

THE HELL HORSE



William Adams - 2001

From the very beginnings of the Empire the Soulforgers have sought to solve the problem of transportation for the many carriers and Gaunts that must pass through the Tempest to reach the outlying Stygian outposts. The Stygian Steeds of the Ferryman were seen as the best candidates to transport warriors through the Tempest. Their strength and loyalty along with their speed and endurance made them desirable companions for Gaunts braving the Tempest alone. But Stygian Steeds were rare and impossible to domesticate or breed. The answer, like so many of Stygia's problems, was to forge souls into a solution. And so the first Hell-Horse was forged into being. Unlike a simple Draught the Hell-Horse is composed of somewhere between six to eight souls Mollated into a single being. Also more care is given to the motivations and Passions of a Hell-Horse. The Hell-Horse isn't merely a beast of burden, it is also a war-beast and companion to the Gaunt who holds its reins. So only those soul-forgers who have mastered *Outimination* and *Mnemosis* can produce a Hell-Horse. Consequently Hell-Horses aren't handed out to every Legionnaire who has to carry a message or perform a mission into the Tempest. Rank and seniority play an important role in who gets to have a Hell-Horse and who doesn't. Gaunts are given preference above other Wraiths as they can take full advantage of the benefits of a Hell-Horse. Power is also a consideration. Even though most of those who hold mastery over a Hell-Horse are also adept at *Argos* and can traverse the Sea of Storms unaided it is usually to these Wraiths that Hell-Horses are entrusted. A Hell-Horse represents such an investment in souls, effort and time that only the most capable and trusted Wraiths are given mastery of one of these hell-beasts. Hell-Horses are not only valued for their use as mounts and their ability to traverse the Tempest, but also for their ability in war. A Hell-Horse is able to *Reed* its enemies and *Heal* itself through *Mollate*. Some Hell-Horses have been known to form *Fangs* and *Armor* for battle. Hell-Horses are also taught *Castigate* so that their great Strength will allow them to *Bulwark* themselves and their riders.

To keep a Hell-Horse operational in the Shadowlands it needs a Fetter. Without it the Hell-Horse would be unable to exit the Tempest. *Lifewebs*, *Mnemosis* and *Outimination* are combined to tie the Hell-Horse to a suitable location in the Shadowlands. Preferably one near a Necropolis frequented

by its master. Great pains are taken to keep the Hell-Horse tied to its Fetter. Those Fetters it had before are lost during the soulforging that binds several Wraiths into one Hell-Horse. A diligent master will allow a Hell-Horse ample time to roam through its Fetter and to *Slumber* at any opportunity. The Hell-Horse's Passions are another concern and are closely guarded by its master. Giving the Hell-Horse opportunities to fulfill its Passions is the responsibility of its master.

Hell-Horse

Attributes:

Physical: Strength 8, Dexterity 4, Stamina 7(2)

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 4, Appearance 1

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 1, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 2, Awareness 3, Frown 4, Dodge 2, Empathy 1, Intimidation 4

Skills: Tracking 3

Arcanoi: Argos 2, Castigate 1, Mollate 4

Passions: Serve Master (Loyalty) 5, Protect Master (Love) 3, Fight (Anger) 2

Fetters: Local Graveyard 5

Willpower: 8

Pathos: 6-9

Angst: 4 (2-5 Temporary)

Permanent Corpus: 18

Equipment: Stygian Chains, Reigns & Saddle, Corpsekin Bags, Piece Armor (2)

Backgrounds Cost: Allies 3, Artifact 4, Status 3