



himself joined his paintings on the pyre after *The Blessed Ones*, though it, somehow, escaped destruction.

The Blessed Ones surfaced several times during the last three centuries, but each time, its owner mysteriously disappeared. This, of course, does nothing to deter the curious and, in fact, heightens its mystique. Moreover, the work has been cited in dissertations and lectures at the University of Nuln, including it in the survey of mythological pieces, and so the piece is well known in art circles.

The last time *The Blessed Ones* appeared was several years ago in Nuln, and was believed to be in the possession of a merchant known as Otto Grubach of Tin Street. When word got out, Count Romanov, a well-placed noble who was famed for his interest in exotic substances and strange relics, hired a local thief to steal the work. Exactly what happened isn't clear, for all parties involved in the theft, including Herr Grubach, the thief, and Romanov vanished. The only thing known for certain is that on the very night of the theft, Romanov's estate burned to the ground. Whether the painting was destroyed or not isn't known.

As there are no surviving people who have ever laid eyes on the painting, everything known about it is through the writings of those who've studied it in the past. In such cases, there are contradictions about what the painting shows, sometimes leaving figures out or adding others in. Generally, though, it is described as depicting a forest glade with a shallow pool in the centre. In and around the pool, several figures are arranged, each in various states of undress. Attending the revellers are several red-skinned Daemons, oddly disproportional. Those who've seen it claim the people, though appearing pleased and comfortable, have frightened eyes. True or not, most believe it is just a gaudy painting of low calibre when compared to others of its kind.

Using *The Blessed Ones*

Viewing this painting is intensely disturbing, requiring anyone who looks at the work for more than a few seconds to make a Will Power Test or gain 1 Insanity Point. But this is just a minor side-effect of this hideous work. If a subject places even one drop of blood on the canvas, the painting releases two Unholy Ones (see **Chapter XVIII: Daemonic Hordes** for details). These horrid creatures attempt to grab the subject. If successful, they bring the individual inside the painting, where they languish for eternity, forever conscious, but forever frozen, condemned to spend their immortality as part of a picture.

of many searches and dark plots. As with all works of Chaos, the gifts this one offers are never the ones expected.

Not much is known of Hals, except that he created several works that explored mythological scenes with strange, evocative imagery. Few of his paintings have survived to the modern era, largely because they straddled the line between imagination and religious interpretation, and many of the works were burned even during Hals' life. And of course, Hals

— GRIMOIRES —

The grimoire is an oversized tome containing knowledge about the magical arts. Most grimoires contain detailed theories on the applications and practice of certain spells to say nothing of the author's personal reflections on the nature of magic. A grimoire may sometimes serve as a journal, allowing the author to make a commentary on his experiences in magic and its use. But by far, the most important element of any volume is the rituals the book contains.

Rituals are complicated spells that require rare ingredients. To undertake a ritual is a great risk for the magic user, requiring intense concentration and focus. Should the caster falter, most rituals carry severe consequences of which death is often the least.

Thankfully, grimoires are rare. Most people go their entire lives without seeing an authentic tome of magic. But despite their rarity, these volumes hold great knowledge and greater power, so those fortunate (or cursed) enough to gain one, go to great lengths to keep them.

The majority of grimoires found in the Old World contain treatises on Colour Magic; that is, the magic Imperial Magisters use. Held in the great libraries in Altdorf, these books are prized possessions, organised in a labyrinth of shelves and tables all behind a heavy metal door protected by loyal and dedicated sentinels. It's believed that several volumes available to the Colleges of Magic were penned by Teclis himself.

But, some magic tomes contain information on darker subjects. They offer untold knowledge into the forbidden, exploring Necromancy or, worse, Daemonology. Witch Hunters, and servants of Sigmar, Verena, and Morr scour the land for these forbidden tomes, all in an effort to destroy them, or, failing that, return them to a secure location.

FAMOUS FORBIDDEN GRIMOIRES

Grimoires are dangerous because of the knowledge they hold. They may provide unsettling insight into the workings of Dark Magic or expository treatises on the nature of Chaos, or they might even offer instruction into the Lores of Necromancy or Chaos. Many of these books can be destroyed when uncovered, but some escape destruction, being too valuable to consign to the flames. As such, many of the darkest works lie in the vaults underneath the Temple of Sigmar in Altdorf or in other repositories around the Empire. And from time to time, one of these volumes disappears, falling into dangerous hands.

THE CELESTINE BOOK OF DIVINATION

Believed by some to have been the very words that shattered the mind of the Templar who would become Archaon, Lord of the End Times, this corrupted journal contains the writings of a mad visionary and diviner

known as Necrodomo the Insane. Most who've examined this work cannot report accurately as to what it contains since the contents are laid out in no particular order, with entire thoughts left off in one paragraph only to embark on explicating a new subject in the next. If there is a meaning or purpose to this tome, only the insane can truly comprehend it.

Necrodomo sets out to reveal the secrets of the world, identifying the events that led to the collapse of the Chaos Gates and the subsequent doom that hangs over the world. He also makes blasphemous assertions about the Gods, interchanging them with the Dark Gods, combining them under the idea that all divine essences are nothing more than reflections of Human experience. Furthermore, it defines the patterns and goals of the Hordes of Chaos, foretelling of the end times as brought on by a Dark Champion of no compare.

As disturbing as the book is, most scholars see the volume as nothing more than the ravings of a madman and so discount it. Still, it is interesting insofar as it offers a glimpse into the beliefs and character of those who serve Chaos. It's believed this volume remains in the Vaults beneath the Temple of Sigmar in Altdorf, though there's suspicion that the book was stolen. The Templars are quick to quell any such rumours.

Using the Celestine Book of Divination

A cursory glance through this tome reveals little, and is harmless. However, any serious effort to examine the work, to piece together the curious blend of prophecy and gibberish, to sift through the meaningless nonsense to arrive at the kernels of truth, can drive a reader insane. Each day the reader examines the text, he must succeed at a Hard (–20%) Will Power Test or gain 1 Insanity Point. This would be enough to keep most away from further study, but the images and words haunt the reader compelling him to read more. Each day the character does not read the book, he must succeed on a Challenging (–10%) Will Power Test or return to his study. Seven successful tests free him from the attraction. The Character finishes the volume once he gains 6 Insanity Points, having fully understood and digested the material. Finally, Chaos Warrior is always considered a Career Exit for this Character.

CATALOGUE OF FLESH

Penned by the foul Daemonologist Adel Alsdén of Wolfenburg some 200 years ago, this book exudes raw malevolence. The cover—strange red leather covered in coarse, black hair—feels warm to the touch and almost seems to pulse. The pages are made from Human skin, and the words are written in a perverse mixture of Human blood and Warpstone dust. In the reader's peripheral vision, the text sometimes appear to writhe on the pages.

According to the Witch Hunters that tracked this Black Magister down and burned him, Heinrich was obsessed with Daemons and their kind and made it his life's work to create a full index of all their different forms. Each entry has a corresponding illustration that expertly captures the summoned abominations. Most believe that Adel illustrated the Daemons as he brought them forth from the Realm of Chaos. The truth is that he actually bound the entities into the book, using the blood of Halfling sacrifices (who are noted for their resistance to Chaos) to tie them to the tome. The *Catalogue of Flesh* holds some 200 entries in all.

Alsdén was a potent Warlock, and he probably never would have been defeated had it not been for an accidental summoning. After one particularly loathsome effort to bring forth a mighty Exalted Daemon,

"This? You say this is a magic book? Why blessed Sigmar, I've been using it as a cutting board!"

—ANNA OF GROTTENBURG

"I always sez books are evil. Fill your head with strange ideas, they do. They make you dream of strange places and even stranger people. I've never allowed no book in my house. Last time my boy brought even a stack of papers home, I beat him near an inch of his life. Sez he was to use them for kindling. Just imagine! All them haunts getting loosed from the papers! He learned, he did. You spoke to Mikel? They've been saying he's a Mutant. I believe it too, wot with that bulge an all..."

—JOHANS THE CRIER

nothing happened. He looked into the octogram used to conjure the beast, but it was empty—or so it appeared. As he pored over the ritual to ensure he had made no error, the Halfling sacrifice, still mewling as her lifeblood spilled out onto the floor, reached for the powdered silver, Warpstone, and blood that formed the hermetic circle. Her touch broke the ring and released the essence held within. The Warlock expected to summon a powerful beast, and indeed he did. But the power of the Daemon was not its size and strength, but rather its ability to devour the mind. No bigger than

a mote of dust, the fiend latched onto the base of the Daemonologist's neck, burrowing into the base of his spine. Like a tick, it drank the Warlock's fluids, growing larger with his life energy. Moments after it affixed itself, Adel slumped to the floor, his mind filled with maddening visions, his body twisting in agony as the thing drank deep. Before the Daemon could finish, the Witch Hunters who had been tracking the man burst into the room to arrest him. Fearing discovery, the wet and bloated fiend disengaged from its host and slithered across the floor towards Alsdén's volume of fiends. It wrapped itself over the cover, joining with the book until such time that it could find a new host to kill.

The Witch Hunters promptly tried and burned the man and then prepared the contents of his rooms for burning. As they piled the profane devices and instruments on top of the oil-soaked pyre, the book pulled itself free from the pile and hid in a waiting carriage. Since then, the book has been lost, occasionally surfacing once every score or so years. Each time, when rumour of its existence reaches the ears of the Templars of

