

Short Discworld Demo Scenario – A Quiet Evening in the Green Pig

Initial Setup

This is a quick (one-hour) scenario designed to introduce players to the Discworld RPG (and to roleplaying in general if necessary), and to demonstrate a number of the game's rule mechanics. Start by checking the players' familiarity with these topics, and explain the basic idea here.

This scenario's set-up is the sort of thing that can be the basis for a low-power Discworld campaign. The PCs are the owner and staff of the **Green Pig**, a pub in Pseudopolis which is conveniently close to the recently opened Brazenneck College, and which has become a regular haunt for the students and some staff from there – which is (more or less) what its current owner planned. This has its risks, of course, but the owner is gambling on the rapid growth in naïve customers outweighing the danger of the place being blown up or burned down too often. So far, the jury is out on the success of the gamble – but that could make for an interesting campaign.

Available PCs for this game were created using templates from the rulebook, to show what can be done with them. Note that if anyone wants to play them as a different gender, that wouldn't be very difficult. They are:

- **Arkstore the Boss**, a **Merchant** with business, acting, and leadership skills and abilities and a fair amount of charisma.
- **Danny the Rabbit**, a **Fourecksian Backpacker** who's smart and something of a people person, and so is employed as a barman.
- **Sharleen "Big Sheila" Shorrocks**, a tougher **Fourecksian Backpacker** who is employed as a bouncer.
- **Michel the Mixologist**, an out-of-work **Alchemist** who works here as a cocktail specialist.
- **The Reverend Jim**, a priest of the god of wine and small things on sticks who is permitted to use the pub's snug bar as a shrine, because his congregation are often good customers, and who is therefore treated as honorary staff.

Go over the character sheets, briefly explaining each section. Also note that people are welcome to take their character sheets away with them after the game.

Background – GM Only

Boskin Drome, a janitor at Brazenneck College, has run up unfortunate levels of debt with **Big Herbert**, a local gang boss. Showing the sort of good sense that got him into this situation in the first place, he's lifted a new experimental imp-powered device from the Commercial Projects department at the College, the **"Ruffian-Scarer"**. This is supposed to be used to deter attackers, by snarling terrifyingly at people when pointed at them and activated – but of course, Boskin hasn't read the damn manual, and thinks that throwing the device at the opponent is the way to make it work. Oh well, at least he has the manual with him.

So Boskin comes into the bar, feeling twitchy but pleased with himself, with the Ruffian-Scarer in his pocket. Big Herbert's boys have determined that this is Boskin's regular local, and so **Handsome Larry**, one of Big Herbert's goons, is sent to grab Boskin for a little chat. Which is where things begin, and begin to go out of control.

Scene 1: A Quiet Evening

It's the middle of the week, and the pub has only just opened. All of the PCs are around – Arkstore is supervising the opening and seeing how the evening is set to go, and Jim is looking out for possible converts. In fact, no one is in yet – until a somewhat familiar figure sidles in, orders a beer, and sits at the bar nursing it. Recognising regulars is a routine barman's skill, so identifying him is a **Professional Skill (Barman)** roll at +4, which equate to **IQ-1** for anyone who hasn't bought the skill; this is **Boskin Drome**, who works at the College as some kind of janitor or handyman. No roll is required to pick up that he looks a bit twitchy and nervous, but not insanely so.

The PCs get a few minutes to try talking to him, which means either sitting down with him and hoping for a good reaction (roll randomly, p. 172) or trying an Influence Roll (p. 172); in the latter case, Boskin seems to be a dubious enough individual that Streetwise might work, and his effective **Will** to resist it is 8. (He's pretty pathetic.) A Good or better effective reaction allows the PC to draw him out a bit, but it will require some specific questioning to get any details of his situation (*"I've had a run of bad luck on the horses, and I needed a few dollars to cover me till payday, and, well, you know how it is sometimes..."*), and he's not going to automatically volunteer the fact that he "borrowed" something from work in case he needs to defend himself, let alone what it is.

However, before anyone can get very far with this conversation, another figure arrives at the door; a burly, bullet-headed fellow with an evil smirk on his face. He's not a regular, but **Streetwise** identifies him as **Handsome Larry**, a low-grade goon for a local gang. A Critical success on that roll tags him as an enforcer for a loan shark named **Big Herbert**. He barges through the door, and ignoring anyone else, scans the room while demanding to know if Boskin Drome is present.

Larry is so blatantly trouble that someone – probably Sharleen – is going to have to confront him; even if they hold back initially, he'll enter the bar and pick up a stool to emphasise his threats, which makes it necessary to calm him down. He's spoiling for a fight, so although he's only **Will** 9, he has +4 to resist any attempt to make him back down. He mostly relies on his fists; if he does pick up a stool in anger, it'll be to throw it.

Handsome Larry: ST 12, DX 10, IQ 9, HT 10, Basic Speed 5, Brawling-12, Intimidation-11 (+3 for the sort of displays of violence that come naturally to him).

Punch: Skill-12, 1d-1 cr.

Thrown Stool: 14 yard range, roll-7 to hit, 1d-2 cr.

Parry 9, once per turn with each hand, -3 vs. swung weapons.

HP: 12

However, as soon as Larry enters the bar, Boskin reaches into his pocket for something, and after a round or two of combat, he yells *"Don't worry, I've got this"*, and throws a small object in Larry's general direction. It bounces off a table and shatters on the floor, and then a cloud of thick black smoke boils up from the impact point. Larry pauses to stare in puzzlement, and the cloud takes a semi-humanoid shape and glares back at him. Boskin yells *"Go get him!"* and

points at Larry; then, Larry screams in terror and turns and runs; the ... creature ... sets out after him, leaving an unpleasant smell and a chilly feeling in its wake.

Scene 2: A Bad Idea

Hot Pursuit

The PCs are free to act as they choose here. If any of them step out of the bar, they'll see Larry running away as fast as he can, the monster snapping at his heels. *They could pursue themselves*, but none of them are faster than Larry, and the creature is actually chasing him to terrify him rather than catch him, so they'll all just keep going for a minute or two until the creature gets bored and turns to head back to the pub. It will mostly ignore anyone else on its route back to Boskin, but will unleash its *Terror* attack on anyone who actually tries to stop it; see below. Any random bystanders in the area will flee from the sight of it; it's clearly a supernatural threat.

Oh, and as usual, there's never a watchman around when you need one. The PCs will all automatically realise that it'll take them far too long to get official help.

In the pub, the obvious thing to do is ask the smug-looking Boskin what that thing was. He'll look even more pleased with himself as he says it was *"The latest fang in techno-wotsit self-defence stuff. I borrowed it from work."* However, any kind of further cross-examination will rapidly reveal that he has no idea what it was beyond that.

Read the Manual

If the PCs ask reasonable questions, they should eventually induce Boskin to mention that he did at least pick up the instructions along with the device. These turn out to be a thin leaflet, rendered especially crumpled by being stuffed in Boskin's pocket. On inspection, it's a rather unimpressive printed set of instructions headed **"Brazeneck Industries Ruffian-Scarer Mk.I"** With underneath *Operating Instructions Draft Version 0.5*. The instructions involve a line drawing of the device – a ceramic sphere with a glass window at the front and a button marked "Shutter Operation Button", and instructions that boil down to *"Point at miscreant and press button to operate."*

Current Affairs (Business) at +2 identifies Brazeneck Industries as a new commercial spinoff of Brazeneck College, attempting to break into the imp-powered device market with new and innovative devices and thus make the College a bit more self-supporting. Of course, they have to compete with the established operations in Ankh-Morpork's Thaumatalogical Park. Loyal citizens of Pseudopolis are permitted to boo at the mention of Ankh-Morpork.

Getting more information out of the leaflet takes a little attention, as it's terribly first draft. Apart from the basic operating instructions, everything is on the back, in dense small print. Wading through this actually requires a **Research** roll at +3; Research defaults to IQ-5, so that's IQ-2. A lot of it is patent and copyright assertions, but eventually someone should find the Product Warnings section:

"Warning: Contains a minor entity sourced ethically from the nether realms. Warranty voided if containment breached. Also, put your affairs in order and take up religion."

And a bit further down:

"Components are temperature-sensitive. Do not expose the Ruffian-Scarer to naked flames."

Scene 3: Confronting the Entity

All of which is very informative, but the PCs can only extract so much from it before the entity returns to the pub. While its initial focus is on Boskin, it's flagrantly malevolent, and the pub really doesn't need a petty demon running amok.

This thing has Basic Speed 5.5, Move 5, and attacks by locking eyes with an opponent at close quarters, which induces a **Fright Check** at -2 (p. 170). Then, it attempts to envelop victims; once it has done so, its cold aura drains them of 1 HP per turn. Being a cloud of dark vapours, it's effectively immune to physical weapons, though that also means that it can't restrain victims; they can struggle free with a DX roll, or be pulled free by friends – but the entity keeps on coming.

Fortunately, it also has weaknesses. As a nominally demonic creature, it can be held off with **True Faith**, and someone with that advantage can drive it back by walking slowly up to it, or force it to take a long way round when attacking other people. It's also highly vulnerable to fire, with just **7 HP** for this purpose. It has **High Pain Threshold**, so it doesn't worry about shock penalties, but it starts rolling every round to remain functional once its HP go negative, and is sent back to from whence it came when reduced to -7. On the other hand, if not destroyed, it recovers 1 HP every 10 seconds.

The simplest way to get a flame attack going in the current situation is probably to set fire to some of the strongest spirits in the bar. **Professional Skill (Barman)** or **Alchemy** identifies the best choice, and Michel has matches, or a **Scrounging** roll tells anyone that the lanterns on the wall could be employed (if someone gets up and grabs them). Each bottle does 1d-1 burning damage. Roll against DX to toss a dose into the same hex as the entity, missing by 1 hex in a random direction for every point of failure – or just walk up to it and drop the thing.

However, **Alchemy** would also allow Michel to improvise even better incendiary weapons from some of the more exotic mixers behind the bar. Each attempt takes 3 turns to prepare and an **Alchemy** skill roll, producing 1d+1 doses. Each does 1d+2 burning damage. Throwing these things uses the same rules as above.

Coordinating matters in this fight is also a good chance to employ **Leadership** skill, and the players are welcome to improvise as they see fit.

Scene 4: The Wrap

Hopefully, the PCs can destroy the entity, or at least send it back from whence it came. That leaves the small matter of the idiot who caused this trouble, who is still in debt to the local loan shark, and who'll now have a bunch of wizards annoyed with him. He's completely clueless; the PCs may just advise him to take a long trip out of town. Or they can turn him over to one faction or the other. The wizards may even pay off the loan shark if it gets them a voluntary experimental subject.

Also, eventually, the Watch and those wizards will show up in the pub. If there's time, the PCs can decide on a line to take with them; persuading the wizards to cover the repair costs for the barroom would be a reasonable idea – the PCs can have +3 to **Fast-Talk** if they think to point out that building malevolent petty demons into consumer products is probably a breach of product safety regulations, or will be once someone has invented such things. They resist with IQ 13.

Watch members have effective IQ 11 to see through **Acting** or other claims of innocence if the PCs decide that they don't need to know the whole truth..