

The Summoning Bell

Ripper Adventure by Pythagoras (<http://www.hardpoints.de>)

1 Introduction

In this adventure, recommended for mid-novice characters, a powerful artefact that can be used for good or bad is discovered. The risk of the Cabal using the artefact leads to interesting fight scenes in the bell tower of a cathedral. The adventure is set in Glasgow but can easily be transferred to other places.

2 DM's Background

Crimes of the Past

About a century ago, an evil cultist named Arthur Penned, who had dedicated himself to a demon of disease, found out that the bell at the St. Mungo's Cathedral was a powerful artefact, long thought to be lost. The bell, created from the metal of a cannon that helped repel a demonic creature, was able to conjure an angel when struck the right way under a very specific star constellation that occurs only every 2 years. The angel would then put his blessing over the town.

The cultist did some research and found out that the magic of the bell could be corrupted to call forth his foul master in the same way. Having devised a ritual, Penned eventually went up on the bell tower and did heavy damage to the bell. At the last minute he was stopped by Lord Illingsworth, a Ripper dedicated to the protection of Glasgow. A cover story was made up and the bell brought to London for repair. The Rosicrucians of London put a powerful spell onto it, weaving the magic into a seemingly harmless inscription. While a constant guard was put up to protect the bell, knowledge about the artefact was forgotten when its guardians were wiped out by a random Cabal attack.

Greenfield's Plan

Dr. Pericles Greenfield, an obscure anthropologist and victim of the Hyde potion, has plans to release the disease demon worshipped by Penned in return for absolute control over his Hyde form.

So, Greenfield has obtained the documents of Arthur Penn and sent up a hapless henchman to the bell. Unfortunately, the protective magic worked very well and almost fried the werewolf sent up to the tower. The still-smoking wolfman is the first hook the players encounter...

3 Hook

The PCs are returning from the theatre late at night. When they pass the cathedral, they notice a bright flash of blue light in the bell tower, followed by a scream and a crashing body. A quick investigation reveals that the body is that of a heavily injured wolfman, who will try to flee (pace 2, running die d4, -2 to all agility-based trait rolls).

4 The Wolfman's Story

The first interesting segment of the adventure, is a long talk with the "fallen angel". The wolfman is called Peter West. He a young unemployed from one of the worst areas of town, does not put up much of a fight but cannot be injured; otherwise he is likely to die.

Peter West - Wolfman

Gaunt and tall, West has something of a Doberman about him. He is dressed like a factory worker but his clothing has been mended several times. The wolfman carries tools suitable for damaging a bell as well as a diagram showing a pattern. The bell in the tower shows the beginnings of a

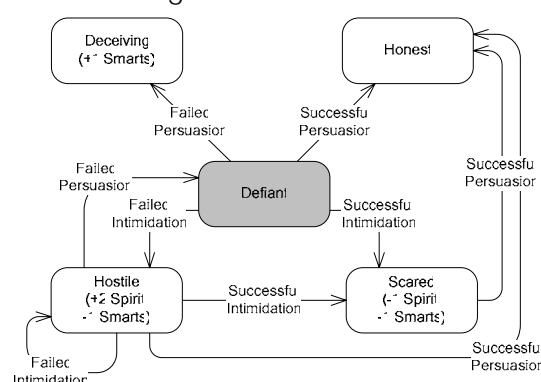
carving. Use the following information to portrait West.

Goals: West is a young goon hoping to rise in the hierarchy of the Cabal to escape the squalor of the slums. A secondary motivation is money.

Fears: Loss of status in the Cabal and the wrath of Dr. Greenfield.

Personality: West is uneducated and spiteful of the rich. He is convinced that the only way to get other to do things is by force.

The Interrogation



The table above describes the mental state and is used to determine interrogation results. West starts out **defiant** and Intimidation vs. Spirit or Persuasion vs. Smarts can be used to get him to talk. Give the PCs a bonus if they appeal to his goals or play with his fears. On the other hand, penalize a pure brute force approach.

Defiant: West will not tell his name but insult the PCs. He shows his violent nature and brags about how powerful his masters are.

Hostile: West will feebly try to attack but due to his action penalty will not be able to do much harm. He is also likely to mention that others will complete the task he failed at.

Scared: The wolfman will cower and beg to be released. He tells the PCs that he is deathly afraid of his master. Further intimidation does no good; he must be con-

vinced that he will be safe.

Honest: The young rogue will reveal the full story as far as he knows it. He tells the PCs that a Dr. Greenfield, residing in London Street, has offered him £ 10 to engrave a specific symbol onto the church bell. He does not know why but overheard the words “summoning call”.

Deceiving: Two options exist at this stage. If West thinks they are going to kill him anyway, he will try to take the PCs with him. He will tell them about Dr. Greenfield but misdirect them to the neighbour of Greenfield, an obese merchant named Wheatern. (This is not clever but the best most of us can come up with after falling from a bell tower.) The poor man knows nothing of the whole affair and will be quite shocked when the Rippers come for him. If he survives the encounter, he can identify Peter West by description and point to Dr. Greenfield.

If, on the other hand, West gets the impression that the PCs are soft-hearted fools and will let him go, he will try to take advantage of them. He will offer to help them to attack Greenfield, revealing a lot of information. Then, at the right time, he will warn Greenfield in order to gain his gratitude.

In any event, in the case of mutual lies, make sure to roll *Persuasion* vs. *Notice* often enough.



5 Research

If the PCs are unable to get information out of the were-creature or want to get some additional insight first, they can perform some research on the subject of the bell.

The Past: A *Research*+1 roll reveals the “official” part of the back story described under *Crimes of the Past*. A raise gives information about the Ripper involvement and the protective spell. Also, the PCs realize that the

knowledge of the bell was lost due to the annihilation of the local Ripper lodge.

The Ritual: A *Knowledge(Astronomy)* or similar allows to calculate the appropriate date for the ritual – which is a week from now.

Dr. Greenfield: *Streetwise* or some appropriate *Knowledge* reveals the address of Greenfield, his ties to the “Silver Bonnies”, a werewolf street gang, and his love for exotic items. A raise reveals that he is most likely a Hyde.

6 Dr. Greenfield's Study

Dr. Pericles Greenfield, an anthropologist, lives in a formerly well-off area of town that has been in decline over the recent decades (London Street in Glasgow). His place is on the first floor, with his landlady and 2 other bachelors living in the same house.

Greenfield's place is stuffed with all kinds of curiosities from all over the world and he will not hesitate to use those against the PCs should they raid his place. These items are:

- A rippertech extract made into a bomb that causes a swarm of flies to be conjured. (-3 visibility penalty on most actions, 1d4 damage per round. Disperses after 10 rounds.)
- A Chinese halberd made of cold iron (treat as spear).
- A cursed wooden mask from Africa that grants +2 on *Intimidation* checks when worn.

If the PCs attack the Doctor, he will try to get away using his potion and jumping from his window (taking 2d6 damage in the process).

Greenfield is a Wild Card Hyde with *Level-Headed*, *Combat Reflexes*, and *Quick*.

Once outside, Greenfield will yell for the help of his Wolfmen henchmen (1 per PC), who will try to delay the pursuers. If the PCs capture the Doctor, he will reveal the full plan, being easily cowed. If they do not capture him, the doctor will continue with his plan and can only be stopped by

the PCs intercepting him at the bell tower, where he gives the attack on the bell a second try.

7 Wrap-Up

If the PCs did not catch the doctor but know when to be at the bell tower, they can intercept him (and his wolfmen, 1 per PC). If they know nothing, they will witness a wave of typhoid in the city, after Greenfield has released the demon.

Finally, if they wrap everything up, the PCs might consider stealing the bell to avoid future problems. This end should lead to some interesting situations (after all, how to steal a bell). If the bell is left where it is, it might be a target of future attacks.

8 Handout: Bell Inscription

If the PCs ask for it, give them the text of the bell inscription:

In the year of grace 1594, Marcus Knox, a merchant of Glasgow, zealous for the interests of the reformed religion, caused me to be fabricated in Holland for the use of his fellow citizens in Glasgow, and placed me with solemnity in the tower of their cathedral.

My function was to announce, by the impress on my bosom, (Me audito venias doctrinam sanctam ut discas) [Come, that ye may learn holy doctrine.] and I was taught to proclaim the hours of unheeded time.

195 years had I sounded these awful warnings, when I was broken by the hands of inconsiderate and unskilful men.

In the year 1790, I was cast into the furnace, refounded at London, and returned to my sacred vocation.

Reader, thou also shall know a resurrection, may it be to eternal life.