



# CONTAGION

SAVAGE ADVENTURES



AN ACE SETTING JUMPSTART





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**IF YOU CANNOT HANDLE THAT:** Don't play. Don't read. Get help.

**EVERYONE ELSE:** Enjoy!

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# CHAPTER ONE: THE WORLD OF CONTAGION

## A DARK REFLECTION OF OUR TIMES

The world of *Contagion* is a dark and terrifying place. Though this world bears many cosmetic similarities to our own, the world of *Contagion* is torn by supernatural conflict. Until recently this conflict raged in the shadows. Gods, demons, and monsters hid in the shadows, fighting over the souls of humanity. Though a few heroic warriors, astute scholars, and devout servants of the supernatural knew the truth of this war, most of humanity went about their daily lives unaware of the otherworldly threats that stalked the darkness.

In 2016, everything changed. The city of Mauston, Wisconsin was destroyed in a massive battle between angels, demons, monsters, and magicians. Humanity has become aware that the supernatural is real and deadly. Footage and photos emerged from the Mauston Massacre as the victims shared their nightmarish experience on social media in real time. Live video from a mobile device showed demons fighting in city streets. Dozens of people posted photos of animate corpses shredding the flesh of the living, only to be struck down by magical bolts of energy from unseen saviors. Even elves and werewolves were depicted among the carnage, engaged in pitched battle for the fate of the rural Wisconsin town. When the dust settled, hundreds were dead, the city of Mauston was in ruins, and the supernatural was revealed for all to see.

Accounts of strange occurrences began flooding the internet and television news outlets in the wake of the Mauston Massacre. At first, the U.S. government tried to cover up the truth. Official press releases from government agencies described the Mauston Massacre as a terrorist attack. Evidence of the incident was discredited as alleged forgeries and whacko conspiracy theories. Despite the overwhelming evidence, about half of the population bought the official stories, blowing off the supernatural as “fake news.” The rest have been trying to cope with a reality that feels increasingly less “real” in the intervening months. As more stories of monster attacks, divine visitations, and urban legends make their way into the media, the divide between those who reject the supernatural and those who accept their new, terrifying reality grows deeper.

## TONIGHT AND EVERYTHING AFTER

Your adventures in the world of *Contagion* begin in these pages. The *Contagion Savage Adventures JumpStart* is designed to give you a small taste of what is possible in this dark world of modern horror and urban fantasy. With this booklet and the *Savage Worlds* core rules you can jump right in to telling your own stories in the world of *Contagion*!

This JumpStart focuses on playing mundane humans who have only caught the barest glimpse of the supernatural, likely through media exposure. Additional supernatural races, Arcane Backgrounds, and Powers are introduced in the *Contagion Savage Adventures* book.

# CHAPTER TWO:

# RULES

To reflect the feel of modern horror and urban fantasy, games set in the world of *Contagion* use the following rules permutations.

## CHARACTER CREATION

Character Creation in *Contagion* follows the basic process described in *Savage Worlds* with a few alterations.

### CONCEPT

The world of *Contagion* supports a wide variety of character concepts and archetypes. Any character you can imagine existing in the real world is a valid concept for a *Contagion* character. You can play a mail carrier, a factory worker, a barista, a soldier, or a scholar. You can come from any walk of life and have access to a broad array of skills and experiences. Humanity is nothing if not diverse.

### RACE

This Jumpstart keeps the focus on humanity for the sake of brevity and to get you telling stories in the world of *Contagion* as quickly as possible. The *Contagion Savage Adventures* book offers a far wider range of archetypes and options including over a dozen playable races.

### HINDRANCES

*Contagion* utilizes Hindrances as described in the *Savage Worlds* core rules. Several races in *Contagion* have unique or modified Hindrances, which are detailed in *Contagion Savage Adventures*. Certain Hindrances

presented in the *Savage Worlds* core rules have additional effects in *Contagion*, as detailed below.

#### ANEMIC

A character with Anemic provides less nourishment to vampires who attempt to feed on him. While the Anemic character still loses the normal amount of Contagion Points when targeted by Blood Drain, the vampire attacking him only receives half the Contagion Points drained.

#### DOUBTING THOMAS

Doubting Thomas is considered a Major Hindrance in *Contagion*. This Hindrance may only be taken by human characters, or by dhampir, half-elves, or half-orcs raised in human communities. Members of any other race that refuse to accept the existence of the supernatural are not Doubting Thomases and should instead take the Delusional (Major) Hindrance.

### NEW HINDRANCES

In addition to the Hindrances offered in the *Savage Worlds* core rules, the following Hindrances are available to characters in *Contagion*. Additional new Hindrances can be found in *Contagion Savage Adventures*.

#### DESTITUTE (MAJOR)

The character is utterly destitute, beginning the game with only \$50 in starting gear, no home and no income. The character lives on the streets and must beg, borrow, or steal to acquire food and shelter to say nothing of gear. Also, due to being homeless, finding regular



gainful employment is exceedingly difficult for such a character, as they have no reliable place to engage in personal hygiene and getting clean clothes is an uphill battle. If the character ever gets a regular job and a place to live, this Hindrance must be bought off by sacrificing an Advance.

### POSSESSION SENSITIVE (MINOR)

Due to an intense synchronicity with the spiritual realm, a strong desire to make otherworldly contact, or an extremely open mind, your character is very susceptible to ghostly possession.

Ghosts and spirits easily possess your character. When making a Spirit roll to resist ghostly possession your character receives a -2 penalty to the roll. On the bright side, your character is immediately aware of a ghost or spirit's presence at the moment a possession attempt is made. This awareness requires no roll and is automatic.

*Special Note:* You may not gain the Possession Resistant or Possession Immune Edges, if at any time your character receives those Edges, you must buy off the Hindrance by sacrificing an Advance.

## TRAITS

*Contagion* utilizes the method described in the *Savage Worlds* core rules for determining Attributes and Skills, subject to the More Skill Points Setting Rule. In addition to the standard Derived Traits of Pace, Parry, and Toughness, *Contagion* introduces a new Derived Trait, detailed below.

### CONTAGION POINTS

Contagion Points represent the metaphysical anima that makes up existence. Generated by sentient souls, and coveted by celestial beings, this energy binds the cosmos into a coherent whole. Magic manipulates Contagion energy, bending the laws of the universe to the spellcaster's will. When celestial beings reshape the world in their own image, they do so through the manipulation of this energy. Though mystical in nature, Contagion energy also manifests itself in mundane life in a number of ways.

When an athlete pushes that extra bit at the end of a race, he calls upon his Contagion. When a mother rips the door off a car to rescue a trapped child, she draws upon this energy. When a dying man refuses to release his tenuous hold on life, his connection to the universe keeps him strong. Though only the most knowledgeable scholars of theology and powerful celestial beings truly understand the full workings of Contagion, humans draw on this force every day. In the game, this special trait is measured by Contagion Points.



Contagion Points provide characters with the means to affect game play in significant ways. A character always has a limited amount of Contagion Points, and while the character slowly replenishes this supply as time passes, the character must use them wisely. It is possible for a character to deplete his reserves of Contagion Points, essentially weakening his connection to creation, and lessening his ability to enforce his free will upon the universe.

A character can spend 1 Contagion Point to do one of the following things:

- Alter a single Trait test.
- Use a racial feature or Edge during your turn for which the expenditure of 1 Contagion Point is required.
- Shrug off the effects of being Shaken for one round. Unlike spending a Benny, this expenditure does not completely negate the effects of being Shaken. A character that expends a Contagion Point to shrug off being Shaken acts normally for a single round, at which point he becomes Shaken again until making a successful Spirit roll or spending a Benny.
- Ignore wound penalties for one round.
- Make a Soak Roll, as if a Benny had been expended.
- Stave off Bleeding Out for one round.
- Stave off Fatigue: the character may expend 1 Contagion Point to ignore the effects of being Fatigued for one round. If the character begins the



round Exhausted, he may expend 1 Contagion Point to overcome being Exhausted, instead suffering penalties for that round as if he were Fatigued. A character who is rendered Incapacitated can expend 1 Contagion Point to act as if he were Exhausted, but **ONLY** on the round after he is rendered Incapacitated.

- Double the damage result (following any successful melee attack) of one armed or unarmed melee attack against any non-human.

When a character spends 1 Contagion Point to alter a Trait test, add 1d10 to the roll result to help meet or exceed the target number. A character can declare the use of 1 Contagion Point to alter a Trait test after the roll is made—but only before the Game Master reveals the result of that roll (whether the Trait test succeeded or failed). A character cannot use a Contagion Point on a skill check or ability check after using a Benny to reroll. A character that expends a Contagion Point to alter a Trait test also cannot subsequently spend a Benny to reroll the Trait test. One method or the other must be chosen to affect the roll.



When a character spends 1 Contagion Point to use a racial feature or Edge, he gains the benefit of the feature but doesn't roll an additional d10. In this case, the Contagion Point is not a bonus to a Trait test.

A character can only spend Contagion Points on one specific use per round. If a character spends a point to use a racial feature, he can't spend another one in the same round to improve a Trait test, and vice versa. If a racial feature or Edge requires the expenditure of multiple Contagion Points, the character may spend the required points in one round but may make no additional Contagion Point expenditures in that round. A character may never spend more than one Contagion Point per round to improve a Trait test.

For reasons unknown most Hellspawn are sensitive to certain Contagion expenditures. If a character spends one Contagion for any reason besides altering a Trait test or using an Edge or racial feature, the expenditure attracts the attention of Hellspawn. All Hellspawn within 1 mile of the person spending Contagion Points become aware that something unusual is going on and are immediately aware of the direction of the source. This will not compel the Hellspawn to attack outright, but many Hellspawn need little encouragement to engage in violence. Any Hellspawn trying to track the source of Contagion expenditure receive a +2 bonus to Notice checks to find the responsible party.

A character's starting Contagion Points are determined by adding the die types for each of the character's Attributes. For stats such as d12+1, include the fixed modifier in the total. The total score represents the character's starting Contagion Points score as well as the character's maximum number of Contagion Points. If a character's Attributes are raised, their maximum Contagion Points score increases accordingly.

While characters of every race can spend Contagion Points in essentially the same ways, regaining spent Contagion Points is an entirely different matter. The mechanisms by which characters of other races regain spent Contagion Points are detailed in *Contagion Savage Adventures*.



## SETTING RULES

The world of *Contagion* uses the Dynamic Backlash, Gritty Damage, and More Skill Points Setting Rules as described in *Savage Worlds*. In addition to these Setting Rules, the world of *Contagion* uses the following new Setting Rule.

### UNEVEN PLAYING FIELD

The world of *Contagion* is not always a fair or just place. Certain races, monsters, and environments utilize unique rules that can grant overwhelming advantages (or drawbacks) in certain circumstances. For example, a particular ghostly entity may become much more potent on the anniversary of its death, or a specific demon might gain access to certain special abilities if a ritual of supplication or sacrifice has been performed in its name in the past 24 hours. The Uneven Playing Field Setting Rule allows for these special cases. When a creature, item, or location is affected by this Setting Rule, the effects of any benefits or drawbacks will be listed in the affected creature, item, or location's description.

In some cases, a species of monster or type of location will include suggestions for applying an Uneven Playing Field. In these instances, the base creature or location will not be affected by the Uneven Playing Field, but the Game Master may choose to apply one or more of the Uneven Playing Field suggestions to a specific appearance or instance of that creature or location within the game.

### EDGES

The Edges described in the *Savage Worlds* core rules are available to characters in *Contagion*. *Contagion Savage Adventures* introduces a host of additional Edges, a few of which are included below.

#### HEAR PURGATORY

**REQUIREMENTS:** Novice, Smarts d8

Characters with this Edge tend to be a bit edgy and distracted. For some unknown reason, your character is blessed (or cursed) with the ability to hear the restless spirits that walk in the void between worlds.

Your character can hear creatures in Purgatory with no penalty. Ghostly invisibility does not apply to your character. Powers and abilities that confer invisibility to the user are unaffected, unless those abilities grant invisibility by virtue of placing the recipient in Purgatory.

#### POSSESSION IMMUNE

**REQUIREMENTS:** Seasoned, Possession Resistant

Only the strongest willed or most stoic characters can develop this Edge. At this point, ghosts or spirits cannot possess your character. You are immune to possession and gain a +2 to any roll made to resist mind control.

#### POSSESSION RESISTANT

**REQUIREMENTS:** Novice, Spirit d6

Perhaps your character is strong willed. Perhaps they are a non-believer, refusing to accept the possibility of life after death. Perhaps they are just too damn stubborn to relinquish control of their body to any other entity. Regardless, spirits attempting to possess the character find it exceptionally difficult to control them.

The character receives a +4 bonus to resist possession attempts.

#### SEE PURGATORY

**REQUIREMENTS:** Novice, Smarts d8

Perhaps your character has had a near death experience, grew up in a haunted house, or is extremely depressed. For whatever reason, the character can see ghosts and other incorporeal entities.

Your character can see creatures in Purgatory with no penalty. Ghostly invisibility does not apply to your character. Spells and abilities that confer invisibility to the user are unaffected, unless those abilities grant invisibility by virtue of placing the recipient in Purgatory.

#### SHIVERS

**REQUIREMENTS:** Novice, Smarts d6

While in the presence of ghosts, your character makes a Notice check. Upon succeeding at this check your character receives a cold chill that doesn't seem to leave them as long as there is a ghost within a number of yards equal to their Smarts x2. If this check is failed, your character feels nothing out of the ordinary.

# CHAPTER THREE:

## ARCHETYPES

The following archetypes are a small sampling of potential characters for use in *Contagion Savage Adventures*. Players may select one of these archetypes to use as provided or use these as starting points and inspiration for creating their own characters. These archetypes can also be used as player characters or nonplayer characters in your *Contagion Savage Adventures* campaign. All of the archetypes presented in this chapter are human.

### CELEBRITY

In the age of social media, anyone can become a celebrity. Those who win the genetic lottery with good looks can earn a fortune as social media models. Some earn their celebrity through sharing a unique skill or commentary on social media. Others, particularly those born to wealth and privilege have learned to monetize the attention of the paparazzi, becoming famous simply for being famous.

Celebrity also covers those who earn their fame through old media outlets. Actors, musicians, pundits, scientists, and other experts who can combine their unique skills or knowledge with charisma and a savvy approach to engaging the media can all be considered celebrities.

Since the Mauston Massacre many self-proclaimed occult experts have risen to prominence as celebrities. Ghost hunters, psychics, occult scholars, and biblical scholars have all tapped into the public desire to know more about the terrible tragedy in Mauston and

the alarming upswing in paranormal activity across the globe. Those who crave the public eye and have a little bit of knowledge can rocket to fame with a little bit of luck and an Instagram account.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d4, Electronics d6, Fighting d4, Healing d4, Notice d6, Performance d6, Persuasion d8, Stealth d4, Taunt d6

**Contagion Points:** 30; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Cautious (Minor), Obligation (Major), Suspicious (Minor)

**Edges:** Attractive, Fame, Famous

**Gear:** Cellular phone, hiking boots.

### CREATIVE

Enthusiasm for the arts is the hallmark of the creative. Most creatives work in a medium of choice while dabbling in several other mediums, working with paints, photography, digital art, dance, and music. While most creatives create, some make their profession in curation and management of creative endeavors.

Others sometimes view the creative as flighty, irresponsible, or shiftless, but this is rarely the case. Most creatives tend to obsess about their work, working even when they are not actively manipulating their medium. Many creatives are constantly jotting down





notes, sketching, or simply taking mental inventory of influences around them.

Since the Mauston Massacre several creatives have become enamored with darker art. Supernatural themes are creeping into popular art across the globe. The occult has always inspired creatives, but the past several months have seen something of a Dark Renaissance across several art forms. Juxtaposed against this trend is a separate movement toward brighter, happier works that distract from the underlying horror that seems to be infecting the global culture.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d4, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Academics d6, Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d4, Electronics d6, Fighting d4, Hacking d6, Notice d6, Performance d8, Persuasion d8, Stealth d4

**Contagion Points:** 32; **Pace:** 6;

**Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Bad Eyes (Minor), Curious (Major)

**Edges:** Charismatic

**Gear:** Cellular phone, Handheld.

## ENTREPRENEUR

The entrepreneur has built (or is in the process of building) a business from the ground up. The entrepreneur shuns the idea of spending their life in toil for someone else's benefit. Instead, they claim control of their own fate, for good or ill. Some entrepreneurs get a leg up through connections, loans, and intangible support provided by friends, family, and investors. Others start with very little by way of resources, scraping together their business with nothing but ingenuity and grit.

Since the Mauston Massacre, there has been a boom in businesses working with occult and supernatural products and services. Psychics, scholars of the arcane, self-styled witches, and all manner of occultists have monetized their talents for ages, but those who treat the supernatural as a basis for a small business and concern themselves primarily with profit are entrepreneurs first.



**Attributes:** Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Athletics d4, Common Knowledge d8, Driving d4, Electronics d6, Hacking d8, Intimidation d4, Notice d8, Performance d6, Persuasion d8, Stealth d4

**Contagion Points:** 30; **Pace:** 6;

**Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Driven (Minor), Greedy (Minor), Obligation (Major)

**Edges:** Connections, Fame, Rich

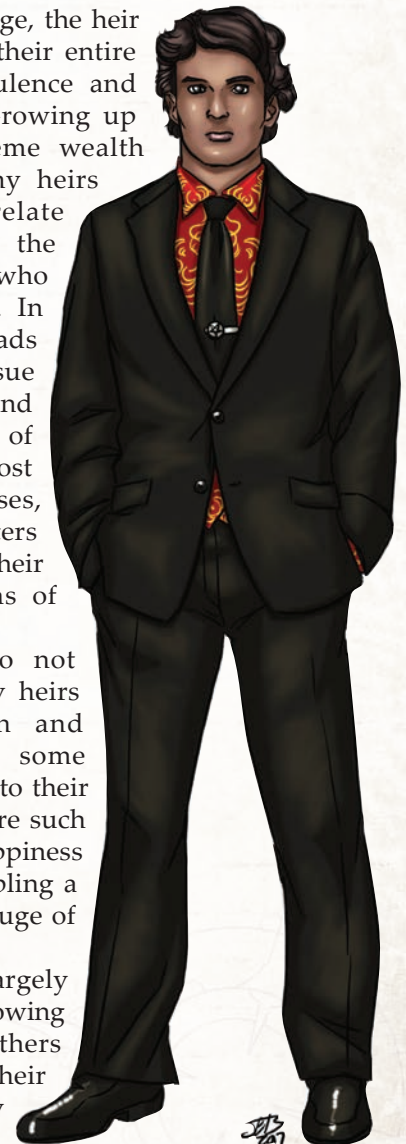
**Gear:** Cellphone, Handheld, Laptop, Pepper Spray (Range 1/2/4, Shots 5, victim must make Vigor roll at -2 or be Stunned)

## HEIR

Born to extreme wealth and privilege, the heir has spent their entire life in opulence and comfort. Growing up with extreme wealth leaves many heirs unable to relate to or understand the struggles of those who are less fortunate. In some cases, this leads the heirs to pursue charitable causes and activities, simply as a way of seeking connection with most other people. In other cases, the privilege of wealth fosters a selfishness that blinds the heir to the needs and problems of other people.

Wealth and comfort do not guarantee happiness. Many heirs struggle with depression and melancholy as they seek some sort of purpose or meaning to their luxurious lives. Others ignore such feelings, seeking to buy happiness and drown anything resembling a negative feeling under a deluge of exuberance.

Many heirs have been largely unaffected by the events following the Mauston Massacre. Others have discovered, much to their horror, that their family





fortunes are tied very closely to supernatural interests. This revelation leads to some heirs seeking the means to protect themselves from supernatural threats while others seek to expand their pacts and connections, gleefully allowing their greed to overcome their sense.

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

**Skills:** Academics d4, Athletics d6, Boating d4, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d4, Electronics d4, Fighting d6, Gambling d6, Hacking d4, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Persuasion d6, Riding d4, Shooting d4, Stealth d4

**Contagion Points:** 30; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

**Hindrances:** Greedy (Minor), Overconfident (Major), Ruthless (Minor)

**Edges:** Rich, Filthy Rich

**Gear:** Cellular phone, Handheld, Glock 9mm pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1).

## OUTCAST

The outcast has never quite fit in anywhere. Differences in musical tastes, political points of view, or beliefs regarding social norms have kept the outcast at arms length from most other people. On the rare occasion that an outcast forms a bond of friendship with someone, the outcast tends to be fiercely loyal, adopting something of a pack mentality about the few people they choose to associate with.

Most outcasts prefer being on their own and reject society as much as society rejects them. Still, humans are social creatures and like minded individuals tend to seek each other out for companionship and camaraderie. This fuels subcultures and communities that thrive outside the judgmental boundaries of mainstream culture.

Outcasts tend to be of two minds regarding the supernatural. Some seek out the things that should not be, sensing potential kinship with beings labeled as monsters and freaks. Others see the supernatural as being one more group of people trying to push some agenda and make everyone behave in a certain way. The latter tend to avoid contact with the supernatural whenever possible.

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

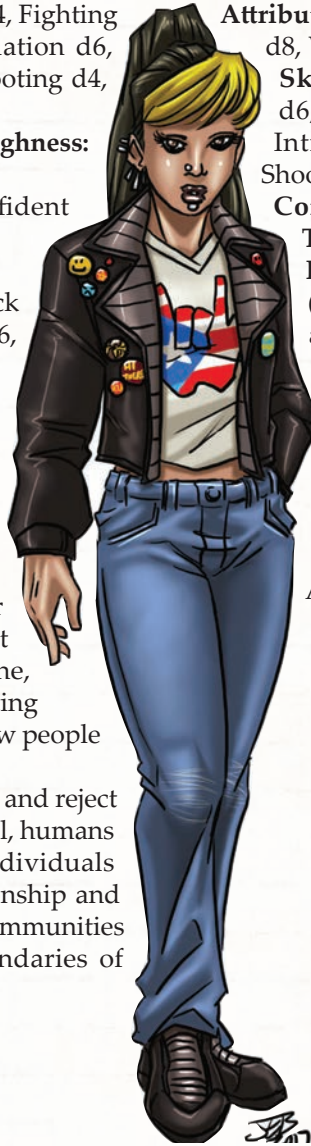
**Skills:** Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d6, Fighting d8, Gambling d4, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

**Contagion Points:** 34; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

**Hindrances:** Doubting Thomas (Major), Loyal (Minor), Quirk (Fashion Choices. The Outcast's appearance is such that outside their chosen subculture their appearance draws negative attention. Furthermore it makes the Outcast very memorable to anyone trying to describe the character or locate the character from a description)

**Edges:** Brave

**Gear:** Cellular phone, Leather jacket (+1 Armor), Survival knife (Str+d4)





# CHAPTER FOUR:

## BEFORE THE DEVIL KNOWS

*Before the Devil Knows* is a short introductory adventure intended to allow your group to take their first steps into the world of *Contagion*.

The peace of a weekend getaway is shattered by the presence of a restless ghost. It wants something from the party. Can they figure out how to destroy or appease this dead thing, or will it vent its lethal rage on the player characters?

### THE SETUP

Around mid-morning, the party arrives at a remote rental cabin in the woods for a weekend of relaxation and companionship. The cabin is deep enough in the woods that there is no cell phone signal and no internet. The closest sign of civilization is an unincorporated village called Shortsville about five miles away from the cabin. Although the player characters are supposed to be the first tenants of the season, an old car with an empty single axle trailer attached sits parked in the cabin's driveway when they arrive. There is no outward sign of a break in, though a successful Notice check made while investigating the front door reveals that it was, at some point, jimmied open and subsequently locked again. Once any character opens the door to the cabin a faint odor of rot and decay wafts forth from the structure.

As the party investigates the house, or if they ignore investigation to simply try to relax, they begin noting strange occurrences. Odd sounds and moans emanate from the cellar. Creaking noises come from unoccupied rooms. If the characters use the generator attached to the outside of the cabin, the electric lights flicker. These occurrences are spooky and unsettling, but nothing

harmful or alarming unless any member of the party attempts to leave the cabin grounds or the sun sets.

### INVESTIGATION

If the characters decide to search the grounds allow them to make Notice checks to discover the following information:

- The odor seems to emanate from the locked trap door that leads to the basement. The door is locked from the inside and must be broken open. The trap door is a light door and has a Toughness of 8. See Breaking Things in the *Savage Worlds* core rules for details on breaking an object.
- A notebook sits open on the table in the cabin's common room. A number of cryptic entries are jotted down in messy handwriting. The notes describe a growing sense of paranoia in the author. There are references to being followed and hunted as well as some mention of weakness and fatigue. The writer also speaks of an urgent need to "find a way out" of something, and the last few entries indicate progress being made on "my little escape hatch." Several strange symbols are scrawled in the margins of the notebook. Characters succeeding on an Occult check with a -4 penalty will recognize the symbols as being obscure demonology glyphs originating in late 15th Century Catholic heresies. Their purpose is supposedly to protect an area from demonic incursion.
- The car outside is locked. It is an old jalopy with the most rudimentary of door locks. Characters can make a Thievery check to attempt to jimmy the lock, using a wire hanger or other improvised Slim Jim



if necessary. The car is a mess with discarded fast food containers and empty soda cans and bottles. The paperwork in the glove compartment reveals the vehicle is registered to a woman named Stacy Tudor from Poughkeepsie, New York.

- Outside of the cabin there are a number of strange symbols carved into the trunks of nearby trees. These symbols match the symbols scrawled in the margins of Stacy's Notebook.

If the party attempts to leave the grounds, the ghost disables their vehicle by snapping the spark plug wires followed by the fuel line. If the group attempts to destroy any of the symbols on the trees the ghost attacks violently, otherwise her actions are more of a nuisance than a direct danger.

## THE NIGHT

Once the sun goes down, if the party has not yet ventured into the basement, the ghost begins violently rattling the trap door in the floor. After a minute or so, the lock snaps and the ghost stops taking any action other than to keep the party in the cabin.

When the party descends to the cellar, they discover a collection of bizarre occult artifacts and trappings. Several strange books line the shelves, there are strange altars adorned with animal bones and marked with bloody sigils. The stench of death is more powerful here, originating from a room on the eastern end of the cellar.

If the party tries to leave the cellar without entering the east room, the ghost slams the trap door shut, trapping the characters in the cellar. The door to the east slowly creaks open and a fresh wave of the scent of death hits the characters. A disembodied whisper speaks, saying: "Finish."

In the eastern room, the party discovers the body of Stacy Tudor lying dead on the ground next to a desk on the north end of the room. On the south side of the room, near the door, is another altar with several ingredients spread out before it. Once in the room the voice whispers again, this time saying, "finish the ritual."

## THE RITUAL

A successful Notice check reveals an open notebook on the ground next to the body. This notebook has plain text instructions for a ritual that takes about one hour to complete. Only one character may perform the ritual, which requires a successful Occult test. If the player chooses, they may instead roll Performance with a -2 penalty. The rest of the party may offer Support as detailed in the *Savage Worlds* core rules. Players who assign their characters to support the main ritualist are encouraged to describe how they intend to help. The Game Master may feel free to add additional bonuses

for especially interesting or flavorful action descriptions at this time.

## THE END

If the ritual succeeds, a light blue glow permeates the room and the outline of a humanoid form appears for a brief moment before dissipating into nothingness. At this point all supernatural activity stops. The characters have won the day and freed the ghost of Stacy Tudor. If the initial roll fails, Tudor manifests in all her hideous, ghostly glory. Have all characters present make a Fear check as described in Stacy's statistics. Stacy then demands the characters try again. At this point, Stacy uses her formidable intimidation as Support, to help motivate the ritualist to succeed.

If the ritual fails a second time, Stacy becomes homicidally aggravated. She begins lashing out with lethal attacks against any living thing in the cabin. If the characters hope to survive, they will have to run away and make it out of the warded area into the forest, or devise some brilliant way to dispatch the ghost.

If the characters survived, they are now experienced with the supernatural. They may gain an Advance.

## GHOST

Stacy Tudor was a monster hunter. For over three decades she chased the supernatural from coast to coast, fighting to protect people from things that went bump in the night. Early on in her career, Stacy wound up making a bargain with a demon to help catch a particularly nasty Skin Feaster. At the time, the deal made sense. For several years, Stacy simply ignored it. But shortly after her 60th birthday, a routine physical revealed a terminal illness. Stacy's deal rushed to the front of her mind as she faced the inevitability of her own death, not at the hands of monsters and fiends, but betrayed by her own aging body.

Determined to outwit the devil, Stacy discovered a ritual that would allow her to shuffle loose the mortal coil without alerting the demon that held the contract for her soul. Stacy reasoned that any delay might give her a chance to make her way to a safe place in the afterlife and avoid the contract. It was a slim chance, but anything was better than no chance.

Knowing that her time was short, Stacy made her way to a remote cabin where she once owned part of a time share. She knew that no one would be renting the cabin for a few weeks, so she prepared the area for her ritual and made her final peace with her ending life.

Unfortunately, Stacy's body wasn't going to let her off the hook that easily. While double checking her ritual notes, Stacy suffered a heart attack and died. Now her soul waits, trapped in the cabin, hoping for a safe way out. Due to the wards set up around the cabin, Stacy is



presently safe from her demonic pursuer so long as she does not leave the warded area.

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

**Skills:** Athletics d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d12, Notice d12, Stealth d12, Taunt d10

**Contagion Points:** 34; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Mean

**Edges:** —

**Gear:** Thrown objects (Str+d4).

**Special Abilities:**

- **Ethereal:** Ghosts are invisible and immaterial at will and can only be harmed by magical attacks.
- **Fear (-2):** Ghosts cause Fear checks at -2 when they let themselves be seen.
- **Uneven Playing Field:** The ghost can manipulate a number of objects equal to its Strength per turn. This allows the ghost to open or close multiple doors or grapple and attack multiple foes using random objects within the cabin. The ghost cannot leave the immediate vicinity of the cabin until the ritual is properly completed.
- **Weakness (Salt Allergy):** Ghosts are unable to pass an unbroken line of salt. If a weapon is coated in salt and passes through the incorporeal entity, apply that weapon's damage normally. Any contact with salt causes the Ghost to become Shaken for the duration of the contact and one subsequent round.

**Note:** Ghosts in *Contagion* exist in a realm called Purgatory, which is a spiritual reflection of the physical world. While Purgatory is detailed in full in *Contagion Savage Adventures*, for the purposes of this JumpStart you need only know that any character possessing an Edge that allows them to perceive or affect Purgatory can therefore perceive or affect ghosts.

