

Power Gamer

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Football players at a local high school have been suffering fatal accidents at an alarming rate. One drowned when his truck ran off the road into a creek. A few days later, the quarterback fell off a tractor and plowed himself into a wheat field. The latest was working on his car when it fell off the jacks and crushed him.

A nerdy gamer found a real spell in one of his gaming books, and has been killing off the jocks who pick on him. The gamer needs to be present to perform the spell, which is telekinetic in nature, and he was at the scene of all three accidents. Investigation may turn up his presence at the crimes or his absence from his home and the local gaming store.

The obvious beneficiary of the deaths is the new quarterback, who was home alone and doesn't have much of an alibi. He's scared and defensive, and will aggressively threaten or even attack any investigators.

Then the captain of the cheerleading squad dies in public. The cheerleaders are making a memorial for the football players during a free period, and the captain runs out to get the scissors. A door blows open, drawing everyone's attention. As the

captain runs back with the scissors, she falls as if pushed and lands on the hand holding the scissors. The PCs are present and observe the gamer making weird little hand movements, then quickly walking away.

The PCs know that the three dead football players mercilessly picked on the gamer. They also know that the gamer and a cheerleader were once good friends. They may even know or suspect that he secretly harbors a crush on her. The gamer will deny everything, but will use his spell to get away from the PCs if they get confrontational.

At the captain's funeral, or shortly afterwards if he was chased off, the gamer tries to convince "his girl" to forget about the other cheerleaders. She says no, and he makes a scene. If the PCs don't confront the gamer here, he will go after her as she drives off.



Easily adapted to: Anime, Comedy, Pulp, Sci-fi, Supernatural, Supers, Victim Horror

Tags: (KS) innocent, investigative, magic, social, villain

The Bleeding Edge

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Diseases of the autoimmune system are common and often deadly. A doctor has discovered a treatment that first weakens, then strengthens, a patient's immune system in order to cure these types of disease. The doctor's tests with laboratory animals showed promise, and the doctor has just received permission to begin trials on human patients. Hooks for this plot include being a part of the doctor's research team, being a friend or relative of someone participating in the treatment trial, or being a member of the hospital staff.

The first group of trial patients becomes ill after receiving the treatment. The doctor expected this, but soon the symptoms worsen. The patients begin vomiting blood, and an hour or two later they transform into zombies with a craving for flesh. Any creature killed by a zombie immediately rises as another zombie. This is the first encounter of what will become a pandemic, during which the zombies overrun one ward of the hospital.

The next encounter involves an attempt by local police and rescue services to contain the threat and treat the injured. The battle has overflowed from the ward and spread to the entire hospital. Many patients are helpless, and the zombies slaughter them without mercy. During this second wave of the pandemic, any person who kills a zombie in combat has a small chance of becoming infected. This encounter ends with the zombies overrunning the entire hospital and spreading into the city.

The next encounter is a citywide crisis as the zombies spread quickly from the hospital into nearby neighborhoods. During this third wave of the pandemic, the chance of infection after killing a zombie increases. Various buildings are on fire as people attempt to defend themselves with whatever is available. At some point, a large vehicle loses control and hurtles straight towards the PCs. If the PCs escape the accident, the military picks them up and takes them to a quarantine center.

At the quarantine center, the PCs receive treatment for their wounds. The odds of infection if a person kills a zombie in combat also increase again. Keep increasing the chance for infection with each subsequent encounter. Whether there's a cure for the pandemic is up to you; if not, this makes an excellent introduction to a zombie-themed campaign.



Easily adapted to: Action Horror, Cyberpunk, Fantasy, Gothic Horror, Grim and Gritty Fantasy, High Fantasy, Pulp, Sci-fi, Space Opera, Steampunk, Supernatural, Supers, Traditional Fantasy, Victim Horror

Tags: (PB) alliance, city, combat-heavy, difficult choice, epic impact, innocent, investigative, mass combat, monster, relationship hook, sandbox, siege, tactical planning

Principal Penitence

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The principal of the local boarding school is a bright, starchy, and stern young woman, with eyes black as night. Her charges do well academically, but are cowed by her. Students who act up disappear for a few days, but always return docile and calm, and never speak of their time away. Their few quiet confidences sound crazy and are quickly stifled.

Several hooligans kidnap the principal's cat and shave it bald. The PCs could be among them (and this is a fun encounter for them to play out), they could be from a rival clique, or they might simply hear the sound of clippers from within a nearby bathroom. The next day, at a school assembly, the principal announces that she has found her cat, and the glare she gives the hooligans is so fierce that they flee the assembly. They hide out in an abandoned house in town and plan to run away from the school, knowing that they dare not face the principal.

That evening, the principal tracks them down—flanked by strange clockwork men, the stuff of nightmares. Restrained by the automatons' heavy brass hands, the prisoners are returned to the school. The PCs are in a position to observe their arrival, and they watch as the entire group heads into the gymnasium. The principal reads strange words from a sheet of parchment, her voice raspy, and small cracks in the wall flow

together and form a dark tunnel in one of the gym's walls, revealing a shadowy path beyond. The cog men lead the prisoners to strange and starless cells at the end of the pathway.

The PCs must rescue the imprisoned hooligans and then decide what to do about the principal. She stores the parchment in her locked desk drawer; the passage can only be opened in the gymnasium. Beyond the wall, the cog men watch their prisoners tirelessly, but they're devoid of true intelligence or creativity and can be tricked into abandoning their posts. Once rescued, the hooligans won't be safe at the school, and neither will the PCs. The principal knows when the doorway has been opened, and will try to stop them from fleeing the grounds.

If they can convince the school board to dismiss the principal, they'll be safe for a time, but eventually she will re-enter their lives.



Easily adapted to: Anime, Comedy, Fantasy, High Fantasy, Sci-fi, Steampunk, Supernatural, Traditional Fantasy, Victim Horror

Tags: (SM) alliance, artificial life form, dungeon crawl, innocent, isolated area, magic, rebellion, relationship hook, stealth, villain

Devil's Feast

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Recently, several people in a frontier community have been torn apart in what appear to be wild animal attacks. Careful examination of the evidence indicates an intelligent attacker, however, as several victims were found barricaded inside rooms with discharged firearms. Only those participating in the investigation, and one resident who refuses to evacuate, remain.

The killer is neither man nor beast, but an ancient vampire, released when one of the locals started construction on a new well. After spending so long sealed away, she is completely feral, but she's still a deadly predator with the ability to turn into mist and get at victims wherever they hide.

In a freshly dug hole in one house's backyard, the PCs discover a void behind a fractured stone slab. A few hours' work will reveal a cave system connecting to a nearby hilltop burial cairn; it's sealed with rune-carved boulders, and houses the ancient bones of dead native inhabitants of the area. The cave network is littered with the pierced and mummified corpses of bats and other small subterranean animals. In the deepest part of the caves is a nest made of gnawed bones and a stench the PCs recognize from some of the murder scenes.

During a nighttime search with the authorities, noises and flashes of movement are a prelude to an NPC being hauled up into a tree and carried off at great speed. If the PCs manage to

shoot the fleeing creature, they can save the life of the NPC, who can then provide a description of the vampire. Otherwise, they might get a glimpse as it flees, and they'll be able to find the NPC's shredded body on the roof of a shed in the morning.

Several nights later, gunshots are heard from the remaining resident's home. As the PCs enter the house, they hear a smashing window and find the resident, a great bear of a man, drenched in blood and clutching his neck. He shot an intruder, but when he checked the woman's wrist for a pulse, she pounced on him and tore at his neck. He managed to get a grip on her and fling her through the window before she hurt him too badly. Without prompt medical attention, he will become a vampire by the next night.

The vampire can be destroyed by traditional methods, but can also be repelled by the runic markings found on the cairn, which may help defeat or trap her.



Easily adapted to: Action Horror, Anime, Fantasy, Gothic Horror, Grim and Gritty Fantasy, High Fantasy, Post-Apocalyptic, Sci-fi, Supernatural, Traditional Fantasy, Victim Horror, Western

Tags: (MN) alliance, dungeon crawl, epic challenge, investigative, isolated area, madness, monster, race, sandbox, tactical planning, villain