MONSTER PLAYSETS - INSTRUCTIONS

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*Disclaimer: These playsets was **not** developed by Thomas Eliot, creator of the **Fear of the Unknown** ttrpg (www.FearOfTheUnknownRPG.com)*

The Monster Playsets are designed to give an Oracle an easy-to-use, no-prep Antagonist if the improvisatory spirit required for *Fear of the Unknown* is lacking. These Antagonists are not fully developed or detailed or even named. Instead, you will find a series of questions to consider before, during, or after the Protagonist and Town generation portions of the game.

The *Fear of the Unknown* rules, as written, work perfectly well to create an improvised horror story with a beginning, middle and end. That said, there are a few reasons you might want to use a Monster Playset. First, a *Fear of the Unknown* session requires a lot of improvisation, from both the Oracle and the players, and sometimes one's mind is just blank. The playset offers not answers, but questions and suggestions to grease the imagination and the keep play going. Second, although the rules state that the Oracle is secretly create the Antagonist during the Town generation phase of the game, I submit that all Antagonists are not the same. The game is intended to simulate a horror movie, and the way a vampire movie proceeds is different from how a zombie movie proceeds, which is different from how a haunted house story proceeds, and so forth. Furthermore, each of these kinds of stories have their own tropes, conventions, and expected imagery, and the playset is intended to communicate those to the Oracle.

That said, there is no wrong way to use a playset! Keep what works or looks interesting, and toss the rest. **The golden rule is that if the Oracle and the players are engaged and having fun, the game is being played correctly.**

Each playset contains a four page playset, with an accompanying Antagonist overview. The overview contains a discussion the kind of questions you can expect to find in the playset, as well as any new optional rules.

The Overview
The overview acts as a guide through the playset, detailing the assumptions built into the playset, and also providing a deeper discussion of the questions and choices within. It also gives optional new rules when necessary, and includes a videography/bibliography of the sources that informed the playset.

The Playset
The first page of the playset contains all the questions the Oracle should consider when running the Antagonist, along with checkboxes for some common answers, as well as space to write a bespoke answer. The second and third pages contain the 6- Tables for the Investigate and Face Peril moves. These tables have been rewritten slightly from those in the core rulebook, both to consolidate the results and tune them towards outcomes one would expect from that particular Antagonist. The results have been placed from the least-worst result at the top (*Find an unrelated clue* for Investigate or *Something bad happens elsewhere* for Face Peril) to the worst result at the bottom (Encounter True Horror for Investigate or death for Face Peril). Each result also gives three example consequences that can be used as-is in the game or as inspiration for a different consequence. The fourth page contains the Structure Sheet for the session (see below), which includes examples for the Inciting Incident, the three questions that make up the structure of the session, and blank spaces for answers.

The Structure Sheet
The *Fear of the Unknown* rules as written don't offer a lot of advice on how a session should be structured — the story begins with an Inciting Incident, then the Oracle and players are expected to play in a way that automatically moves the story forwards and raises the

stakes. As is, the system works. However, if more guidance is desired, each playset contains a Structure Sheet intended to move the story towards a climactic ending.

The Structure Sheet is in two parts. The first part are the six possibilities for the Inciting Incident, as listed in the core rulebook. These choices have been rearranged, from starting the Protagonists the greatest distance away from the Antagonist (*Rumors start going around*) to the least amount of distance away from the Antagonist (*The Protagonists are (attempted) victims*). A lower number results in a story that begins more slowly, with more mystery; a higher number starts the story with more action (and possibly more Face Peril moves).

The second part are a series of questions, usually three, that should be answered during play before the story can come to a resolution. For example, in the **Modern-Day Dracula** playset, the questions are *Who is the Vampire? Where is the Vampire's lair? How can the Vampire be defeated?* Once the questions have been answered in play, the story can move on to a final confrontation to determine if the Protagonists succeed or fail against the Antagonist. The questions can usually be answered in any order, although some arrangements follow more logically than others. The use of these questions are intended to help the Oracle naturally guide the story towards a rising tension and climax; however, they are completely optional.