

Runaway Hirelings

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This document is a bit of extra Runaway Hirelings content that should be considered not a part of the main game but extra material that can be used by a group to meddle with the games rules.

None of this stuff has probably been play tested, but it sounds good on paper.

RULES: WEIRDOMETER

As you go through the dungeon on your way out, something new and mysterious and horrific finds its way inside, or maybe it's trying to make its way out?

Adding weirdness is a big part of Runaway Hirelings to begin with. Spur of the moment generally means whatever you have floating around in your head combined with something you read in a comic or saw on the internet. That is chaotic weirdness. But what if you want to add cosmic weirdness to your game?

This is the weirdometer, a subsystem for Runaway Hirelings that introduces a few new rules, as well as the *weird tokens* (abbreviated as capital "W", Weird).

These rules are meant to bring strange of a specific nature into your game and give players a way to invoke and interact with it mechanically. Doing so will certainly change your hirelings forever, as the horrors of the Cosmic old ones (Cosmics, or

Cosmic) are spread and carried by every living thing that interacts with it.

Additional Setup

To make use of these new rules, make sure to have tokens or items to act as tokens placed next to the Dunarch. When a point of Weird is added to the game, the Dunarch places it in the center of the table where all of the players can reach and make use of it.

When a point is spent, a player takes it then passes it back to the Dunarch for them to hold.

Be sure to also share these additional rules with the players at the table.

Rule: Call to the Void...

(+1 *Weird*)

Whenever a hireling calls to the void for assistance in a time of need, roll a d6.

Adding a modifier of +1 for each hireling who participates or aids in the activity.

If you roll a 5 or greater, then you receive the help you needed. This help is enough for everyone to overcome the obstacle.

Now, roll for *Weird* tags. To determine which tables to roll on, subtract 5 from your initial roll. If that value is a 2, then roll a d6 on table 1 and table 2. The results influence the Dunarch's description of the environment and event...

Table 1: Where *it* came from

1	A Mouth , potentially a friend's.
2	Cracks in the ceiling, the floor...
3	Fog which came from nowhere.
4	Shadows at the edges of the room.
5	Any source of light ,
6	Dreams, the reflections in eyes...

Table 2: What *it's* made of

1	Swirling Fish Scales and Bones
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2	Points of Stars and droplets of darkness
3	Cloaks , and only cloaks, massed one atop another into a humanoid form.
4	A writhing mass of limbs of every creature on the known world fused together.
5	Flowers and vines, plant life overgrown.
6	Small animated objects from all over the room.

Table 3: What <i>it</i> does	
1	Begins a ritual ...
2	Digests the room...
3	Takes control of your enemies...
4	Just is there ...
5	Attempts to communicate ...
6	Alters everything ...

Having succeeded in receiving assistance the hireling who initiated the call must select one tag to cross off the roll list.

Rolling a 2, 3, or 4 results in inhuman and unnatural distortions in the surrounding as described by the Dunarch. The hireling is now terrified of the cosmic horrors for the duration of this room, someone else will have to overcome the remaining obstacles.

On a 1 no one heeds your call. No help comes and nothing terrible either.

Just using this rule adds 1 Weird to the pool.

Rule: Resurfacing from the Void...
(-1 Weird, +1 Flail Point)

When the Dunarch wants to bring the Cosmics into the room, they take 1 Weird from the pool, keeping it for themselves. Any of the options that have been rolled for (but are not crossed off the tables) from Call to

the Void can be picked as how the Cosmic return once again to alter the environment.

Each hireling who chooses to interact with the horror in this room must answer one of these questions (player’s choice) ...

- How does it temporarily change you? How does this change physically manifest itself?
- What about the Cosmic makes you want to be with it? What pushes you to be on *their* side?
- What do you hear your friends saying? Why is it out of character for them? What snaps you out of the song?
- You see your hero; how can you tell they are consumed by the Cosmic? What do you see in your vision? What does this vision tell you of the future?

Once each question has been asked once, the next use of this rule requires the Dunarch to put 2 Weird of their own into the pool and will subtract 1 flail point from each hireling that’s in the room.

If a hireling can’t pay up, then a horror consisting of all tags that are crossed out on the tables for Call to the Void comes forth, forcing each character to lose 1d6+4 gold.

If one-character sacrifices themselves to a 1d6+2 gold loss, then the other party members can be spared from the damage.

If the Dunarch invokes it but there isn’t 2 Weird in the pool to take, then each player who answers the following questions gains 1d6 gold...

- What stories have you heard about this “thing” before? How do you know it’s really connected?

Rule: Returning but Different...

(+2 *Weird*)

Characters who die from any of the rules from the weirdometer and return later to play will be covered in scales and eyes which are glazed in the shimmering stars from the night sky. All actions they take must be described by the player in a way befitting a holy ritual for the old ones (the Cosmics).

Add 2 Weird to the pool when this happens.

Rule: A Door Opens to Nowhere...

(-1 *Weird*)

When a character knocks something over while mumbling strange words, the item will hit the floor and fall through it creating a black pit where it landed, this only happens when a player. Players may climb through this hole, going through the Plane of Chasms; a place of star light and tar filled darkness.

The Dunarch will roll a d6, on 5s and 6s the Dunarch may pick one effect to use once in any of the coming rooms. As the Plane of Chasms can bleed over as it chases the party who trespassed through it...

- Hirelings are pushed apart, separated by planes of existence which occupy the same space. +2 Danger Score for the room.
- The ceiling shoots upwards until it is so far away that it becomes a night sky, eyes glow like stars shooting visions into anyone making eye contact. -1 Flail Point, players choice who.
- A mass of lights and dust swirls around taking the shape of a lost adventurer, a friend. Someone erasing the memory of their build

question (memories) will lower the Danger Score of the room to 1.

The danger score of the Plane of Chasms is always 1.

The cost of this rule is 1 Weird from the pool.

Rule: Strangeness

(+1 *Weird*)

If a player answers a build question, or any question from the core rules by referencing a vague Cosmic weirdness, add +1 *Weird* to the pool.

Rule: Overload

If the pool of *Weird* equals 6 or more, then the walls of the dungeon begin to collapse, the end scene has come before it should have. This is now an escape, roll the danger score as normal. All actions now must involve escaping the growing Cosmics and their grasp of the dungeon.

If anyone dies during this chase, instead of asking what their tombstone says in the Epilogue, ask how this experience changes their entire life, how does it haunt them?

DUNGEON TEMPLATE: TEMPLE OF AL-GURATT

The Temple of Al-Guratt should be looked at and thought of as a Cthulhu or deep one temple. A construct made by the will of men while in the thoughts of chaotic gods, who the efforts of people towards their ends (a man needs religion to live, so he builds a temple, Al-Guratt makes it into one for Al-Guratt). As such, it is dark, confusing in construction, and completely filled to the brim with horrifying sights.

But, the hirelings made it to the boss room, so feel free to ask about how they reacted to X, Y or Z terrible thing when they first encountered it.

Inspirational Imagery

- The entirety of the temple is constructed out of irregular shaped stones, no two stones which touch has the same number of sides or is made of the same material, as such any wall is impossible to judge the distance you are from it.
- Shadows are irregular, light seems to twirl after you when you pass for a few steps before returning to a torch. Illuminating the symbols carved into the walls, all ancient and nearly impossible to decipher.
- This temple is only visible when the ocean recedes enough that the entrance can be seen on the beaches. Somehow the water inside drains to somewhere, somewhere you can't find. But sea life lived and died here, so it smells putrid most of the time, like scum baked in the sun on a beach.

Strange and Cosmic Oddness

The Dunarch at any time can choose to replace a question in a rule with one of the following questions. These can be used for "It's my specialty", "choosing to fail for flails", "doing something that isn't your thing at all". Once three have been used, the GM can no longer use these questions.

- Who is allowed to freely leave this place? And Why?
- What humans live here? Why should they never come back?
- Where do worshippers sleep? What keeps them awake?
- What is the lesser one, whose form is painted on the walls, look like?
- What rites had to be performed to open the front gates, allowing your heroes in?
- Which hero betrayed you? What sacrifice did they make that made you certain they never will again?

These questions do not count towards marking the "It's my specialty" prompts. Instead each use increases the danger score of the next room by +1 and incorporates their answer into one of the challenges in the next room.

Peoples and Creatures

Listed below are the names of a variety of people, creatures and things that reside or visit the Temple of Al-Guratt. If you need a name quick for an important group or NPC, choose from here:

- Conglomerate of Fishmen Spirits (voices: Mendel, Mari, Mezdoza, and Illari)
- Living Plant Children of Yoth (Green Finger, Green Mohawk, and Yellow Breath)
- The Stair Warden, keeper of the depths of the earth

- Pelonorath and Penowrath, servants of the Cosmic son Al-Guratt
- Cant, villager from the Lost Islands, prison of tongues
- Shadow Stone Dancers

If a character gets on the good side of any of these creatures the Dunarch can give 1 flail point to each player that made an action towards this, once the room is left.

Dungeon Rooms

If someone can't think of a name for a room when they really need one, the Dunarch can suggest any of these cool and creative names. Alternatively, write them down on a piece of paper so that anyone at the table can reference them for inspiration.

- Nothing but Fog
- Just under the Exoskeleton
- The Dead Garden
- Star callers Meadow
- Memorial for Time
- Grave Labyrinth
- Secret's Mass
- Wailing Pond
- Brain of the Weak One
- The Painter Lentorn's Hovel

HIRELING: CANDLEKEEPER

The Candlekeeper is an occult candle holder, as candles riddled with occult energy meant to be used by heroes shouldn't be stored and held by heroes outside of use. They are dangerous items in a strong woman's grip, as they enhance and corrupt a personality with a hero's brand of power.

Looks:

Looks are added here as a suggestion, solely due to this being a not stereotypical hireling type.

- Covered in precious but unbreakable candle drippings. Naked underneath his robes.
- Wears a hat with a place for a candle to rest, around his neck dried fruits which reek as they are rotten.
- Very normal clothes, clearly waxed though in a way to make blood potentially drip right off, as seen by pockets which often spill small drips.
- Creepy eyes and wrinkles which show that a panicked expression has been sustained for the majority of the hireling's lifetime. Clothes are never the first thing seen.

Equipment:

You have on your person:

- Unblessed Candles (six **normal candles**)
- Loose **notes on Occult** Standards and Practices from the O.O.P.L.J.A.M.O.
- *1 item of your choice from the general gear list. But you must add the words "Old Ones" to its name.*

Specialty:

Ramblings and second-hand attempts at coaxing the unnatural forward is your thing. Got a friend being pestered by spirits? You have the ability to talk to them and see them. Oh, yeah what a creepy individual you are, being able to talk to spirits is all you do.

Build:

(choose one)

1. You lost your hero a few adventures ago, how did you cope on the way in? Seeing everyone else's heroes go, what did you do?
2. How did you protect your candles from the beasts? Did anyone else help you? How?
3. What about you tends to irritate people? Why did your home village care so much about you? What made them stop?