



Tabletop Adventures Presents
**HALLS OF
HORROR**™
Modern Shards & Bits

CREDITS

Authors:

Matthew Paisie
Daniel Brakhage
K. H. Keeler
Nicholas Salestrom
Christopher Heard
Leigh Anna Harken
Marcella Ganow
Vicki Potter

Editor:

Vicki Potter

Layout:

Marcella Ganow

Cover Art:

Photo by extranoise
Used under the
Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 license

Cover Layout:

Marcella Ganow

Interior Art:

Bradley K. McDevitt
Photo by atomicpuppy68*
Photo by mknobil*
Photo by bchow*

*Used under the
Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 license

Some clipart by:

©2007 Jupiterimages Corporation



<http://www.tabletopadventures.com>

Product Update Password for Halls of Horror: Potsdam

Copyright ©2007 Tabletop Adventures, LLC. All Rights Reserved. Tabletop Adventures, the Tabletop Adventures logo, and "Halls of Horror" are trademarks of Tabletop Adventures. Reference to other copyrighted material in no way constitutes a challenge to the respective copyright holders of that material. This material is protected under international treaties and the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material is prohibited without the express written permission of Tabletop Adventures. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places or events is purely coincidental.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Credits	1
Table of Contents	2
Introduction	3
<i>Welcome!</i>	3
<i>Harried Game Masters, or How We Came to Write This Book</i>	3
How to Use This Resource	4
<i>What are Shards and Bits™?</i>	4
<i>Printing This Product</i>	4
<i>Other Products from TTA</i>	4
Bits Of Horror	5
Horror Shards	18
<i>General</i>	18
<i>Stairs</i>	20
<i>Special Rooms</i>	21
<i>Other Locations</i>	25
<i>Shard set: Small Rural House</i>	28
<i>Shard set: Discovery in the Warehouse</i>	29
<i>Shard set: Gothic Cathedral</i>	30
Index	34
Halls of Horror - Cards	36



INTRODUCTION

Welcome!

Welcome to “Halls of Horror™,” Tabletop Adventures’ book of creepy descriptions in a modern setting. Did the contact for the secret agents pick an abandoned house for a meeting? Did your superheroes track the bad guy to a boarded-up mansion? Have investigators of the supernatural heard rumors of a haunting? Here’s help in describing what they find inside.

These descriptions run the gamut from simple signs of abandonment to weird things which may have a natural explanation to the downright horrific. If something seems out of place, either discard the description or change it as you have need. These descriptions are for your use in your game and you are free to modify them to keep your game fun and exciting for you and your players. I hope that you can find plenty of material here to augment your players’ imaginations and to stimulate your own ideas for adventures.

Harried Game Masters, or How We Came to Write This Book

So, I hear you ask, “Why write a book like this?” Well, I’m glad you asked. We wrote it for all those Game Masters who have ever lamented not having the time that they wanted to spend on their game because those unforgiving intrusions to gaming (life, work, family, school) interfered. We wrote it for all those game masters who have come home from a hard day of work or just finished a grueling finals week and had friends call up

and say, “Hey, let’s play tonight. I had a rough day and I want to get mind off it.” For all of you who need more than 24 hours in a day, welcome to Tabletop Adventures’ line of products for the Harried Game Master.

We here at TTA believe that description is a very important part of game-mastering and that vivid descriptions can make a world or an adventure come alive. However, we have noticed that the more rushed or frazzled a GM becomes, the more mechanical the game tends to be. So we have written a book that we’ve always wished to have, one that would have made our lives easier over the years. Tabletop Adventures’ “Harried Game Master” products are designed to be products that you can buy today and play tonight. We have taken care to make “Halls of Horror” flexible so it could be useful in virtually any modern genre. Our products are to help you, the Game Master, make the maximum use of the limited time you have available.

This tool provides the GM with a way to stimulate the characters’ senses and the players’ imaginations. The descriptions can give players a “feel” for a situation, a better image of what is happening or what their characters are experiencing. They are intended to enhance role-playing by encouraging character building, reaction, and interaction. These slightly off-kilter descriptions are made for you, to ease the life of the Harried Game Master.

Enjoy, have fun, and create fun for others!

The good people at Tabletop Adventures,
and the Overlord.

BITS OF HORROR

01. You find a handprint on the wall. In the middle of an otherwise unremarkable wall you come upon the clear print of a hand: five fingers, palm. A right hand, rather large. The print looks as if it was made with blood and you can make out a few more drops below it on the wall. The handprint is isolated; it does not seem to point anywhere or leave any message. It is at a little over waist height on a man, about where an injured person might lean against the wall, but that is all there is. There are no other markings on the wall and no unusual objects in the area.

02. This area is unusually cold, so cold that you can see your breath. Goosebumps stand up on your arms and a shiver runs through your body. There is no visible or logical reason for the cold nor did the temperature decrease gradually as you approached. The temperature was normal where you were before but here it is deathly cold. There is no frost. Nothing moves. There is only the cold. Thin wisps rise before you as you exhale and you realize that you were holding your breath.

03. The stench of rotting meat fills the room [hall]. Nothing is in sight that could be the source of the smell; it may have been wafted in on a stray breeze.

04. The sharp, too-clean scent of mothballs almost—but not quite—masks the fetid [putrid] odor beneath.

05. The door to the outside stands open, creaking and groaning with each puff of wind that comes by. The door frame is broken and splintered. The metal latch plate, still screwed into a hunk of the frame, lies on the floor. On both sides of the doorframe are long, thick gouges.

06. In this doorway a door lies where it has fallen, partially in the room and partially out. From what you can see, all of the hardware on the door has been

removed. There are traces of rust on the door where the hinges should have been, and it looks like something has scraped or clawed at these areas.

07. There is a smoky quality about the air here, and the faint smell of sulfur. Looking around, you see that the wall is badly cracked and it seems the odor may be coming from that split.

08. Cobwebs hang from the ceiling in every corner, and a thick layer of dust

covers every visible surface. This area appears to have been abandoned for some time.

09. A hint of an odor teases your senses. It is a rich, slightly sweet smell, possibly incense. Just a whiff comes to you, and then the scent disappears.



88. You briefly hear what could be a low growl emanating from this area. No source is apparent and at first you wonder if you were mistaken. Then it begins again. It is a low, rumbling growl such as no creature on this earth has ever made. Finally it ends and you do not hear it again.

89. The area you are in grows very cold and the light seems to drain away. You can see your breath in the cold as goosebumps rise on your arms and the hairs on the back of your neck stand up. From the wall there is a thud like someone being thrown up against it – once, twice, three times. As you watch letters slowly appear that seem to be oozing out of the wall. In an unsteady hand large letters of red say “GET OUT”. The cold continues and the letters begin to run into rivulets of blood that fade back into the wall before they reach the floor. When the letters fade you realize that the room temperature has returned to normal.

90. The plaster is cracked and dented in one place, as if it had been hit with something hard - and curved. The cracks inside the indentation are lined with dark brown and the same dried brown speckles the wall around the recess.

91. An oily black residue glistens in a low spot on the floor, reflecting the light as you approach.

92. In the corner is a dark shadow; it is unclear to you what is casting it. As you look around, you don't see anything that would explain it. Looking back at the shadow, it seems to have changed shape. Perhaps it is bigger but you are not sure. As you watch the shadow appears to be oozing into the corner. It is definitely receding and seems to be fading into the crack of the corner. As you watch, the

shadow disappears into the corner. Looking closer you don't see any type of crack or opening that anything could have gone through.

93. Thin wisps of cobweb stretch across the passage [doorway]. You break the ones in the center as you pass by, but strands still caress your face invisibly and cling stickily to your face and clothes. You seem to feel something tiny scurrying on your exposed neck.

94. A wind picks up in the room, lifting the fine layers of dust and sending the particles into the air. Dust coats the back of your throat as you breathe. It tastes of mold and age. The powdery material gets into your eyes, making them sting and water. Each touch of the breeze on your skin is gritty. The dirt even gets into your clothes, making every movement a brush with fine sandpaper.





HORROR SHARDS

General

01. A BATTERED BARRIER

This thick wooden door is only partially visible, due to the pile of heavy furniture set across it to keep it closed. What bits of the door are visible are cracked and splintered by force from the other side. A swath of floor around the barrier is sharply discolored—the tile [wood, carpet] has an unhealthy purplish hue.

02. SPREADING MOLD

Black mold clings to the spaces where the mortar has crumbled between the bricks of the wall. It also grows across the surface of many bricks. Beads of moisture speckle the fuzzy mold and the bricks are cool and damp. [If the mold is touched, a powdery dust will rise into the air and cling to the person disturbing it, especially to exposed sweaty skin. It has no other effect.]

03. FINAL WARNING

As you move forward, you catch sight of something ahead of you: on the floor lie the scattered pieces of a skeleton. Not all of the ribs and limbs are present but the skull rests against the wall, grinning. A bony hand is curled around a piece of chalk. Something has been written on the floor but not all of the letters can be made out. It seems to say: "In **ds na go ba*k befo** *****" [The stars represent letters that cannot be made out. The writing ends in a smear where something wiped across it.]**

04. MISCELLANEOUS STORAGE

This room holds broken furniture and miscellaneous stuff. You quickly pick out a bench with a broken seat, a table lying on its side with one leg splintered, and a fancy metal pole [curtain rod] which has been badly dented. There is a decorative shelf with a section of the back missing next to the bottom part of what was probably a rifle

rack. To one side are a heavy 'braided' rug that may have been tan and green but is now too filthy to be sure, and a fuzzy blanket with some sort of logo in the center, its original color now faded almost to gray. Scattered between the recognizable items are bits—a metal chair leg, a board painted green over half its surface—suggesting that the items were thrown here to be scavenged for parts. [Unless someone needs bits of wood or cloth, there is nothing useful here.]

05. STORM BUILDING

Outside you can hear a storm gathering. The wind is rising and the sound of thunder rumbles. You get the impression of something building toward a crescendo or climax of some sort, but there is no reason why you should feel that way. The wind grows stronger and somewhere a door or shutter is banging rhythmically. Rain spatters on the window and the thunder rumbles again, louder and more insistently. The storm is building.

06. SWIRLING MIST

It is damp and cool here. A misty haze gathers in corded wisps upon the floor, which snakes along almost like serpents but devoid of purpose or direction. They seem to twist and swirl out of the way of your steps as you walk along.

07. SLIPPERY WHEN WET

The wet floor is slippery; an almost-invisible layer of water covers it. The floor of the hall is polished [worn] smooth and now is very treacherous with the water running over it. The water is barely a finger-width deep, but so cold you can feel the chill through your shoes [boots]. The air right above it is very cold as well, so you are conscious that your face and hands are in air warmer than that around your feet. The slippery floor makes it dangerous to walk in more than half steps if you want to avoid slipping and falling into



46. THE BASEMENT

There is just a small landing at the bottom of the steel stairs, with only a large door reading 'Keep Out.' The door is steel, but the hinges and lock look rather old. [The lock can be picked though it is somewhat difficult. If the characters make it into the room beyond:] The chamber beyond reminds you more of a mockery of a church or theater than anything you would expect to find in a warehouse. Cheap folding chairs are lined side by side into a number of rows. Beneath them are discarded food containers and soda cans, as if this space had been reserved for something less than sacred. The nature of the activities is thrown into question, however, as you look beyond the rows of chairs to where a large cement block rises up from the floor. It is about eight by four feet and at least three feet tall. Chains and belts are crudely bolted to its surface, and the stony gray is stained to a dark brown in a number of large splotches. [If the characters search the rest of the room:] The rest of the area is almost disturbingly empty, with nothing of any significance to be found beyond what you first saw. The only thing behind the slab is a nondescript round drain, about six inches in diameter, its grate mottled with rust and some other brownish substance.

Shard set: Gothic Cathedral

47. APPROACHING THE CATHEDRAL

Spikes of wrought iron fill the spaces between square posts surmounting a four-foot stone wall, creating a formidable barrier between the churchyard and the outside world. Tall spires jut from the cathedral's roof like spear tips, puncturing the bleak clouds overhead. Flying buttresses and gargoyles break up the silhouette of the cathedral and cast twisted shadows in the pale light. Gravel walkways wind through the formal garden, with stunted weeds pushing their way up between the rocks. Ancient trees and constricted flowerbeds



occupy the ground on either side of the paved path leading to the arching entranceway. Marble statues of saints, their faces worn and stained by many harsh years, guard the entrance while reliefs of angelic and Biblical figures crowd the rest of the façade. The heavy wooden doors, bound and studded with iron, loom over you.

[A cathedral is the 'seat' of a bishopric, the church over which a bishop presides; a cathedral is often more elaborate than just a church. However, this description could possibly fit a standard church as well. Many European cathedrals in the Gothic style were built during the Middle Ages, so there have been several centuries' worth of worship, ritual and ceremony in these buildings.]

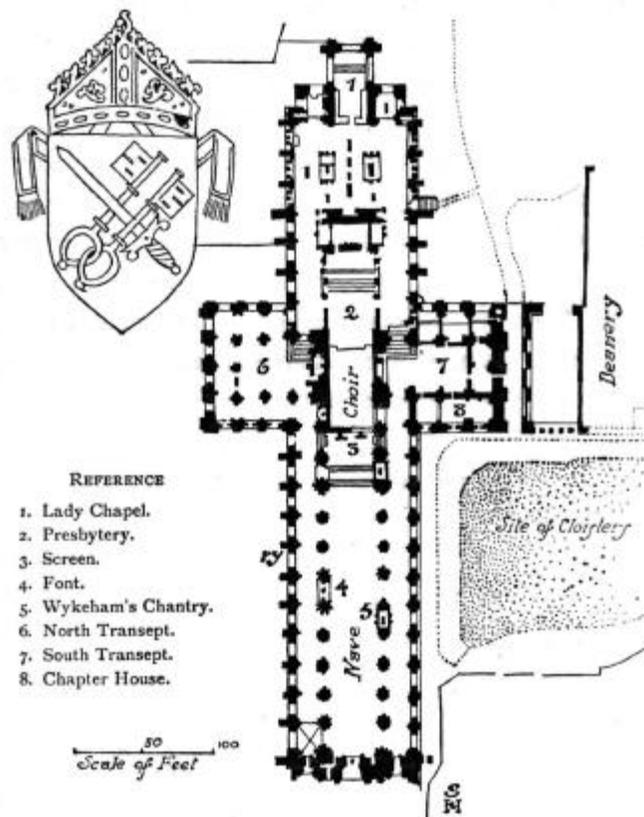
48. CATHEDRAL INTERIOR — NAVE

Inside the church, the soaring space emphasizes your insignificance. The vaulted ceiling is sectioned off into geometric shapes by intersecting ribs which run down the angled ceiling and join to form pillars. These in turn create archways – sets of pillars and arches form walls to your left and right and march in geometric precision down the long sanctuary. Worn wooden pews occupy the open space. Small compartments on the back of each contain missals [prayer books] and hymnals [song books] for any worshippers. Two ornately carved wooden booths [confessionals] sit near the main entrance, doors open on the public side. You spy an upper floor above, set back behind another row of smaller arched openings. Beyond the supporting arches, shadowed walkways run the length of the hall. Past those are the church's outermost walls, made of solid marble blocks with occasional narrow windows of colored glass. The walls of arches lead the eye up the long hall toward a magnificent stained-glass window in the traditional rose shape at the far end of the cathedral.

[Traditional Gothic religious buildings were based on the fundamental shape of the cross and built so that the head of the cross faced to the east. "Nave" is the term for the part of the building that corresponds to the long leg of the cross and is the western-most portion of the building. The stained-glass windows depict holy scenes of various sorts. The spaces between the archway-walls and the outer walls are called arcades; individual archways might be filled with religious paintings, contain the Stations of the Cross or provide settings for statuary of saints. The upper floor located above the arcades is the triforium. The vaulted windows above that are called the clerestory. This particular cathedral is not used for regular services now though it may still serve other functions. The doors of the confessionals are open in a symbolic gesture showing that the Church is always ready to hear confessions from the faithful. Whether or not a priest is on the other side depends on what time of day it is. When it grows dark, tall standing lights are placed at the ends of pews to provide light.]

49. CATHEDRAL INTERIOR — TRANSEPT

You stand in the crossing, where the north and south wings of the cathedral's transept intersect the long hall of the nave and the eastern end, or choir, before you. The ceiling rises up into the underside of the cathedral's central spire, towering above you, its furthest reaches lost in darkness. Rows of arches flank each wing along its length, separating the central portions from arcades to either side. To your left and right are more pews but the crossing itself is open, exposing you to view from almost anywhere in the edifice. There are more of the imposing iron-banded doors at either end of the transept, and above them are stained-glass windows in lurid colors depicting the martyring of saints and the fall of angels. Ahead to your left you can see the priest's canopied pulpit, high and decorated with



carvings of stern teachers of the church. On the right is located the lectern, a somewhat smaller and less ornate platform sheltered by a plainer stone canopy. Straight ahead across the transept stands a two-story ironwork screen. Its lower part has three arches, each more than seven feet tall, for people to pass through. The upper part looks like latticework frozen in iron, and it is topped with an intricate gilt relief of religious figures.

[The "transept" is the part of a church corresponding to the crossbar of the cross pattern. A few cathedral floor plans have two transepts. The larger platform is a pulpit, used for key readings during a service and for members of the clergy to address the congregation. The small platform is a lectern, used for secondary readings during services. The rood (or cross) screen is a divider, which separates the section of the church used by the congregation from that which is restricted to the singing choir and priests.]

Bits of Horror

01

You find a handprint on the wall. In the middle of an otherwise unremarkable wall you come upon the clear print of a hand: five fingers, palm. A right hand, rather large. The print looks as if it was made with blood and you can make out a few more drops below it on the wall. The handprint is isolated; it does not seem to point anywhere or leave any message. It is at a little over waist height on a man, about where an injured person might lean against the wall, but that is all there is. There are no other markings on the wall and no unusual objects in the area.

Bits of Horror

02

This area is unusually cold, so cold that you can see your breath. Goosebumps stand up on your arms and a shiver runs through your body. There is no visible or logical reason for the cold nor did the temperature decrease gradually as you approached. The temperature was normal where you were before but here it is deathly cold. There is no frost. Nothing moves. There is only the cold. Thin wisps rise before you as you exhale and you realize that you were holding your breath.

Halls of Horror: Modern Shards & Bits ©2007 Tabletop Adventures™

Bits of Horror

03

The stench of rotting meat fills the room [hall]. Nothing is in sight that could be the source of the smell; it may have been wafted in on a stray breeze.

Halls of Horror: Modern Shards & Bits ©2007 Tabletop Adventures™

Bits of Horror

04

The sharp, too-clean scent of mothballs almost—but not quite—masks the fetid [putrid] odor beneath.

Halls of Horror: Modern Shards & Bits ©2007 Tabletop Adventures™

Bits of Horror

05

The door to the outside stands open, creaking and groaning with each puff of wind that comes by. The door frame is broken and splintered. The metal latch plate, still screwed into a hunk of the frame, lies on the floor. On both sides of the doorframe are long, thick gouges.

Halls of Horror: Modern Shards & Bits ©2007 Tabletop Adventures™

Bits of Horror

06

In this doorway a door lies where it has fallen, partially in the room and partially out. From what you can see, all of the hardware on the door has been removed. There are traces of rust on the door where the hinges should have been, and it looks like something has scraped or clawed at these areas.

Halls of Horror: Modern Shards & Bits ©2007 Tabletop Adventures™

Halls of Horror: Modern Shards & Bits ©2007 Tabletop Adventures™



Sounds:

Bits 11, 15, 17, 27, 38, 45, 70, 78, 79, 88, 96; Shards 05, 10, 15, 30

Bang/Thump: Bits 20, 25, 36, 89

Creaking: Bits 05, 10, 28, 32, 65, 84; Shards 22, 33, 40

Quiet: Bits 18, 41, 59

Voice: Bits 14, 23, 29, 35, 37, 50, 58, 73

Things: Bits 21, 30, 49, 56, 60, 71, 100; Shards 08, 11, 29

Books: Shards 28, 31, 33, 34, 48

Broken items: Bits 34, 43, 56, 60, Shards 04, 10, 13, 19, 31, 40, 45

Chain: Bit 52; Shards 17, 26, 38, 42, 46

Furniture: Shards 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 33, 34, 41, 42, 43

Painting: Shards 16, 34, 48

Unusual Effects:

Strange but Explainable: Bits 05, 06, 07, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 34, 36, 37, 39, 41, 42, 44, 47, 48, 51, 52, 53, 56, 58, 62, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 77, 79, 82, 84, 87, 88, 90, 91, 94, 98, 99; Shards 01, 03, 06, 07, 09, 11, 12, 14, 16, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 37, 42, 45, 46

Supernatural: Bits 23, 35, 38, 45, 46, 50, 61, 63, 83, 89, 92, 96; Shard 15