

# THE VAMPIRE

## NEXT DOOR

Issue 1 • £4.99



A roleplaying  
game for 3-7  
bold kids

“Try using  
garlic”  
and other  
handy tips

**Vladimir Alucard:  
Evil monster  
or “very nice man”?**

How to handle  
vampires when  
you're a kid  
and no one  
believes you!

# THE VAMPIRE NEXT DOOR

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# INTRO

It's the late 2000s, school's out for summer, and just like every summer before this one you're headed out of town to stay with your grandparents in the tiny village of Wymton-on-Tee, which snuggles in a tiny corner of the Yorkshire Dales. You were looking forward to 6 glorious weeks of horse riding, foraging, wading in the pond, and enjoying freshly baked cookies with full-cream golden milk for supper.

Except that you're pretty sure that Grommie and Grampy's new neighbour, Mr Alucard, is a vampire - in fact, you watched in horror from your bedroom window, on the first night of your stay, as he climbed out of his upper floor window and down the wall like a lizard.

The next morning George Barnsby was found, apparently attacked by some wild animal, and rushed off to hospital. According to a whispered conversation you overheard from Grommie and Grampy, an animal attacked a nearby farm's livestock not long ago, and people are starting to fear that whatever it is has moved from animals to people.

The problem is that no one believes you when you tell them the obvious truth! They say yeah sure, Mr Alucard does dress a little strangely in his frilly shirts and dramatic floor-length jackets, and yeah he does tend to wear a big floppy hat during the day and can only be seen during daylight hours if it's a particularly overcast day - but kids just have too much imagination.

After all, there's no such thing as monsters.

It's up to you kids to collect the evidence you need to persuade the adults of the truth, and save the village.

# BASICS OF PLAY

## You'll Need

- ▶ One player to take the role of GM, and 2-6 players to take on the roles of the kids
- ▶ A character sheet for each kid
- ▶ Something to take notes on and something to write with
- ▶ A d6, d8, d10, and d12 for each kid

## MECHANICS

Kid characters each have 4 stats. During character creation you'll assign a different size of die to each stat; the stat your kid is best at will have the highest value die. Each player will also pick their kid's unique Special Skill; something that they in particular are outstandingly good at.

When you do something that has the possibility of a dramatic failure, or if the outcome is uncertain, you'll roll the die for the stat that you and the GM think is most relevant to the situation, or the objective you're trying to achieve. This is called a task check. The GM will ask you to roll, and tell you the task check target.

The task check target is determined by how difficult the task is:

**4 - pretty easy**

**6 - normal**

**8 - difficult**

If you roll equal to or over the target, you succeed in what you're trying to do. If you roll under, you encounter a complication or additional challenge (this doesn't always mean that you fail the task). The GM will help you decide the outcome based on your roll, and will help narrate any additional consequences and outcomes.

# SITUATIONAL ROLLS

If a kid is in a situation where someone is helping them, they've had time to plan, or it's something that relates to their Special Skill, then their player makes any task check with advantage; roll your die twice, and pick the highest number for your outcome.

If a kid is caught off guard, or doing something especially difficult, then their player makes any task check with disadvantage; roll your die twice and pick the lowest number for your outcome.

The GM can choose to award advantage and disadvantage as appropriate, or if kids can demonstrate that their situation warrants it.



# PUSHING YOUR LUCK

Once per session you can “push” a roll to try and change the outcome. When you roll under the target check number, you can announce that you're going to push your luck and then roll again. If your new roll succeeds, you can move on with the new outcome. If your new roll fails, your bad luck is mirrored in the game by an especially bad consequence.

# GETTING IN TROUBLE

If the kids are caught doing something particularly egregious, like being somewhere they absolutely should not be, or up to some unforgivable mischief, the person who finds them will call Grommie and Grampy, and the kids will get in trouble. Getting in trouble means you have to stop whatever you're doing immediately, and Grommie will escort you home in disgrace. You'll be grounded for the rest of the day, so you'll have to start over fresh the next morning with a new plan.

## Safety

This is a game about a scary monster, and adults not listening to kids. As written, the tone sits somewhere between a classic kids' cartoon and a teen TV show.

Before you play, take some time to discuss the tone and the group's comfort with possible occurrences.

# Creating a Kid

Each player, except the GM, should create a kid; their own individual character who will be their conduit to explore Wymton-on-Tee.

All kid characters are Grommie and Grampy's grandchildren, and are aged somewhere in their early or pre-teens. Your kids can be siblings or cousins, and can be biologically related or adopted.

Grommie and Grampy adore each of you, and spend the year looking forward to your visit. Your visits usually involve exploring the countryside, and being spoilt.

## 1 STATS

Kids have 4 stats:

**Creativity**  
**Physicality**  
**Luckiness**  
**Sociability**

You have one of each of these dice:

**d6, d8, d10, d12**

Assign each die to one stat. The bigger the die, the more likely you are to succeed when you use that stat.

## 2 SKILLS

Each kid has a Special Skill, which is a particular talent that's unique to them. Pick one Special Skill for your kid from the list below and as a group make sure there are no duplicates:

- ▶ Learning and researching
- ▶ Sports and exercise
- ▶ Making friends
- ▶ Building things
- ▶ Nature and survival
- ▶ Solving puzzles

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## EQUIPMENT

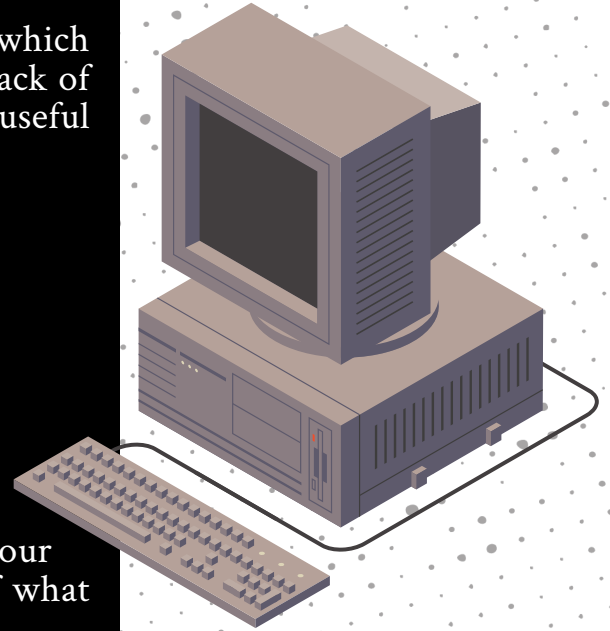
You can assume that kids always have access to classic kid items such as bicycles, scooters, notebooks, rocks, and backpacks; you don't need to track these.

Your group also has the following important items, which are shared among everyone. You'll need to keep track of who has what, and remember that they'll likely be useful in helping you collect your evidence:

- ▶ One compact point-and-shoot digital camera
- ▶ Two short-range walkie-talkies
- ▶ One Sony Ericsson W200i
- ▶ Access to Grommie and Grampy's desktop computer (it runs on Windows 95)

If you pick up any other important items during your adventure, make sure to write those down in your equipment. You'll especially need to keep track of what evidence you've collected.

Some things might not be practical (or safe) to keep with you. Keep a note of where these items are stashed.



# 4

## FINAL TOUCHES

Name your kid. Write or draw something quickly to describe what they look like. How do they dress? How do they act? What's their favourite thing to do? Do they like poking in the dirt for bugs, or do they think dirt and bugs are gross? Do they play sports?

## PLAYER GOALS

Collect indisputable evidence that Mr Alucard is a vampire, and use it to save the village from his evil blood-sucking hunger. Cycle round super fast on bikes. Get into mischief. Be curious about the world. Be smarter than the adults. Find interesting ways to approach the situation, and even more interesting solutions.

# RUNNING THE GAME

For  
the GM  
only!

As the GM it's your job to bring the world of Wymton-on-Tee to life around your players. You'll be describing the game's locations, playing as all the people who aren't players' kid characters, helping to adjudicate the outcome of roles, and (most importantly) deciding what Vlad's next move is.

Wymton-on-Tee is a small, self-contained town, and this game is intended to be played in 1 - 3 sessions. You don't need to plan too much: just react to what the kids decide to do.

## THE PLOT

Vladimir Alucard recently moved to Wymton-on-Tee, and has been making quite the positive impression on the locals, who all think he is the definition of a charming young man. Of course, he is really an evil vampire and is intent on feasting upon the residents of the remote village, then moving on to new hunting grounds once he's finished.

Unfortunately none of the adults seem to see it, even when he sweeps down the main road at twilight in a black cloak and suit, with a blood-red silk cravat and the moonlight glinting off his pointed fangs.

Vlad, as he insists everyone calls him, is intent on making his way round the unsuspecting residents of Wymton-on-Tee, feasting on their blood and slowly draining the life from the village. It's a tactic he's got away with plenty of times before, and he doesn't see any reason for it to go wrong this time.



## THE SETTING: AN IDYLIC ENGLISH VILLAGE

Wymton-on-Tee is a picture-perfect postcard village, all quaint stone cottages and lovingly cared for planters overflowing with colourful flowers. The residents are mostly adults, mostly retired, and sickeningly friendly and kind. The village consists of a cluster of a few houses, some outlying farms, and very little else.

The village's main places of interest include:

- ▶ The Coop, a newsagent store, which serves as more or less the village's catch-all shop for everyday grocery needs. It often carries a wide variety of bizarre little stock items which only a kid could find a use for.
- ▶ The village church, a quaint little stone building which is used just as much as a community hub as a house of worship.
- ▶ The Hound and Thicket, the village's beloved pub and unofficial second community hub (kids might be allowed in past 8pm, as long as they're well-behaved).

# KEY LOCATIONS

Aside from the time they spend outside, up and down the streets and probably following Vlad around and trying to catch him out, there are three important places the kids will find themselves in:

## *Hawthorn Cottage*

Grommy and Grampy's much-loved home is an ancient little cottage with a thatched roof and white-washed walls. It's been a small feature of the village for as long as there has been a village, and sits just next to the church, its garden half-jumbled into the kirkyard.

Most importantly, Hawthorn Cottage's position by the church means that it sits half on hallowed ground: Vlad can only step onto the property with a lot of discomfort (and probably some dramatic smoking), and can't stay there for long. He will only try to enter the cottage as an absolute last resort, so the kids are mostly safe there.

## *The Church*

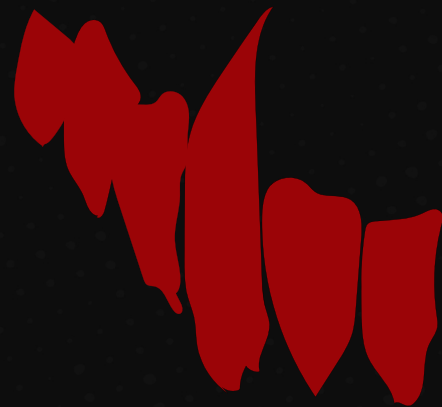
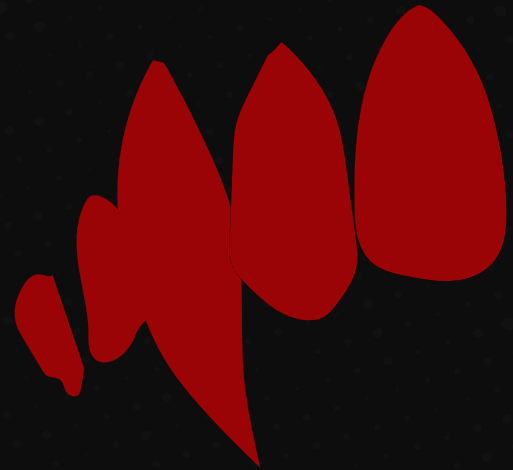
Wymton-on-Tee's little church is picture-perfect; in fact, it actually does appear on several postcards for the area. The church's doors are always open and it offers tea, coffee, baked goods, and orange squash throughout the day to the village residents who use it as a meeting place.

Vlad cannot enter the church under any circumstances, and he tends to give it a wide berth.

## *Vlad's House*

A newer and more modern cottage, built on some once-neglected land behind Hawthorn Cottage, Vlad's House looks a little odd alongside the quaint old-stone cottages of the other village houses. Vlad had quite a few renovations done to the cottage before his arrival, an occurrence which cause quite a stir of curiosity among the locals.

The inside of the house is mundane and pristine, aside from the odd blackout blinds that cover all the windows during the day, but opening what appears to be a cupboard under the stairs reveals a staircase down into a recently-dug out basement area. Dimly lit and smelling of earth, in the centre of this moderately-sized room is a large, ornate wooden coffin. Along the walls are boxes and shelves of various strange artefacts and treasures from Vlad's life.



# STOPPING VLAD: COLLECTING EVIDENCE

The kids need to collect 4 pieces of evidence to prove that Vlad is a vampire, and in succeeding this they will defeat Vlad and win the game. Their equipment is limited, so they'll need to get close enough to take items or get good-quality pictures and recordings. Some suggested evidence:

- ▶ A video of Vlad using his vampire powers.
- ▶ A very old painting of Vlad from the 1500s/an old journal from the 1800s with yellowed pages/a photo album from the 1900s, stolen from his house.
- ▶ Vlad's cravat, left at the scene of an attack.
- ▶ An audio or video recording of Vlad gloating about his powers and immortality.
- ▶ An adult witness or video recording of Vlad being injured by silver, sunlight, running water, garlic or something holy.
- ▶ A newspaper cutting of a story from 4 months ago, about people going missing in Twyndale. It shows a picture of Vlad with other villagers at a bake sale.
- ▶ One of Vlad's white shirts, stained with blood, stolen from his house.
- ▶ A picture of the freshly dug basement in Vlad's house, and his coffin in the centre.

## GM GOALS

Have a wonderful time playing a vampire: gloat, be evil, be self-assured, and give long speeches about how you cannot be stopped. Taunt the players, terrorise the village, stop the kids from interfering. Find fun ways for the players to action their kids, and welcome interesting ideas or plans of action.

Vlad is handsome, pale-skinned, and looks to be in his late 30. He dresses like every iteration of Dracula you can possibly imagine; frilly shirts, black-caped suits, and red neckties galore.

Vlad is in no rush to be done with the village, and plans to spend several months slowly feeding on the residents, while the deaths are blamed on an elderly population.

He enjoys loitering around, watching his prey and deciding on the most opportune moment to strike. He's very careful not to get caught, though, and usually waits until he can catch someone alone, or lure them to a secluded place (and their doom), and he's certainly not above using his charm to lure victims.

Morbidly dramatic, Vlad enjoys taunting his victims with his blatant vampireisms, especially given that adults seem not to notice any of his sinister behaviour. This makes him very arrogant and self-confident, and he is sure that no one can stop him; a presumption that will crack as the kids gather their evidence.

Once Vlad realises the kids are onto him, he'll toy with them as though the whole thing is a game, confident in the fact that no one has ever managed to put a stop to his plans before.



## the bad guy: vlad



## VAMPIRE POWERS

Vlad doesn't age, and has been alive for many hundreds of years. He has super strength and speed, can morph into a cloud of bats at will, can climb along walls and ceilings like a spider, and can bite to drain the blood from people and animals. He can be injured by sunlight, running water, silver, garlic, and anything holy, and will run away if exposed to any of these.

# MOVES



Vlad always acts in accordance with one of the below moves. He never rolls dice and his moves are always successful, making him a challenging adversary for the kids.

Moves are split into two categories: threat moves and danger moves. Vlad only ever uses threat moves at first, building to danger moves if he feels as though his identity might soon be revealed. Danger moves are always preceded by a threat move.

## *Threat Moves*

### **Mysteriously Vanish**

Vlad suddenly disappears from his current location and reappears moments later at his house.

### **Taddletale**

If Vlad has evidence that the kids are pestering him, he'll tell on them to Grommie and Grampy and then they'll get in trouble.

### **Loiter Sinisterly**

Vlad spends a lot of time hanging around and looking suspicious while he picks out his next victim.

### **Tell Fibs**

Vlad produces a lie or excuse, which adults will believe unquestioningly. To the kids, the lie is blatantly false.

### **Give Chase**

Vlad chases after someone or something, moving incredibly fast with his vampire speed.

### **Threaten**

Vlad displays an aspect of his vampire powers and threatens harm to someone or something the kids value.

### **Goad**

Vlad reveals a secret or confession, trying to tempt the kids into putting themselves in more danger.

## *Danger Moves*

### **Capture The Flag**

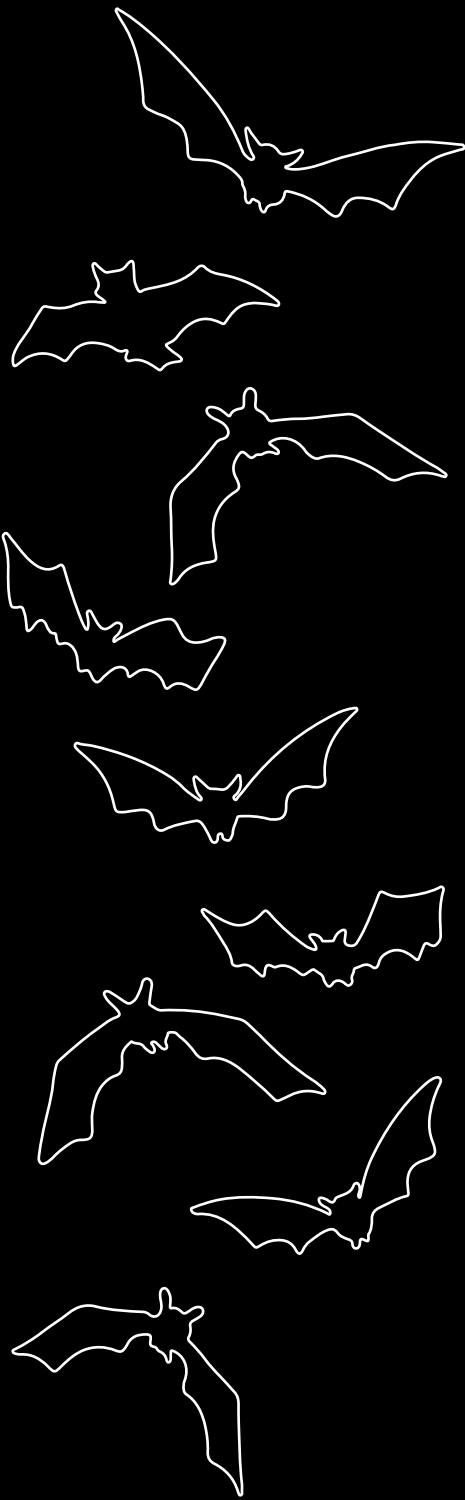
Vlad steals something or someone, and locks it away in his house. It must be retrieved.

### **Break Things**

Vlad uses his vampire powers to injure someone, or damage something, that's important to the kids.

### **Feast On The Innocent**

Vlad attacks and kills a village resident. He'll allow the kids to see him at the scene of the crime, in a moment of evil gloating.



## ENDING THE GAME

Once the four pieces of evidence have been collected, the kids can present these to Grommie and Grampy. As soon as the evidence is presented, the kids have won the game. While it will make for some great fun to have Vlad try to stop them from sharing their evidence, it should be assumed that their success is guaranteed.

As a group, work out what your victory looks like: now that the kids have indisputable proof, they might be able to rally the village residents to action, and gain the help of the vicar to get rid of Vlad. Or perhaps they can finally prove to a professional vampire hunter that they aren't trying to prank them, and actually need some help. Agree with everyone what the solution is, and how it comes about.

The GM should use this last opportunity to give a dramatic losing speech before Vlad collapses into a pile of dust, or runs off into the night, or whatever it is you've decided.





CAN YOU SAVE  
WYMTON-ON-TEE?