

The Millers' Children

by Donna Giltrap

The Millers' children is a scenario for "Little Fears". The scenario works best with the four pre-generated characters included. Krystal may be dropped from the scenario if only three players are available. Additional players could be accommodated by generating some extra characters to be friends staying over at the Miller house.

The Player Characters

Robbie Miller An 11 year old boy. Robbie is the oldest of the Miller children. Robbie is rebellious and gets into trouble at school. He has recently been suspended from school for smoking.

Carol Miller A 9 year old girl. Carol is the middle child and only daughter of the Millers.

Jamie Miller Jamie is a 7 year old boy and is the youngest of the Miller children. He is very fond of the family dog Muppet who he believes talks to him.

Krystal Frost A girl from Carol's class who has been invited to a sleep-over for Carol's birthday. Krystal doesn't really like Carol but has been faking friendship as she has a crush on Carol's older brother Robbie.

Muppet(NPC) Muppet is a small terrier and a family pet of the Millers. What the children don't know is that Muppet is actually their father Richard Miller who has been magically transformed. Muppet tries to protect the children as far as he is able to in his current form. The children may be able to actually talk to Muppet if they make a successful Belief roll.

Addition Rule: If two children of different ages fight (or otherwise try to directly oppose one another), the older of the two children gets to roll an additional d6 and pick the best result.

Background

Robbie, Carol and Jamie are the children of Richard and Allyson Miller. Prior to her marriage Allyson Blackford had been an adept witch. She thought that her marriage to Richard Miller, a promising young executive, would secure her wealth. However, she discovered to her dismay that her husband was not nearly as ambitious as she was. One day he turned down a promotion because he wanted to be able to spend time with his children. Allyson was furious. She cast a spell on him that turned him into a small terrier. She then presented him to the children as a pet, telling them that their father had died in an accident.

That was almost seven years ago. Allyson was eventually able to convince the insurance companies to pay out Richard's life insurance, which was sufficient to keep the family financially comfortable. However, she began to chafe at the role of solo mother. She felt that the children were cramping her style. The final straw was when she met a single millionaire that she knew she'd be able to ensnare if only she was unencumbered. Using her occult knowledge she made a deal with a dark creature known as Oberon, the Elf King. In exchange for enchanting the millionaire to fall in love with her she offered the Elf King her three children. Oberon gave her a silver charm bracelet as a token of her pledge. At midnight on the eve of the equinox Allyson will receive a proposal of marriage and the Elf King will take her children forever.

Running the Scenario

The scenario starts when Allyson Miller leaves for her date with millionaire Todd Carruthers. The three children are left at home with \$20 to buy pizza for dinner. It is Carol Miller's birthday (which her mother has ignored). Carol has invited her friend from school, Krystal Frost, to come over for a sleep-over. Krystal arrives shortly after Allyson Miller leaves. Give the players some time to roleplay the children organising dinner and amusing themselves.

As the evening progresses the house will be magically transported to the Realm of Oberon. The Realm Oberon has created is extremely beautiful, but unfortunately it will fade away without regular infusions of innocent blood. The Elf King will send his goblins to fetch the children and bring them to the place of sacrifice.

The following timeline gives a suggested order of events. The exact timing of events will depend upon the actions of the players and may be altered as necessary for the pacing of the game.

7:30 pm Allyson Miller leaves the children at home while she goes on a date with her new boyfriend. She leaves them money to buy pizza for dinner.

Around 8. Carol's friend Krystal shows up. Carol invited Krystal to stay over, Allyson Miller is not aware of this. Start the game at this point. Give the players some time to get involved with mundane interaction - e.g. ordering pizza, squabbling over what to do, maybe Muppet makes a pest of himself by trying to beg for pizza etc. etc.

9:30 pm Muppet starts barking like crazy. If anyone investigates they notice a ring of black cats marching around the house. Any attempts to stop the cats will be ultimately futile as there are always more to step into the gap. After about ten minutes a thick fog rolls around the house. [This transports the house into the realm of the Elf King]. There is a power cut [as electricity cannot reach the house in the Elf King's realm]. If anyone attempts to use the phone at this point it will appear to work. However, this will simply be a prank played by some mischievous goblins (see *Calling for Help* section in Spooky Events).

10 pm The mist clears making it obvious to anyone who looks that the house is no longer in the real world. The realm of the Elf King has an eerie beauty. There is a forest up to the door, with a winding path leading off into the distance. Three full moons (one golden, one silver and one copper) hang in the sky. The land has the air of beauty just beginning to fade, the leaves on the trees are brilliant autumn colours. If the children go outside refer to the "Into the Fairy Realm" section. Otherwise run encounters from the "Spooky Events" section.

11:30pm If the children have not already left the house then the goblins attempt to catch them and bring them to the Elf King for the sacrifice at midnight.

Midnight. Time of the sacrifice. If the children have not yet found a way to reverse the compact then they will be sacrificed by the Elf King to restore his kingdom. Should they manage to avoid being sacrificed then the compact is still considered broken and the house returns to reality. In this event the Elf King would consider himself cheated and would place a curse upon Allyson Miller.

The House

For the most part the Millers' house is a typical middle-class suburban home. Most of the rooms will contain furnishings typical of a family home. The two exceptions are the master bedroom and the basement. These rooms are described below.

The Master Bedroom

This is Allyson Miller's room. The children are not allowed to enter but the door is not locked. The furnishings consist of a queen sized bed and a large dresser with mirror. The bed will be strewn with clothes that Allyson considered wearing for her date then discarded. Stuck to the mirror is a newspaper clipping showing a man in his 30s with the caption "Todd Carruthers, 36, heir to the Carruthers' family fortune has an estimated net worth of 40 million dollars." Jamie will need to make a smarts quiz to read this, the older children will have no difficulty. Todd Carruthers is Allyson's date this evening. She expects to receive a marriage proposal tonight as part of her bargain with the Elf King.

There is normally a jewellery box on top of Allyson's dresser that is currently missing. (Again on a smarts quiz one of the Miller children may notice this. Krystal will not notice as she has never seen inside Allyson Miller's room before). [Allyson has moved the jewellery box to the basement]. The top drawer of the dresser contains two keys. The larger opens the basement door, the smaller opens the jewellery box.

The Basement [Door Locked]

The Basement is where Allyson performs her witchcraft. The room is at best dimly lit. All around the room there are benches cluttered with magical paraphernalia. Bunches of dried herbs, mummified lizards hang from the ceiling. Anyone who looks too hard will see something disturbing (for example, a jar of pickled eyeballs) and will have to make a Spirit quiz or run away in fear.

On the floor some strange symbols have been painted in silver paint. One of the benches has several books stacked upon it. The children may try to read these to find out what magic Allyson has been working on recently. For every 20 minutes a child spends studying a book they may make a Smarts quiz to see if they understood anything (the books are very difficult to read). Jamie must make a *difficult* quiz, Krystal and Carol a normal quiz and Robbie only requires an *easy* quiz. For each quiz passed make a roll on the table below to find out what information is learned.

Also on the table is Allyson's jewellery box. The box is locked but can either be smashed open or opened with the key from the master bedroom. Inside is a silver charm bracelet. This bracelet symbolises the compact between Allyson Miller and the Elf King. If it is destroyed (completely - damaging it slightly isn't enough) or returned to the Elf King before midnight then the compact is voided. The bracelet has three charms hanging off it. These charms are incredibly realistic renderings of Jamie, Carol and Robbie Miller. The Jamie charm is hanging from a rope, the Carol charm has a dagger protruding from her chest and the Robbie charm has an axe buried in his skull. Any child who looks at the charm bracelet must make a Spirit quiz or suffer the effects of a failed fear check (see LF pg 39). Krystal needs only to pass an *Easy* Spirit quiz as she is not depicted on the charm bracelet.

Clues from the Magic Books

1. The most pure form of sacrifice is a newly-born babe, but the souls of children are almost as potent. An animal sacrifice is often sufficient and sometimes only a few drops of blood are required.
2. It is sometimes possible to make a pact with the fairy folk in return for magical favours. The fairy drive hard bargains but will always keep their word once it is given.
3. The fairies usually give some token to a mortal with whom they make a bargain. If the token is ever returned then the bargain is considered null and void.
4. The fairies can create illusions and manipulate emotions but true creation is beyond them.
5. The Fairy King Oberon created a wonderous realm, but he requires regular sacrifices of human souls to keep his realm from unravelling.
6. Oberon's realm is remarkable for its three moons: Aurius, Argenta and Cupra.
7. Oberon and Titania once ruled as Fairy King and Queen before the fall of Arcadia.
8. After the fall of Arcadia, Titania became a Duke of Hell.
9. A book falls open at a page describing a spell of transformation that can change a person into an animal. There are some old stains on this page. [Note that this spell requires months of preparation and so the children won't be able to cast it tonight]
10. You notice a spell called "Invocation of Oberon". Someone has scribbled notes on the page. [The Miller children will recognise their mother's handwriting. Again this spell requires preparation and cannot be performed in a single night].

Spooky Events

After the ritual at 9:30 the Millers' house is transported into Oberon's realm. This has the effect of causing a power cut as the electricity cannot cross into Oberon's realm.

Several goblins arrive to collect the children for the midnight sacrifice. However, time is not short so the goblins are free to have a bit of fun with the children first. Below are some suggested events. These may need to be tailored to fit circumstances. Should the children still be in the house as midnight approaches then the goblins will set fire to the house and herd the children towards the Standing Stones where the sacrifice is to occur (proceed to "Sacrifice at Midnight"). If the children decide to explore outside the house go to the "Into the Fairy Realm" section. Any children who are captured by the goblins will appear tied up to a rock when the others arrive at "Sacrifice at Midnight".

Calling for help

The telephone is no longer connected to the outside world but a couple of goblins beneath the house have decided to have some fun (note that there will be no cell phone coverage). By touching the telephone cable they are able to hold a conversation with anyone attempting to use the phone. They are excellent mimics and will even make convincing dial tone sounds. Whoever the children decide to phone the conversation will initially seem convincing. However the goblins can't read minds so if the children phone someone they know (such as their parents) then the goblins will be forced to bluff. The goblins want to hear about the children's suffering so initially the conversation will be sympathetic but it will eventually get bizarre ("Has anyone chopped your legs off?", "Would it make you cry if they did?"). Eventually the goblins will not be able to control themselves and will burst into a fit of giggles. [Alternatively this could be adapted by having the goblins make the phone ring and say that they are the police making sure that everyone is all right].

Horrors Under the Bed

Anyone who attempts to sleep hears voices under the bed just as they are about to drift off.

"Is he/she asleep yet?"

"No, shh, he/she's still awake"

"I can't wait any longer, I'm hungry."

"Idiot, we're not going to eat them. The King needs them alive."

"What about just an eye? They've got two, they don't need them both. I like the way they go pop in your mouth."

This should bring any child wide awake. If necessary they can feel clammy fingertips brushing against their face. [Spirit quiz]. The child can attempt faith magic to keep the monsters at bay. Otherwise the two goblins under the bed will attempt to grab the child and stuff them into a sack. A successful Feet quiz will get the child away from the goblins, otherwise they will have to make a successful Muscle quiz to keep from being stuck in the sack. The goblins will run away if outnumbered, seriously hurt or faced with bright light.

The Mirror Beast

This encounter occurs near a mirror. There are suitable mirrors in the bathroom, the master bedroom and inside the wardrobe doors in the children's bedroom. A goblin is hiding inside the mirror and is using its powers of illusion to manipulate the image seen in the mirror. Any child looking in the mirror sees something in the shadows behind them reaching out menacingly. The goblin in the mirror will then attempt to seize the child when they look behind them (automatically successful if the player announces that they are turning around). The goblin then tries to drag the child back

through the mirror. The child must make a successful Muscle quiz to avoid this fate. Any children dragged through the mirror will appear bound to one of the standing stones in the "Sacrifice at Midnight" scene.

The Unicorn

A child who looks outside sees a beautiful white unicorn. The unicorn looks mournfully at the child then heads off down the path through the forest. If the child follows the Unicorn leads them along the path. Eventually the unicorn stumbles and collapses. As the child(ren) approach the unicorn's body slowly dissipates.

[Explanation: The Unicorn is one of Oberon's creations. Its death is a symptom of the realm's weakening. Oberon needs to make a sacrifice soon to rejuvenate the land] From this point on run "Into the Faerie Realm".

Other Stuff

Assume that there are about a dozen goblins running about the Miller household. Even if the children manage to defeat them all more will arrive in time to escort the children to the sacrifice. The goblins are sneaky and have the ability to hide almost anywhere. They can also create illusions that can fool all senses. They shy away from bright light (although they can overcome this if it is absolutely necessary to obtain the sacrifices). Their ultimate goal is to split the children up and abduct them one by one. They also like to have some fun if there's time to spare. They have strict orders not to harm any of the children before the sacrifice.

Into the Fairy Realm

If the children leave the house they will find themselves in Oberon's realm rather than the street where the house usually resides. A primordial forest surrounds the house, except for a winding dirt path from the front door. The leaves on the trees have turned autumn colours and everything has an aura of aging majesty. High in the sky are three large moons - one golden, one silver and one copper.

Once the children start exploring they will eventually come to the Standing Stones that are the site of Oberon's planned sacrifice. This is regardless of which direction they travel in as the geography of the Fairy Realm is fluid and Oberon is the ultimate master of the realm.

The Crystal Spider

Have the children make a Smarts quiz. If successful they notice a large spider web across the path. Those who don't notice will wander straight into the web (unless the others shout a warning). Anyone caught in the web can break free with a successful Muscle quiz, however, their struggles will attract the web's builder. The web was built by a large (5-foot diameter) crystalline spider. This spider is almost invisible when it is stationary but when it moves the moonlight reflects from its surface in a multi-coloured rainbow. It will attempt to bite the children starting with those not trapped. Its bite does no damage but puts the victim to sleep (a child may struggle against the poison's effect by making a Spirit quiz every round to stay awake). A child can escape the spider by running into the forest if they make a successful Feet quiz.

If all the children are bitten then just as the last child is about to pass out they see a hunting party of mounted Fairies approaching. One of the Fairies looses an arrow which hits the spider shattering it.

Any children captured by the spider (and not rescued by their friends) will appear bound to the standing stones in the "Sacrifice at Midnight" scene.

Sacrifice at Midnight

Any children who have not yet been captured will eventually arrive in a large clearing. Three large standing stones are in the centre of the clearing. Each stone has a hole through the middle. The diameter of the hole is just large enough to accommodate a prone body.

Any children who were captured have been tied up and positioned inside one of the holes with only their head protruding from the stone. If all four children were captured then the last one will not be in a stone, but instead lying loosely bound on the ground (a Hands quiz will allow this child to free themselves).

Gathered around the clearing are members of Oberon's court. This will include Fairy nobles, goblins, imps, trolls and other unusual creatures. Oberon himself is an imposing figure wearing an oaken crown.

Oberon's initial approach will be to talk to any free children. He considers that he is already entitled to three of the children due to his bargain with Allyson Miller. However, the fourth child is an unexpected bonus. While he only needs to sacrifice three children tonight an extra child is something he can either save for later or trade with other supernatural creatures. The catch is that he must get the fourth child to agree to stay with him of their own free will or at midnight they will be transported back to the real world. This is a potential way that the children could save themselves as Oberon is bound to keep any promises he makes. He will not knowingly give up his sacrifices though.

If Muppet is with the children then Oberon will be able to sense his true nature. The fact that Muppet is actually a human does mean that he would make an acceptable (although less desirable) substitute sacrifice. Oberon might drop some hints about Muppet's true nature if he thinks that he can use this to manipulate the children.

The best weapon the children have against Oberon is the charm bracelet. If Oberon so much as touches the bracelet it is deemed to have been returned, breaking the original compact with Allyson. This means that Oberon no longer has the right to sacrifice the children. Again he might try trickery, but he has pretty much lost the battle by this point. Of course Oberon will not knowingly or willingly accept the bracelet.

If things turn violent there are Fairy archers with arrows that induce paralysis. They will attempt to hunt down any escaping children. The children don't have much chance of escaping a Fairy hunt but if they are extremely lucky they might make it.

If the children haven't escaped by midnight then the sacrifice will proceed. Three Fairies with ornate poleaxes will approach the stones where the children are bound. At the stroke of midnight they swing their poleaxes and decapitate the children. As their blood spills on the ground the land is revitalised and beautiful flowers burst into bloom.

Conclusion

After midnight the house and any children who are still alive will be returned to the real world (unless a deal was made with Oberon). Any children who were sacrificed will never be seen again. If the sacrifice went ahead then Allyson Miller will receive a proposal of marriage from her millionaire target. She will be surprised to discover any children still alive when she returns home.

If the children returned the charm bracelet then the pact was cancelled and Allyson does not receive her marriage proposal. She will be furious when she returns home.

If the pact was not broken but the children managed to escape being sacrificed then Oberon will place a powerful curse upon Allyson Miller.

Robbie Miller

11-year old boy.

Smarts	3	Soul	10
Muscle	4	Innocence	3
Hands	3	Fear	0
Feet	2		
Spirit	3		

Qualities

Courageous (Advantage)

Lucky (Get to re-roll 1 bad roll)

Delinquent (Drawback)

I feel ...

Fine

Sore

Bad (-1)

Dizzy (-2)

Nothing

My Stuff

\$5

Skateboard

Bike

Cricket Bat

Dear Diary ...

My name is Robbie Miller and I am 11 years old. I have a sister called Carol and a brother called Jamie. I am the oldest. My Mum says that dad died. But I remember they had a big fight before dad disappeared, although I was only a little kid at the time. I think dad left mum because she is so mean. I would leave too. In fact, I used to try and run away when I was younger, but they always found me and then I had to go back home and I would be punished.

Today I got caught smoking at school and I got suspended for three days. Not that I care. School is boring anyway. I was expecting mum to go mad when she heard. But all she said was "You've ruined my life for the past 11 years, but you won't for much longer." Usually she yells and throws things at you. I guess she must be too busy thinking about her new boyfriend. I hope she stays out with him all night and never comes back.

Oh yeah, it's Carol's birthday today and mum didn't even arrange a party or nothing (that's how mean she is). She just left her \$20 and told us to order pizza.

Carol Miller

9-year old girl.

Smarts	5	Soul	10
Muscle	3	Innocence	5
Hands	2	Fear	0
Feet	3		
Spirit	3		

Qualities

Bookworm(Advantage)

Butterfingers (Drawback)

I feel ...

Fine

Sore

Bad (-1)

Dizzy (-2)

Nothing

My Stuff

\$20 (from Mum. Meant to be spent on pizza for dinner)

Collection of "Nancy Drew" books

Monopoly (with most of the pieces)

Dear Diary ...

My name is Carol Miller and I am nine years old today. Mum doesn't like to give us parties but tonight she is going out with her boyfriend (Dad died when I was only little), so I invited my friend Krystal Frost over to spend the night. Krystal has been my friend for two weeks now! In case you didn't know, most kids at school think I'm kind of strange, and Krystal is the prettiest girl in the class, and she wants to be my friend!!

Mum gave me \$20 to buy pizza for me and my two brothers (she doesn't know that I invited Krystal over too!) Muppet will probably want some too (Muppet is our pet dog. He's a bit smelly, but he can do lots of clever tricks).

Krystal Frost

9-year old girl

Smarts	2	Soul	10
Muscle	3	Innocence	5
Hands	4	Fear	0
Feet	5		
Spirit	2		

Qualities

Athletic (Advantage)

Whiny (Drawback)

I feel ...

Fine

Sore

Bad (-1)

Dizzy (-2)

Nothing

My Stuff

Lots at home, but you only brought a purse with \$20 and a cell-phone with you.

Pyjamas, overnight bag

You brought a Barbie™ home makeover kit as a present for Carol.

Dear Diary ...

My name is Krystal Frost. I am nine and I am so pretty that Daddy says that I look like an angel. My favourite colour is purple and my favourite animal is a pony. I like school because I have lots of friends. I also do ballet, which I like as you get to wear pretty clothes.

Tonight I am going to a birthday sleepover at Carol's. Carol is in my class at school. She's kind of weird and normally I wouldn't want to be her friend. However, her older brother Robbie is really cute and I have an enormous crush on him. Tonight should be the perfect opportunity to get him to notice me!

Jamie Miller

7-year old boy.

Smarts	3	Soul	10
Muscle	2	Innocence	7
Hands	3	Fear	0
Feet	3		
Spirit	4		

Qualities

Compassionate (Advantage)

I feel ...

Fine

Sore

Bad (-1)

Dizzy (-2)

Nothing

My Stuff

Harry Potter slippers

Torch

Soft Bunny

Dear Diary ...

My name is Jamie Miller. I am 7 years old. I have a mother, a brother and a sister. I do not have a Dad. My Dad died when I was just a baby. I have Muppet instead. That's my dog. He's real smart. He talks to me when no-one's around. He always tries to help. I love Muppet. I also love chocolate chip cookies and ice-cream.

The Miller House

