

# THE HORROR WITHIN

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*The Horror Within* is an adventure for four or five players of 8th-level characters using the fifth edition of the world's greatest roleplaying game.

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## BACKGROUND

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- **Bertrand Gilliard** is a young, talented playwright sponsored by the Monveau Theater. The **Monveau** was once the most famous stage in the city, but over the last few decades, it's fallen into disfavor and disrepair.
- Bertrand's debut play, *The Threads of Fate*, was a dazzling success, propelling him to instant **fame**. Following that, he spent a year failing to find an idea for his next play.
- Bertrand took to wandering the ancient halls beneath the decrepit theater, hoping to stumble upon inspiration. There, he found a **tome** that held promises of cosmic insights.
- Bertrand devoured the tome's secrets until his mind snapped at the horrific knowledge within. The tome's true purpose was revealed to him — it was a **ritual** to pull an Old One into the Prime Material world.
- Inspired by madness, Bertrand wrote his next **play** in a week. It was a reenactment of the ritual to summon the Old One. *The Horror Within's* debut was a smashing success — and everyone who witnessed the Old One's summoning is now completely mad.

## SYNOPSIS

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- The adventure begins with the PCs meeting with the wife of a friend who attended the opening night of *The Horror Within* and went **mad**. The wife asks the group to uncover what happened and find if there's any way to reverse the NPC's insanity.
- The PCs go to the **theater** and explore it, finding hints at what happened. They may find several NPCs, including a missing investigator sent by the city watch. These encounter test PCs' **sanity**.
- The characters descend into the halls beneath the theater and encounter Bertrand and the troupe of actors, all driven insane. They're worshipping the **Old One**, Sh'golgg, a lesser entity of madness and devouring.
- The group must **defeat** Sh'golgg and its servants to end the maddening effects Sh'golgg has on its victims.

## A WORD TO THE GM

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This adventure is meant to be run at a glance with **minimal preparation** and a **natural delivery**. This required re-thinking the normal adventure presentation a bit. Here's what you'll find included:

- Each encounter contained on one page.
- Bulleted lists. **Bolded** keywords.
- Hyperlinks to monsters and rules online for quick reference.
- Printable cards for each monster and PC so you can run encounters using a card stack. A short video walkthrough of this method can be found **here**.
- Printable cards for special treasure handouts.
- Short room and area descriptions. No paragraphs of droning flavor text — set the scene naturally and embellish as desired.
- Briefly explained non-encounter rooms. Again, embellish as desired!
- GM maps and player-safe digital maps for use with virtual tabletops.
- A short video walkthrough of the adventure that can be found **here**.

## PACING/TRANSITIONS

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A dramatic question is presented with most scenes. Once that question has been answered, the tension of the scene is resolved. That's your cue to work toward the **transition** provided at the end the scene — even if that means summarizing the end of a clearly decided combat, or in the case of clever players, skipping combat altogether. Keep the game moving toward the next challenge!

Room descriptions that are usually long blocks of literary read-aloud text have been left short and informational in this adventure. Many Game Masters prefer to paraphrase read-aloud text and set the scene based on what tone and level of detail the group finds engaging. Anything listed before a **Development** section is safe to share however you prefer to do so.

## TEA AND TERROR

The adventure begins in a large city with a university. The characters sit in the book-filled parlor of Professor Hiroshi Leng's home. The professor is an esteemed occult expert (substitute a suitable NPC, if needed).

Professor Leng's wife, Olivia, offers each character tea and biscuits before breaking into tears. She tells them her husband went to the opening performance of *The Horror Within* three days ago at the Monveau Theater, but the man who came home that night was an unrecognizable shell.

*Ask the players how their characters know Professor Leng. Then, present some or all of the following adventure hooks:*

### APPEAL TO REWARD

Olivia is the university's chancellor and says she'll award the PCs honorary **professorships** if they find out what happened to her husband at the theater and whether he can be cured. The PCs would gain esteemed titles and unfettered access to the faculty-only books and artifacts in the the university's library.

### APPEAL TO HEROISM

Professor Leng is a critical resource in stopping nefarious **cult** activity in the city. Without his expertise and consultation with the city watch, depraved cults grow that much closer to enacting their sadistic plans. If the PCs help Professor Leng, the whole city benefits.

### APPEAL TO DISCOVERY

The professor is not the only victim from the Monveau Theater who needs help. Dozens of people in the audience at *The Horror Within*'s opening night went utterly mad. Some are still **missing**. The city watch is unsure what to do and has declared the theater a "forbidden zone" after one of their investigative teams went inside and never returned.

**Olivia Leng**, LG human **noble**

*"That man is not my Hiroshi. What happened to my poor husband?"*

- **Appearance.** Red-rimmed eyes from crying. Black and silver hair. Pearl necklace.
- **Does.** Pats her eyes with a handkerchief.
- **Secret.** Was once a member of a demonic cult. Professor Leng saved her from it.

### Sidebar: Sanity Points

- The maddening presence of the Old One in the city induces insanity. The PCs begin the adventure with a number of **sanity points** equal to their Wisdom scores.
- Throughout the adventure, horrifying events chip away at the characters' sanity points. Refer to *Appendix C: Sanity Points* for rules and the effects of losing sanity points.

## VISITING THE PROFESSOR

- Professor Leng's muffled **shouts** can be heard through the stone door to the cellar.
- Olivia says the damp cellar is the only room that mutes Hiroshi's screaming.
- Beyond the door, the professor is wrapped in a sheet. Leather belts bind his limbs. He sits in a corner, eyes distant, and shrieks and gibbers in a guttural **language**.

## DEVELOPMENT

- Hiroshi is insane and can't communicate by any means. Magic can't cure his madness.
- The language he speaks in is unrecognizable. If the PCs cast *comprehend languages*, they understand he's saying, "The writhing clot that blackens the stars, the inky tide that swallows the light!" over and over again. Any PC who hears this **phrase** in a language they speak loses 1 sanity point (limit once).

## TRANSITION

Once the group is ready to go to the Monveau Theater, go to *Closed Indefinitely*.

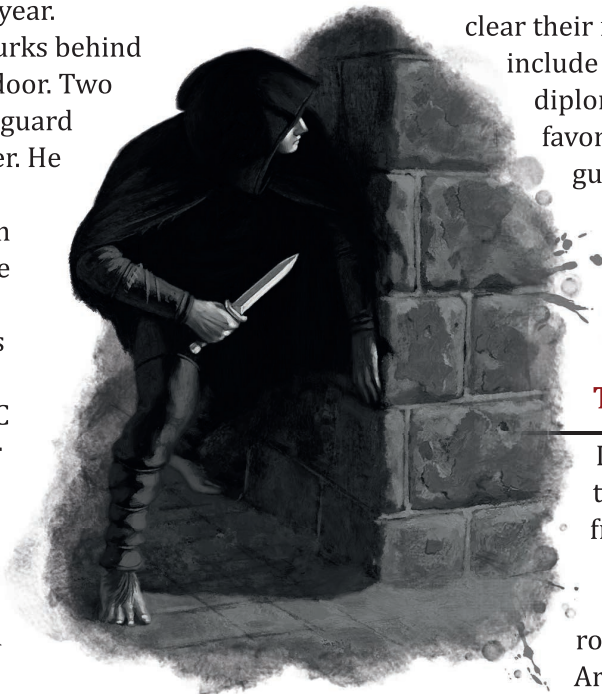
## CLOSED INDEFINITELY

### OUTSIDE THE MONVEAU THEATER

- Crumbling columns and gargoyles decorate the decaying facade of the two-story Monveau Theater. Iron bars cover the murky, half-moon windows.
- The **marquee** has been ripped down, but a lingering scrap says, "...penned by Bertrand Gilliard, rising star of the stage!"
- The front door is boarded shut. A **sign** says, "Closed indefinitely by order of the city watch. Trespassers arrested on sight."

### DEVELOPMENT

- PCs can break the boarded-up **door** open with a successful DC 18 Strength check or one minute of work with a prying implement.
- PCs can **climb** the theater's 40-foot high facade with successful DC 16 Strength (Athletics) checks. An unlocked trapdoor on the roof leads into one of the theater's boxes.
- PCs who are bards or who pass a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check recognize the name **Bertrand Gilliard**. He's the talented, young bard the Monveau Theater took on as its resident playwright last year.
- A madman named **Robalt** lurks behind a pile of rubble next to the door. Two hours ago, he strangled the guard stationed outside the theater. He now hides with the body.
- Robalt greets and chats with the PCs for a moment before introducing his "friend," **Garvin**, the dead guard. PCs who witness the gruesome reveal must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or lose 1 sanity point.
- If the PCs **attack** Robalt, he screams, "Help! They're trying to kill me! Help!" and flees. A nearby watch patrol arrives in one minute.



## DRAMATIC QUESTION

Can the PCs get inside the theater?

**Robalt**, CE human **noble**

*"Would you like to meet Garvin? I had to kill him, but he's not mad at me. Isn't that right, Garvin?"*

- **Appearance.** Fine silk clothes that are ragged and scuffed. A dented bowler hat.
- **Does.** Asks Garvin questions and laughs at his clever "replies."
- **Secret.** Was a tax collector before the Old One's nearby presence drove him mad.

### THE WATCH

- The watch **patrol** has one **veteran** and three **guards**. If they find the PCs outside the theater, they demand an explanation. They won't enter the theater for any reason.
- If the guards spot Garvin's **body**, they try to arrest the PCs on suspicion of murder.
- If the PCs caught Robalt, he proudly **admits** to killing Garvin. The guards take him away, telling the characters they'd better be gone by the time the patrol gets back.
  - Without Robalt, the PCs have to clear their names. Options could include using magic, diplomacy, or calling in a favor. Failing all else, the guards **release** the PCs when the truth comes out via a **spell**.

### TRANSITION

If the PCs enter the theater through the front door, go to Area 1 in *Curtains Rise*. If they enter via the roof, go to box 12 in Area 3 of *Curtains Rise*.

## CURTAINS RISE

### *Sidebar: Inside The Theater*

- Wall sconces enchanted with *continual flame* spells provide light inside the theater.
- The ceilings are 20 feet high and all doors are unlocked unless otherwise noted.

### AREA 1: ENTRY HALL

- Glowing chandeliers reflect in the polished floor of the entry hall. Marble statues of actors in dramatic poses line the walls.
- Two **staircases** lead up to the left and right.

### AREA 2: RIGHT BOXES

- A marble hall leads to a row of private boxes on the right balcony, each with a gilt number on the door denoting boxes 1-6.
- Box 6 at the end of the balcony has a plaque that says "**Monveau Family**" in ornate script.

### DEVELOPMENT

- The red velvet-lined boxes are 8 feet high inside and overlook the stage (Area 4).
- Inside each box, roll or choose one detail from the *Box Clues* table for the PCs to find.
- Inside box 6 is a **body** (see #4 from table).

### AREA 3: LEFT BOXES

- Golden sconces light the row of private boxes on the left balcony, each with a gilt number on the door denoting boxes 7-12.
- Box 12 at the end of the balcony has a plaque that says "**Playwright**" in flourished script.

### DEVELOPMENT

- The red velvet-lined boxes are 8 feet high inside and overlook the stage (Area 4).
- Inside each box, roll or choose one detail from the *Box Clues* table for the PCs to find.
- Inside box 12 is a **playbill** (see #8 from table). An unlocked **trapdoor** in the ceiling leads to the theater's roof.

## DRAMATIC QUESTION

Can the PCs find clues about what happened inside the theater?

### BOX CLUES

2D8	Detail
2	A gold ring with an emerald worth 80 gp.
3	A <i>potion of invisibility</i> hidden in a corner.
4	The body of a male half-elf who gouged his own eyes out. Succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom save or lose 1d4 sanity points.
5	A folding paper fan with a peacock on one side and the words "the writhing clot" written in blood on the other.
6	A half-empty bottle of absinthe.
7	A fine layer of white ash on everything.
8	A playbill outlining the three acts of the play: 1. The Drawing, 2. The Sacrifice, 3. The Summoning.
9	The body of a female human with a disturbing grin. Succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom save or lose 1d4 sanity points.
10	Viewing binoculars with cracked lenses.
11	A case of premium cigars worth 50 gp.
12	A silver locket with a small painting of Olivia Leng inside.
13	A white mask that covers half the face.
14	A severed finger bearing a signet ring.
15	A <i>brooch of shielding</i> under a seat.
16	A hideous symbol scratched on the wall that burns the mind. Succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom save or lose 1d4 sanity points.

### TRANSITION

If the PCs enter the auditorium, go to *Encore*.



# ENCORE

## AREA 4: AUDITORIUM AND STAGE

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- Rows of upholstered seats face the elevated **stage** and the shallow musician's pit beneath it. The velvet curtain is lowered.
- Two enormous chandeliers hang beside the stage from the 40-foot high ceiling. They illuminate a circle of gluey, black **symbols** scrawled on the stage's surface.
- Six lifeless **bodies** sit in the seats, screams of horror locked onto their faces.
- There are doors left and right of the stage.

## DEVELOPMENT

- PCs who examine the **bodies** and pass a DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check determine the victims died of heart attacks. Casting *Speak with Dead* on them results in wailing, gibbering corpses too infused with madness to answer questions.
- PCs proficient in Intelligence (Arcana) who read the **symbols** on the stage learn their general purpose: to summon beings from beyond the Outer Planes. PCs who read the symbols lose 1 sanity point.
- Three rounds after the PCs first enter Area 4, the air grows cold. Three **void spawn** crawl through the circle to attack.

## DRAMATIC QUESTION

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Can the PCs defeat the void spawn?

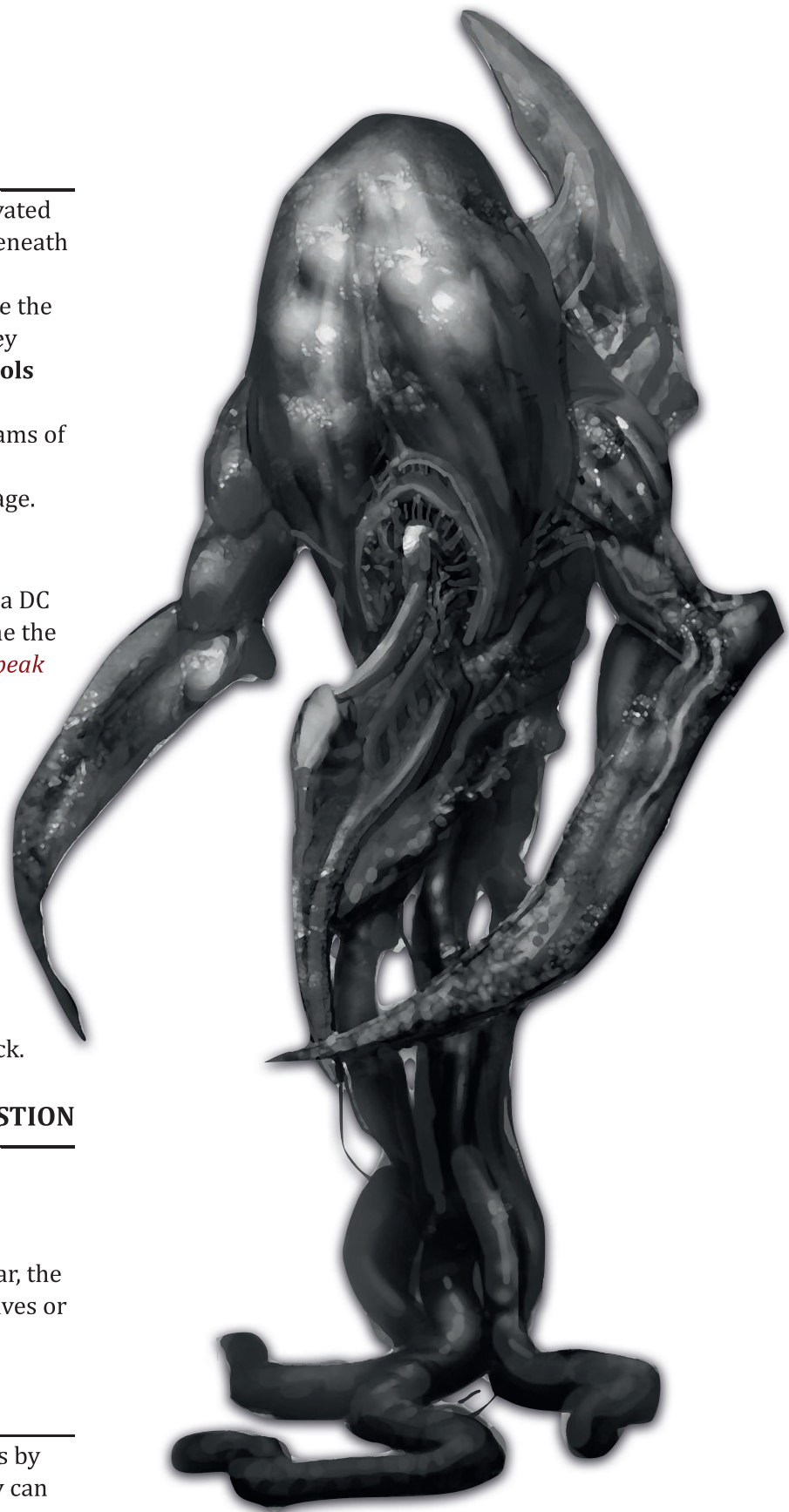
## COMBAT

- When the three **void spawn** first appear, the PCs must succeed on DC 15 Wisdom saves or lose 1d4 sanity points.

## TRANSITION

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If the PCs go through the curtain or doors by the stage, go to Area 5 in *Backstage*. They can also return to Areas 1-3 in *Curtains Rise*.



## BEHIND THE SCENES

### AREA 5: BACKSTAGE

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- Several doors line the dimly lit hall that wraps around behind the stage.

### AREA 6: PROP STORAGE

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- Furniture, painted scenery, and construction material fill the floor and shelves.
- A soft, disembodied **voice** hums tunelessly inside the room.

#### Treasure

A PC who passes a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check finds a bottle of *sovereign glue* on a shelf.

#### DEVELOPMENT

- A city watch detective named **Hildreth** hides in here. She hums to herself with her hands over her ears and eyes closed. PCs who look for the source of the sound find her.
- Hildreth is suffering from a form of **madness** where she can't perceive the exit from the room. The PCs have to convince her to go through a "wall" in order for her to leave.
- If the PCs treat Hildreth kindly and help her leave the room, she shares information with them. Go to *What Hildreth Knows*.

#### Hildreth Frond, LG half-orc **veteran**

*"We're trapped in here! There's no way out!"*

- *Appearance.* Grey cloak and brooch of a city investigator. Two silver-capped fangs.
- *Does.* Rocks back and forth and hums children's songs to herself.
- *Secret.* Wants to leave the city and start a small homestead and farm.

#### DRAMATIC QUESTION

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Will the PCs help Hildreth and learn any useful information from her?



#### WHAT HILDRETH KNOWS

- She came into the theater with two other **investigators**, Percival Winters and Rose Elkhorn. She hasn't seen them in two days.
- The theater troupe, lead by the playwright Bertrand Gilliard, **fled** backstage when the watch arrived.
- The watch suspects there's a labyrinth of **halls** beneath the building, but they don't know where the entrance lies.
- Hildreth was looking through the playwright's **office** when a burbling puddle of eyes and teeth slithered out of nowhere and attacked, forcing her to take refuge in the storage room.
- She examined the bodies in the theater, but they have no injuries — she isn't sure how they died.

### AREA 7: COSTUME STORAGE

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- Flowing dresses, monstrous masks, and a vast array of hats, coats, and garb adorn mannequins and hanging racks.

#### TRANSITION

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The PCs can move to Areas 8-10 in *Magnum Opus* or to Area 4 in *Encore*.



## MAGNUM OPUS

### AREA 8: DRESSING ROOM, STAGE RIGHT

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- Hanging costumes, mirrors, and a row of vanities mark this as a dressing room.
- A glistening trail of pinkish **sludge** weaves a looping trail over the floor.

#### DEVELOPMENT

- The **sludge** smells foul and was left by a **gibbering moulder** that crawled through the room a few hours ago. PCs can determine it was left by an unnatural creature by passing a DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check.

### AREA 9: PLAYWRIGHT'S OFFICE

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- A **desk** scattered with parchment, ink pots, and books sits in the back of the room.
- Books overflow the shelves and are stacked in precarious piles all over the floor.



#### DEVELOPMENT

- Bertrand's personal **notes** are on his desk. They outline his desperation to find a new idea for a play, his discovery of the tome in the halls beneath the theater, and his descent into madness while reading it. His final note says he completed his magnum opus, *The Horror Within*, and it will "free the minds" of all who see it.
- The symbol-etched **tome** Bertrand found in the tunnels is also on his desk. PCs proficient in Intelligence (Arcana) who examine it learn it describes a complex ritual to call forth a cosmic entity called **Sh'golgg, The Writhing Clot**. Each time anyone even glances through the tome, they must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or lose 1d4 sanity points.
- Characters who search the room find a **trapdoor** covered by a pile of books.

#### Treasure

The PCs can take *Bertrand's Tome*. See **The Tome** in the *Aftermath* section for its details.

### AREA 10: DRESSING ROOM, STAGE LEFT

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- The large mirror in this dressing room is covered in a web of cracks.

#### DEVELOPMENT

- PCs who look in the cracked **mirror** briefly see a horrifying, distorted version of themselves. They lose 1 sanity point.

#### DRAMATIC QUESTION

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Can the characters find the way into the tunnels beneath the theater?

#### TRANSITION

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- If the PCs descend through the trapdoor in Area 9, go to *Dreams and Phantoms*. They can also return to Areas 5-7 in *Behind The Scenes*.

# DREAMS AND PHANTOMS

## AREA 11: UNDERGROUND CATHEDRAL

- A crumbling network of **tunnels** winds beneath the theater. The ancient architecture suggest these are the remains of the city's first streets and buildings, buried under centuries of time.
- After an hour, the silent passageways converge upon a 60-foot high, subterranean **cathedral** hall. Dusty, stained-glass windows loom above stone columns and arches.
- At the head of the cathedral, a dozen cloaked figures with torches stand before a huge **knot** of utter blackness. They chant and throw themselves on the ground in worship.
- Two pink piles of **sludge** slurp across the floor. They have dozens of eyes and mouths, and they babble in a dissonant chorus.

### DEVELOPMENT

- When the PCs enter the cathedral, **Sh'golgg** **detects** them with its blindsight. **Bertrand**, one of the figures, turns with a flourish and invites them to worship Great Sh'golgg.
- The eleven other figures are the **cast** of *The Horror Within*.
- The two sludges are **gibbering mouters** — all that remain of Hildreth's companions.

**Bertrand Gilliard**, CE human **noble**

*"The horror lies within, don't you see? It's a dream, a phantom, purely in our minds!"*

- **Appearance.** Cloak that matches those of the play's cast. Wild eyes. Black goatee.
- **Does.** Gestures theatrically and speaks as though delivering a soliloquy.
- **Secret.** Has a new script hidden in his office that he hates but is a work of genius.

### DRAMATIC QUESTION

Can the characters defeat Sh'golgg?

### COMBAT

- The two **gibbering mouters** try to intercept PCs moving toward Sh'golgg. They use their Aberrant Ground trait to hamper movement.
- **Sh'golgg** begins by using Liquify as a Bonus action and a Legendary action to make two more gibbering mouters out of its servants, starting with Bertrand.
- The cast covers on the ground. Each of them uses **commoner** statistics.
- If Sh'golgg dies, the gibbering mouters die.

### TRANSITION

Once the combat is decided, go to *Aftermath*.



## AFTERMATH

### OPENING NIGHT ATTENDEES

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- As Sh'golgg's influence fades, everyone who was driven mad by seeing *The Horror Within* **recovers** and returns to their previous mental state.
- The PCs recover from all forms of insanity except **indefinite madness**, which can only be removed by a *greater restoration* spell.
- Professor Leng regains his senses. His wife is elated and makes good on her promise to grant the PCs honorary **professorships**.

### THE TOME

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- *Bertrand's Tome* is available to the PCs to take. It's an evil **artifact** that functions as a *tome of clear thought*. However, reading the whole tome causes the reader to gain one form of indefinite madness that can't be cured by any means short of a *wish* spell.
- The tome also contains a complex **ritual** to summon abominations who crawl through the outer reaches of reality. The exact nature of the ritual is up to the GM to define.

### THE CITY WATCH

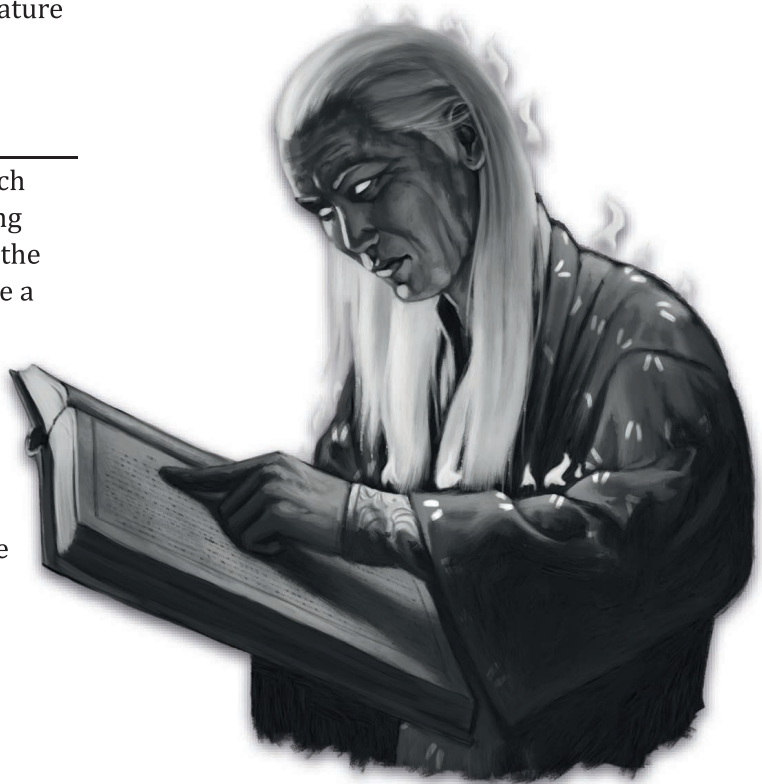
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- If the PCs helped **Hildreth**, the city watch drops any charges against them resulting from the adventure. They also expunge the records of one past crime if the PCs have a history with the watch.
- **Robalt**, who was a member of the audience in *The Horror Within*, turns himself into the city watch if he hasn't already been arrested. He's eventually exonerated when the circumstances of the play come to light, but he carries the guilt of his actions forever and feels indebted to the characters.

### FUTURE ADVENTURE HOOKS

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- Any PCs who were afflicted with indefinite **madness** have new (and sometimes severe) flaws. These PCs may seek out healing from a source that can cast *greater restoration*, or they might embrace their new flaws.
- The PCs now have access to valuable artifacts and information held in the university's faculty-only section. What lost and forgotten **secrets** might they uncover?
- Sh'golgg was a lesser Old One, but its destruction didn't go unnoticed. The PCs now appear in the mad **dreams** of the Slumbering Elders, and monstrosities that prowl the stars may begin looking for them...
- Professor Leng knows the characters have seen true horrors and survived. When a new **cult** begins to make dangerous moves in the city's underbelly, he turns to the PCs for help.
- If the PCs still have *Bertrand's Tome*, evil factions may learn about it and begin hunting them. The PCs might decide to destroy the tome, but it's no simple matter — it contains a tiny shard of Sh'golgg's immortal essence...

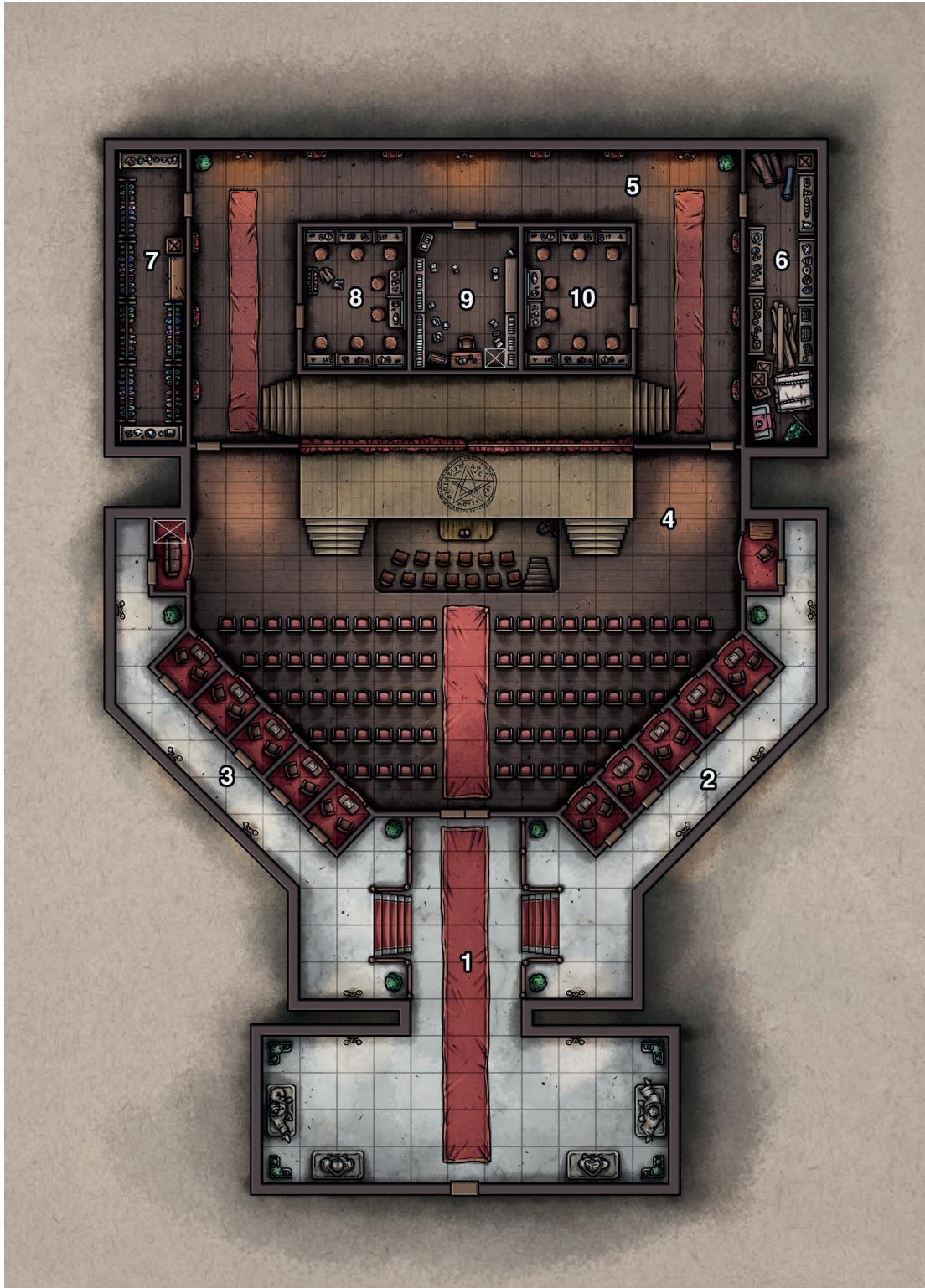




# APPENDIX A: MAPS

## MONVEAU THEATER

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# UNDERGROUND CATHEDRAL

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## APPENDIX B: NEW MONSTERS

### Void Spawn

Four scythe-like appendages jut from a mottled, purple bulb the size of an ogre. The creature rolls forward on squirming tentacle legs, drawing its arms back to slash you into pulp.

**Space Crawler.** Void spawn drift between the cold rocks of deep space, hunting for mineral deposits or lesser beings to siphon for nutrients. Their four scythe-like appendages and powerful tentacles help them cling to spinning asteroids while ingesting any sustenance they can find.

**Alien Intelligence.** Void spawn are surprisingly intelligent and opportunistic. They sometimes ally with other void spawn of equal strength and size — that way none of them can easily devour each other.

### VOID SPAWN

*Large aberration, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 85 (10d10 + 30)

**Speed** 40 ft., fly 60 ft.

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STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

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**Damage Resistances** cold, fire, lightning

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Alien Form.** Void spawn do not need to breathe.

### ACTIONS

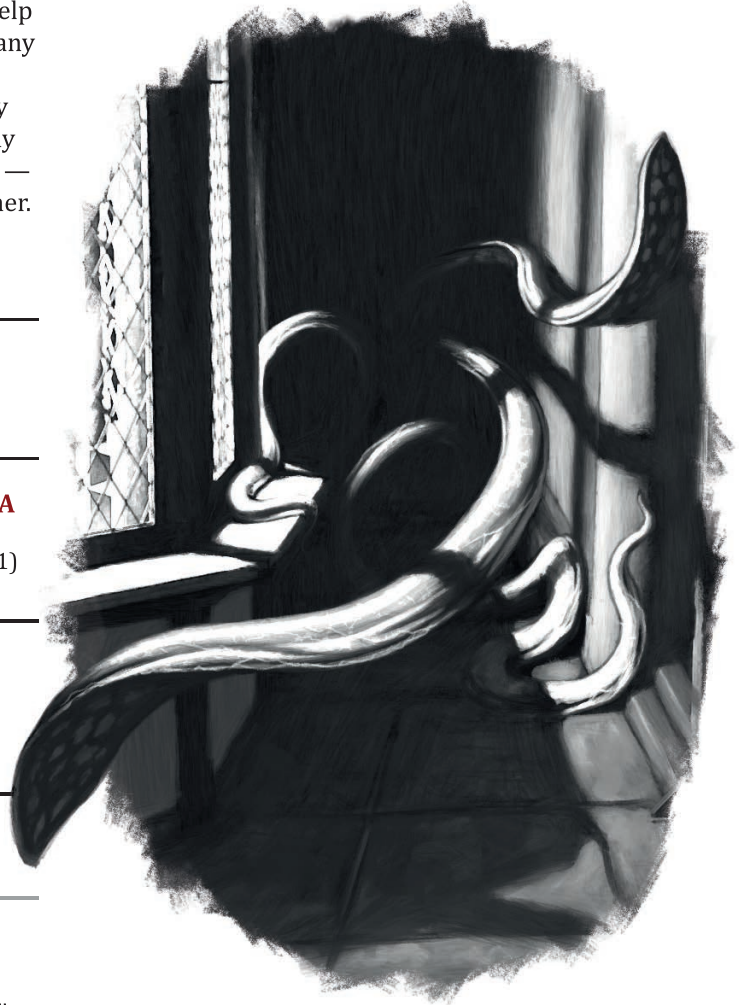
**Multiattack.** The void spawn makes two Arm Scythe attacks.

**Arm Scythe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) slashing damage.

**Tentacles.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d10 + 3) bludgeoning damage. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or become paralyzed until the end of its next turn.

### REACTIONS

**Reflexive Cut.** The first time an attack reduces a void spawn to 39 or fewer hit points, it may make one Arm Scythe attack.



## Sh'golgg, The Writhing Clot

A floating mass of black, churning sludge seems to absorb all light into its inky center. The clot shivers, compresses, and then bursts into a nest of whipping tendrils glowing with stolen starlight.

**Unfathomable.** Sh'golgg is horrifying to behold and inscrutable in its will. Its millennia-long plots are not for mortal minds to comprehend. Still, Sh'golgg is intelligent enough to court and harness other intelligent beings, breaking their minds enough to guarantee their obedience. Once Sh'golgg is done using its worshippers for its immediate goals, it coverts them into its hideous children — gibbering puddles of eyes and mouths that babble litanies to Sh'golgg while devouring its enemies.

**Stardrinker.** Sh'golgg absorbs power from sources of light, blackening the night sky as it drifts across the outer realms. Its goal is to consume all furnaces of creation in the universe so that the cosmos returns to its inert, darkened state when the Old Ones first dreamed. Sh'golgg will have ascended to the court of the Slumbering Elders then and will shape the universe anew in its image.

## SH'GOLGG, THE WRITHING CLOT

*Huge aberration, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 147 (14d12 + 56)

**Speed** 40 ft., fly 80 ft. (hover)

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STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)

---

**Saving Throws** Con +8

**Skills** Arcana +9, Persuasion +8

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Damage Immunities** cold, fire, lightning, poison, psychic

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

**Senses** blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 11 (7,200 XP)

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**Immortal Form.** Sh'golgg does not need to breathe, eat, drink, or sleep.

**Maddening Presence.** When a creature sees Sh'golgg, it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or lose 1d6 sanity points. Whether the creature succeeds or fails, it becomes immune to this ability for 24 hours.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If Sh'golgg fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

### ACTIONS

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**Multiattack.** Sh'golgg makes one Void Tendril attack and one Starblast attack.

**Void Tendril.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) cold damage.

**Starblast.** *Ranged Spell Attack:* +8 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (5d6) radiant damage. The target must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or be blinded until the end of its next turn.

**Liquify.** As a Bonus action, Sh'golgg targets one of its worshippers it can see within 120 feet of it that has a CR of 2 or lower and is not a gibbering moulder. The creature explodes, dying instantly. The ichor reforms into a gibbering moulder that acts on Sh'golgg's turn. Sh'golgg can have up to 5 gibbering moulthers created in this way at any one time and can replace those that die.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Sh'golgg can take 3 Legendary actions, choosing from among the options below. Only one Legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Sh'golgg regains spent Legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Absorb Light.** All sources of light both magical and mundane within a 60 foot radius of Sh'golgg are extinguished. Sh'golgg's next Starblast attack does an additional 7 (2d6) radiant damage. Sh'golgg can use this ability even if there is no light to absorb — it absorbs ambient heat, instead.

**Void Tendril.** Sh'golgg makes one Void Tendril attack.

**Liquify (Costs 2 Actions).** Sh'golgg uses Liquify as a Legendary action instead of a Bonus action.

## APPENDIX C: SANITY POINTS

### LOSING SANITY POINTS

- PCs begin with a number of sanity points equal to their **Wisdom** scores (they can never have more than their Wisdom scores).
- Any time a PC sees something horrific or supernatural, they must make a DC 15 Wisdom **saving throw**. On a success, nothing happens. On a failure, they lose 1d4 sanity points. The GM determines whether something triggers a saving throw.
- Different effects happen to PCs based on the number of sanity points they've **lost** from their total. These effects are cumulative. See the *Effects of Sanity Loss* table.
- Some incidents cause an automatic loss of sanity points without a saving throw.
- Some incidents call for a character to roll on the *Creeping Madness* table. The resulting effects are cumulative. They can each be removed by a *lesser restoration* spell.
- Characters **regain** 1d6 sanity points for each long rest they complete in safety. Regaining sanity points does not remove prior effects gained from sanity point loss.

### EFFECTS OF SANITY LOSS

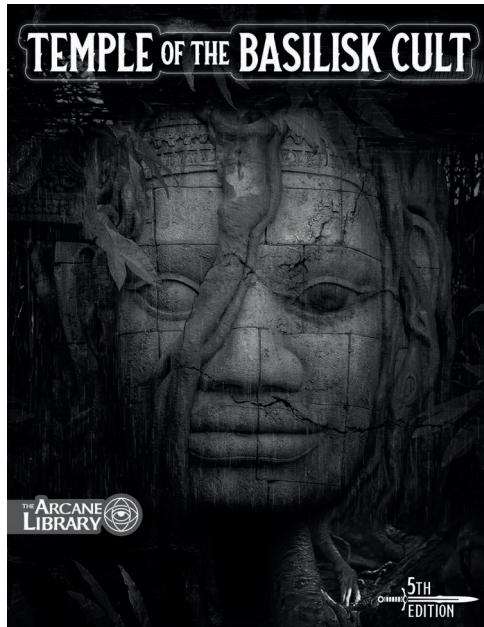
Points Lost	Detail
3	Roll on the <i>Creeping Madness</i> table.
6	You gain one form of <b>short-term madness</b> . Reroll a result that causes you to become incapacitated, stunned, or unconscious.
9	Roll on the <i>Creeping Madness</i> table.
12	You gain one form of <b>long-term madness</b> . Reroll a result of 96-100.
15	You gain one form of <b>long-term madness</b> . Reroll a result of 96-100. Roll on the <i>Creeping Madness</i> table.
All	You gain one form of <b>indefinite madness</b> .

## CREEPING MADNESS

D10	Detail
1	You can no longer perceive the next portal you pass through by any means — not even magical.
2	You hear a voice that endlessly whispers, “The writhing clot that blackens the stars, the inky tide that swallows the light!”
3	You sense something standing right behind you. When you turn around, nothing is there. The feeling always returns after a moment.
4	The room you’re in seems to stretch infinitely in all directions. You can only navigate it by closing your eyes.
5	Every time you go near a wood wall, you hear something scratching behind it. Nobody else hears it. Each time this happens, there’s a 10% chance a diseased <b>giant rat</b> bursts through the wall and attacks.
6	You can no longer remember your name. You keep feeling you’ve forgotten something important.
7	You become convinced that the next person you see is actually a hideous creature wearing that person’s skin. If the creature finds out you know this, it will steal your skin next.
8	You can’t stop laughing, even if it’s just a quiet chuckle.
9	You can’t stomach food or drink. Each time you try to consume something, you must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or you can’t eat or drink for the next 10 minutes.
10	You instantly develop another persona who is different in name, age, and other qualities of your choosing. You retreat into this persona whenever you’re scared.

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If you [join The Arcane Library's](#) newsletter, you'll get a FREE copy of *Temple of the Basilisk Cult*, a 1st-level adventure set in the jungle!



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This adventure is dedicated to everyone grappling with the difficulties of COVID-19. Even though this adventure is meant to be creepy, I hope it helps you escape from the real-world fears we're all facing together.

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