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Exalted: The Abyssals



Synopsis

Born in the Shadowlands Black disciples of the Deathlords, the Abyssal Exalted are the mailed fist of the dead. And yet they are also human, and many are tormented by the curse of their unholy power. Some walk among men as harbingers of the Deathlords, while others rebel against their destiny and ride as forlorn heroes of the living. Are the Abyssal Exalted the ultimate weapon of Oblivion or its ultimate nemesis? Born to Destroy The third in the series of hardbacks that makes the other types of Exalted available for play, Exalted: The Abyssals includes extensive detail on the underworld and the Deathlords - and the Abyssal Exalted as players characters. Inside is everything needed to portray these servants of darkness, from their black curse to rules for their powerful necromancy.

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Customer Reviews

My reason for getting this book is that I am currently planning a plot line for an epic-level Exalted game. Pretty ambitious, considering it'll be the first Exalted game I've DMed. Anyway, the plot line necessitates a repentant Abyssal, so I needed to read up on them. Abyssals are heinous. That's just the way they were made. I mean, just look at their Charms!!! Ouch. Just, ouch. I was surprised the book had as much information as it did. Full bios of 8 of the 13 deathlords (intentional, so the storyteller can also make up her own), full character creation rules for ghosts, and three circles of necromancy spells! (and those are heinous too) It also discussed the turning of Solars to Abyssals and the much more difficult turning of Abyssals to Solars (albeit, in passing). I was thrilled, as this is

exactly what my story line will be about. This is an awesome resource, though I would never want to play a truly evil Abyssal.

I really enjoyed this book! Right off the bat the book begins to immerse you into the "underworld". It goes into depth about the conditions this world is in, and how it got there, but it doesn't bore.. too much! The fact that they were able to kill the Primordials and then make the idea into a whole new book impressed me. This book really allows you to stylize your underworld characters.

Great book, well produced.

This book is the third major supplement to the core Exalted rulebook, which is more-or-less necessary for play. In it is detailed the life and times of the Deathknights-the Abyssal Exalted. Infused with death energy, these dark crusaders venture out to do their Deathlord patron's unholy bidding . . . or not. Some Abyssals come to deny their destinies, carrying out a shadow war against the forces of the Dead. But be she willing servant of darkness or its sworn foe, an Abyssal Exalted is followed by death wherever she goes. Abyssals are created when a dying mortal is offered the once-in-a-lifetime chance of Exaltation, the chance to be infused with the power of a demigod. Those who refuse, die. Those that accept are healed and taken to the bosom of their patron Deathlord, there to be taught the ways of sorcery and draped in the funeral garb of the unliving. In a setting where divine heroes are rather rare, Abyssal Exalted are scarce among them. There are but perhaps 50ish at any given time (compared to a few hundred Solar Exalted, a few hundred Lunar Exalted, a few score Sidereal Exalted, and perhaps 15,000 Terrestrial Exalted in a world of 50 million mortals or more), each carefully shepherded by their dark patron. Able servants are lavishly gifted with arms and armor forged of black ore and unfortunate souls, and taught the secrets of Necromancy (a dark mirror to the sorcery found in the core book and the Book of Three Circles). Beyond the backgrounds available, Abyssal Exalted have a great deal of innate power in the form of charms and anima abilities-many of which are twisted versions of Solar charms. Why is this so? Because the soul of each and every Abyssal Exalt once belonged to a Solar hero. Captured by the Deathlords, twisted by horrible sorcery, the Abyssals duplicate the roles and castes of the Solars (including, then, the Dusk, Midnight, Daybreak, Day, and Moonshadow castes). Deathlords are powerful Underworld entities that act as patrons to the emerging Abyssal Exalted. To this point, the origin of the Deathlords has been cloaked in mystery-no more! It is revealed that the Deathlords (of which there are 13) are in fact the souls of 13 Solar Exalted of old, who in rage and sorrow at the

treachery of the Terrestrial Exalted turned to the Primordials whom the Solars had so recently slain. Ten of these powerful beings are described in detail, leaving 3 for ingenious Storytellers to flesh out (so to speak). I might add that one of the best things about the Deathlords are their names, which range from evocative (Walker in Darkness) to the enigmatic (Eye and Seven Despairs) to the downright weird (Dowager of the Irreverent Vulgate in Unrent Veils). In addition to the Deathlords, this book covers the inhabitants and geography of the Underworld-which, as you may surmise, is a bleak, brooding reflection of the living lands of Creation. Included are a large number of ghostly charms (Arcanoi) and rules for heroic ghost characters, much as the core book covers heroic mortal characters. All in all this is a well-written book, mostly free of the typos and misspellings that have plagued other recent White Wolf releases. While the Abyssals are an excellent addition to the core rules, in some ways I feel that this book was unnecessary. The presence of this book-even if no Abyssal characters crop up in your game-completely strips away the mystery and magnificence of these heroes of the dead. It leaves very little to the imagination. The book also draws heavily from *Wraith: the Oblivion* (for obvious reasons), including terms such as Stygia, spectre, and Arcanoi: but rather than seeming to ape that worthy game (*R.I.P.*), *Exalted: the Abyssals* still clearly conveys the exotic, alternate-universe feel that characterizes the game. Hey, Storyteller: Some players are going to see the Abyssals as the answer to their prayers. Here is a divine killing machine, something so evil and unnatural even its flaws end up killing innocents. With its fuzzy morality, dark imagery, and general nastiness, Abyssal is going to attract twinks and powerplayers like rotting meat draws flies. If you prefer the Abyssals remain the mysterious foes presented in the core rulebook, don't buy Abyssal. Don't let your players buy Abyssal (and if they do, swipe it and feed it to the dog or something), because it's sure to deflate the enigmatic aura of the Deathknights.

Players Take Note: Abyssal Exalted, despite their powers, have a certain number of handicaps to keep in mind while considering one as a character. Though filled with death energy, they are yet living-which makes them something of an oddity in the Underworld. They cannot regain Essence in Creation without stealing it from living things, typically by drinking blood or eating flesh (and that's fresh flesh, not just a rare steak). Furthermore, the Abyssal version of the Great Curse comes in the form of Resonance, which they gain instead of Limit-and they gain it much more readily. Acknowledging your old name? Point of Resonance. Dwelling in a house with the living? One point per night. Siring or bearing a child? Four points. And like *Mage: the Ascension's* Paradox, Resonance is nasty-not to you, but those around you, with effects ranging from the minor (warping and tarnishing holy symbols) to the middling (blighting all crops in your line of sight) to the major (spontaneously creating a Shadowland). However, for death-dealing, Essence-reaping, antipaladin action, Abyssal

Exalted are without peer.

White Wolf is doing a great job of sneaking out it's large scale settings books mixed in with sufficient crunchy bits to keep the kids interested. This book is largely about ghosts, and the politics of the underworld with a later section on the hard rules of creating and playing Abyssals. I noticed a certain disconnect over when they were talking about normal ghosts and when they were talking about the Abyssals. To be honest, I had no intention of ever letting my players play these guys, and just got the book for the setting materials, and a hint of flavour from the powers section. To that end, the book served me well, making many references to the older wraith game, but adding enough new details to give it a unique exalt feel. If you really want crunchy bits for playing abyssal exalted, or are interested in how the underworld works, buy this book.

While the book is plumb full of interesting ideas and really abstract and creative details, it's really not the coolest Exalted book so far. In fact, since the Dragonblooded came out, I wonder where the authors' coolness ran. While reading the book I get flashed images of a bunch of middle aged former D&Ders sitting around a table, drinking soda and eating potato chips, trying to fit every single idea into this book. (Like a "Dual Monarchy" which is actually four personalities. Wait? Monarchy? Dual? What?) It's far too detailed, and this really takes away from those initial "cool ideas." Yeah, the powers are cool, and Abyssals are tanks to fear -- that much is true. Don't buy this book for the literature or the setting.

A very illuminated work about darkness in Creation. Mentions the true name of a Deathlord.

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