



THE BLACK CAT & THE HESSEN

GARY CON SLAM

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Written by

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The Roleplayers

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Based on CHALDEA by

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FADE IN:

FIELD OF DARKNESS

	VLADIMIR KARHONEN (V.O.)	
1	Track down and kill Heinz... (voice dripping with scorn)	1
2	"the Hessen".	2

INSERT MAIN TITLE SCREEN

	VLADIMIR KARHONEN (V.O.)	
3	As he draws his last wretched breath, you tell him that it was I, Baron Vladimir Karhonen, who was the instrument of his doom!	3

EXT. GRAVERS DIG - ESTABLISHING - DAY

INSERT TITLECARD: GRAVERS DIG

Gravers Dig, Somarria's notorious barbaric frontier town.

The muddy streets smell of feces and betrayal. Sounds of arguments, drunken brawls, and the admonishments of brave abolitionists decrying the greed, corruption, hedonism, and loss of family values in this lawless, gods-forsaken port of call.

WHARF

Ships laden heavy with cargo, (both coming and going), keeps the port shipping district perpetually energized with activity.

THREE GRAVERS exit a merchant vessel and immediately vanish into the seething throng of hunters, trappers and grave robbers.

We catch up with the new arrivals moving fast down--

MAIN STREET

The three loiter momentarily in front of a Ma'at Pyramid, a once celebrated Temple of Set turned ruthless graver bar.

ARMANDO, (a professional actor, musician, and funny man from Andalus) sucks in a powerful lungful of exotic pollution.

	ARMANDO	
4	Ahhh yes, the sweet aroma of Gravers Dig. So good to be back.	4

A THUNDEROUS CRACK pounds eardrums as a LIGHTNING BOLT sizzles over head.

15 GRAVER 1 (O.S.)
TUNNEL TERRORS! 15

Armando, The Cat, and Maeve, heads on swivels, follow the screams.

16 ARMANDO
They're coming from the shopping district. 16

DOWN ANGLE UPON THE SHOPPING DISTRICT

A colonial MASS OF ARACHNIDS swarm vendor shops and tents, threatening to overwhelm everything.

Sounds of WEAPONS and ARMED COMBAT increase by the second.

A pair of young CHAN MONKS sprint passed *fast*.

17 GRAVER 2 (V.O.)
What's the points on Tunnel Terrors this week? 17

18 MAEVE
Is this normal? 18

19 ARMANDO
Shit. Only lack of normal is normal in Gravers Dig. 19

GRAVERS pour of the Pyramid Bar eager to get in on the action.

20 THE BLACK CAT
Oh la vache! This is my kinda a place. 20

The Cat yanks his rapier and stabs an approaching SPIDER.

WIDE ON GRAVERS DIG

The entire town is beset upon by eight-legged fiends.

Tunnel terrors by the hundreds burrow up through the ground, attack, spinning webs, and feed, as if some horror from below has pronounced judgement on this city of wickedness.

ON STREET LEVEL

Three tunnel terrors burst up through the ground.

A TUNNEL TERROR IS THE ONE DOING THE BREAKING OUT--

Directly into Armando's face. DIRT. WEBBING. And...

	ARMANDO (CONT'D)	
28	Oh my gods, hairy spider butt.	28
29	<GAG!>, <Cough>, <Retch!>	29

Armando staggers back, head spinning. He coughs and sputters, fending off the advancing arachnid.

NEARBY IN ULTRA SLOW-MO, his friend, The Black Cat laughs uproariously, bathing in the ecstasy of carnal death.

	ARMANDO (CONT'D)	
	(sotto)	
30	Why should he have all the fun?	30

Somewhere, somehow, in his deepest, deepest soul, Armando belts out--

AN EPIC FORTISSIMO CODA

	ARMANDO (CONT'D)	
31	[Gabriel's choice of lyrics here!]	31

His baritone thunderous voice Rachmaninoff's the spiders.

VOOOM!

The VOCAL SOUND WAVE explodes washing the market district.

Tunnel Terror's vibrate, squealing, legs twitching. Finally, their ugly bulbous abdomens explode in yellow and green fountains.

IT'S OVER!

FADE TO BLACK:

A LITTLE WHILE LATER

The three friends reconvene.

	MAEVE	
32	That was a jolly good outing. I need to holiday here more often.	32

The Black Cat cleans green spider goo from his rapier.

33 THE BLACK CAT 33
 I tell you one thing. I've been to
 a pocket universe, I've been killed
 a dozen times, I've played Einvigi
 with demons, and I even attended
 the Garnon Dream Festival. The
 moral of this story? I'm fantastic!

34 ARMANDO 34
 Maybe if we're lucky, the damn
 spiders killed The Hessen and we
 can immediately retire to the bar.

35 MAEVE 35
 I wouldn't count on that.

36 ARMANDO 36
 Why do you say that?

Maeve points to a large circus tent.

37 MAEVE 37
 During the fight, I saw that rat
 bastard, The Hessen enter that
 tent.

The Black Cat takes off running.

38 THE BLACK CAT 38
 (calling)
 The tent that says, "Dogs"?

39 ARMANDO 39
 That man has far too much energy.

Maeve and Armando follow.

EXT. TENT - DOG VENDOR - CONTINUOUS

The Black Cat approaches a large round CIRCUS TENT, faded and
 weather beaten with a ramshackle sign: D O G S.

A large and imposing black-as-sin bullmastiff with red eyes
 is tied securely outside the flap with hulking iron chains.

A sign hangs from his neck: Beware of Unrooly. Eats anything
 including customers.

THE HESSEN emerges from the tent flaps and SPOTS TROUBLE--
 in the form of a rapier wielding SIR FOLEY HARBERTON.

40 THE BLACK CAT
Defend yourself, scrote, from me. 40

41 THE HESSEN
Huh? Me? Who are...? 41

42 THE BLACK CAT
Vladimir Karhonen sends his
regards. 42

43 THE HESSEN
Oh, shit! 43

The Hessen quickly withdraws back inside.

The Duelist pushes past Unrooly and through the flap--

INSIDE

He discovers CHAOS INCARNATE IN ACTION.

He COUGHS and through bleary eyes (caused by an overwhelming pungent smell of GAR FISH), that every dog cage IS OPEN.

WAR DOGS and HUNTING DOGS of every species and size, ravenous and rabid are coming out, pissed off and ready for war.

In the midst of the CANINE CHAOS stands MASTER, the proprietor of this shop, (An 18-Double-Ott Ogre).

44 MASTER
Heel! Heel gods damn it. Heel! 44

The dogs aren't listening. It's unclear if the dogs ever listen, but if they did, they aren't now.

Maeve and Armando enter the tent and choke.

45 THE BLACK CAT
Where is the Hessen? 45

The ogre spins angrily at the new comers.

46 MASTER
If you hurt my dogs, I HURT YOU! 46

47 MAEVE
Is this normal? 47

48 THE BLACK CAT
I don't give a shit about your damn
dogs. Where is the Hessen? 48

49 MASTER
I don't know any Hessen. 49

50 ARMANDO
His name is Heinz. 50

Master thinks hard for a beat. Thinking be hard, especially difficult over all the loud yapping.

51 MASTER
You mean, the fish prankster? 51
 (jerks his thumb)
52 He fled out the back. 52

The starving rabid dogs see lunch in the form of Armando, Maeve, The Black Cat, and surprisingly, even Master and...

THEY ATTACK.

53 MASTER (CONT'D)
What are you doing, you dumb mutt. 53

The ogre grabs a DINOSAUR BONE.

54 MASTER (CONT'D)
Surly. Here boy. 54
 (waves bone and tosses)
55 Fetch. 55

The closest dog, Surly ignores the bone and jumps for Master's throat.

The ogre lands a crushing blow to the side of the War Dog.

56 MASTER (CONT'D)
So sorry, Surly. 56

A BULLMASTIFF with a lopsided snarled snout launches and clamps down on Master's forearm.

For a few seconds, master dances a waltz with the beast.

57 MASTER (CONT'D)
What the hell has gotten into you? 57

Then flings him -- BANG! -- across the tent.

Over yonder, where the dog went a flying, The Black Cat manages a dexterous canine dodge.

58 THE BLACK CAT
Watch out, flying dog. 58

59 MAEVE
What the hell is going on? 59

60 ARMANDO
This stupid Ogre produces even
stupider dogs. It's a problem with
the breed. 60

61 THE BLACK CAT
The ogre or the dogs? 61

62 MAEVE
There is no such thing as a problem
breed, only problem owners. 62

63 THE BLACK CAT
What about the ones with red
glowing eyes? 63

Maeve shrugs.

64 MAEVE
I mean, even Hell Hounds have their
place. 64

The dogs sniff out a scaredy cat and come at Sir Foley
Harberton en masse.

65 THE BLACK CAT
Who's a good doggie? 65

Who thinks dogs will listen to a cat? Raise your hand.

That's right. No.

Soon Sir Black Cat is running around the tent *as if* his ass
were on fire.

66 THE BLACK CAT (CONT'D)
Call 'em off. Call 'em off. 66

Armando has his own dog issues and yanks his singing sword.

67 ARMANDO
Sing me a happy dog song. 67

The sword breaks out in a saucy CANINE DITTY.

68 SINGING SWORD
Bark, bark, bark. 68
Howl, howl, howl.
Woof, Woof, Woof.

Armando looks at the sword momentarily perplexed as the razor sharp blade sings harmony with the rambunctious dogs.

ARMANDO

69 By the jumpin' jehoshaphat, if that 69
 isn't a damn impressive two-part
 harmony.

Maeve tries telekinesis to bring down the tent and...

NO JOY. A viscous DIRE CHIHUAHUA has her heel in his little needle teeth, interrupting her concentration.

MAEVE

70 I'm in need of a Doggonit spell. 70
 Anyone?

A STATE OF UTTER CHAOS means some kind of mischief god or vile entity ninjaing an undercover fart in the tent--for which there is no escape.

- not using Master's magical Rule Bones.
- or Armando's singing sword
- nor Maeve calling upon mystical powers of the universe
- not even a comely silver tongued rogue.

THE DOGS JUST KEEP COMING.

Everyone including master try to defend themselves while not trying to maim the dogs, but the effort becomes increasingly tenuous.

The FISH FART has the dogs emotionally aroused and driven completely out of control.

SOON

Our heroes (including Master) circle the wagons, against the dogs.

ARMANDO

(singing)

71 *My energy's spent at last* 71
72 *And my armor is destroyed* 72
73 *I have used up all my weapons* 73
74 *And I'm helpless and bereaved* 74
75 *Wounds are all I'm made of* 75
 Did I hear you say that this is
 victory?

76 MAEVE
It can't be a coincidence, can it,
the spiders swarm and now these
dogs are acting all crazy? 76

77 MASTER
Living with Brighthwyna is never
dull. N'ver dole. 77

Suddenly, the dogs STOP. *Energy spent at last.* They sit,
some lie down, others sleep.

78 MAEVE
If that isn't a telltale sign of an
enchantment wearing thin, I don't
know what is. 78

79 THE BLACK CAT
This has got to be the work of the
Hessen. 79

80 MASTER
You find that fish farting
scoundrel. 80
81 You boil his teeth; 81
82 You invert his rib cage; 82
83 Harvest his toes; 83
84 And shish kabob his bollocks. 84

85 MAEVE
That's a, creatively specific. 85

86 MASTER
And take Unrooly with you. Nothing
can escape his nose. Trust me.
He's the best hunter in town, in
all of Somarria. EVEN CHALDEA. 86

FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER

Unrooly is on the hunt. Nose down. Moving fast.

The hound parts the masses, people leaping out of the way as
he barrels through like a tornado. The Black Cat, Maeve and
Armando run to keep up.

87 THE BLACK CAT
Now we're cooking with magic. 87

88 ARMANDO
It's nice having Unrooly on our
side for a change. 88

On the northern tip of Gravers Dig, they fly pass the Dwarven Casino, through Security Gates and into the Private Sector.

They are suddenly whisked away to wealth and privilege and...

EXT. MARN MAX KEEP - DAY

Marn Max Keep is the oldest structure in Gravers Dig, hewn from old world stone, laudably by the dwarves.

Today it serves as a posh inn for visitors with title and means.

Unrooly bounds past the doorman and...

INT. MARN MAX KEEP - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Wealthy business folk and socialites stare in disbelief at the red eyed monster.

MAEVE

89

Sorry. Brighthwyna business.

89

Maeve gives her colleagues a sheepish frown before mounting the stairs trying to keep up with the eager hunter.

INT. MARN MAX KEEP - PRIVATE CHAMBERS

Unrooly CRASHES THROUGH THE DOOR, catching The Hessen red handed.

Maeve comes in first, followed by The Cat and then Armando.

IN ULTRA SLOW MOTION The Hessen spins and turns over an ornate HOURGLASS, but before that happens--

With cat-like reflexes, Sir Foley Harberton slides in--

THE BLACK CAT

90

Non, non, non. We can't have you doing that monsieur.

90

His slide carries him past The Hessen, nabbing the hourglass.

THE HESSEN

91

What the...?

91

THE BLACK CAT

92

Because of your nefarious philandering ways, Baron Vladimir Karhonen hired us.

92

(MORE)

THE BLACK CAT (CONT'D)

You soiled his wife and her good name and he is not at all pleased.

THE HESSEN

93 There's been a misunderstanding. 93

THE BLACK CAT

94 Time to die. 94

ARMANDO

95 Oh, must we kill him? He is far too pretty. 95

MAEVE

96 Perhaps the pretty man has a pretty purse. 96

ARMANDO

97 We're supposed to start with a severe beating and then death, remember? 97

MAEVE

98 If you, were to, lets say, perhaps pay us more... we could forgo the beating and murder. 98

THE HESSEN

99 That's ridiculous. 99

MAEVE

100 You would of course have to disappear and never show that pretty face of yours in Hesse ever again. 100

THE HESSEN

101 That despicable Baron. If you had spent any amount of time in Hesse, you would know the Karhonens are masters of treachery and cannot be trusted. 101

THE BLACK CAT

102 This is not helping your case. 102

ARMANDO

103 You are a rare beauty, my good man and I would hate to see such chiseled cheekbones and luscious skin turned into *the undead*. 103

(turns to his friends)

104 Nothing stays dead in this town. 104

(back to The Hessen)

(MORE)

ARMANDO (CONT'D)

105 Your lovemaking skills are renown. 105
 The world needs more love, yes?

The Black Cat and Maeve nod in agreement having no idea where this is leading.

THE HESSEN

106 I'm rather short on cash. But can 106
 I interest you in magic?

(points to the Hour Glass)

107 My Parley Hour Glass or my Getaway 107
 Gar.

He pulls, (like a rabbit out his hat), a 2-foot long Gar fish out of his pocket. Quite alive and flopping about.

ARMANDO

108 Is that a fish in your pocket or 108
 are you happy to see me?

The Hessen nods knowingly.

THE HESSEN

109 Ahh yes, if placed in the wrong 109
 place, it can give off the wrong
 impression. You witnessed its
 power in the dog tent, yes?

MAEVE

110 We can kill you and take both. 110

THE BLACK CAT

111 Now, now Maeve. We are honorable 111
 cutthroats after all.

THE HESSEN

112 Make a choice and please leave. 112

Maeve studies first the Hourglass and then the Gar.

MAEVE

113 So what exactly do they do? 113

THE HESSEN

114 The Hourglass forces a parley for 114
 as long as there is sand. The
 fish, which I think is Cthulhuian,
 causes grand chaos on a colossal
 scale.

Sir Foley Harberton smiles.

115

THE BLACK CAT
So, this gar goes into a bar and
the bartender asks, "Why the long
face?"

115

FADE TO BLACK