

FUTURE RENAISSANCE: GM SCREEN

A CAVALIERS OF MARS/CORTEXPRIME HACK GAME MOD BY RUEMERE

RESOLVING ACTIONS

First, the acting person describes their intent while a GM declares whether this is a high-stakes action (high-stakes action carries the risk of being taken-out from the scene).

Secondly, a [GM] sets the difficulty by selecting a static number (for minions and obstacles, also – no assets or complications) or makes a roll (for named antagonists and unpredictable obstacles):

- Static: 3 (very easy), 7 (routine), 11 (challenging), 15 (hard), 19 (very hard). Effect die is d4 or applicable Difficulty die.
- Variable (rate each): Difficulty/Location/Challenge/Threat: None, Very easy d4, Routine d6, Challenging d8, Hard d10, Very hard d12. Impact: Negligible d4, Moderate d6, Significant d8, Major d10, Critical d12. Scale/Reach/Scope: Small d4, Medium d6, Large d8, Huge d10, Colossal d12. Total any two, pick one for Effect.
- NPC check: Roll applicable Trait dice (one per available Trait category), Resolve die, Asset die (or dice), Complication die (or dice). Total any two, pick one for Effect die (if there are not enough dice, the Effect die is d4).

Thirdly, a [Player] picks applicable dice (one per trait category) and rolls:

- Make a roll: applicable Trait dice (one per available Trait category), Asset die (or dice), Complication die (or dice). Total any two, pick one for Effect die (if there are not enough dice, the Effect die is d4). If



there is a Windfall die, roll d4 and add to the total.

Finally, compare results:

- Higher total wins. A [GM] or a [Player] may spend a Drama Point to avoid results of the action. If they wish to do so, they must do that at this point.
- Combat: add to winner's effect to loser's Stress Track.
- D12+ on Stress Track for a PC, or Stress Track > NPC Resolve, or High stakes Non-Combat: Loser is Taken Out (a mob or a boss lose one of their extra dice) and receives a Condition. Alternatively, Winner may propose (and GM accepts) that Loser gains a specific and appropriate Complication equal to last Effect die.
- Effect die interpretations: D4 (PARTIAL or OK + COMPLICATION) Need another success, or succeed but at a cost (take a complication); D6 (OK); D8 (OK + BONUS) Bonus - gain an immediate advantage (learn another clue, push opponent back); D10 (CRITICAL) This suc-

cess influences your next action or actions (pick one: get OK for next action, gain Windfall d4, half-time, half-cost); D12 (CRITICAL++) As CRITICAL, pick TWO benefits.

DOWNTIME

As a rule, you can select only of of listed benefits. Rest (8 hours, clears physical complications or reset exerted traits), a day (to clear all complications and to reset exerted traits), or a week (to clear a condition, craft an item, make a living or work on a Profitable Venture). Generally, a character can focus only on one activity during a downtime. Drama Points can be spent only on life-threatening or very dangerous conditions- and they are deducted from the starting pool at the beginning of the next uptime.

PROFITABLE VENTURE

To set up a Profitable Venture, you need to form and maintain a relationship (1 Drama Point per session) with a trustworthy

individual. Then make an investment (step down your Purse) and describe the nature of the venture. The rating of Profitable Venture is the same as the Purse rating prior to stepping down.

From that point on you have a Profitable Venture asset (rated at the investment level initially). Once per downtime you may make an action and step up your Purse asset on success. On failure step down Profitable Venture or step down your Purse. A Profitable Venture cannot step up your Purse beyond Profitable Venture level. A Purse however can be stepped down to step up the Venture as long as the Purse rating is higher than the Venture.

MAKING A LIVING

To earn a living during downtime, make a Career action check. The effect die results: d4 (poor, hungry, dirty; cannot recover from health complications), d6 (lean and mean, but mostly fine), d8 (carousing time or shopping spree possible; recovers from health complication at double the speed, i.e. half a day). At d8 or higher you may step up your Purse instead.

Purchasing standard supplies to travel for a week: d6 (supplies provide food, water and basic camping consumables). Purchasing adventuring equipment: d8 (adventuring equipment allows to create an Asset in a middle of nowhere at the usual cost of 1 Drama Point).

DRAMA POOL

[PC]'s starting Drama Pool is 5. [GM]'s starting Drama Pool is equal to the number of players. Drama

points may be spent by PCs and GMs to:

- avoid results of an action,
- add a third die to an action result,
- recover from a complication after a scene,
- procure a new asset for duration of a scene (as long as it is plausible, the asset is to be retained, another Drama Point must be expended at the end of the scene; also a PC must pay a Drama Point per session if the asset requires a maintenance),
- forge a new relationship (once an NPC is befriended, works like an asset, but comes with its own personality, skills and goals),
- power up a talent instead of exerting a trait,
- invoke special Benefit of an asset or a relationship.
- ignore an established complication for a single action.

Drama Pools are reset every session. One can gain only a single Drama Point per scene. Drama Points may be also gained by PCs when:

- they yield during action resolution,
- roll natural one during action resolution,
- they accept a Drawback invoked by an asset or relationship,
- make a stunning contribution to a scene.

CONDITIONS

A character Taken Out receives a Condition and removes all pertinent rated complications. At the player's option at the end of a scene, a character may step back complications and keep them complications in future scenes

until sufficient downtime is arranged.

A Condition is a lasting complication with d8 that summarizes status of a character:

- Exhausted (apply d8 to difficulty of any tasks; needs a good night's rest to clear),
- Injured (as Exhausted, but needs a week of rest and medical care to recover),
- In Love,
- Melancholy,
- Presumed Dead (for NPCs, mostly),
- Trapped (unable to participate in scenes pending release),
- Vengeful.

Conditions affecting mental disposition should be reflected by roleplaying a pursuit of an objective. Their main drawback is that another character aware may manipulate affected protagonist by making an appeal related to the Condition. Care must be taken not to abuse this influence – at worst, such a condition should affect character's actions for two weeks in-game time – a character could become an NPC for that time, with GM running them offscreen. NOTE! A GM should always consult the owner of the character to ensure that they are OK with what is happening.

COMPLICATIONS

A complication is an item in a statblock. It is rated with a die, and gets applied to an eligible target's action dice pool, usually to the disadvantage of its owner.

If there are several complications applicable:

- For complications of the same or similar kind and different ratings (injuries and bruises, for example) – apply the highest only.
- For complications of the same type and of the same rating, apply one, and then step it up by one.
- For complications of the different types affecting the same action, pick two highest.

GANGING UP

Name a leader. Assisting characters add highest relevant die to the pool. Proceed as normal to resolve.

HAZARDS / OBSTACLES

Hazard is an active threat that performs an action against eligible targets once all other actions are resolved. Examples: a raging fire, flash flood, a swarm of rats.

An obstacle is a passive threat that may create complication only if it is interacted with. Examples: a dilapidated building threatening to collapse, contaminated water.

ZONE

Any area where the action takes place is divided into Zones. A Zone template: Name and Description, Speed, Features (potential assets) and Treasures, Hazards and Obstacles, Characters (and their Dispositions), Developments (and their Triggers).

Speed required to traverse it during a single round. If there is more than one method to traverse a zone, name each. An ordinary NPC has a speed of 2, so they can move at a walk speed 20 feet through a Speed 2 zone. Running doubles speed.

TALENTS

Special abilities that grant automatic success against tasks of static difficulty below Very Hard, or add d8 to a pool at the cost of stepping down or exhausting (reduce to d4) a Motivation, Method, Origin or Career once the task is completed.

All Traits are reset at the beginning of the next session or after a restful downtime of at least eight hours.

NPCS

- Extras: One person doing a sloppy job: 2d6+d4; Skilled officials on a task: 3d6; Armed and dangerous: 3d8.
- Boss or Solo: Scale +1 or +2.
- Mob scale adjustments +1 (a small group), +2 (a crowd or well-armed group), +3 (well trained squad).
- Boss, Solos and Mobs lose one step of scale per lost round unless Drama Point is paid.

TRAVELING

Action check vs. difficulty of 7 (for a long route along established and known roads) or 3d6 (if unforeseen complications are to take place).

Draw result indicates a complication occurring to someone else met along the road (the PCs have an option to avoid the complication).

Roll d6 to determine the issue:

1. Technical (failing parts)
2. Resources (out of fuel or other commodity, resupply required)
3. Environmental hazard (dust storm, sand storm, rain, flash flood, heat wave, cold strike)

4. Obstacle (obstructed route, blocked route, damaged route, fee collectors)
5. Unsavory humans (bandits, smugglers, rowdy celebrations, hostiles)
6. Distinctive F/F, fauna or flora

F/F OF RADIUM PLATEAU

1. Sand Floater is Fragile Floating Balloon d4, Electricity Salvo d10, Attracted to Blood d6; Resolve d4; To Escape From d4, To Fight d6, To Charm d8
2. Dune Mites are Palm-Sized Sand Burrowing Insects d4, Love to Take Apart Electric and Steal Stuff d6; Resolve d4; To Escape From d4, To Fight d4, To Charm d4
3. Dancing Carrion Monkeys are Nocturnal Carrion Eaters d8, who Love to Dance in the Moonlight d8, but Need to Hide Away from the Sun d8; Resolve d4; To Escape From d8, To Fight d6, To Charm d6
4. Twilight Leopards are known for their Invisibility in Twilight d10 and Great Sense of Smell d10; Resolve d8; To Escape From d10, To Fight d8, To Charm d8
5. Willowkills are Huge Willow-like Plant Stalkers d8, who Wait until their Target Goes to Sleep d8; Resolve d10; To Escape From d4, To Fight d10, To Charm d10
6. Fire Ants are Poisonous Insects d6 that also Set Fire to Flammable Items d6 (mixture of flammable chemicals carried by two types of warriors that brought together create fire); Resolve d10 (large swarm; active in the morning and evenings only); Resolve d4; To Escape From d6, To Fight d10, To Charm d6

Low-risk parts of the ecosystem: Dusk Mites (scavenger beetles that appear at dusk), Beggar Grass (mildly poisonous, but can be cooked by beggars and eaten at the expense of nightmarish dreams), Rolling Bush (just what it says, will root itself near water or carrion), Feeble Flies (just what it says, very small flies, often indicating presence of a hidden or underground water source), Armored Rats (rats, territorial and with bad attitude), Sand Striders (huge, but slow walkers that are actually plants, strongly poisonous), Turtle Ivy (desert-adapted ivy, capable of slowly moving toward perceived source of nutrition; mildly poisonous).

F/F OF MOUNTAINS

1. Rock Dish aka Mad Hat is Flat Cap-like Toothy Omnivore d4, that can Spit Paralyzing and Blinding Poison d10. It Attacks from Above d6 and then slowly crawls to digest paralyzed its prey; Resolve d4; To Escape From d4, To Fight d4, To Charm d12
2. Jumping Rattler Centipede is Arm-Sized Hunter that Coils and Springs d8, Aiming to use Deadly Stingers d6; To Escape From d6, To Fight d6, To Charm d8
3. Arrow Vulture is a Bird that Can Spit Projectiles d8, and it has a Great Eyesight d8, but easily scares; Resolve d4; To Escape From d8, To Fight d6, To Charm d6
4. Mock Bear is known as Unstoppable Mountain Brute d10 with Great Sense of Smell d10; Resolve d10; To Escape From d10, To Fight d8, To Charm d8



5. Sleeping Moss is a plant that Uses Sleeping Spores d6; Resolve d6; To Escape From d4, To Fight d4, To Charm n/a
6. Fishing Scorpio are a Swarm of Poisonous Insects d4; Resolve d10 (large swarm; active in the morning and evenings only); Resolve d4; To Escape From d4, To Fight d10, To Charm d4

Low-risk parts of the ecosystem: Water Buffalo Beetles (like buffaloes only human-sized, operate in herds), Crawling Trees (too slow to be danerous), Lemon Grass (edible, used as spice), Shadow Salamanders, Hungry Rabbits (a horde of them is not dangerous, but they are omnivorous), Rock Slimes (small slimes that hide below rocks, can do slight burns at most), Stream Trout, Mountain Floaters (like Sand Floaters, only without electricity)

ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

Roll d8 if you need to randomly choose a challenge:

1. Dehydration – without adequate supply of water, one faces risk of

succumbing to dehydration (initial complication d6, step up/1 hour of lack of adequate water supply).

2. Dust storms – are usually short windstorms carrying fine dust. Unless one protects themselves, there is a risk of respiratory issues (initial complication d4, step up/30 min of exposure).
3. Flash floods – sudden downpour, extremely rare and all the more dangerous because of this (Challenging to Very Hard, high stakes).
4. High temperature (around 50 °C) (initial complication d6, step up/10 min of strenuous activity).
5. Low temperature (around -18 °C) (initial complication d6, step up/1 hour of immobility, assuming adequate clothing).
6. Poisoning (usually by low grade water) (initial complication d6, step up/ 12 hours drinking).
7. Sun blindness (sunlight is extremely bright during daylight hours) (initial complication d8, lasts for a day).
8. Sun burns (initial complication d4, step up/untreated or if exposure continues/1 hour).