

Wayward Sons

To be used with (understanding of) Apocalypse World

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Things stolen from:

Apocalypse World, tremulus, Eye of Chaos (AWhack), Monster of the Week, Urban Shadows, MonsterHearts, TechNoir

Plays along nicely with:

Monster of the Week *(for stories the more experienced and legendary hunters and detailed monsters)*

Urban Shadows *(for seeing what the Taint can do and what you are fighting against)*

tremulus *(for understanding what happened to your grandfather and why it is up to you to pay for his sins)*

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GM Prep

The characters are ripped from their conventional lives by some unnatural event that forces them on the move. They dedicate their lives to investigate the strange and unexplained in secrecy. For they know that hidden forces are always working against them and that the general public would judge them insane. What they do not know that they are all on the road to turn into the very monsters they hunt.

Stats:

- *Fitness*: physicality, endurance, agility
- *Presence*: influence, charm, looks
- *Violence*: aggression, fighting, shooting
- *Intellect*: knowledge, education, rational thinking, reason
- *Discipline*: willpower, mental strength

Assign to stats: +2, +1, +1, 0, -1

Trust

Set Trust to other characters at the beginning of the game by distributing points equal to the number of characters. Trust can be set from 0 to 3.

Glossary:

+N ongoing: Add N to all rolls for the remainder of the scene.

+N forward: Add N to next roll you make.

Clue: Gain +1 forward when you act upon a Clue given to you by a Move or GM.

Experience

Gain experience during session for:

+1 for each Condition gained

+n as indicated by Move

Using experience for:

-1 to re-roll

-1 to activate a Sigil

-1 to gain narrative leeway

-n to power up a ritual (depends on the level of the ritual)

-2 to reduce Taint level by one

-5 to mark an advance

Taint

Each character starts with 0 points of Taint.

The Agendas:

- Make the players' characters' lives not boring.
- Play to find out what happens.
- Drive the characters to turn into monsters

The Principles:

- The devil is in the details.
- Introduce a believable world of (supernatural) secrets.
- Give the world more depth through play.
- Come up with interesting mysteries, not interesting adventures.
- Make your move, but misdirect.
- Make your move, but never speak its name.
- Use NPCs to introduce constancy, then destroy them.
- Name everyone, make everyone human.
- Ask provocative questions and build on the answers.
- Respond with challenging circumstances and occasional rewards.
- Be a fan of the players' characters.
- Think offscreen, too.
- Occasionally, let the players answer the questions.
- The fight is in vain, for humanity means little on the grand scale of things

GM Moves

- Separate them.
- Capture someone.
- Put someone in a high-stakes situation.
- Harm someone (as established).
- Trade harm for harm (as established).
- Announce off-screen badness.
- Announce future badness.
- Take away one of their Things.
- Demonstrate one of their Things' bad sides.
- Give them a difficult decision to make.
- Tell them the possible consequences and ask.
- Turn their move back on them.
- Make a move from one of your Dangers or Bigger Pictures.

When making moves remember:

1. Move flows from fiction.
2. Move gives players something to react to.
3. Move advances the narrative.
4. Ask the players "what do you do?"

Setting Expectations

- No-one can be trusted. The characters realize that they are dealing with conspiracies and cults that can reach a global level; everyone can be a spy or an agent of some unknown force. This does not mean that the characters should be hostile to each other. It is their group they know they must trust to survive in a world like this.

- The characters are not unique. At least to begin with. There is a vast ocean of some kind of fish they are and it is quite easy to replace them before they get some experience under their belts. It is the player's duty to make their character unique and allow him to stand out from the masses.

- The characters are going to die. Most of the things the characters will face a horrible and frightening for a good reason. They can kill a man in a heartbeat. But it is not the GM's duty or interest to kill the characters on the spot. This game is about the story of a few unlikely heroes holding back the tide of darkness and facing their own inner demons at the same time. It is like the Ragnarok of men - they know they are going to die but it does not stop them from fighting.

Moves

Basic Moves

Act Under Pressure (Roll + Stat)

When you take an action that risks failure or opposition, roll with one of the basic stats. This includes sanity checks.

On a 10+, You succeed.

On a 7-9, the GM offers you a worse outcome, hard bargain or a cost. If agreed upon, you succeed.

Assist/Interfere (Roll + their trust to you)

When you Assist or Interfere on someone's action, roll their Trust to you.

On a 10+, They take +2 (Assist) or -2 (Interfere) to their roll.

On a 7-9, They take +1 or -1 to their roll, and you are exposed to the outcome of the roll.

On a miss, They lose of point of Trust to you

Fight (Roll + Violence)

When you attack someone or something, roll+**Violence**.

On a 10+, You deal Harm as established or Choose 2

On a 7-9, Choose 1

- You and your opponent both deal harm as established

- You manage to create an advantage, take +1 forward

- You manage to break away from the action

- You spot a weakness. Inflict +1 harm on with next **fight**.

On a miss, the opponent deals harm as established, chooses two from the list above or GM makes a hard move.

Influence (Roll + Presence)

When you want someone to do something for you, you may use your wits, charm, looks etc. to ask someone to do it.

On a 10+, they'll do it but might ask for something in return.

7-9, they'll do it but will ask for something in return.

Instinct (Roll + Discipline)

When you need to know what others are thinking, meaning or thinking you need to trust on your Instinct. Asks are directed to the GM.

On a 10+, Ask something, GM gives a relevant and usable answer (Clue).

On a 7-9, Ask something, GM gives you something interesting, build on that.

Investigate (Roll + Intellect)

Looking for clues in a scene.

On a 10+, choose 1:

- You find something hidden
- You find something lost
- You find something forgotten
- You find a Good item (GM's choice)
- You find a Minor item (your choice)
- You find something relevant (Clue)
- Pick one from the following:

7-9, choose 1:

- You find a Minor item (GM's choice)
- You find a Clue (+1forward), but the situation escalates

On a 6 or less, there either is nothing else to be found or the GM may hold 1 hard move against you.

Reason (Roll + Intellect)

When the clues are gathered, the libraries visited and the old dusty tomes read the player may use Reason to tie in the knots.

On a 10+, Ask something, GM gives a relevant and usable answer (Clue).

On a 7-9, Ask something, GM gives you something interesting, build on that.

Spark of Taint (Roll + Discipline)

Whenever you commit an inhuman act (kill someone in cold blood, work magic, eat human flesh, go darkside etc.) make roll+Discipline.

10+ You remain unaffected by the Taint

On a 7-9, You are fighting the Taint. You may choose to advance it. If you do, gain +1exp.

On a miss, your Taint advance a step. Gain +1exp.

Peripheral Moves

Harm & Healing Moves

All characters have access to Harm & Healing Moves.

When you are dealt damage, roll+harm suffered (reduce protection from the harm suffered if you have any).

On a 10+, Choose 1

- You are taken out of action for any reason suitable to the situation. Gain 1exp.
- Suffer 1 additional harm.
- GM chooses 2 from below.

On a 7-9, Choose 1

- You fall down
- Lose your hold on something
- Lose the track of someone or something
- Miss something important

On a miss, GM may choose one from 7-9 by reducing harm by 1.

When you are harmed you may try to treat yourself (Harm suffered 1 to 4) or need to rely on others to do it for you. Any character may try to help with Harm suffered from 1 to 4, but only those with reasonable access to medical background or training may heal Harm suffered after 4.

To treat a character, roll+Harm suffered.

On a 10+, Choose 1

- You are taken out of action for any reason suitable to the situation. Gain 1exp.
- Suffer 1 additional harm.
- GM chooses 2 from below

On a 7-9, Choose 1, but GM chooses one

- Character is stabilized
- Character recovers one level of Harm
- Character needs to stay in bed for a week
- Character needs monitoring for two days

On a miss, Choose 1

- Character is stabilized
- Character recovers one level of Harm

If you harm or heal another character they increase their trust to you by one (from healing) or reduce their trust to you by the amount of harm caused (from harming).

Ritual Magic

Ritual Magic Moves can only be reached via advances. The character must learn the different effects for the ritual in game.

When you perform a lengthy ritual with quite possible expensive ingredients, choose an effect and describe what you are doing and how will you achieve it, and roll+Discipline.

10+, It works as it was supposed to

On a 7-9, It almost works as you intended, choose 1

- The ritual works, but you pass out from strain
- The ritual works, but you suffer 1 harm (ignore armor)
- The ritual works, but it has a visible and chaotic side-effect
- The ritual works, but the situation complicates
- The ritual works, but you gain 1 Taint

On a miss, the ritual is not successful but you gain 1 Taint.

Ritual effects

- Inflict harm (1 harm, ignore armor)
- Enchant weapon. +1 harm, +magic
- Summon/banish a monster or entity
- Trap/release a monster or entity
- Evict monster, curse or entity
- Force someone to do something you tell them to do
- Do something that is beyond human capabilities but could be achieved via technology
- Observe another place or time
- Use a Taint move for one time.

Sex Moves

When you have sex with someone choose one that makes sense:

- Increase your Trust to them by one.
- Increase their Trust to you by one.
- Reduce Sanity harm by one.
- Take +1forward. You may choose to grant them +1forward too.
- Act as you had rolled 10+ with Influence move.
- You take +1forward. You may choose to grant them -1forward.

End of Session

After a gaming session:

Modify Trust, choose one:

- Increase your Trust to another character by one.
- Declare one of the NPCs encountered as your personal contact. Write it down to your playbook and choose two tags for him:
 - Date, Dealer, Fence, Loan-Shark, Muscle, Reliable, Ride

Gain one Exp for each yes to following:

- Did you learn an Esoteric Secret?
- Did you overcome a notable enemy?
- Did You have a good time?

Use Exp, choose up to two:

- Decrease Taint by one level (2exp)
- Mark an Advance (5exp)
- Purchase an usable item (1exp)

Taint

Once you pass the first Taint Threshold you gain a Taint move each time you Taint advances. This move replaces one of your other moves (unless special circumstances are in effect). The first thing to be replaced is your Sex move. After that you may replace a move that makes the most sense from a narrative point of view.

Playing it Out - When your Taint level raises play it out. It is not as simple as marking something down for the character. It is a bit of himself dying there and something new sparking life inside him. It might drive him insane or

Taint

1-3 Tainted - Character can still fight the Taint and may be reduce it (needs playing it out). Noticing the spark of taint in someone is not easy, though they might seem a bit more sinister, cruel or drawn to darker things than normal. You are drawn to acts of selfish nature, brutality and decadence as well as feel stronger and more agile.

4-5 Corrupted - Once you have been corrupted you cannot reduce Taint. You rarely hinder yourself with thoughts about morality and are drawn to isolated places and to death. You develop strange cravings and might find yourself thirsting for blood or human flesh.

6 Gazing into Abyss - You cannot hide your transformation from anyone (that includes you). Your physical appearance will change to more savage, almost animal-like. If you survive the enmity of other hunters, you are likely to fall to scavenging and ultimately eating the cadavers of men. In folk lore these creatures are known as ghouls.

Becoming a Monster - Out of the game

Turning into a monster - Once your Taint level has reached its limits or when all of your moves (excluding basic moves) are replaced with a Taint move your character turns into a monster. After this it will no longer serve as a player character. Choose a new playbook and give the monster to GM to be used against you.

Taint Moves

Delicatessen

Whenever you consume human flesh gain +1 ongoing.

Endless Greed

Whenever you act to possess something gain +1 forward.

Cold-blooded Killer

Killing innocent people does not force you to make a Spark of Taint-roll.

Developed Senses

Gain +1 to all rolls where senses can be used.

Alluring Presence

Increase Presence by one (max.4)

Excellent Mimic

Once you have heard someone's voice you can perfectly mimic it.

Hibernation

You can fall into extended period of rest closely resembling hibernation or death. This negates the need of normal sustenance your body needs (air, food, water etc.) and heals you physically.

Mind Walker

You may read the minds of others when you have visual contact to them with roll+Discipline.

10+ Ask three

7-9 Ask one

On a miss, choose one:

- Suffer 2 harm, but ask one.

- Suffer 2 sanity loss, but ask one.

- Suffer 1 harm and 1 sanity loss, but ask one.

- You cannot mind walk.

Dark Strength

Your Violence is increased by one (max. 4)

Nightmarish Visions

By concentrating and meditating you can open your mind to nightmarish visions, roll+discipline. On a hit GM gives you a clue of something relevant about the current

situation that could not be uncovered by mundane means.

On 10+, the clue is in detail.

On 7-9, the clue is an impression.

On a miss, suffer 2 sanity loss.

Tainting Touch

Anyone touching you must roll Spark of Taint.

Vessel of Energy

Your blood can be traded for power to rituals. Each point of Harm you suffer adds a point to ritual roll.

Shadow Cradle

Lights dim and fade away around you. This affects both natural and artificial light.

Eyes of the Beast

Gain +1ongoing for Fitness in darkness. Your eyes have a peculiar shine (usually red in hue) in darkness and photographs.

Creature of the Shadows

All light irritates you and force you to Act Under Pressure. Strong ultraviolet lights (direct exposure to midday sun for example) might even cause harm.

Beastly Claws

You grow a set of vicious claws (harm 2, messy).

Beast, Not Man

Increase your Fitness and Violence by one (max. 4) but decrease your Intellect and Discipline by one.

Regeneration

You may heal any harm with roll+Fitness.

Sigil Moves

Sigils are like concentrated rituals. They can only be learned via advances. Activating a sigil requires you to spend an Experience and to roll *Spark of Taint*.

Sigil of the Tainted is used to ward off the Tainted. Any creature with the Tainted tag or a PC with any Taint level may not approach or cross the Sigil of the Tainted.

Minor Sigil of the Bloodlust is an ancient rune-like sigil. It can still be found carved in ancient shields and swords. When the sigil is fused with blood it bestows +1 ongoing to user. It also forces the user to act recklessly in combat.

Sigil of Pain has been used to torture people since it was created. It can also be a powerful warding sigil killing a person touching it instantly. All living things touching or in contact with the sigil must roll +2 Harm.

Sigil of Eldritch Visions allows piercing through the veil of time and reality. By placing an object or himself in the sigil the user may glimpse to the history or future of certain object or location or read most recent or strongest feelings tied to it.

It is said that those who came from heaven used massive *Sigil of Chains* to force their slave laborers to remain on the working sites. In the rare occasions this sigil is found it has been used to ward off unwanted guests. All living things touching or entering the sigil must Act Under Pressure to leave it.

Sigil of Life offers something that only a few sigils do; it replenishes life energy. All living things laying on the sigil may heal one level of harm per hour if not disrupted.

Sigil of Mind is threaded by all who possess any esoteric knowledge. Kings, soldiers and common men have all gone to great lengths to ward themselves against this potent marking. All living things touching or in contact with the sigil must make a roll + Discipline.

On 10+, you are unaffected by the Sigil

On 7-9, Choose one:

- You perform a single task specified by the crafter, gain +1 experience
- You force yourself to act against the commandment, suffer 2 harm.

On a miss, you must perform a single task specified by the crafter.

Sigil of Revenge is an ancient sigil and though it competes with the minor sigil of bloodlust for the most commonly used sigil only a few recordings describe how its potency is actually released. Any weapon placed on the sigil has its Harm increased by one until next sunrise.

Trappings

Tags

Tags represent the special qualities of an item (if it has any).

Tag Glossary

N Armor - Protects you from harm. When taking damage reduce the Armor from total harm suffered. Use the highest value if using more than one item with *N Armor*.

+Bonus - Adds an advantage to rolls specified with the bonus. For example +1forward to Investigate.

N Piercing - Reduce N from enemy armor.

N Uses - Can only be used for N times.

Addictive - Act Under Pressure (Roll+Discipline) to resist being addicted.

Alien - Definitely not made by any human culture.

Area - May target a group or engagement in the same area.

Blast - The attack targets one engagement.

Clumsy - Not really meant to be used the way you are probably using it; thus -1ongoing.

Complex - Complex weapons require more time to be used and are usually hard to handle for someone not trained in their use. This gives the user -1ongoing to all attacks rolls if not properly trained.

Dangerous - Might cause big problems to you if not handled properly.

Defensive - Melee attacks targeting the character suffer -1ongoing.

Heavy - Weighs a lot and most likely difficult to wield but causes heavy damage.

Ignite - May ignite the target.

Ignores Armor - Worn armors do not have any effect.

Messy - Tends to cause a big mess when used.

Non-Lethal - Weapon can only cause Harm with a roll of 12+.

Ranged - Can be used in combat only from a distance.

Two-Handed - Requires two hands to use.

Unreliable - If you roll natural 2 while using the item the gun jams/item breaks and cannot be used until it has been maintained.

Weird - There is something strange, weird and wrong in the object.

Rudimentary Weapons

Knife (1 harm)

Hunting bow (2 harm, ranged)

Sledgehammer (2 harm, two-handed, 1 piercing, clumsy)

Chainsaw (3 harm, two-handed, unreliable, messy)

Machete (3 harm)

Firearms

Handgun (2 harm)

Uzi (2 harm, area)

Hunting rifle (3 harm, ranged, two-handed)

Sawed-off Shotgun (3 harm, two-handed, messy)

Shotgun (3 harm, two-handed, messy)

Assault Rifle (4 harm, ranged, two-handed, area)

Other Weapons

- Dynamite/grenades (4 harm, area, messy, 1 piercing)

- Firethrower (4 harm, messy, ignores armor, two-handed, unreliable, complex, dangerous)

Other Trapping

First-aid kit (recover 1 health)

Sedatives (recover 1 sanity, addictive)

Flashlight

Walkman (+1 ongoing to Presence when dealing with young people)

Camera

Polaroid Camera

Bottle of Whiskey (recover 1 sanity, addictive)

Tent

Car (choose one: new & expensive, old & unreliable)

Motorcycle (choose one: new & expensive, old & unreliable)

Truck (choose one: new & expensive, old & unreliable)

Basic Harm Scale

1 harm

Improvised weapons

Trained fist fighters

2 harm

Handguns, knives, hunting bows, uzis (and other submachine guns)

3 harm

Shotguns, hunting rifles, crossbows

Machetes, chainsaws

Getting hit by a car

4 harm

Minor explosions (includes hand grenades and dynamite)

Getting hit by a large vehicle

Being the middle of a gun fight

5+ harm

Major explosions

Getting hit by a train

Condition

Health

1-2 Bruised - Character that has taken Harm is considered to be bruised. He has suffered some blows, cuts and/or shots but is still up and kicking.

3-4 Injured - Character can still try to treat himself. Requires the character to take it easy for a couple of days.

5 Critically Injured - Character cannot treat himself. A week of bed-rest is usually enough to get the character back on his feet.

6 Dying - Character falls unconscious. Recovering from this condition requires always long-term care. Needs immediate stabilization. At least of month of bed-rest is necessary to begin the healing process. The character might even be in coma for this time.

Dead - Out of the game

Sanity

1-2 Disturbed - Character can still treat himself.

3-4 Shocked - Character can still try to treat himself. Requires the character to take it easy for a couple of days.

5 Traumatized - Character cannot treat himself. A week of bed-rest is usually enough to get the character back on his feet.

6 At the brink of madness - Character falls unconscious. Recovering from this condition requires always long-term care. Needs immediate stabilization. At least of month of bed-rest is necessary to begin the healing process. The character might even be in coma for this time.

Insane - Out of the game

Monsters

Reading Creatures

Description - What kind of monster it is and what does it do.

Damage - How much Harm the creature can cause via its physical attacks. May be modified if the creature uses a different kind of weapon.

Tags - Special abilities, tricks and perks the monster has.

Life Blood - How much Harm can the creature take before it is beaten. GM - scale and play out the loss of Life Blood even if the creature does not actually have blood.

Moves - If the monster has some kind of special move.

Monster Tags

If you do not find a suitable tag, create one or add a suitable Move.

N Abomination - The creature is such a terrible sight that seeing it forces to roll Act Under Pressure or suffer N sanity loss.

N Armor - Decrease the Harm caused the creature by N.

Aerial - Has means of flying.

Alien - Most likely not of this world so anatomy lessons are out.

Aquatic - This creature has the ability to breath and act underwater as well as above ground unless otherwise specified.

Area Attack - May attack more than one target (divide damage caused between targets).

Aura [Varies] - The presence of the creature affects everything around it. For example – coldness, darkness, electric disturbance, smell, tainting presence.

Construct - This creature is created by someone or something and is completely immune to all emotions.

Endless - Excluding violent death, the creature can live forever. Killing or destroying the creature requires special means and/or rituals. Otherwise the creature either always manages to escape or reforms its mangled body in some secure location.

Infectious - Attacks of the creature cause the character to be poisoned. Characters that are infected and are not treated suffer 1harm (ignore armor) each day until dead or healed.

Incorporeal - The creature may change into an incorporeal form where it can pass through solid objects.

Invisible - The creature cannot be seen through normal means unless it chooses so.

Invulnerability to [Varies] - The creature is invulnerable by certain elements or substances. Harm caused by it is negated completely.

Paralyze - The creature possesses some way to paralyze its target. All targets of this power must hit a Act Under Pressure before doing anything else. For example – saliva, blood, venom, gaze.

Possessing - The creature has some way of possessing its target. If the target is sentient it is allowed to Act Under Pressure to resist the possession. A creature possessing anything controls it perfectly for as long as it needs or is driven out by some external force.

[Power Source] - The source of the power may vary but this creature can function without it. Power Source might need recharging from time to time and if removable are usually well protected. Examples – blood, battery, ancient ring etc.

Regeneration - The creature comes back to life after combat unless damaged by fire or magical means.

Resistance to [Varies] - The creature is resistant to certain elements or substances. Suffer -1harm from the substance.

Stealthy - Is most likely hard to notice before it decided to present itself.

Transformation - The creature may transform its appearance to something else gaining the physical abilities of its new shape. This power may be triggered for example by eating a person the creature turns into, blood rituals, full moon etc.

Vulnerability X - Suffer +1harm when harm is caused with the chosen substance. If the creature is bound or trapped with it, it must Act Under Pressure before it can do anything.