

The Book of the Dead

While investigating a dig in Egypt, Sir Lawrence Walthorpe happened upon a series of religious scrolls. [The Egyption book of the dead](#) - a series of rituals for the preparation of dead bodies, and what one could expect in the afterlife.

Total hokum of course, but of great historic interest to any wouldbe alchemists or reanimators.

The Book is more a collection of scrolls, and there are some duplicates and some missing - they were made as required by the Egyptian priests.

On his arrival back in England, Sir Lawrence is murdered and the Book stolen.

As a further complication, there could be a "power of death" contraption that actually works. It's a hypothetical machine that was never build by the priests at the time as they lacked sufficient power to enable it to function. Water wheels, slave turned gears - many ways to power it were investigated, but it remained forever just a theory.

A modern scientist, alchemist or engineer could possibly built the machine. By hooking oneself up to it, their memetic identiy signure is transmitted on the ley lines of the world, embedding mesmeric commands in all living creatures to approach and sacrifice themselves to the machine's user.

With each death in their presence, the builder gains vitality (in game terms, a corruption reroll, or a healing of damage, or some kind of bonus in combat). Once this vitality is used, another death takes place to refill them (if they take the reroll, or get damaged again, or use their combat bonus). Each death is either bigger, or more numerous than the last - a bug, several bugs, a swarm, a rat, a swarm of rats, birds, flocks of birds and so on. The animals or insects make their way to the caster by the quickest means available and once all gathered at the caster's feet, they die, giving up their life force to the caster. This continues until the death of the machine's creator. Destroying the machine or having someone else use it will have no effect - the message has been sent.

There is no limit to the kinds of animals that will sacrifice themselves. If not stopped - the entire population will end up dying at the caster's feet.

[plot](#), [artifact](#), [event](#), [mystery](#)

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