

CREATURE FEATURE: LA BRUJA



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SYLLABUS

BRUJAS	3	SAVAGE TALES	7
BRUJA VARIATIONS	5	ASPIRING PARANORMAL	
FOREST BRUJA	5	INVESTIGATORS	9
LAKE BRUJA	5	DANGER AFTER DARK	10
MOUNTAIN BRUJA	5	THE PARTY CRASHER	12
PLAINS BRUJA	6	THE SIEGE OF WHITEHALL	12
URBAN BRUJA	6		
FIELD TRIP TO HELL	7		

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Dark tales of brujas and their sinister deeds are legion throughout the Southwest. According to Mexican folklore, brujas are deformed, perverse night dwellers who make use of evil magic and feed on the blood of the weak and helpless. At a distance, they appear as an elderly woman but a closer look reveals them as twisted, gnarled, and predatory.

Brujas are malevolent witches who practice black magic. To survive, they consume the blood of children or lost travelers. They fly on brooms and when they take flight, they often cry, "Sin Dios ni Santa María!" translated in English to "Without God or the Holy Virgin Mary!"

Accounts of brujas vary. Some describe forest-dwelling nightstalkers hiding among the treetops to hunt their prey. Others tell of hard, callused mountain inhabitants who await any unwary traveler. There are also tales of brujas who live in the plains and near lakes. Rare tales of brujas living among humans in cities are considered nothing more than paranoid delusions.

Following World War II, a group of men camping in the Big Thicket witnessed strange lights moving through the trees. At first, they believed the lights were cars, but they quickly realized the lights moved far too quickly to be any normal vehicle. Soon, their campsite was shrouded in intense darkness. Even their campfire did little to fight off the shadows. The men huddled together and drank the liquor they packed until they passed out.

The following morning, the men returned to town to have breakfast at a local restaurant. Their waitress overheard them discussing the previous night and told them the lights they saw were brujas, the darkness a spell they cast before attacking their prey. All of the men, she said, were lucky to be alive.

Younger generations often regard brujas as superstition, but the elderly are not so quick to dismiss them. Old women often hang crucifixes on their doors and say prayers at night to ward off the creatures. Some also believe a pair of scissors opened to make an "X" and placed on a windowsill keeps them away.



BRUJA

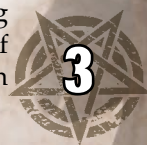
Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Knowledge (Occult) d8, Notice d8, Ritualism d8, Shooting d6, Spellcasting d10, Stealth d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities:

- **Bane (Holy Items):** Because of a bruja's evil nature and a symbiotic, almost dependent relationship with black magic, a character may keep a bruja at bay by displaying a holy item. See Bane in *East Texas University*.
- **Bloodletting:** The bruja makes an opposed roll of Spellcasting versus the target's Spirit. If successful, blood pours from



the target's eyes and nose, and from beneath his or her fingernails. On a success, the target is Shaken (blood in your eyes will do that) and suffers a -2 penalty to all attacks (bloody, slick hands) for 1d4 rounds after recovering. On a raise, the victim also suffers a level of Fatigue, recovered after 30 minutes or half the time with a successful Healing roll.

- **Fangs/Nails:** Str+d4. The fangs and hardened nails of a bruja are as deadly as knives.



- **Fear (-2):** A bruja's gruesome appearance is terrifying to any who see it.
- **Flight:** A bruja has a flying Pace of 12".
- **Hidden:** A bruja gains +2 to Stealth as she utilizes magic to cloak herself in shadow and darkness.
- **High Strangeness:** When High Strangeness manifests near a bruja's home, it almost always takes the form of unearthly sounds and dancing lights just at the edge of perception. The Dean draws two cards for High Strangeness, and if neither is a Joker, the above effect is used. If either is a Joker, the other card is applied as the effect.
- **Low Light Vision:** Brujas ignore all penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.
- **Powers:** *Boost/lower Trait, curse, fear* (mental illusion of target's greatest fear), *light/obscure* (obscure only), *pain transference, summon demon*
- **Power Points:** 25
- **Regeneration, Slow:** Wounded brujas make natural Healing rolls once per day if they have consumed a Fatigue level worth of blood that day.
- **Rituals:** While they prefer using spellcasting, brujas are also capable ritualists. The Dean should decide what, if any, Rituals a bruja has available. One common memorized Ritual is The Spiraling Path, the puppet power affecting up to half their Spirit die type in targets. The Spiraling Path causes them to unconsciously travel to a specific location or to circle back to their original location whenever they attempt to go in another direction. Brujas use the Ritual to draw victims to their lairs.
- **Vampiric Bite:** Although typically reserved for feeding, brujas use this ability to weaken and defeat their enemies. When a bruja gets a raise on a Fighting roll, she lashes out with two rows of razor sharp teeth and drains the victim's blood. This attack causes the target a level of Fatigue and gives the bruja the Hardy ability for one hour. The ability's duration begins from the last Fatigue level caused and is not cumulative. If Incapacitated by Fatigue, the target must succeed at a Vigor roll or die in 2d10 rounds. Only arcane healing



or a blood transfusion and Healing roll at -2 can prevent death. Victims who survive a bruja's vampiric bite attack heal one level of Fatigue every eight hours.

- **Weakness (Holy Water):** Brujas' black magic makes them susceptible to holy water. Brujas contacted by holy water must succeed at a Spirit roll at -2 or be Shaken.

BRUJA VARIATIONS

On the following pages are five different types of brujas you can use in your *East Texas University* campaign.

FOREST BRUJA

Forest bruja are the most elusive of their kind. They remain hidden by day and venture out at night. Typically, they keep to the shadows, especially when hunting for potential victims.

Most forest bruja form covens of at least three or four members. Although traditionally the least aggressive of the bruja living in the wild, they still pose a great danger to any who meet them—especially if their coven is threatened.

Additional Special Abilities:

- **Envelop Attack:** The forest bruja uses magic to control vines, tree branches, and roots to grab and squeeze a target. She makes a Spellcasting roll opposed by the target's Agility. Success indicates partial restraint so that the target suffers a -2 penalty to Pace and skills linked to Agility. A raise restrains the target fully: he cannot move or use any skills linked to Agility or Strength and suffers 2d8 damage. On its action, an enveloped target may make a Strength or Agility roll to break free. Other characters may also attempt to free the enveloped target by making a Strength roll at -2. Maintaining the effect counts as an action for the bruja, applying a -2 to any other actions attempted and ending on her turn if she is unable to take actions (Shaken or recovering without a raise).

- **Improved Frenzy:** Forest bruja become enraged when a member of their coven is Incapacitated or killed. At that point, other members of the coven can make two attacks per round.

LAKE BRUJA

Lake bruja tend to keep to themselves, often ready to viciously defend their home turf against perceived invaders.

Like other bruja, a lake bruja feeds on the blood of the weak, the helpless, and the unwary. She hides among the trees or even in the depths of the lake, waiting for the chance to attack her prey unawares.

Additional Special Abilities:

- **Acidic Spit:** With a Shooting roll, a lake bruja can spit a stream of acid (2d6 damage) at any single target within 2".

- **Aquatic:** Pace 6.

- **Immunity:** Acid.



MOUNTAIN BRUJA

Mountain brujas are solitary creatures that live like hermits high in the mountains. They keep to the trails used by travelers, hoping to find someone to capture and devour.

Although loners by nature, mountain brujas are fiercely aggressive when confronted by a potential threat or met with a possible meal.

Additional Special Abilities:

- **Improved Frenzy:** The mountain bruja may make two attacks per round at no penalty.

- **Pounce:** Mountain brujas may pounce on their prey, usually from a hidden location. She can leap 1d6" to gain a +4 on her attack and damage, though her Parry is reduced by

–2 until her next action when performing this maneuver.

PLAINS BRUJA

Plains brujas pose the greatest danger to those who live near them. While forest brujas, mountain brujas, and lake brujas tend to keep to their own turf, plains brujas are known for sneaking into homes after dark and feeding on children. Many lure their prey outside and spirit them away, leaving nothing behind but empty beds. A select few, however, enter their victims' bedrooms and feed on them there, leaving drained corpses to be discovered the next day.

Plains brujas form smaller covens with two or three members.

Additional Special Abilities:

- **Improved Frenzy:** Plains brujas become enraged when a member of their coven is Incapacitated or killed. At that point, other members of the coven can make two attacks per round.

- **Powers:** Plains brujas have *puppet* in addition to their other powers, but must continuously sing softly to the target when using it. They cannot perform any other actions nor talk while the power is active, but can perform other free actions.

- **Telepathy:** A plains bruja may use this ability to speak with any sentient creature within 8" regardless of language.

URBAN BRUJA

The rarest of the variants, urban brujas live among humanity. They can take on human form completely. It costs much of their power, but also negates normal bruja weaknesses as well, making it nearly impossible to pierce the façade.

Unlike other brujas, urban ones aren't inherently aggressive or hostile to humanity. In fact, they quite enjoy all the luxuries and benefits of civilization and would do almost anything to avoid losing them, even temporarily. Their protectiveness of their secret can put anyone who discovers it at risk.

Urban brujas often work at jobs providing easy access to blood such as doctors, nurses, and other medical professions. Ironically enough, urban brujas are often beneficial to their community, though due to logical self-preservation not altruism.



Urban brujas are not merely loners but extremely territorial. They actively work to remove any other bruja daring to enter what they consider their city.

Additional Special Abilities:

- **Mortal Guise:** An urban bruja can take a completely human form or change back as a free action. None of the standard bruja Special Abilities apply in this form, except for her ability to perform Rituals, which is unchanged. Even the Bane and Weakness do not apply. The specific human form a bruja takes is predetermined, but can be changed to a different one if the bruja stays in her natural form for 1d6 days. The form can have any appearance though brujas favor an Attractive or Very Attractive female one.

She maintains this form even if unconscious. Only three things cause her to transform back to a bruja: death (just prior to disintegrating), consciously choosing to change back, or physical contact with consecrated iron.

- **Rituals:** Urban brujas use Rituals more often, knowing 1d4+1 memorized Rituals, and typically having access to 2d6 other Rituals of the Dean's choice.

- **Traits:** Urban brujas are intelligent, knowledgeable, and perhaps most frightening of all, friendly and charming. They have a d10 in Smarts, Knowledge (Occult), Persuasion, Ritualism, and Streetwise. Depending on their mortal cover, they have a d6 to d10 in a profession-based skill as well, usually Healing.

- **Weakness (Consecrated Iron):** Legend says urban brujas paid for their Mortal Guise ability with an ancient pact, and the price was consecrated iron burns them like acid. Urban brujas take 2d6 damage from bodily contact (clothing blocks) with consecrated iron and are forced into their bruja form for 2d6 rounds. Consecrated iron weapons add +2d6 to their damage.





FIELD TRIP TO HELL

This tale works best with the mountain bruja and Freshman Rank heroes.

Dr. Chad Dougherty, ETU's Archeology and Ancient Cultures professor, invites a group of lower classmen to join him on an important archeological dig in the Sierra Madre Mountains. Apparently, locals discovered Mayan artifacts high in the mountains, in a region far from where researchers believe the ancient civilization had influence.

Even non-Archeology majors are invited, and who wouldn't want a trip to Mexico, all expenses paid by the school?

The young archeologists travel across the border by chartered bus (a trip taking two days) and into the Sierra Madre Oriental, a mountain range in northeastern Mexico.

The bus stops at a small village near the base of the mountain, where the site leader, Dr. Philip Vanderkempf, is supposed to meet the road weary travelers. At Dr. Dougherty's bequest, the bus drops them off near a local shop where the students can purchase food, snacks, and other supplies.

Unfortunately, Dr. Vanderkempf doesn't arrive. Dr. Dougherty tries calling his cell phone, but there's no answer. Discouraged but not dismayed, he leaves the students to visit another nearby business and rents a vehicle to drive up the mountain.

The shop owner asks the students where they're going and, upon hearing the destination, is horrified. He urges them not to go, insisting the mountain is haunted. If asked what haunts the mountain, the man only says, "Bruja!"

The owner's wife joins her husband behind the cash register, and they begin speaking frantically to each other in Spanish, often pointing at the students during the conversation. Students who know Spanish can tell they are concerned about the student's protection from the "bruja." The owner's wife only speaks Spanish, but she hurries to one of the students and gives him or her a necklace with a large cross on it. "Por la paz de tu madre!" she says. ("For the peace of your mother!")

The couple is reluctant to speak more about the bruja, but if the students ask (in Spanish), on a successful Persuasion roll they learn a bruja is a witch and best avoided—confronting one is to throw one's life away.

Dr. Dougherty returns and says he's rented a vehicle for the last part of the journey. He says he asked several people for directions, but everyone refused to help. Despite these ill omens, he orders the young archeologists into the vehicle—an old, red pickup truck—to head up the mountain.

It's an hour's ride up the mountain. The path is a series of winding, dusty, uninhabited roads.



They finally arrive at the dig site just before dusk, but the place is deserted. No other researchers are present. Adding to the mystery, personal belongings like water canteens, boots, and shovels (which can double for weapons later) lie around, as though their owners simply vanished.

After sunset, the group hears an awful, wicked cackle ring out and echo across the mountainside. The sound fills each and every member of the group with a cold dread.

Doctor Dougherty rallies the students to continue investigating in order to learn what happened here. Searching the area turns up weathered, hand-written notes from the previous team. Many of them, written by students and interns as warnings to whoever finds them, describe a hideous creature prowling the mountain in search of blood.

Entering the main tent uncovers weapons and tools like knives, pistols, and shovels (the Dean can determine the specifics), as well as a journal by the team's leader, Dr. Vanderkempf, that includes a crude drawing of a grotesque creature that resembles an old, deformed woman. Scribbled beneath it is a single word: "Bruja." Beneath that is unintelligible text that almost resembles a child's handwriting. One sentence is legible: "She comes at night."

By now, the sun has set. With no light, it's too dangerous to drive back down the mountain. "We'll have to camp here tonight," Dr. Dougherty tells the students.

As the group prepares to rest for the night, they hear the same cackle that rang out earlier. A mountain bruja enters the camp in search of more human blood. She first attacks Dougherty with a vampiric bite. The unfortunate professor manages to escape her grasp before she can kill him, but he is Fatigued and rendered useless during the battle that follows.

In order to survive the night, the students must defeat the bruja using the weapons and tools discovered at the camp. Otherwise, everyone—including Dougherty—dies and serves as part of a large banquet upon which the mountain bruja gorges herself.

If they defeat the mountain bruja, the creature disintegrates into dust, which blows away in the wind. Dougherty recovers by morning, and the young archeologists can return home with

some of the artifacts the previous expedition uncovered but no proof of their deadly encounter. The reason Mayan artifacts were discovered so far from the civilization's borders remains a mystery.

DR. CHAD DOUGHERTY

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Investigation d6, Knowledge (Archeology) d12, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Streetwise d4

Charisma: —; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Loyal (To students)

Edges: Scholar

Gear: Smart phone, briefcase.

ASPIRING PARANORMAL INVESTIGATORS

This tale works best with the forest bruja and Sophomore Rank heroes.

During one of Dr. Glen Maclanahan's lectures on local folklore and ghost stories, he discusses the possibility of paranormal activity in the Big Thicket forest not far from campus.

Apparently, residents of Pinebox have reported strange activity in the forest for years—strange lights moving between the trees deep in wooded areas, otherworldly sounds, and more. Some residents report these happenings to local police, but investigators tend to file those reports away and immediately forget them.

Should the students want to document and study this mysterious forest, they can gather what equipment they can—such as video equipment, microphones, and an electromagnetic field meter "borrowed" (more likely, stolen) from campus—and load one of their vehicles for the trip.

Dr. Maclanahan happens upon the aspiring paranormal investigators as they pack and asks where they're headed. When they tell him, he grows concerned and urges them to take weapons. He worries the phenomenon in the Thicket may be dangerous, but he hasn't had the chance to see for himself.

Dr. Maclanahan has the respect and admiration of most ETU students, so the group should listen to his warnings. Anyone who doesn't have a weapon should find

away to arm him or herself (such as weapons already in their possession or going to a store to purchase some).

Dr. Maclanahan gives one of the students a necklace with a large cross and a vial of Holy Water. "For added protection," he says.

Now armed and with Maclanahan's blessing—albeit a reluctant one—the adventurers set off for the forest. They arrive just after sundown, then immediately experience the strange, paranormal happenings the professor described (the High Strangeness associated with a nearby bruja). Soon after, strange noises resembling growls and moans greet them, and within moments a trio of imps attacks.

The imps first attack the students' vehicle, slashing all four tires with their claws. During the attack, the nasty creatures manage to break into the car and steal the paranormal investigation equipment. Then they race back into the forest with their newfound prizes.

- **Imps (3):** See *East Texas University*.

Some students may wish to leave at this point, but with the car inoperable, that won't be likely in the short term. Plus, the students can't return without the equipment the imps stole, unless they're willing to face severe consequences (fines, failing grades, expulsion...Dean's discretion).

They have little choice but to enter the forest.

The deeper the students travel into the Thicket, the more unearthly sounds and strange, dancing lights they experience.

Soon, the three imps attack the would-be investigators again. These turn out to be heralds for those responsible for all the latest paranormal happenings

in the Big Thicket—a coven of three forest brujas.

If the students defeat the imps, the forest brujas descend from the trees and tell them they should never have come here. The students, the brujas say, have invaded their territory and learned their secrets, and thus cannot be allowed to live.

The young investigators must defeat the forest brujas in order to survive. If they fail, they become the creatures' next meal. If they succeed, the witches disintegrate into dust, leaving no physical evidence of their existence behind. The students can also retrieve the equipment the imps stole. They can return to ETU without fear of punishment, but their car is damaged and they have no documented evidence of what they encountered.

DANGER AFTER DARK

This story works best with the plains bruja and Junior Rank heroes.

A string of disappearances set the residents of Pinebox on edge. Over the course of a month, four families report missing children. Frantic, distraught mothers cry while relaying their loss to police and local journalists. Every incident is the same: The child vanishes without a trace, and one window somewhere in the home is open.

The mystery and tragedy hits home at ETU when President James Nelson's granddaughter is the latest to vanish.

The heroes of this story are offered a freelance assignment reporting on the tragedy by the *Raven's Report*, ETU's student-run newspaper. It's an opportunity for adventure, to solve a mystery, and (if they're lucky) to earn a permanent place in the campus president's good graces.

They begin their search by talking with President Nelson.



Unfortunately, Nelson is still distraught over losing his granddaughter. He tells the students he already spoke with police, and he'd rather not talk about it with anyone else. He's polite but makes it clear he won't say any more.

The young sleuths may try to interview Sheriff Butch Anderson. The tall, overweight, grizzled veteran is less than forthcoming. He provides them with the same information that's been reported before—children missing, windows open, nothing more. If pressed for more information, he politely but firmly tells the students it's a city police matter and to leave.

After striking out with the sheriff, the young journalists can try their luck at the police department. Detective Blaine Bishop agrees to meet with them and, unlike Sheriff Anderson, readily provides more details that have yet to be released to the public.

According to Bishop, President Nelson's granddaughter Sophia was visiting her grandfather the night she disappeared. Nelson reported to police he heard a soft, haunting voice that awoke him late at night. He couldn't make out the words, but the voice was singing. At first, he thought it was a television in another room, but as it continued, he became less and less sure. Eventually, Nelson got out of bed to investigate. He discovered an open window in the living room, and he believed the singing voice was somewhere outside, moving away from the house. He then checked in on Sophia and found the bed empty.

That singing voice, Blaine says, headed past the baseball fields and through the forest to a local farmer's fields. However, when police investigated during the day they found nothing. Blaine says that he is returning for another look near dusk when the singing reportedly occurs and invites the young reporters to ride along.

The group arrives at the field just as the sun is setting. Blaine insists they meet with the farmer before venturing further, and the farmer acknowledges hearing a soft voice singing at night sometimes, just like Nelson described. He says he's never ventured into the field after dark, though.

"Y'all're welcome to check things out," he tells them, "but don't hold

me responsible for anything what happens out there."

Night falls as the group enters the field, and a few moments later, soft growls emanate from the darkness around them just before hell hounds emerge from the shadows and attack.

Blaine, who has battled his share of unholy creatures already, opens a messenger bag full of holy water bottles and four small iron crowbars (Str+d4). Taking one of the crowbars, he tosses the bag to the ground as he readies to defend himself, saying to the students, "They'll work! Trust me!"

An Agility check allows a student to ready one bottle or crowbar and attack in the same round with a -2 for the multiaction penalty (unless the student has Quick Draw).

- **Hell Hounds (2 per hero):** See *East Texas University*.

Should the young journalists overcome these creatures, they might want to question Blaine as to why he didn't warn them about the dangers ahead. "I've long since learned to keep my suspicions of the supernatural to myself," he tells them. "Besides, I was hoping to be wrong."

They can now proceed further into the field. As they do, they see flickering orange light up ahead through the grass. Following the light leads them to a coven of three plains brujas gathered around a fire and preparing to feed on their latest catch—President Nelson's granddaughter, Sophia. Each bruja has a hell hound guarding her side.

The plains brujas, furious at having their meal interrupted, attack the group. If the journalists fail to win the ensuing battle, all of them—plus the child—become the witches' next meal.

- **Hell Hounds (3):** See *East Texas University*.

If the journalists win and save the child, they can return to ETU and reunite Sophia with her grandfather, but with no proof of the plains brujas (whose bodies disintegrate upon dying), they have a hard time proving what happened. If they agree to remain silent, they gain a one time use of the Connections Edge with Detective Blaine. Regardless of what they say, President Nelson is very grateful and grants the students a free Journalism

credit, providing a +2 bonus to their next Exam roll.

THE PARTY CRASHER

This tale works best with the Lake Bruja and Senior Rank heroes.

Spring Break is here. It's been a long, grueling semester, and everyone is ready for a week of fun and relaxation (translation: late night parties, lots of beer, and as much moral debauchery as possible).

In order to avoid campus security, organizers never hold the party in the same place twice. This year, they select a relatively secluded and rarely visited section of Lake Greystone. One of the party organizers is a friend to the group, and it appears this will be the party of the year—or at least the party of the week.

The heroes travel to Lake Greystone, where the massive party kicks off in style with loud music and tapped kegs. By sundown, the party is in full swing.

At this point, a lake bruja who calls this section of the lake home rises from the water. Furious at the students for intruding on her home, she summons a horde of demonically possessed plants and attacks. Most students are either too drunk or too scared to help fight them off, so it's up to the heroes to be, well, heroes!

- **Plant Demons (use Slough Creatures with Demon ability, 1 per hero):** See *East Texas University*.

After the heroes defeat the plant demons, the lake bruja retreats. As she leaves, she screams she will return, and when she does, none of them will survive.

Afterward, the heroes discover their vehicles rendered useless. Their tires were melted before the fight by the lake bruja's acidic spit.

There will probably be other survivors who want to help our heroes. The Dean can print off the ETU Archetypes (available at peginc.com) and let the players use them as allies.

Although most students did not come to the party armed, this is Texas. Several of the partygoers have knives and every vehicle has a small or large tire iron usable as a club (Roll a d6, on a 1-3 it does Str+d4 and on a 4-6, Str+d6). Some students even have crucifixes and necklaces with crosses on them. One or two may even have a firearm in their truck.

One of the partygoers, Jenny Kramer, survived the attack, but she has suffered a vampiric bite from the lake bruja and is mortally wounded. As she dies, she hands one of the heroes a vial of holy water from her baptism she carried with her for luck.

"Not that it did *me* much good," she sighs before passing away.

After an hour, the lake bruja, accompanied by two more plant demons per hero, rises from the water. "This lake is *mine*," she tells them. "And any who dare enter it are *mine*."

The final battle ensues. If the students survive, the lake bruja dies and they can return home. But the events of this night will haunt them forever...

- **Lake Bruja (1):** See above.

THE SIEGE OF WHITEHALL

This story works best with an urban bruja, plains bruja, and Freshman Rank heroes.

The heroes of this story are invited to a study group gathering on the top floor of Whitehall Dormitory on a Saturday night by one of the dorm's residents, Pre-Med and Criminal Justice double major, Amalia de la Rosa (d6 Healing). Amalia is intelligent and focused with her sights set on being a medical examiner. Some students may be more interested in her attractiveness, but she isn't interested in anyone who judges her solely on her appearance. A smart, determined, or funny student is more likely to appeal to her. Amalia is looking for someone who can face the unknown.

Many Whitehall students have had trouble sleeping at night. Several report strange sounds and eerie voices echoing softly in the evening. Others say they hear cackling outside their windows. A few even insist that unnatural shadows move about the building after sundown.

The students in the room are quite familiar with these stories. Some have haunting stories of their own, but they try to focus on schoolwork. It's a welcome distraction.

Unfortunately, it won't last.

The room's lights flicker several times, pulling everyone's attention away from studying, and finally die. The sun has long since gone down, and darkness covers the room, reducing visibility

(-1 adjacent to a window, -2 in a room with a window, -4 in a closed room).

Strange, horrible noises ring out—otherworldly moans, screams, and the sound of something traveling on the wind. This is soon accompanied by terrified shrieks from other students throughout the dorm.

Five imps sweep into the room and swarm the students. They attack with their Snatch Essence Special Ability to weaken the students but if two or more of the demons are killed, the remaining imps retreat to advise the brujas they encountered significant opposition. More screams occasionally ring out from other parts of the building.

- **Imps (5):** See *East Texas University*.

The students may leave the study area to escape or help others. Amalia insists on trying to help the others even if no one else goes along, though she begs them to join her. Several rooms along the way are open, a few revealing grisly scenes of unconscious students who suffered vampiric bites (they have made their Vigor rolls to survive and will recover eventually). In other rooms, they find other pale unconscious students—but these are otherwise seemingly unharmed (victims of the imps' Snatch Essence) If the students search these rooms, they may uncover various items which will help them survive.

The first room they enter has a pallid student, lying in bed as if caught while sleeping. The student, a young man, is breathing shallowly but seems peaceful. There are also some useful items in the room—a baseball bat, a knife, a flashlight, and a fraternity paddle (Str+d6). Only the knife requires a Notice roll to find, the others are in the open.

After taking the makeshift weapons, the “unconscious” student rises from his bed. Possessed by a chaos demon, the student declares, “You’re all going to die here!” and attacks. He targets female characters most often.

- **Chaos Demon Possessed Student (1):** see below.

The heroes must defeat the possessed student to escape the room and should attempt to do so without killing him since he is still alive, just temporarily possessed.

If no student thinks of it, Amalia will mention it. Afterward, they can

search any other rooms open for additional supplies, like additional weapons or flashlights. Exactly what and where are up to the Dean to decide, but should a player get an extraordinary result on a Notice roll, the room may belong to a particularly devout student with a holy item of some sort or perhaps a “foodie” with a cast iron skillet (Str+d6).

Upon reaching the outside set of stairs, the students encounter three shades agitated by the presence of the demons and brujas. The shades use their Imprint Special Ability and the heroes find themselves overcome by sadness and despair (no mechanical effect but an excellent opportunity for players to earn Bennies). The shades take no other actions and if the players don’t drive them off in some way, they soon walk through the students and disappear, unable to maintain their presence any longer. As they flicker out, the shades Drain Electricity from any electric item not turned off.

- **Shades (3):** See *East Texas University*.

On the second floor, the students encounter two more possessed students armed with knives who immediately attack. Once again, the students are obviously still alive though the demons possessing them have no problem using deadly force on the heroes. These foes focus their attacks on females in the group.

- **Chaos Demon Possessed Student (2):** see below.

Several more dorm rooms are open on this floor, as well. The first room the students search reveals a vial of holy water and a crucifix. Other rooms offer more items like medical supplies, flashlights, and additional weapons (once again at the Dean’s discretion).

Three imps plus any survivors from the initial encounter attack the heroes from the front and rear while on the second floor staircase. Like the previous possessed students, the imps focus their attacks on females if the demons can reach them.

- **Imps (3 plus survivors):** See *East Texas University*.

Upon reaching the first floor, a trio of crazed plains brujas greets the surviving students. The three attack in a snarling rage, unable to speak coherently in their fury. The brujas gain the benefit of Improved Frenzy, and three more chaos demon-possessed students

with bats and makeshift clubs (Str+d6) come in from nearby rooms to aid in the battle.

The plains brujas fight to the death and once destroyed, they disintegrate to dust and any active demons are banished, with those possessed falling unconscious to the floor.

Amalia is grateful and impressed. She will be a friend to the heroes through the following years, providing healing if needed without judgment. She may even become a romantic interest. It's possible the heroes never discover Amalia is Pinebox's resident urban bruja or that she set up the study group to protect her from the plains brujas' revenge. Amalia killed a member of their coven—she saw them as encroaching on her territory. She intends to be more careful in the future as the other brujas only knew a female student in the Whitehall dorm was responsible but not which specific one, and these new "friends" may be just the edge she needs. How it works out is up to the Dean, but it's possible interacting with the heroes may awaken something good in Amalia, which begs the question, "Can a bruja be redeemed?"

STUDENT POSSESSED BY CHAOS DEMON

The chaos demons lose much possessing these students but still gain power from fear.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6

Charisma: —; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5
Special Abilities:

- **Feeding Frenzy:** Every time a human fails a Fear roll in its presence, the demon gains +1 to all Trait rolls, Toughness, and Parry for one hour (maximum of +3).
- **Fear:** It's a student—maybe even a friend—possessed by an evil spirit. That would scare anyone.



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