

Product Review

“Bloody Hooks: A Collection of Adventures Hooks for Horror Gaming”

Written by Michael Todd; Published by Big Finger Games; © 2006, Michael Todd

Reviewed by Vicki Potter

“Bloody Hooks” is a collection of 22 broad plot ideas for horror games. At our suggestion, Big Finger Games supplied a complimentary copy for us to review for its usefulness with *Against the Darkness*. It is a PDF product of six pages, with a colorful title page and five pages of text. The title page sets the mood, with its dark coloring and classic horror depiction – an arm rising up out of a grave. Page 2 begins with a brief paragraph of explanation, and then goes right into the hooks. At first glance, few of these hooks have anything to do with religious horror. However, it would be perfectly possible to explain many of these plots in a way compatible with *Against the Darkness*.

One hook, for example, involves a series of grisly murders tied together in an unusual way. All that is necessary is to attribute the murders to demons or demon-possessed persons instead of simply some crazy, and there would be every need to call in the Justiciars. Other mysterious activities could be explained by restless spirits, who have been unable to pass on to their final reward (or are avoiding their final punishment), and the Justiciars would be the perfect people to resolve the situation. Any type of background that attributes the source of a situation to the supernatural in some way, and particularly to the intervention of supernatural evil, creates a suitable plot for *Against the Darkness*.

A special section is featured on Page 4 of “Bloody Hooks,” entitled “The Devil is in the Details.” The explanation reads: *While not designed to inspire adventures, these details, usually odd, inexplicable coincidences, can be injected into a gaming session to create an unsettling and foreboding air.* This list includes ten short items that a game master can play up to add an air of mystery or eeriness to a game. Many could be attributed to some evil or supernatural reason.

In addition to the cover, “Bloody Hooks” has two other pieces of color artwork that add to the feel of the product. The layout itself also plays a part, done as it is in slanted, asymmetrical columns instead of the usual upright manner.

While not specifically written for use with a religious horror game, it would be very possible to use “Bloody Hooks” in such a manner. I can’t exactly say I enjoyed reading this book; some of the pieces are very disturbing. (It is rated M, for Mature Audiences.) Of course, that’s a plus in a horror book! As a Game Master, I did enjoy contemplating using some of them on an unsuspecting group of players. This product could be handy for any GM of a horror game who could use some creative ideas for plots.

“Bloody Hooks” is available for \$1.35 at RPGNow

(http://www.rpgnow.com/product_info.php?products_id=20586&it=1&affiliate_id=54758&src=TTA-Hr).