

CITY OF DEMONS

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Welcome to Hell on Earth





TORG - City of Demons

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“There is nothing in life so delightful as a compromise. It lets a man go to bed comfortably at night, while letting me join him in his nightmares.”

— Thratchen

Prologue

Great flames rose out of bronze urns. The flames hungered to eat the darkness of the large room, to consume it and flood the chamber with red light, but the darkness of Illmound Keep was not so easily defeated. Deep shadows hung in the corners and along the rafters. Within the shadows, strange creatures with gleaming eyes of gold and silver scuttled about and argued over scraps of rotted food.

Thratchen sat upon a throne made of bones and skulls. The silvered metal parts of his body caught the light of the red flames and mirrored it. His clawed hands, his large, folded wings, his fearsome visage, seemed to writhe with fire.

Ahead of him churned the maelstrom of a reality storm, powered by an eternity shard called the Heart of the Coyote. The storm had boiled on and on for nearly two years. Thratchen peered into the storm and saw the Gaunt Man, High Lord of Orrorsh, and victim of Thratchen's betrayal.

Thratchen saw the withered flesh of the Gaunt Man ripped apart by the storm. The storm did not rend the Gaunt Man, as the werewolves of Orrorsh might assault a helpless child. Instead it frayed the edges of his body, and pulled the fabric of the Gaunt Man's body into its coiling force. Not just the Gaunt Man's flesh, but his very being, was swirled about, lost and formless, dragged to the precipice of oblivion.

Thratchen leaned forward, desperate, curious. Would this be the moment at last? Would his damnable former master finally be gone?

No.

As he had done so many times before, the Gaunt Man imposed his will. He mustered the awesome strength that was his to command and gathered himself — piece by piece — together once again. He clawed his being back from the force of the storm, re-built himself, rescued himself from the maw of nonexistence.

Thratchen lowered his head, weary of the sight. How many more times could the Gaunt Man accomplish that miracle? When he had helped send the Gaunt Man into the maelstrom months ago, he had expected the Raider to perish. The Gaunt Man's realm, Orrorsh, would be available for Thratchen to claim, and he would become, in the Gaunt Man's stead, a High Lord.

But the Gaunt Man did not perish. He lived on, despite the power of the storm. The two of them, the Gaunt Man and the storm, were almost evenly matched.

Thratchen had thought that even if the Gaunt Man were not dead, he could use the Gaunt Man's situation to his own advantage. While the Gaunt Man remained trapped in the storm, Thratchen believed he could conquer Orrorsh, master its reality and its inhabitants.

But such goals seemed beyond even Thratchen's abilities. He had allies in Orrorsh, but he had no true feel for realm's reality. He was from Tharkold, and the magic of Tharkold and Orrorsh were so different that he simply could not feel its logic in his cybernetic body. Both were based on terror, but each of its own flavor.

He looked up and his eyes widened. Ahead of him, he was certain, the face of the Gaunt Man peered out of the storm and smiled at him. The man's eyes burned with dark malevolence as they met Thratchen's eyes. The smile broadened, turning his taut face into a death mask. Then the storm's power overcame him. Slowly it frayed him at the edges and the Gaunt Man dissolved toward oblivion. The storm took his eyes last, and the whole while they remained transfixed upon Thratchen.

Thratchen stood completely still, his breathing quick, and watched with terror as the eyes finally faded.

Never had the Gaunt Man been able to do that.

The storm was losing. The Gaunt Man simply was the more powerful,

and would outlast the storm. And with the storm gone, the Gaunt Man would be free.

What would he do? He had turned his back on Tharkold, and then betrayed the Gaunt Man. He needed a safe haven, but who would take him in now?

An idea occurred to him, and he stood straight, his wings unfurling slightly.

Another traitor, perhaps? Someone who might be sympathetic to the benefits of treachery? Someone who might be surrounded by enemies?

Jezrael, perhaps?

His agents had brought him word that Tharkold, his native cosm, had attacked Los Angeles on the North American continent. With that news came the revelation that Kranod had been deposed by one of the Race, a Janissary named Jezrael. Apparently Malgest, Tharkold's Darkness Device, had grown tired of Kranod's incompetence, and had backed Jezrael against the demon. She defeated It in hand-to-hand combat and took the title of High Lord. Her allies were few, for most demon lords would have nothing to do with her.

She needs help, Thratchen thought. Perhaps even from the likes of me.

He would have to make a gift, of course, for she would never take him into her court empty handed. But what?

Perhaps he could find something in Los Angeles, her beachhead on Earth. Help her war, somehow. He would keep his actions a secret, telling no one of his presence. He could not fail her then, for she would have no expectations. He would simply act, and let the actions speak for themselves.

He glanced back at the storm. Once more the Gaunt Man stared out of it, once more his eyes transfixed on Thratchen. The Gaunt Man smiled at him.

Certainly it would not harm him to leave Orrorsh for a while.

No. A trip to Los Angeles seemed a wonderful idea ...





D. Gelon



Introduction



City of Demons is an adventure for *Torg: Roleplaying the Possibility Wars*. Adventures for *Torg* take place on Earth in the Near

Now. Earth is besieged by several powerful beings from other realities. The High Lords, the leaders of the invaders, have the power to conquer other cosms by imposing their own realities upon their victims.

Although the High Lords worked together in the invasion of Earth, the disappearance of the Gaunt Man has allowed each of the former allies to pursue his goals unchecked. Each of the High Lords is attempting to secure enough possibility energy to become the Torg, a being of near infinite power and destruction.

You must have the *Torg* roleplaying game to play this adventure, and both the *Nippon Tech* and *Tharkold* sourcebooks would be helpful, but are not necessary.

Aside from certain props, the contents of this adventure are for the gamemaster only. Any player reading this adventure will ruin the adventure for herself and everyone else.

The gamemaster should familiarize themselves with the entire adventure before running it. Thus if the players have their characters do something unexpected during the course of the adventure, the gamemaster will be able to handle it in a manner that will not conflict with later details of the story.

Adventure Background

The techno-horror realm of Tharkold recently invaded the city of Los Angeles. The invasion was very small compared to the attacks made on Earth by other Possibility Raiders, but then, Tharkold has had a hard time of it of late. First, the Tharkoldu invasion of Kadandra was repelled, and then Tharkold's attack on the Soviet Union collapsed as Core Earth forces destroyed the stelae just as the

maelstrom bridge was forming.

These defeats turned Malgest, the Tharkoldu Darkness Device, against Kranod, Tharkold's High Lord. Malgest gave strength to a woman named Jezrael, a human warrior from the ranks of Kranod's elite guard. Jezrael defeated Kranod, and took control of Tharkold. However, few demons wish to follow the orders of a former human slave. Jezrael is only beginning to build her power base, and her attack on Earth had of necessity to be limited.

She attacked Earth with a specific purpose in mind. She investigated Kranod's failed attack on this cosm and learned that Nippon agents had been largely responsible for the techno-demon's defeat. Using the idea of vengeance against 3327 and his forces as a rallying point to bring the demon lords in line with her rule, Jezrael attacked Los Angeles, where the Kanawa Corporation has a strong presence.

Nippon has invested a tremendous amount of time and resources into the city, which makes it a tempting target. In addition, it is far enough away from 3327's power base in Japan that he can provide only limited aid to the forces defending the city.

Many of the demons decided to help her achieve her goal—at least for the time being. And that was what Jezrael sought—time to gather power.

Meanwhile, in the realm of Orrorsh, Thratchen, a former lieutenant of Kranod, watched the reality storm that held the Gaunt Man prisoner weaken. He knew that the High Lord would soon be free. Fearing for his life, he decided to return to Tharkold, his native reality, and try to claim a spot in the new Tharkoldu court.

However, he didn't want to simply appear and ask for grace from Jezrael. That would make him appear weak, and he would have to accept whatever scraps she offered. An ever-ambitious creature, Thratchen wanted to arrive with a gift that would gain him great glory in Jezrael's eyes.

Thus he decided to travel to Los

Angeles and see if he might aid her in any way. He decided to keep his presence in the city a secret, searching for information that might prove valuable to her.

It took a few months for him to sort out the politics. The super-struggles of the High Lords paled against the subtle power games played out in the ruined city of Los Angeles. Kanawa agents, Tharkoldu demons, street gangs, the US military, and the local city bureaucracy all contributed to a political nightmare. But Thratchen is an exceptional techno-demon, being both patient and subtle. He watched from the shadows, hired gang members to be his eyes and ears, gathered information, sifted it, discarded the useless data, and correlated the important details.

After a few months he discovered something that might buy him a place in Jezrael's court: a demon lord named Garthak, leader of a powerful pride, was planning a coup against the new High Lord. Thratchen could not find out why Garthak expected to win such an endeavor, but the discovery of the intended betrayal was enough.

Thratchen decided to eliminate Garthak without telling Jezrael. This would make it his own victory, and gain him more favor. Besides, if he defeated Garthak himself, he might get the demon lord to submit, and he would then gain a demon pride of his own.

But Thratchen knew he was no match for Garthak and his pride by himself. He needed help. But whom to turn to? Certainly not other techno-demons, for he did not yet know who he could trust. And it was extremely doubtful that Nippon agents would be willing to work with him.

No. Thratchen knew he needed someone on the outside of the conflict, someone used to working the ins and outs of the Possibility Wars. Finally, Thratchen realized he had already worked with exactly the kind of people he needed now.

Storm Knights.

