

THE CARNIVAL OF THE DAMNED

EXTRA APPENDIX

- Four-Hour Funnel Template
- Gelos Patron Taint Table
- Gelos Invoke Patron Table
- Paper Miniatures
- Handout Images



FOUR-HOUR FUNNEL TIPS FROM DAVID

You've just purchased the newest adventure from Purple Sorcerer Games, and one thing you're probably going to realize immediately is that the many pages of the adventure all filled with dozens of encounters designed to get your players knee deep in clown-innards. Because of this mountain of content, **The Carnival of the Damned** is a special gem for the Judge's shelf, in that it can be ran in so many ways. All this flexibility, however, can easily overwhelm the casual Judge, so I thought I would give you an example of a four hour Con-session I've ran in story mode.

My suggestion for anyone wanting to run the Carnival this way is to get the important parts of the story out in the first couple of hours. You can always add random encounters on the fly if you feel like you are moving too quickly, but waiting too long to include things like the "summoning keys" or the "magic slides" can put pressure on you to rush your players to reach the end.

Below, you'll find an example of how I ran the Carnival in story mode during a recent play test session at a Con. Use it 'as is' if you like, or consider it as a formula for plugging and playing your own session. Remember to always keep watch of the time remaining in your session. If things are moving too slowly, simply place all of the summoning keys in one encounter of your choice. You might also wish to place the violin and stuffed bear in one encounter. If you realize your session is moving too quickly slow it down with a random encounter in between each planned encounter.

Remember that the adventure was written under the assumption that as judge you would have several sessions to enjoy the adventure. If you choose to run it during a Con and shuffle the items important to the story around, you'll might need to get creative with how your players discover them to make sure all the adventure bases are covered (lantern slides, violin, etc.).

Open the adventure with a brief story intro, and follow the following encounter scheme.

- E1. Statue of the Mad God
- E2. Ball Pit (Remember the magic lantern and slide #1)
- E3. Mistress of Fate (Remember the Mistress is instrumental in helping the group solve the mystery of the adventure, in addition to eluding to things they need to rescue the missing children). Continue to drop the Mistress in at various points through the adventure after characters find "moon coins".
- E6. Tilt-a-whirl (Freya's bear)
- E10. Love tunnel (Sophia's violin)
- E7. Whack-a-mole (summoning key #1 and magic lantern slide #2)
- E21. The house of stalwart minds (summoning key #2 and magic lantern slide #3)
- E23. The corn maze (summoning key #3 and magic lantern slide #4)
- E22. The dragon cannon
- E26. The scary-go-round
- E27. The mouth of madness (Only room B where players find the unicorn statue)
- E28. Lair of the Black Jester (Remember the jester has possession of the final summoning key)

Gelos the God of Madness

Gelos is the god of laughter and madness; his followers are the insane and those who find humor in dark deeds. Gelos feeds on the emotional energy from laughter of all types, from the laughter of a child playing with a new pet to the twisted cackle of a murderer who finds sadistic glee in practicing his murderous art. The Laughing God often reach-es out to those forgotten in dank dungeons and sanitariums, finding their chaos-filled souls a delicious feast for the taking through twisted bargains.

Patron Taint

When patron taint is indicated for a follower of Gelos roll 1d6 on the table below. When a caster has acquired all six taints there is no need to roll anymore.

1: The casters skin loses normal color and he develops a clownish alabaster skin. Caster also develops a strange body odor smelling like candy apple and other carnival fare. The affects makes it hard for the caster and those within 15' of him to use stealth related skills. A -4 penalty applies to anyone in range of the caster trying to use such skills. If this result is rolled again strange markings will appear making the PC appear more clownish and the odor range of effect extends an additional 15'. If the result is rolled a third time, caster's eyes develop a strange pink glow. He gains infravision at 60' (Or if the caster already has infravision, add 20' to the total range) permanently and suffers -2 to all rolls involving sight in areas of a typical sunny day.

2: The caster develops a bone-chilling cackle and laughs at unfortu-nate things that happen to friends and enemies alike. The caster also feels compelled to learn and tell jokes, often at the worst time (During combat or important diplomatic talks). The caster's hair also changes color turning a bright pink, or other suitable color. Rolling this result a second time will result in the caster having to pass a DC 13 Will save to avoid trying to tell a joke at the beginning of every combat or crucial encounter. Failure results in the loss of his first round action/move and enemies gaining +2 to attack rolls against him (He gets caught up in his own joke laughing uncontrollably). However, if the player can actually tell a joke and the judge/party finds it humorous, instead make saves for all of the caster's enemies that can hear the joke. Those that fail a DC 12 Will save will laugh uncontrollably, even in the heat of combat suffering a -3 to all action rolls the first round after the joke is told. Friends of the caster gain +3 to hit those who are laughing.

3: The caster's appearance grows emaciated while his mouth becomes wider and longer forming a grotesque grin. Caster always wears the un-nerving smile, even when in pain and it takes a DC 12 Will save to stop smiling through an encounter. The change unnerves all who encounter the caster resulting in a -3 to Personality checks when social skills come into play. Rolling this result again will result in the caster's limbs grow-ing longer, imposing a -5 to MV illustrated by a comical gate. Rolling a third time will cause the caster's grin to become completely frozen rigid and his teeth to grow very large. Talking with the caster is unnerving and results in a -4 reaction adjustment as the caster loses the ability to communicate well. Spell casting is modified permanently by +1.

4: Caster sees demonic clowns out of the corner of his eyes at all times. This can result in distractions during crucial moments. A DC 12 Will save will force the visions away; failure amounting to a -2 to the cast-er's next roll. Rolling this taint a second time will result in the clowns actually talking to the caster and make insane suggestions, whispering false statements to propagate confusion. The newly gifted caster will have to make a DC 10 Will save to avoid seeing the clown logic as sound during moments of decision. This normally amounts in a wasted action and the Judge is encouraged to come up with outlandish sugges-tions (â€œIf you tickle the dragon under his chin he'll give you his largest gem!â€•).

5: The caster suffers a mental breakdown after being visited by the Laughing God directly. He takes the caster to the depths of his own soul showing him the ultimate futility of existence and the wonders of allowing the mind to escape to the taint of chaos. Madness and pan-demonium are injected into the caster as a sure-cure for all that in-fects his fragile psyche. The caster must make a DC 12 Will save at the start of each day for six consecutive days. Failure results in a loss of -1 from his Personality stat as he slips further down the rabbit hole. For every consecutive Will save made the caster will regain a point of Personality (Up to his original stat rating) until the end of the six days have passed. Rolling this taint again results in a second visitation and a -2 loss to Personality per failed check over the course of six days. Only one point will come back for the consecutive saves that are made during this time. A permanent mental disorder will forever remain with the caster. Rolling for a third time will take the personality loss to -3 per failed save over the span of six days, and be left with two men-tal disorders (Judge and player should come up with appropriate and playable quirks).

6: Caster acquires a small clown doll. The doll will begin whispering to the caster during restful moments, telling him things that build his ego and confidence resulting in an addiction to have the doll around. The doll can be destroyed, but will be found the following morning restored and watching over the caster as he sleeps. The caster will begin to love the doll putting it above all others, and even the caster himself. As a plus the caster can draw a +1 bonus to a spell check from the doll on any round, but on the following round all PCs suffer a -1 to their rolls due to â€œbad luckâ€•. If allies try and separate the doll from the caster, the caster will suffer 1 point of personality loss per day that cannot be healed. Reuniting the doll and caster will restore all lost Personality instantly. Rolling this result twice will give the doll a voice and person-ality (Generally annoying!). The caster can also draw +2 to spell at will, but allies will suffer a -2 to all rolls after every use of the ability on their next action requiring a roll. Rolling this taint for a third time will allow the doll to animate, able to walk and talk, effectively becoming the wizard's new familiar and granting all the benefits of a standard cha-os familiar. (The doll bullies the wizard's old familiar to mysteriously depart on â€œvacationâ€•). The caster will begin to dote over the doll as if it is an actual child. The animated doll is mischievous by nature and will constantly try to pull pranks on the caster's party. Judges are encouraged to come up with small mishaps, such as items being misplaced, boot straps tied together, etc. The ability to alter spell checks goes to +3 and allies will suffer -3 to all rolls the round after it is used. Clown Doll (Construct): Init +1; Atk claw +2 melee (1d2) ;AC 12; HD 1d8+5 ;hit points 6; MV20'; Act 1d20; regenerate-doll will rematerialize 24 hours after it is destroyed; SV Re-flex: +2, Will +2, Fort -1.

SpellBurn

1: The caster thinks of something dark, twisted and funny. The vision pulls a violent chuckle from the caster. The laughter is so hard, the cast-er's ribs crack and vessels in his brain slightly rupture causing blood to escape from the nose and ears.

2: The caster falls to his knees laughing insanely just before vomiting swarms of black moths with skull markings on their wings. The physi-cal trauma of vomiting the swarm results in the spellburn expenditure and the cloud of mouths cause a -1d penalty to all physical rolls to all within a 20x20 square. This effect lasts for one round.

3: A tear in reality forms and two clowns step out behind the caster. They're holding stitched leather chickens filled with steel balls. As the caster casts the spell, the clowns begin to beat him violently. The pain sparks off the dark humor of the act, and the caster laughs while literal-ly hearing his own bones crack and tasting blood from the wounds.

4: A pink mist materializes and immediately forces itself into the cast-er's ears, and nose. The mist is the essence of Gelos and infects the cast-er with visions of madness. The caster literally has his mind drowned in the depths of lunacy. The caster is granted a single DC 15 Will save; on a successful save the caster shakes it off while laughing uncontrolla-bly. Failing the save twists reality and the caster cannot distinguish the difference between friend and foe as they all look like demonic clowns. The caster that fails the roll also gains a +5 to all spell checks for 1d8 rounds.

Invoke Patron

Level: 1 Range: Self Duration: Varies Casting Time: 1 round; limited x per bond. Save: None

In order to learn this spell, the caster must first cast patron bond. The particulars of this spell vary according to the terms of the patron. In casting this spell, the wizard invokes the name of a supernatural patron to request aid. This spell requires at least 1 point of spellburn. The patron responds by sending aid according to the nature of its followers; the judge will provide specifics. Note that continued casting of this spell may taint the wizard spiritually and physically.

Corruption: Roll 1d8: (1-4) minor; (5-7) major; (8) greater.

Spell Results

1: Lost, failure, and worse! Roll 1d6 modified by Luck: (3 or less) corruption + patron taint; (4-5) corruption; (6+) patron taint.

2-11: Failure. Unlike other spells, invoke patron may not be lost for the day. Depending on the results of patron bond, the wizard may still be able to cast it.

12-13: Gelos is off tending more important matters in the grand scheme of chaos, however he does see the potential for something twisted with you. The area around the caster becomes unnaturally dark while pink rolling clouds form in the sky. Everything takes on a shade of pink except for the caster's face which becomes a pale alabaster white. All enemies within 20' are drawn to the tightly stretched grin that forms on the caster's face. The grin is unsettling and all who oppose the caster are chilled by the sardonic mockery of the smile sensing imminent doom. Enemies in the area of affect must make a DC 12 Will save, or suffer a -4 to all attacks vs. the caster and comrades for 1d6 rounds.

14-17: A sudden rip in space and time appears allowing a swarm of skeletal monkeys to escape out of the rift hysterically chattering and intent on poo-throwing violence. They swarm enemies of the caster for 1d6 rounds.

Skeletal monkey swarm (Un-dead): Init +2; Atk bite +4 melee against all in 15'x15' area (dmg 1d4 and must save vs cackle see special); AC 10; HP 35; MV 15'; Act 1; SP Cackle (with a successful bite, victim must make a DC 12 Will save or break down into hysterical laughter for 1d3 rounds effectively becoming dazed) ; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0; AL C.

18-19: A crack of pink-hued lightning strikes the ground and smells of sulfur-laced candy apple fill the air. A giant construct in the form of a chimpanzee dressed in striped overalls and holding two deadly cym-bals in its hands rises from where the earth was struck. In addition, a twisted version of a giant clown appears behind the chimp long enough to wind it up by a crank handle in its back. The clown then disappears in a wisp of pink mist leaving the construct to attack the enemies of the caster. Wind-up chimp: Init -1; Atk cymbal smash +2 melee (2d6 dmg plus deafening); HD 3d10; hit points 20; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP deafening (Victim must make a DC 13 Fort save, or be deafened for 1d10 rounds. This will hinder communications, and spell casters will suffer a -1d to their checks unable to hear themselves speak); immune to mind alter-ing spells; SV Fort +4, Reflex +0, Will +1.

20-23: Rainbow colored mists rise from the ground and engulf a 30'x30' area. All enemies of the caster begin to suffer from delusions and laughing maniacally. Each round an attacking enemy is in the area of effect he/she must make a Will save vs. the spell check result. Failure means the attacker brings harm upon himself instead and takes dam-age from their weapon of attack. The damage will not be as severe, thus reduce damage die of the weapon by -1d (A long sword normally does 1d8, but in this case it would be 1d6) and do not add any additional bonuses. The effect will last for 2d7 rounds.

24-27: Caster takes on the visage of his enemies' worst fears. Anyone attacking or being attacked by the caster will have to pass a Will save vs. casters spell check result. Those failing must roll randomly on the table below, suffering the results for 1d10 rounds. Roll 1d6:

- 1: Enemy immediately withdraws in fear from the PC and will move away at his full MV for 1d6 rounds.
- 2: Enemy grows violently ill, throwing up his last campfire meal. In game terms this means they will forfeit their action to do nothing but heave rainbow colored vomit. Affected enemy suffers a -4 to AC against all attacks. This affect lasts for 2d4 rounds.
- 3: Enemy begins to hallucinate seeing all of his allies as twisted and demented clowns trying to kill him. The affected enemy will attack his own allies at random each round and if he has no allies he will attack himself suffering damage equal to the attack with no additional bonuses to damage
- 4: Enemy will see the caster as the living embodiment of the Laughing God and feel compelled to do his bidding. Caster may command the controlled target to do anything, however a suicidal command will allow an additional Will save vs. casters spell check to shrug off the effect. This affect lasts for 2d4 rounds
- 5: The target suddenly breaks out with thousands of tiny mouths all over his body. The mouths all whisper secrets and truths of the Laughing God simultaneously. These secrets aren't meant to be heard by mortal ears and it drives the target insane. Only the caster and affected target can see the mouths. The target is unable to do anything to defend himself and will become a babbling idiot succumbing to the revelations of chaos. A Will save vs. the spell check can be made once a week to try and recover and after two such saves are made, the affected enemy will withdraw from the mouth of madness with one randomly determined phobia (Judge is encouraged to find something related to the encounter) left as an emotional scar.
- 6: The enemy must make DC 17 Will save or die from cardiac arrest while experiencing a horrific and forbidden vision of the Laughing God manifesting and ripping him limb from limb, cackling wildly the entire time. This attack is illusion based and anyone immune to illusion effects will not be affected.

28-29: Caster transforms into a giant demonic clown. Head, hands and feet grow to grotesque dimensions. The caster gains a +6 bonus to attacks and damage rolls. The caster also receives a +4 bonus to AC, and a temporary bonus of +10 hit points. A two handed mallet also materializes made from the purest essence of chaos and can be used by the caster as a weapon. Anyone other than the caster who touches the mallet will have his soul sucked into the weapon unless a DC 12 Will save is made. The mallet is two handed, thus 1d16 is rolled for initiative and damage is 1d14. The effects last the entire duration of the encounter that invoke patron is cast. Caster will be unable to cast spells during the effect.

30-31: An avatar of the Laughing God will appear in the form of a death jester. The avatar will serve the caster for 1d6 turns, until killed or dis-missed by the caster. The death jester is garbed from head to toe in black and white leather armor and silver bells hanging from various buckles. His boots stand knee high and the toes are curled in whimsical fashions. The death jester never speaks, for his rictus grin makes it impossible. He glares at all, his frozen grin contorted and stretched.

Death Jester: Init +4; Atk bone mace +5 melee (1d8 +cackle, see SP) ; AC 15; HD 5d8+5 ;hit points 34; MV30'; Act 1d20; SP PC hit by the bone mace must make a DC 12 Will save or begin to laugh violently tak-ing +1d4 damage per round for 1d8 rounds, and suffer -1d to all actions; SV Fort: +1, Reflex: +3, Will +3

32+: Gelos manifests in one of his many nightmarish costumes (Usually clownish, or something taken from a child's mind, only turned night-marish) and causes time to stop. All enemies are paralyzed and unable to move. The Laughing God then tells one of his ancient maddening jokes to all enemies within 100' . The joke is told in different languages simultaneously, sparing no one the treat of the pun. Once the joke is delivered Gelos vanishes cackling as he leaves in an explosion of glitter confetti. Immediately after, enemies will all begin laughing violently on their next round of action suffering 1d8 damage per round until a successful DC 17 Will save is made at the beginning of each round. The caster and all allies receive +1d to hit any enemy affected by the joke.



CARNIVAL OF THE DAMNED PAPER MINIATURES

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