

VERY LARGE MONSTERS

Written by Mark Diaz Truman • Edited by John Adamus • Layout by Fred Hicks

The following is an official FATE CORE rules supplement, created for Michael Cambata as part of a FATE CORE Kickstarter commission. It deals with Very Large Monsters (VLMs) and the organizations that try to counteract them.

VERY LARGE MONSTERS (VLMS)

They are mighty. They are unstoppable. They are the nightmares of humanity's darkest dreams. They are ... VERY LARGE MONSTERS.

From Godzilla to the Cloverfield monster, thousands of stories have been told of the few, brave souls willing to stand against giant monsters. Your Fate group can now join the legends, as they work to stop these giant beasts from devouring the countryside and burninating the peasants.

MONSTERS AS ZONES

For very large monsters (VLM), treat the monster itself as a map with several zones. In order to defeat the monster, the characters may need to defeat each zone independently, while navigating the obstacles between the zones, or may need to target one zone with a particular plan (like closing a portal or activating a device).

By statting up the monster in pieces, you split up the players and give the monster a number of extra actions—one per zone—to convey the size of the foe. These additional actions can be used to target multiple players, keeping everyone involved with the same giant creature without limiting the creature to a single action.

The Elder Dragon of Ormulto is a VLM. He's so large that he has four (4) separate zones: two claws, head, and tail. When the players try to keep him from destroying an apartment building, they will need to deal enough stress to his head to bring him down. However, if they don't do anything about his claws or tail, he will quickly rain destruction down upon the people the heroes are trying to protect. They will have to split up among the zones to keep him in check.

VLMs can mechanically convey the effects of their attacks by creating advantages, such as PANICKED CROWDS or FALLING BUILDINGS and then compelling the heroes using the free invokes created by the rolls.

STATE CHANGE STUNTS

In addition to the size and reach of VLMs, you can also create special stunts that help to convey the theme and style of the monster. Many of these are **state changes**, stunts that fundamentally alter the monster, change the nature of the fight, or affect the entire zone. Many of these state changes can actually make the VLM hard to defeat, prompting the PCs to return to their organization to figure out a plan.

A few potential state changes for the Elder Dragon of Ormulto include:

Dragonflight: *The Dragon has massive wings; he may spend a fate point to change the arrangement of his zones or exit a conflict at any time without conceding the conflict.*

Dragonblood: *Ormulto's blood is acidic and deadly to those who would wound him. Ormulto can spend a fate point to inflict stress on an attacker equal to the stress that attacker inflicted upon him.*

Fiery Breath: *The Dragon can spend a fate point use his fiery breath to attack all the characters present in the zonewhere his head is located.*

In order to mark the importance of the intermediary steps needed to defeat a gigantic monster—such as destroying a part of it or closing a portal from which it draws strength—VLMs may have a state change tied to their partial defeat.

*Since his claws and tail are much weaker than his head, the Elder Dragon of Ormulto has a state change tied to the destruction of those zones on the map called **Breath of Vengeance**.*

Breath of Vengeance: *If the players destroy one of his appendages, the Dragon deals two stress to each character on the map, regardless of zone, and adds the situational aspect _____ IS ON FIRE! where _____ is an important building, asset, or person near the fight.*

VLM WEAKNESSES

Finally, VLMs usually have weaknesses, vulnerabilities that make them easier to defeat once the PCs have discovered the VLM's secrets. Sometimes these weaknesses can be obvious (a water elemental's weakness to fire) or mythic (a werewolf's weakness to silver), but they can also be a major source of plot, as the PCs scramble to research the creature and expose the weaknesses they need to defeat it before it strikes again.

There are two kinds of weaknesses that creatures can use: lesser weaknesses and greater weaknesses. A lesser weakness is something small—a kind of weapon that works well or a fear the creature has—and a greater weakness is something large—a deep secret that may kill the creature quickly. Sometimes the offspring or minions of a VLM may have a lesser weakness that mimics the VLM's greater weakness.

Weaknesses carry major advantages for creatures, allowing them to make use of their stunts without spending as many fate points. Possessing a lesser weakness allows the VLM to spend one fate point to activate a stunt multiple times in a scene, while having a greater weakness allows the VLM to activate the stunt for free at all times. Owning a greater weakness, for example, can essentially make a monster invulnerable by allowing them to use a regenerative stunt for free.

When the PCs exploit a lesser weakness, the VLM must once again pay for the stunt; when they exploit a greater weakness, the VLM loses the stunt completely. Either way, the PCs knowledge exploits the weakness in such a way that it makes the VLM vulnerable.

Potential weaknesses for Ormulto include:

Vulnerability to Silver: *The Dragon's wings are vulnerable to weapons made of pure silver. (Greater Weakness attached to Dragonflight)*

Weak Eyes: *The Dragon's eyes are especially vulnerable to targeted attacks. (Lesser Weakness attached to Fiery Breath)*

Weaknesses help pace the action by making the VLM seem indestructible during an early encounter and then significantly weakening the VLM once the PCs have had time to discover and prepare for the VLM's secret.

ANTI-MONSTER ORGANIZATIONS

While VLMs threaten humanity, there are organizations that stand in their way, protecting the world from giant monsters wherever they arise. Whether they are secret organizations that work for shadowy governments or public defenders of humanity, these anti-VLM organizations are our last, best hope!

To represent the abilities of an anti-VLM organization, treat the organization itself as an Extra (see “Extras” in FATE CORE) with aspects, approaches, stunts, and a stress track with several consequence slots. These can emerge during play as the characters interact with the organization, or your group can take a few minutes at the start of play to define the group and how it accomplishes its goals.

ORGANIZATION ASPECTS

Anti-VLM organizations start with high concept and trouble aspects.

The high concept should describe how the organization is funded or kept together—*Secret Cabal of the Vatican* or *Scrappy Techno Teenage Wizkids*—while the trouble should reveal what kind of threats the organization faces while it pursues the work of saving the world from VLMs—*Harried by the Forces of Darkness* or *Always Out of Cash*. During the game, these Aspects can be invoked or compelled as if they belonged to every character affiliated with the organization.

ORGANIZATION APPROACHES

Unlike characters, organizations don't have Skills to use on a particular problem. Instead, organizations have Approaches, a tool from the Fate Accelerated Edition (FAE) that describes the effectiveness of the organization by the style of the action the organization is trying to accomplish. For example, an organization calling in a military strike on a target might roll using their Military approach to represent their internal military resources or using their Political approach to place pressure on the government to handle the strike using national security forces.

THE SIX APPROACHES

Organizations have six approaches, each with a rating from -1 to +3. At the start of play, the players should allocate six starting scores (-1, +0, +1, +1, +2, +3) to the six approaches, representing the strengths and weaknesses of the organization. For example, an organization funded by rich and powerful backers but lacking strong scientific resources would choose Good Financial (+3) and Poor Scientific (-1).

- **Covert** – Roll Covert whenever the organization attempts to accomplish an objective through tricky or stealthy means, such as utilizing secret special forces or hidden social maneuverings.
- **Financial** – Roll Financial whenever the organization tries to solve problems by throwing money at them, especially when the organization is applying financial pressure by buying up resources or offering bribes.
- **Military** – Roll Military whenever the organization calls upon internal forces to accomplish a military objective, such as striking out at a target or protecting a resource from threats.
- **Political** – Roll Political whenever the organization leans on political allies and contacts to accomplish an objective, such as impeding or encouraging the success of political candidates or bypassing governmental obstacles.
- **Scientific** – Roll Scientific whenever the organization attempts to solve problems by applying scientific resources, such as investigating the scientific origins of the problem or attempting to prototype an experimental device.
- **Supernatural** – Roll Supernatural whenever the organization attempts to utilize supernatural resources, such as ancient tomes of hidden knowledge or powerful magical rituals.

ORGANIZATION ACTIONS

While people within the organization can always take individual actions, it's possible for the organization to mobilize large resources to accomplish much larger tasks. A single hacker might be able to bring down a computer system for a few hours, but an organization of hackers can shut down the whole network infrastructure of a country. In short, organizations can leverage scale to accomplish objectives that no single character could accomplish.

- **Overcome** – Organizations can roll to overcome problems at an enormous scale, launching rescue operations, uncovering secret information, or banishing demons. *Note:* This should only be used for problems that the organization knows how to solve, not for problems that require the PCs to intervene and explore further.
- **Create Advantage** – Organizations can also create advantages for the PCs to use in upcoming scenes. If an organization is going to buy equipment, build new weapon prototypes, or discover crucial information to aid the PCs, use this roll.
- **Attack** – Organizations can use this roll to launch attacks on other organizations.
- **Defend** – Organizations can defend against attacks using this roll, as long as the defense is supported by the fiction of the story.

ORGANIZATION STUNTS

Organization stunts are exactly like personal stunts, but allow the organization to do something new or unexpected. Feel free to steal from stunts in the Fate Core book, as many of them can be adapted to the organization-level context.

ORGANIZATION STRESS

Organizations don't suffer mental or physical stress, as they aren't individual characters that can be physically killed. History is filled with the tales of revolutions (or religions) that lived on long past the death of a founder or the destruction of a physical location. Yet some organizations do get stomped out or absorbed by rival organizations that focus political, financial, or legal attacks on their enemies.

To represent the effects of these actions, organizations have a stress track and consequences that can absorb the stress generated by organizational level attacks. Organization stress, however, does not clear until the PCs reach a Significant milestone, and the consequences the organization suffers do not resolve until the organization has made a successful overcome roll and the PCs have reached a Major milestone.

If an organization is taken out in a conflict—attacked by another organization and unable to absorb the stress—the organization fragments and breaks up. This doesn't mean the organization disappears; the people who used to work there still have crucial information and resources the PCs can use, even if they are no longer part of an organization. Perhaps the PCs even need to put the organization back together to really face the threats of the day.

ORGANIZATION ADVANCEMENT

Whenever the PCs reach a Significant milestone, they may:

- Swap any two organization approaches that are next to each other in the ladder (i.e. Good/Great or Average/Fair)
- Swap any existing organization stunt for a new stunt.
- Clear the organization's stress track

Whenever the PCs reach a Major Milestone, they can choose one of the following:

- Add +1 to any organization approach.
- Take a new organization stunt.
- Remove any organization consequences that are in recovery.

EXAMPLE ORGANIZATION

DEPARTMENT OF PARANORMAL DEFENSE & SECURITY (DPDS)

ASPECTS

High Concept: Secret US Department of Paranormal Defense

Trouble: Opposed by the Fourth Reich Alliance Movement (FRAM)

APPROACHES

Average **Covert** (+1)

Poor **Financial** (-1)

Mediocre **Military** (+0)

Average **Political** (+1)

Fair **Scientific** (+2)

Good **Supernatural** (+3)

STUNTS

Digging Through the Files: When the DPDS creates an advantage on a VLM associated with Nazi research, it gains two free invokes instead of one on a success. If the roll succeeds with style, it gains an additional boost on top of the two free invocations.

ORGANIZATION STRESS

CONSEQUENCES

Mild (2):

Moderate (4):