

cockroach souffle  
and other tasty tidbits for  
kill puppies for satan

cockroach souffle is copyright © 2002 by the author, all rights reserved.  
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<http://www.septemberquestion.org/lumpley/>.  
I adapted the recipe from one in the joy of cooking.  
the title font is vtc corona. visit <http://www.vintagetype.com> if you like it.  
published by hand.

## cockroach souffle

a dozen good sized cockroaches will yield only a heaping tablespoon of meat. cockroach has a spicy, pungent, lemon-cilantro-bug flavor that is intimidating by itself, but nicely permeates this souffle. this would make an ideal dish for a champagne brunch.

12 large cockroaches  
4 eggs, separated  
1 tbsp flour  
1 tbsp butter  
1 cup milk  
1/4 cup chopped parsley  
salt, pepper and cayenne to taste

preheat oven to 325.

plunge cockroaches 1 or 2 at a time into boiling water and cook 2-3 minutes. cut the carapace open with kitchen scissors and carefully pick the meat from the abdomen, body, and top joint of legs.

prepare a bechamel with the flour, butter and milk. when it is smooth and hot, stir in the cockroach meat and parsley, and remove from heat. beat the egg yolks well and add. season to taste and let cool slightly.

whip the egg whites until stiff and fold them gently into the cockroach and egg yolk mixture. pour into a greased 7-inch souffle baker and bake until set, about 40 minutes. serve at once.

contents: cockroach souffle 1; the wisdom of the damned 2; how many fish would a blowfish blow? 5; good grief and gravy 6; i scream you scream 9; a big hairy combat example 12; wizardly shit 14; revenge of the killer puppies 16; scenario: hey, i found this, you wannit? 17; appendix a: who hates ya, baby? 21; appendix b: but you can't 21; appendix c: killing vampires is easy 21; appendix d: what would jesus do? 21

## the wisdom of the damned

### the yellow grimoire of malthais van orley

now i have to warn you, malthais van orley (1731-1777) was one cold fucked up mean relentless motherfucker, plus he had a real gift. he could sit down and write six hundred pages in his crabby little hand and in all of them not three consecutive words would make sense.

benjamin franklin wrote of him: "if it is not the pottage of vermin, then it is the covetous glance he fixes upon my loyal old trey. such a damn'd nuisance is this v. o. that i find myself quite off my hump."

in the early fifties, van orley's (so called) yellow grimoire came to the attention of a disgruntled editor at puffin books named wilfred leer, who published it in two volumes. occasionally you can find it in a college library or one of those used bookstores specializing in books nobody ever buys. don't be put off by the fact that it's totally unreadable and the frontspiece invokes a curse of pustules and pox on the reader -- you don't want it for the reading and the curse only takes effect if you open the book during a waxing moon or in february.

van orley wrote three satanic spells into his yellow grimoire, but they're tricky to pick out of the gibberish. have your pcs make a cold roll to find each one.

- good for driving off vagrants, a first degree spell - toss a small stone at your target. it hits with about the force of a mediocre professional-level fastball. this spell takes a second or so to cast and sometimes gives you a nosebleed.

- good for having your revenge upon burglars, a first degree spell - say aloud the name of something you own. the thing you name, wherever it is, bursts into fierce flame, setting anything near it alight and burning itself quickly to ashes. this spell takes three minutes to cast (by the clock) and leaves blisters on the palms of your hands.

- good for cheating the hangman, a greater ritual - kiss your target on the lips. you and your target swap bodies. forever. if you have magical things like bound demons and branded spells, they stay with your old body. you'll still die of old age when your time is up, no matter how youthful a body you're in. this spell takes a couple of hours to cast and leaves you exhausted and puking.

malthais van orley was in fact hanged on march 6, 1777, and so that's when we say that he died, but who knows?

### the golden guide to satanic ceremonies

now this is a book to find. it was published in 1971 by golden books, compiled by one eliza j. jowre, and unfortunately went almost immediately out of print. the story goes that late in 1971 jowre learned that she had terminal lymphatic cancer, converted to islam and joined a fundamentalist mosque, to which she willed the book's reprint rights on the condition that they never be exercised. the result is that there simply aren't very many out there. for the most part sorcerers, not puppykillers, have the resources to collect them.

(i have it from a highly placed source that the relevant authorities found jowre's last-minute conversion entertaining, but not particularly convincing.)

the guide contains 5(!) satanic spells, and an absolute bare minimum of raving.

- good for souring milk, a first degree spell - summon up a piddly-ass demon and tell it to do something. probably it'll obey, especially if you tell it to do something really really easy. this spell takes a good ten minutes to cast and is kind of pricey, like about as much as a dinner out. (yes, this is from the kill puppies for satan main book.)

- good for interfering with the outcome of a sporting event, a first degree spell - take a ball point pen and scribble on a photograph of your target. for

the next couple hours, any plants your target happens to step on will clutch and grab at her feet. the plants don't get any supernatural strength or anything, so it's a small hindrance, but there it is. doesn't work on astroturf. this spell takes say ten minutes to cast, and afterward the pen won't write.

- good for keeping current with the times, a first degree spell - turn your tv to channel one. for the next couple hours it picks up hbn, the hell broadcasting network. this spell takes a minute or two to cast, banging on the side of the set sometimes helps, and if you cast it every day your tv will burn out in a week. an easy variation lets you cast it on a radio instead.

- good for demoralizing a rival, a second degree spell - write the name of the person you want to fuck with on a piece of paper and leave it in a public toilet. until tomorrow, everything that happens to go into the toilet falls out of the sky onto your target. yuck. this spell takes ten minutes to cast, and you might want to choose a time when the restroom's otherwise deserted, because the noises and smells will be embarrassing and you'll want to clean up afterward.

- good for evading the tax-assessor, a third degree spell - go peel the numbers off your door or mailbox or porch or whatever. for one fiscal quarter, your address disappears from the world. you still get electricity and cable and phone service, but no mail delivery, no pizza delivery, no landlord visits, and even the goddamn mormons pass you by. this spell takes five or six hours to cast and calls for two fifths of bourbon, and after it ends your bills come back with a no shit vengeance.

#### the theologia of genevieve st. john

this book has a complicated history, so pay attention. genevieve st. john wrote the original manuscript in paris in the early nineteenth century. (or else the nuns of a corrupt convent wrote it, and used genevieve st. john as a pseudonym, a possibility which also has merit.) either way the book is not fucking around, with a capital not fucking around. it was published in a very small edition in 1847; i've never heard of anyone who owns an original.

in 1910, sir igor bermouth made the first translation into english, called the "redoubtable." it is an excellent translation, dense and nuanced. occasionally one of these will come up for sale or auction, if you know where to look; if it sells for less than say fifteen thousand dollars, it's not genuine.

in 1912, gregory phipps, an american, made an independent translation. his is more approachable, perhaps, but with a much more strident editorial style, and footnotes that frankly devolve into the fantastic. he was much taken with the heretical convent theory, and went so far as to identify six separate authors, whom he named after stage stars of the period. nevertheless, a valuable and informative book, and no easier to get.

then, in 1941, sir igor's son in law, coincidentally also named phipps, found the french manuscript sir igor had used and, ignorant of the fact that his father in law had already done so, published a translation. he believed the book to be a genuine theological tract, however, and did a lot of damage to it in order to make it one. he cut out almost wholesale the perversions and sacrileges, he made the delightful depictions of freaks and human oddities into trite sermons, and, confused, he garbled the spells beyond function. if you have a chance to get "the phipps translation," make sure it's the other one.

and finally, in 1949, professor childe valten translated it, not from the original french, which she didn't have access to, but from an 1886 german edition. oddly, her translation contains almost a hundred pages not in any other, including an extra spell. no one knows whether they're original to genevieve st. john, original to the german translator, original to professor valten, or incorporated at some stage from another source. professor valten published it herself, so naturally it's a big stupid pain in the ass to find this one too.

the "redoubtable" and phipps(1912) editions contain two satanic spells:  
- good for deceiving st peter, a second degree spell - until dawn, you are invisible to angels (and demons, by extension). this spell takes one minute to cast, but you can't cast it if during the past twenty four hours a. you've killed something for evil or b. you've used any evil for anything. there's a popular belief that this spell might allow you to sneak through the pearly gates. i wouldn't count on it, but fuck, you got a better plan?  
- good for facing st michael, a greater ritual - cast this spell on something you can hold in your hands. whatever it is, it becomes unholy. if you cast it on a weapon, the weapon will now hurt demons, vampires, ghosts etc, even angels. yes, even angels. (angels aren't killable, but you can sure as shit make them run away with their tails between their legs.) you can even cast it on a gun and it'll work, you don't have to cast it on individual bullets. heh heh. it takes four hours a day for seven consecutive days to cast, and, barring some other magic or miracle, the unholiness is permanent.

professor valten's translation has a third spell:  
- good for distressing the mother superior, a lesser ritual - take your target by the hand and say her full name aloud. you lose a point of evil, and she gains one, even if she's not a puppykiller for satan. she can use it just like you would, in fact she'll feel a tremendous pressure to do so, she'll have to make relentless or devoted or whatever rolls to keep herself from giving in. it pisses god right off when his fanatics use evil. the bad news is that some demons think that this counts as tempting to sin, and they might come kick your ass for a scab. the spell takes twenty minutes or so to set up, and aside from the evil, doesn't cost you a damn thing.

plus, if you read any edition but the useless phipps(1941) one, you get a free point of character evil to spend on increasing your fucked up! what a deal.

satan!\_loves!\_you!!!

i found this little pamphlet tucked into a hymnal in the local lds meetinghouse. who knows where you'll find it. it's a tri-folded sheet of legal paper, poorly typed on both sides without margins and with very bad punctuation. it's almost completely unreadable, and the anonymous author's theories (including the title) are facially absurd. it contains a satanic spell, however:

- good for getting away from the piggies, a first degree spell - the next person who tries to put handcuffs on you suffers a sudden, temporary, incapacitating brain seizure. (if you want, you can have them make a relentless or whatever roll to recover quickly.) this spell takes around half an hour to cast, plus the time it takes you to write a random hate letter to 475w 910s heber city, ut 84032. if you cast the spell and nobody tries to put handcuffs on you in the next oh say week or so, the spell fades.

don't actually send random hate letters to 475w 910s heber city, ut 84032. it's a law enforcement equipment supplier if you must know, that's why them and not some other arbitrary address, and they never did anything to you. plus no matter how many hate letters you send, you still can't actually cast spells. duh.

how many fish would a blowfish blow?  
or, the evil fucked up side of...  
...zombies

let's start with a sorcerous spell:

- the obedient servant, 3 potency - cast on a corpse. the corpse becomes animate and supernaturally strong. it will follow your instructions but is stupid as shit. the spell lasts for as long as you want, but the corpse continues to decompose the whole while. blowfish poison is a traditional component of the spell (as we know from the serpent and the rainbow).

so that's where zombies come from.

now, the type of zombie you get when you cast the spell depends on just how decomposed the body is. and yes, if you keep zombies around they gradually change from one type to the next.

- instead of cold, zombies are minimally sentient, instead of fucked up, they're a pain in the ass, instead of mean, they want to eat your brains, and instead of relentless, they're single-minded.  
- if you cast the spell on a body that hasn't begun to decompose, you get a zombie who can pass as living. zombies of this sort usually have high numbers in minimally sentient and pain in the ass, and low to middling numbers in want to eat your brains and single-minded. they can even occasionally talk or otherwise communicate ("want... to... eat... brains..."). of the three, they make the best bodyguards, not least because you can take them out in public.  
- here's a character sheet for a recently dead zombie.

my friends and relations might still recognize me i used to have a name minimally sentient 4 pain in the ass 4 want to eat your brains 2 single-minded 3
---

- if you cast the spell on a body that is definitely decomposing, you get a classic evil dead sort of zombie, vicious and aggressive, with a fucking fearsome hunger for brains. this sort has high numbers in want to eat your brains and single-minded, and lowish numbers in minimally sentient and pain in the ass. of the three, they make the best killers and shock troops, if you can keep them quiet between jobs.

- here's a character sheet for a classic zombie.

dead by dawn! dead by dawn! i haven't had a name for a while minimally sentient 1 pain in the ass 3 want to eat your brains 5 single-minded 4
--

- if you cast the spell on a skeleton (or mostly one), you get an animated skeleton, of course. skeletons, being more brittle, pay more attention to their surroundings, but god damn they still crave the brains. their high numbers are in pain in the ass and want to eat your brains. of the three, they make the best protectors for your stuff, since they fold small and you can put them as an ambush into like your closet or foot locker.

- here's a character sheet for a skeleton zombie.

ray harryhausen would be proud to call me his own i haven't had a name for a long ass time minimally sentient 2 pain in the ass 5 want to eat your brains 4 single-minded 3
--

## **good grief and gravy**

being the gm is the shit, and also bullshit. the shit because you get to toy with peoples' little lives, bullshit because it's like the goddamn sims, their little bladder meter goes all the way to the red and they can't figure out for them stupid selves to get off the stupid couch and go to the stupid bathroom. no, you gotta click on the little thing, and click on the other little thing, and they spend so long in there that they miss their carpool and get fired, and then they come crying to you, wah wah wah. feebs.

right, but i mean your players. they think that if a. you didn't say so or b. it's not on their character sheet, then it's not true. which is a problem, because a. you can only say so many things, and you hope to god they're more interesting than "scooter, you really have to pee, do you go to the bathroom? do you make it back out in time for your carpool?" and b. there are only eight things on their character sheet, and one of them is that they kill puppies for satan for fuck sake.

so what you want to do as gm is make them responsible for their own pee. keep the good stuff for yourself, naturally, but give the bullshit away.

killing puppies is a perfect example. the first couple of times it's kind of novel, if you're into it. but since

## **rule number one: there must be enough evil**

you're going to end up going through puppies like toilet paper. it can get a little dull. you could just hand puppies out, okay you kill the puppy and you get two evil what do you do now, but then you might as well be playing observe celestial events for potency or some other lame shit. and besides

## **rule number two: there must be more grief**

so slacking off on it will never do. no, you've got to find a way to make the damn puppies carry their own weight.

here's a way. whenever one of your pcs wants to kill a puppy and you don't want to deal with it in depth, hand it back to them:

scooter: man, i'm down to my last couple evil. i gotta find a puppy to kill.

hey, can i find a puppy to kill?

you: sure. what kind of puppy do you find?

who cares what scooter says. i find a baby harp seal living under a bench in the park, i find a rare beautiful tropical fish that somebody left in a fishbowl on top of their car, i find a nice parrot. give it to them, don't even sweat it.

you: that's fine. you can kill it however you want. go ahead and collect the evil. what grief does it give you?

now what you want, of course, is for your players to come up with devious, perverse, and funny things to do to themselves, without any more effort on your part. you might have to keep at it a while, but sooner or later they'll catch on.

the first thing is to get them to stop thinking about their damn character sheets:

scooter: uh, i get -1 to my cold for the next six hours.

you: yeah, right. that doesn't even make sense. try again.

scooter: well how about if i get a penalty to my people hate me roll?

you: yawn. keep trying.

eventually they'll start coming up with good in character things, genuine inconveniences, not just dumb dice penalties. making enemies, leaving evidence, hurting themselves, costing themselves money or time, stumbling into weird shit that they'd otherwise miss, on and on, they're probably much more twisted than you gave them credit for. sometimes dice penalties or new people who hate them will come out of their descriptions, and that's cool, just not vice versa.

anyway once they get away from the dull mechanics-based grief, the next thing is to make sure they're serious about it. whenever they try to get away with weak grief you might just slap them down:

scooter: okay, well as i'm bashing the fish with a brick i nick my other hand with the corner and i get a wicked bad blood blister right -- here.

you: nice try. actually, when you bash the fish with the brick, the brick splits and there's this rush of foul air from the crack. you're possessed by an obnoxious little demon, it's been trapped in there for a long time. what's your favorite restaurant?

scooter: uh. pinnochio's, downtown.

you: great. the demon takes you downtown to pinocchio's and you spend the next six hours gorging yourself on veal and scampi. you eat, what, five dishes an hour, fifteen bucks a plate, call it five hundred dollars worth of food. you skip out without paying, of course, and then the demon curls up in a corner of your mind and goes to sleep.

scooter: you mean it's still there?

you: naturally. and i gotta tell you, it needs five hundred dollars worth of veal and prawns every day or it gets really nasty.

scooter: but -- but how do i get rid of it?

you: you wait. until christmas. oh, and plus, when you see morton, the first thing you do is puke on him.

morton: huh? you what?

show them that when they try to get away with lame grief, instead they get fucked to spare. get them looking for that magic level -- bad enough that you'll give it to them, but not so bad that they can't live with it. and definitely definitely not as bad as you do to them when they try to weasel out.

another fun thing is to turn it over to one of the other players:

scooter: so i kill this puppy, and --

you: hold on. morton, what grief does it give her?

morton: huh? oh, i get it. well, let's see, what was it again that she puked on me? veal and prawns?

scooter: oh, come on now!

you: no, go ahead, morton. run with that. what's the grief?

that'll learn 'em.

once you get it rolling, all you gotta do is decide occasionally to play a puppy killing out in detail, so nobody gets too comfortable. you're golden.

oh, and of course if they fucking cheated during character creation, it's your civic duty to give them grief till the blood comes out their ears. just in case you forgot.

--

so great, you've passed off one of your more irritating duties as gm. what's next?

keeping track of a world full of people is a pain in the ass, but your pcs gotta have friends. that's one of the best ways to get them into trouble, right, friends, families, lovers, naturally it is. can't do without it. like



good old gerald stebbins, always getting taken off to willard or over their heads with the loan sharks. kill puppies or not, you still can't just blow off your friends.

anyway that's fine, but you should be hatching fiendish plots, not trying to remember if scooter's friend marsey is the one who sniffs between sentences or the one who speaks in a clipped monotone. right? right.

the solution is the same. farm everybody who's not important out to your players. just spring it on them, why not? it works like this:

you: scooter, someone's calling you. ring, ring.

scooter: hello. scooter.

you: it's your friend marsey. he's just been in a car accident. morton, would you play marsey for me?

morton: huh? what?

you: play marsey for me. he's just been in a car accident. come on, don't be a feeb.

morton: well, whatever, okay. scooter? (sniff) it's marsey. (sniff) listen, could you give me a ride? (sniff) i've, uh, i've got a problem with my car. (sniff)

you can hand over marsey's character sheet if you want, but odds are you never bothered to make one for him. sometimes it's fun to tell marsey's new player secrets that marsey knows, but don't feel obligated. keep an eye on it and be ready to step in and it'll be fine. after a little while you won't even notice, you'll wonder how you managed before. swear to god.

the only trick is: don't make anybody play their own friends. got that? you hate it when two npcs have to talk to each other in front of everybody, i know you do. your players hate it too. don't do it. even if you hate them, even if they cheated like cheating bastard pigs and you can't think of any other way to make them pay. it's just not worth it.

--

so keep that up. whenever something gets irritating, figure out a way to make one of your players do it. eventually you'll be left with only the cool stuff, and that is the no shit shit. gravy.

**i scream you scream  
or, the evil fucked up side of...  
...ghosts**

the pain in the ass with ghosts is that you have to think about what's up with them. their history, their psychology, their whole backstory. i mean, i guess you kind of have to with every npc, but ghosts you actually really have to. nah, fuck it. i'll make a little table for you to roll on instead.

- ghosts mostly don't realize that they're ghosts, and a lot of the time the people around them don't realize either. a lot of ghosts are visible and have jobs and seem like everybody else.

- instead of cold, ghosts are in touch with the times; instead of fucked up, ghosts are psychologically whole; instead of mean, they're tangible, and instead of relentless, they're recurrent.

- ghosts are most fun when they fail rolls. when a ghost fails an in touch with the times roll, it is simply incapable of figuring out what's going on around it. when it fails a psychologically whole roll, it reveals the gaps left in its personality when it died. when it fails a tangible roll, it becomes translucent, silent, odorless, weightless, frictionless, something cool like that. and when it fails a recurrent roll, it disappears entirely and returns to some earlier state.

- instead of evil, ghosts have unquiet. the theory is that every ghost has some unresolved something that's keeping it here. when the ghost resolves its deal, its unquiet goes to zero and on it goes to its well-deserved rest.

- since ghosts mostly don't know that they're ghosts, they mostly have no clue what their own deal is. They're basically winging it, going where their unquiet leads them.

- they're also pretty easy to fool. say a ghost is hanging around until it gets to attend its daughter's sixth birthday party, and its daughter is forty one and married and living in ohio. you can help the ghost out by having everybody act the party out, pretending to be its daughter and guests and so on. get enough details right and it'll work fine.

- ghosts don't spend unquiet to do things. instead, their level of unquiet determines what they can do. or rather, what they can do easily, since they can do things from other levels of unquiet, but when they do, their unquiet increases. bear with me, it'll make sense.

- a ghost's unquiet goes up (by 1 point) every time a. it fails a roll on any of its stats, b. it uses a power from a different level of unquiet, or c. something happens that will make it substantially harder for it to resolve its deal.

- a ghost's unquiet goes down (by 1 point) when a. it makes a significant move toward resolving its deal or b. it forgets about its deal for a long time. its unquiet can never go to zero until it totally resolves its deal.

- sometimes it makes sense to keep track of how many people know that it's a ghost.

- here's a character sheet for a random ghost.

my tortured soul wanders the earth looking for surcease in life my name was annabella brockminster in touch with the times 2 psychologically whole 1 tangible 4 recurrent 3 unquiet 6 my deal is that i'll hang around until i get to go to my daughter's sixth birthday party. this many people know i'm a ghost: 0
--

here are some ghostly powers.

at zero unquiet, remember, the ghost goes away forever, buhbye ghost.

at low levels of unquiet, from 1 to 3, the ghost can do any or all of these:

- hold down a job.
- remain corporeal in high-pressure or high-sensation situations, like while competing in a bicycle race or having sex.
- sleep, shit, and feel hot and cold.

at middle levels of unquiet, from 4 to 6, the ghost can do any or all of these:

- participate in conversations.
- remain corporeal in low-pressure, day to day situations, like while pushing the button to call the elevator or watching tv.
- walk through walls.
- haunt people by making them see things out of the corners of their eyes and hear weird noises.
- eat, drink, blink, and feel pain.

at high levels of unquiet, from 7 to 9, the ghost can do any or all of these:

- remain invisible and intangible for long periods, just watching and waiting.
- manifest as a spectral figure, a chill wind, laughter, heavy footsteps, things like that.
- manifest as it appeared when it died, a la sixth sense.
- move things around without touching them.
- give people bad luck.
- attack people astrally, doing psychological damage instead of real damage.

and at very high levels of unquiet, 10 plus, the ghost can do any or all of these:

- make blood gush out of the water fixtures or pour in through the windows.
- possess people.
- manifest as a terrifying, horrific, monstrous thing, a la jacob's ladder or the first half of the house on haunted hill remake (the movie was whatever, but gimme a right on for geoffrey rush).
- do very bad things to people, like making them drop lit matches or sinking their rowboats or dragging them screaming and bleeding into (and i mean into) the walls.
- anything else scary and cool you can think of.

and here's that chart i promised you, so you don't have to think. roll a d6:

i rolled a 1	the ghost will hang around until somebody convinces it that it's dead. showing it its own obituary might help.
i rolled a 2	the ghost will hang around until some particular thing happens to some particular person. like maybe the ghost wants revenge on its killer, and will hang around until its killer's death.
i rolled a 3	the ghost will hang around until it gets to see or do something it was waiting for when it died. like yeah yeah i know you've heard it enough but like maybe its daughter's sixth birthday party again.
i rolled a 4	the ghost will hang around until it gets to interact with someone who it really wanted to see when it died. like maybe its wife or dog or whatever.
i rolled a 5	the ghost will hang around until somebody finds or does some particular thing with some particular object, like the deed to its land or its gold locket or its bones.
i rolled a 6	the ghost will hang around until some particular situation is restored to how it was before the ghost died. like maybe until its family farm is restored to its family or ivy covers the old boathouse again.

while i'm thinking of it, go rent l'éolo. it's a french-canadian flick on new line home video. it doesn't have anything to do with ghosts or killing puppies for satan or anything, but it's a strange, beautiful, fucked up movie and if you're like me you'll realize you've been missing it all this time.

anyway so fine, and at the higher levels of unquiet they can be kind of disruptive, but your pcs shouldn't get all altruistic and shit just because they're ghosts. sure you could follow the ghost around and figure out its deal and reenact its daughter's goddamn sixth birthday party or whatever, but why would you? ghosts are just too much fun to fuck with, and they can also make damn useful friends.

my tortured soul wanders the earth looking for surcease  
in life my name was captain mike harvers  
in touch with the times 1  
psychologically whole 2  
tangible 5  
recurrent 4  
unquiet 5  
my deal is that i'll hang around until i get to eat some homemade strawberry ice cream.  
this many people know i'm a ghost: 2

hands down my favorite bit of world war ii trivia: bomber crews would take a canister of cream, sugar, sometimes fruit, sometimes chocolate or coffee, and bolt it to the outside of their plane. this would expose the cream etc to a. the below freezing temperatures at their flight altitude and b. constant shaking so no grainy ice crystals would form. if the plane landed safely, they'd celebrate with c. lovely fresh ice cream. no lie.

so this captain mike harvers guy. he was a tail gunner on a b24 in europe and the plane landed safely, but he didn't get any ice cream. he'd personally taken substantial flack. they rushed him from the plane to the field hospital and not long afterward he went back to the states. he lived in the va for a little while and then went home. he married his sweetheart and five months later climbed the big maple in his back yard with a deer rifle. he shot his wife three times as she came around the house with a watering can, shot at the neighbor's dog and missed, and then blew his own brains out.

the next owners cut the tree down and by whatever route it ended up that the city made park benches out of it. That's where you can find captain mike harvers today, sitting on one of those benches downtown, tossing peanuts at the pigeons. sometimes he goes and stands in front of the ice cream cart, and reads and rereads the menu, looking for something he can't remember and will never find.

poor unhappy guy. don't you just want to hug him? here captain mike, i made this just for you! strawberry, your favorite!

well, i didn't mention one very interesting fact. captain mike notices and remembers every single thing that happens anywhere in that park. he's like ten thousand camcorders aimed at one of the places where shit goes down. if you're a little lucky and you ask him the right question, well, i think you can see the possibilities. drugs, sex, puppies, incriminating evidence, your enemies on a stick. ask captain mike.

not so anxious to help him out now, are you? getting used to the idea of him being there, aren't you? told you so.

**a big hairy combat example**  
**(because god knows the main book didn't have one)**

scooter: you wanna piece of me! you wanna piece of me! come and get it, you shambling piece of rotting flesh shit! i haul off and smack him one right in the nose. my mean roll totals to 6.

jiggo: yeah, right. i let her. my single-minded roll is a 10. i don't even stumble. when she gets close enough i grab her head. my want to eat your brains roll is an 8. want... to... eat... brains...

scooter: aigh! get it off! i do a knee drop onto his foot. my mean roll is a 9! yes!

jiggo: duh. i hold her up by her hair.

announcer: that's gotta hurt!

scooter: doh!

morton: hey! you can't treat my friend that way! i vault into the ring.

jiggo: whatever. i chew on scooter's head. anng anng anng.

scooter: no! get it off! get it off!

announcer: is that blood?

morton: i get jiggo in a headlock! my mean roll is a 7.

jiggo: want... to... eat... brains...

morton: i squeeze! come on, make your roll!

jiggo: dude, i'm a zombie. i already don't have any blood going to my brain.

scooter: i use some evil! i use 2 evil! i blow my nose on him! it's flame! bwah hah hah!

announcer: can she do that?

jiggo: um, hey! oh... no... not... fire... i let go and try to beat it out with my hands.

announcer: actually, all that methane you generate? it goes up with a noise like: foomf. you fall down. you're on fire. lose a single-minded.

scooter, morton, make relentless rolls.

scooter: got a 7.

morton: owie! a 4! stop drop and roll!

announcer: you're down too, morton. you both lose a relentless.

morton: smooth, scooter.

scooter: well at least it wasn't a head lock, morton. duh.

jiggo: i'm kicking and thrashing. do i set anything else on fire? can i make it to the ropes?

pharus: my zombie! i jump into the ring. i bring my folding chair.

morton, scooter: oh shit.

morton: i cast a satanic spell! i cast the one where i summon a big-ass demon! you're going down, wizard boy!

announcer: morton? that spell takes an hour to cast, plus you're on fire.

morton: oh right. i guess i keep rolling around.

announcer: good.

pharus: i hit morton with my folding chair! remember that i enchanted it with fist of the storm?

announcer: oh, i remember.

morton: noooo...

scooter: oh no you don't. i tackle him from behind. my mean roll is an 8!

announcer: pharus, make an astute roll to notice the sneak attack!

pharus: you mean insightful?

announcer: whatever.

pharus: i got a 6.

scooter: ha ho!

jiggo: hey, what about me? do i make it to the ropes?

announcer: Scooter, you plow into pharus from behind! he goes sprawling -- lose a resolute, pharus -- and the folding chair of the storm's fury flies up into the air! where's that d4? it falls on ... morton! kazap kaboom!

morton: urk!

announcer: you know the deal, morton. two consecutive hit.

pharus: plus the chair.

announcer: plus the chair.

morton: i rolled a 7, a 4, and a 3, but it doesn't matter. i'm down to 0  
relentless. i'm seein' tweetie birds.  
announcer: so sad.  
pharus: victory is mine!  
announcer: not so fast. jiggo, you do manage to pull yourself up on the  
ropes. but just as you do, scooter's flying tackle carries pharus  
practically right up your flaming ass. you fall back down on top of him.  
scooter: eat hot flaming undead, wizard!  
pharus: aiee!  
jiggo: owie. sorry... boss...  
  
oh for fuck sake. i forgot that i wanted to have a ghost in there, so that i  
could show you how cool it is when ghosts fail their recurrent roll and have to  
go back to some earlier time and place. the wizard was going to cast like  
sword of the sun and the ghost was going to be four combat phases behind for  
the whole rest of the thing.  
  
well, whatever. you can imagine it perfectly well, and no way in hell am i  
going back and rewriting it. what you see is what you get.  
  
jiggo: hey vincent? are you sure that decomposing bodies produce methane?  
announcer: shut up, on fire zombie boy.

## wizardly shit

sorcerers are such bastards, y'know? they can cast our spells, but we can't cast theirs. they're rich, suave, educated, and they take showers. they don't need to kill helpless animals to do magic and their magic isn't mostly vermin-related. plus their spellbooks are engaging and well written and not full of the ravings of some paranoid whack-nut. jerks. they can bite me.

### fine and worthy diversions for a winter's evening

like take this book for example. it's a grimoire by reynaud copersley, published in 1899 by upstate press. it includes hilarious descriptions of fourteen victorian parlor games (including piggy piggy, where one person, blindfolded, sits on the lap of someone in the circle, who squeals like a pig, and the first person has to guess from the squealing who it is, and in the well, where there's some stuff and then everybody kisses everybody else); recipes for roast rabbits and game fowl; a delightful account of a year spent travelling to oregon and back, full of well-drawn characters and stirring events; and four sorcerous spells.

- the company's repast, 2 potency - a fabulous meal appears: quail stuffed with venison sausage, roast potatoes, egg and cheese pies, wild salad herbs, spiced lobster bisque, and roast nuts and relishes, serving fourteen. the food is real, nourishing, and expertly prepared.

- shadows of memory, 1 potency - as you tell a story, beautiful translucent phantasms appear in the air before you as illustrations. the spell draws them from your memories, imaginations, and dreams.

- the horseman's ease, 1 potency - cast on a smooth stone and put the stone into a bath. whoever takes the bath is overcome with a warm, tingling, soothing relaxation, which eases sore muscles and heals small scrapes, scratches, and bruises. the sensation lasts until the bath begins to cool, and leaves the subject invigorated, calm, and in good spirits.

- the subtle tutor, 2 potency - cast on a book. while you will it, until the book is done, a quiet voice whispers the words of the book into your ear. you can direct the voice to repeat itself, to skip ahead, to skip back, and to resume where it left off.

as you can see, reynaud copersley was a right fucker and if he were around today he'd need his ass kicked.

### gifts of rock and fire

here's another one. this one was written by one of those larger-than-life world-travelling adventurers of the twenties, a woman named adelaine north. at the end of her adventuring career miss north was initiated into an order of mystics and magi in egypt, and she retired to the riviera to study and write. gifts of rock and fire is her memoir. it's moving and insightful and it contains three substantial sorcerous spells.

- untying the knots of the wind, 3 potency - the local weather changes, precisely as you direct. you control the weather for a full day.

- jonah's carriage, 4 potency - cast on the ocean. a gigantic fish of white adamant, with diamond windows for eyes, rises from the depths and opens its mouth for you to board. it will take you by sea to any port in the world. it's sumptuously provisioned for a journey of up to several weeks.

- the moon in the earth, 3 potency - cast on a fire. when the fire goes out and the coals cool, each one will be a lump of silver ore.

can you believe that shit?

### the undisclosed history of the dread covenant of hellfallow hall, a novel

this book was published in 1943 and it's one of those irritating books that pretends to be a novel when really it's a polemic. (so that's good. at least one of these damn wizard's grimoires is irritating, i'd be pissed with a capital pissed if none were.) the great wizardess isabel estafen wrote it, but before she was especially great. it contains three sorcerous spells.

- the divining glass, 2 potency - cast on a mirror, and name a person aloud. that person's image appears in the mirror, as though someone were following her around with a camcorder.
- speaking silent words, 1 potency - write a sentence or two on a piece of paper. your target hears those words in her head, recognizably in your voice.
- eavesdropping on the past, 1 potency - name a time o'clock. you hear in your head everything that anybody said, in your current place, at the time you named.

whatever. that's not so very cool. we can do that kind of shit.

the wartime grimoire of stephen bullherald

this one's cool though. stephen bullherald sent it with his son to france in 1916. it's written in a clear and no-nonsense style and contains four very practical, pretty easy spells of the sort we're particularly jealous of. like check out the fourth one.

- to stop bleeding, 1 potency - the wound doesn't like close or seal or disappear or anything, but the blood clots rapidly and the bleeding stops.
- to hit your mark, 1 potency - cast on a gun. next time you fire it, you will hit what you aimed at, all other considerations aside. the spell is nullified if somebody else fires the gun before you do.
- to hide and remain hidden, 1 potency - stomp a footprint into the dirt. As long as you can see the footprint, even out of the corner of your eye, you are silent and invisible.
- to stay safe in gunfire, 3 potency - until one hour passes, no bullet can harm you.

how it is exactly that stephen bullherald's son lost the book and didn't come home from france alive, no one knows. but i hardly need to point out that it probably served him right, wizard's brat.

## **making magic items**

the easiest type of magic item to make is called a suspended spell. what you do is you take the spell and then instead of casting it, you attach it to some physical object. the pairing of spell and object should make sense, since in order to release the suspended spell you have to do something appropriate to the object. a good example is pharus' folding chair from the big hairy combat thing. he suspended fist of the storm in a folding chair, and when he hit somebody with it, the spell went off.

you decide yourself, when you suspend the spell, if only you can release it, or if anyone who does the right thing can. suspending a spell costs one extra point of potency and takes only a few minutes.

next is potions, powders, salves, unguents, ointments, tinctures, blah blah blah. there, you take the spell and you invest some stuff with it. herbal pastes and concoctions are traditional but anything goes. greasepaint is more and more popular. anyway, choose a spell that makes sense for it, but think flexible. invest the divining glass into grated nutmeg and sprinkle it on the mirror, invest gunpowder with to hit your mark and load bullets with it.

anybody can use a potion, if they know to. consider labelling it so that somebody doesn't sprinkle it in their eggnog. making potions costs an extra point of potency per dose, and takes at least an hour per dose too.

and then the big stuff, actual enchanted objects. that's like if the folding chair of the storm's fury had unlimited charges, or like the mirror were always a divining glass. it should always take at least three or four times the potency to enchant an object, plus require months or years, plus it should depend on the correct celestial circumstances. other than that, go hog wild.

hog wild sounds like: squee! squee!



## revenge of the killer puppies

sooner or later you know it's going to come to this. it's just too perfect. i don't see how you can avoid it.

- instead of cold, werewolves are assimilated into human society; instead of fucked up, they're sly; instead of mean, they're ferocious; and instead of relentless, they're dogged (ha ha).

- they have different ferocious and dogged (ha ha) scores in human form than they do in wolf form, and in wolf form they range from 6 to 10, like demons, so that's serious. oh, but they can't make assimilated into human society rolls at all when they're wolves of course.

- what is it that hurts werewolves? silver bullets, right? garlic doesn't? yeah, that's it. silver bullets. i have no earthly idea where somebody would get a silver bullet. if your pcs claim to have some, ask them where the fuck they got them and don't let up until they admit that yeah, yeah, you're right, they couldn't possibly actually have any, no they were just trying to get away with it.

- if you feel like it, you can give individual werewolves unique weaknesses or spiffs of their own. the moodier and fucked upper the better, naturally. i'm thinking of one who keeps her heart in a jackal-headed funerary jar in her office, that sort of thing.

- anyway, meanwhile, until you get your hands on some silver bullets or the heart in the jar or what have you, whenever werewolves change form, they immediately heal any injuries they might have, plus they're unkillable.

- werewolves can change form pretty much whenever you want them to, usually a. when they're in deep shit and the other form will be better able to handle it, and b. when they're wicked hungry and the other form will be better able to stalk, catch, and eat it. changing is instinctive, totally out of their personal conscious control, but it happens when it's called for.

- werewolves are not happy. they aren't ecowarriors or anything else spiritually fulfilling. they go flipshit under the full moon and eat their friends, and they know that nobody will ever love them, really love them for what's inside. as a result they're bitter, lonely, vindictive, and full of hate.

- here's a character sheet for a random werewolf.

i walk on silent paws under the moon my name is deborah tyrone assimilated into human society 1 sly 3 ferocious 3/8 dogged (ha ha) 2/7 i must pass my curse on to another before i may be free. (hey, now there's something fun you could do to a pc...)
--

now this is key. do not fuck around with werewolves. make them mean, vicious, terrible, and shocking. they are humanity's inhumanity incarnate, they are the ripper and the hunter and jeffrey oscar-meyer-balogna-song dahmer. they will fucking kill you and fucking eat you, i kid you not.

there's no excuse for lame werewolves. don't make me come over there.

**scenario: hey, i found this, you wannit?**

so poor pathetic gerald stebbins has been doing the ghoul on the street thing. which is sad, but hell, there's only so much you can take of him sleeping curled up on your loveseat with his skinny-ass ankles sticking out of the ratty afghan he uses for a blanket and him getting up at all hours and checking on the mousetraps again, slobbering like maybe they've killed another snack for him since he checked ten minutes ago, and would he please just go back the fuck to sleep, it's seven in the morning for crying out christ, not that (he says) eating former rodents is at all even the real thing, and you oughta try it sometime, it tastes goo-ood and it's more fun than bad crack cut 50-50 with soap flakes.

he says he'll make it up to you, please don't put him out on the street, but he always says that and instead he just eats your corn flakes and leaves gray infected toenail clippings in your bathroom sink.

so whoda thunk when the feeble bastard shows up three weeks later with the no shit choirboys' ring?

**briefly, the choirboys' ring**

the choirboys' ring is an ugly like high school class ring style ring, gold tone, with a big glass stone that's not quite the right color of red. instead of greek letters or a motto or whatever, the design has the word choirboys around the band. to look at it, it's quite obviously worth shit for money.

it's a demonic device, though, steeped in satanic humours and imbued with their sinister sympathies. when you wear it, what you do is touch somebody else's skin with it (shaking hands is perfect) and lean close to them and whisper a short, simple, you-directed command in their ear. vote for me, sleep with me, forget you saw me here, take a bullet for me, give me your wallet, that kind of thing.

they don't do it right away, as though mesmerized - no, it sinks into their brain and they never think of it again, until an opportunity presents itself. when it does, bang! they do it.

(if you feel like it, you can have them roll relentless or whatever to resist, or fucked up or whatever to notice that they're waiting for it, or whatever. it's your clambake.)

**you bet your ass i wannit. question is...**

who else does?

**pilchard jeffers' widow, estranged**

i am a master of forces occult and obscure my name is ernestina jeffers, although i usually use my maiden name, andrzaj. learned 4 insightful 5 fierce 3 resolute 3 potency 8 my familiar is a big ol' spirit-raven named war.
---

ms andrzaj split with her husband ten years ago or so, and took let's say 40% of their little magical order with her. she may have cursed him to death, and she knows to the one what sorcerous and satanic artifacts he owned.

### **pilchard jeffers' former pupil**

i am a master of forces occult and obscure  
my name is paul markson  
learned 3  
insightful 5  
fierce 2  
resolute 5  
potency 3  
i get 1 potency every time i have sex.

naturally, mr markson feels that he should inherit his mentor's books and paraphanelia. he may have murdered pilchard for precisely that reason, or because pilchard was an old prude and didn't like the way his rising star was carrying on. either way he too knows exactly what pilchard owned.

it might be fun and twisted to play erneztina and paul as secret ex-lovers from before the split, or even current lovers, possibly conspiring. but enemies is fun too. the choices, man, the choices!

### **pilchard jeffers' older son, a big disappointment**

i don't kill puppies for satan, but sometimes i audit people  
my name is pilchard jeffers jr, but people call me jeff  
cold 1  
fucked up 1  
mean 1  
relentless 1  
evil 0  
this many people have ever noticed me as a human being, not just the shark in a suit who wants to take their house away: 6

jeffers jr doesn't have any idea what stuff his father owned, but better, he has a list. odds are good that he wants his estranged mother to get none of it, but on the other hand they'd make excellent allies too. he may have murdered his father in a fit of penis envy or whatever freudian thing.

### **the munson county scorched earth party**

i am a master of forces occult and obscure  
my name is matilda jeffers, but i prefer to be called matt  
learned 2  
insightful 3  
fierce 4  
resolute 2  
potency 2  
i get 3 potency every time i personally affect the outcome of a political election.

revenge is a dish best served right the fuck now  
my name is j. "hiroshima" bird  
thorough 5  
survivor 2  
vengeful 3  
driven 3  
i have a fucking arsenal full of a fraction of a gram of weaponized smallpox.

```
i serve the cold blind nameless god of science
my name is kev barret
cutting edge 5
mad 4
curious 2
objective 2
publishable material 4
i'm researching the effect of internet-delivered subliminal messages on
borderline personalities.
```

```
i don't kill puppies for satan but sometimes i stomp on people's heads
my name is d_vorn402@myaccess.net, i'm whacked
cold 1
fucked up 1
mean 2
relentless 1
evil 0
this many people have ever noticed me as a human being, not just another
frowny emoticon on the chatboard: 1
kev, to whom i am fanatically devoted (which i don't find odd) can use a point
of publishable material to give me +1 mean for an hour or so.
```

matt jeffers knew at least about the ring, and probably most of the rest of her father's stuff too. she may have murdered him to get his power and because she hated him for his radical (by comparison) just-right-of-center politics.

oh and no matter how they pester her, she won't sleep with any of the rest of her political party.

### **a small assignment of credit**

if it weren't for mr. ron "sorcerer" edwards, none of the above people would have been related to / fucking each other.

### **okay but the real question is...**

who even gives a hairy white rat's ass who killed the old fucker? not me.

don't even use this as an excuse to play out some dumb agatha christie murder mystery lameness. "ah, but what you didn't realize, jiggo old fellow, you nor the constabulary neither, is that miss matilda jeffers is secretly (dum-dum-tum) the butler!"

no.

the point is, your pcs have the ring, they love it, it's fun to play with in the bathtub, but all these other extremely random weirdos keep showing up and trying to take it away from them.

i can't believe you were even considering the murder mystery thing. weak.

### **oh, and the bad news, before i forget**

remember how the choirboys' ring is a demonic artifact? the bad news is that demons have, you know, plans for that kind of thing. particularly, they give them to otherwise good upstanding moral kind boring people, to - ready? - tempt them to sin.

i'll have the filet of soul, rare if you please  
my name is kektak, junior arbiter of leeches and maggots  
cold 3  
fucked up 3  
mean 5  
relentless 2  
evil plenty  
i've tempted this many people to sin and thus condemned them to eternal  
torment: 2,464  
i'm in charge of the choirboys' ring.

kektak doesn't want your pcs to keep the ring, because they're already  
condemned, right? if they commit sins with it, so what? he doesn't get any  
credit a-tall for tempting them.

but, and this might be good for a giggle, if your pcs give it to somebody, or  
maybe even if somebody manages to get it from them by cunning or stealth, then  
they've tempted that person to sin.

and have i made it perfectly clear yet what demons like to do to pcs who scab  
on them?

## **appendix a: who hates ya, baby?**

you'll notice that there's never any mention in the rules of how to get new people to hate you. that's because: use your imagination god damn yez. mechanics would totally miss the point. totally miss it.

that said, i'd think that the last thing you'd want to do is add your friends to the stat. i mean, fuck man, they're your friends. what else you got going for you?

## **appendix b: but you can't**

you can screw your friends,

and you can screw the pooch...

## **appendix c: killing vampires is easy**

... if a. you're in the know and b. you're forewarned and well equipped and c. you have the wherewithal to hold a supernaturally powerful uber-predator who personally survived the civil war, the burning times, the age of enlightenment, the third reich, the great depression, the renaissance, the reformation, and the for fuck sake spanish inquisition too, and who during that time killed people numbering in the mid five digits, I mean all alone, no death squads or crematoriums, with bare hands and fangs, can you imagine the cunning and energy and ferocity, and you'd only make it a very slightly larger five digit number, my mind boggles, it makes pol pot look like mr for fuck sake fred h. rogers - anyway hold that voracious fucker bastard down until sunrise.

i'd run.

## **appendix d: what would jesus do?**

hang there whimpering and eventually die.