

Will to Cremate/Project CAVEAT

Introduction

Harvey Clearwater, Jr. is the picture of a young playboy. A wealthy upbringing and expensive education saw his way into a cushy position in the family business. After the untimely death of his father, Harvey inherited his 50% shares and position as CEO. This sudden rocketing into wealth and power had cemented his position as quickly as he had gained it. A future of uninterrupted prosperity and financial growth seemed to be in the future for both Harvey and his father's company. This good fortune would not last, however.

Zachary Munn, CFO and founding member of Clearwater-Munn, sat fuming quietly at the other end of the boardroom table during this sea change. Munn believes he should have control over the entire company now (which is not entirely unwarranted - it was his savvy investing sense backed by Clearwater Sr.'s seed money in the early 60s that earned them their original success). He refuses to take this perceived slight in stride, and has decided to take it upon himself to change Harvey's mind on a number of company policies - using whatever means necessary.

The Truth

Zachary Munn, incensed at what he believes to be an unlawful takeover of the company he helped to found, has made a pact with forces he scarcely understands to control the son of his dead partner, whom he believes to be incapable of running their business. Utilizing a hypergeometrical effect uncovered from a peculiar text in his family's collection, he has brought forth a manifestation of the Worm that Walks. The Worm that Walks is expending psychic effort to control the animate corpse of Clearwater, killed two days ago by Munn in a fit of rage during a meeting of the two men. This process was initiated by Munn after an attempted buyout of his stocks by Clearwater et al. was forced on him and resulted in his separation from the company under hostile circumstances.

Munn's newly-formed pact with the Worm that Walks has overfilled his mind with psychic insight concerning those the Worm has infected. He is aware and in control over conversations with those so infected, so long as he concentrates and is not himself so engaged. He will use this ability to misdirect prying Agents toward dead end inquiries.

Soon thereafter, the Worm's psychic link to Munn came to fruition, physically manifesting as a parasitic being within his body. It has since gained more control over him as his murderous obsession grows. Soon, the Worm's own motive will bear fruit as it assumes full control of Munn and enforces control over others to serve as slaves and foodstuffs.

Getting Agents Involved

The Agents are informed that Clearwater-Munn is (unbeknownst to any of the civilians employed there) one of a number of shell companies used to funnel DoD funds into the project and maintain its black budget accounts. Corporate leadership has become unstable and the program isn't happy. The Agents are drawn from a variety of professional backgrounds as a sort of catch-all measure to deal with the situation as it develops. They are to meet with a handler, Agent Brian, in a reserved library meeting room. They are apprised of the situation and tasked to seek out Harvey Clearwater Jr. and report on the nature of his mental deterioration. After discovering the true nature of the situation, they are ordered to put an end to the source of the unnatural occurrence and cover it up.

Investigating Leads

Clearwater - see description.

Munn - see description.

- Munn's home: gaining access to Munn's apartment should be difficult. A rotation of stubborn doormen guard entrance to the building which seems luxurious judging by location and appearance. Persuade 40% might talk a lone Agent inside, but a large group of investigators will rouse suspicion, up to and including a call to local authorities. Success should turn up several incriminating pieces of evidence, including:

- A single photograph of Clearwater, Jr., apparently dead on the floor of his office, with what appears to be a mouthful of worms, taken from only a foot or so above. Search 60% or successful roll, +10 if Agents are aware of Munn's guilt/corruption.

- Pages from De Vermis Mysteriis - Language (Latin) 50% or successful roll to decipher Located within a locked roll-top desk in Munn's study is a sheaf of papyrus leaflets, brittle with obvious age. An Agent with Other Language (Latin) 50% or successful roll can decipher the contents of the pages: a banishment spell used to combat the Worm that Walks. Agents who can read it may learn the spell in 1d12+4 hours; those who cannot read it double that time due to a laborious translation process.

Dramatis Personae

Harvey Clearwater, 31yo CEO Clearwater - Munn Mutual - mis-diagnosed with Cotard's Syndrome. He is currently being held in a nearby psychiatric facility under restraint. Alone in his room, he moans constantly, gnashing his teeth and wailing about "the worms." Agents who flash badges or convince an orderly of their medical interest are allowed in to speak to him, though the attending will doubt they'll get through to him. Questioning Clearwater about the takeover or Munn will elicit panic and fear; he is convinced Munn is going to kidnap him in the near future, though he doesn't know how. If an Agent entertains his notions of the worms in his body or his being dead, he frantically begs them to cut them out of him or euthanize him. He will gladly allow anyone enabling these desires to go ahead doing so, but it is likely an orderly will see this and put a stop to it, alerting security if they have to. This could rapidly go south for the Agents, risking blowing their cover.

Zachary Munn, 67yo - craven, desperate dabbler

Zachary Munn is a cruel, malevolent person whose ability to disguise his true personality verges on sociopathy. If approached at his home or one of the few shops he frequents, he responds very pleasantly and cooperates with law enforcement if a badge is presented - to the extent it serves him. Questioning him about the situation at Clearwater-Munn is met with skillful placation and gentle denial. According to him, the "heated rooms upstairs" are scorned by his defiance of Clearwater Jr.'s recent policies and he believes his "friends and colleagues" will soon come to see his point of view. A HUMINT of 70%, Psychoanalysis 80% or successful roll is required to perceive his lying; his long-trained facade of empathy is further bolstered by the creeping influence of the Worm. He regularly enters the offices at night, using the key code he knows to enter through the delivery port - 8744. Inside, he works to place the miniscule eggs which contain the means of his infecting and dominating his former employees.

Confronting Munn

By the time the Agents piece together the truth behind Clearwater's condition, Munn will have fully succumbed to the influence of the Worm. He can be found either in his home or his corner office at Clearwater-Munn, wherever the group checks first. He will be draped in dark robes, fully immersed in a ritual chant and heedless of the group when they find him. The Worm, now fully in command of its new host, is attempting to complete a powerful hypergeometric effect; waking the parasites dormant in over half the employees working in the building. If allowed to finish the ritual, the scenario ends rather abruptly as the newly-formed army of Wormslaves set upon devouring them.

Worm that Walks

Putrefied Horror

STR 16 CON 15 INT 13 POW 11 DEX 15 HP 13

Weapons: Claws 50%, dmg 1d6

Armor: None, but the Worm that Walks can be harmed only when in its true form and then only by non-firearm weapons.

Skills: Sneak 50%

Sanity Loss: 0/1D10 Sanity points to see the true form of the Worm that Walks.

Banishing the Worm

Located within a locked roll-top desk in Munn's study is a sheaf of papyrus leaflets, brittle with obvious age. An Agent with Other Language (Latin) 50% or successful roll can decipher the contents of the pages: a banishment spell used to combat the Worm that Walks. Agents who can read it may learn the spell in 1d12+4 hours; those who cannot read it double that time due to a laborious translation process. It involves the sacrifice of a total of ten points from the invoker's POW and/or HPs; this takes the form of self-mutilation while chanting the ancient words of power, taking as many combat rounds as it took hours to learn. At the end of the incantation, the Worm lets out an ear-piercing shriek and appears to implode from its center mass, wisps of purple-black smoke swirling around it as it is cast back into its own dimension.

Wrapping Up

Letting Munn achieve his aim will result in a massive emergence of the unnatural, which will take much for the organization to smother. Surviving Agents are severely reprimanded and likely never trusted with responsibilities again.

The Agents can find among other occult implements a Latin transcription of *De Vermis Mysteriis*, bound in what appears to be an unusual leather. The portions related to summoning and binding the Worm are highlighted in standard office yellow and annotated by Munn. Destroying or turning it in allows 1d10 SAN recovery, though leaving it whole fills the Agents with an unease, like their stomach is full of something... wriggling.