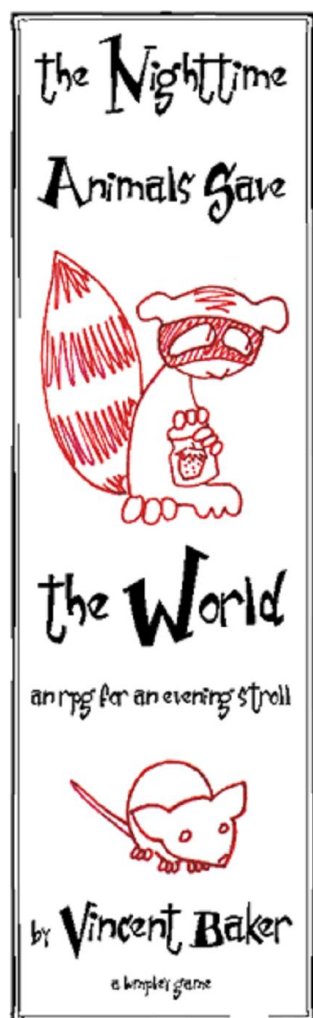


## lumpley games: the Nighttime Animals



[anyway.](#)

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Following in the bold footsteps of [Army Ants](#), [Munchkins](#), and [SqueakQuest](#), drawing from much of the same source material as [Tales from the Wood](#), with mechanics influenced by [the Valedictorian's Death](#) and [Rise Up](#) (which isn't online yet) and probably some [Shadows](#) and maybe De Profundis, unlikely as that might seem, but also [Trollbabe](#)'s influence ripples through the whole blessed hobby. Convos with Paul Czege got me thinking about danger. Plus at the Forge's birthday party, Gordon Landis said:

*And - you know how we've got some deliciously, mind-numbingly \*twisted\* games here? Le Mon Mori, kpfs, Violence Future, etc. I want each of those designers to write a contrasting game.*

So.

### **The Nighttime Animals Save the World** **Playtest Version, Short Form**

You play while you stroll of a summer's evening. The in-game events happen in the real-world setting. Like you can say "see that place in the fence back there where the lilac bushes are? There are 2 cats back there, whispering, and they give you a dirty look." You can say "I jump up onto the roof, see right there, and then onto the dormer, and can I make it onto the roof next door?" Like that.

The PCs are nighttime animals, specifically raccoons, rabbits, skunks and opossums. All of 'em can run and jump and hide and see in the dark and smell smells and stuff. Raccoons also have opposable thumbs, skunks have stink power, opossums can dangle by their tails, and rabbits can run fast and jump real high.

They save the world! Something bad's going on, like there's a sorcerous hurricane devastating the neighborhood, or somebody's making all the dogs mean instead of just friendly, curious and kinda dumb, or the cats are doing their thing about who's king of the cats and it's turning ugly and spilling over into inter-species violence. Conveniently enough, whoever's behind it is headquartered at the destination of your stroll. (Many is the world-threatening plot hatched in and around our local popcycle store or our favorite video rental place!) Only the nighttime animal PCs realize just how serious it is, and if they don't solve it, it'll be bad for everybody.

Of course they'll solve it! I mean duh.

The real suspense comes from step 2 of character creation, as you'll see:

#### **Character Creation**

1) Choose a nighttime animal to be. ("I'm a rabbit!")

2) Choose a bad feeling and say why you feel it, naming another (non-PC) nighttime animal. ("I'm scared and angry cause this mean possum hissed at me and told me to go away!")

#### **Mechanics**

Every player, including the GM, needs 3 coins. Choose from pennies,

nickels, dimes and quarters. Your 3 coins have to be different ones, like you could have a penny a nickel and a dime, or a penny a nickel and a quarter, or a penny a dime and a quarter, or a nickel a dime and a quarter (those are all the possible combos). Make sure that among all the players there's at least one of every coin.

GM and players just normally go back and forth saying what happens, with players mostly saying what their PCs do and GM saying most everything else. It's when a PC does something *dangerous* that you use the mechanics. Here's what:

1) GM says what the danger is ("the danger is that you'll jump too short and fall in the river!") and holds out a coin ("a nickel!") to show how bad the danger is. The more coin, the more bad.

2) Player holds out a coin to respond ("a dime!"). If the player's coin is less, the danger comes true. If the player's coin is more, it doesn't. The player can't respond with the same coin as the GM's: no ties allowed.

3) Either way, THEY SWAP COINS. Now the GM has the dime and the player has the nickel.

4) Note that PC failure is never mandated by the mechanics. Like if the player says "I grab the teeny gold crown from the cat and book it across the road," the GM can say "the danger is you'll get cut off by cars and have to stay on this side" or "the danger is the cat will book it after you and jump on you in the middle of the street," not really "the danger is you won't grab the crown." At least in the best world. Sometimes GMs' wits fail them and we should go easy on them, not throw fits and call them stoopy-heads and stomp our feet and refuse to be mollified even by a popcycle.

Anyway my 6yo got the strategy at once, doing dangerous exciting things and taking the complications in order to get the dimes and quarters out of my hand and into his, so he'd have them when it mattered.

Like I say, of course the PCs will save the world. The question is, how will they resolve their bad feelings toward their peers? Like Star Wars, where blowing up the death star was the backdrop for the thing between Luke and Han Solo. It's the GM's job to bring the problematic relationship into play. (Which is easy, in my experience. Just have the NPC show up and not back down and the 6yo will fully invest, let me tell ya. 6yos are ripe for this.)

Anything I've forgotten? Ultimately it'll be an illustrated pdf for sale for a couple bucks. That's the front cover over on the left there.

Please comment!