

Hootgoblins

In 1955 the police station of Hopkinsville, Kentucky was swarmed by members of the families that shared a farmhouse just outside of the town. They reported that the house was under attack by extra-terrestrial creatures, but a police investigation only uncovered bullet holes and shattered windows, and evidence that the families were mostly drunk at the time of the incident. The aliens reported in the story became known as the “Hopkinsville Goblins”, and became an infamous local cryptid, though there were no reported sighting since. Experts believe that a combination of alcohol, a meteor sighting, and aggressive owls led to the supposed sighting. This game is inspired by that story, told from the perspective of the owls.

Hopkinsville Goblins are owls trying to scare off a group of drunk vacationers. This game requires two to four players. There is no game master, so all players have equal control of the story. The players are a group of outlaw owls hiding from the law in an abandoned building until a group of rowdy vacationers moved into the building and forced you out. Fearing discovery by owl law, you decide that your only option is to force them out using the same grift you used back in the day: alien impersonation.

Roll a 1d8 to determine your species of owl, all of which are native to Kentucky

- 1-Great Horned Owl
- 2-Barn Owl
- 3-Eastern Screech Owl
- 4-Short Eared Owl
- 5-Barred Owl
- 6-Snowy Owl
- 7-Saw Whet Owl
- 8-Long Eared Owl

Roll a 1d6 to determine your role

- 1-Brains
- 2-Decoy
- 3-Face
- 4-Thief
- 5-Brawn
- 6-Wildcard

Roll a 1d6 to determine your special skill

- 1-Perfect natural camouflage
- 2-Flawless voice impersonation
- 3-Sick aerial stunts
- 4-Passable communication with other animals
- 5-Pyrotechnics
- 6-Sharp talons

Twice during the game you will roll a 1d6 for a complication. Roll once now (you will roll again later)

- 1-The humans are well-armed
- 2-The humans are very superstitious
- 3-The humans are shitfaced drunk
- 4-The humans have trained attack dogs
- 5-A murder of crows wants in on the job
- 6-The humans are also outlaws on the run

The game is played in a series of six scenes. Each scene can be as long or short as the players want, but each should meaningfully push the narrative of the story forward. Each scene has slightly different rules, but the rules are secondary to the storytelling you will be doing as a group. Play off each others' characters and have a fun time, and tell an interesting and funny story!

Scene 1: Inciting Incident

This scene begins with the owls going about their daily business when their routine is interrupted by the new humans. Show off how the owls are living on the run, and then have the humans' appearance throw everything into chaos! Put the first complication on display here, and end the scene when the owls have decided that they need to pull off one more job: get these humans off their territory. **There are no dice rolls in this scene**, just play up your characters and the humans and establish the stakes.

Scene 2: Planning Montage

This is the scene where you plan out the job. Try to stay in character for the montage, and use the knowledge your owls have. Play to your strengths and try to come up with the ultimate plan to fool the humans into believing aliens are real. Figure out how to scare the pants off them with the limited resources you have. **At the end of the scene, roll 2d6** (3d6 if one of the owls is the Brains). If the highest result of any of the die rolled is a 6, then you have a Good Plan. If the highest result is a 4-5, then you have a Competent Plan. If the highest result is 3 or less, then you have a Bad Plan.

Scene 3: First Contact

This is the scene where you put your plan into motion. Play out the “first contact” between the humans and your “aliens.” **Before the outcome of the scene is decided, roll.** If you have a Good Plan, roll 3d6. If you have a Competent Plan, roll 2d6. If you have a Bad Plan, roll 1d6. If the scene plays up the strengths of one of your special skills, add an extra die. If the highest result of any of the die rolled is a 6, then everything is going According to Plan. If the highest result is a 4-5, then you’re off to a Rocky Start. If the highest result is 3 or less, then things are Going Disastrously. Resolve the scene according to your result.

Scene 4: The Turn

This is the scene where things take a turn for the worse. Whether everything is going According to Plan or things are Going Disastrously, things get worse here. **At the start of the scene, roll a 1d6** and compare it to the complication table. If you roll the same as your first complication, roll again until you roll a different result. Whatever this complication is, it throws your plan off the rails and you have to improvise.

Scene 5: Finale

This is it! The success of the job lives and dies based on the results of this scene. **Before resolving how the job ends, roll.** If things are going According to plan, roll 3d6. If the job had a Rocky Start, roll 2d6. If the job is Going Disastrously, roll 1d6. If the second complication threw your plan into severe chaos, subtract 1 die. If you would roll 0 dice, instead roll twice and take the lower of the two dice. If the highest result of any of the die rolled is a 6, then the job was a Complete Success. If the highest result is a 4-5, then the job was a Success at a Cost. If the highest result is a 3 or less, then the job was a Disastrous Failure. It is up to you to determine what these mean, and act out a thrilling conclusion.

Scene 6: Aftermath

This is the scene that shows what happens after. Wrap up the owls’ story and tell what happens after the job. How do they cope with the sacrifices and mistakes they’ve made, and what is the ultimate fate of the owls after the job. If all the owls died due to a Disastrous Failure, this scene will likely be short, but you could always narrate this scene from a different perspective. **There are no dice rolls in this scene,** the die have already been cast. Say your goodbyes to your characters and resolve any lingering questions or character threads.