

A Simple Massacre

For this fight, I'll demonstrate a simple engagement between three freshly-made Godbound and an encounter that would shred an ordinary group of novice adventurers. The example will show how basic combat works and introduce the special rules that apply to fighting Mobs of foes. The key concepts to understand in this example are hit rolls and damage rolls.

To make a hit roll, the attacker rolls 1d20 and adds their own hit bonus, their most applicable attribute bonus, and their target's armor class. If the total is 20 or greater, the attack hits. Monsters and other creatures without attributes simply add their attack bonus and the target's armor class.

You'll notice that the heroes to the right already have their total attack bonus worked out for their usual weaponry. Garm is using Strength as the modifier for his hurled hammer; because he's using *Fists of Black Iron* to augment the attack, he can use any single attribute that he can justify to boost the attack, and not just the usual Strength of hurled weapons or Dexterity of ranged attacks. Lucullus also relies on his Strength with his *Steel Without End*-boosted spear, but Violetta's *Scythe Hand* gaze is influenced by her fearsome presence, and so she uses Charisma. If any of these heroes were to pick up ordinary weapons and not use their abilities to augment them, they'd have to use the more conventional attributes to modify attacks.

To make a damage roll, the heroes roll the weapon's damage die and add the same attribute they used to modify the hit roll. Then they compare it to the damage chart; a roll of 1 does no damage, 2-5 does one point, 6-9 does two points, and 10+ does four points. If you're not using a pre-made character sheet, it can be handy to note this down on your sheet for quick reference. If an attack rolls multiple dice, like a 10d6 flaming explosion, each die is counted separately.

Garm and Violetta are wearing armor. Garm's chain hauberk counts as medium armor, and he's decided that the weight of it hinders his Hardiness saving throw, applying a -4 penalty to what would normally be an 11+ roll. Violetta's light armor applies no penalty. Lucullus trusts to his *Body of Iron Will*, which gives him a base armor class of 3 with no drawbacks.

GARM OF THE THUNDERS Level 1

Str	Dex	Con	Wis	Int	Cha
19 (+4)	11 (+0)	16 (+2)	8 (-1)	13 (+1)	15 (+1)
HP: 10		AC: 5		+Hit: +1	
Attack:	Hurled greathammer for +5 to hit, 1d12+4 damage				
Hard.:	15+ arm.	Evasion: 14+		Spirit: 14+	
Powers:	Words of Might, Sky, and Bow. Gifts of <i>Bolt of Invincible Skill</i> , <i>Fists of Black Iron</i> , <i>Bar the Red Descent</i> , <i>Loosening God's Teeth</i> , and <i>Sapphire Wings</i>				

LUCULLUS Level 1

Str	Dex	Con	Wis	Int	Cha
18 (+3)	12 (+0)	16 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+1)	8 (-1)
HP: 10		AC: 3		+Hit: +1	
Attack:	Spear for +4 to hit, 1d10+4 damage				
Hard.:	12+	Evasion: 14+		Spirit: 14+	
Powers:	Words of Sword, Passion, and Endurance. Gifts of <i>Contempt of Distance</i> , <i>Steel Without End</i> , <i>Cutting the Crimson Road</i> , <i>Body of Iron Will</i> , and <i>Defy the Iron</i>				

VIOLETTA CAVEETEI Level 1

Str	Dex	Con	Wis	Int	Cha
8 (-1)	16 (+2)	14 (+1)	15 (+1)	16 (+2)	18 (+3)
HP: 9		AC: 5		+Hit: +1	
Attack:	<i>Scythe Hand</i> gaze for +4 to hit, 1d10+3 damage				
Hard.:	11+	Evasion: 14+		Spirit: 14+	
Powers:	Words of Death, Night, and Deception. Gifts of <i>Scythe Hand</i> , <i>Mantle of Quietus</i> , <i>A Road of Shadows</i> , <i>Welcoming the Dusk</i> , <i>Shadow Play</i> , and <i>Veiled Step</i>				

Round One

The three heroes are tromping through a dank Raktine forest when a cluster of smirking ruffians leap up from the bracken, drawing bowstrings tight. A snaggle-toothed boyar distinguishable only by his well-kept armor stands at a judicious distance and demands their purses and the woman as a toll for passing through his lands uninvited.

Violetta is unimpressed by this offer and turns a lethal stare on the man that blackens the blood in his veins. The boyar's heart skips a beat at that terrible gaze, but he remains standing. One of his minions laughs until a flick of Violetta's eyes parches him like a withered leaf.

The ruffians count as a Small Mob of Trained Soldiers, while the veteran boyar is a Minor Hero. If the foes had simply attacked from surprise they'd have gotten a free round to act, but they sacrificed their surprise to parley.

As PCs, the heroes act first. Violetta takes the first action by mutual agreement and makes a gaze attack boosted by her *Scythe Hand* gift. She rolls a 1d20 and gets 3 to which she adds her attack bonus of +4 and the boyar's armor class of 5 for a total of 12. Sadly, since it's not 20 or better, it misses, but *Scythe Hand* always inflicts at least 1 point of damage. The boyar's hit dice drop from 4 to 3. Meanwhile, Violetta's Fray die rolls a 3, inflicting 1 hit die of damage to the Mob because it's made up of creatures susceptible to her Fray die, leaving it with 11 hit dice. As a final step, Violetta turns on her *Mantle of Quietus* to discourage attacks, Committing Effort for the scene and leaving her with one point left.

Garm's answer comes in a tremendous oath and a hurled hammer. A tree beside the boyar is shivered and split by the crash of the mighty hammer, but the knavish lord flinches away just in time. As the weapon leaps back to Garm's hand, it brains one of the ruffians. Meanwhile, storm winds whirl about the mighty Godbound in a protective mantle.

Lucullus lifts his spear with the glee of a confirmed lover of slaughter and charges at the trembling boyar. The noble has prudently set himself back from the fray, however, and Lucullus can't move quite fast enough to reach him. Even so, a passing swipe guts an unlucky ruffian.

The boyar is terrified but responds the only way he knows how - with an instinctive order to shoot. A flight of arrows leaps from the bowmen toward the heroes, and no sooner are the shafts launched than the boyar himself charges Lucullus and heaves a mighty blow at the Godbound with his falchion. A dozen men blacken and crumble as their arrows skim too close to dark Violetta.

Garm uses **Fists of Black Iron** to augment his hurled hammer, inflicting 1d12 damage on a hit with +4 for his Strength modifier, given that he's using both hands to wield the weapon. Unfortunately, he rolls a 7, and that plus his +5 bonus to hit plus the armor class of 5 the boyar has is not quite enough to make 20 and a successful hit. His Bow innate power allows him to call his hammer back instantly, and he also Commits Effort to activate his **Bar the Red Descent** effect to ensure that the bowmen can't hurt him. He uses the hammer's return as a flavor descriptor to explain the 1 hit die of damage his Fray die does, dropping the Mob to 10 hit dice.

Lucullus is brutal in a direct confrontation, but he's a melee fighter, and the boyar is 70 feet away. Lucullus moves 30 feet toward him with his movement and then spends his action to move another 30 feet. The GM decides that the Mob's too loosely-packed to impede Lucullus' charge, but he still can inflict his Fray damage die roll of 5, doing 1 point of damage to the Mob and dropping it to 9 hit dice.

The ruffians are a Mob, and so get to use their full attack sequence against every enemy in reach. Against Violetta, they roll a 13 to which is added their +2 attack bonus and Violetta's armor class of 5, just barely reaching 20 and a hit. They roll 1d8 for damage and get 2, meaning they inflict 1 point of damage on the Godbound, dropping her hit points to 8. Before it resolves, however, her **Mantle of Quietude** triggers against them, rolling a 19 on 1d20 and inflicting 4 points of damage, dropping them to 5 hit dice. Against Lucullus they roll a natural 20 for an automatic hit, and roll an 8 on the damage die, inflicting 2 points of damage against the warrior and leaving him with 8 hit points. The GM doesn't even roll against Garm, since he's immune to their mundane bowfire. Against the spear-wielding Lucullus, the boyar rolls 10, +6 for his hit bonus, and +3 for Lucullus' armor class, but it's not enough to reach 20.

Round Two

Violetta's fearsome gaze does not shift from the boyar even as a terrified Bowman runs through her line of vision and is dust before he hits the ground. The boyar bleeds from his eyes, but he still fights the spearman before him.

Garm shouts his indignation at Lucullus' "theft" of his foe, and hurls his hammer at the noble. The weapon curves like a living thing to sweep around Lucullus and mash the boyar's chest into pulp, cutting down another Bowman as it leaps back to Garm's hand.

Frustrated Lucullus will have words with Garm about this later, but for now he consoles his wrath by slaughtering those pathetic wretches who have yet to sensibly flee. Organs and limbs are disjected with tremendous force as the Raktine forest is bedewed with innards.

The three briefly debate afterwards whether or not they should have taken prisoners, or perhaps chased after a few of the survivors who fled at the first clash, but eventually decide that they were doing the Raktian Confederacy a favor by their bloody work, and continue along their way.

Violetta's dice are still sour, and she rolls a 4 for her gaze attack. **Scythe Hand's** automatic damage injures the boyar for 1 point of damage, putting him at 2 hit dice, and her Fray die takes another 1 point from the Mob, leaving it with 4 hit dice.

Garm rolls well this time, getting a 15, which together with his attack bonus and the boyar's armor class easily makes for a hit. His Bow Word's innate gift ensures that his ranged attacks never accidentally hit a friend, even in the midst of a melee. He rolls 1d12+4 for a result of 9, inflicting 2 points of damage and killing the boyar. His Fray die clips another point from the Mob, leaving it with 3 hit dice.

Lucullus decides to be extravagant and Commits Effort for the day to mimic the **Thirsting Razor** gift, allowing him to automatically hit lesser foes for the remainder of the scene. He then activates **Cutting the Crimson Road**, which allows him to roll his damage dice straight against a Mob of lesser foes like the ruffians. This ensures that the last few hit dice of the Mob are swept away in a red tide of ruin as he rolls his 1d10+4 damage to do 8 points of damage to them, when they only had 3 hit dice left.

While shattered as a force, not every member of the Mob is killed unless the heroes make a point of hunting down and exterminating them all.