

Losing One's Head

Welcome to the wonderful world of esoteric-memetic contamination overload. No, that term makes sense. In order, and using the case at hand: 'esoteric' is obvious, and it refers right now to the lingering ghost of that poor fellow who got decapitated by a boulder when Vesuvius erupted. 'Memetic' refers to the way that his gruesome, yet darkly entertaining, final resting place was revealed to a world perhaps grown too used to sardonically macabre *tableaux* in their popular entertainment. 'Contamination' is what happens when somebody isn't on hand to (or isn't capable of) breaking the esoteric connection between 'memetic' and 'esoteric' before that connection boosts up a ghost to significantly higher power level -- which is what 'overload' would be.

Shorter version: lots of people know about this guy from Ancient Rome who died dramatically and self-evidently prematurely, so now his ghost is wandering the streets of Naples. And, unfortunately, this is not a particularly self-aware ghost; it's reflexively inclined to feed off of death energy, which means that it's going try to put itself to rest by recreating the circumstances of its death as best it can, for as many times as it takes. That means that your

team needs to shut the spirit down before it starts trying to crush people's heads in a hydraulic press. Or anything else along those lines.

Yes, normally ghosts can't do that. Behold the awesome power of the Internet. Here's your accordion.

The good news is, Naples is one of those cities where the local cops are checked out on the supernatural. So, your team will be able to operate somewhat freely, although midnight chases of a headless apparition through the streets is, as always, contraindicated. Also complicating the situation is that there will be at least one team from a rival faction who would like to use the ghost as a way to deniably kill off a couple of local occult troublemakers (ghosts, of course, make excellent assassination cutouts). This is against our own policy, naturally, but the names on the rival group's list are in fact very awful people. Our noting this is not a tacit giving of permission to ignore a murder spree; merely an observation that, in the end, we'd rather have your team alive than any of the people on that list.

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