

*The Gentle Ladies'*  
*Tea*  
*&*  
*Monstrosity Destroying*  
*&*  
*Quilting Circle Auxiliary*



Bother the apocalypse. Bother demons. Bother failure. Bother many things.

The Gentle Ladies' Tea & Monstrosity Destroying & Quilting Circle Auxiliary is a Machine Age Production. It is a game about destroying nuisances before they ruin tea. Because no matter how wicked the end of times, there's no excuse for incivility. This is not post-apocalyptic, it is proper-apocalyptic.

You will have need of dice. Four sided, six, eight, ten, twelve, and twenty. As is traditional. Remember extras for guests! Set your center piece on the credenza and gather your dice in its stead. You will have need of some notions. Buttons, thimbles, or perhaps a helping of macaroons. One shouldn't face the forces of evil without a taste of sweetness, after all. Pencils are also quite useful!

Oh my dear! I'm so glad you could finally join us. I know Margret can be a touch, shall we say, picky about who gets these invitations, but now that you've risen to her approval, welcome! I thought as we've gotten together to craft, stitch, and destroy the blackest souls of destruction, it would only be proper as a hostess to give you every comfort. Make yourself at home, there's tea. You'll need honey, as we've no sugar cubes. Radiation does silly things to the sugar cubes, sadly.

Machine Age Productions are licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution/Share-Alike/NonCommercial license. Share it all you want. If you want to sell it, talk to us first. Pretty simple, right?

Check <http://www.creativecommons.org/> for more.



# *Just Before Lunch*

Things really have gotten quite... Difficult. Many of the horses fulminated themselves about the road. I understand that Parson Williams has stripped himself of cassock and is running naked about the part screaming of the end-times. I can see fires burning out the window of my breakfast parlor AND the dining room. It is ever so dreadful.

Well, and of course, there are the demons. Or rather, monsters for the sake of my friends amongst the Deists. It is of little matter, though, as these monstrosities are quite real and they are causing us many difficulties. I dare say I witnessed some eat Fran from just down the way. And her husband. Messengers and a wire from Aunt Miriam suggest that many of the larger cities have pits. Dubenshire has two. Talumet seems to have three. (Though I do wish they wouldn't use such a word, pit, it's very... tinny some how.)

What is a pit? A rather large chasm in the middle of the ground from which monsters birth. Nightmarish, really. I understand one erupted in the midsts of London just this morning and carriages were turned over, pedestrians were swallowed whole, and those monsters made a real muddle of things. Just awful.

## *Monsters*

There's quite an assortment of terrible things cavorting about out there now. Some of them are quite familiar from myths and even all those dreadful Gothic novels the girls read. There are a number of things I'm simply incapable of comprehending. Were I a more fragile sort, I may have fainted when I believe I saw a dragon fly south toward the village. (Actually, dear Henry swooned. He's got that way about him.)

I stopped down at the butcher, it's a good place to be when monsters are about, and witnessed a terrible thing made entirely of meat pieces. Sick and wet and lurching. I admit I hurried home, crinoline at my knees, though without a mouth or claws or even bones, I'm unsure what a meat monster could have done to me. I simply wasn't going to wait and find out.

Not every one of the pits are quite so productive. The pitch nearest to Midsummer has something very large. I daresay quite a bit bigger than my great grandmother's estate in the country. That is to say, the thing, it may be a shoulder (or part a good bit more rude) is stuck in the mouth of the pit and struggling to break through. Should be a duce rotten should the beast with so huge a shoulder (or other bit) break through into our world. Many of the pits, I hear, have similar monstrous plugs. I do hope the military sort gear up soon, and further, that there are any of us left about when they do.

Robin, you know Robin, well she used to sit with a poet at University. She told me that perhaps the monsters are simply frightened by our world. Maybe they are misunderstood creatures attempting to reach out to us but lacking any real ability to do so. Of course, that was right before something crawled into her garden and spattered her all over the gardenia. Which is no way to treat a gardenia. Or Robin. I'll admit, I was very cross about it.

All of this is to say: there are indeed monsters and they are very troublesome.

# *In the Marrow*

I think it's important that we accept the fact that we may not be holding a Cotillion this year. No, not even the ice cream social. I imagine we can keep planning for the quilting bee next Sunday, but the time would probably be better spent putting up jams and pickles. Since, you know, we're all very likely to be killed by the monsters. That sounds a touch harsh, but do keep in mind, they are very large and seem to like to eat people quite a bit.

It seems to me that we have two choices. We might carry on, as we always have, and sit in our parlors hoping for the best. We can wait for the military men and our husbands and our brothers to fight off the beasts. Or we can pick up our tools and do as wives and mothers, sisters and household servants have always done in times of tragedy: we can take things into our own hands. They can die. I've ended one myself after it ate poor Robin. It just takes a shocking amount of force.

Umbrellas. Frying pans. Hunting Rifles. Swords. We can wield these things.

# *Meat Monster*



# Taking Stage

We don't have time for full introductions, sadly, what with the end being nigh and all. Instead, simply give your Lady\* a name and a Rumor. A Rumor is something that the Lady is known for.

All ladies, are of course, exceptional people, but a Rumor is what makes them interesting. Does she bake the best pies in the whole region because she spikes them with cocaine? Is it rumored she briefly had an affair with a pirate? The Rumor doesn't have to be entirely true, but it does have to be juicy. Write your name down and your Rumor. Put "d8" next to your name. Consider putting them on little decorative place markers or folded on lovely paper birds if you've got the talent!

You will also later earn a Title of Station, but don't worry about that for the moments. In due time!

\*Your Lady can actually be a man so long as he's genteel. The End of the World is an Equal



Opportunity Employer.

## Rumors

Some examples of the sorts of rumors that might pass from gadfly to gadfly.

Not From 'Round Here

Illegitimate

Secretly Diest

Willing to Steal Pastries

Addicted to Laudanum Drunk

Obsessed with a Married Man

Descended from Witches

Sleeping with the Gardner

Went to University

Pro Union

Bootlegger

Plays for Both Teams

Willing to Do 'That Thing' to her Husband'

Willing to Do "That Thing" to Your Husband

Dance Hall Regular

Haunted

# Starting

You've gotten your Ladies gathered? Good! With your Names and Rumors written down, make sure every player has two notions to start. We're ready to get started. While I love the Brontes as much as the next Lady, these stories really ought to start in the middle. In Media Res, if you've been to University.

As with all good things in life, the start of game has a bit of protocol. There must be monsters, you must be engaged with them. If you start and start with your character being eaten, mauled, or otherwise molested by very dark things, you get an additional notion from the pool. For the ease of intercourse, we should call those notions something. Let's refer to them as Gentility.

Are you alone? I should certainly hope not, but that's entirely up to the other players. The important thing to keep in mind, you are in a great deal of trouble if you are on you're own. We're stronger in numbers. If a monster has you in jaw as an hour d'orse, and you're alone, you gone faster than a good pattee. (Or, if you have it, you can spend a point of Gentility and escape fairly well injured.)

If one of the other Ladies wants to get involved, she should step forward and say, 'I stand with you, sister' or something in that line. Then she should give an idea of how she's there and in what way she is helping. At this, you'll roll dice, a thing explained in more detail on the next page.

At this point, the players should pass play to the next until each player has their Lady involved. On another players turn you may assist her in creating an exciting scene by creating and playing the unruly, Gentry, Survivors, and of course, monsters. If you find that another player is being intolerably rude by taking up all of the spotlight, you may spend a point of Gentility to move the story along. Once that's all established, the things get troublesome.



# Rolling Dice

Things get troublesome, when a Lady, a Survivor, the unruly, or the Gentry get attacked by monsters any Lady can step up and stand with her sister. That will involve rolling dice and perhaps risking Gentility. If the Lady is successful, no one gets hurt. If she's risked Gentility and won, no one gets hurt and she receives more Gentility. If she fails, people get hurt. If she's risked Gentility and failed, everyone gets hurt. If any parties are out of Gentility when the dice fail them, they Faint. (It's presumed that you eaten and destroyed quite terribly when you Faint. But that's rather coarse, isn't it, so we say Faint instead.) A bit overwhelming? No worries. A chart follows explaining this in an orderly fashion.

Be sure to cup the dice and gently roll them onto the table cloth or put down a festive doily just for rolling dice! Mind the cordial glasses! Any roll of one, two, or three means that you have triumphed! Any roll above four, and sadly, you've lost. If a die has rolled the highest it can possibly roll, you are expected to exclaim 'Oh Fudge!' You've been fudged, and things will go very badly even if you've somehow been successful in the roll besides, but now you are going to need someone to stand with you. It is perfectly acceptable for the other players to gently chastise any play who exclaims 'Oh Fudge.'

You'll (gently) roll one to four dice. One die for you're Rumor. If you've earned one, you'll roll a die for your Title of Station. You'll also roll a die for the monster you're fighting and one die Survivor or Gentry you might be saving.

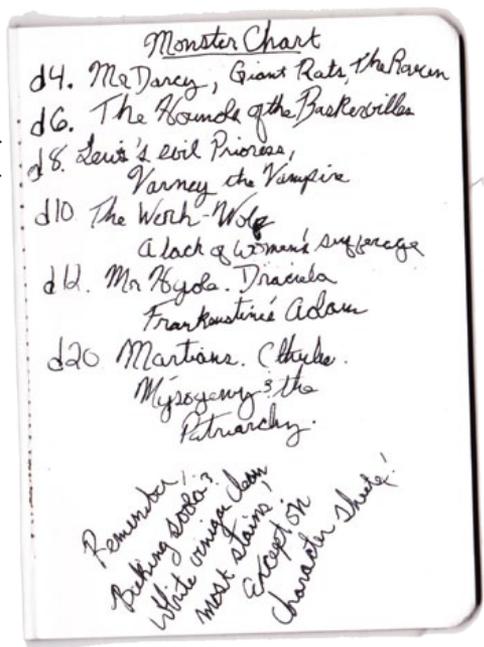
You're Rumor die should be a d8. You should note what about the truth behind your Rumor helps you in this situation. It is the fire that sparks you to get a little dirty, shall we say.

The monster die can be anything from a d4 to a d20 depending on size and scope. Chart to follow.

If you've earned a Title of Esteem, you may choose to add a d4 to the roll. Just remember, titles are a double edged sword, and rolling a 4 on that die means shouting 'Oh Fudge.'

(And of course, being fudged in the process.)

Survivors and the Gentry have dice assigned to them. You'll simply use that.



# Protocol

Here are the ordered events. (Consider creating a decorated card for those you're hosting! For fun!)

Things Get Troublesome. Who is narrating at the time introduces a monster to the story and that monster seeks to do harm to someone.

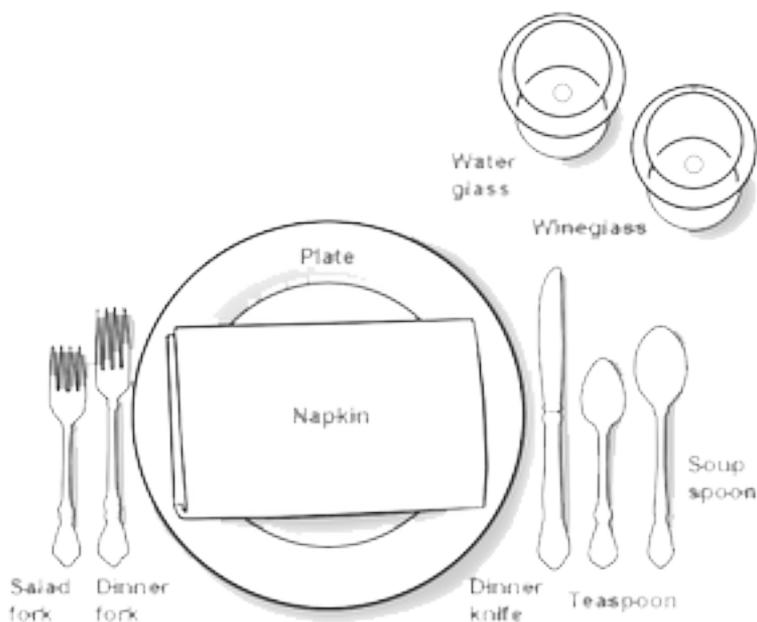
Some person steps forward to stand with whomever is in danger.

That someone rolls dice and compares it to the chart above.

According to the page previous, determine the results.

Should any of those dice come up the highest they can possibly roll, the player exclaims 'Oh Fudge!' the other players gently chastize her, and then it becomes necessary for someone to come and stand with her, as she's been fudged. The cycle returns to the start of the protocol.

Any time more than one Lady offers to stand with her sister, the one with the least Gentility is the one to stand. (If the event of a tie, the character with the most social standing goes, as to be determined by the players.)



# Survivors

Survivors are simply those who have survived. Perhaps the mail deliverer, or the Sunday School teacher or the gardener. If they become the unruly, or the Gentry, they cease to be Survivors. They do not have Gentility, sadly, and thus if things get troublesome for them, they've nothing to spend, ergo they Faint. A survivor fits nice and orderly into one of three stages.

1. The Rabble. At this point, the Survivor has no name, no rumors, they exist as just a part of faceless crowd.
2. Named Character. They've come on the scene thanks to one of the players bringing them into play and they can be used by any player to interact with the Ladies. Write their name down on a notecard. They also get a Rumor, (because no person is so unimportant in a community to live without rumors floating about them.) Also note a d12 next to their name.
3. Rising (or Falling) to the Occasion. The moment that a Survivor helps out a Lady his gentility is proven, he becomes a part of the Gentility. If he gets in the way of a Lady he proves himself to be part of the unruly mob. In either case, they earn a point of Gentility and their Rumor becomes a d10 instead of a d12.



Example: This is Jennine, she started as one of the Ladies governess. She speaks French and German beautifully. When the Lady was backed into a corner by pustulent hounds, Jennine grabbed up the fire poker and ran the hounds through. She earns a point of Gentility, we note on her notecard that she's probably sleeping with the 18 year old she's tutoring in French and put down a d10 instead of a d12.

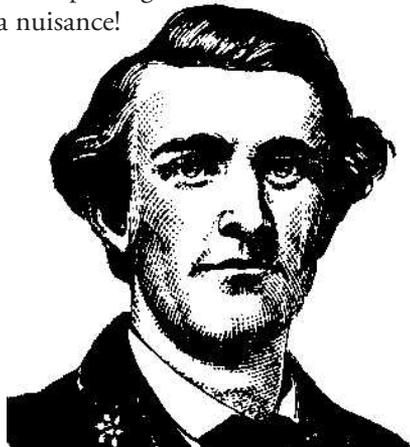
# The Gentry

As soon as a Survivor steps forward and puts herself out for a Lady, she becomes a proud member of the Gentry. In demonstrating their good graces, they gain the ability to gather Gentility just like a Lady. Furthermore, she can stand with a Lady and even earn a Title of Esteem. They're so much like Ladies, in fact, that should one of the Ladies Faint, her player may pick up any of the Gentry and continue on with her as part of the story. Should the players desire, they might even switch their Ladies out with the Gentry in a sort of troupe play. What fun! (A Lady so demoted will join the Gentry until someone elects to bring her back center stage.) For these purposes, the Gentry need not, and nearly almost never, are toffs or nobility. Generally speaking, they're people just like you and me. Upper, lower, middle class and all the shades between.

# The Unruly

Tragically, there are those who would stand in a Lady's way. We refer to these people as the unruly, as they surely cannot respect the grace and poise it takes to step up and fight evil for the sake of land and home. Tsk. They may collect Gentility, (they have it, after their own fashion.) They may earn a Title of Esteem. However, they cannot stand with a Lady. In fact, they may only make things more troublesome. If they have a Title of Esteem, roll that die instead of the monster die when determining how a troublesome situation turned out. (A truly vile member of the unruly is virtually indistinguishable from a monster, at least in my experience.)

Example: Colonel (d12) Mitchel Turner does not believe women should vote. He is agast that the lady folk of his home have taken up arms against the horrors, as he believes a poper woman should sit and wait for her husband to save her. (Even if that means she should die while waiting.) This probably has something to do with the Rumor that his wife left him for the tennis instructor. He's so put off by all this that he locked some Ladies in a basement to get them to stop being so adventurous, even though the basement has a small pit in it. What a nuisance!



# *A Lady's Responsibility*

So far this booklet has discussed the troublesome. We've talked about the unruly and the monstrosities that are making life very difficult for Ladies, their Gentry friends and those Survivors still left about. But if you think a Lady is helpless, you've got another thing coming. As my grandmama used to say, a Lady who sits on her gloves when the carriage has turned over isn't really very much of a Lady. You're going to have to step up, you're going to have to take up arms, you're going to have to be clever and above all, you're going to look wonderful doing it.

As the Americans are so found of saying, you've come a long way, baby.

As noted before, monsters have a rating. When you're doing your responsibility, you also need to make note of the monster's Propriety and Vulgarity. To do your Responsibility, you should have Gentility equal to the monster's Propriety. While the other Ladies and Gentry may stand with you, to begin, you must meet the monster's Propriety in Gentility.

To rid the world of whatever blight you're facing, you'll roll just as you would under other circumstances. (That is, Rumor, Title, Monster, and possibly other Ladies and Gentry.) Winning at this roll decreases the monster's Propriety by one. Once the monster is free of Propriety, you've destroyed it. (Monsters don't Faint, because that would be silly.)

If you fail, you're going to lose as much Gentility as the monster has Vulgarity. That level of base Vulgarity can mean a Lady may Faint thanks to it.

If you've rolled the highest number on any given die, things have gone intolerably bad, and you're going to need some help. The Lady in question has been badly injured and she's going to need someone else to stand with her. That second Lady doesn't need to spend any Gentility. However, as with the first Lady, if the second Lady fails, she'll lose Gentility equal to the monster's Vulgarity. Any good roll removes more of the monster's Propriety. A maximum die roll means the second Lady now needs someone to stand with her.

And thus it goes, around and around until either the monster is dispatched, everyone has fainted due to a lack of Gentility or no one is willing to stand with anyone else.

If a Lady has Fainted, anyone can stand with her. Anyone.

# *Titles of Esteem*

Naturally, no one starts with a Title. (Well, the toffs may in reality, but they're not likely to be the sorts of Ladies found in these stories. They have armed guards and other luxuries.) You must earn these titles in game. If you've done something noteworthy, of great poise and excellence bar none, another player may hand you a point of Gentility and bequeath you with a Title.

Write that Title down with your name and Rumor. Your Title gets a d4. It applies any time you'd like to use it.

Excelsior! You've become a Lady par excellence.



# *Beyond the Daily Concerns*

You already have everything you need to sit down with your friends and destroy monsters the way a Lady ought to. (Except maybe a good pot of tea.) Everything that follows is optional. Like a rich dessert, it's quite alright to skip it.

## *Crafting*

A clever Lady knows how to make the best of a bad situation. Any time she rolls a one, two, or three, there are enough goods around to salvage. That may be scraps of fabric for quilting, metal for weapons, or fresh fruit for making jam! Yummie! Make note of what exactly your craft is and any little home made touches you've added to make it uniquely yours. Do you add a little gelatin to your Molotov cocktails for a little added sticky fun? Do you clean that old hunting rifle with rose oil so you can enjoy a little aromatherapy while you're destroying evil? One you've worked that out, you should write it down and write d12 beside it. Add the die any time you could reasonably use your craft in a roll. (The lure of your delicious apple pie brings all the monsters in, for example.) Any time you roll successfully while using your craft, lower it's die type by one. Make note of any clever little repairs you've had to make to the item, or additional charm. Each lowering of the die type should have that new touch of Shabby Chic! Fantastic!

## *Progress!*

If you've the time and interest, you can stretch a game out to many adventures, holding on to your cast of characters as long as you want. In that case, advancement rules work as follows: Titles start at a d12 instead of a d4 and Rumors can get juicier over time.

To make progress, you'll need to keep track of the amount of Propriety your Ladies remove from offending monsters over the course of your adventures. Every time the combine Ladies have removed ten Propriety, all the Ladies get one Progress Point each. Spend a point of Progress, lower the die type on your Rumor or Title by one.

And do remember to keep track of your Gentility from game to game.

## *Let the Rumors Fly!*

It may me bold of me to suggest, but it is entirely possible that a Lady will attract more Rumors over the course of a longer run game. After all, such an active and adventurous life might get your stuffier neighbors talking. (Assuming there are any of them left.)

Anytime a Lady does something the players agree is Rumor-worthy, write it down. (Remember, the juicier the better!) It starts as a d12 and can be bought down as described above. If you have multiple Rumors, you may not use the same Rumor twice in a row. That's just dull.

# Women

(With rather insincere apologies to Mr. Rudyard Kipling.)

I went to ask my government                    --            if they would set me free,  
They gave a pardoned crook a vote,            --            but hadn't one for me;  
The men about me laughed and frowned      --            and said: "Go home, because  
We really can't be bothered                    --            when we're busy making laws."

Oh, it's women this, and women that and women have no sense,

But it's pay your taxes promptly when it comes to the expense,

It comes to the expense, my dears, it comes to the expense,

It's pay your taxes promptly when it comes to the expense.

I went into a factory                            --            to earn my daily bread:

Men said: "The home is woman's sphere." --            "I have no home," I said.

But when the men all marched to war,        --            they cried to wife and maid,

"Oh, never mind about the home,            --            but save the export trade."

For it's women this and women that, and home's the place for you,

But it's patriotic angels when there's outside work to do,

There's outside work to do, my dears, there's outside work to do,

It's patriotic angels when there's outside work to do.

We are not really senseless,                    --            and we are not angels, too,

But very human beings,                        --            human just as much as you.

It's hard upon occasions                        --            to be forceful and sublime

When you're treated as incompetents        --            three-quarters of the time.

But it's women this and women that, and woman's like a hen,

But it's do the country's work alone, when war takes off the men,

And it's women this and women that and everything you please,

But woman is observant, and be sure that woman sees.

Are Women People?

-Alice Duer Miller.

# Monsters

Know Thy Enemy, they say. If the previous chart isn't enough for you, here's a guide to even more of the monsters you'll deal with as your village fights off the end of the world. I've written down their Propriety and Vulgarity as well, as a proper hostess doesn't wait for a guest to ask. Don't hesitate to make your own as you play!

## Coleridge's Albatross

Never trust sea-based poems by Gothic poets. Coleridge's sea-birds weren't metaphor. Or rather, they aren't anymore. Now they're maggot ridden, disease laden sky-beasts that go for the throat for some reason. A good argument for avoiding decolletage.

Propriety: 1 Vulgarity: 2 Monster Die: d4



## Radcliffe's Black Penitent

Oh, surely he'll come across like the Gentry. Maybe the unruly at worst. A sour monk who wants you to confess your loathsome ways and come back into the fold. That's how he'll appear, at first, until you notice the tentacles peeking up out of his cassock. Hopefully this is before he tried to seduce you and lock you into a sepulcher. When in doubt, set him on fire.

Propriety: 2 Vulgarity: 4 Monster Die: d6

## Antis

Apparently, there are people out there, (largely men) who deeply fear the idea of women voting. Or controlling their own fertility. Or thinking for themselves. Originally this was a term for Anti-Suffragists, but I'm sure you'll indulge me and use it for the anti sort all about. When in doubt, a picket sign through the stomach works very nicely.

Propriety: 9 Vulgarity: 3 Monster Die: d12

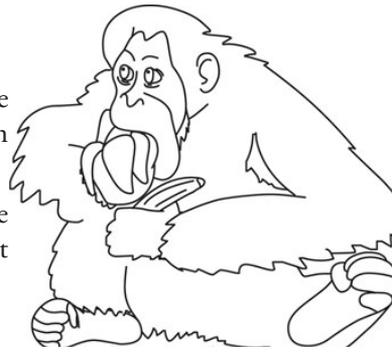


# Poe's Ourang-Outang

What's orange, just shy of six feet tall, able to brachiate at an alarming speed and occasionally strangles women in locked door mysteries?

I'm not sure either, but if you run into one in your home don't wait for Dupin, hit it with a cast iron kettle until it stops moving.

Propriety: 2 Vulgarity: 4 Monster Die: d6



# Reynolds' Necromancer

No one talks about the Danvers family. That is, not where they're likely to be overheard. Dear Musidora seemed like such a nice young lady before the end of the world. Now, she appears to be somewhat undead. Now she and the rest of Danver clan is looking to gather up other Ladies and turn them into the Lovely Undead. Chilling!

Propriety: Vulgarity: Monster Die: d4



# Le Fanu's Carmilla

Who doesn't want to have a pleasant young lady, beautiful to boot, liling about the garden? Carmilla is charming, sweet, and is quick to share a warm cup of coco just in the afternoon. It isn't even so much that she's very easy to engage with carnally, a forgivable thing between two Ladies, it's that she'll try to drink all of your blood when you sleep. Mind turned over carriages and unusually beautiful young ladies who can turn into demon-cats.

Propriety: 4 Vulgarity: 4 Monster Die: d8



# Leroux's Erik

Poor, poor Erik.

He's as tragic as he is brilliant as he is dangerous. Of course, one might be compelled to fall in love, fawn, and otherwise relent to Erik's madness. Try not to, though, because he's a completely monstrous sociopath and murder who is as likely to foster your musical career as he is to put you in a room full of mirrors and super heat you until you explode.

Propriety: 8 Vulgarity: 2 Monster Die: d10



# Shelly's Atheist Demon Zastrozzi

A demon who wants to commit people to an eternity of suffering in Hell but doesn't believe in God? If one is well bred, one tries not to pass judgment, but yeesh. Zastrozzi is mean, ugly, and bent on more than simply killing you. He also wants to commit you to the river of flames.

Propriety: 4 Vulgarity: 5 Monster Die: d6



# Wells' Martian Fighting-Machines

While they may have crawled out of a pit rather than flying in from space, they're still twenty foot tall death-machines with heat rays the likes of which can wipe out entire villages. Well, entire villages with soldiers as the resistance. I rather think we'll do better. Why? Because just like our legislators, Martian Fighting-Machines seem to underestimate Ladies. To their destruction, I rather think.

Propriety: 8 Vulgarity: 6 Monster Die: d12



# Blake's Red Dragon

It may be a manifestation of evil. It may be allegory for the Devil. It may be a giant fire breathing beast. It's probably analogous for male sexual predation. However it manifests, it's a jolly rotten thing and it's going to be a great danger to you and the rest of the village. You're going to have to stand up to it. Luckily, you're not alone.

Propriety: 10 Vulgarity: 8 Monster Die: d20

