

A CHURCH FALLEN

Competition Winning Ace Tale™ for Savage Worlds by Doug Kilmer and Brett Smith.

A MISSION FOR NECROPOLIS 2350

BRIEFING

Listen up, Knights. The Pope has seen fit to bless you with a cakewalk as reward for your fervent service. During the recent evacuation of Providence, the local priest failed to retrieve the relic of St. Piran, patron saint of miners, upon which the church was consecrated. Doctrine demands all reliquaries be restored to the Church.

You are to recover the reliquary from beneath the altar and return it to the Curia's Office of Relics. Enemy resistance is anticipated to be low. Field intelligence indicates the initial Rephaim offensive has continued to advance, and occupation forces have yet to move into Providence. A counter-offensive is planned. You have four hours to hump in, retrieve the relic, and get to the extraction point before the bombardment begins.

MISSION

The Knights insert by Cherub into the pre-dawn outskirts of Providence. As they hump across the small mining com-

munity, it is obvious it is deserted. The initial Rephaim offensive is absent, as are the townsfolk. The Knights encounter no resistance as they approach the church.

The church is possessed by an Ordo Secundus demon. The dark presence has taken up residence within the structure—specifically the pipe organ. It has corrupted its surroundings, both melding the religious icons into sinister servants and tainting the baptismal font. The demon has already tortured and killed several fleeing civilians who sought refuge in the sanctuary.

THE POSSESSED CHURCH

The Providence church's exterior appears nondescript, being constructed of utilitarian concrete similar to the adjacent ore processing buildings. It is unrecognizable as a house of worship, except for its cruciform shape and the tall, narrow stained glass windows lining the central nave. One door to the vestibule stands askance, its hinges groaning a protest in the breeze.

The interior of the church is dim and shadowy (-1 to attack rolls). Limited lighting provided by the aurora shimmering through the stained glass windows highlights a traditional gothic architecture. A cloying stench of putrid incense wafts from chain-suspended censors. The stench clings to the back of the Knights' throats. A dingy red carpet runs the length of the central aisle between pews polished shiny by use. The crossing before the altar is capped by a hanging rood (large crucifix). Seven columns topped with religious icons border the crossing. A baptismal font stands in the western transept. The only exit besides the main doors is in the sacristy at the rear of the church behind the sanctuary.

Upon entering the church, a successful Notice roll reveals the following: the rood is hanging upside down; and/or the icons are performing horrendous acts, miming the seven deadly sins. With a raise, a hero observes the Organ pipes have what appear to be rust (blood) stains.

CONFRONTATION

When all Knights are inside the church, the demon uses *barrier* to seal the vestibule doors. Though the demon is malevolent, it begins the confrontation with the Knights slowly so as to lure them deeper into the sanctuary. As the Possessed Church toys with the Knights, the lethality of the attacks increases. A typical progression of conflict would be: Disharmony from the Organ; *entangle* using the center aisle carpet; *telekinesis* to attack using the rood; using *puppet* (see following); and, lastly the Organ physically attacking. The WM should deepen the sinister mood by interspersing disturbing hymns throughout events. The demon's favorite ploy is to take control of a team member using *puppet*, turning the victim on his comrades in a hail of gunfire. It targets the weakest (lowest Spirit) individual.

The dark presence can only be wounded by damaging the Organ. It continues the confrontation until it (the Organ) has suffered three wounds. At this point, the demon disengages from combat and lifts *barrier* from the doors.

OBSCENE EFFIGIES

The iconic statues, now Obscene Effigies, attack when the majority of the force is within the crossing. The seven Effigies activate simultaneously. They select their targets at the WM's discretion, but several gang-up on the senior Knight. The Effigies initially use *Revulsion*, following up with a *Back Rider* attack (refer to Stats). Being mindless constructs, the Obscene Effigies fight until destroyed. At the WM's



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discretion, the Organ may take advantage of this encounter to launch its own attack from the rear.

BAPTISMAL FONT

Similar to the icons, the baptismal has been corrupted. The holy water is a malevolent water elemental. It attacks any living entity passing through the western transept. Just prior to its striking, a successful Notice roll at -2 alerts the target to the moving elemental, negating any surprise.

AFTERMATH

The holy relic has also been corrupted by the demon's presence. The person carrying St. Piran's bone fragment suffers a -2 penalty to all rolls. If the Knights complete the mission within the four hour time limit, they are extracted without incident. If the mission takes longer, they must fight their way to a secondary LZ amidst Rephaim forces.



POSSESSED CHURCH

Attributes: Agility d4 (Organ), Smarts d10, Spirit d12, Strength d10, Vigor d10
Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Necromancy d12, Notice d8 (inside church only), Taunt d10 (as profane prayers, chants, and hymns)

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10

Special Abilities:

- * **Arcane Background (Magic):** The demon has 30 power points and up to ten powers (including *barrier*, *entangle*, *puppet*, *stun* and *telekinesis*)
- * **Disharmony (Stun):** The demon performs *stun* attacks using discordant music.
- * **Greater Undead:** +2 Toughness and +2 to recover from being Shaken. Immune to poison and disease. No additional damage from called shots. Half damage from piercing weapons. Ignore wound penalties.
- * **Life Sense:** The Organ can detect life energy and does not suffer poor lighting penalties.
- * **Pipes:** The Organ has six pipes (see following).
- * **Size+1:** Size of typical church organ.
- * **Weakness (Fire):** The Organ takes an additional 1d6 damage from fire attacks.

ORGAN PIPES

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Special Abilities:

- * **Armor +2:** The pipes are made of thick brass tubing.
- * **Reach 1:** Each pipe has the Reach edge.
- * **Sweep:** Each pipe has the Sweep edge.
- * **Life Sense:** The pipes can detect life energy and do not suffer poor lighting penalties.

OBSCENE EFFIGY

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Notice d4, Throwing d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Special Abilities:

- * **Armor +2:** Obscene Effigies are made of stone.
- * **Back Rider:** With a successful opposed Agility roll, Obscene Effigies jump onto the target's back and receive a +2 Fighting bonus while riding the target. A successful opposed Strength roll at -2 dislodges an effigy.
- * **Construct:** Constructs add +2 when attempting to recover from being Shaken. Constructs do not suffer additional damage from called shots, and do not suffer from disease or poison.
- * **Fearless:** Obscene Effigies are immune to fear and intimidation.
- * **Infravision:** Obscene Effigies halve penalties (rounded down) for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- * **Revulsion:** As an attack action an effigy may perform a vile act, requiring those within a medium burst template area adjacent to the effigy(ies) to make a Vigor roll to avoid disabling nausea. Failed rolls result in the target being Shaken and suffering a -1 penalty to all rolls until a successful Vigor roll at -2 is made. Each additional effigy participating in the revolting act adds a cumulative -1 penalty (maximum of -3) to the initial Vigor roll (but not the subsequent Vigor rolls to remove being Shaken).
- * **Size -1**
- * **Stone Claws:** Str+d6

BAPTISMAL WATER

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6

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

Special Abilities:

- * **Elemental:** No additional damage from called shots; Fearless; Immune to disease and poison.
- * **Invulnerability:** The elemental is immune to all non-miracle attacks except fire. A torch or similar causes 1d6 damage but is instantly extinguished if it hits.
- * **Seeps:** Water elementals can squeeze through any porous gap as if it were Difficult Ground.
- * **Size -1:** The elemental is small due to the limited water in the font.
- * **Slam:** Str+d4 non-lethal damage.
- * **Water Spout:** The elemental can project a torrent of rushing water. This automatically puts out any normal fires. Creatures within the cone must make a Strength roll or be Shaken.

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