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INTRODUCTION

The evil that lies within doesn't sleep for long.

In *East Texas University: Pinebox Perils* we took a closer look at some of the additional supernatural creatures that may be lurking around campus. We learned that one of these creatures, Doctor Kewalie Sisemba the director of the student wellness center, has an evil counterpart lying within him that is drawn to fear, death, and any hint of High Strangeness it can get its hands on.

On the outside, Dr. Sisemba is a healthy and svelte 30-year-old American of African descent with ebony skin and a short clean haircut. Always prepared with a smile and calming demeanor, he is easily well liked by his peers and students alike.

On the inside, "Popa Bowa" takes perch, waiting for the perfect moment to pounce on its victims. The creature within reveals itself vilely, expelling like an oily tar vomit from Dr. Sisemba's mouth. Completely coating his body with the viscous fluid, it transforms shape into a four foot tall bat-like creature with wings and a cyclopsian eye. Popa Bowa takes control, and is ready to feed.

We warned you that evils never sleep, at least not with High Strangeness in the air!

SAVAGE TALE: HIGH STRANGENESS

The students are drawn into a tense standoff when a traumatized student holds the library study room hostage.

LATE NIGHT RESEARCH

The photocopier on the second floor of the library has been acting strangely ever since a student (perhaps one of the heroes) tried to photocopy pages from an occult book. Although every copy printed turned out blurred, something of the book transferred to the machine.

The study group is introduced to the adventure while meeting at the library late one night. The building is mostly empty except for the occasional student librarian shelving the books like silent ghosts.

The students hear a shout of alarm and a thud from around the corner. Upon reaching the scene, they see a photocopier on wheels rolling circles around a very alarmed student, Roddy. The student makes a break for safety but the photocopier lunges and knocks him over, all the while opening and shutting its lid like a chomping mouth.

The photocopier is magically animated, but the magic runs out in six more rounds.



ANIMATED PHOTOCOPIER

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4(a), Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d4

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5 (1)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +1:** High-grade plastic!
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken, ignores 1 point of Wound penalties, does not breathe or suffer from disease or poison.
- **Fearless:** Unsurprisingly, this photocopier is immune to Fear and Intimidation. "Photocopier don't care!"
- **Ram:** Flapping lid notwithstanding, all this thing can really do is ram a target and knock it over. As long as it's not Bound or Entangled, it does Str+d4 damage and the victim must make an Agility roll or be knocked prone.

- **Size -1:** The photocopier is about the size of a standard home printer.

I'M NOT CRAZY

After the photocopier runs out of magic, one would think things would return to normal. However, this incident is too much for poor Roddy McDaniel. Although this is not his first encounter with the paranormal, it is his first with other witnesses. While within earshot of the students he calls the student counseling hot-line and asks for Dr. Sisemba. If the study group tries to leave, he draws a concealed weapon and holds them hostage until Dr. Sisemba arrives, which he does within minutes.

Heroes who are honest with the counselor about what they saw earn Roddy's tremendous relief and gratitude, although Dr. Sisemba expresses natural skepticism. On the other hand, heroes who express ignorance or make up an alibi drive Roddy into panic. He's desperate to prove to Sisemba he isn't crazy.

No matter how the students handle the situation, eventually Dr. Sisemba leaves with Roddy in tow. Within a minute the heroes hear yet another cry of alarm, this time due to the Popo Bawa. The presence of so much recent High Strangeness has caused Dr. Sisemba's alter ego, the Popo Bawa, to emerge while in the shadows of the tall library stacks. When confronted by the study group, the creature first attempts to strike Fear into them, but if Wounded or clearly outclassed it retreats via its Shadow Walk or Glide abilities.



■ **POPA BOWA:** See Popa Bawa in *East Texas University: Pinebox Perils*. The popa bawa is always a Wild Card!

- **Roddy:** Use the Student profile from *East Texas University. The cat ran.*

CONCLUSION

If the Popo Bawa is not defeated outright in this adventure, Dr. Sisemba is found unconscious some distance away. As always, the poor man has no recollection of what happened. Roddy, on the other hand, has snapped. He's been driven catatonic by his experiences and requires medical attention. With months of counseling he concludes he was slipped a hallucinogenic earlier in the evening and experienced a "bad trip."

From this moment onward, the Popo Bawa takes an interest in the study group. By day, the students may find themselves the subject of curiosity and caring concern by Dr. Sisemba. By night, when the study group performs a ritual or any other activity involving High Strangeness, they have a 50% chance of attracting the Popo Bawa!

SAVAGE TALE: THIEF IN THE NIGHT

The heroes find themselves at odds with a supernatural creature who steals their talismans and ritual components, then attacks the ritualists themselves.

Either due to an earlier encounter or simply due to multiple exposures to High Strangeness, the Popo Bawa closely follows the study group's supernatural encounters. This adventure is best experienced in the middle of other ongoing adventures.

HIGHLY STRANGE

The Popo Bawa appears during a High Strangeness event. This could be after a ritual cast by the study group or others, or could be an event triggered by other supernatural activity such as a haunting or talisman use. The Popo Bawa uses its Shadow Walk ability to appear on the scene from within a shadow. It uses its Fear ability to frighten away the students, and only enters combat if cornered. Play this one for creeps!

DISRUPTION

The Popo Bawa appears as the students cast a ritual. Its presence automatically increases the difficulty of the Casting Modifier by -2. It only seeks to frighten unless cornered and forced to fight.

CONSUMPTION

In this encounter, the Popo Bawa arrives during the Gathering Power phase of a ritual being prepared by the study group. It's particularly drawn to the Exotic Components prepared for the ritual and attempts to steal or consume them on the spot (depending on the nature of the component).

ANTICIPATION

In the final encounter, the Popo Bawa has decided to feed on the supernatural energy of a ritualist. The creature stalks and preys upon the study group's ritualist, visiting at night while she's asleep and feeding on her fear. The stalking continues until it incapacitates its victim or takes at least two Wounds in a fight.

SAVAGE TALE: HOUSE CALLS

Students who have counseling sessions with Dr. Sisemba turn up missing.

SETUP

When Dr. Sisemba counsels a student who has been exposed to High Strangeness, the Popo Bawa pays a house call. The study group learns an acquaintance who was caught up in a recent supernatural event has turned up missing.

INVESTIGATION

Sleuths who investigate the circumstances learn the student disappeared from his apartment in the middle of the night. There was no sign of break-in, and the police are treating it as someone who cracked under pressure and left town. As evidence, it comes to light the student had been seeing Dr. Sisemba three times a week. It also comes to light other students have been disappearing under similar circumstances.

OFFICE VISIT

Students who visit Dr. Sisemba (either as investigators or under the guise of being a patient) come to his attention as being tainted by High Strangeness. The Popo Bawa later pays the student a visit, ideally late one night while in the presence of the students' friends.

RESOLUTION

Wounding the Popo Bawa to the point of death kills Dr. Sisemba as well. The only way to defeat it without killing its host is with the *banish* power. This frees Dr. Sisemba, although the counselor becomes more somber and is never as carefree as before.