

MALLEVS MALEFICARVM ^{or} HAMMER OF WITCHES ^a FIASCO PLAYSET

ABOUT SORCERY IN THE ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE

By Endwalker



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MALLEVS MALEFICARVM *or* HAMMER OF WITCHES

CREDITS

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Special thanks to Robin and Lucy for proof-reading and my gaming group whose poor Somerset accents during the first play-test brought me to tears... repeatedly.

BOILERPLATE

This playset is an accessory for the Fiasco role-playing game by Bully Pulpit Games.

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For more information about Fiasco or to download other playsets and materials, visit www.bullypulpitgames.com.

If you'd like to create your own playset or other Fiasco-related content, we'd like to help. Write us at info@bullypulpitgames.com.

THE SCORE

"Hoc est corpus meum."

The year is 1488 and the village of Prencott is ill at ease. It may be witches, it may be werewolves, or it may be nothing at all but everyone is out to blame someone, and everyone is out to cover their own arses. The fine balance between rumour and hysteria is about to topple. Mr Bramblebee is forming a mob at the tavern as we speak. Mrs. McGinty is always acting strange and Lady Braithwaite has been gathering with robed figures at the lake by moonlight. There's something prowling in the wodds and bodies have been going missing from the churchyard recently.

Heads will roll and bodies will smoulder. Don't be one of them.

MOVIE NIGHT

Blood on Satan's Claw (1970), The Devils (1971), Witchfinder General (1968),
A Field in England (2013), The Wicker Man (1972), Häxan (1922).

RELATIONSHIPS

ESOTERIC

- I. Alchemist and apprentice.
- II. Teacher and student.
- III. Master and servant.
- IV. Believer and sceptic.
- V. Apothecary and ailing customer.
- VI. Members of a secret society.

MUNDANE

- I. Parent and offspring.
- II. Simpleton and academic.
- III. Commoner and patrician.
- IV. Doctor and patient.
- V. Part of the same strange family.
- VI. Person of influence and village drunk.

RELIGIOUS

- I. Priest and congregation member.
- II. Opposed religious ideologies.
- III. Man of religion and man of science.
- IV. Undertaker and mourner of the recently deceased.
- V. Fellows at the same convent or monastery.
- VI. Discrete followers of an 'alternative' religion.

CRIMINAL

- I. Grave Robbers.
- II. Petty criminals/urchins.
- III. Scapegoat and guilty party.
- IV. Law abider and miscreant.
- V. Captor and prisoner.
- VI. The start of a riotous mob.

FRIENDS OR LOVERS

- I. Forbidden lovers.
- II. Fellow gossips.
- III. Unrequited love.
- IV. Lifelong friends up to no good.
- V. Share a dark secret.
- VI. Lovers 'til the end.

OTHER

- I. Accuser and accused.
- II. Hunter and hunted.
- III. Local and outsider.
- IV. Longstanding feud.
- V. Witchfinder and suspect.
- VI. Leader and influenced.

OBJECTS

ESOTERIC AND ARCANE

- I. A dusty tome, annotated by hand and stuffed with loose drawings and diagrams.
- II. Bloodied ritual knives bundled in leather.
- III. Tattered and dusty arcane robes.
- IV. A stuffed cat whose eyes seem follow you around the room.
- V. A bag of mushrooms which supposedly bestow powers of divination.
- VI. An ancient human skull, engraved with symbols.

MUNDANE

- I. A bag of silver crowns; forgeries.
- II. Boyle, a bloodthirsty poodle.
- II. A tamed owl.
- IV. A selection of stolen jewelry.
- V. A map of the local area with several places added to it at a later date.
- VI. Ornate, inscribed pipe and pouch of tobacco.

RELIGIOUS

- I. A printed bible with additional chapters and passages.
- II. A religious statuette with something concealed inside.
- III. A triptych depicting a scene similar to The Last Supper, only with skeletons and demons.
- IV. A finely carved wooden holy symbol.
- V. The death mask of a former priest.
- VI. A relic from a pilgrimage.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

- I. Evidence enough to put someone to death.
- II. An arrest warrant.
- III. A pair of shackles, broken open.
- IV. A list of suspects for an unknown crime.
- V. A set of torturers tools, freshly sharpened.
- VI. A heavy bundle of keys belonging to the Sheriff.

STRANGE

- I. A small locked box, contents unknown.
- II. Mummified human hand, pitch black and leathery.
- III. A selection of salves and elixirs in clay vials.
- IV. The body of some unidentified beast.
- V. A bag of mixed animal skulls.
- VI. Teeth threaded on to a length of string.

DEADLY

- I. A musket inscribed with religious verse and a bag of silver bullets.
- II. A Scottish broadsword thats seen battle many times.
- III. Instructions to make a potent poison.
- IV. An executioners axe.
- V. A disease addled pig.
- VI. Wooden stakes, a hammer and a cross.

PLACES

ESOTERIC AND ARCANE

- I. The ancient henge on the edge of the wood.
- II. The crooked house by the lake.
- III. A stone circle and altar deep in the woods.
- IV. The old burial mounds, recently disturbed.
- V. The house that serves as a gathering place.
- VI. A fire pit with the bones of animals.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

- I. The gallows at the center of the village.
- II. The impromptu dungeon in the basement of the town hall.
- III. The tall wooden stake and pyre the villagers have seen fit to construct.
- IV. The stocks next to the tavern.
- V. A barn containing a 'Wicker Man', ready to be erected.
- VI. The new ducking stool by the river.

RELIGIOUS

- I. The ruined abbey on the hill.
- II. The abandoned convent near the lake
- III. The church at the center of the village
- IV. The overgrown graveyard that used to serve the village.
- V. The funeral of a villager who died in unusual circumstances
- VI. The old rectory; no longer inhabited.

AROUND THE VILLAGE

- I. The 'Crippled Arms' tavern.
- II. The farm where the animals seem spooked.
- III. The butchers shop.
- IV. The mill where the children died.
- V. The apothecary.
- VI. The town hall and courthouse

BEYOND THE VILLAGE

- I. A secluded 2-storey folly, recently built but already in disrepair.
- II. The stagnant and eerily calm lake beyond the woods.
- III. The field where the crows gather.
- IV. The castle that's been there longer than the village.
- V. The woods where the trees grow black and leafless.
- VI. The bog where a young boy went missing.

BENEATH THE VILLAGE

- I. A natural, labyrinthine cave system.
- II. The catacombs beneath the church.
- III. The cellar of Mrs McGinty's house.
- IV. The tunnel that runs from the church to the abbey.
- V. The hidden library beneath the town hall and courthouse.
- VI. Buried in a wooden coffin.

NEEDS

1. TO UNCOVER THE TRUTH...

- I...about a newcomer to the village
- II...about the recent disappearances
- III...about the strange noises
- IV...about the nocturnal gathering at the lake
- V...about the recent murders
- VI...about the lights at the abbey

2. TO HIDE THE TRUTH...

- I...about your dark machinations.
- II...about your past.
- III...about a dark partnership.
- IV...about a place near the village.
- V...about a member of the congregation.
- VI...about the person you've been harbouring.

3. TO REVEAL THE TRUTH...

- I...about a secret you've been keeping.
- II...about a certain member of the village.
- III...about the machinations of another.
- IV...about someone who's been wrongly accused.
- V..."it's not a body in that coffin".
- VI...or your version of it.

4. TO SAVE THE TOWN...

- I...from succumbing to mass hysteria.
- II...from a hundred year old curse.
- III...from the thing at the abbey.
- IV...from the coming storm.
- V...from their sins.
- VI...from utter destruction.

5. TO SAVE YOURSELF...

- I... from being persecuted at the hands of the village.
- II...even though you're the one to blame.
- III...and get another in trouble instead.
- IV...and get as far away from the village as possible.
- V...from the spirits that haunt you.
- VI...from your dark past.

6. TO SAVE ANOTHER

- I...from travelling the most unholy of paths.
- II...from persecution at the hands of the village.
- III...from making a mistake they'll regret.
- IV...from the bad influence of another.
- V...from themselves.
- VI...from ruining everything.

THE DOWNFALL OF PRENCOTT VILLAGE INSTA SETUP

RELATIONSHIPS

FOR THREE PLAYERS...

- *Accuser and accused.*
- *Priest and congregation.*
- *Master and servant.*

FOR A FOURTH, ADD...

- *Part of the same strange family.*

FOR A FIFTH, ADD...

- *Grave Robbers*

NEEDS

FOR THREE PLAYERS...

- *To discover the truth about a newcomer to the village.*

FOR FOUR OR FIVE PLAYERS, ADD...

- *To save another from persecution at the hands of the village.*

LOCATIONS

FOR THREE OR FOUR PLAYERS...

- *The tall wooden stake and pyre the villagers have seen fit to construct.*

FOR FIVE PLAYERS, ADD...

- *The funeral of a villager who died in unusual circumstances.*

OBJECTS

FOR THREE, FOUR OR FIVE PLAYERS...

- *A dusty tome, annotated by hand and stuffed with loose drawings and diagrams*

