

**Medusa's Bad Day**, a game for 3-5 friends in 10-60 minutes by Kitty Stoholski

Medusa has had a dreadful day. Maybe not worse than most days she's been having recently, but this one got to her. She's staying in tonight because she needs to do the thing that centers her - her hair. Her shining, slithering hair.

### **Tone and Safety**

Medusa's Bad Day is a game that involves expressing vulnerability, sitting in close proximity, and embracing soothing, physical touch. Players set their own physical boundaries and touch is common, so trust about physical boundaries is a must! If when deciding to play this game, there are any concerns as to whether players' physical boundaries will be adhered to, please consider another game, such as one from the many great games offered on the [Golden Cobra website!](#)

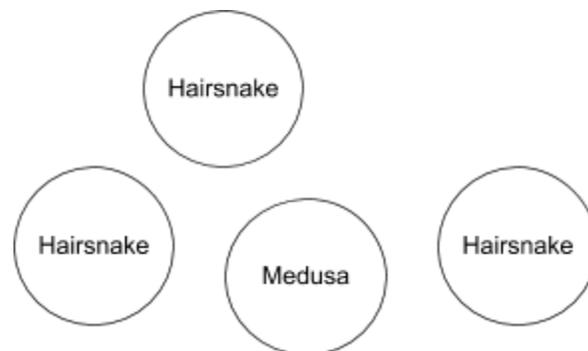
In addition, this game uses sock puppets, which are inherently goofy, to help give support to Medusa in response to her feelings of frustration or defeat from her bad day. This tonal difference may feel like a player's real world feelings aren't being taken seriously and that's terrible! If a player has immediate emotional needs, please take off the sock puppets and pause or stop the game so the player's needs can be met! Look out for one another!

### **Ingredients**

- Close, comfortable seating area for all players with no object separating the players. Chairs or the floor should work!
- 1 clean sock per person. DO NOT USE THE SOCKS FROM YOUR FEET! EW!
- 1 medusa-safe mirror, optional

### **Setting Up**

Accept a volunteer to be the first Medusa, who will lead gameplay for other players. Other players put on sock puppets (See Appendix A), who will take the role of the Medusa's Hairsnakes. Hairsnake players should sit in a semicircle around the sides and back of the Medusa player, close enough that they can comfortably rest their sock puppet on the Medusa. Consider the sample diagram below:



If you have a medusa-safe mirror, place it in front of Medusa so she can see what's she's doing.

The Medusa player informs Hairsnake players what areas of their body are okay Resting Places, that is, areas where it's okay for a Hairsnake to be placed when not directly interacting with the Medusa. This may include shoulders, arms, knees, or even nowhere at all! If Medusa does not wish to be touched, Hairsnakes can rest on their respective players; resting on their respective player is always an available Resting Place! Always respect the Medusa player's touch boundaries!

Once the Medusa and Hairsnake players are seated and comfortable, Hairsnakes find a comfortable Resting Place. They may remain there throughout the game or may reposition themselves as needed.

Medusa begins the game by sighing audibly.

### **PLAY**

Medusa can do what she needs to in order to find any peace after a miserable day. Medusa leads play, and Hairsnakes follow lead. During play, Medusa may do any number of the following things (or repeat some!):

- Call Upon a Hairsnake
- Monologue
- Sit in Silence

#### **Call Upon a Hairsnake**

- To Call Upon a Hairsnake, Medusa may gently tap a Hairsnake on its head\*. That Hairsnake lifts from their Resting Place, and the Hairsnake player may reposition themselves such that the Hairsnake is now in front of Medusa.
- Once a Hairsnake has been called upon, Medusa may converse with the Hairsnake about her day! Medusa can discuss specifics about the day's events, how she feels, or anything else that needs to be said. Maybe that Hairsnake has a name! In conversation, Hairsnakes are not problem-solvers, but they're great at listening and sharing emotions and can respond accordingly!
- In addition, Medusa may comb or style the Hairsnake with her hands\*, to make sure everything looks right! Take time to do this – Hairsnakes can be difficult to keep! If a hairsnake does not wish to be touched they make shake their head no or retreat to their Resting Spot. Hairsnakes can still talk while being styled, but they sometimes make passive noises coinciding with what's happening to them
- Once finished, Medusa may tap the Hairsnake on the head\* to inform them that they may return to their Resting Place
- *\* Please do not ever interact with actual snakes this way! Only Hairsnakes!*

#### **Monologue**

- Medusa may monologue about her feelings at any time, expressing thoughts about her day! The medusa player may play as much into the fantasy of being a medusa as they would like or they may voice real frustrations they have in their own player life!

- As noted in the Tone and Safety section, if a Medusa player is clearly expressing intense and real frustrations and could really use help, please take off the sock puppets and prioritize their well-being!

#### Sit in Silence

- Sometimes it's okay for Medusa to just be present for awhile. Medusa can breathe and focus on her own presence and that of the Hairsnakes. How does it feel having their company?

#### Example of Play

*Mxdusa indicates that Hairsnakes may rest on their shoulders and arms. Hairsnakes A and B take up perch on Mxdusa's arms and Hairsnake C remains with C's player by choice. Mxdusa sighs and taps Hairsnake B on the head, so B's player swings around in front of Mxdusa with Hairsnake B facing Mxdusa. Mxdusa gently cradles Hairsnake B and says "Oh little snake, I almost lost you today, getting tangled up in that tree! What am I going to do with you?" Hairsnake B makes a little noise, unsure what to say. "I was so scared of losing you! You're my most curious snake and I love you for it! But sometimes I need you to be aware of where we're going"*

*Hairsnake B nods sullenly. "I was so scared too but you saved me..."*

*Mxdusa combs their fingers across Hairsnake B for a minute until they look perfect. They tap Hairsnake B on the head, who then retreats to Mxdusa's arm while B's player returns to their original position. Mxdusa then taps Hairsnake C...*

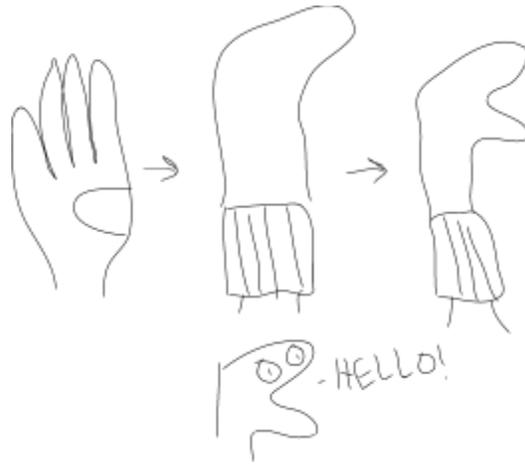
#### Ending

- Once Medusa feels there's nothing more they need to do, she may thank her Hairsnakes for being there for her. Medusa can take as much time as she needs, though 5-15 minutes is often enough.
- If players would like to continue playing, another player may become a new, different Medusa with a bad day. Repeat the activities above, starting with setting new appropriate Resting Places for this new Medusa's Hairsnakes.
- Play until everyone who wants to be a Medusa has had their turn!

## Appendix A - Sock Puppets and You

### Creation

1. To create a sock puppet, obtain a clean sock!
2. Flatten your hand with your fingers together and rest your thumb on your palm.
3. Insert your hand all the way into the sock
4. Using your other hand, create a pocket between your fingers and thumb to serve as the mouth
5. (Optional) Add googly eyes around your fingertips or tape on the ones at the bottom of this sheet!



### Talking

1. To talk with a sock puppet, have the puppet make eye contact with who the puppet is speaking to
2. When speaking out loud, open the puppets mouth as you say each syllable!



### Misc Eyes

