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### CHILL: CONVERTING CREATURES FROM 2ND EDITION

October 12, 2016 · by growlingdoorgames · in chill, Kickstarter · 1 Comment

I've gotten frequent requests for a step-by-step guide to converting creatures of the Unknown from the 2nd Edition **Chill** rules to the Third Edition. See as how we're in the middle of a (successful!) [Kickstarter](#) for our **Monsters** book, I figured now would be the appropriate time. I asked folks for suggestions for 2nd Ed creatures to convert, and John Kahane requested some of the monsters from the other **Things** sourcebook. So let's take a look at the Pisacha, and use my method for creature conversion (I say "my method" because I don't want imply that this is official or anything; it's just how I approach the process).

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#### Pisacha (pizz-ah-cha)

*"Imagine my surprise, and the confusion of my ancestors, when I fell into a trap. It was a simple trap, but I was not expecting it. Concerned that Colonel Howe would become anxious for me, I managed to free myself and made my way to where our camp was. Should I live to be as old as my grandfather, I hope never to see such a sight again, for as I watched, Colonel Howe turned his back on what he thought was a friend, and was attacked. The creature wore my face, spoke in my voice, and acted like me—but it was a creature of evil with murder in its heart."*

*"With a shout, I rushed to Colonel Howe's aid..."*

SAVE Washington D.C. debriefing:  
Wong Sox, essay  
December 1, 1991

AGL: (65 + 2D10) or 60  
 DEX: (65 + 2D10) or 60  
 PCN: (65 + 2D10) or 80  
 PER: (50 + 2D10) or 65  
 STA: (70 + 2D10) or 85  
 STR: (55 + 2D10) or 70  
 WPR: (35 + 2D10) or 50  
 EWS: (100 + 2D10) or 115  
 ATT: 1 - 3; (40 + 2D10) or 55  
 SR: 3/varies (bite & claws/ta per weapon used)  
 WB: 40  
 Fear: -25 only if recognized  
 MV: 150' (L)  
 Type: Monster, Independent  
 Class: C  
 Disciplines:  
 75/90/110 Empathy, Spirit and Image  
 82/97/117 Change Self  
 77/92/112 Haywire  
 70/85/105 Influence  
 74/88/109 Throw Voice  
 80/95/115 Blind

A Pisacha resembles a hairless monkey of human size, with glowing green eyes and powerful arms.

A Pisacha is a blood-drinking ghoul that can assume the specific shape of any person or animal. To affect this, the Pisacha catches its victim (double) alone, observes him for 2D20 minutes until it can exactly duplicate him, uses its Change Self Discipline to assume his form, and delays its victim with a trap or uses its Influence Discipline to make him stay in his room until the Pisacha returns. If the victim is influenced, the Pisacha asks pertinent questions about himself and his friends so it can be as like its double as possible. If the double is not successfully influenced, the Pisacha uses its Empathy Discipline to gain as much information as it can. The Pisacha then joins the party, pretending to be its double.

A Pisacha attacks a victim chosen from among its new "friends." When it gets its victim alone or in the smallest possible group, it attacks him. This attack should come as a surprise (surprise Initiative for first round of attack) to the victim, unless the Pisacha has done or said something to make him or his friends suspicious.

A Pisacha can fight with any weapon and only changes to its true form if its bite and claws can do more damage than the weapon in use. A Pisacha takes normal damage from all attack forms. When its STA is reduced to zero (0), it reverts to its natural form and is banished to the Unknown for 3D20 days. Thereafter, it comes back to the Known world to start its hunt anew. A Pisacha is destroyed when it has zero (0) Wound Boxes.



Patricio Gonzaga on  
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## Step One: Research

This isn't always necessary, but I like to know the history and folklore behind the creature I'm converting. The **Pisacha**, it turns out, is a demon from Hindu mythology. They can assume different forms or possess people, and according to that Wiki page, they feed on "human energies" (but are also described as "flesh-eating"). So, the description in **Things** is pretty much in-line with their mythological basis, which is good to know. As I have said in other posts, I don't think it's appropriate for us to say that a creature of the Unknown literally is a creature from mythology, so much as that, in the **Chill** universe, the mythology gets applied to the creature or the creature may have inspired the mythology in the first place.

## Step Two: Trim the Fat – Traits

Remember that scene in *Armageddon* where Bruce Willis and his crew are ripping apart the space vehicle to make it suitable to drill into a comet? ("All these rubber hoses gotta go!") That's my approach to game design a lot of the time. When converting a creature from 2nd Ed to 3rd Ed, remember that while in **Chill 2nd Edition**, creatures had the same traits as human characters (minus Luck, plus EWS) in **Chill Third Edition** they have EWS, STA, REF, Aspects, disciplines, boom, done. However, in looking at the trait ranges given for the Pisacha, we can set appropriate traits for using it in 3rd edition.

Let's start with EWS. In general, EWS skews a lot higher in 2nd Ed. The Pisacha is listed as 115, but that would put it at Legendary, so that's way too high. My immediate gut feeling is not more than 100, but there's a slightly more objective way to think about this: Look at what it can do. It uses the Change Self discipline to mimic a specific person. Now, in Third Ed we have a couple of "shapeshifter" options that do slightly different things within the rules; Steal Form lets a creature assume the form of specific people. while Change Form allows a creature to turn into an animal or another creature. Interestingly, though, the write-up in **Things** doesn't mention the Pisacha turning into animals other than one throwaway line, and focuses on it turning into a person and impersonating them.

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In the interest of trimming the fat, then, I'm gonna ditch the idea that it turns into animals (if you as the CM want to add that notion in, just give the Pisacha the Change Form discipline and call it a day). That means it uses Steal Form, which doesn't have a breakdown by power level. Still not seeing this creature as terribly powerful on its own. Let's set its EWS at 80, on the high end of Notable.

For REF and STA, I think I want higher values. This thing is monkey-like, it should be fast and strong. In **Things**, its AGL and STR are 60 and 85, respectively, while its ATT is 55. That's pretty low. I'm gonna set its STA for **Third Edition** purposes at 75 (potent, but not terrible, though I plan to make up the difference with Aspects) and its REF at 90 (monkeys are *quick*).

## Step Three: Disciplines

You can do Aspects before disciplines if it makes more sense to you; I usually do it this way because disciplines come before Aspects in the book.

The **Things** book gives the Pisacha Empathy, Spirit & Image, Change Self, Haywire, Influence, Throw Voice, and Blind. Let's consider each of those.

**Third Edition** doesn't include Empathy or Spirit & Image. I'm actually not clear on why this creature has Spirit & Image anyway; seems a little unnecessary. I'll ditch that (the equivalent would probably be a limited form of Illusion, for the record), and in place of Empathy I'll give the Pisacha the Exploit discipline, which seems very in keeping with its MO.

Change Self I've already addressed; it gets Steal Form instead.

Haywire, Influence, and Throw Voice have equivalents in **Third Edition**. Haywire doesn't make a lot of sense to me, though; nothing in this creature's **Chill** write-up or associated mythology makes me think it should screw with electronics. I'll ditch that. I don't really feel the need to replace it (in general, I avoid overloading creatures with disciplines; I only get so many tokens at any given time, after all).

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Blind got replaced in **Third Edition** with the Stifle discipline. At EWS 90, the Pisacha could knock out two senses, but I'm good with that. Stifle it is.

## Step Four: Aspects

The only Survivability Aspect that I think is really appropriate is Special Weakness, and that's only because I think it's a good idea to have a way to detect the creature when it's mimicking a person. The Wiki page mentions mantras as a way to force it to drop possession (our version doesn't possess people), and that's not bad. So let's say that quiet, but audible, meditation or prayer can force it to reveal itself, canceling the Steal Form discipline.

I think I'm going to give it the Sturdy Aspect as well, because I picture the creature being so nimble and agile that you can't really knock it down; it just rolls to its feet.

How about Combat Aspects? Let's say Deadly Attack (Minor, due to its strength), Enervating Touch (it's frequently described as "vampiric" in mythology sources), and Supernatural Speed (see "monkeys are quick," earlier in this post). Its write-up in **Things** mentions that it can "fight with any weapon," so I'll give it Specialization (Melee Weapons +15).

The only other Aspect I think is appropriate is Cloaked, just because one good Sense the Unknown roll would ruin its whole day. I'm going to say that this Aspect only applies when the Pisacha is in a stolen form, though.

## Step Five: Description

Finally, I look over the write-up and see if anything needs to change. We already jettisoned the "can turn into an animal" bit. Its methods still work OK; it chooses a target, either traps or Influences them to stay put, uses Influence or Exploit to learn about the target, mimics them, and tries to separate the "party" to attack other members and feed on them. Oh, given that, probably I should give it the Sustenance Aspect; we'll say it has to feed on human blood once a week or suffer an escalating Injury, starting at Minor.

Its weakness as written is simply that it's corporeal and vulnerable to weapons. That's fine by me. (The **Second Edition** rules break things down by STA loss and Wound Boxes, but we don't need to bother – it dies when it takes a Lethal Injury.) All in all, I think it's a pretty good monster: It's got an understandable MO, it's dangerous one-on-one, and it's got a couple of nasty disciplines to use to back it up. For a small group of envoys, it would be a decent threat.

## Pisacha

EWS: 80 (Notable)    REF: 90    STA: 75

**Disciplines:** Exploit, Influence, Steal Form, Stifle, Throw Voice

**Aspects:** Cloaked (stolen form only), Deadly Attack (Minor),  
Enervating Touch, Special Weakness (mantras/prayers),  
Specialization (melee weapons, +15), Sturdy, Supernatural Speed,  
Sustenance (human blood weekly or suffer Minor escalating Injury)



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midnightred · October 12, 2016 - 3:38 pm · [Reply](#)→

Excellent!

A good conversion article and example between editions of a game goes a long way to bulking up the resources available for the new edition...and keeps old editions from becoming obsolete.

Thanks!

=)

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