

MONSTER OF THE WEEK EXTRA: MORE WEIRDNESS

As written, *Monster of the Week* doesn't exactly fit *The X-Files*, *Fringe*, or *Warehouse 13*. Those are all big inspirations, aside from being cool shows, so I've always had the intention of working out how to fit them in. The following rules are a (not yet playtested) draft of how to do so.

If you try them, please let me know how it goes – email me at michael.sands@genericgames.co.nz.

The changes are to two sections of the rules. It will also make the game a bit more focused on the investigation side of mysteries, and less on combat, so keep that in mind when creating hunters.

First, instead of all hunters getting the **use magic** basic move, each hunter will pick from a selection of weird basic moves, as appropriate to the character concept. You may also wish to limit the range available if you have a specific concept that doesn't fit some of them.

Second, there is a new main threat type the Keeper may use when creating mysteries: the **Phenomenon**. This is a strange danger that must be investigated, understood, and somehow mitigated before it causes more trouble. This has some new rules about creating a weird phenomenon mystery, and new moves for the phenomenon threat type.

ALTERNATIVE WEIRD BASIC MOVES

Use magic is no longer a basic move for all hunters. Instead, all hunters get this basic move **How Are You Weird?** Any hunter playbook moves that change how you would normally **Use Magic** now apply to the new move (if it doesn't directly apply, come up with an appropriate adjustment with the agreement of your group).

Big Magic still works the same, but you can adjust the requirements so that they have a more "weird science" style when appropriate.

How Are You Weird? Choose one of the following as your basic move for Weird:

- **Hunches** (see below).
- **No Limits** (see below).
- **Sensitive** (see below).
- **Telekinesis** (see below).
- **Use Magic** (as in vanilla *Monster of the Week*).
- **Weird Science** (see below).

THE NEW WEIRD MOVES

HUNCHES

When you consult your instincts about what to do next, roll +Weird.

- On a 10 or more, the Keeper will tell you what to do next: somewhere to go, someone to talk to, or something to pay attention to. Whatever it is, it is important for the current mystery. You get +1 ongoing while you are following this lead.
- On a 7-9, the Keeper will tell you one thing that seems important, with no hint why. Take +1 forward as you explore that.
- On a 6 or less, your instincts lead you into danger.

Advanced Hunches. If you advance your **hunches** basic move, add this:

- On a 12 or more in addition to the usual 10+ result, the Keeper will tell you one important fact you realise about the current mystery.

NO LIMITS

When you need to push your physical body past its limits, roll +Weird.

- On a 10 or more, your body obeys your will.
- On a 7-9, you do it but choose one consequence: suffer 1-harm, take -1 forward, or you need to rest right now.
- On a 6 or less, something goes horribly wrong.

Advanced No Limits. If you advance your **no limits** move, add this:

- On a 12 or more, you can continue to ignore your body's limits for 30 seconds.

SENSITIVE

When you open up your brain to the psychic environment, roll +Weird.

- On a 10 or more, you gain a definite impression (a vision, feeling, aura, overheard thought, etc) about something important to the current mystery.
- On a 7-9, you gain a hazy impression about something important to the current mystery.
- On a 6 or less, your brain is in contact with something dangerous.

Advanced Sensitive. When you advance your **sensitive** move, add this:

- On a 12 or more, you get an impression as for 10 or more, plus you may ask one follow up question that the Keeper will answer honestly.

TELEKINESIS

When you move something with your mind, roll +Weird.

- On a 10 or more, you move it as desired. Choose two options.
- On a 7-9, you move it. Choose one option.
- On a 6 or less, something goes horribly wrong.

Telekinesis options:

- Someone is trapped.
- Someone is hurt (2-harm smash).
- Something catches fire.
- Something is flying under your control.
- Something goes just where you want it.

Advanced Telekinesis. When you advance your **telekinesis** move, add this:

- On a 12 or more, you may also choose from the advanced options.

Advanced telekinesis options:

- Something explodes (3-harm fire area messy)
- Something implodes (3-harm crush)
- Lots of stuff is flying under your control.
- You have perfect, fine control over exactly what happens.

WEIRD SCIENCE

When you want to create or adapt a device to analyse or deal with a strange phenomenon, say what it will do and roll +Weird.

- On a 10 or more, you pick one requirement.
- On a 7-9, you pick one requirement and the Keeper picks another.
- On a 6 or less, something goes horribly wrong.

Weird science requirements:

- It needs a rare and/or weird material.
- It won't be very reliable.
- It requires huge amounts of power or fuel.
- It will take a long time to get it working.
- I won't work exactly as you intended.
- You'll need help (beyond the hunters on your team) to finish it.

Advanced Weird Science. When you advance your **weird science** move, add this:

- On a 12 or more, you gain +1 ongoing when operating the device.

WEIRD PHENOMENA

Mystery creation goes the same as normal *Monster of the Week* games for monster-centred mysteries.

For weird phenomenon mysteries, it is slightly different. Instead of starting with a monster, start with a main source of weirdness. A weird phenomenon needs the following details:

- A description of what's going on.
- A phenomenon type and motivation.
- What effects it has on hunters (and other bystanders) who get too close.
- What its weakness is (this works differently to monster weaknesses).
- Custom moves for its effects (optional).

These are the possible phenomenon types:

- **Altered physics** (motivation: make things work differently).
- **Plague** (motivation: to infect and harm).
- **Mutagen** (motivation: to change things).
- **Trap** (motivation: to deny escape).
- **Conspiracy** (motivation: to keep secrets and create confusion).
- **Experiment** (motivation: to release dangerous things).
- **Alien** (motivation: to act inhuman, create confusion).
- **Biohazard** (motivation: to harm all that ventures within).
- **Collective hysteria** (motivation: to make people act irrationally).
- **Artifact** (motivation: give someone more power than they can handle).

Create custom moves for a phenomenon the same way you would for a monster, based on your concept and what it might be able to do.

Weaknesses for a phenomenon are not what allows it be defeated or killed, but instead the secrets or discoveries that will allow the hunters to mitigate, undo, or prevent what it wants to do.

For example: The phenomenon is a time loop (type: Trap) that has a town stuck repeating one afternoon, and prevents anyone from leaving. It is caused by strange crystals that were discovered in the mine that is the town's main industry. The phenomenon's weakness is that it must be able to radiate energy to create the effect – if the crystals are contained (by returning them to the mine, placing them in a special containment device, or something like that) then the effect will stop.

You should create a countdown for the mystery as normal. However, rather than thinking about a monster's plan and how it will get worse, you should think about how the phenomenon will become more and more dangerous as it grows without constraint.

Other threats for the mystery should be created, too. There will be bystanders and places as usual, and often minions (including people taking advantage of, or believing they control, the phenomenon). There could even be monsters created by the phenomenon, that need to be defeated in the usual ways.

PHENOMENA THREAT MOVES

These are the threat moves a phenomenon can use during the mystery:

- Hint at its presence.
- Break the world's rules.
- Increase or decrease in size or intensity.
- Create some new weirdness.
- Harm, destroy, or erode someone or something.
- React unexpectedly.
- Escape from containment.
- Hold someone in place.
- Grant an unnatural ability.