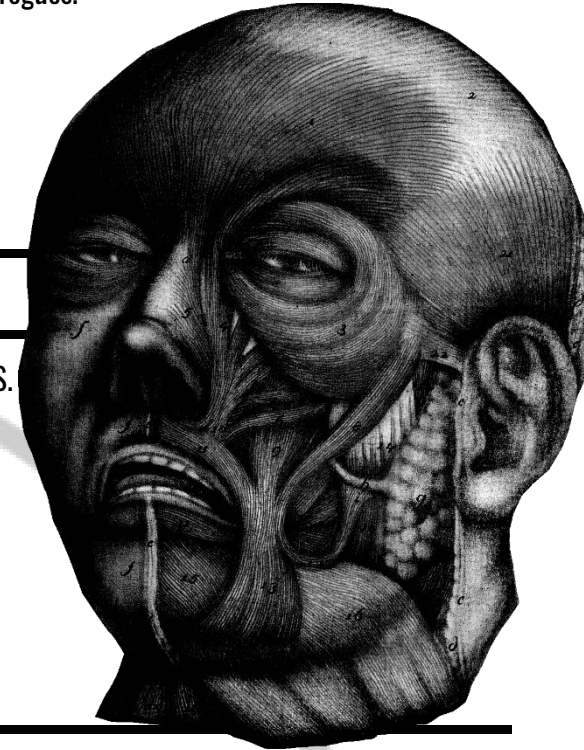


HEX DEX VEX

Beneath the earth is a place of failed magic that the last wizards locked away before they were slaughtered by heathens, mathematicians, and rogues. Here, no gods can see you. Your screams echo past rock walls and stone corridors for the scurrying skittering things to hear and draw closer. The knife in your hand is from someone's back and you would leave your friends to perish if it would save your filthy skin. Once you pay off your debts, you can go back to the gutters and never think of this place again.



HOW TO PLAY

You are dirty little delvers inhabiting Afflicted Vessels, journeying into forbidden caves to grub up Coin to pay for your various DEBTS and VICES. You have 3 stats. Roll 3d6 for each in order.

- HEX - Anything magical or Powers
- DEX - Anything physical or manual
- VEX - Anything social or cerebral

When you try something dangerous, roll under your stat with a d20 to MARK. If you roll equal or over, take STRESS.

AFFLICTED VESSELS

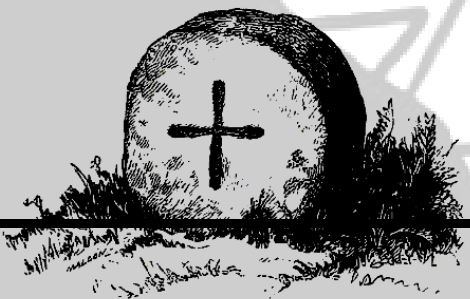
Choose, or roll to find out who you are. Next, roll 3d6x10 to find out your DEBT. Then, pick something you feel compelled to spend your money on instead - this is your VICE.

d6	VESSEL	DESCRIPTION	TRAIT	AFFLICTION
1	WEREWOLF	You used to be a wolf, now you're not. This troubles you.	SHARP NAILS	MARK 2 in unarmed Combat
2	SWARM	You are the buzzing and writhing of thousands. Hopefully no one has noticed.	AMORPHOUS	Reduce STRESS by 1 in Combat
3	ROTTER	You're a real piece of shit. You're also decaying.	SLOUGH	Take 1 additional STRESS in Combat
4	CURSED	Nothing ever goes your way, unless it makes someone else's life worse.	CURSE	Pass 1 STRESS to another Afflicted Vessel in Combat (once per REST)
5	BONEHOST	Every debt cost you a pound of flesh. You had so many debts.	PAID OFF	Reduce your DEBT by 1d6x10. Take 1 additional STRESS in Combat
6	FILTH	You have the law behind you and that makes you a pig.	OINK	Sorry piggy, you get nothing

You begin with 5 Coin, which you can use to buy EQUIPMENT, pay off some of your DEBT, or indulge in your VICE.

STRESS

Every failure takes its toll. Every misstep brings you closer to the edge. You begin with 0 STRESS. If your STRESS goes above your lowest stat, your luck runs out and you must MAKE A PACT or END YOUR JOURNEY. You can relieve d3 STRESS by resting or d6 STRESS by Making Camp. Resting is an hour or two of break from strenuous activity. Making Camp is taking time to sleep and recover for 6 or more hours.



MAKE A PACT, END YOUR JOURNEY

When your STRESS goes above your lowest stat, your GM will give you a choice: MAKE A PACT or END YOUR JOURNEY. If you MAKE A PACT, discuss with the GM to create a devilish task for you to achieve and return to life with 0 STRESS. If you END YOUR JOURNEY, choose how you die. Your bones are left to be picked clean and the other Afflicted Vessels can argue over who gets your meagre possessions. If you already have a PACT and your STRESS goes above your lowest stat, you are dragged to the hells as an Oathbreaker and the worst of possible things occur to your tattered little soul.

POWERS

Magic is the echo of a dead god's laughter. It grows louder as you delve. HEX determines which Powers are available to you. When you attempt to use a Power, roll HEX. On a miss, take STRESS equal to the level of the Power. If you have Powers available to you, roll a d6 after Making Camp. You can use this many Powers before Making Camp again.



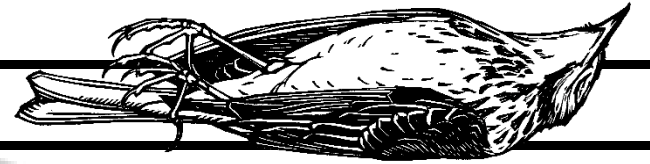
HEX	LEVEL	POWERS AVAILABLE
3-10	-	-
11+	1	<input type="checkbox"/> LIGHT - Create torchlight for 1 hour <input type="checkbox"/> CAUSE HURT - MARK 1 in Combat <input type="checkbox"/> HEAL WOUNDS - Remove 1 STRESS outside Combat
13+	2	<input type="checkbox"/> SHIELD - Reduce next STRESS by 1 <input type="checkbox"/> CAUSE HARM - MARK 2 in Combat <input type="checkbox"/> HEAL INJURY - Remove 2 STRESS outside combat
16+	3	<input type="checkbox"/> UNLOCK - Unlock a sealed door or chest <input type="checkbox"/> DEAL DEATH - MARK 3 in Combat <input type="checkbox"/> RELIEF - Remove 1 STRESS during Combat
17+	4	<input type="checkbox"/> BREAK SEAL - Unlock a magically sealed door or chest <input type="checkbox"/> BLESS - Remove all STRESS outside Combat <input type="checkbox"/> MONSTER SENSE - You instantly know the location of the nearest, largest Monster
18+	5	<input type="checkbox"/> UNCOVER - You instantly know the location of the nearest, largest amount of Coin <input type="checkbox"/> DEATH CURSE - MARK 5 in Combat. MARK 1 additional when an Afflicted Vessel MARKS against the target.

RUNNING A GAME - FOR GMS

Delving is a horrid, violent business. The abandoned arcane places are full of magical abominations that want nothing more than to strip the flesh from the bones of any creatures they find. They also house the twisted personalities of ancient mages - chained to construct bodies or trapped within tomes - and the ghosts of previous Delvers.

Most of a session should take place on the Delve itself, but the Afflicted Vessels may need some time at the beginning or end to pay off DEBTS, buy EQUIPMENT, or indulge in their VICES. A Delve is finished when all Afflicted Vessels are dead, or have enough Coin to pay off their DEBTS.

ENCOUNTERS



The difficulty of an Encounter is represented by how many MARKS it takes to overcome, how much STRESS Afflicted Vessels receive, and how much reward they get. Some sample Encounters are listed below.

The GM should never roll dice. When Afflicted Vessels roll below their stat, they MARK. Unless specified, MARK 1. MARKS represent stages in a challenge, Combat, or task. Any Afflicted Vessels can MARK against the same Encounter.

Some Encounters - like disarming a trap, or leaping between the broken ribs of a giant's corpse - may have only one step, but might be more dangerous, or give out more reward. For these, use a HINGE Encounter and deal STRESS or reward your players in a way that is appropriate to the situation.

DIFFICULTY	MARK	STRESS	REWARD
SIMPLE	1	1	-
BASIC	3	1	1 Coin, 1 VALUE of EQUIPMENT
TOUGH	5	2	d3 Coin, d3 VALUE of EQUIPMENT
DESPERATE	7	3	d6 Coin, 2d3VALUE of EQUIPMENT
DEADLY	9	5	2d6 Coin, 3d3 VALUE of EQUIPMENT
DOOMED	12	7	3d6 Coin, 3d6 VALUE of EQUIPMENT
HINGE	1	SPECIAL	SPECIAL

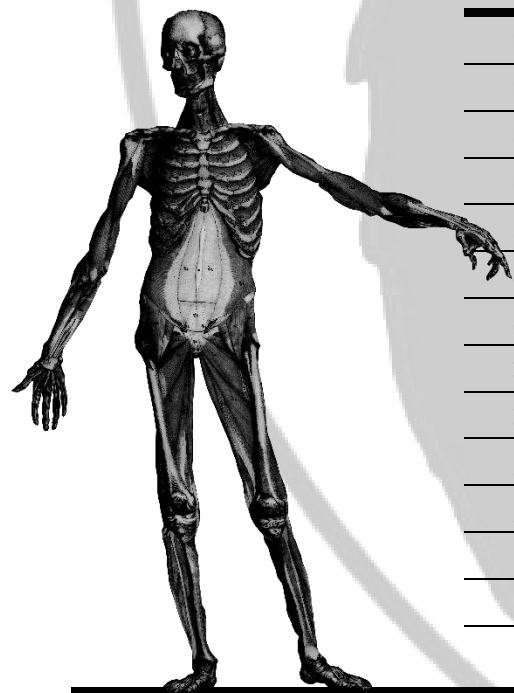
d20	ENCOUNTER	DIFFICULTY	DESCRIPTION
19-20	PIGEONRAT	SIMPLE	Cooing. Scratching. Flapping. Running.
17-18	SLIMEWRETCH	SIMPLE	Slick. Hobbling. Vomiting. Sad.
15-16	SENTIENTWEAPON	BASIC	Twitching. Sharp. Kniving. Hovering.
13-14	RESTLESSCORPSE	BASIC	Ambling. Rotting. Confused. Hungry.
11-12	RATSWARM	TOUGH	Seething. Clawing. Overwhelming. Vicious.
9-10	FISHDOG	TOUGH	Soaked. Ragged. Gaping. Snapping.
7-8	OILWRAITH	TOUGH	Howling. Shimmering. Floating. Dank.
5-6	AWAKENEDJELLY	DESPERATE	Oozing. Slithering. Smothering. Thick.
3-4	MOULDFIEND	DEADLY	Jibbering. Heaving. Festering. Mouthing.
1-2	SLUDGEDRAGON	DOOMED	Eyeless. Pale. Writhing. Hate-filled.

Combat should always begin with the Afflicted Vessel who is in the most danger. If you still can't decide, then the player with the highest DEX goes first.

EQUIPMENT & REWARDS

Equipment is hard to come by and harder to maintain. Most Equipment won't last more than a few bouts of Combat. Before a Delve, Afflicted Vessels can spend Coin to buy more Equipment.

VALUE	EQUIPMENT	EFFECT
6	ARCANE ARMOUR	Reduce 3 STRESS in Combat. Breaks after reducing 10 STRESS.
6	FORBIDDEN TOME	Reduce 1 STRESS when using Powers. Turns to ash after reducing 10 STRESS.
6	LUCKSTONE	When you would take STRESS in any situation, roll 1d6. On a 4+ reduce STRESS by 2. Breaks after reducing 10 STRESS.
6	EMPOWERSHARD	Cast d3 Powers as if you had 16 HEX. After casting a Power, roll 1d6. Breaks on a 2+, dealing d6 STRESS.
5	DELVING SUIT	Reduce 1 STRESS in Combat. Breaks after reducing 20 STRESS.
4	HEAVY ARMOUR	Reduce 3 STRESS in Combat. Cannot use Powers while wearing. Breaks after reducing 10 STRESS.
4	BASTARD SWORD	MARK d6 in Combat. Breaks after 12 uses.
3	MEDIUM ARMOUR	Reduce 2 STRESS in Combat. Cannot use Powers while wearing. Breaks after reducing 8 STRESS.
3	LONG SWORD	MARK d3 in Combat. Breaks after 10 uses.
2	LIGHT ARMOUR	Reduce d2 STRESS in Combat. Cannot use Powers while wearing. Breaks after reducing 6 STRESS.
2	SHORT SWORD	MARK d2 in Combat. Breaks after 8 uses.
1	SHIELD	Reduce 1 STRESS in combat. Breaks after reducing 4 STRESS.
1	KNIFE	MARK d2 in combat. Breaks after 6 uses.
1	10 TORCHES	Burn with torchlight for d3 hours



DEBTS & VICES

At the beginning of a Delve, ask each Afflicted Vessel who they owe their DEBT to and how they came to owe it. Then, ask them what their VICE is and how they came to value it above all other needs.

At the beginning or end of a Delve, Afflicted Vessels can choose to pay off some of their DEBT or indulge their VICE. When an Afflicted Vessel's DEBT is paid off, they can return to their life, knowing that their Delving days are over - at least until they get into DEBT again. If they choose to indulge their VICE, they can pay any amount greater than 3 Coin and roll for an Effect.

1d6	RESULT	EFFECT
1	TWISTED	Swap any 2 stats.
2	INVIGORATED	Improve any stat by 1.
3	EMBOLDENED	When you MARK in Combat, roll 1d6. On a 4+, MARK 1 additional.
4	AWAKENED	Once, between REST, you can use 1 Power of a level higher than you can currently use.
5	UNPUTDOWNABLE	When you take STRESS, roll 1d6. On a 6, reduce the STRESS taken by 2.
6	LIMITLESS	Improve any stat by 2, or any 2 stats by 1

