

ORRORSH

WELCOME TO ORRORSH...

ONE YEAR LATER...

The Basics of Orrorsh	6
Life in Orrorsh	6
The State of the War	7
Manners.	7
Religions and Holidays	8
Core Earth's Response.	8
Year 1 Major Timeline Events.	9

STORM KNIGHTS

New Perks	10
Corruption and Transformation	15

MAGIC

New Spells	20
Empowering Spells with Corruption	23
Dark Rituals	24

MIRACLES

The Mysteries of Sacellum	30
New Miracles.	33

GEAR

Orrorsh Possibility Energy	43
--------------------------------------	----

WARZONES

The Haunted Southeast	44
The Ravaged Southwest.	47
Arranged Marriage	48
Languages and Linguistics	49
The Disturbed Northwest.	50
The Stalked Northeast.	53
Monsoons	53
Rail Connections	55
The Victorian settlements	56
Castes	58

4 THE INVADERS

6

The Gaunt Man.	60
Relations with the Other High Lords	64
The Darkness Device: Heketon.	66
Stelae	68
Nightmare Trees	69
Horrors and Nightmares	72
The Sinister Secrets Cosm Card	73
Example Nightmares	74
Ravagons	76
Notable Ravagons	78
The Hellion Court	80
Members of the Hellion Court	81

REALITY

Orrorsh Axioms	84
World Laws.	87
The Law of the Uncanny	90
The Bleeds	91
Example Bleeds	91

THE DELPHI COUNCIL

The Orrorsh Agenda.	102
Council Personnel	104
Resources	107
The Disappearance of New Delhi Station.	107
Secret Societies	109

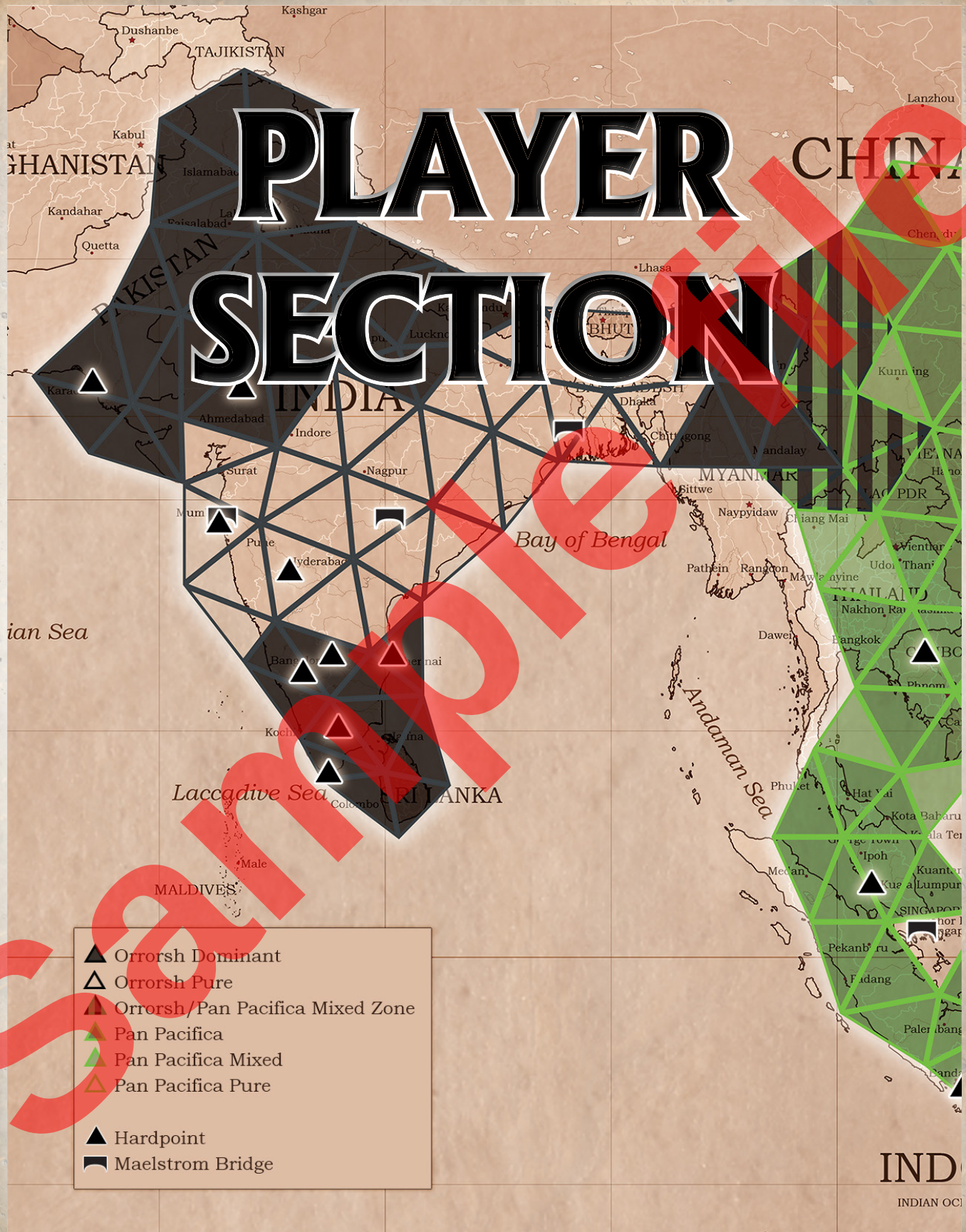
ADVENTURES

Themes of Orrorsh.	110
Adventure Seeds	113
Nightmare Generator	114

THREATS

Gospog of Orrorsh.	120
Humans	124
Monsters	125
Nightmares	136

PLAYER SECTION



WELCOME TO ORRORSH...

Undown changed the townspeople into something less than human. The mob pummeled the walls, smashed through glass on barred windows, hurled themselves at the doors in fury over my eluding them for the moment. Near me, the rising tone of tea pouring into cups, the ring of a tiny silver spoon on porcelain, as I faced the monster Hodges had come here to confront, the primly attired Miss Adelaide Murphy.

"Sugar?" she asked.

"Two please," I said. I took in my surroundings as best I could; lace doilies on the small table, black and white photographs of a family that clearly wasn't hers.

Near my feet was a large splattering of dried blood. In the center of the splatter was a single bullet hole. It looked like the bullet entered almost perpendicular to the floor. Smearred trails of blood led to the kitchen and around the corner.

I tried to think the scene through. Hodges confronts Adelaide. He draws his Webley, but doesn't have time to raise it to firing position before she strikes. One bullet hole, so Hodges dies quickly. Both are indications that she is supernaturally fast. She then dragged the body to the kitchen...

"I did not kill your man," Miss Murphy said.

"You should get a repairman out here. This time of year, floors shouldn't bleed nearly that much," I said.

Cold hatred lit up her eyes. That look told me that not only was she capable of murder, she was considering murdering me, "I do not lie, Mr. McAllister."

Monsters, the really tough ones, can't be killed until you know enough about them. I didn't know nearly enough about Adelaide; "I apologize, Miss Murphy; seems my manners are stuck outside with the mob."

Her expression softened. "I should have been more graceful. That mob pursued you here; facing that hoi polloi might make even me churlish," she said. "Biscuit?" she asked. "You are one of those oracle men, yes?"

More sounds of cracking wood from the hallway. Running out of time, I decided to shoot my shot.

"Delphi Council, yes ma'am. Our safe houses in this area are family homes. Those families are being murdered, and Hodges suspected you."

"That certainly would be scandalous," said Adelaide, "but that supposition is wrong."

I indicated the family photos on the wall, "Mind telling me who they are? Why you are in their house and they are not?"

"Those are the Jhas," said Miss Murphy. "I have adopted them."

"Adopted?"

"Yes. I educate them on manners, on special truths about their lives, their true place in the world," she said.

"Why aren't they here?"

She gave me a knowing smile, "Come now, Mr. McCallister. I am sure you know why I might not want to educate within earshot of the neighbors."

So she had the Jha family somewhere else, was torturing them — for "education." As I tried to make sense of it, Adelaide took my silence as a reason to continue.

"The youngest boy, Guneet, has such a need to be loved, a need to live, it is almost heartbreaking. But without manners, refinement, his life is just another blight on this world. Guneet shall be grateful."

Was she just gloating? Why confess to kidnapping and torturing a family for weeks? What other purpose...

I bolted out of my seat, and started following the blood trail to the kitchen, "You did not murder the families in the safe houses," I said.

"Good to see your schooling was not wasted, Mr. McCallister," Adelaide said. "Families are for adopting, not slaughtering."

The blood trail stopped midway through the kitchen. There was half of a heel print and a speck or two of blood on the knob of the kitchen door. Hodges had stopped the bleeding, almost instantly, and left. Damn it, he was one of the monsters. And the angle of the bullet? I went back to the parlor.

"Hodges is the killer of the safe house families? And he shot himself to —?"

"To encourage you to attack me, so I would kill you. I kill only the rude and the ignorant. You proved to be neither, and I am no one's lackey."

Shrill screams accompanied the ruination of the front door. In raced the folk on spindly, bent legs, hands with elongated thumb and middle finger hardened and shaped like pincers. The faces looked too damned unchanged.

I am a good shot. I dropped four of them.

"You are not invited," hissed Adelaide. She killed seven, and they retreated, She was really. Really. Fast. Adelaide locked the door to the parlor.

"That won't hold them for long," said Adelaide as she ascended the stairs, "Now that the front door is open, I imagine the kitchen door will be unguarded. You have important things to get to, so I will let you get on with it."

"If that is what you really want," I said, trying to sound nonchalant.

"It is all I have ever asked of the world, really," she said, then turned a corner upstairs and was gone.

I ran to kitchen, opening the back door as the parlor door crashed off its hinges. I immediately started running, then step by step I slowed. Adelaide had confessed to kidnapping and ongoing torture. To clear herself of the safe house murders, yes. But she also knew that I would walk away, allow her to snuff out the hope and life in the Jha family, because I had more important things to do. It is all I have ever asked of the world, really.

I wheeled back inside. I don't remember the fight; at the end I had three bullets and no townspeople. I then leaned into the madness of fighting Nightmares. I sat down at the roller desk, practiced my penmanship on some blank stationery, then wrote a thank you note:

"I appreciate your generosity in giving me shelter from the mob. Your delicious biscuits and lively conversation have galvanized my determination.

"Yours in gratitude, Aidan McAllister"

I found an envelope and sealing wax. I used the primer end of a cartridge as the seal, then put that bullet in my pocket. When I knew enough, that bullet would be for Adelaide. I dropped the note on her desk.

Hang on Guneet. Help is coming...

SOME YEAR LATER...

The realm of Orrorsh covers India and large portions of Bangladesh and Pakistan. It is, without doubt, the most dangerous place on the planet. It is an eternal, waking nightmare and the domain of The Gaunt Man, leader of the High Lords.

THE BASICS OF ORRORSH

Before the Possibility Wars the regions that comprise Orrorsh contained over a billion people. An accurate census is impossible due to the horrific conditions there, but the estimates are the population has been decimated at the very least.

The reality that has over-written Core Earth's is tailored to maximize dread and terror. The technology supports just enough information technology to spread sordid tales of danger, but not enough science to properly analyze and combat the underlying causes. Enough magic exists to tempt people to turn to it for protection, but the monsters of the realm retain the edge. The holy power of Miracles is strong enough to manifest — and then fail in the face of overwhelming evil.

In other Cosms, reality evolved without specific direction. In Orrorsh its development has been carefully curated by The Gaunt Man to make people afraid. He feeds on fear, and in Orrorsh he feasts. The deadly dangers of the realm are simply a necessary by-product of that fear.

The two biggest cultural influences inside Orrorsh are the diverse peoples of modern India, and the influx of Victorian thought from the invasion. The land as it exists now is a mixture of these two forces, plus the unhealthy tension that comes from living in a war and a horror movie at the same time.

LIFE IN ORRORSH

No corner of life is untouched by the war inside this perilous realm. Threats are everywhere and can look like anything. There are no unlocked doors, and average citizens are armed with blessings and blades as a matter of practical survival.

Urban density is significantly lower than pre-war levels. Some citizens managed to flee the country entirely, but many more returned to their smaller hometowns to be with their families.

The nation is operating as a wartime economy. Critical jobs still need to get done: coal mined for boilers, silver and steel for weapons, food for people, and most importantly keeping the transformed power grids functioning. Keeping the lights on keeps people alive. The Rupee has lost value, but citizens can still buy groceries and supplies, so the economy hasn't totally failed.

Widespread transformation has affected attitudes and politics, but not nearly as much as the invasion itself. Trust is a commodity in short supply for good reason. Any stranger to the community could be a threat in disguise. Knowing someone who can vouch for you is critical to getting around.

To complicate matters even further, entire communities of Victorians fleeing from the other reality are attempting to carve spaces for themselves in the new world. These grizzled survivors have much to teach their Core Earth allies, but some fear that these newcomers are just another trick serving the Gaunt Man's ends.

THE STATE OF THE WAR

In Orrorsh all the turning tides of the war have been massive in scale. The initial attack, "The Night of Screams," was the bloodiest and most devastating of all the invasions. Quinn Sebastian's counter attack obliterated a major leader within Orrorsh's forces and caused major disruptions in his assault thanks to multiple "Glory" attacks. The Gaunt Man's reprisal—a trap involving several at-risk stelae—was similarly devastating.

India contains thousands of small hardpoints, beacons of relative safety for the ravaged citizens. Most of the largest hardpoints have fallen to special attacks called "tainting." In other theaters hardpoints are usually physically destroyed to disrupt them. In Orrorsh they become sites of grisly crimes which disrupts the hope and history they otherwise embody.

MANNERS

Storm Knights may hear all manner of advice about how to be polite in India. The most common is a directive to only eat food with your right hand. In truth, attempts at etiquette are more appreciated than the actual form employed. Polite manners vary so widely among different groups even within the same region that most people just accept that whatever a Storm Knight is doing is considered the polite way to do it where they're from.

Worth mentioning is the head wobble. To an unaccustomed Storm Knight it may look like someone is shaking their head to indicate a negative response. Actually, the motion is side to side slide or wobble—the face always still directly aimed at the speaker. Rather than negative, this motion usually indicates acknowledgment, understanding, or even emphatic agreement. As usual, the situation's context is key.

Another thing that can catch Storm Knights unawares is that vegetarian is the default for most cuisine, and the change in axioms hasn't altered that at all. When meat (or non-veg) is requested it's usually chicken or goat. Beef isn't available in Hindu communities, but Muslim owned shops offer beef (and cow leather items) without violating taboos.

The Indian government was severely disrupted during the Night of Screams, but pieced itself back together in the aftermath as new leadership rose. Pakistan initially closed its borders to refugees and took an antagonistic attitude towards the beleaguered India, but that changed once the scope of what was happening became clear—including the fact that Orrorsh had already taken half the nation and threatened to expand further.

In the latter half of the year several crushing defeats hit the Delphi Council and their allies. Storm Knights were minor celebrities after months of victory, and the news of so many slain hit the popular consciousness like a cold shock. There is a

RELIGIONS AND HOLIDAYS

Faith is considered a personal choice and freedom in India, and multiple major religions have coexisted in relative peace for centuries. Hinduism is by far the most commonly practiced religion across the broader realm. Smaller Islamic communities exist in major cities and become more predominant in the Northwest, and Pakistan is considered Islamic with only small communities composed of Hindus and other religions. Different sects of Christianity, including Sacellum, are the next most common form of worship across Orrorsh. Sikhism is still practiced in the North, especially in Punjab. Jainism and Buddhism have scattered adherents, but represent a small minority of the population overall.

With so many different forms of worship, festivals and holidays can be tricky. There are very few holidays celebrated universally across the nation. Republic Day and Independence Day are commonly celebrated in all communities, but nearly every other festival or observance is optional and based on an individual's worship and belief. This means that a Storm Knight can expect that someone is almost always at work, but a particular person may be out unexpectedly for a lesser known holiday.

The most popular and wide reaching celebrations are Holi (the spring festival of colors), Diwali (the fall festival of lights), Teej (various festivals celebrating women near the monsoon), and Gandhi Jayanti (celebrating Mahatma Gandhi's birthday). An individual may be expected to celebrate up to 20 different holidays, just not always the same ones as other workers in the same region.

growing feeling that the Gaunt Man is all powerful and just toying with Core Earth — which is exactly what he wants. Quinn's credibility is eroding.

The massive number of zones becoming Pure Zones is especially troubling to Delphi Council strategists. The Gaunt Man isn't taking his time to draw out the maximum amount of energy, he's draining some Possibilities quickly and then strengthening his realm instead of lingering to drain the rest. This quicker conversion means his energy reserves are relatively shallow. Nothing about the Gaunt Man suggests he's a short term thinker, so he must be positioning for something big — something coming sooner rather than later

CORE EARTH'S RESPONSE

The three main responses to Orrorsh are flight, sheltering in place, and fighting back. There's also collaboration, but nobody likes to speak about that option.

The Himalayas and seas block most routes out of Orrorsh. Bangladesh was a popular route out, but it leads directly into Pan Pacifica. Now that it's clear that's an invasion site as well, the flow East has stopped, and refugees risk the difficult desert crossing into Afghanistan instead.

Most people are trapped in Orrorsh, and don't wish to leave their homes no matter how dangerous things have become. The struggle is survival. Citizens need light, blessings, weapons, and food — in that order. Around hardpoints things are a little more relaxed, but the constant tension around attacks or the potential collapse of the hardpoint never abates.

Many men and women of all ages have joined ad-hoc military units. Most of these function as military police with minimal training, stationed around cities and hardpoints. Better trained, regular troops are reserved for coordination with the Delphi Council and assaults on major targets.

The regular army's assaults have a reputation for over-planning, which makes them seem slow and inflexible compared to the operations in other cosms. Ultimately that caution has worked in favor of India's forces, since surprises in Orrorsh turn swiftly into a slaughter.

YEAR 1 MAJOR TIMELINE EVENTS

Day 1: The Night of Screams. The maelstrom bridges drop, killing hundreds of thousands.

Day 5: Ravagons begin attacking smaller cities in the Ravaged Southwest.

Day 8: Traitorous General Wellington arrives to claim a seat on the Delphi Council, only to discover it's a trap by Quinn Sebastian. He suffers his True Death, which sends shockwaves through the Hellion Court.

Day 11: Battle of Pollachi. MARCOS drives back ravagons in a battle bloodier than either side expected.

Day 12: What had been a trickle becomes a mass migration of Victorians into Orrorsh.

Day 31: Delphi Council New Delhi Station is lost, along with most Orrorsh branch senior leadership.

Day 50: Last Pan-Pacific relief operation is destroyed in the Hunted Northeast.

Day 64: Ghost ships close down many eastern ports.

Day 75: Kochi Station is running and fully staffed, restoring Delphi Council operations to Orrorsh branch.

Day 81: A serial killer Nightmare, Lucius Todd Clayborn, is killed via True Death. This is the first True Death investigated and executed without Delphi Council intervention.

Day 92: The first bleed shows through.

Day 104: A laity council on destroying demons is held at an undisclosed location between representatives of the Cyberchurch and the Sacellum. It fails spectacularly.

Day 108–129 A month of light: Several Glory results refill residents of India with hope.

Day 138 Quinn's Folly: A coordinated attempt to remove three stelae fails, costing hundreds of

Indian and Pakistani troops, several Spartan teams, and 14 Storm Knights. It's the Delphi Council's worst defeat up to that point.

Day 156: The Taj Mahal hardpoint falls. The structure remains intact, but coated in blood it becomes a beacon of dread and terror rather than a repository for hope and history.

Day 170: A professional cricket team disappears in Hyderabad after returning from an off-season goodwill tour throughout East Asia.

Day 183: A personal request for help reaches Vinutha Patel; council priorities and setbacks delay help until the opening of "A Trifling Matter."

Day 191: The Sisters of Sobriety burn nearly half of a Gospog field. A political cartoonist was found flayed to death shortly after publishing a cartoon captioned, "Sisters drive the Gaunt Man to drink."

Day 224: A Nile Empire archeology team lands in Sri Lanka for a dig at mysterious ruins in the interior. They do not even survive until the first dawn.

Day 224 –30: The first Home Skies bleed.

Day 241: The Hellion Court begins a more coordinated effort to eliminate Storm Knights, rather than counter the whole of Delphi Council.

Day 275: Dozens of hardpoints fail unexpectedly at the exact same time, leading to the worst death toll since the Night of Screams.

Day 303: Delphi Council base receives signal intelligence of an underwater Orrorsh settlement.

Day 342: Storm Knights report that the Gaunt Man has disappeared, following a surprise encounter in the "Forever City." The report is disputed due to the lack of disruption among Orrorshan forces.

Day 366: Remembrances are held in over 800 locations in India. The Hellion Court begins to suspect that the Gaunt man is no longer in Orrorsh.

STORM KNIGHTS

Storm Knights questing in the fields and catacombs of Orrorsh have new options for spending Experience Points (XP).

NEW PERKS

The new Perks below represent new discoveries of the industrious Victorians or adaptations of the population who have transformed and been living in Orrorsh's harsh axioms for nearly a year.

If a Perk lists **Beta Clearance** as a prerequisite it may only be taken once the Storm Knight has achieved that clearance level (50 XPs) or greater.

When a Perk boosts an attribute it counts exactly the same as if the gain were purchased by XPs. If the Perk is lost due to transformation or a crisis of morality, so is the attribute gain. The standard ceiling for a race's attribute remains unchanged unless the Perk specifically increases it.

CORRUPTION

Cosms: Orrorsh

Corruption Perks are technically free. They aren't purchased and don't count against the number of Perks a character has when calculating the cost of purchasing other Perks. The only cost is paid when the character perishes — and awakens into a new life as a servant of the Void.

ANCHORED

★ **Prereq:** Transform within Orrorsh.

Orrorsh's reality is pervasive, and winds its way into the character's very soul. When the character would transform (to or from the Orrorsh reality) the whisper emerges to offer a dark bargain. The Storm Knight connects to Orrorsh now and forever. In the future when he Disconnects he automatically reconnects to Orrorsh—but makes a Corruption test each time.

DOOMED

• **Prereq:** Spirit 10+, fail a Defeat test within Orrorsh.

When some heroes die in Orrorsh, dark spirits whisper to their souls and offer them a new chance to live, but be forever bound to the forces of darkness. If the character accepts, she gains this Perk for free and returns to life as though the Defeat test had been an Outstanding success. There is no other apparent effect.