

THE BAD MAN

A *DON'T REST YOUR HEAD* CONVENTION SCENARIO ABOUT CHILDREN OVERCOMING THEIR VERY REAL, VERY DEADLY NIGHTMARES AND THEIR FIRST TIME IN THE MAD CITY.

Ever since you went back to school after winter break, things have been very, very disturbing. A monster has taken up residence in your room, one that won't leave no matter what you do.

Of course, no one believes that this monster, this **BAD MAN**, lives outside your window, in your closet, under your bed. Everyone says he's not real, that it's just your imagination.

The way he looks at you with a deep, deep hunger—that's more than just your imagination.

You know that when you go to sleep, he will **COMPLETELY DEVOUR** you. So, you don't sleep, not anymore.

One day, he says something different, something... new. He beckons you to open your closet and come inside.

With great hesitation, you do—though, you take a moment to grab something in your room, something you hope will help protect you.

That's when you find yourself in a strange, nightmarish **CITY** full of **THINGS** that would love to **EAT** little children alive.

But it's not just you there. Some of your classmates are as well! The **BAD MAN**'s been busy, making quite a few children unable to sleep in their beds for fear of being his next meal.

There's only one way back home—make the **BAD MAN** go where all Bad Men deserve to go: **AWAY**.

his EYES

his MOUTH

his VOICE

his HANDS

his CLOTHES

his FEET



THE QUESTIONNAIRE

WHY CAN'T YOU SLEEP?

The Bad Man is in your closet, under your bed, scraping outside at the window. He's always whispering your name, telling you how you're naughty, how no one cares about you, how you're going where all bad kids go—in his belly.

Hiding under the cover makes him be quiet, but he's always there, and you know he's going to eat you the moment you fall asleep.

There's something particular about the Bad Man that frightens you more than anything.

Note: each player (including the GM) will be randomly assigned a piece of the Bad Man: eyes, mouth, hands, feet, voice, clothes.

What is it? Why does that frighten you so?

WHAT JUST HAPPENED TO YOU?

Maybe your mom or dad tucked you into bed peacefully. Maybe you were sent to your room early for misbehaving. For whatever reason, you were put to bed.

The moment no one else is around, The Bad Man starts up again—except tonight is different. He's whispering something else in your ear, something new, something that convinces you to open up your closet and go inside.

What does he say? Is it an offer—or maybe a taunt?

And what did you bring with you?

Note: What you bring with you will tie into your special powers. Choose wisely, and make sure it gives you an idea!

WHAT DO THE OTHER KIDS THINK OF YOU?

Everyone in your class makes assumptions about you based on how you're dressed, what you eat for lunch, how much of your homework gets done, whether you're quiet or talkative in class. What do they think of you? What do they assume about your home life?

Are you the class nerd? Class clown? Bully? Miss Priss? Rich kid? Quiet kid? New kid? Talk with the other people around the table—they're some of the Other Kids.

WHAT IS HOME REALLY LIKE?

Life is never as simple as what everyone in class thinks, and children are never happy with what they have. What's life really like at home? What makes you wish something was different? That you were someone else? Who in your class do you envy for their perfect life?

WHY DO YOU DESERVE TO BE PUNISHED?

The sad truth is that you know why the Bad Man has come for you. You did something you shouldn't have, and now the Bad Man has found you, taunts you, and waits for you to sleep.

Why are you a bad little boy or girl? What was so awful that you did? Was it something genuinely monstrous—or something tiny that just *feels* big?

WHAT DO YOU WISH UPON A STAR FOR?

This is the thing you wish could happen—not wishing for a pony or to be Superman, but to change your life. Maybe you wish for your prince or princess to come into your life. Maybe you want mommy and daddy to stop fighting. Maybe you want someone you love to finally come home, from a war, from a never-ending business trip, from alcohol and drugs.

YOUR SPECIAL POWERS

WHAT ARE YOU BESTEST AT? [YOUR EXHAUSTION TALENT]

What are you the best at in your class? Maybe it's a talent that everyone in your class knows you for—for good or ill. Maybe it's something the other kids don't even know about, something you keep hidden.

Are you good at sports, or math? Maybe sneaking around and not getting caught? Or could it be you're good at telling grown-ups lies? Is it something nice, like making people feel happy and special, or mean, like beaming people with your slingshot?

Figure out one possible thing that you can do particularly well. Write it down.

WHAT MAGICAL POWER DO YOU HAVE? [YOUR MADNESS TALENT]

This place is dark and scary, but there's hope! When you crossed from your bedroom into this nightmare-land, you got to *take something with you*. Maybe your teddy bear helps protect you. Or your Spiderman underwear makes you a superhero. Could be your Harry Potter book, letting you be a wizard just like him. Whatever it is, that's the only thing that'll help keep you from being eaten alive.

Figure out one impossible thing that your special toy, book, clothing, or other item lets you do. Write it down. If you don't want to figure out what your impossible thing is yet, you don't have to! Just write down what your special item is, and we'll discover what it can do, together, as we play.

THESE ARE THE RULES.

🧠 ROLLING THE DICE

WHEN YOU ROLL, gather all your discipline & exhaustion dice. You may add one to six dice of temporary madness.

ONCE PER ROLL, you may increase your exhaustion by one.

TO DETERMINE THE DEGREE OF SUCCESS, count up all the dice that show 1, 2, or 3.

TO DETERMINE THE STRENGTH OF A POOL, find the die of that color showing the highest number.

IF YOU MEET OR BEAT THE GM'S DEGREE, you succeed. Otherwise, you fail.

🧠 CONSEQUENCES

TO DETERMINE WHAT DOMINATES, pick the pool with the highest strength. If there's a tie, go next highest strength, and so on. Still tied? Pick the first one on this list that's tied.

IF DISCIPLINE DOMINATES, things stay under control. Describe that. You have the option to remove a response checkmark or decrease your exhaustion by one.

IF EXHAUSTION DOMINATES, your resources are taxed. Increase exhaustion by one. Describe how this drains you.

IF MADNESS DOMINATES, things get more chaotic. Check off a response and behave accordingly. Describe the crazy.

IF PAIN DOMINATES, you pay a greater price. A new coin goes into the GM's despair coffer. Describe the suffering.

IF EXHAUSTION IS INCREASED ABOVE 6, you crash.

IF YOU MUST CHECK OFF A RESPONSE, but can't, you snap.

IF YOU CRASH, you fall asleep and face some other serious defeat (like death).

IF YOU SNAP, you go mad for a time, clear out your responses, lose one discipline, and gain one permanent madness.

IF YOU LOSE ALL DISCIPLINE, you become a Nightmare. You're an NPC now.

🧠 USING YOUR SPECIAL POWERS

TO MAKE MINOR USE OF AN EXHAUSTION TALENT, your exhaustion must be at least one. When you use it, your *minimum* number of successes is equal to your current number of exhaustion dice.

TO MAKE MAJOR USE OF AN EXHAUSTION TALENT, you must increase your exhaustion by one. You get *extra* successes equal to your current number of exhaustion dice.

TO MAKE USE OF A MADNESS TALENT, you must add one to six temporary madness dice to the roll. Based on the effect you're angling for, the GM will set a minimum.

🧠 HELPING EACH OTHER

NOTE: This veers off from how DON'T REST YOUR HEAD's helping rules work. That's intentional—we're doing something different here!

YOU CAN HELP A FRIEND...

... BY USING YOUR EXHAUSTION TALENT (without the usual benefit). Describe how you're using that talent to help, and roll your current exhaustion dice. Those exhaustion dice count as a part of your friend's pool. Both you and your friend will face the consequences of domination.

... BY USING YOUR MADNESS TALENT. Describe how you're using that talent to help, and roll however many madness dice you want to (GM sets the minimum). Those madness dice count as a part of your friend's pool. Both you and your friend will face the consequences.

... BY TAKING THE HIT. Specify one friend you're helping. If something other than Discipline dominates on that friend's roll, you face the consequences instead.

... BY SPENDING HOPE FOR THEM (see below).

🧠 HURTING EACH OTHER

If you must fight each other (PC vs. PC), here's how.

FIRST, INCREASE YOUR EXHAUSTION BY 1 IF IT'S BELOW 2. Fighting other kids is tiring.

NEXT, CHOOSE HOW MANY MADNESS DICE TO ROLL. You have to roll *at least* one. Fighting is scary and infuriating!

THEN, THE GM ROLLS AT LEAST 1 PAIN PER PLAYER FIGHTING.

FINALLY, EACH PLAYER ROLLS THEIR DICE NORMALLY. You can bring in your exhaustion or madness talents if you wish.

THE WINNER OF THE FIGHT is the one with the most successes. If you tie, no one wins; something worse interrupts.

DOMINATION IS DETERMINED NORMALLY FOR EACH PARTICIPANT.

🧠 HOPE AND DESPAIR

THE GM MAY SPEND ONE COIN OF DESPAIR to add or remove a 6 from any pool in play; the coin then goes into the hope coffer. If this causes pain to dominate, no coin is paid into the despair coffer. Describe how things get worse.

ANY PLAYER MAY SPEND ONE COIN OF HOPE to have a flashback. Describe it. Then remove one exhaustion or checkmark from any protagonist's responses, or to add a 1 to any protagonist's discipline pool. The coin goes away.

ANY PLAYER MAY SPEND FIVE MINUS DISCIPLINE IN COINS OF HOPE during a calm moment to recover one point of discipline *and* remove one point of permanent madness.

MY NAME IS...
AND I AM...

WHY CAN'T YOU SLEEP?

THE BAD MAN WILL GET YOU!

WHAT DOES THE BAD MAN LOOK OR SOUND LIKE?

WHAT JUST HAPPENED TO YOU?

WHAT DID THE BAD MAN SAY TO YOU?

AND SO HE BECKONED YOU INSIDE...

WHAT DO THE OTHER KIDS THINK OF YOU?

HOW DO OTHERS SEE YOU?

RECESS IS OVER, KIDS

WHAT IS HOME REALLY LIKE?

MOMMY'S ALL RIGHT, DADDY'S ALL RIGHT

THEY JUST SEEM A LITTLE WEIRD

WHY DO YOU DESERVE TO BE PUNISHED?

EVERYBODY'S BEEN A LITTLE BAD ...

... WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

WHAT DO YOU WISH UPON A STAR FOR?

HOW WOULD YOU CHANGE YOUR LIFE ...

... IF YOU COULD?

DISCIPLINE

START WITH 3 DISCIPLINE DICE

PERMANENT MADNESS

START WITH NONE

CURRENT EXHAUSTION

START WITH 2 EXHAUSTION DICE

RESPONSES

FIGHT OR FLIGHT

MARK THROUGH THE CIRCLES YOU **DON'T** HAVE AVAILABLE!

WHAT ARE YOU BESTEST AT?

[EXHAUSTION TALENT]

MINOR USE: ROLL YOUR DICE. IF YOUR SUCCESSES ARE LESS THAN THE NUMBER OF EXHAUSTION DICE YOU HAVE, SET THE SUCCESSES OF THE ROLL EQUAL TO THAT NUMBER.

MAJOR USE: INCREASE YOUR EXHAUSTION BY ONE, AND ROLL YOUR DICE. ADD THE NUMBER OF EXHAUSTION DICE YOU HAVE TO THE SUCCESSES ON THE ROLL (SO IF YOU HAVE 3 EXHAUSTION DICE, +3 SUCCESSES).

WHAT MAGICAL POWER DO YOU HAVE?

[MADNESS TALENT]

WHAT DID YOU BRING WITH YOU INTO THE MAD CITY?

... AND WHAT DOES IT LET YOU DO?

1-2 DICE MEANS I CAN...

3-4 DICE MEANS I CAN...

5-6 DICE MEANS I CAN...

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DON'T REST YOUR HEAD

Don't Rest Your Head is a sleek, dangerous little game, where your players are all insomniac heroes with superpowers, fighting — and using — exhaustion and madness to stay alive, and awake for just one more night, in a reality gone way wrong called the Mad City. It features its own system, and is contained entirely within one book.

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