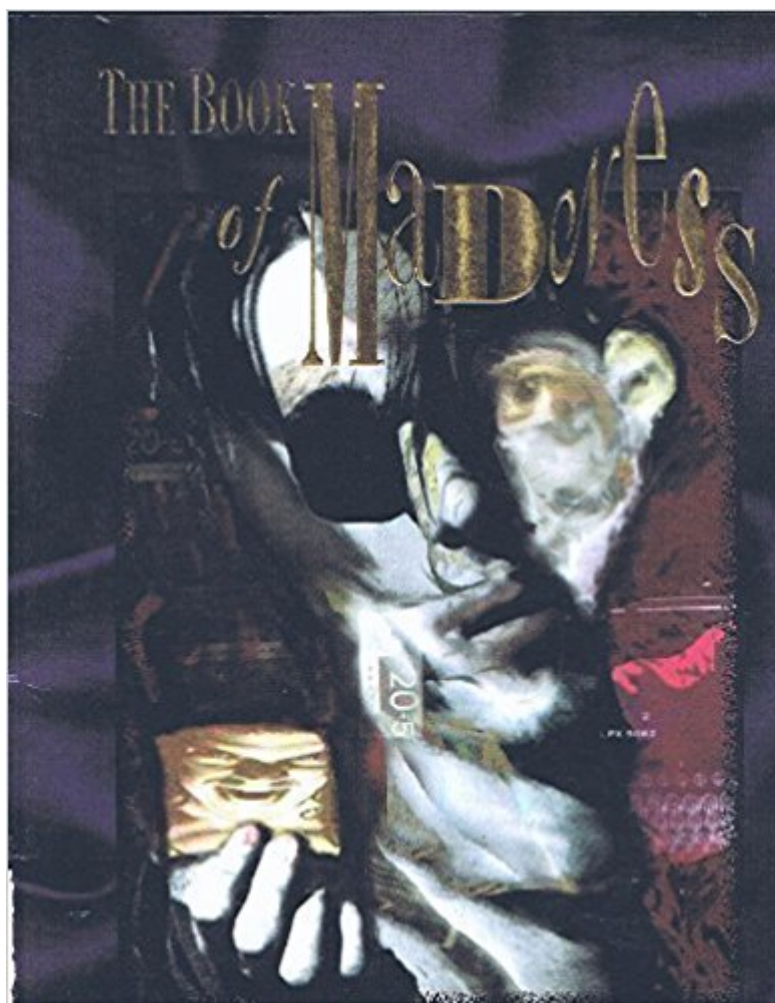


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The Book Of Madness: Whispers Without, Chaos Within (Mage)



Synopsis

"The Darkness Has Teeth... And it Hungers. Beyond the Horizon, dark forces claw at the edges of sanity, battering at the fabric of reality, seeking final night: Nephandi, the Corrupters -- Marauders the Foot-Soldiers of Chaos -- Demons, the Renders of Souls-Paradox Spirits, the Mage's Bane -- Umbrood, the Living Mysteries. What are they? Why are they? Can we stand against them at all? And what if we cannot? The Book of Madness is a bestiary for Mage: The Ascension, exploring the darker reaches of magick's touch. It presents the forces of Chaos itself, for players to fight and Storytellers to champion".

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"The Darkness Has Teeth... And it Hungers. Beyond the Horizon, dark forces claw at the edges of sanity, battering at the fabric of reality, seeking final night: Nephandi, the Corrupters -- Marauders the Foot-Soldiers of Chaos -- Demons, the Renders of Souls-Paradox Spirits, the Mage's Bane -- Umbrood, the Living Mysteries. What are they? Why are they? Can we stand against them at all? And what if we cannot? The Book of Madness is a bestiary for Mage: The Ascension, exploring the darker reaches of magick's touch. It presents the forces of Chaos itself, for players to fight and Storytellers to champion".

Informative but lacking in detail. It's less in depth about the nephandus and marauders than I could have hoped for but it does have some useful information for storytellers. Overall a middle of the road

book for the Mage line.

The Book of Madness was out of print for a while, but White Wolf did a new print run of it in early '99. The book doesn't need a reprint, it needs a revision. I'll get to that. The Book of Madness is all about the mages' strangest, wildest adversaries: The Nephandi and the Marauders, the two other forces in the Ascension War besides the Traditions and the Technocracy, along with a bunch of spirits, the demons of the Astral Umbra, Paradox spirits, and a chapter on the Umbrood in general, plus a small selection of Mythic beasts. All of it is fairly good, but none of it, except possibly the section on Paradox, was long enough for my taste. Much of the material on here was intergrated into the second edition of Mage, like the rules for Umbrood, more details about the Nephandi and Marauders, and some of the clarifications of Paradox. The lack of quantity of the material and its outdatedness are the book's two main flaws, but they're enough. Personally, I think they either need to revise and expand the Book of Madness, or, preferably, there needs to be a volume detailing both the Nephandi and the Marauders in more detail, giving some history of the two sects, and then a separate book of Umbrood, Astral demons, and Paradox spirits. But I'm just blue-skying here. This is one of those books that is all storyteller resources and nothing players would benefit from, and while not essential for running a campaign, it would definitely help if you wished to include any of the forces described within.

Like the Technocracy, the main Mage rules do little to explain why the Fallen Ones or the Mad Ones are supposed to be feared and hunted by the Archmages or even the majority of ranking mages in Traditional or Technocratic circles. Aside from the Nephandi having evil powers and the Marauders being almost completely immune to the limiting effects of Paradox, they simply functioned as human-sized dragons in Mage, good for destroying large chunks of real estate or frightening small children. With this book, we now have information about running and playing these kinds of characters that turns them into actual characters, rather than scary set-pieces. You didn't just sell your soul to a Hermetic mage gone bad, you sold it to Jodi Blake, with a distinctive style all her own. And so on. I recommend this book as a starting place for any storyteller (or, heaven forbid, a player) who wants to include one or more of these folks in a Mage game.

This is THE most useful Mage sourcebook there is. Get it at the same time you pick up 2nd edition Mage and you'll be away. It explains (in fact theorises about) the nature of paradox, spirits, marauders, nephandi and so on, and gives handy hints on how to flesh them out into plausible

adversaries rather than monsters to magick to death. It is excellently written and well thought out, typically Phil Brucato (who is by the way the most worthwhile member of White Wolf by a mile) and will improve your chronicle. Trust me (as Jodi Blake might say)

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