

Gregorius21778:

Curse of the Gleaming Icosahedron



*A Character-Morphing Curse &
Halloween Horror Supplement*



Version 1.0;
(c) 2019

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The Curse of the Gleaming Icosahedron is one of my Halloween Horrors: a horror themed pay-what-you-want title that will become available at the start of October and is going to disappear from the virtual shelves again after All Hallows’ Eve. This one here enters a long-term curse into an ongoing game (or campaign) that will transform both the body and the very fate of a character, step by step. As it is common with old school RPG elements, the roll of the die dictates the turn the events take, but it all starts with a decision to scrutinize something that was Not Meant to be Screwed With.

Enjoy!

A Gift not Meant for Them



The beginning to all what follows is the find of a certain item by one of the PC. It may be found in the possession of a wizard, cultist, adventurer, thief, pirate or sage. It may be uncovered in a ruin, a treasure hoard, a collection, among a merchant's wares or in an oubliette. It may be found buried, hidden in a statue, uncovered in a beast's stomach, sealed in a wall or washed ashore at a beach.

It is a gray metal disc, three inch thick and six inch in diameter. The metal is the color of lead, but it is neither as heavy nor as soft. The item will actually turn out to be a tin (a very solid one), but although one can see the line that indicates the end of the lid, it is impossible to remove it by hand (unless a character is in league with the *Gods of the Outer Dark* or an offspring of a race that worships them).

The metal proves to be harder than steel (or any other known metal) and resists any attempt to open it by force, or to destroy it. It will not crack, it will not shatter, it will not melt. A cast *Knock* spell or *Dispel Magic* will allow to remove the lid.

The inside is lined with black satin and holds a small green gem. The precious stone has been cut into an almost round shape, also its surface is made up of evenly shaped triangles. It gleams softly.

The exact shape of the gem is that of an *icosahedron* (a shape known to most roleplayers as that of the D20). It is enchanted and holds a gift for those who have in them the heritage of (or have pledged their souls to) an entity best described as *One of the Gods of the Outer Dark Beyond the Stars*.

Curiosity, Greed or Foolishness

As long as a character only inspects the gleaming gem briefly and then closes the lid again, nothing will happen. Both disc and glowing gem may be sold for a fine price to the right buyer.

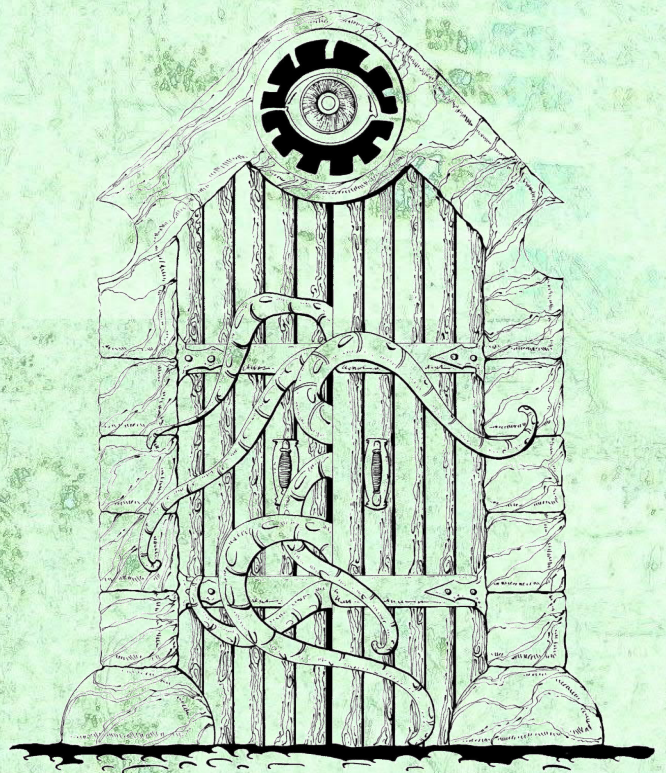
If a character scrutinizes it more closely or lifts it from the satin (by any means), he or she will become hypnotized by the gem while the gleam brightens to clear green light... and then dies down. The gleam of the gem is gone then, and the character has been bestowed with the gift it has contained.

...but as it was not meant for him or her, it will be more a curse to the character (and counts as such).



A metamorphosis of both body and fate will set in. It already started the moment that the gleam left the gem. From now on, all results of a natural "19" on an Attack roll or Saving Throw are now treated as a natural "20" instead. Furthermore, any natural "20" on a roll of a d20 (or any result treated as such) triggers a roll on the Metamorphosis chart (see next page). Results that change the die results are applied immediately, while all physical changes take a random amount of time till the metamorphosis is completed (roll a d6):

- | | |
|------|------------------|
| 1: | 2d6 hours |
| 2-5: | that many rounds |
| 6: | 1d8 turns. |



Metamorphosis of Body and Fate



#01: Haunted by Success

Not only is the result of 19 treated as a 20 in regard to the character, but now the 18 as well. If this Metamorphosis is rolled again, the 17 is treated as a 20, too. Then the 16. Then the 15, and so on....

#02: Five Fingers and the Right Hand

Roll a d6: On a result of 1-5 a finger swells, throbs and eventually bursts open to make way for a flexible, glistening green tentacle that replaces the finger from now on.

1: Thumb 2: Index Finger 3: Middle Finger
4: Ring Finger 5: Baby Finger

The tentacle is one or two inch longer than the finger was, and is as flexible as one may expect. If a finger that has already been replaced comes up as a result again, the tentacle swells, throbs and then splits up in two. This way, the number of tentacles increases. It is up to the GM at which point this may or may not interfere with the use of certain objects.

When a 6 comes up, all remaining natural fingers are morphed while the hand itself throbs and then dissolves. The finger tentacles now start directly at the wrist, and are accordingly longer. From this point on, no more finger tentacles may grow.

If this metamorphosis comes up again after the hand has been transformed, treat it as **"Haunted by Success"**

#02: Five Fingers and the Left Hand

See above.

#03: The Right Arm is not Right

From shoulder to wrist, the skin of the limb starts to feel damp and turns sickly green. The bones begin to ache and the joints feel hot. At the end it feels like hot wax would be poured under the skin, and the whole limb becomes flaccid. Bones and joints melt away while the arm itself elongates by several inches and form itself into a tentacle. The hand is not changed by this.

It will take the character two days to get used to the new limb, till then all actions involving it suffer from a (-2) penalty, which is lowered to (-1) after the first day. When the metamorphosis comes up again, the tentacle gains a foot in length and may be used as a whip in melee from then on (1d4 damage at first, 1d6 if rolled for a third time).

#04: The Left Arm will not be Left

see entry #3

#05: The Right Leg Lost

From hip to toe the skin of the limb starts to itch and flakes away in large patches. What is revealed beneath is of a shocking green color. The bones and joints start to feel like jelly and the character will fall prone. Finally, a tingling sensation starts, but turns into the pain of a thousand hot needles. The flesh melts while leg and foot split up into two thick tentacles that are still not strong enough to fully replace the function of the limb the character now has lost in exchange for them. The movement of the character is reduced by 25% (which is cumulative if the other leg becomes transformed as well later on).

If this metamorphosis comes up again, one of the tentacles thickens and throbs before it splits into two tentacles, and thereby increases the total number by one. Every time this happens, the penalty (see above) is reduce by 5%. When both limbs are tentacles and the penalty has been mitigated, every two new tentacles mean a 5% increase in movement. It does not matter if the growth is even or not, because... well.. we are not talking about a locomotion on a pair limbs here anymore.

#06: The Left Leg Gives Way

see above

#07: The Right Eye

The area around the eye swells while the vision on its side becomes milky and fades to black. Eventually, the whole eye is pushed out from the inside and falls to the ground as 1d3+2 small, mucus-wet tentacles press forth from the socket. They move lazily, and on their own accord.

The character is now half-blind (-1 to melee attacks; -3 to ranged attacks) or completely blind, if the other eye is missing as well. If there was no eye to start with (due to a prior event in the character's life), the tentacles grow out of the empty socket.

If the same eye is rolled for again **or if both eyes were replaced and there is another roll on the Metamorphosis table(!)**, the eye-tentacles become pale and photosensitive. While bright, unobstructed daylight actually blinds the character now, other conditions allow the same sight as by torchlight (if any light is there) or candlelight (in darkness of any kind).

#08: The Left Eye

see #07

#09: Your Kind Shall Spread No More

It starts as a strange and unwholesome feeling in the loins, both hot and cold. The tissue seems to soften and lose firmness. The genitalia start to feel damp and bereft of warmth, like a dead jellyfish. Then, the change happens. A male character will have both, "the pistol and the shot bag", rot away into viscous slime. Out of the open wound grows a small cluster (1d6+2) of pale-green tentacles that twitch at odd intervals. In the case of a female character, the labia will just grow flaccid and turn into pale, hanging flaps of skin while the tentacle cluster grows right out of it, filling most of the cavity.

Sexual intercourse is no longer possible for the character, and the act itself gains a sickening quality to the PC, like wallowing in rancid fat.

If this metamorphosis comes up again, the character becomes immune against *Charm* effects. When it comes up again thereafter, it is treated as **In Failure**, too.

#10-11: Wet Behind the Ears

At first, it is a wet rash behind both ears, like an infection. What follows are headaches and a constant humming only the character perceives. In the end, the humming becomes a chorus as fine, worm-like tentacles spread out right behind both ears. They constantly wave, gently, just as they would flow with a wind or current around them. The noise dies down then. The character will from now on be able to understand the spoken words of any chaotic being, without knowing the language.

When the result comes up a second time, the character will gain the ability to perceive every invisible presences as a humming noise. The character will not be able to determine the exact location, only that something invisible is within 30'.

When the result comes up a third time, the same is true for cursed items. The humming of those are of a different quality, but the character will have to find out about the meaning by him- or herself.

When the result comes up again after this, it is treated as **"You Cannot Keep your Head"**.

#15: Its Mouth

Every move of the lips causes an ache, then a sharp pain while they and the skin around the mouth bulges and strains. It will finally rip as all of a sudden, dozens of fine, worm like tentacles burst forth. They will hang like a grotesque beard around the mouth and down the chin, unless the character speaks, eats, becomes agitated or aroused. Then, they start to writhe, roll, lift and wriggle.

When this metamorphosis comes up again, the voice of the character gains a sinister and unearthly quality. The words of the character will from now on be understood by any chaotic thing or being that is not from this earth.

When it comes up a third time, the character may use a "kiss attack" with the tentacles as an option after a successful wrestling attack (see LotFP rules p. 63). The victim must Save vs. Poison or will be paralyzed for [character's level+1d4] rounds.

When the result comes up again, treat is as **Haunted by Success**.

#16: Entrails

It starts as a gripping in the guts, but turns to nausea as the innards seem to twist and turn inside of the body. This ebbs and flows. 1d8 rounds after eating, the character will feel sick and suffer a (-1) penalty to all actions for 1d4 turns. Still, the food stays in and is nourishing. But it is now impossible for the character to defecate. Instead, the PC will vomit a nasty mustard colored mucus that reeks like diarrhea. The character may from now on re-roll any failed Save vs. Poison once. When the re-roll is successful, the PC will immediately vomit the mustard colored mucus and will thereby be stunned for a round.

If this metamorphosis comes up again, roll a d4:

1: The character gains a +2 bonus on all Saving Throws vs. Poison

2: The Entrails count as a "Always On" 1st level *Detect Magic*, but the knowledge is just a painful revolting of the entrails (stunned for one round). The effect is only triggered once per item/entity.

3: When the character becomes heavily wounded, a bunch of 2-feet long tentacles burst forth from the belly. Any successful melee attack against the character that's damage die shows a natural "4" is negated instead, as the tentacles grab the weapon and wrench it from the attacker's hands.

4: When the character dies, his or her belly begins to throb and expand. After 1d4 rounds, a **Tentacled Icosahedron** bursts forth from it (see end of the document). Its reaction to the party the PC belonged to is determined randomly.

If any of the four additional effects is rolled up again, no new effects are added to the Entrails and all further upcoming results of this metamorphosis are treated a **Haunted by Success**.

#17: The Beast's Back

The shoulders, upper back and the spine begin to ache, the muscles tighten and at one point, it becomes impossible for the character to keep an upright posture. A hunchback begins to form and grows continuously. It enlarges and begins to take up more and more of the back till it reaches the tailbone and has the character look like a toad carrying its young on the back. The skin over this abnormal growth begins to stretch and balloon to eventually burst with a !POP! while 1d3+1 fleshy green tentacles, each the thickness and length of the character's arms, stretch out, only to sink down the back and sway lazily. After [8 minus Dexterity Bonus] days the character will have gained control over the limbs, but using them has the same penalty as a blind attack. They do provide the PC with an unarmed melee attack against any opponent that attacks him or her from behind.

When the result comes up again, it is treated as **"In Failure, too"**.

#18: You Cannot Keep Your Head

It starts as a headache. It grows into an unbearable migraine. In the end, everyone nearby can hear the skull crack under the skin before face and scalp peel away and open up like a flower in bloom. Everything inside the head rises on a cluster of tentacles that look like that of a deep sea anemone. The eyes sit on a tentacle each, the ears as well while the mouth sits on a particular thick and muscular tube that links it to what is left of the throat. The brain has been parted up (but is now twice its normal mass, as things are redundant now) and rests on different tentacle ends as well: each part looks strangely close to a piece of broccoli now, both in appearance and color. All of the above assumes a regular human head. Any already existing metamorphoses remain unchanged. Due to the missing skull, the AC of the character is decreased by 2. It is impossible for the PC to wear a helmet.

When this metamorphosis comes up again, treat it as **"Haunted by Success"**.

#19: Heart & Soul

A pain in the upper left part of the chest sets in while the heart beat slows and becomes erratic. All the character may do is to clutch the own chest in panic while beads of sweat form on the face. Then, the heart stops completely... but begins to pump again. Yet, it is a strange, alien feeling now. Not like the beating of a drum, but like the croaking of a toad. For a few days, the character believes to actually feel how the blood is driven through the veins.

When this metamorphosis comes up again, roll a d6:

1: The character must *Save vs. Death*, or will die on the spot from a sudden heart failure as the rest of the body finally rejects the changed organ for good.

2-3: The alignment of the character changes to Chaotic. If the PC was a cleric, he or she is now a cleric of the Outer Gods as a sudden, undeniable yet inexplicable realization sets in.

4: The expression and presence of the character gains an alien quality while new insights fill the mind. CHA is reduced by 3 while WIS is increased by 2.

5: The intellect of the character becomes unfathomable while he or she gains a brooding and detached demeanor. INT is increased by 4, but CHA is reduced by 1 and the character will be *always surprised by an ambush*.

6: Outsiders will not recognize it, but the character's mind became unfathomable, and the personality has an undefinable but undeniable eeriness. The PC is now immune against all attempts to read, control or influence the mind. The CHA bonus is decreased by 3 and all retainers must pass a Moral check between adventures or will leave the character.

When any result but "1" comes up again, the metamorphosis of heart and soul is complete. It, and all further upcoming results of this metamorphosis are treated a **"In Failure, too"**

#20: In Failure, too

From now on, not only a natural result of "20" triggers a roll on the Metamorphosis Table, but a natural "1" as well. If this Metamorphosis comes up again, the 2 triggers it, too. Then the 3. Then the 4, and so on....

The Conclusion of the Metamorphosis



When all results of the d20 have been either changed by **Haunted by Success** or **In Failure, too**, the metamorphosis is complete. The changes to the d20 results from **Haunted by Success** remain, but no further rolls on the Metamorphosis table are triggered.

From now, every time the character gains a level, the player must *Save vs. Magic* for the PC.

On a **failure**, the fate of the PC is sealed as at some point during the upcoming adventure (determined by the GM) an utterly alien mind from *Beyond the Stars and the Outer Dark* will take over the body, and the character becomes an NPC from that moment on. The agenda, additional spells, powers and weaknesses (if any) of this being is up to GM, as well as its intellect. It could become into a mystic quest giver, a dire enemy, a minor godling expecting worship or a powerful NPC that is simply going to part ways with the characters at some point during the adventure.

After three successful *Saves* the character has instead achieve a convergence while mostly remaining him- or herself, and remains a PC. The curse is overcome. How the rest of the world will treat this new inhabitant is a different matter.

Fighting the Metamorphosis



Remove Curse will stop the metamorphosis and negate all triggers for rolls on the table, but it will also negate all instances of **Haunted by Success**.

Dispel Magic may be used to counter an ongoing metamorphosis before it completely manifests itself. The ongoing changes are reverted, but in regard to the Metamorphosis table it is like the result in question has not been rolled (and may thereby come up again).

Dispel Evil will “attack” all already manifest changes to body and fate separately, including all manifestations of **Haunted by Success** and **In Failure, too**. For each change, a *Save vs. Magic* is rolled as if it would be a 5th level Magic-User. On a failure, the effects of...

... **Five Finger and the Hand**

... **The ... Arm ...**

The ... Leg ...

The ... Eye

Your Kind...

...are removed, together with the manifested tentacles, but the original body parts are not restored. The character does not suffer any wounds from this. It will appear as they would have been surgically removed by a surgeon of unmatched skill.

...**the Ears**

Its Mouth

The Beast's Back

...are completely reverted, just as if this manifestations would have never happened.

Entrails

Heart & Soul

...call for a *Save vs. Death* by the character after they have been reverted. On a failure, the character suffers a sudden and inevitable death by organ failure.

To dispel **You Cannot Keep Your Head** dooms the character as well, as the head is not restored. The character will instead appear to have just been beheaded, but without the head being anywhere.

Both **Polymorph Self** and **Polymorph Others** may be used to negate the effects of all metamorphosis but **Haunted by Success** and **In Failure, too** by turning the character back into a human being. The limitations of the **Polymorph** spells still stay in effect. The character may thereby not be changed into an exact copy of his or her former self. **Polymorph** spells will not remove the *curse*, and thereby not prevent further triggers on the Metamorphosis table.

The Tentacled Icosahedron

The creature that bursts out of the corpse is a gleaming icosahedron, about a foot in diameter and resting on about a dozen tentacles on its lower side, each the size of the arm of an adult man.

Move:	90' (30')
Hit Dice / Points:	0 / 8 hit points
AC:	12
Attacks:	Whipping Tentacles (1d4)
Save:	as 5 th Level Wizard
Moral:	10

The creature attacks with whipping tentacles in combat (1 attack; 1d4 damage) but may instead cast a 5th level *Dispel Magic* at will. The loss of all hit points merely means that all its tentacles have been cut off. It may then be picked up and carried away (oversized item), but will spontaneously regenerate all of its tentacles (and hit points) after 1d8+8 hours. If it is immersed in water, strange/cosmic energies or copious amounts of blood, it may do so immediately. Destroying the Icosahedron itself takes a character with a Strength of 12+ and a blunt medium weapon (e.g. a warhammer).

When it brings a character to zero hit points, its gleam will turn into a bright light..and then die down. The character now carries the **Curse of Icosahedron**, the creature itself is "dead" now and will not regenerate anymore. The body of the thing is not a gem, but crystal. It is still worth 2d6 x100sp (depending on the buyer).



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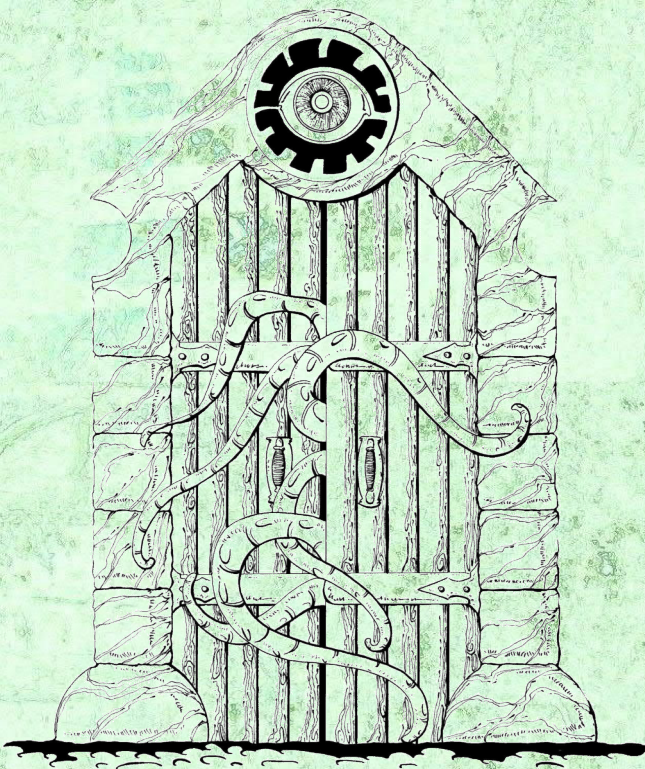
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Print out the section above as a hand-out and tell the player to mark all changes from "**Haunted by Success**" with a 20 and those from "**In Failure, too**" with an X under the die. This will help the poor fool to keep track of which result now means what.



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