which was now light years distant. According to the science officer, traveling through space did funny things to time, and so it was anyone's guess what time it was back home. Still, it didn't really matter; the crew had worked hard for many months, and it was time they had a party. And what

better time to have a party than welcoming in a new year?

Someone had chosen the observation deck as the main venue, the largest open space on the ship. It had been decorated with a variety of ad-hoc banners and streamers, and the captain's private stock of red wine, a fruity little number that travelled well, had been plundered. The computers were running the ship, so most

of the 112 crew could relax, at least for a few hours.

The youngsters gathered at one end of the deck, playing some awful music and watching a wide screen monitor. The more mature crew had gravitated towards the captain, who sat on a chair as far away from the noise as was possible to get.

Filling a good portion of the view through the huge window was a red giant, a bloated sun expanding into its dotage. The science officer had explained what it was doing and why, but the captain, after a third glass of the excellent red, couldn't recall the details.

If you looked close enough, an observer would have been able to make out a tiny planet a short distance from the sun. It was a barren rock, but remote probes had discovered the remains of a globe-spanning, advanced civilization.

By some quirk of fate, some serendipitous chance, the planet would collide with the sun and be consumed a few minutes after the clocks clicked past midnight. A suitable firework display to usher in the New Year.

The youngsters had sent out several probes - some to the planet, some in close orbit - and were even now gathered around the screen observing the views relayed by these probes. The captain laughed. Typical of youngsters, they had the real thing right in front of them, and they were ignoring it in favor of a second-hand show on a display screen.

Someone came along and refilled the now empty glass. The captain made no effort to stop them, but wasn't sure if it was a good idea to carry on drinking. A small sip, maybe a larger one, and that would be enough.

The clock was a little blurry, but showed fifteen minutes to go. A quick call

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to maintenance was required, get the thing repaired. Can't run an efficient ship with blurry clocks.

Fifteen minutes to a new year, one that wouldn't last long for the little planet. Of course, time was always relative, so they had no idea what time it was on that particular planet. It could be the middle of the year, or a day after New Year, or, by some vastly improbable galactic coincidence, New Year's Eve. In a few short minutes, the planet would be gone, billions of years of history, of evolution, of individual lives, wiped away.

Five minutes from midnight, the crew began to gather by the windows or by the screens, according to their preference. The music was turned down, and all eyes turned to the clock. Those crew who had formed partnerships leaned into each other. Glasses were filled and readied, and as the last seconds of the last minute ticked away, those gathered began a countdown. At midnight, a huge cheer went up, glasses clinked, and lovers embraced. The music increased in volume, and those who were interested watched the tiny speck as it neared its end. One part of the large screen showed a view from the planet's surface, another from high orbit. There wasn't much to see but red. The captain suspected the younger crew was more interested in how long the armored probe would last than the planet.

It was something of an anti-climax as the planet was finally consumed. One second it was there, then it was gone. There wasn't even that much of a light display, just a few seconds of a yellowish flare, and then nothing but a rapidly fading afterglow. The creeping evolution of life, the inevitable ascension of intelligent species, and the rise and fall of empires, obliterated in seconds.

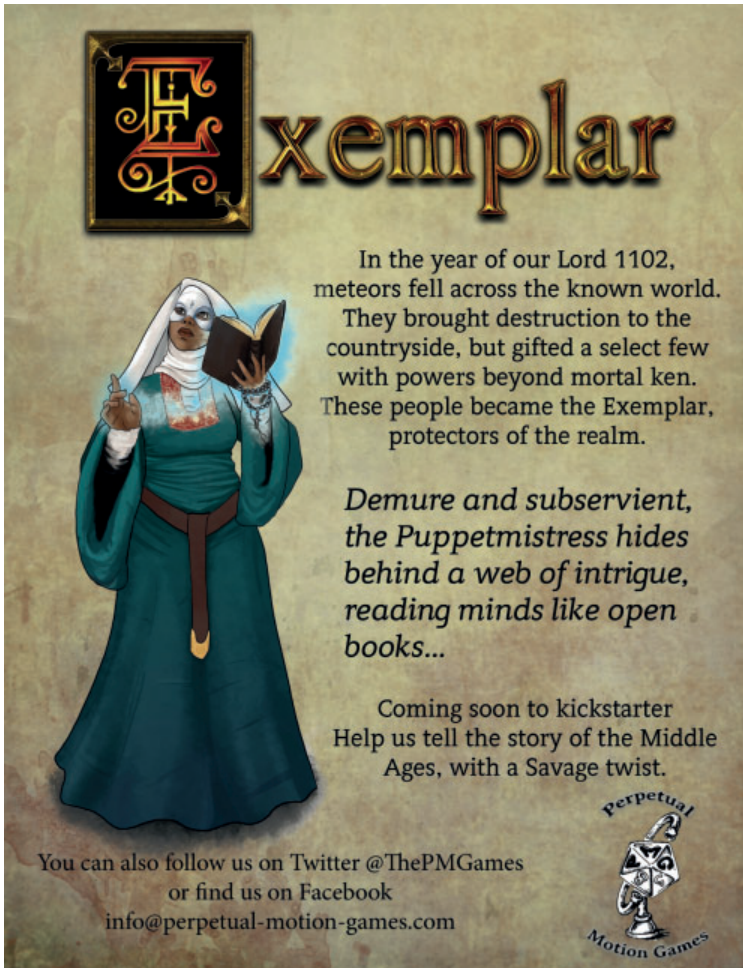
The captain wondered who those beings were, what they looked like, and how they lived their lives. And, ultimately, what had happened to them. Had they

known what would happen to their star? Had they built huge space ships and escaped to another, younger, planet? Or had they fallen to fighting and war, used up all the planets resources, and perished?

Looking down into his half full glass, the captain frowned. This was a good vintage, but it was making him maudlin. Of course they'd escaped! They would have had centuries, millennia even, to develop and construct space ships, to find and colonize another planet, to transport everything they needed to a new world. Maybe they had built huge space stations and even now were exploring the outer reaches of the galaxy. Whoever they were, whatever they looked like, whichever direction they had chosen to travel, the captain had never encountered them. If they had left, they had gone away from the expanding sphere of territories explored by this ship and others like it.

The captain looked down into the wine, as red as the star. That's quite enough of that. Lives, even whole planets worth, were insignificant on a galactic scale, but individually they were greatly important. It was all a matter of perspective. Get that right, thought the captain, and everything else comes into focus. Unless you'd had far too much red wine. The captain looked around and then offered his glass to the nearest person, a junior officer who hesitantly accepted it but didn't drink.

With the glass discarded, the captain stood, steadying the weight of an armored thorax with all eight limbs. Inner mandibles clacking, the captain searched for the science officer with the deep yellow eyes, it was time to show these youngsters how to really dance on the ceiling.



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EQUIPMENT CORRAL: BASKET OF ABUNDANCE

By Vickey A. Beaver



Various cultures have tales of endlessly useful items that never run out of steam. Here we have one such item. Well, sort of. It replenishes itself frequently throughout the day during the last week of harvest. Whether you're picking apples, cutting down grains, or digging up potatoes, this basket is your friend. No one knows if there are others.

Appearance

In games with a historical or rustic environment, the Basket of Plenty is made of woven straw, reeds, bamboo, or similar materials. In modern settings, the basket could be a small shopping basket. For science fiction settings, a virtual basket wouldn't be out of the question. In all cases, there is some type of harvest deity symbol, or something else of similar significance, subtly displayed or completely hidden within the basket.

How It Works

The basket only works in a special way during the last week of harvest. Otherwise, it is only as useful as any other basket. If your setting has multiple harvests, then it works during the last week of each of those.

The characters do not have to do anything in particular to activate the basket's ability. When the first PC touches the basket for the first time, have them roll a d8. The party then puts newly harvested items in the Basket of Abundance (the items can be placed in the basket by anyone, and as long as the party is in possession of it, it will work). Once emptied of its harvested contents (all the same, or mixed), the basket magically refills one time plus the same number as was rolled on the d8 during each day of the harvest for as long as the party keeps the basket (d8+1 each day). The frequency resets if it is passed to a new party such as another townsfolk or a PC's family member that isn't traveling with the party.

The caveat is that the basket only refills after everyone looks away from it. No one sees what the Basket of Abundance looks



like when it is being refilled. It only refills whatever was last in it during the day and refills do not carry over from day to day. If at the start of the new day someone puts fresh apples in the basket, then it only refills with apples. If the basket is able to be refilled five times and it's only used four times on a given day, it does not have the ability to refill six times the next day. It still only works five times per day.

Limitations

The Basket of Abundance can be whatever size the GM wants so long as it is an appropriate size for an individual to carry unaided when completely filled with the heaviest of produce.

It cannot refill anything that isn't a plant being grown at harvest. Gold coins, weapons, other magic items, live animals, and the like will not be replenished if the basket is used to carry those and those items are then removed.

EQUIPMENT CORRAL: SNOW MAKER

By Vickey A. Beaver



Centuries ago, a gifted man sought to create a present for his daughter who loved the snow. He fashioned a globe from a thin, translucent skin. Before binding it, he filled it with several pinches of small, white pebbles and plenty of clear, cold water. When he was done, it fit in the palm of his hand. He painted figures like letters all around the globe.

On the winter solstice, he gave her the creation. At first she was puzzled by it. She slowly turned it over and over with her small fingers. "Shake it," her father told her. So she did. Then he pointed to the window, telling her to watch. A few minutes later, it started to snow.

Appearance

The snow maker looks as described in the story unless you want to alter it to fit a particular feel of your campaign. Alternate appearances could include modern snow globes or special images on a computer display.

How It Works

If the day has any clouds, shaking the globe lightly results in snow for 1d4+1 minutes. Shaking it vigorously results in snow for 1d8+2 minutes. If a character that shakes it has any sort of weather-related magic, the durations go up two die types. Snow cover occurs on a large burst template centered on the person shaking the Snow Maker. If the person is inside, and the template extends to the outside, whatever area the template reaches gets snow cover as long as the requisite clouds are within sight of the shaker.

The heaviness and rate of precipitation correlate as follows on a d12:


- 1-3 light and slow
- 4-6 light and fast
- 7-9 heavy and slow
- 10-12 heavy and fast

If used during the winter solstice, duration is doubled.

Limitations

The Snow Maker only works during winter in the region where the item is. Unless there are clouds indoors, it only works outside under a visibly clouded sky, even if the clouds are light, few, or far away.

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Throb!

Well hung and left for dead, Throb Hammerdong is quite annoyed...
Barbarian quarry worker Throb wakes up one day to find himself hanging by his neck from a bridge. Luckily for us, he doesn't die, but instead sets out on a quest for revenge.
Accompanied by his loyal crew and armed only with the latest weapons, a full stomach, and regular, almost constant sex, Throb must survive attack by bandits, go shopping, and sit through the worst live porn show on earth, before facing his enemies and sorting out the whole beaver thing.

Wayland Snowball doesn't want much from life. A fast car, huge amounts of money, and two gorgeous women with big... personalities. Unfortunately, Wayland is one of life's losers; a shallow and work-shy youth whose only purpose in life seems to be to get drunk, upset people, and try to find a way for his only friend to lose his virginity.
But with a bit of luck, lots of luck, and unbelievable amounts of luck, even he may make something of himself.

By
Steve
Dean

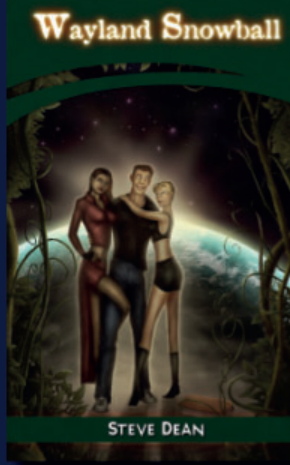
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Wayland Snowball

STEVE DEAN



BRAINRADIO

What's Your Frequency?



GREAT ADVENTURES: THE HARVEST KING

By Mark Woodside of Hearthstone Games



BACKGROUND

From "Harvest Rituals of Pre-Industrial Europe" by Jacob Kaylor:

"In pre-industrial Europe people depended on the harvest to survive the winter. Starvation was a very real threat to those without adequate stores of grain, corn, or potatoes. Farmers went to extreme lengths to ensure a successful harvest. Some even resorted to methods considered heresy by the established religions. Despite the risk, a few desperate farmers made offerings to pagan gods. One old god in particular was known to bless a harvest if properly appeased. In France, he was known as Roi de la Moisson - The King of the Harvest. This was shortened in English to 'Harvest King'.

The Harvest King demanded blood sacrifices to ensure a successful harvest. Offerings were made during the full moon between Lammas (first day of the harvest) and Samhain (Hallowe'en). If performed

during a 'blue moon' (the second full moon in one calendar month), farmers could guarantee three years of success.

It has been decades since anyone in the western world called upon the Harvest King. For most, the advent of mechanized farming and transportation has reduced bad harvests from tragedy to annoyance.

The following rhyme may describe what would happen if the summoning ritual were not performed properly:

*Run - Fly from the Harvest King
Tis squall and death his reign shall bring
Yer blood shall fuel his caddish art
and quench the fires in his hell-broke heart"*

SETUP

That's the (very inaccurate) scholarly version. In truth, the Harvest King was a malevolent spirit who demanded sacrifices. If farmers refused, he would blight their fields. He was banished to

Mabon centuries ago, and has been plotting revenge ever since.

Unfortunately, Larry Kraig didn't get the memo.

Larry grows pot in the woods near Heather Lake, and he's tired of losing his crops to Police Chief Barryman. Larry's girlfriend, Sheila Kintz, is an aspiring Hedge Witch who stumbled across the rituals to summon the Harvest King while doing research for her mentor. Sheila is madly in love with Larry, and will do anything to help him.

The Call

Marissa Talbot, owner of Widdershins Books, contacts the PCs. She has chosen them due to their knowledge of the occult world, and their unique blend of skills and abilities. Marissa is very concerned about her protégé, Sheila, who has gone missing. She has little information to provide other than the address and a key to Sheila's apartment.

Marissa is aware of Larry and his growing operation. She thinks very little of Larry, but doesn't believe he would harm Sheila. Marissa cannot pay the characters for their investigation, but promises assistance in the future should they agree to help.

Sheila's Apartment

Sheila Kintz rents a small studio apartment above Pompeii Pizza on Division St. The apartment is her home, art studio, and shrine. There is little furniture: a futon bed, small dresser, a bistro table, and a small writing desk. Against one wall, is a makeshift bookcase made from cinder blocks and discarded wood. Her library consists of books on art, spiritualism, and urban gardening.

On the writing desk lie several books



about harvest festivals and rituals. With a successful Notice roll, a PC discovers a page subtly marked with a piece of string. On page 97 of "Harvest Rituals of Pre-Industrial Europe" by Jacob Kaylor, Sheila has highlighted most of one page (see **Background** above). GMs may read the text verbatim or summarize it for the players. Be sure to include the information about the 'blue moon', as tonight is the second full moon of the month.

The text goes on to describe how the ritual must be performed:

- Summon the Harvest King by calling his name while walking widdershins (counter-clockwise) around the harvest bonfire.
- He appears at the apex of the full moon.
- Once the Harvest King appears, sacrifice one creature every minute for seven minutes.
- If the ritual is interrupted, the

Harvest King retreats to Mabon, and the harvest blessing is voided.

Another Notice roll reveals a parking ticket given to Sheila by the Washington State Park Service. The ticket was given for parking without a state parks permit at the Pennington Creek Trail Head. This is the only clue to her current location.

Pennington Creek Trail Head

The Pennington Creek trail isn't one of the more popular trails in the area. Washouts are common, and the trail is not well maintained. Upon arriving at the trailhead, the PCs find Sheila's car and a set of fresh footprints leading up the trail; whoever left the prints was obviously running. Following the path, the PCs lose the footprint trail about one mile in. A successful Tracking roll reveals more prints leading up a narrow game trail.

The Shack

Two miles up the game trail, the PCs come across a marijuana growing operation. There is a half-acre field of marijuana and a small shack (used for packaging up the harvest). They can see smoke rising from

the middle of the field. The plants are too tall and too thick for the PCs to see the source of the smoke. As the PCs survey the scene, they hear a woman scream. The scream cuts off abruptly.

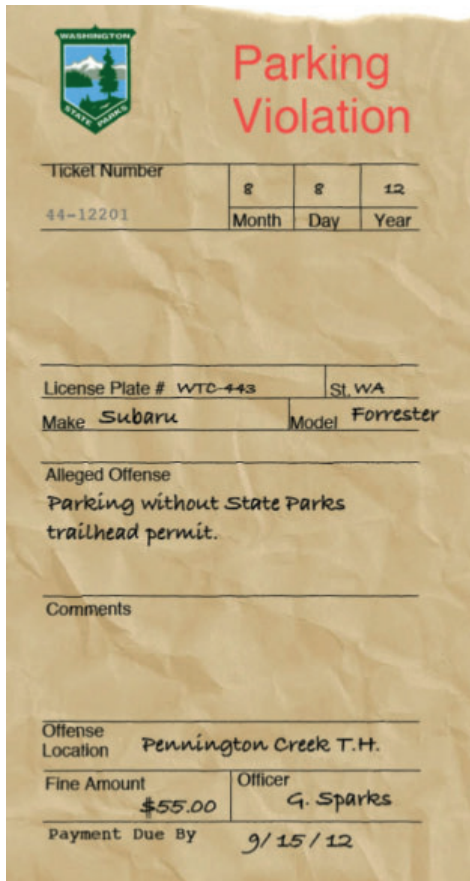
Approaching the smoke, the PCs see a small fire surrounded by several figures. Six men are struggling on the ground, held down by what appears to be ropes. A body lies on the ground next to the fire. Silhouetted against the fire, is a monstrosity tall figure, its orange, misshapen head is topped by a fiery crown. Robes obscure the rest of the figure. With a successful Notice roll, the PCs smell burning flesh and see a head in the fire.

In a voice that sounds like crackling fire the figure says, "One sown. Six to own."

The figure starts to walk toward the closest struggling figure. He screams in terror, pleading for his life.

"Scream my tithe. Wriggle and writhe."

If the PCs intervene, the Harvest King turns on them. His first action is to use his Entangle power to slow them down. If any PCs escape entanglement, he blasts them with sprays of magickal thorns. As the Harvest King fights, he moves around the



fire, attempting to kill one victim on the minute.

The Harvest King uses his scythe along with his Improved Sweep Edge to attack every player in melee range.

If the PCs hesitate, the Harvest King starts killing each bound victim on the minute. With each sacrifice, he grows larger and more substantial.

Combat

Larry and his friends are too traumatized to do much. They each start the first round of combat Shaken. A PC with the Command Edge might spur them into action. Use the statistics under The Farmers shown at the end of adventure for all six farmers.

Being mostly incorporeal protects the Harvest King from most physical damage. Because he has only killed one victim, all damage done at the start of battle is at -6. If he manages to kill more victims, increase damage by 1 per victim (-5 with one additional kill, -4 with two, etc.) as he becomes more substantial. Magick and magical weapons do normal damage.

Killing the Harvest King is nearly impossible, but the PCs don't need to kill him to achieve victory. Preventing the sacrifices from occurring each minute is enough to banish him back to Mabon.

If the PCs succeed in disrupting the ritual, they make a determined enemy. The Harvest King has little reach beyond his demesne in Mabon, but travel in that region of Arcadia is now much more dangerous.

The Aftermath

The PCs can return to the trailhead with the survivors. If they acted quickly, the only death is Sheila's. Larry Craig has suffered a breakdown, and his friends are nearly as traumatized.

The PCs have to think of a cover story before they involve the authorities. One possibility is to blame Larry for the death. The others will agree to this, claiming they

didn't know about his occult practices.

Any or all of the following events may also occur:

- The police seize the pot operation and arrest Larry (who is later committed).
- The members of Larry's crew are arrested, but later released.
- The occult community is shocked by Sheila's death. They seek to warn others about the dangers inherent in their practices.
- Religious groups like the Foursquare Union take this opportunity to once again condemn the "Satanic" practices so prevalent in Brighton Bay.

Where to go from here

Marissa is grateful to the PCs, but is furious with Larry, whom she blames for Sheila's abuse of her powers. She may try to go after Larry, endangering herself and the occult community. This could be the source of another adventure. The PCs don't want to hurt Marissa, so they must find other means to stop a very powerful Witch.

PLAYER CHARACTERS

Tina Contreras

Tina teaches mixed martial arts at Crossroads Martial Arts Academy (1st St.



and Beecher Ave). She met Sheila Kintz through a women's self defense class she taught last year. She has since become friends with Marissa Talbot, and is considering becoming a student of hers.

Tina does not like violence, but realizes that pacifism is not protection against assault. She always carries a collapsible baton with her, and is skilled in many weapon styles.

Attr: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Pace: 6, Parry: 6, Toughness: 5

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

Armor: None

Weapons: Baton (Str+d4), Bokken Sword (Str+d6, AP1), Bo Staff (Str+d4, +1 Parry)

Hindrances: Overconfident (M)

Edges: Martial Artist, Two-Fisted

James "Gill" McGillian

James McGillian is a private investigator and former cop. He first learned of the occult world while still serving as a police detective. Gill and his partner, Steven Liedler, were investigating a human trafficking case involving the K Street Redcaps, led by Patrick "Pappy" McBride.

At first, Gill and Steven thought of the Redcaps as just another street gang. The truth was far stranger than the official report. Following leads led both detectives to Marissa Talbot. Marissa aided the detectives and taught them much about Brighton Bay's occult underground. By the

end of the investigation, McBride's older brother, and two innocent bystanders were dead. Gill was accused of recklessness and forced to quit the department. He still keeps in touch with Steven Liedler.

Gill, now a private investigator, takes on many of Brighton Bay's stranger cases.

Attr: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Pace: 6, Parry: 5, Toughness: 5

Skills: Fighting d4, Investigation d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d8, Streetwise d8

Armor: Kevlar Vest (Torso, +2/+4)

Weapons: Colt 1911 (Range:12/24/48, RoF: 1, Damage 2d6+1)

Hindrances: Code of Honor (M), Enemy (K St. Redcaps), Loyal

Edges: Connections (Police Detective), Investigator

Chris Noonan

Chris is one of Marissa's more promising students. Despite being only sixteen years old, he has become a potent Hedge Witch. Chris abhors violence, but will aid those in danger if he can do so without harming others.

Attr: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Pace: 6, Parry: 4, Toughness: 5

Skills: Climbing d4, Fighting d4, Knowledge (Herbalism) d6, Knowledge (Nature Spirits) d6, Notice d4, Spiritualism d6, Stealth d6

Armor: None

Weapons: Ritual Athame (Knife) (Str+d4), Holy Symbol (Ankh)

Hindrances: All Thumbs, Pacifist, Young (+1 Bennie)

Edges: Arcane Background: Divine Favor, True Sight

Powers*: Banish (Casting Modifier: 3), Entangle (Casting Modifier: 1/3), Healing (Casting Modifier: 3)

*If the GM is not using Casting Modifiers, use the Power Points listed in the Savage Worlds Deluxe rules.

Susan Rivers

Susan Rivers died from a stray bullet during the firefight that killed Pappy McBride's brother and one other passerby. As she lie bleeding on the sidewalk, a woman named Sophia Young approached her. As Susan's spirit left her body, she was drawn into the woman's flesh. Trapped inside Sophia, Susan was disgusted by what she could sense. Sophia went by the name Madame Kaplinksy. She was a charlatan who told fortunes out of a rundown apartment in Porterville.



To Susan, the real tragedy is that Sophia can communicate with the dead. She just doesn't realize it because most spirits refuse to speak to someone like her.

While bound to Sophia's flesh, Susan enjoys tormenting her and foiling her attempts to cheat her gullible and grief-stricken victims.

Attr: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Pace: 6, Parry: 6, Toughness: 5

Skills: Fighting d8, Knowledge (Spirits) d6, Intimidation d6, Investigation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d4, Taunt d6

Armor: None

Weapons: Claws (Str+d6, magickal weapon)

Burdens (see descriptions below): Blood Bound, Vitreous

Favors (see descriptions below): Death Wail, Spirit Claws

- **Blood Bound:** This Revenant was drawn into the living body of another at the time of their death. They must spend 1 hour/day in that body, or suffer Fatigue.
- **Vitreous:** Susceptible to Magick. -2 vs. Magickal effects. -2 Toughness vs. Magickal attacks.
- **Death Wail:** All enemies within a medium burst template must make a Spirit roll or become Shaken.
- **Spirit Claws:** Manifest claws that inflict Str+d6 damage. Spirit claws affect both the Rational and spirit worlds, even if the Revenant has the Immaterial Burden.

- Katy Helms
- Kevin Anderson

Larry and his crew are not the brightest people. They continue to grow pot in the same general location, allowing police to easily track their movements. They haven't realized that their frustration is a result of their own incompetence. They also sample a *lot* of their own product on a daily basis (including today). They will not be any help in the fight, and will likely get in the way several times.

Attr: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Strength d6, Spirit d6, Vigor d6

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 5, **Toughness:** 5

Skills: Climbing d4, Fighting d4, Knowledge (Agriculture), Notice d4, Repair d4, Shooting d4, Stealth d6

Armor: None

Weapons: Machete (Str+d4)



Harvest King

The Harvest King relies on his incorporeal nature for defense, but must fully manifest to use his Blight power. All other powers may be used normally.

In melee, the Harvest King uses his scythe with devastating effect. His Improved Sweep ability works per the Edge, allowing him to attack every foe within a 1" range.

Like most Fae, the Harvest King does not require an arcane skill. Use his Spirit Trait for casting spells.

Attr: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Strength d10, Spirit d8, Vigor d8

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 7, **Toughness:** 7

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Stealth d8

Armor: None

Weapons: Scythe (Str+d6, Reach, Parry +1)

Special Abilities:

- Size +1
- Incorporeal (see notes)
- Improved Sweep
- **Powers (see notes):** Blight, Entangle, Rain of Thorns

Harvest King Powers

In Marchland, Casting Modifiers replace Power Points. Power Point values are provided below for those who wish to use them.

Blight

Rank: Legendary

Casting Modifier: 7 (8 Power Points)

Range: Spirit

Duration: Spirit x 1 Month

Trappings: All vegetation in the affected area withers and dies. The area of effect is equal to the caster's Smarts x acres. Affected areas usually recover the next season. All harvested grains, vegetable, and fruits in the affected area will spoil or be devoured by rodents and insects.

Entangle

Other than the Casting Modifiers, Entangle works exactly as presented in the *Savage Worlds* rules. Casting Modifiers are included below for those wishing to use them.

Casting Modifier: 1 for single target, 3 for Medium Burst Template

Rain of Thorns

Rank: Heroic

Casting Modifier: 2 (2 Power Points)

Range: Flame Template

Duration: Instant

Trappings: A shower of 3-inch long thorns rips into everyone within the template causing 2d10 damage. Targets within the template may make Agility rolls to avoid the thorns.fgff

NPCs AND ENEMIES

The Farmers

- Sheila Kintz (deceased)
- Larry Kraig
- Tyler Gordon
- Rick Hanson
- David Helms



EQUIPMENT CORRAL: NEW YEAR BANNER

By Christopher Margraves and Sophie Dixon of Perpetual Motion Games



Perhaps it was time for you to lie down.

The battle had raged on through the night. Even as the sun crested the horizon, you could hear men fighting in the distance. Here though, in this lull in the combat, talk began that the commander was dead. Your eyes drifted up the rise where the battle standard of the Hawk stood at a drunken tilt. It wouldn't be long before it fell.

Last night's snow had long since been churned down to mud, stained red with the blood of the wounded and the dead, and the sharp pain at your side reminded you that some of it was your own. The fight was lost. It was time to lie down.

A voice calling out caught your attention and drew your eyes back up the ridge. He lifted the standard high, the crest of the

Hawk emblazoned proudly on it. You couldn't quite make out his face, but he represented your liege lord and that was enough. A great cry rose up from your fellow soldiers, and you added your own voice to it. You could worry about the pain later. This fight was far from over.

It was a new day, a new year, and you still had a chance to win. Long live the Hawk.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Weight</u>
Banner	100	2

Special Rules

Banner – A banner adds 5" to the range of any Leadership Edge used to aid allied minions that can see the banner on the field.



A full-page illustration of a cowboy on a horse in a desert canyon. The cowboy is wearing a wide-brimmed hat and a patterned shirt, riding a brown horse. The canyon walls are tall and jagged, with a large sun in the sky and two birds flying. In the foreground, a large scorpion is on the ground. Three speech bubbles contain text.

I RECKON *SOME*
DAYS JUST DON'T
GO AS PLANNED.

FIGGERED I'D BE
SIPPIN' TEQUILA IN A SALOON
IN BISBEE BY NOW.

AN' I BET THEM
OTHER BOYS THOUGHT
THE SAME THING...

WHAT A MAN'S GOT TO DO

MATTHEW CUTTER
WRITER

ULISES ROMAN
PENCILER & INKER

DOUG SPENCER
COLORIST

JACOB BASCLE
LETTERER



I ALWAYS HAD A KNACK FOR KEEPIN' ONE STEP AHEAD O' DEATH.

BUT IT'S HARD WORK, AMIGO.



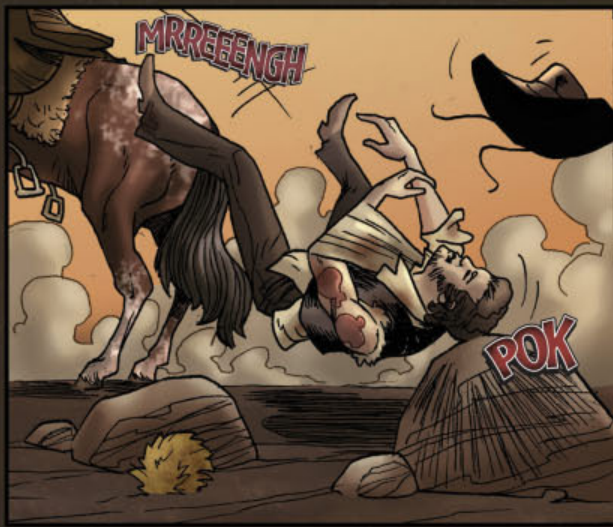
HELL, I BEEN THROUGH SO MANY SCRAPES I CAN'T REMEMBER 'EM ALL.

BUT THEY ALL HAD ONE THING IN COMMON.



YOU NEVER QUITE SEE IT COMIN'.

THUK



MRREEENGH

POK



IF THIS IS THE END, I CAN'T SAY AS I MIND TOO MUCH.



I SHOULD NEVER HAVE JOINED UP WITH THAT POSSE IN BISBEE IN THE FIRST PLACE. BUT I DID, ON ACCOUNT O' MY PRIDE.

SOMETIMES YOU GOT TO LISTEN TO THAT LITTLE VOICE IN YOUR HEAD.

...NOW THEN, WHO'S WITH ME?



NONE OF YOU?

WHAT ABOUT YOU, LUKE?

SURELY A VETERAN OF THE GREAT RAIL WARS, A WAR HERO LIKE LUCAS PITT...

...WOULD BE WILLING TO GO AFTER SOME NO-GOOD OUTLAWS?



...UNLESS MAYBE YOU'RE SCARED?

IS THAT IT, LUKE?

COULD THE MAN WHO MIRACULOUSLY SURVIVED HIS WOUNDS AT THE BATTLE OF LOST ANGELS BE SCARED?

THEY SAY THE BURNS YOU SUSTAINED WOULD HAVE KILLED A LESSER MAN...



ACCORDIN' TO MARSHAL CREIGHTON, THESE BOYS WE WAS AFTER—THE ONES WHO DONE ROBBED THE PAYROLL HEADED FOR BISBEE'S GHOST ROCK MINE—WEREN'T NOTHIN' TO SPEAK OF. JUST VARMINTS.



WE TRACKED 'EM EASILY, AND LAID IN WAIT 'TIL DARK. THAT'S WHEN WE HEARD A HORSE DOWN IN THE CANYON.

SOMEBODY'S DOWN THERE, ALL RIGHT...

THOSE LOWLIFE TRASH WON'T KNOW WHAT HIT THEM.



D-DO YOU HEAR THAT?!





NO!

POW
POW
POW



BAM
POW POW BLAM

PING
PING



MIND YOUR STEP!

POW
POW



GET 'EM,
BOYS!!



WHY
DIDN'T YOU
KILL ME?





AWW, WEREN'T YOU EVEN GOIN' TO ASK FOR MY HELP? THAT AIN'T TOO NEIGHBORLY, AMIGO!

BUT THEN AGAIN, YOU NEVER DID COTTON TO ME, DID YOU LUKE?

IT'S ON ACCOUNT O' THE WAY I CRAWLED IN YOUR SKULL AND MADE MYSELF AT HOME, I RECKON.

AND Y'KNOW, THOSE FEELINGS ARE UNDERSTANDABLE. BUT YOU GOT TO LET BYGONES BE BYGONES, AMIGO!



YOU AGAIN.
DON'T NEED NONE O' YER HELP. DOIN' FINE ON MY OWN, THANK YOU.



THAT HURTS, LUKE. IT GETS ME RIGHT IN MY GUT WHEN YOU SAY MEAN THINGS LIKE THAT. I MIGHT JUST UP AND LEAVE YOU.

BUT NOT TODAY, PARTNER.

YOU KNOW, LUKE—THERE ARE ONLY FOUR OF 'EM ON OUR TAIL. WHY ARE WE RUNNIN' SCARED?

LET'S MAKE BEEFSTEAKS OUT O' THOSE BASTARDS.



I AM GOIN' TO BISBEE. HAD ENOUGH DEATH FOR ONE DAY.

ONCE I RECOVER, I'LL ROUND UP A POSSE AND--

HERE THEY COME, DAMN YOU.

CLOP-CLOP
CLOP-CLOP



CLOP-CLOP

FORGET THE POSSE, AMIGO.

IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE ABOUT TO START YOUR OWN QUILTING SOCIETY.

I GOT TO BE HONEST WITH YOU, LUKE, YOU'RE NOT EXACTLY INSPIRING MY CONFIDENCE.

YOU'RE GOIN' TO HAVE TO LET ME TAKE CARE OF THIS ONE, PARTNER...

CLOP-CLOP



I TRIED MY DAMNEDEST TO KEEP CONTROL O' MYSELF.

CLOP-CLOP
CLOP-CLOP
CLOP-CLOP



MY
DAMNEDEST
WASN'T
ENOUGH.



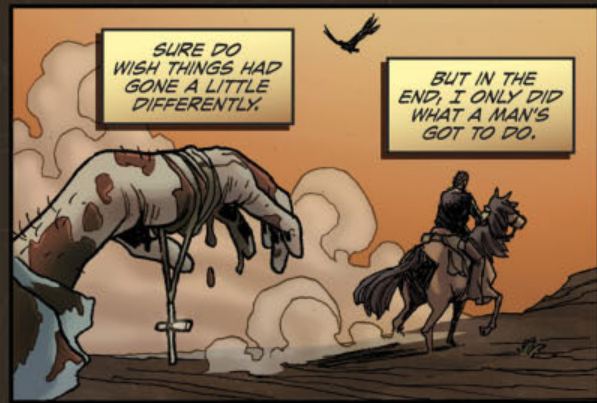
I'M ALIVE.
MORE'N I CAN
SAY FOR THE
LAUGHIN' MEN.



POOR
CHUCKLES.
COYOTES GOT
AT HIM.



LUCKY THEY
DIDN'T BOTHER
THE HORSES
NONE.



SURE DO
WISH THINGS HAD
GONE A LITTLE
DIFFERENTLY.

BUT IN THE
END, I ONLY DID
WHAT A MAN'S
GOT TO DO.



A MAN'S
GOT TO KEEP
ONE STEP AHEAD
O' DEATH.

THE END

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CHARACTER GALLERY: THE OWL KEEPER

By Vickey A. Beaver

A man who travels the lands during the harvest season is known as a font of wisdom. He is always cloaked in fabric or fur. No one can describe his face with any accuracy. It is just too plain. They know him by his deep voice and the owls that follow him.

He walks, carrying a satchel on his back and pulling a small, covered cart behind him. Often an owl is on his shoulder and another is on the cart.

He stays with whoever offers him a place or in the trees if no one makes a bed available. He tells stories and sings songs of harvests past. He shares parables warning of what happens if the land is not treated well or the gods of plants, harvest, or autumn are not honored.

If persuaded by the party, he can tell them one piece of useful information about their current quest or one you plan to send them on in the near future. He gives them a pressed leaf with appropriate symbols or words to remind them of what he shares.



If for some reason they end up in a quarrel, The Owl Keeper tries to persuade the party not to fight. Barring that, he defends himself. His owls fight as well. Killing the owls enrages The Owl Keeper, giving him the same effect as if he had No Mercy.



THE OWL KEEPER

The Owl Keeper is a wandering folklorist. He entertains people in hopes of food, shelter, or other payment. He always tells the truth, however grim or unwanted.

Attr: Agility d8, Smarts d12, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (1); **Charisma:** 3

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Storytelling) d10, Knowledge (Owls) d12, Notice d10, Persuasion d12, Stealth d8

Armor: Leather vest.

Weapons: Dagger (Str+d4), Sling (4/8/16, Str+d4, RoF 1)

Hindrances: Lameness (left leg)

Edges: Beast Bond, Beast Master

Special Abilities: Killing the owls will enrage The Owl Keeper, giving him the same effect as if he had No Mercy.

OWLS

The owls are 1' tall with brown and dark orange feathers.

Attr: Agility d10, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d8

Pace: 3; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Skills: Fighting d6, Stealth d12

Special Abilities:

- **Claws/Bite:** Str+d4
- **Flight:** Owls have a Flying Pace of 9" and Climb 1
- **Size -1:** The owls are 1' tall with 2 ½' wingspans.
- **Screech:** Once per every two rounds, the owl can screech, effecting the opponents in the same manner as a Trick.



CHARACTER GALLERY: MEARA OF THE COLD WOODS

By Vickey A. Beaver



Travelers along lonely stretches of rural lands often find themselves longing for the comforts of home. Yearning for even small comforts, delays in getting to a dry building or warm fire can make time-consuming treks nearly unbearable. Sometimes, lucky parties run across unexpected sources of hospitality, such as Meara of the Cold Woods.

Meara is a woman whose age is hard to tell. Her stature indicates confidence, her body is youthful, and her bright hazel eyes are creased with experience. Her hair is not a naturally occurring color, red highlighted by purple, which disturbs some who see her.

Meara exudes an aura of calm, reducing the chances that those approaching her will do so with anxiety. They simply feel more at ease when they get within two yards of her.

Meara is always found in the woods, being noticed as she gathers sticks for a fire. She walks with a long staff with an owl's face carved into it. She is never seen unless it's winter. She is most likely to be seen at midwinter (PCs get +3 to their Notice rolls when it's within four days of midwinter, whether before or after that day).

Meara has a small cottage barely within sight of the path the party is on. She is days away from any form of civilization. She offers food, shelter, and fresh water from a creek that leaks from underneath boulders on a hill, runs behind her abode, and leads into the ground between slabs of thick rock hundreds of feet away. It never freezes despite being less than a foot deep and only two yards across at its widest point.

If Meara responds favorably to the party, she invites them to stay the night in her warm home. The place is spacious enough on the inside to shelter ten people, even though it looks only big enough for two or three from the outside. If asked about the size, Meara hasn't a clue what they mean.

If the party does something to provoke Meara's ire, she shoes them away. When they look back, she and her home disappear from view and party members find themselves lost,

regardless of Tracking rolls, for ten hours. They are unable to find her, the creek, or any signs of the road. The skies over the woods become completely overcast.

If they wish to fight her, Meara fights until she is down three wounds, then she runs deeper into the woods, disappearing from their view. If she is being restrained, a gust of wind stirs up forest debris, impairing the party members' view of her, covering her disappearance. When next the party looks, her cottage is gone. That route gets them lost for three days instead of ten hours.

With favorable results, Meara asks the party an abundance of questions about anything that strikes her. She offers the party gifts of the season as they leave. From a small, ornate, wooden chest, she mysteriously produces any number of small, easy-to-carry items from the PC's homelands or favored locations. She tells them of their significance. Each relieves a level of fatigue when held for fifteen minutes, even if the person is still on the move.

Those could be anything from a pine cone to a belt buckle of certain design to scarves of a particular fabric.



MEARA OF THE COLD WOODS

Meara is a widow who loved to travel when her husband was alive. She now lives to honor her family's line of special gift – magically aiding long-suffering winter travelers - which she may hint at, but will not reveal.

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

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7; **Charisma:** 3

Skills: Fighting d6, Persuasion d12, Knowledge (Woods) d12, Notice d10, Stealth d8, Healing d6

Armor: None

Weapons: Staff of the Cold Woods (Str+d4+1, Parry +2, Reach 1, Two Hands)

Hindrances: Curious

Edges: Nerves of Steel

CONVENTION CALENDAR JULY - OCTOBER

Welcome to Convention Connection! In order to ensure that readers have a chance to plan their convention trips, each quarter's issue will show conventions occurring in each of the three months of that quarter, plus the first month in the next quarter. It wouldn't do much good for you to get October's issue and only then find out that you have 10 days or so to get to a convention in October. That does mean there will be some overlap, but we felt the benefit was worth some small duplication.

Covering October, November, December, and January At-A-Glance

Convention	Website	Dates	Location (States + UK)
Icon	http://www.iconfestival.org.il/2012	10/2-4/12	Israel
Council of Five Nations*	www.swa-gaming.org/council	10/5-7/12	NY
Nuke Con	www.nuke-con.com	10/5-7/12	NE
Con on the Cob*	www.cononthecob.com	10/11-14/12	OH
New York Comic Con	www.newyorkcomiccon.com	10/11-14/12	NY
Realms Con	http://realmscon.com/wordpress/	10/12-14/12	TX
Furnace	http://rpgfurnace.com/	10/13-14/12	UK
Albacon	www.albacon.org	10/18-21/12	NY
CharCon	http://charcon.org	10/19-21/12	WV
Rock-Con	www.rock-con.com	10/19-21/12	IL
Crystal Coast Con	www.crystalcoastcon.com	10/20/2012	NC
FlatCon	www.flatcon.com/default.shtml	10/26-28/12	IL
GaelCon	www.gaelcon.com/gaelcon	10/26-29/12	Ireland
Hal-Con	http://hal-con.com	10/26-28/12	Canada
Necronomicon	www.stonehill.org/necmain.htm	10/26-28/12	FL
U-Con	www.ucon-gaming.org	10/26-28/12	MI
Carnage	www.carnagecon.com	11/2-4/12	VT
HammerCon	www.hammercon.ca	11/2-4/12	Canada
MACE	www.justusproductions.com/index.php/justus/mace/2/2/2	11/2-4/12	NC
AmberConNW	www.amberconnw.org	11/8-12/12	OR
IndieCon	www.indiecon.net	11/9-11/12	UK
MEPACON Fall	www.mepacon.com	11/9-11/12	PA
PentaCon	www.pentacongames.com	11/9-11/12	IN
Philcon	http://2012.philcon.org	11/9-11/12	NJ
WindyCon	www.windycon.org	11/9-11/12	IL
ZOECon	www.zoecon.net	11/9-11/12	WA
ShaunCon	www.rpgkc.org/Con	11/15-18/12	MO
Daisho Con	www.daishocon.com	11/16-18/12	WI
JimCon	http://jimcon.ca	11/16-18/12	Canada
Pure Speculation	www.purespec.org	11/16-18/12	Canada
Extraordinary Consequences	www.ishtari.co.uk/consequences	11/22-25/12	UK
ChambanaCon	www.chambanacon.org	11/23-25/12	IL
Wolfcon	www.wolfcon.org	11/23-25/12	IL
Dragonmeet	www.dragonmeet.co.uk	12/1/2012	UK
AnonyCon	http://anonycon.com/	12/7-9/12	CT

Convention	Website	Dates	Location (States + UK)
WinterCon	http://metrodetroitgamers.wordpress.com/gaming-conventions/wintercon	12/7-8/12	MI
Holiday Game Bash	http://holidaygamebash.com	12/8/12	OH
IkkiCon	www.ikkicon.com	12/28-30/12	TX
Raiders of the Game Cupboard	www.raidersofthegamecupboard.co.uk	12/29/12	UK
Anime Los Angeles	www.animelosangeles.org/wp	1/4-6/13	CA
Arisia	http://2013.arisia.org/	1/18-21/13	MA
Confusion	http://confusion.stilyagi.org/	1/18-20/13	MI
MarsCon	www.marscon.net	1/18-20/13	VA
SCARAB	www.s-c-a-r-a-b.com	1/18-21/13	SC
ChattaCon	www.chattacon.org	1/25-27/13	TN
Conception	www.conceptionuk.org	1/30-2/3/13	UK

*Known to have Savage Worlds games or personalities.

All dates and websites were accurate as of this printing. If you know of conventions occurring between October and January that are not listed here, please let us know.

Savage Saturday Nights

Savage Saturday Nights (SSN) started at Con on the Cob and has become something popping up at other conventions from those as large as Gen Con to small, regional ones. If you are aware a convention featuring an SSN, let us know, and we'll mention it if we can.

If you are associated with a convention, we are happy to feature your logo and, if you are convention featuring an SSN, even elaborate a bit on that aspect of your con, providing we've got room to do so.

RECENT RELEASES JUNE 15 - SEPTEMBER 15

Here's a comprehensive look at Savage Worlds products that have been released during the previous three months.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Publisher</u>	<u>Setting</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Format</u>
<i>Heroes & Servitors</i>	Savage Mojo	Dungeonlands	Supplement	PDF
<i>Bad Times on the Goodnight</i>	Pinnacle Entertainment Group	Deadlands	Campaign	PDF
<i>Savage Insider Premium Issue #3</i>	Mystical Throne Entertainment	Multiple	Magazine	PDF, POD
<i>Starships of the Galaxy</i>	Triple Ace Games	Daring Tales of the Space Lanes	Supplement	PDF
<i>Sellswords & Soldiers</i>	Triple Ace Games	Hellfrost	Supplement	PDF
<i>Firelight Scout Ship</i>	StoryWeaver	High-Space	Battlemap	PDF
<i>Rocket Rangers</i>	Triple Ace Games	G-Men & Gangsters	Supplement	PDF
<i>Starship Figure Flats</i>	StoryWeaver	High-Space	Paper Miniatures	PDF
<i>All for One: Regime Diabolique</i>	Triple Ace Games	All for One: Regime Diabolique	Core Rulebook	PDF, Print
<i>High-Space (Open Beta)</i>	StoryWeaver	High-Space	Core Rulebook	PDF
<i>Creatures from the Dread Sea Dominions</i>	GRAMEL	Beasts & Barbarians	Supplement	PDF, Print
<i>Return to Manitou Bluff</i>	Pinnacle Entertainment Group	Deadlands	Adventure	PDF, Print
<i>Kaiser's Gate</i>	Battlefield Press	Kaiser's Gate	Core Rulebook	PDF, Print
<i>Fan-Created Support (2)</i>	Daring Entertainment	War of the Dead	Supplement	PDF
<i>Hero Construction Set</i>	Okumarts Games	Beasts & Barbarians	Paper Miniatures	PDF
<i>Creature Guide #3: Fungals</i>	Triple Ace Games	Hellfrost	Supplement	PDF
<i>One Shots #2: Starstruck</i>	Reality Blurs	Agents of Oblivion	Adventure	PDF
<i>Creatures of Barsaive</i>	RedBrick	Earthdawn	Supplement	PDF, Print
<i>Death of the Prophet</i>	Silver Gryphon Games	Wellstone City	Adventure	PDF
<i>Savage Insider #5</i>	Mystical Throne Entertainment	Multiple	Magazine	PDF
<i>Player's Guide</i>	Pinnacle Entertainment Group	Hell on Earth	Core Rulebook	PDF
<i>Denizens of Barsaive, Volume One</i>	RedBrick	Earthdawn	Supplement	PDF, Print
<i>Denizens of Barsaive, Volume Two</i>	RedBrick	Earthdawn	Supplement	PDF, Print
<i>Hell on Earth</i>	Pinnacle Entertainment Group	Hell on Earth	Core Rulebook	PDF, Print
<i>Welcome to Mortiston, USA!</i>	Scrying Eye Games	Welcome to Mortiston, USA!	Core Rulebook	PDF, Print
<i>Eurellia, the Pirate Haven</i>	StoryWeaver	Hael	Adventure	PDF

SAVAGE INSIDER

PREMIUM ISSUE 2

SPRING 2012

Watch for issues of Savage Insider Premium with lots more in-game content and supplemental material for the Savage Worlds settings published by Mystical Throne Entertainment.

MTE



Savage Insider Issue 6: Holidays and Havoc is dedicated to Autumn and winter holidays and festivals and how we incorporate them into our games. Incorporating believable holidays and festivals can be hard enough, but creating interesting NPCs, usable equipment, and interesting adventures sure can be fun! This issue provides a collection of NPCs, equipment, and adventures all surrounding a holiday or festival theme.

Holidays and Havoc is a cross-genre issue with a leaning toward the horrific. To coincide with the idea of using holidays and festivals in your game, a general interest piece has been included discussing how this can be achieved.

Holidays and Havoc includes:

- Catching the Christmas Spirit adventure
- The Harvest King adventure
- Headless Horseman character gallery
- Halloween Jack and Halloween Jill character gallery
- Meara of the Cold Woods character gallery
- Basket of Abundance equipment corral
- New Year Banner equipment corral
- Holidays of Miniature Proportion miniature spotlight
- ... and much more!

Look for new issues of *Savage Insider* every 3 months in January, April, July, and October with Premium releases in-between.