



# HOOKS #1

## Author

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## What is this?

**HOOKS #1** is the seventeenth monthly small release for *KULT: Divinity Lost*. This folio features four supernatural events told by NPCs, the possible Truth behind them and a bunch of suggested mechanics and twists. The italicized text is written in first person, imagining it was told by the source of the hook in question. Use the mechanics and apply the twists as you see fit.



Characters, locations and incidents are portrayed from the metaphorical viewpoint of the *KULT: Divinity Lost* setting.



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# THE GHOST FLOORS

"Working graveyard shifts in big and especially old buildings is as scary as it is tiring. It is easy to get lost when you are carrying automatic tasks like cleaning and waxing the floor. You see, things happen when you are not paying attention. Weird things. Dangerous things. Some of them follow you home, some of them want you dead.

I learned to count my steps working as a janitor back in '99. I swept the internal fire stairs clean from top to bottom. I'm not kidding when I say that I went down nineteen floors and I somehow ended at the top. I was so scared and it was so dark at night that the corridors appeared to be longer and narrower, sometimes even stretching beyond the building's limits. I've never told this to anyone until five years later when a boy vanished inside the building. Poof. Nowhere to be seen.

I suggested that it was the place itself that robbed him from us. The manager, my direct superior at the time, laughed hysterically and fired me on the spot without allowing me a single second to explain why I thought that. Clearly the boy must have been kidnapped, right? Anyways, the kid was important. Cops got involved. Nothing was found. Ever. No clues, no sign of the boy. It then died down and people forgot about the case altogether.

Now, I managed to get this job that happens to be just across the street from the building I'm telling you about. As I see it, you could go in there and see for yourself what's what... or you could stay with me and watch other people vanish."

**In Truth**, the building is connected to Metropolis and Sleepers are unwittingly crossing the barriers between worlds. Counting steps is the only way to make sense of direction and Space inside the darkest parts of the building.

## Suggested mechanics

- ◆ As a GM Move when the player-characters wander or go through terrible experiences inside the building, the GM might shift the PCs to Metropolis without them noticing it.
- ◆ Player-characters that happen to be **Wayfinders** (KDL, p116) may find shortcuts inside the building at their own risk.
- ◆ A player-character that triggers **See Through the Illusion** inside or near the building risks being sensed by local Azghouls (KDL, p301).
- ◆ Metropolis Moves (KDL, p298) can be used when player-characters are inside the building even if they're in Elysium.

## Twists

- ◆ The building is (or was once) an asylum where Madness is used by doctors and patients alike to harvest power from beyond the veil.

- ◆ People vanish beneath the building, where corridors have direct pathways into the Underworld.
- ◆ In Elysium the building is a bank. In Metropolis, this is a large safe controlled by a rogue Cherubim (KDL, p313), all hidden somewhere in Yesod's citadel. People come here to wither and become gold — beyond the veil, this happens quite literally.

# CRICKET ALLEY

"High school was fun, man. Me and a bunch of friends prank called the police a lot back then. We always reported a heinous crime going down at Cricket Alley, a place that has never existed until we fucked up. It was usually a cold-blooded murder, gang related. Stuff from the movies. Once in a while we'd say suicide or robbery.

Mind you, we were barely sixteen at the time, so this may be purely teenage imagination, but after a while Cricket Alley started to feel real. We would sneak out into the night and pretend to go to Cricket, spray "Cricket Alley" on a random alley brick wall, drink cheap booze, and roleplay as criminals doing shady deals and murdering each other. Of course, these fueled our prank calls later. It became sort of an on-going joke in our area.

Then, there was this night. We had already spray painted the walls a few nights before in preparation for this. We had the best clothing, fake guns and cash, and were ready to play pretend. And so we did. In the middle of it, however, everyone felt incredibly nauseated all of a sudden as muffled sounds coming from inside a trash bin shook us to the core. Believing that to be some sort of prank, we gathered the last bit of courage left in our hearts and checked the bin... and, even to this day, I don't know what that was. A body? Of what? A person? A rabid animal? It had fur patches, long hair, live breathing muscle, a beating heart. That thing was very much... dying. It pleaded for help four times before we snapped back to reality.

Everyone started to scream and run to their homes. Next morning Jason, the oldest, didn't go to school. Cops spent two or three weeks actively searching the area, but no one knew what we did the night before his disappearance and we sure didn't want to get into trouble... so never told anyone about that. In fact, you're the first to hear this.

You see, call me insane, but it's been years and I still dream about Jason every single night. Sometimes I even think it was his body inside the bin, somehow. And the alley? Still there. Same spray paint. Same place. It even shows up on maps. Yes, even the ones from before that night. Cricket Alley. No, I'm sure it didn't exist before then. Believe it or not, we created it."

**In Truth**, the group weakened the veil that separates Limbo from Elysium with their powerful creative energy, birthing an imagined place. The Illusion reshaped the surrounding area to reflect it as a place that has existed for a long time, and Sleepers surely don't question it. The trash bin with a dying creature inside is a portal to another dreamworld... one just like our reality, except the calls were not pranks and Cricket Alley is as dark as the teens imagined it.



### Suggested mechanics

- ◆ Cricket Alley is a place of power. Magical rituals done within its boundaries receive a bonus of **+1** or, if the magic is Dream-related, all failures are treated as if PCs rolled **10-14** instead.
- ◆ Dying inside the alley separates the consciousness from the physical body, turning the player-character into a Revenant (KDL, p358) bound to Limbo. The PC might cross into Elysium and back by following dreams and nightmares related to the Cricket Alley.
- ◆ Inside the Alley, all player-characters receive the **Inner Power** (KDL, p115) Advantage as Limbo bleeds into Elysium and their creative power is unleashed in terrifying ways.

### Twists

- ◆ Cricket Alley is only one of this supernatural phenomena's names and this location is present at different Spaces in Time, readily accessible to anyone who possesses knowledge of it. **Dreamers** (KDL, p114) may treat the alley as a portal to other places, sometimes being able to physically cross into Limbo and navigate humanity's dreams until they find the alley elsewhere in Elysium, effectively traveling through Space and Time.
- ◆ Cricket Alley is a place imagined by a group of individuals in Elysium, yes, but the group is being actively drained of its vital force as the dream verges ever closer to the Vortex. To save the Alley and the power it holds, the player-characters have to expand the myth and lodge the Alley deep into other people's dreamworlds. Everyone who dreams of the Alley becomes **Infirm** (KDL, p98).

## THE RULE OF THREE

*"Don't leave your tent after three in the morning. If you are pumping venom in your veins, smoking, whatever, just don't leave your tent. It doesn't matter if you are so high God himself comes down on earth and calls your name while kneeling before the tent. Just don't. Lock yourself in it. Sometimes drugs make you see weird things. Leave your tent and you'll find your sorry ass somewhere else. Somewhere darker, far more dangerous. You see people's faces around here... and they're demons. Wide smiles and sunken eyes. Metal limbs, humpback, creaking voices. The sky is pitch black, buildings are falling apart, and agonizing screams escape the sewer tunnels to sing your arrival. Everyone knows it, and I know you. So now you know it as well.*

*One more thing: don't buy the drugs with "different spices". It doesn't make you feel good, it just rots your soul. Get yourself the real deal only. No laced or spiked stuff. And even if it is, don't leave your fucking tent after three in the morning."*

**In Truth**, escapees of death cults nesting in the Underworld have found new homes among the homeless. Living on as Revenants and Abominations, the Children of Death's corrupting presence has been severely heightened by the wide abuse of drugs. When the world is submerged in penumbra, all paths lead to Achlys—even the ones that go upwards.

### Suggested mechanics

- ◆ Underworld Moves (KDL, p298) may be triggered even when the player-characters are in Elysium.
- ◆ As a GM Move, a wandering player-character may find a portal into a deeper level of the Underworld (Soft move) or cross it without noticing (Hard move).
- ◆ When out of their tents, player-characters have access to the **Shadow** (KDL, p109) Advantage. When triggered, their bodies become ghostly in essence and appearance. Knowingly (and noticing) it or not, they may even cross physical barriers.
- ◆ When a player-character triggers **Read a Person** near this area, they may always ask "Are you dead?" and get a truthful answer, even if they don't believe or have no means of proving so.

### Twists

- ◆ After three in the morning, the streets separate Sathariel's citadel in Inferno from the Underworld. Staying inside the tent furthers Sathariel's reach, as isolation and paranoia fuel his presence. Leaving the tent allows the PC to wander aimlessly to each destination. Elysium is accessible again after sunrise, and only to those who have slept in their tents. The tents are seen both in Elysium and beyond the veil.
- ◆ The collective's drug abuse has spawned a nightmarish dreamworld bordering Gamichicoh's citadel. Under the grip of Fear, the homeless' Madness runs wild and twists everything and everyone. Resisting change is as hard as holding clear, singular control over the dream. Inside the dream, however, a shrine for the Swap Dealer has been built, connected directly to his domain.

## INTO THE BORDERLANDS

*"We call it "the midnight bus." It's a normal bus that loops through the inner city, except that after a certain hour it deviates from the journey and delves into a darker place. Basically, after it reaches the end of the line, it stops completely. Driver is nowhere to be seen, there are no other passengers either. You step outside and realize you're not at the typical "end of line". The night sky is tinted red, you see only abandoned warehouses... big and crooked. The heavy smog doesn't take long to fill your lungs, making it hard to breathe.*



Now, there's no phone signal whatsoever and it's nearly impossible to find a spot to call 911. Meaning that, when you go there, you need to bring a gun. For safety, you know? Because there are a lot of weirdos roaming that area. Not weirdos like us. They're real weirdos that do real weirdos business, like the psychic on 441 Whaley Drive. Skinny dude, hooked on IV drips, naked under a stained duvet, always sitting in front of the dump he calls home.

Actually, you should talk to him. He might have something important to say to you. He always does. He told me once I'd marry Maria, and look at us now. He also told me when I'm going to die. And how. Freaky stuff."

**In Truth**, the midnight bus drives people into the borderlands of Metropolis. Particularly, near a long forgotten industrial area where people with mechanical bodies act in disguise. Many of them are bloodthirsty and insane, many of them have a story to tell. The psychic in question is one of those people: a Madness Magician trapped in the borderlands after a botched ritual. He likes to take guesses about people's lives for free. The ones that pay, however, must do so with something that isn't money, as cash holds no value where he lives. He values morphine a lot, because his madness has completely corrupted his mortal shell forcing him to live in pain. What they get, however, is not a guess. It's the truth of their future.

#### *Suggested mechanics*

- ◆ Player-characters capable of sensing things beyond the veil are able to pinpoint locations within Metropolis they want to stop at. This could happen by performing a ritual before riding the bus, using the **Enhanced Awareness** (KDL, p114) or **Wayfinder** (KDL, p116) Advantages, or however else the PCs are able to have supernatural insight.
- ◆ Veteran Kultists who enjoy playing with the cosmology may find it entertaining to trigger **Worldly** (KDL, p120) whenever they get out of the bus. Even though the Advantage's trigger is about the "mundane world", the group could play with revelations about a forgotten godly past in Metropolis. Entering metropolis through the bus triggers Worldly, even though it's not the mundane world. Between player and gm, one describes who was met there and another decides what was left behind.
- ◆ After talking to the Madness Magician, player-characters receive the **Condemned** (KDL, p97) Disadvantage as their fates are sealed.

#### *Twists*

- ◆ Instead of a bus, it could be a taxi cab, mysterious van, a ship or boat.
- ◆ The bus could venture into any world beyond the veil: Limbo, Inferno, Metropolis, and the Underworld. A proper journey would require certain rituals to be properly performed within the bus — maybe the PC has to ride it blindfolded and holding her breath, or perhaps she needs to be under the influence of hard drugs (ideally taken as she goes to the world in question). Doing so triggers **See Through the Illusion**, which causes the Illusion to tear and bring everyone else along with her on a **10-14**. The location is far more dangerous if a **-9** is rolled. Alternatively, creatures of Madness might take a special interest in her on a **10-14** and join her to possibly drain her energy or exchange occult secrets.

