



THE MINISTRY

OF EXTRAMUNDANE AFFAIRS

Storyteller Resources

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This document provides resources and advice for Ministry Storytellers.

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BEING THE STORYTELLER

It is a tough but rewarding job being the Storyteller. It is up to you to provide the world and the challenges that your players inhabit and overcome. You are every individual that your players meet, you are enemy and ally and all points in between. You are the arbiter of the rules and have responsibility for making sure that the story is compelling and proceeds at a decent pace. It is a task that can involve a certain amount of cat herding amongst your players. This can seem like a daunting prospect but there are some things that really, really help with this task.

PREPARING

Before each session, make sure you know what the story you want to facilitate is. Figure out the major beats in the story ahead of time, have names for the major npcs. If there's a planned bit of violence, consider mapping out the landscape it will happen in so your players can be clear about where they are. Have notes to remind you what different npcs know. Have your dice to hand, get a beverage ahead of time to keep your throat clear - Storytellers do a LOT of talking. We have a number of resources and bits of advice below to help you in these important tasks.

Be informed

Make sure you know how the game works. It's important that you know how the rules operate so you can break them. While your players are responsible for knowing the rules they *will* ask you how the situation they find themselves in interacts with those rules. Be able to answer them.

Be fair

It's an obvious point but don't have favourites, allow everyone to have the chance to be the big hero, make sure that rules interpretations are consistent and so on.

Be aware

Check around the table, does someone look like they're not engaged? Maybe ask them a question with an NPC or have them make a test for information they've noticed while others were talking. See who falls in to which roles and try to create situations where the natural face of the party is elsewhere and someone else has to do the diplomacy for a change. Keep an eye on the time, if you have a hard finish time and a lot to fit in then you need to keep a lid on things and ensure things proceed apace. If a player seems to be the butt of a lot of banter and isn't enjoying it then maybe a gentle "enough now folks" is necessary. Stay engaged and you'll be rewarded.

Be flexible

No one likes to be told "you have to go there now". Railroading plots is one of the fastest ways to disengage your players. Much better to drop breadcrumbs that make them *want* to go where you want them to. If they have a good idea to solve a problem, facilitate it! If they are having unexpected connection to a random NPC, rearrange things to make them a recurring character if possible. Keep an open mind and plot what the bad guys are doing not what the players will do to thwart them. That's their job.

Have fun

It can be easy to forget that this roleplaying lark is supposed to be fun for the Storyteller as well as the players. Build yourself comic relief NPCs, delight in evil little traps, do voices, indulge in-jokes. Have fun!

The Social Contract of Roleplaying

There is an implied agreement at the heart of roleplaying. You, the Storyteller will supply an adventure. They, the players, will engage with that adventure! It serves no-one for the players to ignore the dangled hooks and just go off to play dominoes in the Dog & Duck... Likewise, it serves no-one for the Storyteller to be telling the players what to do. It is their decision after all. Thus we get to the social contract. You provide an engaging adventure and the players will direct their characters to engage with it.

THE NATURE OF MINISTRY

Ministry has been deliberately designed to be an extremely free-wheeling rules system, but while that means that there are a lot of options for experienced roleplayers to take advantage of, the less experienced amongst the party may feel a little overwhelmed by choice at first. While hopefully the explanatory examples that pepper the rules will hopefully encourage more timid players to throw themselves in, you may need to do some coaching. The Stat+Skill combo that is the heart of the rules set is a very versatile tool. Players should be encouraged to find clever uses for their skills: “wait, wait, I’ve been flying planes for years, could I use my Pilot skill with my Awareness to try to predict the best angle of approach would be here? And then set up the guns to cover it?”

Lethality

This is a dangerous system. We wanted to give our players the sense that they are real people at real hazard rather than abstractions of hit points and the like. This does mean that the game can get very, very dangerous if you, the storyteller are not careful. Fortunately the setting is on your side. If in doubt, the bad guy does not have a gun. This is Britain after all, they will have clubs, or knives or similar. Heck, in any slaughterhouse there are implements that would make a medieval soldier blanche. Most households will have axes or similar weapon-adjacent tools. Even a humble poker makes a quality club. If there are guns, make sure there is cover. You want a dramatic, an-inch-from-death feeling scene. Not a firing squad.

You will find that a combination of cover and the ever-useful Fortune Tokens will mitigate the danger that the players face. They tip the balance from “realistically lethal” to “heroically lethal”. You can do some cool stuff from the movies without getting instantly killed. Just be aware that when there was a choice of two ways to go in the rules design, the designers plumped for the more realistic option most of the time.

Healing

Having said all that about lethality, we don’t want our heroes missing most of 1941 learning to walk again because they got shot in the knee. While field medicine is bandages, splints and hope, once you get to Chapter House things change a great deal. The Recuperative Wing is the product of the absolute bleeding edge of healing ritual magic research. Agents within the folded magical energies and constant work of the staff will heal very, very fast. While you may want a grievously wounded character to need a little downtime (perhaps giving a player a chance to play a one-off loaner agent from another team or even country) most will be able to be healed by the next session. The lethality of the game is to produce tension and fear rather than roleplaying months of recuperation.

A Living World

Ministry has been designed to work well when there is a balance between social solutions and violence. Given how dangerous the system is, your players should always be encouraged to find a peaceful/clever resolution if possible. They should also be reminded that it is a part of their job to cover up supernatural incidents in the community. If they start firing a bren gun in suburbia there is going to be a lot of police summoned. They should be keeping as low a profile as possible.

Mr Pilgrim

As a Storyteller, Mr Pilgrim is an unbelievably powerful tool. He is the instigator of missions, the provider of exposition, a rein on over-exuberant officers and a provider of helpful information when they are totally stuck. They can phone Chapter House from nearby post offices and the like. Make Mr Pilgrim your own, he is the best representation of your voice in the game.

That Pesky 1940's Problem

There is a bit of a wrinkle with running compelling and believable characters from the 1940's in the modern era. That wrinkle takes the form of the terrible levels of racism, sexism, homophobia and other unsavoury attitudes permeating every facet of society. Ultimately, it is up to you and your players how far you want to push this angle, but I have a few tips that might make an acceptable portrayal of the unacceptable possible. The easiest way is to do what a lot of TV shows do and express these attitudes, but only in the mouths of unpleasant people. Nasty NPC's can be offensive and then get some comeuppance for expressing such. Decent people can be surprised at the unusual - "good lord, a filly with a firearm?!" - and then quickly be accommodating once challenged. Avoid slurs, but keep the prejudice. Above all make really unpleasant types rare and thus impactful and then empower your players to punish them. Depending on your players you may not want to go even this far. You know your group best.

An *Empire* at War

It is worth remembering that while the popular imagination had "Britain Standing Alone" it was standing alone with an Empire of 500 million people at its back. Ethnic diversity is far more believable than a lot of people realise. Feel free to pepper Britain with people from all over the Empire on which the sun never sets.

Overusing Rules

Knowing when to abstract the action in a roleplaying game is important. Sure, you could have everyone narrate their every action in initiative order, but that would get old fast. Likewise, there is no need to have driving tests made for every calm journey between locations. Likewise there are times when it's best to initiate a round of turns, generally high tension events like combat or a chase. Much of the time it is better to just say "right, anyone want to do anything before we leave this area?" and let people just act whenever they want.

There is also benefit to being explicit about when you are moving into a round of turns. People know to time their moves and be ready to be more rules focussed, and there is a delightful frisson to be had when the Storyteller suddenly says "so, anyone higher than Reflex 4?" and people realise something bad is about to go down...

CREATING THE CHALLENGE

It is worth getting some terminology straight at this point. For the purposes of this section, a Mission is a self-contained story containing a beginning and an end in and of itself. A Campaign is a series of Missions that might lead on from one another directly or have a hidden linking factor that isn't apparent until much later. Don't think that you have to always link Missions within a Campaign. There is a fair amount of joy to be had in standalone Missions that are for their own sake.

Designing a Mission

When crafting a Mission for your players, there are a number of things to consider. First, how are you hooking them into the story? Is it a briefing from Mr Pilgrim giving them an assignment? Are they already on assignment and something weird happens to them? Are they contacted by a friendly NPC with information received? Whatever the method, you need the initial factor that will pique their curiosity or fire their resolve and drive them into the adventure.

Establishing shots

The first location the party go to will almost certainly have an expository quality to it. It might be a crime scene, or a victim with a story to tell, or the physical evidence of an unusual happening. Whatever it is, this is where you get across the initial information that your players need to contextualise the Mission and give them the clues to how they are going to resolve it. Let them use their skills to shake information out of the location and participants. Let them feel that they are discovering the clues they need.

The Plot Thickens

With the information they have received, your players will have ideas on how to proceed. It might be simple, like "track those footprints into the foreboding forest" or more complex like "we'll need to talk to the mother and the sister won't we...". Regardless, they'll be taking actions to uncover more information and inform their next steps. Note that you can steer things very easily without it looking like you are railroading the players. They find clues that tease the next location or course of action, and by working it out they'll be pleased to have figured out where to go rather than being told where to go. In this phase you are facilitating their uncovering the plot rather than telling them it.

Inserting Jeopardy

Tension is important to good Storytelling. This can be achieved through time limitations; through aggressive adversaries; through limited opportunities to achieve an end or goal; or through threat to secondary characters or the players themselves. There is a truism in writing that goes something like "if this isn't the most exciting moment of this character's life, why are you not writing about that?". In this vein, assume all the Missions that result in your characters walking into a scene, finding a note that says "Bill did it", going to Bill's house and him coming quietly are happening between sessions. These Missions are the dramatic ones! It is worth having the simple ones happen from time to time though, to wrong foot your players and act as a springboard for something unexpected to happen.

Establish who the adversaries are, maybe have an early encounter that goes poorly for the players if they are unprepared. Allow them time and resources to figure out information they need to have in order to defeat/thwart/escape from them.

Violence with Consequence

The best fight choreographers know that a good fight scene advances the plot while it excites the audience. While you may feel like an action beat is needed to spice up the story, make sure that it serves that story. A thug attacking the players in an alleyway for no reason just to have some action achieves nothing. Having friends of the subject waiting for them in a dark alleyway makes much more narrative sense. Always be serving the plot.

Resolution

The story needs to build to a climax. Maybe it's a final shootout. Perhaps a dangerous descent into a monster-haunted cavern to rescue a stolen child. A car chase to capture a fleeing subject. Whatever it is, the resolution should be achieved by the players following the information they have uncovered and the puzzles they have solved. It is so much more satisfying to chase down a lead than run into them on the 9:14 to Clapham.

Denouement and Epilogue

This is where all the threads of the mission come together, the explanations revealed, the machinations undone. It may have a debriefing element by Pilgrim. It might just be going exhausted to their homes or the hospital wing... Regardless, this is the point where you end the story and wrap everything up.

Timing the Mission

Depending on your time commitments you may have wildly different amounts of physical time to play Ministry. It is therefore useful to consider this when planning missions. If your group generally gets together for a whole weekend afternoon and evening then you can probably have an entire Mission as one gaming session with start, middle and end all neatly within the same session. If you only get a couple of hours, then it is likely that you will have to split the mission up into several sections before it comes to its conclusion. In these cases it is worth having little cliffhanger or revelatory moments to finish a session rather than leaving it mid conversation with the victim's Great Aunt Mabel.

It is usually worth doing a "Previously, on Ministry..." recap at the start of each session. Get your players to help you with details to stimulate their memories and get them focussed on the game world and the task in hand.

Making the most of Tea & Medals

It can be tempting to see Tea & Medals as nothing more than a test to earn XP. However, when used well it can cement the best memories of the session and fix vital information in the minds of your players. It is up to you as a Storyteller to facilitate this process, as not everyone is confident or has the ego to be proud of their roleplaying. If someone is struggling to come up with a character moment then invite others to help with their favourite memories of that character's actions in the session. At the same time, make sure people have time to come up with something on their own as the feedback will be more impactful and resonant as a result. The character development point is most important here as it really helps the player to see their character as a living, adapting being. The learning point is your opportunity to see what exposition has sunk in to your players' minds. They may have missed something critical to an ongoing plot that you will need to find a way of dropping in to a future Mission.

Tea and Medals Considerations

Depending on the length of your sessions it may be harder or easier to earn all five experience points from a session. If a short session was consumed by a protracted fight then there may have been badassery to spare but not much in the way of world expanding learning. Whereas a longer session might give plenty of opportunities to get all of the available points.

Crafting a Campaign

While there is nothing wrong with stand alone Missions, there can be considerable satisfaction to be had with either overtly or covertly introducing running themes through them that link together to form an overarching story. When doing this, think like a television writer. Most shows will have stand alone episodes that only have hints at the ongoing plot or mere mentions of it. Then there will be episodes that explicitly advance the main plot with the events at hand a mere sideshow to the exposition. You'll want to seed little hints and build compelling adversaries that become persistent thorns in the sides of your characters. There can be huge satisfaction for both players and storyteller when someone goes "wait, we've seen this before" and starts flipping back through notes to make connections hidden until that moment. There are few things that can help you do this:

Introduce the Adversary Early

If there is a mastermind behind a lot of things then the players need to encounter them early on. Whether they know that they have or not is another matter. Make sure that if they have an enemy it is a smart one that can escape in plausible fashions. Consider giving important heroic-level enemies their own pool of Fortune Tokens for example. You want to build quality hating time in so that the eventual defeat of the enemy is so, so much sweeter.

Make Use of Events Later

Having an unusual and unexplained phenomenon turn up later on again will confirm that someone is using it for a higher purpose. Maybe a thief steals a scroll with a particular ritual on it as a subplot of a Mission, only for that ritual to be used three or four Missions later.

Repetition Makes Memory

Have the enemies name/description repeated often until your players are almost snarling under their breath the answer that a victim gives them before they give it "yeah, a one armed man, blonde of hair... Grrrrrr.". Consider having signature items left at crime scenes or a distinctive method for killings etc.

Let It End

Don't draw things out too much. Have an overplot develop, mature, become the main threat, and then allow the players to thwart it. If you are clever you'll have unbeknownst to them seeded the next overplot during the end phase of the previous one. If you don't do this then interest may wane before you ever get to reveal your master plan!

Quick-fire Scenario Concepts

While you are all wonderfully creative and interesting individuals, we find it helps to have a few ideas tossed around for missions that can be thrown at your ~~willing-victims~~ players. It helps indicate tone and gets the brain running for your own creations. Sessions we have run include:

- Children have gone missing from a series of seemingly unconnected streets. The only commonality? Beneath them runs one of the many hidden rivers of London and a troll has taken residence. What is a street above a river? A bridge, and now it's a troll bridge.
- A Preternatural Criminality and Justice team has been murdered by the very man they were sent to bring in (a Cambion of vicious skill). The PCJD asks the DoI for help in tracking down and bringing in this Cambion.
- A gang war has suddenly escalated with a building being brought down in the night with no apparent explosives used. Ministry agents realise that ritual magic is being used by this mundane gang. The ritual needs to be recovered and the gang brought to justice.
- An enemy night-fighter aircraft is shot down over the coast, intelligence indicates that it is an Me-616 Hollejäger, a demon-possessed plane able to see in the dark and turn better than a human could. The team are to recover it for study; only problem is, the containments cracked in the crash and it is loose and possessing local machinery.
- A DoI team has gone missing in a sleepy English village. The team investigate to find unnaturally friendly locals, odd practices and a real fondness for swimming in the local pond. Could there be a connection to the creepy cult in the cave under the pond infecting people with brain-worms? Decent chance..
- You have been approached by the American version of the Ministry with an extradition request. A man wanted by them for performing Black Sacraments leading to a series of deaths has come to Britain and is now seemingly living with a coven of like-minded people. The British really don't want him here, so you are sent to evict.
- A raid by the mundane police on a Brothel running trafficked women has found some very odd things. The Ministry quietly take over and discover that a local gang of magical types is specialising in smuggling in creatures. When they take them down they find evidence that many are being sold to an elite gentlemen's club in Scotland called "Hydes." This leads to the second mission. Infiltrate and take down an establishment patronised by the rich and the powerful.
- A series of young people have been turning up dead and drained of their blood. The only connection? Proximity to an army camp where a large number of Polish Free Army are billeted, could something vampiric have infiltrated alongside the army? Or, more likely are they being unfairly blamed for something using them for cover.
- The team are sent to investigate a U-boat, found drifting and deserted. Hardened commandos could not board it for some reason. Inside, they find the crew have murdered each other. The only clues? The map showing their destination - an apparently tethered iceberg - and their cargo. The body of a young Jewish man, his head surgically altered for some reason. He died of dehydration but was powerfully magical. This leads to a second mission: the raid on the iceberg base. Beneath the iceberg is a vast steel construction housing a secret base. At the bottom of it, bathed in heated Atlantic waters are more altered people. They are psychically tracking shipping in the North Atlantic. Destroying this will massively aid the war effort.
- The team are sent to support a Ministry chaplain performing a dangerous exorcism. The demon can apparently call people to defend it. Only trouble is, the chaplain is a wrong 'un and isn't an exorcist at all, he's made a pact with a much more powerful demon - Hastur, a duke of Hell - and is using him to scare out lesser demons. Tonight is the night that Hastur comes to collect his due...
- In villages around marshland, young women are going missing with no explanation until one turns up expertly skinned. The team are sent to investigate finding a bog hag dwelling in the centre of the marsh using the skins to re-wrap its horrific form.

- A series of ritual murders during air raids in underground stations draws the ministry's attention. The only connection is geography. They will find that the closed Aldwych station is being used by the British Museum to store collections, and an air raid has broken some significant canopic jars and woken a mummified priest. Believing himself to be in the afterlife, he is performing rituals of sacrifice to resurrect his beloved Pharaoh.
- An unnaturally-shaped paratrooper is found hanging by his chute in a tree near Birmingham, his equipment removed and tracks leading away. Werewolf saboteurs are trying to destroy industrial production centres. The team must track and eliminate them.
- A series of odd suicides in a succession of towns along a major road lead to the conclusion that a carnival is involved in some way. A fortune teller has unwittingly got her hands on a real ritual mat and her performance is permitting malign influences to poison people's minds.
- In Liverpool, a headless body of a Chinese man, its insides eaten out, is discovered. Research indicates that this could be the work of a penanggalan leading the team on a game of Cat and Mouse in the unfamiliar world of Liverpool's Chinatown.
- The team are sent to support an Esoteric Treaties Office ambassador as they enter Ælfheim to negotiate a treaty of either support or non-interference with the war. Of course, the Queens have also invited the Germans, so a contest of champions ensues.
- A tin mine in Cornwall is suffering a vast array of accidents. Sabotage is suspected but none can be found. The Ministry decides to take a look and the team track the problem to the new mine manager banning the practice of throwing pasty crusts to the Knockermen and instead insisting on the men bringing them back up for the pigs "there's a war on y'know!". The Knockermen are of course real and have been taking their revenge.

Hopefully these should fire up the imagination and have those initial sessions humming along nicely. Feel free to nick any of these ideas wholesale or twist them to suit your own style!

CREATING AND MANAGING NPCs

Of all the tasks a Storyteller is charged with, creating interesting and engaging Non-Player Characters (NPCs) is the one that does the most to bring the world to life. Hearing “the Greengrocer tells you he saw a man acting shifty” is fine for expediency. But how much better might it be to meet Cecil; dodging the draft with a chest complaint that comes and goes and who would really like to sell you some cabbages that he has - that are past their prime - while you try to make him focus on telling you what he saw. One is exposition; the other is world building and creating memorable moments.

Friendly NPCs

Amongst inexperienced Storytellers, a lot of work goes into the antagonists. Their backstories and motivations are fleshed out. The other characters the players might meet tend to be a little thinner. They form a simple archetype, there to get information across and nothing more. But in a game like Ministry, where the setting means that there will be a lot of investigative or at the least eye-witness interactions, you need memorable “extras”. You need your solid character actors making memorable roles out of bit parts. There are lots of ways of doing this: some work with meticulous planning, thinking ahead of time about every character the players are to meet. Others use lists of personality quirks or random online generators to get a varied cast. Still others improvise almost everything and just go with what feels right at that moment.

There are advantages and disadvantages to all those three methods and in honesty, most people do a mix of the three. If you are constantly improvising then the same tropes will start to appear as you reach for the comfortable option. Obsessive planning can lead to a lack of flexibility when your players go a bit “off-piste”. Relying on randomness can lead to inappropriate or ill-fitting moments in what could otherwise have been a nice scene. Often the best advice is: plan out the important people. Especially if you have an investigative mission planned then you need everyone to be singing the right songs and with the right mood so the players can figure out “who dunnit”. Otherwise, be prepared, have lists of names so everyone in the world can have a name and maybe a crib sheet of a few quirks to back you up if you go a bit dry and improvise the rest. Ultimately what is best is what works best for your group.

RECURRING NPCs

So you've done all that work, you've pulled interesting characters out of the air and made them real. It would be a shame to forget them, wouldn't it? Make a couple of notes to remind you of that character's essential points and their name and use them again! Maybe the same copper detains them that didn't buy their story about why they were haring down a country lane with a harpoon last time. Perhaps there's a shopkeeper who *really* likes one party member and keeps an ear to the ground for them. It's all valuable world building and helps make your players feel at home. They *know* these people. They can predict how Nicky Three-Fingers will react if cornered and pressured for information. They know how to sweet talk the admin staff at Chapter House to expedite their searches. They can live there.

As an example, here are some of the people who exist in the canon Chapter House from the playtest world building:

Sgt Locke: Found in the Armoury, a gruff Scot missing his right arm, eye and leg and with substantial scarring. Won't talk about the injuries and gets shirty if pressed. An expert in weapons maintenance, he is the man to beg for special issue wargear. Will not issue unless he's satisfied you know how to use it and that it's appropriate.

Vincent Saint-Saëns: Frenchman resident in the UK. The Librarian of Chapter House. Dapper chap, always wearing lightly smoked glasses, even in the gloom of the indoors as though strong light hurts his eyes. Cheerful and helpful to a fault, he is a specialist in angelic manifestations in myth. He is also an enthusiastic – bordering on geeky – practitioner of Savate and is always keen to pontificate on its perfection – in his eyes – as a martial art. He's willing, if not eager, to give lessons.

Professor Charlotte Jacklin: Usually to be found training officers in the magical gymnasium. Professor Jacklin is an neuromancy expert and ruthless with it. She believes that a mind incapable of resisting a neuromancer's assault is a danger to the team around them and is thus contemptuous of those unwilling or unable to learn to defend themselves. A prickly woman, who once they've proven themselves, is extremely helpful to her students. But *only* once they've proven themselves.

Dr Edward Brader: Fellow of Oberon College, Oxford. Has spent the last forty years researching dry details of ritual magic which has given him a certain donnish distractedness; a maddening tendency to lecture while distracting himself with interesting tangents; and more knowledge of ritual magic than is healthy for one person to have. Comes in to Chapter House on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Edith Hinchcliffe: Elderly lady wearing a sort of strict Victorian governess outfit, hair in tight grey bun, sharp eyes that peer over pince-nez spectacles. She is the liaison for the Preternatural Criminality and Justice Department and former field agent and seems to know every shady character in South London. Any mention of her to experienced hands tends to lead to shudders and an oblique reference to the parrot-headed umbrella she carries; with which, rumour tells, she is lethal.

"James": No other name given, large man always in army mess uniform. Medal ribbons indicate he fought in the First World War and Boer war. Magnificent moustache. Now works as the doorman, security and informal social secretary of St Jude's Commonwealth Club. Bit of a gossip among officers but a silent wall of very polite and muscular refusal to anyone he doesn't know.

We hope this has given you some inspiration, encouragement or just some useful people to use outright in your own games. It's worth noting that all the points about recurring friendly NPCs very much apply to our next category: Antagonist NPCs, after all everyone loves to hate a recurring villain.

Antagonist NPCs

Just as the friendly NPCs will build a world, good antagonists will build a campaign. Having bad guys with solid motivations and real personalities will make your game sessions come alive. Granted, not all adversaries need their life histories on display but you definitely need some memorable antagonists who through cunning and guile – and the sacrifice of minions – escape time and again, thwarting the player’s efforts and making their eventual victory all the sweeter.

THE GOOD GOON GUIDE

All that being said, there is a lot of use to be had out of just plain goons. We tend to think of goons as being the folks in films that are there to shoot at and be shot by the hero. When you see Bruce Lee beating up three dozen people in a dojo somewhere you don’t know all their hopes and dreams, they are there to be targets. *However*, there are ways to make goons memorable and even threatening and that is to pay close attention to the *organisation* they belong to. Not the individuals. While there is nothing wrong with hired guns picked up from a local pub, they have to act that way. No loyalty when things get really rough, self-preservationist, not really cooperating. Contrast that with the sworn brothers of a crack Brethren of the Union strike squad, fanatical, loyal to a fault to each other and the cause, ready to die rather than retreat. Or again, a gang under a feared crime lord, loyal to each other as long as someone else is watching, their bravado evident only when there is someone there to report back.

All of those examples could share the exact same non-heroic stat line, but each plays very, very differently to the other. Each of those would be a believable and potentially memorable encounter without any actual rules work at all. You know about the organisation, thus the goons have the personality of the organisation. Don’t be afraid to use the streamlined non-heroic character model either. There are times, especially when the heroes are outnumbered, that you want that one-hit-kill model to work. It makes the players both very threatened and look awesome all in the same moment. *But*, make sure to have either a list of names to hand for the improvised goons or name them ahead of time for the planned ones. It’s so much better to have them refer to each other by name or if captured having a name to give the players. It keeps that sense of the world being a living, breathing place populated by real people.

HEROIC VILLAINS

While a goon will do the job just fine in a combat scene, you need some more nuances to make more cunning and subtle bad guys. The number one rule for us is: No-one thinks they are evil. No-one is rubbing their hands together going “buah ha ha haaaa, gosh I’m evil!” are they? Instead, people convince themselves that they are “making hard choices for the greater good”, or that “I have no choice”, or through small steps find themselves so far beyond the line that they can’t see it with a telescope. Bad guys are compelling when *they have a point*, when you think “yeah, I can see what she’s saying... she’s wrong, but I can see where she’s coming from”. There’s also a trope for the “crazy bad guy”. Sure, from time to time, someone really unhinged can be compelling. But crazy isn’t all that scary, someone deciding to do something terrible because in their mind *it’s the right thing to do*? That’s scary.

Likewise, while fanatical goons can be entertaining, if all the bosses are fanatical too that leaves only death as an option for your players. Convincing a bad guy to give himself up, that the situation is hopeless, or just taking them down and arresting them are satisfying outcomes too. In order to have them happen, you have to know how your bad guy thinks, what will be needed to kick the fight out of them. Ultimately, everything said for friendly NPCs holds true for the antagonists. Making them living, breathing people makes the game memorable.

MAKING LIFE EASY FOR YOURSELF

You do not need a full character sheet for every antagonist, especially the goons. If you know the goons will have clubs then you don't need to know what their melee stat and club skill is. Just combine the two and use it on a short stat line to remind you. Likewise, with the heroic villains, unless they are returning time and again and you want to flesh them out in your mind, don't bother with fully realised character sheets. Just figure out what numbers you are going to need and have them to hand.

All that being said, if you have a long running villain: consider having them gain XP like your players. Have them develop new tricks, make it seem like they have lives beyond the players. Keep a brief character sheet for them in your folder. Note down things you'd like them to remember from earlier sessions in order to taunt the players in the future or take revenge for. Keeping these notes will make it seem like you have an encyclopaedic memory and the world is believable and living. Only you will know the truth!

Emergency NPCs

Much as we might like to assume that we have anticipated our players every move, Storytellers cannot be expected to cover every contingency in planning. Who would have guessed that the player would punch that policeman eh? So we present a small selection of Emergency NPCs so that you are not a loose end for a character if your players go a little off piste... We're alternating genders in this section but any of these could easily be for men or women.

Please note that some of these NPCs have stat lines that do not look like anything a player could legally have. That is because we are using composite stat lines that include things like strength training or similar skills in order to save a busy Storyteller some brain space!

The Ordinary Civilian: *"The man on the Clapham omnibus."*

This delightful construction of British law represents the "average man", such as anyone pulled at random from the Clapham Omnibus. This can be seen as the base level of the Man On The Street and would stand in for any civilian you would care to mention.

R	M	Re	S	P	K	I	A	C
Ranged	Melee	Reflexes	Sorcery	Physique	Knowledge	Influence	Awareness	Courage
2	2	4	0	4	2	3	4	2

The Everyday Tough: *"Looks like she can take care of herself."*

This character seems a little above average physically, a certain set to pose that indicates that she can deal with a physical confrontation comfortably. Could represent police, home guard, amateur fighters, physical laborers, sportsmen and the like.

R	M	Re	S	P	K	I	A	C
Ranged	Melee	Reflexes	Sorcery	Physique	Knowledge	Influence	Awareness	Courage
2	3	5	0	6	2	3	5	3

Skills: Unarmed (or appropriate melee weapon) 3.

The Thug: *“Bit of a bruiser, that chap.”*

This character bears the scars of many a physical confrontation, muscles tense under clothing and their manner is a little intimidating. Could represent boxers, bouncers, thuggish henchmen, and so on.

R	M	Re	S	P	K	I	A	C
Ranged	Melee	Reflexes	Sorcery	Physique	Knowledge	Influence	Awareness	Courage
2	3	6	0	7	2	3	5	4

Skills: Unarmed (or appropriate melee weapon) 3, Intimidation 3.

The Scholar: *“Sharp as a tack, she is.”*

This character is smart and observant, quick witted if not physically impressive. Could stand in for scholars, detectives, journalists, scientists, and so on.

R	M	Re	S	P	K	I	A	C
Ranged	Melee	Reflexes	Sorcery	Physique	Knowledge	Influence	Awareness	Courage
2	2	4	0	5	4	3	6	2

Skills: Area of Specialism 4, Associated fields of study 3, Observation 2.

The Leader: *“I’d hollow him to the gates of Hell.”*

This character is charismatic, persuasive or maybe just charming. They communicate well and are good at getting others to follow their lead. Could stand in for officers, politicians, clergy, gang leaders, shop stewards and the like.

R	M	Re	S	P	K	I	A	C
Ranged	Melee	Reflexes	Sorcery	Physique	Knowledge	Influence	Awareness	Courage
2	2	4	0	5	2	5	5	3

Skills: Oratory 3, Diplomacy 3.

The Craftsman: *“Jill of all trades.”*

A skilled craftsman, engineer or other manual worker, this character is good with her hands, mechanically minded and crafty. Could stand in for mechanics, factory workers, ground crew, safe crackers and the like.

R	M	Re	S	P	K	I	A	C
Ranged	Melee	Reflexes	Sorcery	Physique	Knowledge	Influence	Awareness	Courage
2	2	5	0	5	3	3	6	2

Skills: Main trade skill 4, Associated trade skills 3.

The Military Man: *“Tommy Atkins/Jack Tar.”*

This character is a trained military man, a passable shot and well conditioned to action. Could stand in for soldiers, sailors, Brethren of the Union members, even criminal gangs using firearms.

R	M	Re	S	P	K	I	A	C
Ranged	Melee	Reflexes	Sorcery	Physique	Knowledge	Influence	Awareness	Courage
3	2	6	0	5	3	2	5	4

Skills: Rifle 3; Bayonet 3; Military training 2; Tactics 1.

The Elite Combatant: *“Do not mess with her.”*

This Character is an elite combatant, skilled in close combat, an expert shot and stealthy. Could stand in for commandos, veterans, Sonderkommando Thule troops and elite henchmen.

R	M	Re	S	P	K	I	A	C
Ranged	Melee	Reflexes	Sorcery	Physique	Knowledge	Influence	Awareness	Courage
5	4	7	0	5	3	2	6	5

Skills: Rifle 4; Bayonet 3; Military training 2; Tactics 2; Silent Movement 2; Concealment 2.

The Daredevil: *“A dab hand at that.”*

Pilots, drivers and other speedy types.

R	M	Re	S	P	K	I	A	C
Ranged	Melee	Reflexes	Sorcery	Physique	Knowledge	Influence	Awareness	Courage
2	2	7	0	5	4	2	7	5

Skills: Fly/Drive 3; Aerial gunnery 2.

I CREATED A MONSTER!

Introduction to monster creation

While many of the foes that the brave officers of the DoI will face are all too human, a huge part of the day job is keeping the public safe from the beasts of Myth and Magic that inhabit this green and pleasant land. British folklore is stocked with an incredible array of creatures, and the possibilities are limitless given how much of the world trades with the British Empire, potentially bringing something unexpected to the British mainland.

This section of the book will provide some guidelines to help you put whatever monster you're imagining into the game.

Creating a monster is not a rules heavy process, nor is it balanced. We include no means of making it "a fair fight" because, bluntly, it will not be in any way fair for the most part. Four agents vs. a dragon is not a fair fight. Four agents who have lured the dragon near the anti-aircraft cannons though... now that is a different story. You as the Storyteller should not concern yourself too much with how the creatures do what they do within the rules. Players will not be using these abilities themselves so all you need to worry about are the narrative consequences and any time the players actually interact with the creature. You don't need rules to tell you how a vampire turns into a cloud of bats. It just does, uses an action, is now a swarm of bats.

SUMMARY OF MONSTER CREATION

1. Read the original myth

Having a solid understanding of the mythology makes everything easier.

2. Determine the monster's form

Decide what shape it is, how it's hit locations will work and how it will move.

3. Assign stats and skills

Much like building an NPC, produce a stat-line for the creature. If it only has limited options consider making a composite stat-line where the skills are pre-added.

4. How odd is it?

Many magical creatures have supernatural talents or abilities; a suggested list of which are included in the section. Consider having powerful abilities balanced with specific vulnerabilities.

5. Non-human races

This section contains a non-exhaustive list of certain groups of creatures, such as undead, daemons, and so on, and describes some of their features and vulnerabilities.

The original myth

The best place to start in any monster creation is the original myth that the monster springs from. The story of that monster will tell you everything you need to know to make an archetypal version work in your game. We all know what a werewolf can do: they're tough, strong, fast, have teeth and claws, can heal damage, and are harmed by silver. It's relatively simple to translate a concept for a monster into the game by following the steps outlined below. The next few pages will go through each of these considerations in a little more detail.

WHAT IS ITS MOTIVATION?

Don't worry, we're not asking or expecting Freudian psychoanalysis of mythological monsters here – although if you think it'll improve the player experience then go right for it. What we are looking for is a consideration of the way the creature acts and fights. Is it a cunning, considered, intelligent fighter? More likely to set traps than blunder into them? Or is it a wild berserker, driven mad by the smell of blood and determined to rend and destroy anything that moves? Is it timid, tending to flee from strong opponents it doesn't outnumber unless cornered?

Giving your creatures a wide variety of personality types and tactical instincts *that stay consistent* is a really good way of keeping fights fresh. If all the creatures your players face have Napoleon's tactical cunning, all fights will feel the same, and likewise if all the creatures blunder into crossfires and pit traps. Force your players to shake up their tactics, let them have the win of noticing the creature's weaknesses and from time to time feel the fear of an intelligent monster noticing theirs.

Ultimately, having this as part of creature creation is an opportunity and reminder to think of these considerations and keep them consistent within the same type of monster. You can have a canny werewolf and a dumb werewolf, so long as both feel like werewolves.

Determining a monster's form

One of the ways in which your monster is going to be different to the players is in hit locations. Winged things are going to need to be shot out of the sky, horrible slug monsters are almost all body etc. Over the page there is a sheet of different hit location tables to use as a basis for your monster. Feel free to switch these up, ignore them completely, etc. They're just there to help as a first principles thing.

Dealing with damage

There are a lot of creatures naturally on the Earth that can shrug off damage that would kill a human in minutes. Considering this, it is easy to see how the damage levels in the injury section might not be appropriate for every creature. There are a number of ways to deal with this but my favoured way is in adjusting the second injury effects and by adding "shrug it off" hit boxes. Your player hits, harms the creature, it roars in pain (or whatever) but the damage is inconsequential. It allows for the fight to have a quality of attrition. When overused, attrition can be tedious or even frustrating so don't go mad with them. Avoid using creatures that can simply "no sell" the hit, ignoring damage until torn apart. One of those every now and again is scary, all the time is boring. Instead, consider giving tougher creatures one or two "shrug it off" boxes on their hit locations at most and let the players have at it. It can be tempting to make tougher creatures be all but impervious to harm, but that again is frustrating if overused. Feeling that they're chipping away at a tough monster is more compelling than being unable to hurt it at all.

With monsters, often a location will have functionality that a human limb might not, e.g. a claw as an integral weapon. For the most part, their effectiveness will diminish realistically with the harm done to melee and ranged. You may want to adjust "unconscious and bleeding out" to "crippled" for particularly large things or creatures that you feel shouldn't be killed from blood loss or from a limb being crippled (insects spring to mind). Some creatures may only be killed by hits to specific locations, or even need to be torn limb from limb to stop them. Relatively minor tweaks to the injury effects can have really strong results on the feel of a fight.

SAMPLE HIT LOCATION TABLES

Biped (e.g. human)			Quadruped with tail (e.g. wolf)			Avian (e.g. eagle)		
Ranged	Melee	Location	Ranged	Melee	Location	Ranged	Melee	Location
1	1	Head	1	1-2	Head	1	1-2	Head
2-6	2-3	Body	2-6	3-6	Body	2-5	3-6	Body
7	4-5	L Arm	7-9	7-9	Legs	6-9	7-8	Wings
8	6-8	R Arm	10	10	Tail	10	9-10	Legs
9-10	9-10	Legs						

Gastropod (e.g. slug)			Myriapod (e.g. centipede)			Fish (e.g. shark)		
Ranged	Melee	Location	Ranged	Melee	Location	Ranged	Melee	Location
1-2	1	Head	1	1-2	Head	1	1-3	Head
3-10	2-3	Body	2-6	3-6	Body	2-6	4-8	Body
			7-10	7-10	Legs	7-10	9-10	Tail

Clawed arachnid (e.g. scorpion)			Winged Quadruped (e.g. dragon)			Winged Biped (e.g. demon)		
Ranged	Melee	Location	Ranged	Melee	Location	Ranged	Melee	Location
1	1	Head	1	1	Head	1	1	Head
2-6	2-3	Body	2-6	2-5	Body	2-4	2-3	Body
7	4-5	L Claw	7-8	6	Wings	6	4-5	L Arm
8	6-7	R Claw	9	7-9	Legs	7	6-7	R Arm
9	8	Legs	10	10	Tail	8	8	Wings
10	9-10	Tail				9-10	9-10	Legs

Wing Locations: these are almost always fragile; consider making the first damage cause the creature to fly clumsily, the second to prevent flying at all.

Tail Locations: tails, unless they are for weaponry, are almost always used as a balancing aid helping a creature's agility. Consider having the first hit reduce the creature's reflexes, then the second acts as a body hit.

Many Legs: when a creature has lots of legs there is a huge amount of redundancy. Consider having "shrug it off" boxes for all those that the creature can afford to lose. In the case of Myriapods, that's a lot...

How Proficient is it?

This is essentially, what sort of stat-line do I want this creature to have? All you really need to do is figure things like “is it stronger than the strongest human that has ever lived?” which would mean a Physique higher than the normal ceiling of 5. Don’t be afraid of pushing even combined stat/skill numbers above 10, even though a 10 is always a failure. These things are very much not human and there are lots of times where a statistic is reduced through injury or circumstance. All it means is that you have more room for manoeuvre when things get rough.

Not every monster has to be a powerhouse, make creepy, fragile things as well. Let the myth be your guide, unless it says “this thing could lift a barn” then it’s probably as strong as a strong human. A creature’s abilities and tactics are often what make it scary more than its stat-line.

As far as skills go: unless you have a compelling reason for making a creature be specifically good at only one type of fighting (a constrictor snake being *great* at grappling), or to have an contextual advantage on a stat (awareness increased when tracking by smell or something). Don’t bother with them. Just fold the skill into the stat-line and make your life easier. Intelligent creatures – or those with some weapons etc. – are more likely to need skills than the beast types.

How Odd is it?

Just as the characters have Oddnesses, so too can creatures. In fact, many of the supernatural world’s abilities can be found in the Oddness section already. Once more, let the myth be your guide in representing the weird stuff that creatures can do, go to it! However, here are a few ideas for some monster mechanics to use in game:

Slow and Shambling: The creature is slower than normal. Halve all movement distances. This can be taken multiple times to make a thing very slow indeed (quarter speed, eighth speed etc).

Fast Like a Freak: The creature is much faster than normal. Double all movement distances. This can be taken multiple times to make a very fast creature (double speed, quadruple speed etc).

Tough as Old Boots: Even gunfire doesn’t seem to do much more than irritate this thing. The creature can use its Physique to avoid the effects of gunfire in the same fashion as in melee and always uses its base physique ignoring the lethal quality on melee weapons, i.e. make a successful Physique roll to discount the damage, on occasion you may want a creature that is tough rather than strong, in which case write this ability as **Tough as Old Boots (6)** for example and use the number in parentheses as the damage Physique.

Regeneration: Essentially, it grows back! The creature can heal damage as it goes along. Consider whether you want this to be constant (if so at what rate?) or conditional (a special location? Does it need to feed on, or absorb something?). Regardless, the creature can “untick” damage boxes as the fight progresses. Consider having regeneration stopped with vulnerabilities, trolls getting burned, werewolves with silver etc.

Just Won’t Die: The creature seems oblivious to the pain of damage and continues to function as best it can even when pulverised. The creature is assumed to pass all Physique rolls to remain conscious and avoid death unless stated otherwise. The negative physical effects remain: so a creature whose legs have been incapacitated can still haul itself along by the arms for example. Once all locations are incapacitated (or the creature reaches zero Physique) the creature can be considered “dead”. Unless, of course, it is regenerating...

Incorporeal: The creature is not a physical presence. It can neither attack or be attacked physically in this form and can move through solid objects. Supernatural attacks (magic etc.) are still possible. Maybe the creature can become corporeal to attack giving a brief window of vulnerability. Maybe it is harmed by faith, or a certain ritual can drive it into a bottle.

Possession: Some spirit creatures can enter the mind of a living person and attempt to control their actions. The possessed entity can fight back and potentially drive out the spirit that controls it. When attempting to possess a creature and every turn after that, take an Influence test for both the possessing spirit and the possessed creature. The amount that the possessed creature passed or failed is used as a modifier for the possessing spirit's test. *Example, Hugh is being possessed by a ghost. He fails his Influence by 2 and thus the ghost gains 2 to its Influence for the test. In a subsequent turn Hugh does well. Succeeds by 3 and thus the ghost loses 3 influence.*

Invulnerable: The creature cannot be harmed. This is a boring and frustrating ability unless it is paired with a vulnerability, maybe a special material, a blessed weapon, a particular hit location (that Achilles heel, literally!) or a special time of day. Ensure your players have a way of finding this vulnerability out!

Special Vulnerability: The creature has a bane, which will harm them far more than it should normally. Perhaps it is mere exposure to the vulnerability that harms it (vampires and sunlight) and forces constant defence tests every round. Or maybe it needs to be wounded by it (werewolves and silver) causing automatic damage on a hit. It might harm them physically, or shut them down into catatonic torpor (fae and cold iron) preventing action. Maybe the vulnerability is a particular family line, or gender, or even an incantation. Whatever it is, the creature cannot abide it and will avoid it at all can.

Draining: The creature can take energy from others in some way. Perhaps it is draining blood (removing physique points as though bleeding out); eating magic; stealing heat causing hypothermia; or lots of others. It may be able to do this just by proximity or it might need to successfully attack a creature to achieve this. Draining is often linked to other Oddnesses, the energy drained fuels another supernatural ability.

Fortune Token Pool: The creature has a pool of Fortune Tokens, just like a player character. It can burn through these to achieve remarkable feats of physical strength or magical potential. But once it is gone it is weaker. Often these creatures can top up their pool by Draining or with time recover them. It is a good way of representing a creature that is dangerous if it has prepared, but if you just hold on long enough it is killable.

Transformation: The creature can change its form. Maybe it has two radically different shapes with different stat-lines (werewolves), or it can disguise its appearance, or shift to a more advantageous form (incorporeality or a cloud of bats). Maybe the ability is voluntary, perhaps it costs something like Fortune Tokens or Physique tests to pull off. Maybe it is triggered by a command, or the full moon, or the smell of blood.

Breath Weapon: The creature has an innate ranged ability. Perhaps it spits acid, or breathes a gout of fire (consider using the flamethrower rules), or throws poisoned quills. It might affect just one person or a group (blast and splash weapon qualities do well here). The creature might need time to recharge this ability, or a condition to be met such as Draining or consuming some special resource. It may simply be a one-shot tactic, unlikely to be done again in a single combat.

Body Weapons: Teeth, claws, poisoned stingers, sharp bone ridges. You name it, it can be a body weapon. All that needs to be done here is decide if they are large enough to count as an edged weapon and any special conditions that that weapon has. Can the weapon be used all the time? Or just once like a bee sting?

Damaging Nature: The creature's very nature is harmful. Maybe it breaths out poisoned gas making proximity dangerous, or perhaps it splashes acid blood when harmed potentially damaging the character that harmed it or their weapons. Maybe there is some terrible condition that if the players get their tactics wrong will harm them (like the Medusa's petrification – word to the wise, make this obvious or be prepared to lose entire parties).

Heightened Senses: The creature has preternaturally sharp senses, maybe it can see in the dark, or hear a pin drop. Perhaps it can sniff out even silent enemies or can sense the tremors in the ground as they move.

Fearsome Aura: The creature is terrifying to behold, or so unearthly that its very presence unsettles the mind. Maybe this ability is persistent, a fog of fear around a creature; or maybe it is conditional – a dragon's roar for example. Force Courage tests to approach it or stand their ground against a charge.

Invisibility: Maybe it bends light like a wizard, maybe it steps partially out of phase with reality, and perhaps it is just really see-through. Regardless of the method, it cannot be seen normally. Consider whether it is physically there? Can they throw chalk dust at it and expose it? Does it make sounds or smell funny in a way that they can detect? An invisible enemy needs that disadvantage to be compelling to fight.

Swarm: Even tiny creatures can still be a threat to a character if they are in large enough numbers. Swarms tend to be weak but have some form of poison or other debilitating effect. Any action spent in a swarm results in the swarm getting an attack on you. You cannot react to this to avoid it. If nothing else, they make it impossible to take concentrate, aim or similar focus-based actions while within a swarm. Damaging a swarm is very difficult with conventional weapons – would recommend several dozen “hits” needed to disperse them – but they tend to be vulnerable to fire and other area-effect weapons.

Non-Human Races

While you have complete creative freedom to do whatsoever you wish with your creatures, there are a few common tropes that have developed over the centuries. These form “families” of creatures that have consistent abilities or vulnerabilities and we have summarised some of them here for your convenience:

Undead: The undead are all called to life through unnatural means. They are vulnerable to holy weapons, blessed water and the like and are driven back by faith (Divine Instrument oddness). While some undead are brought back to life by their own hideous will, most are raised by a necromancer. In these cases they cannot cross an empowered circle and if they find themselves suddenly within one, they will lose their enervating spark and fall lifeless once more.

Spirit: Spirits have no physical presence; they cannot be hit by normal weapons although some special circumstances may apply. Follow the legend in this case. They can be affected by magic, are vulnerable to sunlight and certain spellcasters can command or compel them to act. They can never cross even an unpowered circle but can pass through physical objects.

Daemon: Daemons are usually summoned spirits but can for a brief time manifest in the real world in physical form. Mostly they act through possession. Pitting their diabolic will against the victim to force themselves into their bodies or being invited in to an empty or willing host, once inside the victim can continue to resist but the daemon is now in command. They are vulnerable to faith in the same way as the undead and cannot cross circles like a spirit.

Fae Blood (Fae): There are hundreds of faerie legends throughout the British Isles. Most share common features. The Fae cannot abide the touch of iron and are both vulnerable to it and incapable of using any of their abilities when touched by it. Almost all Fae are capable of using illusion to change their form and/or to help them hide. Fae can never speak a direct lie, although they can misrepresent, dissemble and weasel through the letter of their words as much as they like.

Constructs and Golems: A Construct is a creature made by another entity out of stone, metal, clay, etc. They are two sorts, those enervated by magic – in which case they will be rendered inert if they are trapped in an empowered circle – or by some internal magic. These internally powered Constructs usually have some sort of “chem” a scroll or tablet with the ritual needed to awaken them inside. They are immune to any neuromancy and usually are extremely physically tough.

Magical Creatures: Almost all magical creatures are created by some unlikely chain of events such as an egg incubated by a toad. They are expressions of old, random ritual magic discovered by accident. Almost all of them have extremely specific powers and methods of dispatch.

Example Creature Creation: the Cockatrice

A magical beast formed when a cockerel lays an egg that is then incubated by a toad or a snake. The resultant beast hatches forth bearing the wings and scaled tail of a dragon and the legs and fore-parts of a rooster. It is about the size of a large dog when full-grown. While the beast is not directly much more of a threat than any large bird, it possesses a baleful gaze that can kill even the strongest person if directed at them. Only weasels are immune for some reason. They are said to be harmed by the crowing of a rooster and thus will avoid them around dawn. It is said to be killed by it's own gaze if it sees it in a mirror.



Designing the Cockatrice:

So what we have here is a slightly bonkers medieval creature, clearly created by some bored wizard. We're not looking for excessive physical prowess, even in flight it should be clumsy and chicken-like. The big feature is it's baleful gaze so we need to emphasise that. Given that it seems to be a magical strike, perhaps the best way to mimic this is to use a Sorcery roll by the Cockatrice, modified by the target's sorcery. If it succeeds then the target takes a hit to the head and needs to take a physique test modified by the amount the Cockatrice passed by. That gives a decent chance of an instant kill while not making it inevitable. Then we put in the vulnerabilities and the job is a good one.

Type	Ranged	Melee	Reflexes	Sorcery	Physique	Knowledge	Influence	Awareness	Courage
Monster	0	5	3	8	4	0	1	4	8

Skills: Fly 2. **Form:** Avian-ish. **Melee weapon:** beak & claws (reach 0, no Physique modifier).

SPECIAL QUALITIES

Clumsy flight: The Cockatrice can fly, but poorly, much like a chicken. It can glide to the floor from any height without risk but must take Physique + Fly tests to fly upwards.

Baleful gaze: The Cockatrice's main weapon is its terrible gaze. Anyone who looks upon the beast can be killed instantly. For an action for Cockatrice can attack a character whose eyes it can see (regardless range and whether or not it's looking at the target in a reflection). It takes a Sorcery test, with the Sorcery of the target counting as a penalty. If passed, the target must take a Physique test with a negative modifier equal to the amount the Cockatrice passed its Sorcery test by. Failure causes a level of injury to the head. Dreadful failure as normal causes two levels of injury. Weasels are immune to this power.

Reflected gaze: if a Cockatrice sees its own eyes in a mirror then it strikes itself with its own baleful gaze. It takes its sorcery test but does *not* get to resist its own strike. Proceed as normal for damage.

Rooster's call: if a Cockatrice hears the call of a rooster it takes an automatic injury to its head.

COCKATRICE INJURY TABLE

1. Roll D10 for location			2. Cross out box	3. apply effect	
Ranged	Melee	Location		1 st injury	2 nd injury
1	1-2	Head	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Go prone. Miss next turn. Pass an immediate Physique test or fall unconscious. Melee, Reflexes, Sorcery & Awareness halved.	Unconscious. Pass Physique test to avoid death.
2-5	3-4	Body	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Reduce its Physique by 1, then take a Physique test. If failed, it is dead.	
6-8	5-8	Wings	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Halve flying speed	Unable to fly; must pass Physique test to avoid death.
9	9	L leg	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Go prone. All movement distances halved.	Dead
10	10	R leg	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Go prone. All movement distances halved.	Dead