

Pumpkin

Being a Short Tale of a Wonderland Gone Wrong

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INTRODUCTION

Many years ago a young Crow feasted on a succulent Pumpkin, then fled when the sapient Plant attacked him, screaming. The wound was not particularly harmful but left the Pumpkin scarred and bitter. The bitterness became madness over the years as the Pumpkin plotted revenge on all Crows.



The Pumpkin turned to Gourmancy, and after fifteen years of experiments, he at last had the means for revenge. In that time, the Crow family moved on and a family of Blackbirds has come. Unfortunately, the Mad Pumpkin makes no distinctions.

THE START

The heroes have stopped in the Laughing Horse Tavern in the small village of Frogspite (in the woods to the northeast of the Chessboard Fields) when an ale-curdling scream echoes outside. (It is late evening - darkness modifiers apply).

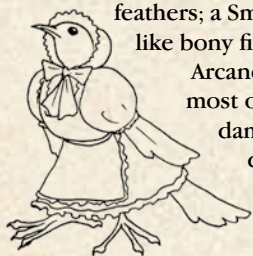
THE VICTIM

Outside in the street lays a Blackbird amidst a spilt and jumbled mess of vegetables, sticks and a broken wicker basket. No matter how quickly the heroes reacted, there is no sign of anyone else, although other villagers are now approaching.

Investigation will reveal that the Animal has been strangled, though she is still alive. A successful Notice roll reveals narrow, deep gouges in her flesh beneath her feathers; a Smarts roll suggests that something like bony fingers caused them.

Arcane or mundane healing will fix most of the hurt to the girl, though the damage to her throat will require days of rest before she can speak.

All she can do for now is croak "crow."



THE BLACKBIRD FAMILY

Before long, the girl's mother is located - she is distraught over her daughter's condition but can explain that the girl, Calinda, had gone to the vegetable patch to fetch some fresh vegetables for dinner. Maybe the old Dandelion who has rooted there saw someone following Calinda? Could the heroes help?

THE VEGETABLE PATCH

The vegetable patch consists of a dozen neat patches of open soil with a variety of vegetables (non-sapient) growing there. Some plots have wigwam-like structures of sticks supporting climbing plants such as tomatoes and runner beans, while others are covered in ground-growing vegetables such as marrows and carrots.

A scarecrow with a pumpkin head and tattered clothes flaps forlornly in the breeze, but there is no sign of the Dandelion. Investigation reveals that the "scarecrow" is the missing Flower; the pumpkin has been thrust over his once proud, petalled head. The Dandelion has been killed by a hand sickle thrust through his stem, and a single black feather has been hung on the handle of the implement.

Successful Notice rolls reveal the spot where Calindamust have picked her vegetables. A raise on the Notice roll will reveal a series of holes, 1/2" in diameter and a couple of inches deep, leading from one of the stick wigwams, across several plots (including one pumpkin patch - but do not mention this) before they disappear in the hard ground around the plots.

THE ATTACK

When the heroes return to the village, they can get directions to the Blackbird family home. They are soon invited in and offered tea while they talk of what they found.

Abruptly two crashes resound as the front door is broken inwards and two pumpkin-headed Greater Scarecrows shamle into the cottage. Three rounds into the combat there is another crash from a side room as a third Greater Scarecrow clanders through the window.

Once they are defeated, a successful Smarts roll will suggest that the raw materials for the scarecrows were readily available from the vegetable patch.

THE VEGETABLE PATCH REVISITED

The patch is a complete mess with leafy vegetables strewn everywhere and gaping holes where they have been uprooted. The orderly “wigwams” have been knocked over, their component sticks broken. The holes (see The Vegetable Patch above) can be found all over the plots. A dozen or so pumpkins can be found in the patch if someone thinks to look; these are in fact Lesser Scarecrows and can be “killed” while still buried.

At a suitable moment, probably while the heroes are smashing pumpkins, the soil in several plots erupts upwards as three Greater Scarecrows burst out of their hiding places. At the same time the remaining Lesser Scarecrows will begin to struggle free - though, as they are weaker, it will take them two rounds to emerge.

THE PUMPKIN'S LAIR

During or after the fight, any hero making a raise on a Notice roll will spot small flickering flames some distance away in the dark. These are the eyes of two more Greater Scarecrows guarding the Mad Pumpkin's lair, a deep cave in the nearby hills.

The Pumpkin is within his lair with a further six Lesser Scarecrows; he will urge his minions forward to attack while screaming that all crows must die and using his powers.

Once the Pumpkin is defeated, the messy cave may be searched. Aside from some rather dubious-looking Gourmancy ingredients, the only item of interest is the old, slightly rotten diary of the Pumpkin. A successful Smarts roll will allow a reader to get the gist of the Pumpkin's story from the deranged ramblings within.

SCARECROW

The scarecrows animated by the Pumpkin's magic are fragile-looking things of thin sticks bound together with vines topped with a carved pumpkin for a head. While “alive,” the carved faces can move, sneering and blinking while a flickering flame burns behind the eye holes. Greater Scarecrows are more powerful, and should be treated as Wild Cards.



Attributes: Agility d10,

Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Stealth d8, Taunt d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities:

- ☛ **Construct:** Scarecrows gain a +2 bonus to recover from being Shaken, take no additional damage from called shots and are immune to disease and poison.

- ☛ **Fear:** Scarecrows' scary visage causes fear.

- ☛ **Immunity (Fire):** Despite their flammable construction, Scarecrows are immune to fire damage.

- ☛ **Weakness:** If the flame inside a Scarecrow's pumpkin head is extinguished, the creature collapses, lifeless. This will normally involve a Called Shot to the head.

- ☛ **Wooden Claws:** Scarecrows have sharp twig-like fingers that can claw for Str+d6 damage.



MAD PUMPKIN

A Living Plant, the Pumpkin stands about 3 feet tall and wide with long tentacle-like roots and fronds. One side of the Pumpkin bears a long and deep scar of flesh that has not properly healed.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Cooking d8, Notice d8

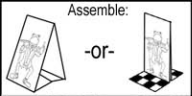
Pace: 4; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities:

- ☛ **Arcane Background (Gourmancy):** The Pumpkin is a practitioner of the magical art that uses food and cooking to create its magical powers, he uses his Cooking skill to cast his powers.
- ☛ **Mobile ... Mostly:** The Pumpkin moves by dragging himself along by his fronds; base Pace is 4 and Running die is a d4.
- ☛ **Plant:** As a plant the Pumpkin is immune to diseases and poisons affecting animals, but is susceptible to diseases and poisons that affect plants. He has no need for food but requires sunlight in its place (1 hour of sunlight per two days). Due to his fibrous nature, he takes half damage from piercing and crushing attacks.
- ☛ **Small:** The Pumpkin is small and suffers a -1 penalty to Toughness.
- ☛ **Power Points:** 20
- ☛ **Powers:** armor, burrow, entangle
- ☛ **Gear:** Carving Knife (Str+d4)

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Assemble:

-OR-

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**Calinda
Blackbird**

Mad Pumpkin

**Greater
Scarecrow**

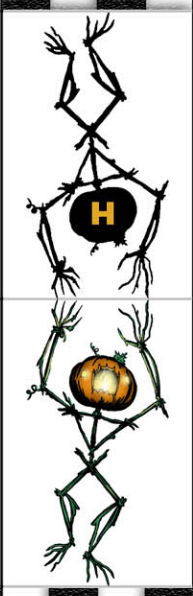
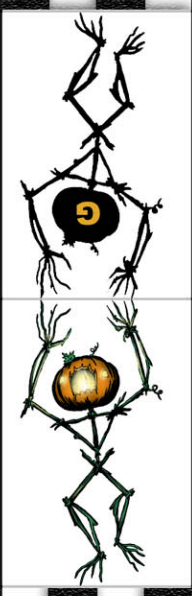
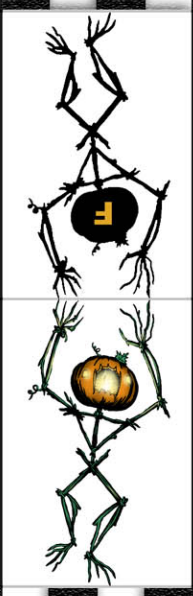
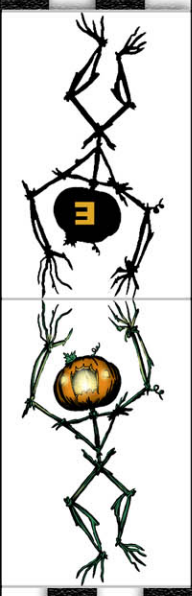
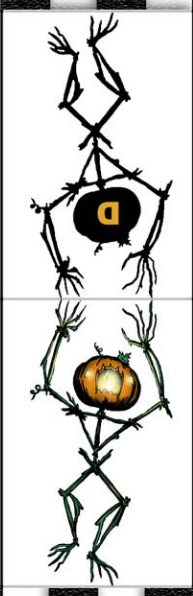
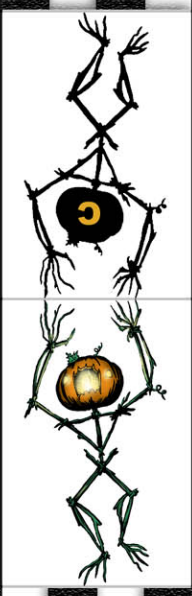
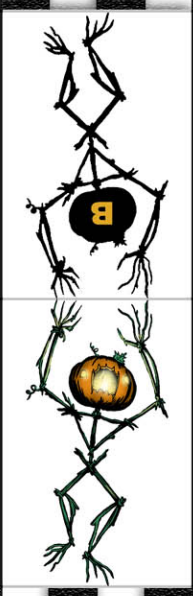
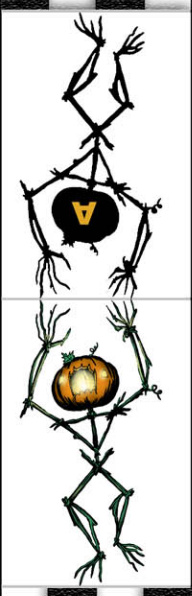
**Greater
Scarecrow**

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**Scarecrow
(Lesser)**

**Scarecrow
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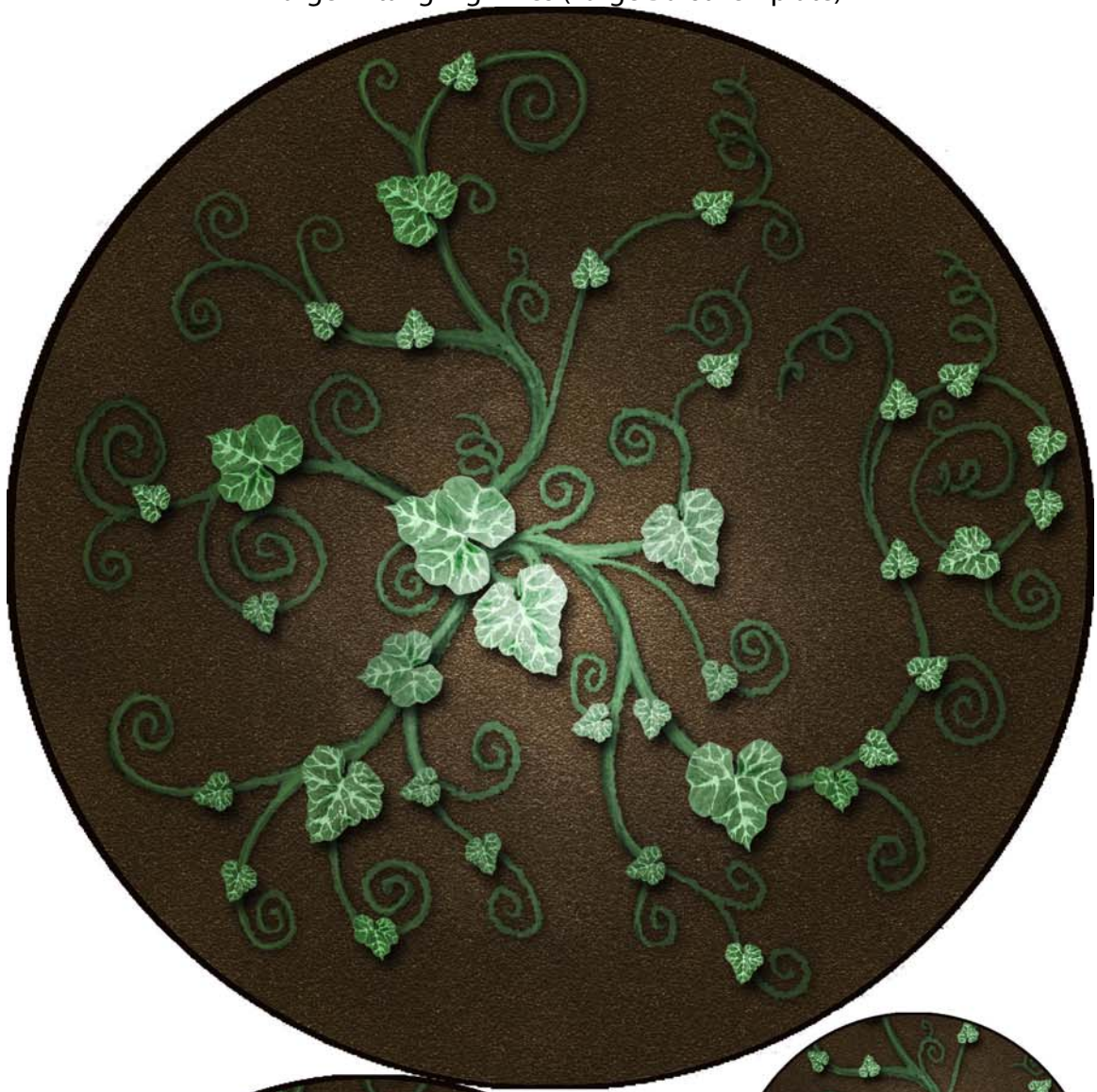
**Scarecrow
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Large Entangling Vines (Large Burst Template)



Medium Entangling Vines (Medium Burst Template)



Small Entangling Vines (Small Burst Template)