

In these pages we have discussed the approach of making 'the game of the movie' with all the advantages of world building and character portrayals that involves. Not only does this approach give people the chance to experience the events of the movie but it goes further by giving them the chance to *revel* in those events and play the movie from a different perspective. Key to this achievement lies in the development of our characters – playable and non-playable alike.

And so we move on to the next part of our diary – the creatures of Narnia, as interesting and worthwhile a topic as anything else and one that will reveal the depth of detail within the game.

By featuring all of the creatures and characters of the film, the game enhances the richness of Narnia and enables the player to go toe-to-toe with the many denizens of that wintry world. Whether on the side of the White Witch or Aslan, this populous potential is the lifeblood of the game as surely as our principal characters are its heart. Each creature in the game is a faithful recreation of its big screen counterpart right down to the last tusk and nail. That means the evil creatures will be almost as menacing as the White Witch whilst the good creatures will be as noble and brave as Aslan. Where the game goes further than the film is in giving each and every one of these creatures their own individual traits.

Let's quickly run through some of the various 'minions' and 'followers' and then draw it all together with an overview of how they all work to help or hinder.

#### The Minions

All evil creatures must be called minions. Pressed into service they represent the worst of all character traits and our evil creatures are no exception. **WOLVES** are the most common (if not the lowest) of the creature population and they act as spies and guards for the White Witch. They dog the heels of our Pevensie children at speeds that can surprise an unwary traveller. Wolves do not represent a major challenge unless they happen to be of the Grey Wolf variant – a much more ferocious opponent that only Peter has the strength to overcome.

**GOBLINS** skulk and slither through our land of Narnia with all the slyness expected of such creatures. Their skinny frames are punctured by sharp teeth and narrow eyes and they wield a long pole arm with which they attack from a distance. In on-on-one combat Goblins are easily defeated but their true strength lies in being able to surprise the enemy with their agile movements. Climbing and swimming give them unique abilities when launching surprise attacks.

The tough, lumbering **OGRES** wield enormous wooden clubs and tower over the children with frightening effect. Their great strength is at its most evident when you witness one lifting a huge boulder. We wouldn't recommend that you stay around to see it being hurled in your direction despite their legendary stupidity. It will take teamwork – something the game brings in time and again – to defeat such a creature.

On the subject of boulders being dropped from great heights we find one more creature terrorising the children – this time it is the **HARPY** and their vicious claws that hold the deadly rocks. These malicious winged creatures attack from the relative safety of the air as they are especially vulnerable on the ground.

Also keeping an eye out (we're sorry) for children is the **CYCLOPS**. Far more formidable even than the OGRE, the CYCLOPS wears tough, metal armour and wields a fearsome axe. No amount of hacking and stabbing from the Pevensie children can affect the tough hide and so teamwork and ingenuity are the only effective weapons.

Whilst the CYCLOPS are often used to lead the armies of the White Witch into battle it is the fabled **MINOTAUR** who take centre stage when it comes to outright danger levels. The

MINOTAUR, part bull, part human, is the most dangerous soldier in the White Witch's army. Their sheer size, their numbers and the utter ferocity of their attacks are matched by the absolute nastiness of their weaponry. Flails, Kopesh swords work alongside the sharp (very sharp) curved horns on their heads as they combine attacks to intimidating effect such as slashing from side to side with a sword before leaping forward to gouge with their horns. This fearsome attack and their thick armour must be broken before they can be defeated.

And yes, it is down to the children to defeat them.

All is not lost, however, as the great and good Aslan has his noble followers to help even the battle. We have, of course, included the indomitable **MR** and **MRS BEAVER** who, despite not being on everyone's list of creatures to recruit for a battle, prove invaluable in escaping the White Witch's pursuing wolves and finding Aslan himself. The Beavers have access to a large network of hideaways and holes across Narnia – handy when you need to escape or fancy your chances at finding hidden treasure.

The crafty **MR FOX** is often mistaken for a minion of the White Witch. In reality (well, our reality) he is one of creatures who remained loyal to Aslan throughout the cold winter of HER rule. Like all foxes in Narnia, Mr Fox is not only crafty and intelligent but also skilful at turning awkward situations to his favour.

The rich vein of Greek mythology provides the source of many creatures in Narnia and the **FAUN** is no exception. Whilst Mr Tumnus remains the most famous of Fauns, the race as a whole has managed to remain loyal to the cause of good. Fauns are capable of using their love of music to conjure up beautiful and enchanting melodies.

Closely related to the FAUN is the **SATYR** who is even more goat-like than their cousins. As a result they are stockier and stronger and form a brave a stalwart part of Aslan's army.

The awe-inspiring presence of the **CENTAURS** are a valuable addition to Aslan's army. Part human, part horse, the CENTAUR are formidable in battle. The males will use their sharp swords and hooves to defeat their opponents whilst the female of the species will employ their considerable talent as archers to fend off any who would harm Narnia and its people.

Of course, even such a cast of magnificent, noble or terrifying creatures would not make the game even if they perfectly matched the creatures of the movie. More work had to be put into creating creatures with special abilities that add something to the overall flow of the game. For example, Mr Beaver will help the Pevensie children get past a wooden obstacle by gnawing his way through it – a fine way of showing of such splendid teeth. Other creatures are also guided in the way they interact by their own abilities. Minotaurs and Minoboars know to lower their heads during an attack so as to make use of their deadly horns, Goblins know well enough how to lurk in the shadows before ambushing the player and Dwarfs, well Dwarfs are skilful archers who can be dangerous at any range.

It all helps increase the levels of realism in the game and heighten our involvement with the land of Narnia right from the moment at the start when the balance seems to be hopelessly in favour of evil and all who remain loyal to Aslan live either in constant fear or reside as statues in the castle of the White Witch. Guiding the Pevensie children through the trials of their journey becomes an emotional story as this balance shifts over time. From trying merely to escape pursuit through to exploring the darkest dungeons and then ultimately the major confrontation between Aslan and the White Witch, the player will need to call upon every aspect of their ability and know every aspect of their opponent before they can hope to emerge victorious.