

STEAMPOWER PUBLISHING



# DEAD OF NIGHT

SECOND EDITION

PREVIEW



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CARLOS HAGAN PRESENTS A FILM BY NICOL WILSON WRITTEN BY JETZ BARNEKOW BASED ON THE NOVEL BY LYNDON PATTERSON SCREENPLAY BY STEVEN FERNE  
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IN THE FINAL BATTLE OF  
GOOD VERSUS EVIL...

...GOOD LOST

# U N H A L L O W E D



## THE VENGEFUL DEAD

Everything you need to know about the Vengeful Dead is expressed in its name - it is out for vengeance and it's, err, dead. This spirit's revenge kick might be misguided or misplaced, exacting its fury upon any nearby victim, or it might have a genuine grievance and is out to get its own back. Either way, it's not stopping until it's got its justice. But can justice be found before it's too late?

By its very nature, the Vengeful Dead is supernatural in origin, but there's more to it than that. It could be a formless ghost, lashing out at the living using the world around it as its weapon. It could be a far more tangible form, an undead monster that staggers implacably towards its prey. Whatever its form, the spirit is back for unfinished business in the mortal realm, driven to revenge of the murderous variety. This could be genuine revenge, as the ghost is denied death by the escape of its murderer, or it could merely be baseless vengeance, as the killer lashes out at the descendants of those that saw it hang.

The nature of the Vengeful Dead will inform the story. A subtle monster, such as a poltergeist or ghost, might lead to a more evenly paced psychological horror or ghost story, perhaps more akin to a supernatural mystery than outright horror. Equally, as many a J-Horror has proven, such a monster can easily pitch the plot into the realm of the sinister, visceral and horrific. Either way, until the source of the perceived injustice can be found, such as the killer brought to justice or the victim's remains found and buried, there can be no defeating this foe. A more tangible threat, such as a murderous corpse returned from the grave, might have more in common with a slasher movie, with the monster seemingly unstoppable until the source of its power uncovered and destroyed - the one surviving piece of its corpse or the magical amulet that gives it strength.

Most ghost stories or haunted house movies fit the bill for the Vengeful Dead, such as *Poltergeist* or *the Haunting*. Similarly, many modern Japanese horror movies feature the Vengeful Dead, such as *Ringu*, *Dark Water* or *the Grudge*. *A Nightmare on Elm Street* presents a slightly different take on the monster, with Freddy Krueger the vengeful spirit out to slay the children of those who killed him. *I Know What You Did Last Summer* performs a similar trick, albeit in the land of the living rather than the dreams of the victims.

Survival Points: 3-4

Suggested Specialisations: Controller, Formidable,  
Implacable, No Escape.



# Ghost

A ghost is the restless spirit of a dead person, unable to pass on because of unfinished business with the living. The ghost is linked to the mortal realm by its unburied physical remains or by strong emotions, such as those of vengeance towards its unpunished killer. The targets of the ghost's vengeance might well be the source of its anguish, or they may be innocent victims who have gotten in the way. Their only chance at survival is to find out what stops the ghost from reaching its afterlife and putting it to rest.

Identify: 2	Obscure: 6	Secrets of the Grave: 8	
Persuade: 2	Dissuade: 4	Fright: 8	Possession: 5
Pursue: 5	Escape: 5		
Assault: 5	Protect: 3	Implacable: 9	

Survival Points: 4

**SECRETS OF THE GRAVE:** The dead have many secrets and they do not reveal them easily. This Specialisation can be used in place of Obscure to prevent another character from discovering the ghost's Vulnerability.

**FRIGHT:** The ghost can move objects about or appear as a spectre, terrifying the living and scaring them off.

**POSSESSION:** The ghost can attempt to possess the living for a short while, forcing another to do its bidding with a successful check.

**IMPLACABLE:** The ghost is insubstantial and physical attacks pass right through it. This Specialisation can be used to defend against physical attacks or to negate other circumstances that might cause the ghost harm. It can be triggered immediately after the ghost loses a Risk Check to negate the Survival Point loss, so long as the loss stemmed from physical damage.

**VULNERABILITY:** Dormancy (Mortal Remains) - If ghost's physical remains can be found, salted and burned, the ghost enters a state of dormancy. Whilst dormant the ghost is reduced to 1 Survival Point and may only take defensive actions. Dormancy does not count as resting for a scene. The ghost immediately regains its Survival Points plus an additional one should the remains be disturbed.



## BODY HORROR

Body horror is a genre where the horror derives from the body itself, specifically its uncontrollable degeneration, decay or mutation. Key films in the body horror genre include *the Fly*, *the Brood*, *Tetsuo: the Iron Man* and, more recently, *District 9*. The genre exacerbates a sense of loss of control over that fundamental centre of being - your own body. It has a lot in common with the psychological horror genre, except whereas in that genre it is the loss of sanity and mind that is at stake, in the body horror genre it is a loss of your own body.

Body horror can stem from all manner of places, from viruses and exposure to weird radiation all the way up to infestation by alien parasites. Likewise the transformation can manifest itself in different ways - almost all of them slow-burning - such as the slow decay of body parts or strange mutations to the replacement of the flesh bit by bit with metal or alien physiology. Sometimes the victim is unaware of the transformation, but more often than not it is painfully apparent to them, if not to anyone else.

In a body horror game, the loss of Survival Points represents the slow change of the body. With every Survival Point lost, something about the character changes. His fingernails might mutate into scalpels, his face begin to rot away or he might feel the alien growing inside him. The final loss of Survival Points might entail that the character has finally succumbed to the mutation, changing in mind as well as body into something else, or succumbing completely to the embrace of change.

Monsters in body horror games are often the instigators of change - scientists whose experiments have triggered the change in their victims, or aliens whose spawn is slowly growing inside unwitting hosts - or they might be past victims of mutation, whose minds and bodies have degraded so much that they are monsters themselves. Sometimes there are no monsters at all, but those which the players become.



# Symbiote

*Symbiote* is one of the more unpleasant - yet painfully stylish and darkly humorous - body horrors, following in the footsteps of the multitude of Spanish horror movies to appear in the late 00s. Ramone and Leanna Baharanda's movie centres around a pair of scientists sent to investigate a virus outbreak in a remote Spanish town. There they discover that the townsfolk are falling victim to the symbiote of the title, a horrible macrovirus that warps the victim's body and drives them insane before finally slaying them - all shown in hideous detail, of course. Although the film's poster shows the end result of the infection, the special effects showing the inside of the victim moments before death remain some of the more creative, yet gory, uses of CGI to date. The real twist in the tale was that there were two twists - both writers wrote their own endings (Ramone favoured a supernatural explanation, whereas Leanna's ending was firmly rooted in mad science), and both were filmed and released, to the frustration and delight of cinema-goers.

When running *Symbiote* as a game, pick a couple of the players to be the scientists. The rest of the players play the townsfolk. The monster in question - the symbiotic macrovirus - can be represented in a couple of different ways. It might be a Formless Horror, representing the virus' spread as a whole throughout the population, or it could be a Corrupter, twisting the virus' victims until they snap or die. The game is a slow-burner as the magnitude of the threat becomes apparent, so Tension should build up slowly.

One trick you can pull is to use tokens or beads as Survival Points, mixed in with a number of distinctly coloured tokens. When players gain a new Survival Point, get them to draw from the bag - a coloured token indicates that the victim has become infested. They can't spend these coloured tokens, and the more they have the more the virus spreads, driving them increasingly insane. Once all they have are coloured tokens, they snap, going on a psychopathic rampage before passing on the virus and dying. Messily.

**TENSION POINTS CIRCUMSTANCE:** Only spend when Tension hits at least 10, and then only on Identify and Escape Checks.

**INTENSITY:** Must spend at least 3 Tension whenever able to.

**STARTING TENSION:** 5.

**MOOD:** Darkly humorous, with plenty of horrific moments. Reward with bonus Survival Points for describing particularly gruesome scenes