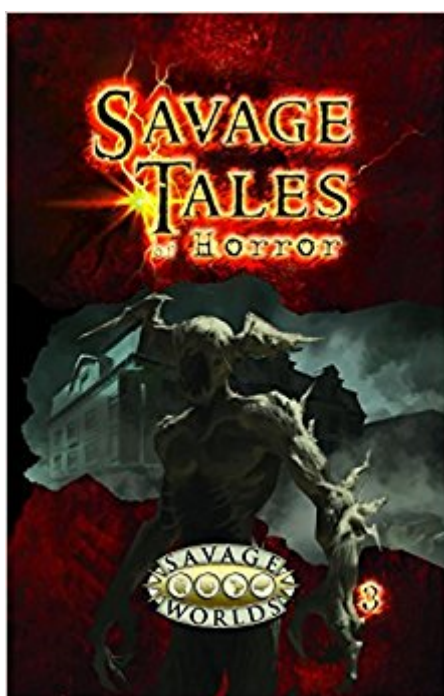


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Savage Tales Of Horror Vol.3 Hardcover (Savage Worlds, S2P10552LE)



Synopsis

Your unit is stranded on an Isle of Death, where Nazis don't just come for you, they don't stay dead! The shards of a Witch's soul is written in The Final Page of an ancient tome of evil. Who else can stop this terror but you the Accursed, those who are witchmarked themselves! A deep space distress call reignites a bitter eons old war between two deadly adversaries, intent on drawing you into their conflict, or to just Hear You Scream! Hotel 96 is waiting for you. It promises fine music, great food, and a release for the soul...but it has a burning desire to make you stay for good! Ghastly aspirations roam old London town...while a dancing craze causes death by euphoric exhaustion. Who will survive The Dance of the Dead? Isle of Death may be used with the Weird War II setting. The Final Page may be used with the Accursed setting. Hear You Scream may be used with The Last Parsec setting. Hotel 96 may be used with the East Texas University setting. The Dance of the Dead may be used with the Savage World of Solomon Kane setting.

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Customer Reviews

Introduction: Savage Tales of Horror is a three-volume set of independent adventures for the Savage Worlds roleplaying game. Even though Savage Worlds has its Savage Worlds Horror Companion, these scenarios can be played with just the core rules. The adventures are based on different Savage World settings, but, again, only the core rules are necessary. This is definitely an unusual approach for adventure collections, which typically center around only one roleplaying game setting. However, given the mortality rates in horror, and gaming groups who can only meet for a one-shot game, these collections are an excellent way for roleplayers to play a variety of horror settings without having to learn another roleplaying game system. They also introduce the gaming

group to Savage World's other game systems, which they might not otherwise be exposed to.

Spoilers ahead, of course.

Isle of Death: This adventure takes place within Savage World's Weird War II setting. The players are on a routine mission, which crash lands on a Nazi testing island. Up until the lab, much of the adventure is novel for gamers mostly used to generic fantasy or Cthulhu Mythos roleplaying. Players will involve themselves in a dogfight (read up on the Dogfight Chase rules!), encounter zombie soldiers while in a crashed plane, and skulk around a POW camp to free some prisoners. However, once in the lab, most of the encounters just end with a monster of the week fight. Gamemasters with some experience should be able to change the mood of the adventure and NPCs to focus more on stealth, or interacting with prisoners and staff who'd rather escape. If you like Savage Worlds as a miniatures game, the adventure has plenty of opportunities for miniatures combat. No pregenerated characters are included, but most players should have an idea how to create a World War II allied soldier.

The Final Page: This adventure takes place in Morden Savage Worlds setting. "The world of Morden is part of a setting book for Savage Worlds named Accursed, a place of dark fantasy where the themes and tropes of Hellboy meet those of Solomon Kane. Only those bearing the forms of monsters can stand against the tide of the Witches' evil. The Accursed are this world's only hope - they must learn to embrace their curse or fight against it in order to free their world from the grip of darkness." As someone not familiar with The Accursed, it's a little unclear from this sidebar what sort of character should be generated. I think pregenerated characters would have helped. The Accursed roleplaying site, accursedrpg.com, has a wealth of information about this setting, more than enough to run this adventure. You should also be able to run the adventure with generic fantasy heroes, treated as outsiders sent by an unwelcome body. The adventure primarily happens in a mansion, so it's not too difficult to modify it to a Gothic adventure. With some editing and scaling down of encounters, the adventure could be modified into a Call of Cthulhu-style scenario (or even a Tom Baker Dr. Who adventure, "The Witch in the Mirrors", with its science-fiction-y explanation of horror events!).

Hear Your Scream: This adventure takes place in the Last Parsec setting, and optionally uses the Savage Worlds Science Fiction Companion. Savage World's Last Parsec Primer free download has additional background the gamemaster and players may wish to use. The gamemaster may also wish to play the free non-horror Last Parsec's Unexpected Colony download adventure beforehand. With the characters in space, their communication devices will go dead, and the players will have to communicate non-verbally. The last pages of the adventure have stats for entities encountered during the adventure, a synopsis of the Kobold crew, and pregenerated characters who may be used in other sf games. The adventure starts off with a distress signal, and the players find themselves

having to make a decision: who stays on the ship, and who boards the disabled space craft? Tales then divides up its adventure into location-based encounters on the disabled space craft, and event-driven ones on the rescuing ship. The plot is a bit more straightforward than I'd like. Two alien crystalline intelligences have been squabbling about for eons, but, being crystals, couldn't do anything about their philosophical opponents. Millenia ago, mobile aliens found these alien crystals, which then took over their bodies and resulted in planetary war and doom. Time passed, and the Kobold crew discovered these crystals, which took them over as well, resulting in their demise as the aliens, both as crew members and the mobile aliens, fought each other again. Thankfully, one of the crew, who can be revived in the medical bay, isn't quite telling the truth, and can be played by a wily gamemaster (or co-GM). A creative gamemaster can think of other ways for the different entities in this scenario to have their own interests, with the players caught in-between (or having motives of their own). If players are late to the game, the gamemaster can also try some flashback roleplaying of the crew of the Kobold, so that the players can look at them as more than "extras".

Hotel 96: This adventure takes place in the East Texas University world, or can be placed in any modern horror, mystery, or noir setting. Our heroes find their car (and, mysteriously, cell phones) breaking down in front of the ominous Hotel 96. As they enter the hotel, they find themselves within celebration -- of the last night of Prohibition. Alas, they are soon told, by the charred spirits of the hotel, that they must "end this". The hotel of the adventure reminds me quite a bit of that of *The Shining*, so you may want to watch that movie (with a bright light) for ideas and encounters with those of the hotel's past. As the characters investigate the rooms, they have various premonitions and encounters with various NPCs. Activities which result in disrupting the environment result in various "haunting" effects that happen to the characters. Myself, I would have liked the adventure to be more subtle, giving clues rather than direct instructions, and the NPC encounters fleshed out more into subplots. Pregenerated characters (Freshmen (Novices) with two advances) are included, and may be used in other East Texas University campaigns.

Dance of the Dead: This adventure "is a Soloman Kane adventure for veteran level characters or higher set in London and the wilds of Scotland." Soloman Kane himself is a pulp-era late 16th to early 17th century Puritan, and creation of Conan the Barbarian writer, Robert E. Howard. N'Longa, one of the characters of Soloman Kane, makes an appearance. The adventure itself can fit any generic fantasy city (with a book seller), and its beginning a particularly good model for designing a town adventure. The adventure also features a variety of ghosts from different eras and you can adjust the difficulty levels of the ghosts pretty easily, from wispy to fully material. The adventure is on the linear side, and assumes the characters will act heroically, rather than ally against the enemy, or

even defeat him and take his place. Thematically, characters will need to have weapons that can affect ghosts, although the Friends and Foes section says the ghosts the characters fight are material, and do not have the Ethereal ability (can only be harmed with magic attacks) that Ghosts in the core book have.

PDF vs. Hardcopy: For adventures, I typically recommend PDFs over hardcopies. With a PDF, you can print out the adventure you're playing for the night, rather than bring the entire book with you. You can print pages on color, then cut them out as visual handouts (some of the Tales of Horror adventures also have handouts). You can cut out and give the players any pregenerated characters (although I would have preferred them to be on half-pages, rather than across a two-column format). You can take notes on the printouts. And, of course, the PDFs are less expensive.

Free Test Drive: I should note that Savage Worlds has a free Test Drive modern-day horror adventure, The Wild Hunt, originally given out on Free RPG Day 2011. The sixteen-page PDF has a short four-page adventure, pregenerated characters, figure flats, and six-page core rules including character generation. A review can be found on RPG.net :

<https://www.rpg.net/reviews/archive/15/15319.phtml>

Conclusion: I would describe these Savage Tales of Horror as adventures, as much as horror. Characters can fight off most of the threats, though the foes are often flexible enough for a game master to adjust ad hoc. Some investigation and stealth is necessary. Some of the adventures are on the linear side. And, as said, the adventures are for different Savage Worlds, so they're best played by players who prefer or can only play one-off adventures.

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