

Paul desperately roamed the alleys looking for a vendor with what he needed. Booth after booth blurred by, each one having something similar but not the same. He twisted a handkerchief over and over again in his hands, his fingers working it and tying it into knots as his eyes darted over each stall.

As he wandered down one alleyway a shrill scream filled the air, sending a sharp ring through Paul's ears. He turned to see an old woman with the sweatshirt lying on the ground, her eyes glazed over and her skin ashen. A man rose from crouching near her body and surreptitiously closed a small vial as he walked away. The crowd parted around him for a moment before descending upon the body, hoping to find something of worth on it.

Struck by sudden greed, Paul fought his way through the scavengers. A quick glance gave him what he was after: the dirty sweatshirt the woman had tried to force on him yesterday. He snatched it and turned to disappear into the crowd. Finally he had his prize; the tattered piece of clothing was worthless yesterday, but it was suddenly worth a great deal more.

COLLECTION

OF

HORRORS

CAVEAT EMPTOR

A Storytelling Adventure System anthology for Hunter: The Vigil

WHITE WOLF PUBLISHING, INC.
2075 WEST PARK PLACE
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STONE MOUNTAIN, GA 30087

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Special thanks to our voice actors for giving up a Saturday to help us out:
Anna Albano, Nathan Binder, David Bounds, Natasha Bryant-Raible, Priscilla Kim, Vincent Lombardo, Orrin Loria, Weston Reid, Rich Thomas, Michelle Webb

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Check out White Wolf online at <http://www.white-wolf.com>

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Caveat Emptor

MENTAL ••

PHYSICAL •

SOCIAL •••

Overview

A traveling swap meet full of strange wonders and colorful people, the Market is a place to buy and sell information, rare items or special equipment. Perhaps the characters need to find info on a new creature they have encountered, or they need exotic weaponry to take down a shape-shifting demon. Here hunters can find wondrous new things to aid them in their pursuit of the Vigil or new dangers that can drag them into deeper evils.

No one knows when the Market started. There is no great legend detailing its birth, no secret libraries devoted to its mysteries. The Market manifests as a collection of stands and small shops. Its overall size never seems to be constant: it can appear to be nothing more than a few small vendors one day and expand to fill an entire football field the next. Even the inhabitants of the Market can never give a straight answer on its full size. For one person, it's enormous and has everything they could desire. For another, it's dinky and doesn't have the shop they need.

Entry into the Market is a tricky thing. For the lucky (or unlucky) few who spot a strange ad in the classifieds or see a faded flyer tacked to a wall, getting in is as easy as following directions. Regular customers may even begin to develop a kind of "Market sense," finding entries into the bazaar just by following a hunch. Rarely, a specific doorway or underpass will lead to the Market more than once, but this connection can dissipate after a month, a week or even a few hours.

The Market can also have a strange effect on people. A cell that travels to the Market seeking information on a monster may leave once they've gotten what they needed and never feel the need to return. On the other hand, those who get caught up in the swaps and trades seem to be unable to quit. They become obsessed with the next deal, the biggest score, and soon they cannot get enough.

Description

The doors creak and groan as they shift on rusty hinges. The reek of mold and mildew fills the air as you pass through the old mall doors. Gang signs and crumbling plaster cover the halls as you head down the darkened corridor with just the faint glimmer of security lights guiding the way. As you round the corner, you hear strange noises and see bright lights at the end of the hallway. In front of you lies a crowded bazaar full of stalls and tents, with keen-eyed vendors haggling with their customers. The air pulses with mysterious emotions and the unmistakable stench of desperation.

Storytelling Goals

The Market can offer new insights for the players to explore. Characters may find themselves enamored by the Market and want to delve further into its mysteries, or they may take pity upon a poor sap who got himself tangled up in a series of bad trades. It can also help the characters find new leads into their investigation; there's bound to be vendors who have the knowledge and are willing to part with it... for a price.

The Market should not be a place to buy new equipment or toys for players to outfit their characters. Powerful weapons and items can be found at the Market, but should only be obtained through personal sacrifice and great effort.

Character Goals

Find the treasures hidden in the mess of junk and learn more of the Market's mysteries.

Actions Trading

Trade in the market is always based on barter. A man trades in an old baseball trophy in order to get a radio from the drive-in he took his wife to on their first date. That same trophy becomes the fixation of a woman who is trying to replace the trophy her father had when she was a girl. She spends months trading around in order to get the matching tea set of a Russian Czar she needs to buy the trophy.

Each item's worth differs from person to person. Some items have priceless sentimental value, while others are rare collectibles. Some items may prove to be powerful Artifacts, while others are only precious to the right buyer.

Not every item has worth. Most items end up discarded into one of the huge piles of debris that are routinely picked through by scavengers. On the other hand, a vendor may sell fine silk clothing for next to nothing but haggle ruthlessly when it comes to an old pack of half chewed bubblegum. Buyers that dismiss items that appear to be nothing more than useless trash never discover hidden treasures like the chew marks in the gum that reveal dental impressions of fangs.

The Market, like any other business, can be risky when it comes to trades, and the vendors take their trades seriously. Those who attempt to short the system or consistently make bad trades find themselves on the bad side of the Market and may walk into a stall prepared to trick the system but never walk out. Those who try to steal from the Market never seem to do it for long. While the Market might overlook the occasional loss, vendors are quick to catch on. Most vendors notice the same faces in the crowd when inventory disappears. Others seem to be granted a sixth sense and seem to know when thieves are about to strike.

Bargaining with Vendors

Dice Pool: Wits or Manipulation + Persuasion vs. Manipulation + Subterfuge

Action: Contested

Hindrances: Character tricked the vendor before (-2), item's value is exaggerated or is inferior to the item asked for (-1 to -3), speaker insults the vendor's wares (-2)

Help: Character compliments vendor's wares (+1), item offered greatly exceeds value of the item to be acquired (+1 to +3)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The vendor not only declines the character's offer, but accuses her of being a con artist. The vendor refuses to give up the item, and other vendors turn her away.

Failure: The deal is just no good. While the vendor may remain friendly, she is adamant that she cannot accept the trade.

Success: The trade seems good enough, although the vendor might gripe about losing out on the deal. The character acquires her new item, and the vendor promptly turns towards his next customer, hoping to get a better deal.

Exceptional Success: The item offered seems to the vendor to have more value than the character is aware of. The vendor gratefully accepts the trade, and promises to keep a look out for anything she might need in the future.

Fighting Within the Market

Some ballsy characters may choose a more direct answer. Any marketplace would close up if enough bullets and fire were pumped into it. Smash the vendors' tables, take the valuables and the Market is gone for good.

Logically, if it were that easy, the Market would have been gone a long time ago. Rumors abound of groups that would spend weeks plotting a raid on the Market only to have it disappear completely. Whether it's a self-defense mechanism or just coincidence, the Market can close down and move on to another location overnight.

If hunters try to cause spontaneous trouble in the Market, the crowd is will scatter and separate. Running bystanders make accurate shooting more difficult (-2 penalty to Firearms rolls) and make moving through the crowd itself difficult (-1 penalty). Some vendors use the chaos to pack their bags with their most valuable possessions, leaving the rest of their possessions to chance. Others will take offense to troublemakers and band together to drive them out.



Buyers and Sellers

Lori Nivens, Desperate Mother

Quote: "I'll give you anything to get my child back. Anything."

Virtue: Hope. Lori clings to the hope that she can get her son back.

Vice: Greed. She always needs something to fill the void in her life.

Background: Lori rose to the top of her class in high school before marrying her high school sweetheart and giving birth to her son David less than a year after graduation. For eight years she was a doting mother and did everything possible to protect her son and build a good life with her husband. A drunk driver changed her life forever when he careened out of control at an intersection near their home and struck David just as he was starting to cross the street. Lori's husband blamed her for not watching the boy more carefully and eventually left her. For years, Lori lived in a whirlwind of short-lived relationships, anguishing about her lost child. Eventually she ended up roaming the street most nights, lost in her own memories and driven by a yearning to be reunited with her little boy. One night she wandered down the wrong alley and appeared in the midst of the Market.

The Market provided Lori with the answer she needed. Seeing the miracles it sold, she scoured the stalls trying to find the right item to end her agony. She eventually found a vendor who had an old casket with inscriptions that seemed to be in poorly-written Hebrew that was said to resurrect first-born sons. Sensing her desperation, the vendor gave her a list of items he wanted before he would turn it over to her. Now Lori tries to seduce or trick others into giving her the items she needs. When those methods fail, she strikes viciously with the strength of a madman.

Description: Lori appears as a young woman, often dressed provocatively. She is engaging and will change herself to fit someone's needs. Her eyes sometimes have a faraway, calculating look, hinting at the madness that she hides within.

Storytelling Hints: Obsession and conviction are what drive this character. She knows the difference between right and wrong, but doesn't care; she just knows what she has to do to get David back. Although her appearance suggests otherwise, she is a cunning deceiver and knows exactly how to convince others to do what she wants.

Old Man Chambers, Devil in Disguise

Quote: "Come in, come in! You look lost. Is there anything I can help you with?"

Virtue: Hope. He knows that everyone has something they need.

Vice: Greed. He also knows that he can make a profit off that need, every time.

Background: A fixture among the vendors, even the most casual of visitors know of the Old Man. His stall is large and impeccably neat, and he is always out front, welcoming customers inside his tent. His voice is deep and soothing and his warm smile puts people at ease when they walk in.

What few know is that Chambers is a dark and twisted being. He welcomes people into his store and will engage them in conversation. He will offer them something to fix their ills, from a pair of dice that help them win bets or a scratch-off ticket that can give them just enough money to get by for a while. Every offer is designed to spark an addiction within them, bringing them back to his store for more and more help.

Once they're in his sway, he will start to push their boundaries. He will make them inflict suffering on others in exchange for his help, until eventually the victim burns himself out. Then he discards them, refusing to acknowledge them as he turns to his next victim.

Description: Dressed in a casual sweater and comfortable slacks, Chambers seems to be harmless and almost feeble to a casual observer. It is only when he has drawn his victim in that he reveals his other side, capable of moving with the speed and grace of a man half his age and exuding a predatory aura.

Storytelling Hints: A true wolf in sheep's clothing, the Old Man will bait someone with their own desires and draw them just close enough to turn on them. A peddler of hope, highs, and personal power, he knows that even the most temperate of people will eventually give in to the right temptation.

Maria McKay, Junkyard Seer

Quote: "Oh, I know what it is you are looking for, but in order to find it, you have to find me something I'm looking for."

Virtue: Temperance. She can take the long view of things and carefully plan how she approaches them.

Vice: Pride. Who else is better at understanding the future than her?



Background: Born in Last Chance, Tennessee, Maria always had a gift. With the help of a teddy bear and a headless doll, she predicted her father's abandonment of the family and her mother's sudden death. Maria has had numerous jobs over the years, from managing thrift stores to working at antique shops. Discovering the Market was like walking into paradise. Customers trade their most prized possessions and she imparts the wisdom that was exclusively hers.

Though she revels in the wealth of junk around her she can use her gifts upon, she is haunted by one particular vision. One day she became curious about her own destiny and opened her mind to the future. She saw her own lifeless body, murdered by a man dressed all in blue. Now she watches her customers with a wary eye, fearing the day the man walks through her door.

Description: Though she's in her early forties, Maria McKay is surprisingly fit and youthful in appearance. She dresses conservatively but with a certain thrift-store chic, often wearing sweaters and long skirts when she is conducting business.

Storytelling Hints: Maria is a helpful ally to those who need it. She knows first aid, and with her fortune telling powers she tries to help out as much as she can. Maria knows that her time is nearly up, and she keeps a watchful eye for the one who will come to kill her.

Name: Maria McKay **Virtue:** Temperance **Profession:**
Concept: Junkyard Seer **Vice:** Pride **Cell:**

Threads of Prophecy ●●●●●●●●●●

Holding an item in her hand, Maria begins to pluck at it as if she is pulling off cobwebs. Somehow, she can pluck the fibers of destiny that are attached to every item, and use them to see briefly into the future. On a success, she can impart wisdom or a warning regarding an upcoming challenge the cell will face. On an exceptional success, Maria is overcome with her visions and will prophesy for over a minute about an event that will occur in the near future. The experience is exhausting and she will immediately need to rest; she cannot use the power again for one hour.

Notes



Name: Lori Nivens **Virtue:** Hope **Profession:**
Concept: Desperate Mother **Vice:** Greed **Cell:**

Appealing Eyes ●●●●●●●●●●

Lori knows how to read a person and can manipulate their feelings with a sad story, a flirtatious wink or appealing to their sense of honor. She is so good at it that she is capable of influencing how others behave after engaging in conversation with them. Those she engages in conversation must roll against their Will + Composure or find themselves at a -2 against all future social rolls against her.

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Notes



Name: Old Man Chambers **Virtue:** Hope **Profession:**
Concept: Devil in Disguise **Vice:** Greed **Cell:**

Sadist's Delight ●●●●●●●●●●

Chambers is able to gain power from his victim's suffering. After he has gotten to know a subject, he starts to feed off the negative energy that he engenders in them. After one of his victims accomplishes a task for him that causes anyone great emotional pain, he begins to feed off their energy. For each success he rolls, he gains one temporary health level, which can last him for up to a week.

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Notes

**Can't find it?
You WANT it?
YOU NEED IT!
The Market Has It!**

**Every stall is jam-packed with objects and
items so rare and wonderful you never
even knew you needed it until you see it!**

**The Rare!
The Obscure!
The UNIQUE!**

**From singular objects to priceless
memories, stop by and be prepared to find
absolutely the best deals around!**

No Cash? No Problem!

**Trades and Swaps Accepted!
Find us at the Usual Place! But hurry!**

Deals this good don't last long!