

The Bride of Baron Samedi

An Adventure for Lost Souls

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Background

We were lounging around Limbo, debating what Gilligan's first name is, when she stumbled into the waiting room.

She looked strange to us. She didn't have any wounds, but then neither does Nicky, and he was torn limb from limb by an escaped gorilla. It wasn't until I helped her to a chair that I figured out what was wrong with her. She was still warm.

A note pinned to her blue dress read, "This medium was discovered wandering about Limbo. Please see that she gets home safely." It was signed by our mentor.

Referee's Introduction

This *Lost Souls* adventure is designed for a group of spirits and one female medium, whose last name is Torres. The medium is the central character, around whom the story is based. The referee may make the medium an NPC, though this will reduce the player's personal involvement in the adventure.

The medium PC is bewildered and disorientated. She can remember nothing about her trip to Limbo or anything about her life except her name, her supernatural powers, and the fact that she if she stays here any longer, she'll be late to meet someone.

The medium assumes she used her Astral Projection power to escape her body, but whenever she tries to return to her flesh, an icy coldness blocks her. She must find her body and remove whatever is blocking her, or else remain a lost soul.

Before returning to earth, the PCs must make ghostly vows. The obvious choice is: "I will not return until the medium rejoins her body." After the vows are taken, a tunnel of light forms to whisk the PCs back to earth.

The Tar Pit

It is twilight when the PCs arrive in a park in the middle of a city in southern California. A wire fence surrounds a large tar pit. On a bench in front of the fence slumps a man in a trench coat, a hat pulled low over his face.

Before the seated figure is an old man wearing colorful, tattered clothing topped by a floppy hat. He has a huge lower jaw, and grins constantly. This is Daddy Bones.

Daddy Bones smiles at the medium as though he can SEE her. If approached, the old man glares at the medium and shouts: "I don't like your dress!" Then Blatt! he vomits green ectoplasm at her. The medium must make a Good Dodge roll to avoid being hit. The vomit is scalding, and does (Defense vs Passable) damage per turn for every column under Good the player rolled on her Dodge.

Daddy Bones takes a necklace from his breast pocket, waves it at the medium, and says "Is this what you're looking for?" Before the PCs can react, he hurls the necklace over the fence and into the tar pit. On the next turn, he shouts, "Affa Miredo!" and then laughing, he disappears. At his shout, two skeletal saber-toothed tigers rise from the pit and attack the PCs.

Saber-Toothed Tigers

Type: Neutral creature under evil influence

Consistency: Incorporeal

Defense: Good. Missile weapons do only x1 damage to their skeletal forms.

WTL: 18

Abilities: Great Agility, Good Strength, Inferior Intelligence

Appearance: Skeletal tigers with sandy-brown coats and big fangs.

Motivation: To guard the tar pit.

Combat: Each turn, the tigers attack with their claws for (Defense vs Passable) x 3 damage and their bite for (Defense vs Poor) x 4 damage. The tigers will not venture more than twenty feet from the pit.

The Corpse On The Bench

The man on the bench is dead. A Good Medical roll will show that he died of a heart attack. His wallet identifies him as Brock Simpson, a police detective. The breast pocket of his coat holds a notepad. Reading it, the PCs learn that Simpson was working on the Torres case. About three months ago, Hernando Torres came to him and told him that he believed his family was being systematically poisoned. The superstitious folk in the barrio believed the deaths were the result of a curse, but Hernando didn't believe it. A month later, Hernando died. An autopsy did not show any trace of poison, and the death was attributed to natural causes.

The final entry in his notebook reads, "3 p.m. -- Hernando's sister called, says she knows how to stop the curse. More Santeria crap. Will meet her anyway, 6 p.m. at tar pit."

The Necklace

It is imperative that the players retrieve the necklace that is sinking in the tar pit. Since Daddy Bones is no longer touching the necklace, it has resumed material form, making it even more difficult for the PCs to pick up. It will sink completely in four turns.

An incorporeal PC who enters the tar must make a Passable Aquatics roll to avoid plunging to the bottom.

The long silver chain holds a blue enameled ball with the figure of a snake etched around it. The ball twists open. Inside are small pictures of the medium and another woman who looks very much like her. The medium recognizes her as Tina, her sister. Both women wear red uniforms with "Rainbeau & Ramon Uniforms." embroidered on their pockets. Inside the ball is a small quantity of fingernail clippings (they belong to Jerome Rainbeau).

The address of Rainbeau & Ramon Uniforms is listed in any phone book.

The Sweat Shop

Rainbeau & Ramon Uniforms is located in a brick building in an ethnically diverse neighborhood, predominately Spanish and African-American. Looking around, the PCs will see that many of the shops carry the name Rainbeau: Rainbeau Deli, Rainbeau Dry Cleaning, Rainbeau Records and Tapes.

At the top of a narrow, enclosed stairway is a locked steel door with a peephole. On the other side of the door, a young Hispanic man sits on a stool, smoking a cigarette. The punk is armed with a switchblade and an attitude, but is otherwise defenseless against lost souls. He guards the shop, making sure the workers do not leave until the end of their shift.

The sweat shop is filled with young women sitting in front of sewing machines stitching the words, "Nadine," "Sally" and "Rochelle" on the breast pockets of waitress uniforms. Racks of uniforms line the walls, and large bolts of colorful material - green, yellow, blue, and red - are scattered throughout the building. The air is filled with bits of cloth and the smell of machine oil. The only windows are at the edge of the ceiling and are covered with wire mesh. At the far end of the room is a door with the sign "Office" attached to it.

Only one sewing machine is not occupied. Next to the empty station, the PCs spot Tina working. Though frightened by contact from the afterlife, Tina will tell what she knows. "The men in red robes took my sister. Go see Tizano the italerero. He

will read los caracoles of the Table of Ifa and tell you her fate. I know only that I am doomed. I will ask the saints and orishas to have pity on me so that my death will not be so terrible as hers." She will also tell them Tizano lives in the Botanica on Little Market Street, not far south of the uniform factory.

As the players try to question Tina further, Daddy Bones passes through the office door, blood dripping from his mouth. "It's you again!" he cries as he wipes the gore from his chin. "Ramon has paid for letting your soul escape. But I've no time to play with you. Can you play with fire?"

Taking a deep breath, Daddy Bones blows across the room, knocking the cigarette out of the mouth of the punk guarding the door. The lit cigarette flutters across the room until it lands in a pile of greasy rags. With a whoosh the rags burst into flames. Daddy Bones vanishes just as the shop girls jump from their seats, screaming and racing for the exit.

The Fire

The women swarm for the door, completely overpowering the guard. Unfortunately, the bolt mechanism is stuck (due to the machinations of Daddy Bones) and they cannot open the steel door. Many of them fall to the ground and are trampled as the room fills with smoke. Tina is overcome by smoke inhalation and must be carried to safety. The characters must use their powers to prevent the deaths of the women.

The Office

Lost souls are immune to natural fire, so the PCs may wish to examine the office even as the building goes up in flames. It contains a small cage covered by a red cloth, a desk, chair, large trunk and coat rack. The coat rack holds a baggy, white suit streaked with blood. There is a desk calendar on the table turned to today, where the notation, "Wedding of Baron Samedi. Hounfour." is written. By looking through the calendar, the players will note that the word Hounfour appears frequently.

On top of the cage is a card in the same handwriting as the calendar. It reads, "To the Bride and Groom." A scratching sound comes from the

cage. If the players lift the cloth, they will find two white chickens.

Inside the locked trunk is the body of Mr. Ramon. His throat has been ripped apart. Around his neck hangs a sign scrawled in blood, which reads, "Best Man."

The Botanica

Following Tina's directions, the PCs go to a small shop flanked by two bright blue pillars. The window is dark, but the words Botanica seem to glow brightly. The shop is crammed full of items. Some of them are traditional Catholic paraphernalia - statues, crucifixes, rosaries - while others are African in origin, such as rattles, herbs, dried powders, drums and sea shells. Everything is brightly colored. A red parrot sits on a perch in a corner. There is a door directly behind the counter.

When anyone physical or incorporeal enters the room, the parrot squawks, "Those who enter, are those that pay; pay your toll, or rue the day." If the lost souls try to go behind the counter, the red parrot will instantly block the door, repeating, "Those who enter, are those that pay; pay your toll, or rue the day." If the PCs assault the parrot or try to bypass it, it will turn into a handsome man wearing a long red cape. This is a manifestation of Elegua, god of entryways, doors and roads. Though he is not a nasty fellow, he will require each person to give him something (even an ectoplasmic item) before letting them pass.

Elegua

Type: Neutral higher being

Consistency: Dual

Defense: Superior

WTL: 60

Abilities: Superior Agility, Great Strength

Appearance: A handsome man with dark hair and flashing eyes. His nose is rather beak-like. He is naked except for a red loincloth, a magnificent cape of red feathers and a small pouch. He carries two large machetes.

Personality: Dignified and stolid.

Motivation: Elegua has been bound to guard the Botanica and alert Tizano to visitors. He will let

anyone pass who will give him a trinket or gift of a personal nature, but otherwise he will fight them.

Combat & Powers: Elegua is capable of turning into a red parrot. He can fly as a man as well, though the Botanica is a little hard to maneuver in. He will attack twice per turn with his machetes for (Defense vs Good) x 4 damage. Like a bird, if his head is hooded he will immediately grow docile and revert to his bird shape.

Gear: Elegua carries a "master key" in his pouch. If a player obtains it, she may use it to open any three locks, whether material or ectoplasmic, before it disappears forever. If Elegua is defeated, the key will remain behind.

Tizano the Italero

The door behind the counter leads to the top of a flight of stairs. From the ceiling hang little dolls made of black cloth. Crosses and hearts are painted on every step in blue and white paint. A faint light can be seen at the bottom, along with the hum of voices on a television set.

The basement is the living quarters of Tizano, an old Spanish gypsy. In the middle of the room is a table covered with a woven mat. A number of seashells are scattered on top of the mat. Tizano sits on his cot, watching the small black and white television.

Tizano

Type: Good person

Consistency: Material

Defense: Poor

WTL: 12

Abilities: Feeble Agility, Inferior Strength, Superior Intelligence

Appearance: A wizened man with a long white beard and tan skin. His brown eyes are quite lively. He is lame in his left foot and walks with an ebony cane.

Personality: Tizano sells a variety of occult goods to the Santeria and Voudou population. He is known as an italero - a reader of the Tablet of Ifa. In other words, he is a fortune-teller.

Powers: Within his room, Tizano is immune to all supernatural powers. He can sense the presence

of the lost souls, but he will not be able to contact them since he is not a medium. He will be happy to communicate what he knows should the PCs make their needs known.

Tizano's Story

Some years ago, there were two religious cults gaining favor in the neighborhood. Both of them had the same roots in African culture, but one of them became Santeria and the other the cult of Voudou. The leader of the Santeria cult was Mama Torres, the medium's grandmother. The Voudou cult was led by a handsome black man named Jerome Rainbeau who had just gotten out of jail for mail fraud. He was very charismatic, drawing many followers to him, some of them from Mama Torres' Church of the Little Angels. He grew wealthy from the donations of his people, buying up property and businesses until he became one of the most important men in the area.

Mama Torres warned her people against Rainbeau and his evil ways. She called him a mayombero - a malignant being specializing in revenge and destruction. It wasn't long before the Torres family began to die one by one. Mama was the first to go, and her son Hernando soon followed.

This morning, the medium came to Tizano for advice. He had her toss the caracoles (sea shells) and read her fortune. He learned Rainbeau had cast a bilongo (an evil spell) on her family and that within a year they would all be dead. The only chance the woman had was to place an ebbo (a counter-spell) on Rainbeau, but to do so she would need clippings of his hair or fingernails. By burning the clippings, she would interrupt his powers long enough to defeat him. The medium felt she could talk Juan the barber into doing her the favor of giving her some clippings.

Tizano does not know the location of Rainbeau's Hounfour (a temple). But he does know it is probably guarded by many powerful loa (spirits). Tizano will warn the PCs that evil spirits do not like blue, the color of purity, and the smell of burning brown sugar and garlic are abhorrent to them. Lastly, he advises them to never eat anything offered to them by an evil one.

Tizano will refuse to go with the PCs. He is old, and fighting Rainbeau would kill him.

The Hounfour

After the PCs leave Tizano, the medium will notice a strange protrusion growing from her stomach. It looks like a piece of semi-material rope extending about a foot from her body. A Passable Occult roll will reveal that it is a silver cord, which sometimes manifests when a astral medium draws near her material body.

The cord points southeast, and after a few minutes of traveling in that direction, the PCs arrive at the front of a house surrounded by an iron fence which is immune to supernatural powers.

Inside the compound, the PCs find a one-story building with an open courtyard. Women are carrying all sorts of food from a kitchen to a large table. A number of other people are milling about, all dressed in red. A few goats and sheep are tethered at one end of the compound.

At the far end of the courtyard is a magnificent fountain standing in a large pool. Before it is a stone altar stained with blood. Two burning braziers are at either end.

If the PCs check, they will see that the medium's silver cord points to the fountain. The medium's body is hidden inside the shower of water. The pressure of the water is so fast that any lost soul trying to enter it must make a Superior Aquatics roll or else be swept into the pool where he will churn helplessly for 2 turns for every column by which he failed his roll. The character takes (Defense vs Great) x 2 damage from the ordeal. The controls to shut off the fountain can be found in the kitchen. A character needs a Passable Mechanical roll to figure out how to operate the valve.

The medium cannot return to her body so long as the water shields it. Once the fountain is turned off, she can freely rejoin her mortal shell.

"So you've come to the feast!" booms a familiar voice. "Well, there's nothing like a good wedding for good food. Come, sample the whiskey and eat some banana cake. You've never had anything tastier!" Daddy Bones beckons them to the ectoplasmic feast which is intermingled with the real thing. The PCs will find themselves compelled to eat for (Will vs Poor) x 2 turns. Those who fail their Will roll voraciously cram food into their

mouths. Anyone who eats of the food will become ill and suffer -1 column on all rolls for (Stamina vs Good) hours.

The Wedding

A handsome man dressed in red robes steps to the altar before the fountain. He holds a sword in one hand and a staff in the other. The medium will instantly recognize him as Rainbeau.

"We are gathered here to witness the joining of the greatest loa, Baron Samedi!" Rainbeau says. "Accompany me in calling him to our presence, so he may claim his bride!" The musicians begin to play and riotous dancing begins. With a wave of his sword, Rainbeau motions to one of his cronies to turn off the fountain. The crowd gasps as the unconscious body of the medium is revealed. She is dressed in a white chemise and is bound to the central pipe of the fountain.

A loud crack of thunder startles the crowd. The tile floor cracks apart and Baron Samedi steps up to take his bride to the underworld. The voodoo practitioners flee, leaving only Rainbeau, Daddy Bones, and Baron Samedi behind.

Brown sugar and garlic can be found in the kitchen. If these items are thrown onto the braziers, it will weaken all evil spirits in the area, including Baron Samedi and Daddy Bones, giving the players +1 column on all rolls to resist their powers.

Daddy Bones

Type: Evil creature

Consistency: Dual

Defense: Great

WTL: 60

Abilities: Great Intelligence, Great Cunning, Superior Strength, Good Agility.

Appearance: Ragged man with a large jaw and big teeth. He wears colorful clothes.

Personality: Cunning and sadistic.

Motivation: To serve Baron Samedi

Combat: Daddy Bones' touch drains (Defense vs Great) x 2 WTL.

Powers: Daddy Bones may teleport back to the underworld at any time, although he cannot return

again. He can also vomit ectoplasm. The target must make a Good Dodge roll to avoid being hit. The vomit does (Defense vs Passable) damage per turn for every column under Good the player rolled on her Dodge.

Daddy Bones does not like the color blue, since it is the color of spirituality and purity. He will not be able to use his powers if he is swathed in blue.

Jerome Rainbeau

Type: Evil person

Consistency: Material

Defense: Good

WTL: 25

Abilities: Good Agility, Good Strength

Appearance: A handsome black man wearing red robes. He carries an iron sword in one hand and a staff in the other.

Personality: A sociopath who will stop at nothing to achieve his ends.

Motivation: Rainbeau wants to gain favor from Baron Samedi by sacrificing the medium's body to him.

Combat & Powers: For human foes, Rainbeau carries a small .22 in his pocket which does (Defense vs Passable) x 2 damage. His iron sword does (Defense vs Passable) x 4 damage to the material or incorporeal beings.

Notes: The PCs may have the locket containing Rainbeau's fingernail clippings. If they are burned, Rainbeau loses control over Daddy Bones and Baron Samedi. The loas will turn on him, carrying him to the underworld and bringing a quick ending to the adventure.

Baron Samedi

Type: Evil Demon

Consistency: Dual

Defense: Great

WTL: 80

Abilities: Great Intelligence, Great Cunning, Superior Strength, Good Agility.

Appearance: An old man wearing a top hat, dress coat and shaded glasses. He smokes a cigar and carries a cane.

Personality: Although Baron Samedi is the Lord of death, he is a rather jolly, if crude, fellow. He enjoys whiskey and a good joke.

Motivation: To take the medium's body to the underworld where he plans to consummate their horrific union.

Combat & Powers: The Baron strikes with his cane for (Defense vs Good) x 5 damage. By blowing cigar smoke, he can put a target into a death-like coma for (Stamina vs Passable) x 2 turns.

The Adventure Ends

Once the medium returns to her body, she remembers everything that happened. She recalls getting Rainbeau's fingernail clippings from Juan the barber. She called Detective Simpson to seek his help in fighting Rainbeau once she had broken his powers. She was on her way to meet Simpson when Ramon kidnapped her. She used her astral projection power to escape his clutches, but because of the trauma of her capture, she suffered amnesia.

The referee should give the PCs 3 Karma for saving the women in the burning sweatshop. They also gain 1 Karma for destroying Rainbeau, 2 Karma for banishing Daddy Bones, and 3 Karma for destroying Baron Samedi. The referee should award additional Karma as appropriate for completing ghostly vows.

Glossary

Santeria: This religion is based on ancient African rites and Catholicism. It arrived in the Caribbean aboard slave ships. Since the slaves were not allowed to practice their religion, they adopted the worship of saints as a cover for their own gods. Santeria comes from the Spanish word *santo*, meaning saint. Followers of the faith are called *santeros* and *santeras*. The gods (or *Orishas*) are embodiments of the force of nature.

The Table of Ifa: This is a method of fortune telling. *Santeros* who specialize in Table readings are called *italero*. Reading the Table is called *diloggun*. Eighteen sea shells (*los caracoles*) make up the Table, but *italero* only use sixteen. The

unbroken sides of the shell are filed until serrated edges appear. The shells look like mouths filled with teeth. These are the “mouthpieces” of the orishas.

During a consultation (or registro), the italoero prays to the orishas, rubs the shells together and throws them on a straw mat called an estera. The shells are read according to how many of them fall with their “mouths” showing. The italoero then interprets the reading.

Voudou: Also known as voodoo, voodoo, vodoun or voodoo. Like Santeria, Voodoo is a combination of African religion and Catholicism, which arose from slaves shipped to the Caribbean. Many loas (spirits) equate to the Santeria orishas and the Catholic Saints.

Hounfour: Voodoo practitioners meet in a temple called a Hounfour to sacrifice animals to the loas and to bid them to join them. These ceremonies are characterized by drumming, dancing and chanting. Possession is a common event, and loas can be recognized by their behaviors.