
From the Saberpunk.net

: ExampleOfPlay

Foreword

What I noted we lacked for Wushu was a fully-worked Example of Play, showing exactly how an encounter would flow from start to finish. This was relevant because Wushu doesn't work the same as many games in this regard, having distinctly separate narrative and mechanics.

Without people being able to see exactly what was meant by this, they discounted it as being no different to most other games. Which wasn't an accurate reflection of how play happens. I was also keen to demonstrate that Wushu doesn't just work for high-octane martial arts action.

Thus I sat down and wrote out a complete one, in this instance a generic fantasy scenario.

~Damian aka Kiero

Formatting Notes

For clarity Out-of-Character (OOC) dialogue is in standard text like this, *all In-Character (IC) dialogue is in italics*. All **Traits are highlighted in bold** so they can be clearly seen.

Characters

There's the GM and three players, Alice, Bob and Chris (A, B and C!). They're playing a D&D-esque fantasy game.

Alice is playing Thorgan Hearthstone, a male cleric. His Traits are as follows:

Blessed Words 5 - Inspirational speeches, cleric magic, turning undead.

Soldier of the Temple 4 - Fighting in heavy armour.

Builder 3 - Knowledge of structures and construction.

Vows and Strictures 1 - Can't use edged weapons, must pray daily.

Bob is playing Althea a female sorceress. Her Traits are as follows:

Mistress of the Mysteries 5 - Indirect magics like conjuring and enchantments

Eldritch Ass-kicking 4 - Direct combat magic.

Of Noble Stock 3 - Giving commands and expecting to be obeyed.

Powerless Without Words and Gestures 1 - Needs to be able to speak and move to use her magic.

Chris is playing Walks-in-Shadows a male ranger. His Traits are:

Secrets of the Wild 5 - Tracking, bushcraft, stealth and so on.

Skirmisher 4 - Fast-moving combat.

Uncanny Insights 3 - Seeing and perceiving things others cannot.

Taboos 1 - Collection of things he won't do, including using a sword and killing non-combatants.

The Scenario

The characters are an adventuring party who have been tasked with rescuing villagers who were kidnapped by a cult. They've tracked the cult down to a grove deep in the woods. This is the final conflict of the game.

Initial Setup

GM: *You track the cult down to a glade deep in the forest. They are assembled in a kind of service, all robed and hooded in red. Only their leader, conducting the service has his hood down. The five villagers are staked out on the ground, the sounds of their sobbing and plaintive calls for mercy carry across to where the three of you are hidden. The congregation begin a chant and something flashes in the cult leader's grasp - a sacrificial dagger!*

A: Sounds a bit like the end of *Brotherhood of the Wolf*.

C: Kind of what I was thinking too.

GM: It was the red robes, wasn't it?

B: What's the scene goals here?

GM: Alright, getting to it, there's the Cult Leader who's a Nemesis. He's using **Charismatic Speaker 5** and **Demon-summoning Magics 4** in the main. He has 4 Chi.

B: The caster is mine!

GM: The cultists are an 18-point mook Threat Rating with a Yin toll of 1. There's a Secondary Goal attached to making the captives safe, that's a 6-pointer with a Yin toll of 1 not to cause any complications that might harm them. Might add more stuff as we go, depending.

C: Let's get at them!

GM: Hang on, the dice cap for the scene is six. Now go!

Round 1 - Describe

A: *Stepping out into the glade, I draw a deep breath and proclaim: "This foul business ends here and now!"*

C: *Very cleric-y! While Thorgan draws the cultists attention towards him, Walks-in-Shadows ghosts off to one side between the trees, moving into a position on*

the group's flank.

GM: *Hooded heads turn towards Thorgan and the cult leader looks up from the captives.*

B: *Althea joins Thorgan, standing a pace behind his left shoulder, a nimbus of power playing around her hands.*

GM: *The leader shrieks out "Kill them, kill them both!". Cultists reach for weapons underneath their robes and charge at Thorgan and Althea.*

C: *The ranger nocks an arrow and snipes at the cultists left guarding the captives. He drops one and puts an arrow through the hand of a second reaching for a weapon.*

B: *Althea gestures and a lightning bolt zaps the cult leader dead.*

A: Veto! You can't take the leader out without even knocking his Chi down!

GM: She's right, you're going to have to amend that Detail.

B: Alright. *Althea gestures and a lightning bolt streaks towards the cult leader.*

GM: *A wild-eyed cultist throws himself into the path of the bolt. "Witness the power of our faith!" the leader calls out as he begins to work magic of his own.*

A: *I brace myself for the first wave of them, shield forward and hammer held aloft and still. As the first one comes at me, I parry his stroke with my shield and knee him in the groin, crushing his head with my hammer.*

B: *"Keep them off me" Althea says to Thorgan readying a counter-spell.*

A: *"I'll do my best" I say to Althea, before headbutting a cultist who tries to grapple with me.*

C: Cool image, lone fighter holding back the tides while the mage dukes it out with the cult leader.

A: *"Now lets see what this poor excuse for a sorcerer has up his sleeve." Althea adds.*

GM: Nice Pass too, dialogue earns Details just the same as description of stuff. *"There are only two of them, cut them down and nothing will stop the glory of our master coming into this world!" The cult leader says as he continues to weave his magic.* I think that's more than enough description to move on to resolving this round. Everyone at least reached the six Details if not more.

Round 1 - Resolve

GM: What are you targeting, what Traits are you using, and how are you splitting your dice?

C: I'd say mine was mostly **Skirmishing 4**, I'm going after the Secondary Goal to free the captives. I'll split my dice 4 Yang, 2 Yin.

A: I started off with some speechy stuff, but that was mostly fighting, so **Soldier of the Temple 4**, split 5 Yang and 1 Yin against the mook threat.

B: **Eldritch Ass-kicking 4** against the Nemesis, I'll go with an even split this time around. What are you using for the cult leader?

GM: There was a bit of magic, but it was mostly talky stuff, exhorting his followers and all that, so **Charismatic Speaker 5**. I'm going with a 4 Yang, 2 Yin split.

A: Let's roll then.

- clatter*

B: I got 3,3,5 on my Yang and 5,1,4 on Yin. That means two of each flavour.

GM: I rolled 1,3,6,5 for Yang and 3,6 on Yin. So 3 Yang one Yin - so Althea and the cult leader both lose a point of Chi.

A: I rolled 1,6,2,5,1 on Yang and 1 on Yin. So I got the Yin success I needed to cover the toll and cut the mook Threat Rating by my three Yang successes.

C: I got 1,3,4,3 on Yang and 1,6 on Yin. So no complications with that Yin success, and I bring the Secondary Goal down to 2 points. Nice.

GM: OK, on to the next round. Just to recap, the mook Threat Rating is now 15/1, the captive secondary goal is 2/1 and the cult leader, and Althea have lost a point of Chi.

Round 2 - Describe

GM: *More cultists join the fray against the increasingly threatened Thorgan, while a smaller number at the back turn their attentions towards the elusive threat of Walks-in-Shadows.*

B: I want to rationalise my loss of Chi. Work with me GM, here goes. *One of the cultists slips past Thorgan's diligent guard and makes for Althea, seeing an easy target. "I thought you were holding them!" She says to Thorgan.*

A: *"I'm doing the best I can!" I yell back, stoving in a cultist's chest with a solid blow.*

B: *As he raises his weapon, Althea gestures freezing him in place.*

GM: *In the heartbeat Althea's attention is off the cult leader, he strikes. Chanting a command word, shadowy tentacles rise from the ground, grasping the sorceress. Their touch burns.*

B: *They burn through Althea's outer-most layers of magical protection, but before they reach her skin she utters the counter-spell, causing them to vanish.*

A: My turn! *Two of the cultists grasp the rim of my shield, trying to wrest it from me. Calling on the name of my god, I am infused with holy might, my armour, shield, holy symbol and hammer all glowing brightly. Momentarily stunned, the cultists fall back in fear. "The wrath of the pure is upon you." I declare, smashing one down with my shining hammer.*

C: *Walks-in-Shadows fires an arrow on the move, killing another of the guards, then casts his bow aside. Running into view in the clearing, a hachet in each hand, he charges headlong into the cultists angling his way.*

GM: Cool. *"Don't let him reach the sacrifices!" The cult leader screams gesturing in the direction of the ranger. The closest of them raises a weapon to Walks-in-Shadows.*

C: *Without even breaking his stride, the ranger ducks under the blow and cuts through the cultist's spine with an axe as he passes.*

GM: *The cult leader begins to chant, something Althea recognises as a summoning spell.*

B: *Althea calls out "Walks-in-Shadows, don't let him finish that spell!"*

GM: Enough describing, lets resolve.

Round 2 - Resolve

GM: Usual drill.

A: Using my primary **Blessed Words 5** this time, mostly buffing magical stuff. On the mook threat again, split 5 Yang 1 Yin this time.

C: **Skirmishing 4**, 3 Yang on the Secondary Goal, 2 on the mook threat and one against the Yin toll.

B: **Eldritch Ass-kicking 4** on the Nemesis, 4 Yang 2 Yin.

GM: Nemesis is using **Demon-summoning Magics 4**, split even. Roll!

- clatter*

GM: I got 1,4,6 on Yang and 4,6,6 on Yin for 2 Yang and 1 Yin successes.

B: Ha! I got 5,2,4,2 on Yang and 2,2 on Yin for 3 Yang and 2 Yin. I lose nothing and the cult leader loses 2 Chi!

GM: So he's now down to 1 Chi.

A: I rolled 2,6,4,3,3 and 3, for 4 Yang and 1 Yin. Safe again and another chunk out the mook TR.

C: I got 5,3,2 on the SG, 1,4 on the mook TR and 5 on my Yin. So I lose a point of Chi, but the captives are safe and another 2 points out of the mook threat.

GM: Right, the mook TR is now 9/1, Chris gets to describe a Coup de Grace on the Secondary Goal at some point and the cult leader has only 1 point of Chi left. Soon as he goes negative, someone gets to describe a CdG on him. Now both Althea and Walks-in-Shadows have lost a point of Chi. Onwards!

Round 3 - Describe

C: I'm getting my CdG in now on the Secondary Goal. *A guard falls dead on one of the captives, his belt knife within reach of the woman's hand. She uses it to cut the rope binding that hand, then in no time has it free and cuts the rest of her bonds. The cultists are busy with the interlopers and pay them no mind and she sets to work freeing the others.*

A: *Taking advantage of the momentary respite, I shield-charge the nearest cultist, pulverising his comrade before he can react. "Now Althea, hit them before they regroup." I roar.*

B: *Wasting no time, Althea forms the words of power and points at the cowering cultists. Sparkling motes glitter in the air for a moment, then a half-dozen of them topple to the ground, unconscious.*

A: *"What, no fireball?" I jibe Althea.*

B: *"I am capable of some subtlety, you know, priest." Althea retorts. "Besides we may wish to question some of them later."*

C: *The ranger parries the lunge of a spear with one axe, then takes the face off the owner with the other. He's working his way towards the cult leader as quickly as he can through his followers.*

GM: *There's a horrible keening sound coming from a patch of ground the cult leader seems intent on. As though the fabric of reality were being painfully parted. A pentagram appears in the soil, air shimmering like a heat-mirage above it.*

C: *Walks-in-Shadows swears, he'll never make it through at this rate. Drawing his arm back, he hurls one of his axes directly for the cult leader's head.*

GM: *The axe flies true, but strikes an invisible barrier inches away from skin, dropping to the ground impotently. That'll do.*

Round 3 - Resolve

GM: Call 'em.

B: Using **Mistress of Mysteries 5** this time with some enchantment magics, on the

mooks I guess. Go with a 5/1 split.

A: More butt-kicking with **Soldier of the Temple 4**, on the mooks, split 5/1 as well.

C: Straight **Skirmishing 4** again for me, on the cult leader split 4/2.

GM: Cult leader is using **Demon-summoning Magics 4**, split 3/3. Roll 'em everyone!

- clatter*

GM: I get 3,2,3 on Yang and 2,1,2 on Yin for successes all across the board for the cult leader.

C: Mine's 4,2,3,2 on Yang, so four and 5,2 for one. That's a point of Chi each. He's on 0 I'm on 1.

GM: That means he's still in...just. Up to you if you want to rationalise that loss of Chi next round. Easy Detail.

A: I rolled 4,1,3,3,5 on Yang for all successes, but a 6 on Yin. So lose a point of Chi but take the mook TR down by 5.

B: I got 2,6,4,4,5 on Yang and 1 on Yin. So no loss of Chi and take the mook TR down another 3 points.

GM: To recap then, mook threat is a measly 1/1, Cult leader is on 0 Chi, and Althea and Walks-in-Shadows are both on 1 Chi. Only Thorgan still has a full complement of Chi.

Round 4 - Describe

GM: *The cult leader finishes his incantation and the ground shakes and thunder rolls in the sky. A...thing materialises inside the summoning circle. Black as night with three glowing yellow eyes it is roughly the shape of a big cat with row upon row of spines upon its back. New Nemesis here if anyone wasn't clear.*

A: *"By all that is holy!" I exclaim marching to face this new threat. Brandishing my holy symbol high, it gleams with a pure light as I beseech my god to banish this abomination back to the plane from whence it came.*

GM: *The summoned thing roars in pain and levels its spines, a stuttering cough sounding as a volley come zipping Thorgan's way.*

A: *I level my shield, holding it firm as spines impact against it. Others patter off my armour, but fail to find a seam. One passes right through the shield and vambrace pinning my forearm. Pulling it all the way through, I whisper a prayer of healing that closes the wound as though it were never there.*

B: *"Walks-in-Shadows, stop the summoner." Althea calls out to the ranger.*

C: *"Anyone would think she was in charge." He mutters to himself as he cuts the last of the cultists in his path down. He draws his knife to replace the axe he threw in his left hand and runs at the leader.*

GM: *The cult leader's jaw distends and he spews forth a swarm of black flies. They stream towards Walks-in-Shadows, the biting, stinging cloud enveloping him.*

C: *Walks-in-Shadows closes his eyes and mouth, holding his breath and doing his best to ignore the pain. With gritted teeth he stumbles forward, a step at a time, towards the cult leader.*

B: *Althea focuses and sends a blast of wind towards the ranger, scattering the remaining cultists still in the fight before blowing the swarm clean off Walks-in-Shadows. She follows it with a lance of flame which vapourises the swarm in a gout of dirty smoke.*

C: Neat! *Walks-in-Shadows*, now covered in livid boils, fights against the burning sensation in his skin and runs straight into the cult leader, knocking him flying with a shoulder-charge before he can form any more magics.

B: Back to the task at hand - the demon.

GM: If you're going after the demon too, I'll extend the cap for it.

B: *Drawing deep into her reserves of strength, Althea seeks to unravel the bonds that hold the demon in this world.*

GM: *Roaring in irritation, it bounds towards the sorceress, accelerating alarmingly fast.*

B: *With a swipe of her hand, Althea peppers it with conjured bolts of energy, stopping it dead in its tracks. Thorgan takes advantage of the opening to charge into its flank.*

You're alright with that, A?

A: No probs, carry on.

GM: *The demon takes a swipe at the cleric with its paws, dislodging the spines from earlier and leaving rake-marks in his shield.* Resolve!

Round 4 - Resolve

GM: The demon has 3 Chi and is using **Otherworldly Predator 5** as its only Trait. I'll split its twelve Details equally between Thorgan and Althea. Going with 4/2 on each of them.

A: I'm going all out as well, a 5/1 split to do as much harm as possible, **Blessed Words 5** again.

B: I'm putting a point against what's left of the mook threat, then splitting 3/2 against the demon. With **Eldritch Ass-kicking 4**.

C: **Skirmishing 4** split 4/2 on the cult leader.

GM: He's using **Demon-summoning Magics 4**, split 3/3. Roll!

- clatter*

B: 4 on the mook threat to finish it, 1,6,3 for two Yang on the demon and 6,2 for 1 Yin. Oh dear.

A: 5,2,2,6,6 on Yang for three successes and 3 on Yin for one.

GM: I'll do the demon first, then you C. Against Althea 5,2,5,5 for four Yang and 2,5 for 2 Yin. So takes no hits on Chi and puts her on -2! That's a Coup de Grace. On Thorgan 6,4,3,2 on Yang for 3 and 6,5 for one Yin success. So it's down to 1 and so's Thorgan.

C: For Walks-in-Shadows I rolled 2,4,6,2 for 3 Yang successes and 3,2 for two Yin.

GM: He rolls 1,3,5 for two Yang and 5,3,2 for two Yin. No further harm to Walks-in-Shadows and he puts the cult leader on -1 for a Coup de Grace.

C: My second of the fight!

B: I did all the work, though.

GM: So to round up, Althea and the cult leader are out, Coup de Graces being given. Thorgan is on 2 Chi, Walks-in-Shadows on 1 and the demon on 2.

Round 5 - Describe

GM: *With a stuttering cough the air between the demon and Althea is filled with spines. Not even her hastily-erected barrier of force can stop them all, and while most*

are stopped by her closest defenses one finds its way through to impale her gut. She falls to the ground, curling up in a ball around the projectile, clutching at it ineffectually, mouth working silently but not saying anything.

C: *Beaten but not defeated, Walks-in-Shadows walks to where the cult leader fell. The man struggles to get to his feet, hands curling into mudras of power. The ranger's axe thuds into his forearm, fizzling the spell and he screams in pain. "Have mercy!" He wails pitifully. "As you would have done these innocents?" Walks-in-Shadows says as he closes. "I think not". He adds and the cult leader gasps and looks down to see the knife through his heart.*

A: *Might as well get mine in while I can, since I'm not in this round. Seeing their leader defeated, the fight goes out of the cultists. Those still under arms throw down their weapons and drop to their knees. They cross their arms across their chests in a submissive gesture and bow their heads, awaiting their fate. They make no move to assist the demon or get involved.*

GM: *The demon turns on Thorgan, slamming into him with its full weight and knocking him to the ground.*

A: *I keep a tight grip on my shield, protecting my face and vitals while trying to bring my hammer to bear.*

C: *Picking up a spear discarded by one of the cultists, Walks-in-Shadows draws to cast and sights along it. He hurls it with all his strength at the demon.*

GM: *The spear strikes the demon in its back, eliciting an ear-splitting roar of pain. Momentarily distracted from the prey underneath it, it half-turns towards the new threat and spits spines.*

A: *Taking advantage of the lull, I swing my hammer into its shoulder, crushing bone.*

C: *Diving to the ground to avoid the spines, the ranger lands next to the body of a cultist with one of his arrows through his breast. He rolls the man over himself absorbing the worst of the missiles.*

GM: *Howling in outrage, the demon swats at Thorgan, knocking him off his feet.*

Resolve!

Round 5 - Resolve

GM: Split evenly between the two of you as before. **Otherworldly Predator 5**, split 4/2 on each.

C: I'm going all-out this time 6/0, I'll take my licks. **Skirmishing 4**.

A: Someone has to survive this one to deliver the Coup de Grace. I'm going 4/2 with **Soldier of the Temple 4**.

- clatter*

GM: On Walks-in-Shadows 5,4,1,2 for four Yang and 2,3 for two Yin. On Thorgan 6,1,4,3 for three Yang and 3,6 for 1 Yin.

C: I got 3,1,3,2,4,2 for all six Yang successes! Go me! Course even while I've put it on -2, I'm on -3 so it narrates me out.

A: I got 2,4,4,3 for four Yang and 2,6 for 1 Yin. So I'm on 0 and it takes even more pain ending on -6!

GM: Only fair then that Thorgan gets the Coup de Grace here.

Round 6 - Closure

GM: *Walks-in-Shadows feels a sharp pain in his left leg and as he tries to get up can't move it. Several spines have passed through his lower leg, pinning it to the ground. He feels dizzy and nearly vomits trying to pull one out and slumps back to the ground in his own world of pain.*

A: *As I get back to my feet, I prepare to receive the demon. At the last possible moment, I sidestep, bringing my hammer down with sickening force on its skull. Like a poleaxed bull it drops dead right there, dissolving into smoke and then blowing away.*

GM: *The villagers emerge from their hiding places and look nervously on their rescuers, all in a bad way.*

A: *"You're safe now, we will lead you back to your homes. But first I must tend to my companions." I say.*

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