

## DURING THE HUNT

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Now that you have learned about the GM Principles and what to do before your first session, we can now get into what you should be doing during every mystery.

### THE INTRODUCTION TO THE THREAT

The introduction in a given Hunt is what eases the Hunters in towards what their objective is going to be for the Season. It's important for the introduction to hook your Players and get them invested in a given mystery. Some examples of good hooks could be:

- Design a threat based around a Monster or character you know one of your Players is interested in.
- Bring back a recurring threat (see page x).
- Have the Hunters be sent a letter from a previous NPC they saved telling them that they need help again.
- Put an extra reward on the line (I.E: A powerful Weapon or artifact).
- Have them be approached by an organization requesting the aid of the Hunters. The organization promises a deal in their favor could be struck if they do a good job.
- Curse the Players. If they don't defeat the Monster by the end of the season, a Haunt point or worse will be inflicted on them.

Once the hook is established, the GM should give the Players just enough clues to work with to start their investigation. This could be a sample taken from the Monster, a witness to the Monster's last attack, a foot or claw print, etc.

### THE INVESTIGATION

Once the initial clues have been given to the Hunters, it's time to let them off to identify and locate the Monster. Investigations can consist of studying Monster samples, talking to the locals for clues, scouting surrounding areas, etc. Some good ways to keep an investigation interesting are by providing the Players with two different witnesses with conflicting testimonials. This can lead to some heated discussion between Players on who to believe and which path to take. Another is by purposely giving them clues that lead to them believing it is one type of creature when it is actually another.

For example, the GM can give the Hunters tufts of fur and teeth around the incident, leading them to believe it's a beast, to later find out it's a wraith who hunts hounds and humans.

GMs also shouldn't be afraid to make their investigations longer or shorter than the actual combat encounter they anticipate. Sometimes the thrill of a Hunt can come more from one or the other, so they don't always have to be equal in length. This also means they can potentially skip one or the other if they so desire, but it is encouraged to have some form of both in a given Hunt to provide Players with the full experience.

### FORCE TOUGH DECISIONS

Another way to keep things interesting during a Season is to force a Hunter to make a tough decision. These can lead to a given Hunter escaping peril or gaining fortune, but at the cost of another Hunter's success. They could also be decisions that the whole team must come to a consensus on. For example, a curse might be cast on an entire city, turning them into zombies, and a quick way to lift the curse is by sacrificing the mayor's daughter in a ritual. It could lead to a quick solution and easy Experience, but they'd be killing a child, and word of their sacrifice would spread. Instilling these choices can give Players room to interact with one another as a team to strategize, and will also give each Player room to play with how their Hunter might handle tough decisions.

### FORCING INNATE TASKS

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One of the GM's best tools for instilling difficulty in the Players is by forcing Innate Tasks on them. These can lead to a slew of negative effects if they roll a miss on any of the Tasks. Here is a list of the negative repercussions of each failed Innate Task:

**ANALYZE:** The Hunter attempts to gain more information regarding the crisis, but can't seem to find anything helpful. The GM can optionally stagger the Hunter or even put a creature in position on them if failed in combat.

**CASTING:** When a Player fails a Casting roll of any type, they specify 1 effect with 2 bonus tags and they pick 1 drawback. Once that is done the GM may pick an additional drawback tag to the spell. Alternatively, GM's are permitted to just say the roll fails and nothing happens.



**COMMAND:** The Hunter attempts to command one or multiple targets to do something, but who they are speaking to doesn't comply. The target(s) will do something different, potentially disadvantageous to the Hunters.

**CONVINCE:** The Hunter attempts to persuade the target with their charm, but either fumble on their words or accidentally offends them. They will dismiss whatever you are saying and/or not take your words seriously.

**CRAFT:** The Hunter attempts to work on their project quickly and ends up breaking their creation or delaying its progress significantly.

**DISCERN:** The Hunter attempts to get a read on a target's intentions or if they are telling the truth. The Hunter is unable to tell anything about the target and will automatically trust them no matter what may come of it.

**FINESSE:** The Hunter messes up their initial intention and suffers a consequence related to the action.

**GUARD:** The Hunter throws themselves in front of the attack taking the hit, but suffers from -1 Evasion. Depending on the situation GMs are permitted to add additional damage to the attack.

**IDENTIFY:** The Hunter attempts to identify the use of a relic or the meaning of a scripture, but has a false understanding, leading them to gain either no helpful information at all or incorrect information that can lead them and their party to danger.

**INVESTIGATE:** The Hunter attempts to gain more information on a situation but can't seem to find anything helpful. The GM can optionally have them find an important piece of information, but it is met with a combat encounter, a Haunt point from touching something cursed, etc.-Navigate: The Hunter Navigating gets lost and must spend an additional Navigate task to get back on track, losing time in the process.

**NULLIFY:** Instead of giving a caster -1 from their roll, they give them +1.

**PARRY:** The Hunter fails to deflect the attack and leaves themselves wide open. The Attacker gains the Accurate tag on the Hunter for their next attack.

**POSITION:** The Hunter is not able to find cover or get in position. The Hunter loses their reaction to this turn rotation.

**SHOVE:** The Hunter attempts to shove the target but slips up, allowing the target to push them back. The Hunter is staggered.

**TEST OF FATE:** Failing this Task can lead to a wide variety of penalties depending on when it was rolled. Most GMs will already have a penalty in mind when they force a Test of Fate on a Player, but some examples are: drawing unwanted attention, creating a negative disposition toward who they are interacting with, forcing themselves or others into a perilous situation, losing an important piece of equipment, etc.

**TRAVERSE:** The Hunter trips, fumbles, or slips up on their traverse, failing the Task and suffering from some unforeseen consequence such as proning themselves or staggering an adjacent ally.

It's important to note that depending on the situation and the time an Innate Task takes place, the GM is permitted to fluctuate the amount and severity of negative effects that occur on a failed task.

## THE PATH WILL LEAD TO BLOOD

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Once the Hunters have conducted their investigation and have gathered the necessary materials to track and hunt the Monster, they are going to want to eradicate it. For more information about creating threats you can see page (x), but this will be an overview.

## MAKING YOUR THREATS UNIQUE

When creating your threat, don't be afraid to do something different. As fun as raid boss-style fights are with high health bars and big damage numbers, don't be afraid to make the fight more of a puzzle than a combat encounter. Force Hunters into areas where they must overcome their surroundings to even get a chance to get into position on a creature, give the creature unique status effects that can inflict on the Hunters, and have a unique method of attacking the creature besides just with their Weapons. This system is designed with creating terrifying, eccentric, and bizarre creatures in mind, take advantage of that!

Another way to make a fight more unique is to increase the stakes. Of course, any fight could lead to death, but why not spice things up and add another element that is dependent on winning or losing? Maybe an NPC of the Hunters has become deathly ill with a rare disease, and they need the blood of this specific beast to create an antidote. Or if the Hunters don't stop the Monster where it



stands, it will pillage the hometown that sits behind them.

GMs should also be incentivized to not give the Players any slack in these engagements. GMs shouldn't pull their punches and aim to severely wound their Players if not kill them outright. Make the Monsters feel alive, not just a moving piece for the GM. Make examples out of NPCs by showing off the Monster's capabilities in front of them to show them what they're up against. It can instill a great deal of tension before a fight, and make the Hunters nervous for the coming fight.

## ONGOING THREATS

An Ongoing threat is reoccurring Monster, Hunter, or looming force that will antagonize the Hunters for longer than just one mystery. These could almost be seen as major antagonists throughout the Hunters campaign. Whether it be a Vampire Monarch who is the source of the particular Monsters the Hunters are tracking, or another group of Monster Hunters who are chasing the same bounties as you, these can be used to keep the Hunters on their toes and give them more long term characters to become invested in.

## EQUALLY DISTRIBUTE THE SPOTLIGHT

As much as it is a GM's job to make the Hunters' lives hell, they also should be giving them equal chances to shine and show off their capabilities. All of the Hunters have the capability to do unique things and achieve great feats unique to them. Encourage and give the Players the chance to do so! Nothing is less fun than a GM who gives all the attention to one Player. Giving all the Players a chance to shine will keep your Players coming back and encourage them to experiment with their abilities to do new and exciting things!

## KEEP A QUICK PACE

A GM should do their best not to make a combat encounter or investigation phase of a Hunt drag on. The game is meant to be played at a good snappy pace to keep the flow smooth and consistent. If the Players are in a combat encounter with a bunch of weak mobs where it is very obvious to all that they are going to win no matter what, don't be afraid to speed things up and give them the win. If you don't want to rush a mystery too quickly, then don't be afraid to put a pause on the story and pick things up later. Try not to rush, but also not to dawdle.



### SUMMARY OF ALL OF THE ABOVE:

A GM's job above all else is to create exciting and unique Hunts every season for their Players to enjoy and experience. While sticking to a formula can keep things consistent, GMs should be encouraged to experiment with their investigations, combat encounters, and storylines to keep the Players on their toes and excited to see what's going to happen next. GMs should challenge their Players and thrust them into perilous situations, but also give them the chance to shine and show off their abilities, and also deal with the consequences of their actions subsequently.

## AT THE END OF A SEASON

When the season concludes, the GM should have all the Players add +1 Experience to their tracker and have them pick a new improvement (and advanced improvement if they've met the required experience). The GM should ask all the Players what they pick and jot it down so they have a better idea of what their Players have in their catalog of choices so they can utilize it in their future Hunts. The GM should also jot down any unfinished business the previous Hunt might have left as well as any Hunter-specific moments. By writing these things down, it can better help them pull from these experiences to create more enticing storylines and to keep the Hunters' past not as far behind them as they might think.