

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4	Interrupts: A Game of I Dare You.....	24	Priority Three: Talk to Witnesses.....	51
CHAPTER 1: A WORLD OF HORROR	7	External Investigation.....	25	Priority Four:	
Genre versus Mood	7	Investigation Rewards.....	26	Bag and Tag the Evidence	51
SERIES STYLES	7	CHARACTER RE-CREATION	26	From the Outside	51
A Touch of Horror.....	7	Starting Power Levels.....	26	Information Gathering.....	52
Session Elements.....	8	Normals (PL 3-6).....	26	Surveillance.....	52
Power Level Options:.....	8	Pulp Heroes (PL 6-8).....	26	Questioning.....	52
Monster of the Week.....	8	Super Heroes (PL 8-12).....	27	Databases.....	53
Series Elements.....	8	Heroes of Legend (PL 12+).....	27		
Power Level Options.....	8	Supernaturals		CHAPTER 3:	
Series Elements.....	9	Ability Benchmarks.....	28	MASTERING YOUR FEARS	55
Power Level Options.....	9	Complications	29	TYPES OF HORROR	55
Post-Apocalyptic	9	Curse Sworn	29	Sociological.....	55
Series Elements.....	9	Flashbacks.....	29	Psychological.....	55
Power Level Options.....	9	Mythic Weakness.....	29	Allegorical.....	55
Post-Humanity	10	Phobia	30	Scientific.....	56
Series Elements.....	10	Monstrous.....	30	Supernatural.....	56
Power Level Options.....	10	Supernatural Equipment.....	30	Natural.....	56
The Ancient Ones.....	10	Occult Tech.....	33	Sociological Horror.....	56
Series Elements.....	10	SUPERNATURAL ARCHETYPES	34	Post-Apocalyptic Horror.....	56
Power Level Options.....	10	Playing Monsters.....	34	Alien Invasion	56
Children of Myth.....	11	How They Became "Good".....	34	Applications in a Supers Game.....	56
Series Elements.....	11	Monster Benchmarks.....	35	Sociological series Examples.....	57
Power Level Options.....	12	Weaknesses.....	36	Psychological Horror.....	57
Science Amok.....	12	Archetypes.....	36	Applications in a Supers Game.....	57
Series Elements.....	12	Cursed Adventurer.....	37	Psychological Series Examples.....	58
Power Level Options.....	12	Ex-Cape	38	Allegorical Horror.....	58
Altered History.....	13	Infected Hero.....	39	Applications in a Supers Game.....	58
Series Elements.....	13	Massacre Survivor	40	Allegorical Series Examples.....	59
Power Level Options.....	13	Monster Hunter	41	Horror Subtypes	59
Series Elements.....	14	New Temple Guardian.....	42	Supernatural Horror.....	59
Power Level Options:.....	14	Noble MOnster.....	43	Scientific Horror.....	60
Enslaved	14	NSTROUS TEMPLATES	44	Natural Horror.....	60
Series Elements.....	15	Alien.....	44	A Confluence of Horror.....	61
Power Level Options.....	15	Hunter.....	44	PART-TIME HORROR	61
TIME PERIODS IN HORROR	16	Hybrid.....	44	Part-Time Campaigns	61
Mythic Age	16	Infiltrator.....	45	Solo Sessions.....	61
Muslim Conquest (600s-1400s).....	16	Swamer.....	45	Story Arc.....	61
Crusades (1000s-1300s).....	16	Artificial Life	45	Season	61
Inquisition (1300s-1700s).....	16	Familiar	45	Part-Time Scenarios.....	62
Industrial Age	17	Golem	45	Future Flash.....	62
Weird West (Mid to Late 1800s).....	17	Robot	45	Time Gone By.....	62
Steampunk (1800s).....	17	Celestial	45	What If Worlds.....	62
New Science (1890s-1910s).....	17	Angel.....	46	Alien Planets.....	63
Pulp Age	18	Demon.....	46	In Someone Else's Shoes.....	63
Roaring Twenties (1920s).....	18	Immortal.....	46	Tangent One-Shots.....	64
The Dirty Thirties (1930s).....	19	Gestalt.....	46	FEAR AND CORRUPTION	64
Nazis (1930s).....	19	The Beast.....	47	Fear.....	64
The Cold War.....	19	Mad Science Hybrid.....	47	Fearlessness.....	64
Fifties Paranoia (1950s).....	19	Risen.....	47	Corruption	65
Seventies Upheaval (1970s).....	19	Classic Vampire	47	Types of Corruption.....	65
Age of Information.....	20	Metrosexual Vampire.....	48	Acquiring Corruption.....	65
...and Everything Beyond	21	Mummy.....	48	Effects of Corruption.....	65
Armageddon (Immediate-Future). ..	21	Zombie.....	48	Corruption Limits.....	66
Technology Awry (Near-Future).....	21	Shapeshifter.....	48	Removing Corruption.....	66
Eaters of Stars (Far-Future).....	21	Bastet.....	49	Fear and Corruption in Action.....	67
		Doppelganger	49	Madness.....	67
		Lycanthrope	49	Mutation.....	67
		Spirit.....	50	Toxicity.....	68
		Ghost.....	50	Wickedness.....	69
		Skin-Rider.....	50	THE TOOLS OF HORROR	
		INVESTIGATION 101:		GAMEMASTERING:	
		DOWN & DIRTY	50	FEELING SCARED?	69
		Crime Scene Investigation.....	50	This Is Not a Competition	69
		Priority One: Secure		Precision vs. Blunt-Force Trauma.....	69
		the Crime Scene	50	Disquiet versus Discomfort	70
		Priority Two: Sweep the Scene.....	51		

Tipping Point: Tilting the Scales70
 Leaving in the Blanks.....70
Descriptions 70
Let Them Suppose..... 70
Using the Senses 71
Heralds..... 71
Vaguely Seen..... 71
Be Inventive 71
 Toying with Expectations.....71
 Humor in Horror.....72

INTERMEDIATE TOOLS

OF HORROR GMING72

Horrifying
 the Already Powerful.....72
 Monster Power Plays.....72
 Greater Power Level..... 72
 Immunities.....72
 Linked73
 Overwhelm..... 73
 Adapt 73
 Attacking the
 Hero's Physical Weaknesses..... 73
 Attacking the Hero's Mental State . 74
 Attacking the Hero's Emotions 77

ADVANCED THOUGHTS ON

GAMEMASTERING HORROR79

Maslow's
 Hierarchy of Needs.....79
 Mirror Neurons 80
 Degrees of Separation 81
 I, Monster..... 82

THE PLAYER'S JOB83

Investing the Player.....83
 Reward the Fear.....84
 Know Their Fears84
Types of Fears..... 84
Describing the Phobia 85
Other Theatrics..... 86

CREATING 10186

Creating Organizations.....86
The Rationale..... 86
Their History..... 88
Their Influence..... 89
Their Secret..... 90
Their Structure..... 91
Their Public Face 91
 Creating a New Mythology92
Rebirth..... 92
The Myth Pattern 93
The Myths 93
Figures of the Pantheon 95

ALIEN PANTHEONS97

Raison d'Etre97
Tier 5 - Physiological 97
Tier 4 - Safety 97
Tier 3 - Love/Belonging..... 98
Tier 2 - Esteem..... 98
Tier 1 - Self-Actualization..... 98
 Gods & Monsters98
Arachnids..... 98
Fungi 99
Insects..... 100
 Cults 101
Unlike Real World Cults 101
The Promise..... 102
The Corruption 103
The Agenda..... 103
The Ace in the Hole 104

DISASTERS: DEAD

AND DYING WORLDS104

Global Flooding 104
Flood Repercussions..... 104
 Impact Winter..... 106
The Effects..... 106
 And All the Rest 107

CHAPTER 4:

MISADVENTURES IN HORROR 109

BUILD-A-CRITTER109

Abilities 109
Nimble Packages..... 109
Strong Packages..... 110
Cunning Packages..... 110
Alluring Packages..... 110
 Skills and Advantages 111
 Horrific Effects 111
Attacks..... 111
Defense..... 112
 Haunted Houses 112
Abilities..... 113
Location, Location, Location..... 114

MONSTER ARCHETYPES114

Dark Emissary 114
 Inhuman Juggernaut..... 115
 Flesh Sculptor..... 115
 Infected..... 115
 Mr. Clown!..... 115
 Supernatural Slasher..... 115
 Trophy Hunter 115
 WTF!..... 115
Dark Emissary..... 116
Inhuman Juggernaut..... 117
Flesh Sculptor..... 118
Infected..... 119

Mr. Clown!..... 120
Supernatural Slasher 121
Trophy Hunter..... 122
WTF!..... 123

CLIPPINGS124

CASE FILES127

Bandwidth 128
Background..... 128
Investigation 128
Conflict 129
Location 129
Adversary..... 129
Finale 130
 Sleeping Gods Lie 130
Background..... 131
Investigation 131
Conflict 132
Location 132
Adversary..... 132
Finale 133
 Orphan Killer 133
Background..... 133
Investigation 134
Conflict 134
Location 134
Adversary 135
Finale 136
 The Blood Cult..... 136
Background..... 136
Investigation 137
Conflict 138
Location 138
Adversary..... 138
Count Dracula 138
Centurion Half-Bloods..... 140
Legati Vampire 141
Finale 141

CHAPTER FIVE: ARCADE 143

INSIDE THE ARCADE.....143

The Gravity of Balance 144
 History of ARCADE..... 144
 Organization 145
 Leroy Dutch 146
 The New Orleans Base..... 148
 Fun & Mayhem with ARCADE..... 148
Occasional Interaction 148
Ongoing Series 149

INDEX150

LICENSE152

INTRODUCTION

The little boy looked frail, his duvet tucked up under his nose and his sandbagged eyes darting to every dark corner of the room. Outside Dutch's window, the winds howled at the blistered farmhouse, the fields outside choked on a Dustbowl storm. A wisp of an old woman entered the room and sat at the edge of his bed, her veins mapping out the road of her years. Her eyes were almost white with cataracts but she steered by them just fine.

"Granma?" Dutch asked. "Are monsters comin' for me now?"

She smiled and ran her fingers through his silken hair to comfort him. "Of course they are, dear. You know that. They always gonna come for you."

"You gonna kill them?" he asked.

She shook her head and gently laid the nickel-plated revolver in his lap. "This here Colt belonged to my pappy. It killed many of them evil bastards and a few Union boys to boot. Every bullet, done baptised in blood. But Granma's done fightin' your fights. Time you became a man, Dutch. Time you killed them yerself. Or they ain't never gonna stop comin' for you."

Dutch nodded and propped himself up in his bed. He took the revolver in both hands, the nose dragged down by the weight of its long barrel. The old woman nodded and made her way to the bedroom door.

"Night, Granma," Dutch said. "Don't let the bed bugs bite."

She nodded and pointed to the closet door. It swung open a hitch. "Ain't the bed bugs you got to worry about," she called from the hallway. "Do us proud, Dutch. I'll pray I see you in the mornin'!" The closet door swung open another inch and Dutch could hear the monster breathing now....

The *Supernatural Handbook* is a sourcebook for M&M dealing with the paranormal from the context of the "extraordinary" investigating and confronting the "otherworldly." In other words, it's about super-powered and fantastic men and women investigating horror. In these pages, imagination curdles as black as blood under a moonlit night, and the unseen, the unimaginable holds court with cackling delight.

These are games to be run by candlelight. These are heroes who face the unspeakable every dusk and struggle to usher in one more morning for a blissfully ignorant humanity. Let the spandex-clad jesters have the daylight and their paparazzi. Let them stop bank robbers and defeat four-color villains with their four-color dreams. Your glory is unspoken, your enemies legion, your daily struggles fought from the shadows.

In your worlds, your heroes speak in whispers, for words can stir the sleeping leviathans from their slumber.

In your worlds, the most inhuman of monsters can carry the most human of hearts, and the most mundane of humans can carry the most monstrous of intentions.

In your worlds, H.P. Lovecraft was a prophet and the Grimm Brothers crusaders. Their tales weren't just parables...they were omens, instructions and promises.

THE CAVEAT OF HORROR

Before diving into the guts of this sourcebook, let's clarify something. This sourcebook may draw upon the supernatural and its role in superhero games, but at its tarhearted core, it's about horror. It's about the unknown

and all those dark and delicious things that lie beyond conventional understanding. Or perhaps horror is about understanding them all too well.

It's about unnerving the players and about characters playing scared. That last part is important, because without the players' cooperation, the game can go from *Alien* to *Evil Dead 2*, from *Night of the Dead* to *Shaun of the Dead*. If that's a deliberate choice, then let it be deliberate. Let it be unanimous from the series' conception and not some cruel happenstance that derails the game.

Of all game types, horror is easiest to highjack. The wrong joke here, a player unwilling to suspend disbelief there and all the tension evaporates. That's why, when running a horror or supernatural game, you need to line all your undead ducks in a row beforehand. The *Supernatural Handbook* is here to help you with that.

CAVEAT PART II

The *Supernatural Handbook* deals with all types of horror, not just the supernatural kind. Slasher movies are about a type of terror that sometimes have little supernatural in them. Apocalypse films that use natural disasters to trigger "The End" have nothing mystical or mythological too them either. Giant sharks, killer ants, stalkers with murderous intent, diseases that ravage the body...all are equal to the task of scaring the player as any tentacle-waving fiend.

The fact is that horror can be anything from the ghost dragging poor souls into its web to the search for a girl



kidnapped by a torturing rapist. What matters here isn't the *cause* of the horror, which is only the vehicle, but the shock and terror it generates in the vehicle's passengers... the players. It may stem from the anticipation and fear of terrible things; it may come from witnessing brutal times and acts. Regardless, though, it covers a wide range of what people consider horror, and it tries to deal with many definitions by exploring what they evoke as opposed to what causes them.

Throughout this book is material on the effects of a disaster or the fear from loved ones jeopardized, etc., but what matters is that monsters are not scary on their own. Monsters and villains are only frightening in the context of their actions and impact. The "*Supernatural*" part of the *Handbook* (or "the *Supernaturals* series" when referring to a series) is just a vehicle for that impact.

USING & ABUSING THIS BOOK

Imagine horror is a great beast, a construct of fetid minds and maligned intentions. And like all beasts, this too must be built from the skeleton up. Tendons, organs, muscles, veins... a symphony of foul creation to haunt the dreams of good folks.

Therein lies the purpose of this book. For Gamemasters, this book helps build the spirit and foundations of a good horror series, and it offers advice on continuing said series into the twilight. For players, this book is of equal importance. It details elements of building the right characters and the roles of said characters in the game.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

From heroes to monsters, archetypes to enemies, adventures to locations, and advice to examples, this book is a Gamemaster's one-stop to run a horror game and player's inspiration to play in one.

Chapter 1: A World of Horror deals with the basics of a game. Be it series styles or the genres that use the supernatural, this is the place to lay a solid foundation with the eras and types of horror out there.

Chapter 2: The Player's Guide to the Supernatural covers all the tools and tricks that players can use to help them survive a horror series, be it traits and modifications, rules on playing monsters, or both Heroic and Monstrous Archetypes.

Chapter 3: Master Your Fear arms Gamemasters with everything they need to know about running and maintaining series. Emphasis is placed here on running horror games with powered heroes in mind, though the advice is certainly open enough to run almost any style of horror game.

Chapter 4: Misadventures in Horror provides Gamemasters with monsters and adventure ideas, haunted house construction, and a monster randomizer to harrow the characters.

Chapter 5: A.R.C.A.D.E. presents The American Research Center for the Arcane Defense of Earth (A.R.C.A.D.E.), a Federal organization dedicated to fighting the supernatural. This organization is self-contained and can be dropped into any series with minimal fuss.



CHAPTER 1: A WORLD OF HORROR

The ground ruptured and spread a delta of cracks and fissures across the city. Entire blocks vanished into the hellfire glow of the crevices while swaying tentacles the size of skyscrapers emerged from the ground to shatter buildings.

"Tell me you've got a plan!" Morris said, looking at his companion, a wall of a man named Dutch.

"Plan?," Dutch said calmly; he smacked the baseball bat turned truncheon in his meaty palm. "We beat the ever-loving Christ out of that thing until we're up to our eyeballs in calamari."

Stemming from a long-running debate in the horror community, the arguments as to whether horror is a genre or mood is a good place to start series discussions. The argument tries to define horror's place, because some people classify it as a genre and others as a mood, which adds flavor to other genres.

GENRE VERSUS MOOD

Old horror stories sprung from the breast of Gothic novels, and were most certainly mood or emotive. They focused on nuance and the suggestion of something untoward, allowing the reader to fill in the gaps with their imagination. Mood is the horror in science-fiction films like *Alien* and *Pitch Black*. Mood is the horror in coming of age stories like *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Ginger Snaps*, or in urban fantasy comics like *Hellboy*, *The Goon* or *BPRD*. Horror as mood is a spicing to change the nuance or theme of stories.

As a literary genre, however, horror follows a set of rules and principles. It becomes category, as defined and regimented as science fiction and fantasy. Horror as genre came about with writers like Stephen King and the booming sales of horror in the 1970s. Specifically, horror was at the prime of its popularity when bookstores categorized it on their bookshelves for easier shopping because fans came looking for more books by King or "like King."

Another way to think of it is if horror was a country, then genre would be its borders and mood would be its air.

A problem with defining horror as genre is that genre seeks to define a rules set, which some say defeats the

nature of horror. The problem some people have with mood is they might actually enjoy the roles and definitions of a genre. Slasher flicks, zombie stories, vampire tales and apocalypse yarns are all subsets of horror genre with their share of fans who prefer the visceral and known elements of their beloved medium.

Then, of course, you have those who say horror is neither or both, because if horror can't be defined for it to be effective, then it can be both genre and mood (or neither) as the story demands.

How does this all apply to the *Supernatural Handbook* and superheroes? Should the series be mood or genre? The answer is, it can be both. It just depends on what the Game-master wants to accomplish. If the series is ongoing and the universe pre-established, then horror as mood is a perfect way to introduce the occasional supernatural element into an otherwise normal supers game. If the series is dealing with specific horror-based events or enemies over the course of its life, then it can be genre. Otherwise, a trick to using both in an ongoing horror series is to say:

Genre is the physical manifestation of horror (monster and location), while mood is the psychological ramifications of horror (its impact on the heroes and NPCs).

SERIES STYLES

When talking about a *Supernaturals* series, some of the threats and options have nothing to do with magic, but may be stories of science run-amok or ancient technology so beyond our kin it might as well be magic. In this sourcebook, "supernatural" is meant to mean anything that 1) provides an element of fear or terror to the series, and 2) is well outside the status quo of our everyday lives. The latter is sometimes hard to establish in a world where heroes routinely break the laws of physics, but so long as the setting establishes a baseline of normalcy, then the series or story arcs should be about matters deviating from that baseline.

A TOUCH OF HORROR

This is best when the game is already ongoing or the group is only interested in occasional brushes with the supernatural. This style of series uses heroes of any power

level dealing with the normality of any supers game. Once in a while, however, the odd villain, monster, artifact or arc comes into play that exposes the heroes to horror. It is the best way to keep the team off-balanced and it throws a nice change of pace into a session.