Members of the Guard

Horror roleplaying in a world of religious warriors versus the armies of evil.
Powered by the WaRP OGL from Atlas Games.

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Meeting the head of the guard.

They stood in the center of the room waiting. He was one of the old guard, mid-thirties and worn by fighting. His armor marked by repaired damage and stained with the blood of the dark ones. She was much younger, untested and nervous. Even her armor betrayed her lack of experience, new and unmarked. Both stood beside each other looking about the room. Two empty cells made of barred walls, a table in the middle of the room covered with papers, books and some writing instruments, wooden stools and a single oil burning lamp hanging from the ceiling.

Within a few minutes a third man enters the room through the door. Wearing the leather armor of a town guardsman with one arm colored black to denote his rank as a sergeant. Carrying a bowl of soup in one hand he stops just two steps in as he raises his eyes to meet those of this visitors.

"Chevaliers... I was unaware of your presence or I would not have kept you waiting. It is an honor to be graced by your company. Please have a seat." he motions to the chairs as he sets his soup onto the table, "I was attending to tonight's orders and grabbing a late dinner. There is still more left if you are hungry. I can have a man bring you..."

"That isn't necessary Sergeant we are not in need of food at this time. I am Brother Joseph and this is Sister Mary, we are here to look into some matters involving some of your men." He motioned for the guard to sit down, "Do sit down and enjoy your meal, we have a few questions to ask you while you eat and then we'll be on our way."

With a little nod he takes his seat. A bit of sweat already appearing on his brow. He pulls a spoon from his his belt and stirs the soup a bit. "Anything you say Brother Joseph, I am always ready to aid the servants of our Lords."

"Then before your first bite... put this in your mouth for a moment." He drops a silver coin onto the table where it rolls a bit before stopping. The guard stares at it for a moment, sweat building more on his face, before looking up.

"Why do I need to do that? I mean what is it for Brother?"

"Just put it in your mouth please, on top of your tongue." Her voice was a bit soft compared to the two men. But very clearly spoken and slow as if every word was premeditated long before they

were spoken. Staring at her for a moment he then reached over and retrieved the coin from the table top and rubbed it slightly with his fingertips. Glancing back over at Brother Joseph while laying the coin onto his tongue.

"Good, now please swear your loyalty to our Lords who..." His words are cut short as the coin is spit back on the table, smoking with a good deal of burnt flesh and blood clinging to it. The guards mouth hanging open and a charred twitching chunk of burnt meat laying out of it. The body shook, eyes rolling back into the head, "A prayer of cleansing now Sister!"

The thing that was the guard stands up quickly, inhumanly fast, bringing the table up with it. Running forward, table and all, slamming against his enemy as he tried to draw a blade. Running him back into the bars with a metal clang as they met with his armor. Sister Mary pulling her Badge of Astoria from beneath her robes immediately begins reciting a prayer in a clear determined voice.

With its face growing red with blackened veins it looks over to her and lets out a shrill scream. The skin of it starting to smoke faintly. Joseph regaining a bit of footing shoves the table back pushing the creature back across the floor and against the wall, shattering the table between them. In the close quarters neither are able to pull their swords reducing the fight to short strikes, kicks and shoving each other into the walls. As the prayer continues the smoke gets thicker and an acidic smell fills the room. Finally as the two tumble through the middle of the room until the one who is not a man manages a grip on a chair, bringing it across the others head knocking them down in a heap.

"Stop... that... you... wench..." Gurgling out the words as it turns towards her. The eyes bulging out now, face an almost purple red and the neck swollen to twice the width of the head. With a forward lurch and a cracking noise as a jaw dislocates itself a spew of intestines is vomited forth onto Sister Mary. Moving around her body and slithering upwards towards her arms. Pausing for a moment to keep from throwing up herself she keeps on with the prayer as the guts wrapping around her, even those were smoldering as well. They continue to pull around her, gripping her arms tightly as they constrict, trying to pull down her arm that holds the badge forward. Her throat burning with each breath from the smoke and eyes running with tears from it as well. Each word a struggle as they fight to see who can outlast the other.

Suddenly there is a flash of steel from behind the thing and the tendrils of guts go limp around her. Brother Joseph had regained his feet and finally managed to pull his sword. Headless and spurting blood the creature falls to the floor. The Sister backs away shaking the gore off of her and stumbles back against a wall gasping for breath and covering her mouth.

"Sister Mary are you injured." She shakes her head in response as she swallows hard still keeping herself from throwing up. "You did good, your faith did not falter. Well done, especially against a Baalarashi. They are quite a nasty bit of business."

Speaking from behind, her hand still at her mouth, "I fear my stomach may not be as strong as my faith..."

"Nonsense," with a grin and a laugh Joseph turns to look at her, "the first time I came face to face with one I threw up all over it and myself."

Lowering her hand and finally smiling a bit she nods. Reaching down and retrieving the fallen coin he tosses it to her. With clasped hands around it she utters a silent prayer and the flesh and blood

of the creature that caked on it turn to dust. As she hands it back over to him she looks out the small window into the night. "Baalarashi almost never travel alone do they?"

"No... they do not. I fear we have our work cut out for us in this town Sister."

They both turn as the door suddenly flies open, one with sword at the ready the other holding forth their Lord's Badge. A guard stands stunned by the sight at the doorway, short sword in a trembling hand. "Sergeant! What is going on here? What has happened?"

"Your Sergeant is no more, he had succumbed to the dark ones. Look for yourself at his remains he was one of the unholy, soul and body." The guard glanced down towards his fallen commanding officer and winces holding back emotions. His eyes narrowed and watery now. Finally he looks back up, holding his sword towards the floor and straightens his stance.

"I understand Chevaliers, you do what must be done." Pausing to swallow hard and keeping his eyes averted from the mess at their feet. "What are your orders for me now?"

"What is your name watchman?" Mary asked.

"I am Morgan Wright sister, named after our patron savior Morgan the Black."

"Well Morgan," Joseph fumbles his free hand into his pouch, "you can start by putting this coin in your mouth and swearing loyalty to our Lord who stands behind us at all times."

Minutes later Morgan was beating on the doors of the town chapel trying to rouse the one inside. After hammering until his hand hurt he finally hears the latch and the door swings open. In front of him stands the old priest in his night clothes, "What is it my son, if it is of such importance you could have simply came in and hollered for me. I never lock the door after all."

Raising his hand to his forehead and then back down to greet a man of the cloth he quickly relays his message. "Preceptor we have Chevaliers at the guard towers, they have found the dark ones among us. They wish for you to light a green flame in the steeple as a signal to their rest of the entourage outside of the gates."

The eyes of the old man widen and he motions for the young man to come inside, "Quickly then come. I will find the oil and lamp for that you run it to the top. You probably move faster than I do." With a nod Morgan runs inside.

Out in the wood line a group of men stood watching the town in the dark. Waiting for the signal to light their orders. Then atop one of the buildings that stood higher than the wall they see a green flicker of flame come to light and stay motionless. "That is not what we hoped for. Tell the Preceptor Major that we have serious trouble. The rest of you strike our encampment we enter the city tonight."

The other men all raise their hands to their heads and back down and quickly start moving.

Looking back towards the light one giving orders talks out loud to himself, "I don't know what you found Joseph but may the Lords stand behind us in this."

Chapter XX: Setting Overview

The basic run down of the setting.

Chapter XX: Character Creation

Creating a Character

Concept

This is the basic overview of what your character is about boiled down to a sentence or two. In MotG the characters are one of three things; a Cavalier, a Cleric or a Priest. Be sure to include this in your characters concept.

> "A Cavalier who has gone from a farm boy to a proud swordsman for the church."
> "A Cleric from a wealthy family who still hasn't adjusted to a life of service."
> "A Priest with a meticulous fascination for writings of the church and their meanings."

This gives you a good idea of how you want them to be before you start filling out any of the details.

Traits

Each character has four traits. One will be their Central Trait and will be the one that defines who they are hearkening back to their Concept. The next two will be their Side Traits which act as additional skills or characteristics. Of these first three one will be chosen as Superior and will receive a higher rating than the rest. Finally there is a Flaw or disadvantage that has a chance to come up in play to hinder the character. Each of these four traits will have a Sign, some visible or tangible aspect of that trait that others can notice.

Central Trait

First, you have one Central Trait, essentially the identity of your character – who she is and what they do. In MotG the name of your central trait is based on what your character is in the church, Cavalier, Cleric or Priest. However there is more to it than just the name as this trait takes into account a variety of aptitudes, skills and characteristics. You will be adding a sentence of description help make your chosen Trait different than somebody else who chooses the same.

A Central Trait includes the name followed by a description, then in parentheses sign(s) that are associated with the trait. At the end will be a number indicating the number of dice that are assigned to the trait, which is four for your Central. The description is where you would want to place any extra

bits to set yourself apart from others of the same trait.

"Cavalier – Trained to fight with most melee weapons but excels at the battle ax, known for his brutality against foes, demonic and mortal. (Always carries his ax with the Lords symbol on it) 4"

In MotG each concept also receives other training as well. More on what all they know along with more sample signs can be found in the concept write ups at the end of the chapter.

Side Trait

After your have finished with your central identifying trait you move on and pick two side traits. These may or may not be related to your central trait. Also these are much more specific, representing discrete characteristics or skills. Now just because these are not your central trait does not mean they are less significant. Sometimes these may come up in play more often or really set off how your character behaves.

A side trait also includes the name, followed by a description, then in parentheses sign(s) that are associated with the trait and finally a number at the end indicating the number of dice rolled. In this case the number could be either a 3 or 1 but more on that in a moment. Common side traits could be things like these:
        "Tough – Resist poisons, pain and fatigue (big boned) 3"
        "Farmer – Knows how to grow and maintain food (talks about the seasons, harvests, etc) 3"
        "Fast Hands – Quick reflexes and can manipulate her hands well (constantly rolling a coin over her fingers) 3"

More About Traits

The GM has the call to veto or edit any that she judges out of order. Most will be fine with traits like those listed above or ones like "Exceptionally tough", but disallow ones that overstep like "Completely impervious to all manner of attack, damage, threat to live, or heartache.". After all they are trying to keep the game balanced to a certain point.

When naming your traits take some time and try to be unique if you can. If your character is to have a way with words, is she "well spoken," "manipulative," or "silver tongued"? While these distinctions may seem very small but they can affect your perception of the character and can may change the way their abilities are used in special circumstances.

Scores for Traits

Now you have your three positive traits along with the number for the central trait. Next we need to assign the scores to each of the side traits. To do this you must determine if they are standard or technical traits. If it is standard than you get a score of 3, if it's technical you get a score of 1.

The difference between the two has a lot to do with how common it could be and if somebody could do the same thing without any training. Traits that have to do with physical or mental abilities can be safely assumed to be standard (GM discretion of course) and would come in at a 3. Other abilities like cooking, public speaking and such would also be standard as they can be learned with a little practice or come naturally to some. But traits like surgeon, blacksmith and fletcher would be technical because it takes time and commitment to learn them. Anybody else would get zero dice when attempting to do

any or these and your character gets a one to show they have been trained but haven't had the necessary time to get more experience.

Later in the game all traits, including ones rated as technical, can be raised with experience points. Just be sure to have perform actions in game that could used as a reason for the raise.

Flaws

Once your three positive traits have been chosen and properly scored it's time to move on to the last trait and choose a flaw. A flaw is any disadvantage that your character will have in play. It must be important enough that it actually comes up in play and makes a difference. Ideally it should be something that can be tied back to your central or side traits rather than a tack-on disadvantage. However sometimes something completely unconnected may occur and with proper reasoning with your GM it will be allowed.

A flaw hurts your ability to roll well when it comes up in play. It causes you to take a penalty die. When this happens you add a die to the total number rolled and then when totaling up the result you remove the highest number from the bunch. Example: You are rolling for a trait which is scored at a 3 when the flaw comes into play. So you take the three dice for the trait, add another for the flaw and then roll. If the results were a 6, 4, 3 and a 1 you would then drop the 6 and your roll result would be the total of the remaining three.

A flaw includes the name of the trait followed by a description, then in parentheses the sign(s) that are associated with it. There is no score number attached to a flaw as they all grant the one penalty die.

"Nervous Speaker – Has trouble talking in front of groups of people and starts to stutter and lose track of what they want to say. (Goes silent when around more than two other people and doesn't speak unless they have to)"
"Rage – Hates demons with a passion and loses their cool when dealing with one in any way. (Gets very angry quickly when talking about demons, full on red face yelling may occur)"

Signs

For each trait, including your flaw, describe one sign related to it that others can notice. These are added in to help you describe your character when other meet them so physical visual signs are the best. That way you can say "I'm a tall slim man with a badge of the lord hanging around my neck and a crossbow slung across my back on a worn strap." which sounds much better than "I'm a slim cleric who can use a crossbow". Some signs are not always apparent. They may appear when you use the trait in question, or only occasionally.

Faith

Faith is a representation of your characters overall belief in the ability of the Lord acting through them. It may be used by Clerics when using their prayers or by Cavaliers for special attacks when in combat with demonic foes. All starting characters begin with a Faith of 2. Most GPCs start off at a 0, while they believe in the Lord they do not believe in Him enough that he gives them abilities. Some GPCs will have a score of 1, they are the true believers who haven't gone over to full service of the church.

Hit Points

A representation of the amount of punishment, damage and pain you can take and still keep going. The more hit points you have the harder they will have to beat on you to take you down.

Hit points are determined by any trait that you may have that is relevant to fighting, toughness, strength, mass, or other aspect of your character that indicates the ability to take damage. You then get 7 points for every die in the score of that trait. Cavaliers would automatically use their central trait and get 28 hit points. Others would use their side traits and get 21 for a standard score of 3. If they have no trait that seems fitting for this use, or only a technical trait fits, then they would get a 14. The character may have more than one trait that fit and in that case you would use the highest.

Once you've determined hit points, attach a descriptive word or phrase to them to represent what they mean for your character. Some examples could be "brawn" to show sheer physical resilience, or "guts" for those who push through by force of will. It could also have a slightly negative outlook if you like such as "big and dumb", it adds to the personality of the character and since it's not a flaw doesn't risk a penalty die.

Experience Pool

At character creation you start with one die in your experience pool. This means that once per game session you can use this die as a bonus die on any roll you make, improving your chances for success. A bonus die works by adding another die to your roll and then dropping the lowest one when totaling the result. However once you use this die you cannot use it again for the rest of the session.

The experience die represents your experience, will, wits and special circumstances. Therefore you must justify the use of the die in these terms. For example, to block a sword thrust you might say, "I've been locking blades with these guys all week and I'm getting use to how they attack." If the GM does not tell you what a roll is for, you cannot use an experience die to modify it because you cannot justify its use.

As the series progresses and your character becomes more experienced the GM will award you with more dice for your experience pool. That means you can improve more of your rolls per session but still with the rule of only one bonus die per roll. Once one is used it cannot be used for the rest of the session.

As you gain more dice in your pool, you can "trade them in" for improved traits. See the rules for experience later in this section.

Awarding Experience Pool Dice

Awarding these dice is entirely up to the GM. They are best awarded to pace the progression of play. If you want things to slow down then award few and put the emphasis on the real world accomplishments of the PCs. They become more powerful mostly through figuring out who to trust, how to get things done and making a reputation for themselves. If you want the series to move quickly then award plenty of dice. The more dice the PCs get the better they will be able to handle deeper and more dangerous plots. When in doubt, award the dice.

These are actions for which the GM can award dice to the PCs:

- Doing things. A full session of talking, being lied to, fighting, sneaking, watching your back, watching the backs of your companions, following clues and so forth should be worth a die. Unless the PC was generally incompetent.
- Succeeding at some major task, such as solving a mystery, neutralizing an enemy, or gaining a hard-won prize.
- Getting severely torqued, betrayed, tricked and jerked around... but surviving to tell about it. "Experience is what you get when you don't get what you want."
- Executing a brilliant maneuver. If a PC dumbfounds you by thinking his way out of certain death or manipulating a situation the way a pianist manipulates a keyboard. Another die for the pool is a concrete way to acknowledge the feat.
- Excellent role-playing. A player who breathes life into a sheet of paper (the PC) adds depth and wonder to the series. Again, awarding a die acknowledges this proficiency.

In general, one die should be awarded for each session of worthy play, plus dice for any exceptional accomplishments.

Motivation

Choose a motivation for your character. Why did she decide to join the churches services? What are they hoping to accomplish? What are their long term goals in the church? The character might not be fully aware of his own motivation. A good motivation inspires your character to action so the GM can use it to involve you in events. But also beware of motivations that will make your character hard to play.

Remember motivations can be something that you can achieve, a goal, something you can finally accomplish. But remember not to make it overly easy and you reach that point in a couple of sessions. Of course your GM may make it incredibly hard to reach even the easiest of things.

Important Person

Choose one person who was important in your characters past, and decide how that person was important to you. It could be someone you know personally, or merely someone you admire. Church leaders, a relative, historical figures all can fit into this.

Background and Equipment

Fill in any extra details about your characters background. A few simple notes should suffice, maybe what type of background they came from before joining the church or relationship with their family members.

Each starting character will be given starting equipment as per their concept. You can find the three concepts and all these details listed at the end of this chapter. You may also make a list of extra equipment that you think your character may carry with them and submit it to the GM for approval.

GM Approval

The GM should look over every character before approving it for play. Look out for traits that would take control of the series out of your hands and place it in the hands of a single player. The GM can veto or edit these as they see fit.

THE THREE CONCEPTS

Cavalier

You are the sword arm of the church in the cities and small towns. Chosen for your physical strength and endurance to be the first to take the fight to the followers of the dark. While you may not always be the leader you are always in the front when there is danger about. Weapons at the ready, armor carefully maintained and the courage to go nose to nose with anything that dares to stand against the church.

Starting equipment: Shield, one handed sword or axe, a two handed sword or axe, 2 daggers, full set of plate mail, two sets of robes, two sets of commoners clothing, outdoor lodging pack (tent, flint and tender, etc), 2 water skins, a steel bound copy of the 'Lords Word', a good horse bred stout for battle.

Training. You are trained in hand to hand fighting, weapon based combat, and using a shield. During character creation pick three weapons that you are specialized in and you gain a bonus die when using them in combat. Very basic first aid like being able to stop a minor bleeding wound and dressing it properly is also something you know, but not anything more complex like setting a broken bone, administering stitches or tending to more serious injuries. Fighting from horseback you are able to use your full amount of dice from your trait.

Blessing in Combat

Blade of the Avenger – Only usable when in combat with obvious demonic creatures. Roll your Faith, on a score above a 7 this affects your next two hits, on a score of an 11 or higher it affects your hits for the remainder of this combat. When rolling to attack if you roll a six you keep that number and roll again adding that additional number to your attack roll as well. If the extra roll is also a six you do the same thing and reroll again. There is no upper limit that you could roll with these attacks.

Shield to my Companions – Only usable when in combat with obvious demonic creatures. Roll your Faith, on a score above an 8 this effect takes place for the next two rounds of combat. All of your companions have their armor rating level raised to the next level of heavier armor but do not suffer the penalties of that rating level.

Cleric

You are the armed healers of the church. Those who have sworn to take blood in order to preserve lives. While not as trained in the ways of arms to the point of Cavaliers you are able to fight. What you can do is call upon the aid of the Lord to grant abilities that can heal some and hurt others. Demons tremble at your words and are burned by your faith. Do well to make them fear your name.

Starting equipment: One handed sword or axe, Shield, 2 daggers, full set of chain mail, two sets of robes, two sets of commoners clothing, outdoor lodging pack, 2 water skins, a steel bound copy of the 'Lords Word', a steel badge of the Lords Sigil, a healers pack (bandages, stitches, splint, etc) and a good horse bred for travel.

Training. You are trained in fighting with one handed weapons and using a shield. During character creation pick a weapon that you are specialized in and your gain a bonus die when using it in combat, or choose a shield instead and gain a bonus die when using it in defense. Most of your training has been toward tending to the wounded, from setting bones, to diagnosing internal injuries, you are the go to person for the injured.

Prayers

Hearing the evil lurking within – The Cleric must stand motionless while quietly saying the prayer. Only works on people who are visible to the character. Roll your Faith. On a 6 or higher you can tell if somebody withing a group is of an evil nature but you cannot tell whom or how powerful the evil is. On a 9 or higher you can tell if the evil is weak (a person simply loyal to a demon) powerful (demon in disguise, things like that). On a 12, as a 9 or higher but you also know exactly which person it is.

Healing those of Faith – Lay hands on a wounded person and roll your Faith. On a 7 or higher they roll their Faith and gain back Hit Points equal to their roll. On an 11 or higher they roll their Faith plus a Bonus die. Also on an 11 or higher a person with 0 Faith will roll 1 die plus a penalty die and recover that in Hit Points.

Priest

You are the voice of the church. One who travels far and wide to help maintain the faith of the Lord in the people. Every town is a flock that needs tending and dedications reaffirmed. By your words even the governors have to listen and obey. Giving the people a chance to repent their sins, report those who are in league with the dark and putting hope in all of those who stand by the light. You may also be called upon and asked to perform various ceremonies such as weddings, blessing of children and laying the dead to rest.

Starting equipment: One handed sword, 1 dagger, full set of heavy cloth armor, two sets of robes, two sets of commoners clothing, one set of formal prayer robes, outdoor lodging pack, 2 water skins, a steel bound copy of the 'Lords Word', a steel badge of the Lords Sigil, a compact set of equipment for leading mass (incense, candles, oils of anointment, thurible, etc) and a good horse bred for travel.

Training. You are trained in fighting with a one handed sword, gain a bonus die when using it in combat. Most of your training has been toward knowledge of the Lords Word and maintaining the flock through sermons and relating studies of the books chapters to those who serve.

Maintaining the flock

Calling Forth the Truth. During a sermon you ask a question to those in attendance. Usually one that is about something secret or that they don't speak of normally. Roll your Faith. On a 6 or higher you know that they are hiding something but you are unsure who is. On a 9 or higher anyone with knowledge of the answer will be visibly uncomfortable (fidgeting, sweating, etc). On a twelve or higher anyone with knowledge to the answer will yell it forward for all to hear.

Curing the Sick. During a sermon you ask for a sick person to be brought forward. Placing a hand on their forehead you pray for their recovery. Roll your Faith. On a 6 or higher the person feels relief from their symptoms for a D6 of days. On a 9 or higher the person feels relief from their symptoms

and within a week is healed. On a 12 or higher the person is completely cured on the spot.

Chapter Two: Basic Mechanics

These are the rules for play, how to tell if you succeed or rail at the various tasks and efforts your characters attempt. The mechanics for combat are covered in their own section.

General Actions

Whenever your character tries to do something, the GM will respond in one of three ways depending on the difficulty of the task. She will either judge it Automatic, Chancy or Impossible. Automatic means you perform the task without a roll while Impossible means you cannot perform the action by any means and you don't get a roll. Chancy means that there is a possibility that you may or may not succeed.

Chancy Actions

Roll some dice and add up the numbers, the better you roll the better the result. Specifically, your total is compared to some other number. This results in three possible outcomes.

1) Your total beats the number. Whatever it was you were trying to do, you did it. The more you beat the number by the greater the success achieved, as ruled by the GM.
2) Your total equals the number. Draw, stalemate, or inconclusive results are indicated.
3) Your total is less than the number. You fail at whatever it was you were trying to do. The more you rolled under the number by the more severe the failure, as ruled by the GM.

How Many Dice Do You Roll?

Generally, you roll two, three, or four dice, depending on the action and your traits. If you are trying something that directly involves one of your traits then you roll the number of dice equal to your score in that trait. If the action has nothing to do with any of your traits, you roll two dice. That means an average person attempting an average task rolls two dice.

For example, a Cleric is trying to sway a crowd to back their cause. He has the trait "Well spoken" with a score of 3, so the GM tells him to roll three dice. The higher the number, the more the crowd sides with him. A normal person would only get to roll two dice. While somebody with the negative trait "Aversion to large crowds" would roll two dice plus suffer a penalty die as well. Now if he were a Priest swaying a crowd is part of their central trait and they would have gotten to roll four dice.

If you try something at which you have some kind of edge or advantage, you get a bonus die. (These bonus dice are awarded by the GM in the situation and do not come from your experience pool). Roll it right along with your normal dice, but drop out the lowest die you roll. Your total is still composed of the same number of dice as normal, but they're likely to be higher rolling dice. That's how your advantage translates into game mechanics.

If you try something at which you have some special difficulty or hindrance, roll a penalty die along with you regular dice. Now drop out the highest rolling die and use the total of the remaining dice as your roll.

If you get a bonus and a penalty die for the same roll, they cancel each other out and you roll normally. You can use an experience die to cancel a penalty die as well, but then you cannot use the die again for the rest of the gaming session.

The GM is sole person who makes the decision on whether or not you receive a bonus or penalty die. However you can ask for a bonus die when you think you deserve one. After all the GM can't keep track of everything about every character.

Comparing Your Roll

There are two ways to determine what number to compare to your die roll.

When you are working against an inert force the GM assigns a Difficulty Factor. That's the number to which you compare your roll, and the more difficult the task the higher the Difficulty Factor.

Task	Difficulty Factor
Easy	4
Moderate	7
Hard	11
Really Difficult	14
Near Impossible	18+

When working against an active opponent, the opponent roll a number of dice just like you do. The amount is figured the same way based on their traits and bonus or penalty dice, if any. You and the opponent compare your rolls, with the specific results determined by the GM. Generally, the higher roll wins.

For example a character is trying to argue scripture with the head of local church. He in turns argues his side back and tries to prove that his is the correct way. Each has four dice. If either of them have been studying that particular section lately they would gain a bonus die, if either has something like 'bad memory' or similar flaw then they would get a penalty die. The player and the GM (running the other character) each roll their dice, and then the GM interprets the results depending on who beat whom.

Note that the GM need not tell you what she rolls for a GMC, or even how many dice she is rolling. The GM only needs to tell you the results of your action as your character perceives them.

A Special Case: Technical Traits

With technical skills (such as surgeon), even a score of 1 die indicates the character can do things that the average person would have practically no chance to do. (the average person has a score of 0 in surgeon) A 1 die might not be very skilled or experienced, but he is still able to do things that even a score of 3 or 4 in another skill would not permit. Assume that someone with such a skill can automatically perform any related action that an unskilled person could do but would have to roll for, as well as most normal functions related to that skill. Generally, a character only rolls for a technical trait in some unusual situation or when performing it under extreme duress.

The Rule Of Common Sense

Sometimes the dice will dictate an event that runs counter to common sense, something that would strain the players' willing suspension of disbelief. There are two possibilities when this happens.

First, remember that strange things happen all the time in-game. Go with the result, no matter how bizarre. Maybe the GM will invent a justification for it, maybe not. But roll with the weirdness and keep the game moving.

Second, don't bother to roll the dice in the first place, if common sense makes it clear what's going to happen. The dice are a way to answer the question "What happens?" Don't ask questions that you already know the answer to.

The GM has quite a job determining just what is "common sense." Make the job easy for her and don't argue when she makes a ruling.

The Hand of Fate

Sometimes a chancy situation develops in which no trait truly applies, but the outcome is uncertain. In this case, roll two dice. A high roll means a result good for the players, a roll around 7 means a mediocre or average result, and a lower roll means a bad or dangerous result.

For example you can use this for determining the weather when the characters are planning a ceremony. It could also be used to see just how sturdy that rope bridge is or if a torch is going to last through the night.

Multiple Actions

You may attempt more than one action in a round, but by doing so you take a penalty on each action. If you attempt one extra action, you suffer a penalty die on all actions (including defense rolls). If you attempt two extra actions, you roll one fewer die on all actions undertaken in that round. Three extra actions means two fewer dice than normal, four extra actions means three fewer dice, and so on.

Tangential Traits

Sometimes you have a trait that does not exactly apply to the task at hand. In this case, the GM may allow a bonus die (if the trait is 3 dice) or an extra die (if the trait is 4 dice or better).

For example, consider a Priest with 3 dice in 'swordsman'. This trait covers the use of a sword in combat, taking care of it, things such as that. If she tries to use an axe in it's place because it's the only weapon at hand then she would get her two regular dice plus a bonus die. That's better than average but not as good as someone with the trait 'Axe fighter'.

Group Efforts

When working together PCs can improve (or sometimes decrease) their chances of success. Depending on how well a given task can be accomplished by more than one person, the GM can call for one of the

following resolution systems.

Simple Addition.

In tasks that two people can easily do simultaneously without getting in each others way, add the dice of both characters together.

For example, two characters are trying to lift a stone that's covering an entrance to some underground passage. The GM decides that a roll of 13 is necessary to move it. (That means an average person wouldn't have a chance of moving it alone.) They each get two dice for brute strength, and they roll a 4 and a 10, for a total of 14. They move the stone and descend into the darkness.

Combining Dice

In tasks where two can work together effectively, but not perfectly, roll all the dice and take the highest, a number equal to the number normally rolled by the best of the cooperating characters. (Effectively, the dice rolled by lesser characters become bonus dice for the best)

For example, two characters find a cache of ancient texts, partially translated into barely coherent English. Under time pressure, they rush through the texts looking for something useful. He rolls four dice, she rolls two, and they take the best four dice between them to see how much information they can glean quickly.

Either/Or

Sometimes characters split up a task so that only one of them (determined randomly) has a chance for success. In this case, all the PCs might roll, but only the one with a real chance for success counts.

For example, two characters decide to quickly search the bodies of their fallen enemies for anything of interest. Each PC searches half the bodies, so only one will even have a chance to find the note hidden in one's pocket. The GM rolls and determines that the second character is searching the relevant body. Being perceptive, she rolls three dice plus a penalty die for the darkness of the chamber, she gets an 8, good enough. Meanwhile, the first character rolls a 4, and the GM tells him he found nothing. He doesn't know that there wasn't anything for him to find anyways.

Worst Roller

When two or more characters attempt something that should really be left to one of them, they all roll, and the worst roll is used to determine the result.

For example, two characters are trying to bluff their way past a guard patrol while they are dressed as common peasants. The first character pretends to be happy to see them and launches into a tale about how they're lost. Hoping to help, the second character speaks up and adds some details. In this case you would have both players roll, whoever scored the lowest determines the results. Now if they had came up with a story before hand and rehearsed it a bit then they would probably be using the 'combining dice' resolution instead.

Experience

Through experience, you can improve your skills or learn new ones. Your experience is represented by your experience pool. At the end of every game session, the GM can award bonus dice to the characters who partook in the action, and these dice are added to your experience pool, as previously explained. In addition, you can "spend" the dice from your experience pool to buy new skills or improve ones you already have. Each kind of improvement requires a certain number of dice that are permanently lost from your pool and some action in the game world. The GM must approve every trait improvement, and you can improve a trait any time immediately after meeting the requirement.

Developing a New Trait

It costs 5 dice from your pool plus game-world experience to develop a new trait. If the trait is something casual, such as brawling or reading people, you can pick it up without any special training. If it is technical or specialized, such as blacksmith or calligraphy, you need some kind of training.

Once you have satisfied the need for training (if any) and spent the dice from your experience pool, you have one die better than normal in your new trait. If it is a technical trait, you have a score of 1 with the trait. If the trait is standard, something most people can do, if not well, then you now have a score of 3.

You cannot develop a new central trait in this manner. Once you have chosen your core concept at the beginning of the game you are stuck with it for it takes many years of dedication and training to learn it.

Traits that are not subject to easy development might require more than a little training. For example, you cannot gain the trait "strong" just by mucking around in the fight for a while. If you want to develop a trait such as "strong," you might need to undertake intense training over weeks, and a regular exercise regimen to maintain your strength once you have developed it.

Use your common sense when deciding what it takes to develop a new trait.

Invent a sign for each trait you develop.

Improving a Current Trait

For a trait listed as 1 or 2 dice, you can increase the score by 1 for every 5 experience dice you spend. Once a score is at 3 or higher, however, it becomes much harder to improve.

First, you definitely need training to raise any score to 4. This training takes at least a year, if you are carrying on other activities at the same time, or six months, if you are training full time. In addition to the training, you must spend 10 experience dice.

Raising any trait to 5 requires highly specialized, nearly full-time training. You might be able to undertake an adventure or two while training, however you will not have time for much else like social events and such. The training may also cost quite a bit to hire a qualified trainer, and even then finding that qualified trainer will be difficult. In addition to the training, you will need to spend 15 experience dice.

Raising a score to 6 is pretty much beyond the scope of the rules. It may not even be possible. Getting such a high score is a matter of roleplaying rather than rule-playing.

Of course, some skills lend themselves to gradual development over years of time. It is possible to develop a score of 6 in a skill just by applying yourself single-mindedly for years on end, but that's out of the scope of the game, wouldn't you say?

These guidelines are for increasing your side or learned traits. Increasing you core concept trait is another matter altogether. It requires years of dedication to the church in your role, along with a large amount of experience dice and in the end is up to the whim of the GM. It should not, under any circumstance be something that is done easily.

Special abilities listed under with your core concept that you did not choose during character creation cost 10 experience dice and plenty of study under someone who knows the ability.

Faith increases are an award by the GM to the player. There is no spending of experience dice required. However it is again something not to be handed out lightly. The highest score for PC's in Faith is a 5.

Increasing Hit Points

If your trait relates to hit points, you may earn more hit points by developing the trait or increasing your score in it.

If this trait is the only one on which your hit points are based (or if you had no traits to improve your hit points), you may take +7 hit points or roll two dice and add the result.

If another trait besides this one had a hand in improving your hit points, then roll double the number of dice that your newly improved trait offers. This is your new hit points score. (You may not raise your hit points by more than 12 points by this method.)

For example, if a character works out and develops the trait "strong, 3 dice," he can roll 6 dice. If this total beats his current hit points of 22, he gets the new roll as his hit points. If he manages to beat the odds and roll 35 or 36, however, he only gets to keep 34 hit points, 12 better than his previous score.

Chapter Three: Combat

Combat Overview

<u>Initiative</u>: Roll a combat, agility, or speed trait at the beginning of a combat. Actions proceed each round from highest roller to lowest.

<u>Attack</u>: Roll a combat, strength, agility, or similar trait. Compare it to the defender's roll. A non-combat trait can only be used for either attack or defense each round. You hit your opponent if you beat your opponent's defense role.

<u>Defense</u>: Roll a combat, agility, or similar trait. A noncombat trait can only be used for either attack or defense each round. You get one defense roll for each attack made against you.

<u>Damage</u>: On a successful hit, subtract the defense roll from the attack roll. Multiply the result by the weapon's damage factor to calculate the damage done.

<u>Armor</u>: The defender determines armor protection (usually 1 point for casual armor, or one or two dice for good armor). Subtract this protection value from damage done to get damage taken.

<u>Lost Hit Points</u>: Subtract the damage that exceeds armor from the target's hit points. If the target is at half hit points or below, they take a penalty die on further actions. If at 0 hit points or below, the target is out of the fight. If at a level of hit points equal to the negative of their normal hit points (e.g. -21 for a character with 21 hit points) they are purchasing agricultural real estate.

<u>Recovery</u>: After a chance to rest and recuperate (maybe half an hour), you recover half the hit points you lost. After that, you recover only by rest or medical care.

<u>Damage Factors</u>

Unarmed	X1
Throwing Knife	X1
Knives, clubs, thrown axe, crossbow	X2
Swords, axes, etc	X3
Large Swords, axes, etc	X4

Combat

The rules above rely a lot on common sense, the GM's ability to adjudicate ambiguous results, and your good natured acceptance of the GM's rulings. In combat, when things happen fast and your life is on the line, you probably need more specific rules. Here they are.

Movement In Combat

Sometimes you will want to know just how long it takes to get from one place to another. Assuming a 3 second round, you can move at the following speeds.

Walking (3 km/h)	2.5 m/round

Hurrying (6 km/h)	5 m/round
Jogging (9 km/h)	7.5 m/round
Running, steady (12 km/h)	10 m/round
Running, fast (18 km/h)	15 m/round
Sprinting (24 km/h)	20 m/round

For reference, remember that a "4 minute mile" means running at about 24 km/h for four minutes. Not many people can do it, though some can run that fast or faster for much shorter periods of time. Also remember that characters usually do not have light clothes, running shoes, a generous warm-up, and a clear track on which to run. That 24 km/h figure is impossible for most PCs in most situations.

Initiative

When the fight starts, each players rolls for initiative. Use whatever traits are appropriate. For example, traits such as "agile" "good reflexes" and "martial artist" count. Lacking any such trait, a character rolls 2 dice. The GM can roll for GMCs with one roll for simplicity's sake. The GM or a helpful player writes down the character from highest to lowest. This is the order in which they will act each round.

Or have each of the players act in the order they are seated around the table, with the GM acting first or last.

Rounds

Each round is long enough for each character to do one thing. That way everyone stays involved all the time. Generally, a round equals 3 seconds of action in the game world.

The GM calls on each player in turn, depending on their initiative rolls. When you are called, you get to do one thing that you could do in a few seconds, such as try to hurt somebody, run away, use an ability, scream for help, try desperately to patch a bleeding wound, find that necessary object in your backpack, or whatever. If you try to do too much, the GM will only let you perform part of the intended action. The most common thing players decide to do is to take a piece out of their oppenents.

You may also wait to act until later in the round, in which case you just interrupt when you want to take your turn. By waiting, you can coordinate a simultaneous action with another player. Such as attacking the same target, etc.

Attacks

When it is your turn to attack, roll your relevant attack trait, such as "Strong" "Martial Artist" or "Good with a Club." If you get a penalty or bonus die, add it in.

The target of your attack makes a defense roll, using traits such as "Fast on my feet" "Good Brawler" or "Slippery as an Eel".

Note: A non-combat trait cannot be used for both attack and defense in a single round. If you are "Agile," you must decide each round whether to use that trait for your attack or defense roll. A specifically combat oriented trait, such as "Good Knife-Fighter" can be used for both attack and defense rolls. This rule preserves game balance. Since a trait like "Agile" has non-combat applications

that "good knife-Fighter" does not have, it wouldn't be fair to allow such a broad trait to equal a strictly combat-oriented trait in a fight.

On the other hand, someone who is "Strong as an Ox" and has "Good Reflexes" to boot could use "Strong as an Ox" for the attack roll and "Good Reflexes" for the defense roll.

So you've rolled your attack roll and the other guy has rolled defense. Compare the numbers. If your attack roll is less than or equal to the defense roll, you have failed to connect for significant damage. If your attack roll is higher than the target's defense roll, you've scored a hit and will do damage. Subtract the defender's (lower) roll fro your (higher) roll. Multiply the result by the damage factor for the weapon you are using, and the total is the damage you have just dished out.

Bear in mind that making an attack roll does not represent a single swing or lunge; it represents three seconds of trying to get the other guy. A high roll might mean that you have pounded your opponent in the head several times, not just once.

Ranged Attacks

For missile weapons like bows and crossbows, the system is a little different because it is harder to hit someone at a distance with a single shot than it is to stab somebody next to you during three seconds of your best effort. With missile weapons, the target receives a defense roll based on such factors as range, movement, cover, and so on. The GM assigns the defense roll, based on the factors in the "Ranged Attacks" table.

The distance terms are highly subjective as they depend on the type of weapon being used. The Weapon Ranges chart lists the range in meters at which the target receives various defense dice, based on the type of weapon used. If the distance in meters exceeds the number listed, use the next higher number of dice. For example, if someone fires an arrow at you while you are 30 m away, you will get 3 defense dice for range, in addition to dice for dodging, moving, cover, and so on.

Ranged Attacks Table

Distance	Defense Dice
Point Blank	1
Short Range	2
Medium	3
Long Range	4
Very Long Range	5

Other Modifiers	
Cover	1 or 2
Target Moving	1
Attacker Moving	1
Target Dodging	bonus *
Darkness, fog, etc	1 or 2

* Defender gets bonus dice equal to the number of dice normally rolled for "Agility," "Quick Reflexes," etc. (The default is 2 dice.) Someone with "fast, 4 dice," for example, would receive 4 bonus dice on the defense roll. A clumsy character receives only one bonus die for dodging.

The target rolls the number of dice indicated from among the above factors as his defense roll.

Weapons Ranges

Dice for Defense Roll

Weapon	1	2	3	4	5
Thrown, balanced	2m	4m	8m	16m	32m
Thrown, awkward	2m	4m	6m	8m	10m
Crossbow/bow	2m	10m	20m	40m	80m

Weapon Range Table Notes

To find the "distance dice," find the number that is equal to or higher than the distance to the target. Now find the number at the top of that column, that's the number of "distance dice" rolled for defense. For example, if you throw a throwing knife ("thrown, balanced") at someone from 6m away, the target gets 3 dice for the defense roll (plus other modifiers besides distance).

If the GM wishes, she can use "half dice" when characters do not deserve a full dice under the rules above. For instance, someone under very light cover might just get a bonus die instead of an extra die on defense, or someone standing 5m from a knife-thrower might get 2 dice plus a bonus die for range, rather than jumping straight from 2 dice to 3 because of the difference between 4m and 5m.

Some weapons may, at the GM's option, have ranges different from their general types, based on design. After all some weapons are just better than others.

Predictable Attacks

If you ever make a predictable or boring attack on an opponent, the GM has the right to give you a penalty die on the attack. Here are some examples:

Penalty die: "I swing at it"

No penalty die: "I pull back for an all out blow at the thing's lower face."

Penalty die: "I try to hit it in the gut again." (after trying the same thing the round before)

No penalty die: "Well, it's gut is pretty well protected; I'll drop to the ground and sweep its feet out from under it."

There are two reasons for this rule. First, if you try the same attack repeatedly or attack without planning (as evinced by phrases like "I swing"), then your opponents are going to have an easy time defending themselves. Second, "I swing" is boring.

The "predictable attacks" rule does not apply to GMCs.

How Much Damage

If you've scored a hit, now you take the difference between your roll and the defender's, multiply it by

a damage factor (see below), and the result is the number of points done in damage. Certain types of armor subtract a certain number from each attack that does damage. Only the points in excess of the armor's rating can do damage. These points are deducted from the target's hit points.

Damage Factors

Unarmed	X1
Throwing Knife	X1
Knives, clubs, thrown axe, crossbow	X2
Swords, axes, etc	X3
Large Swords, axes, etc	X4

<u>Messed Up</u>

If the target is now at half or less their normal hit points, they suffer a penalty die on all actions until they recover to more than half their normal hit points. The GM may assign more specific debilities for characters that have received specific wounds, such as decreased mobility from a knee shot, decreased vision from a blow to the eye, and so on.

<u>Down for the Count</u>

If the target is at 0 hit points or below, they are out of the fight. "Out of the fight" can mean a lot of things, depending on the type of weaponry used and the number of points below 0 that the target is at.

When you have taken enough damage to be out of the fight, but not enough to kill you outright, you may find yourself in any of various states of disrepair.

Someone dropped to 0 by fists and kicks is likely hurt, unable to fight, demoralized, in great pain, and probably suffering some broken bones. The situation, however, is rarely lethal, and most vital organs are well-protected by a body structure carefully shaped by millions of years of evolution. Such an injured character should be able to return to impaired function with time or the help of friends and eventually recover completely.

Someone at 0 or below from application of clubs, cudgels, monkey wrenches and the like may well have badly broken bones and internal bleeding, but they're likely to be in stable condition. They might be able to resume mobility after a while even if left on their own, though they might have a concussion.

Knives, swords and other sharp, pointy things are likely to leave you incapacitated and bleeding. Untended, you could easily bleed to death (especially from a slashing weapon) or die from internal injuries (especially from a puncturing weapon).

Character Death

As a rule of thumb, a character dies when he has taken twice as many points of damage as he has hit points. If you have 21 hit points and drop to -21 through wounds, you are either dead or checking out. In order to survive, you need medical attention and a reason to live.

At that point, you face the decision of recovering or letting go. Attempting to recover means piecing your broken body back together, suffering prolonged pain, possibly facing permanent injury, and

perhaps dying anyway after undergoing all that tribulation. Letting go is often the easier option, letting yourself slip into the great white light, where the damage inflicted on your body will not be an issue at all. At the point of death, you can only direct your will to recover if you have a good reason to live. Tell your reason to live to the GM; if she agrees it is sufficient, you live. Otherwise, you slip off into the great beyond. (Of course, the GM may wish to make a roll or two when deciding whether you live.)

Armor

The rating for armor represents the number of dice rolled and deducted from each attack.

At the very lightest level of heavy cloth you do not get a die to roll, but instead simply gain one point of protection. At the higher levels you get dice and sometimes a bonus die.

Heavier armor also come with a cost. Whenever you attempt to make any sort of agility or movement based action while wearing the armor you take a penalty die for the action. This includes attack and defense rolls.

The protection offered by armor is cumulative, but "stacking" armor causes a penalty die for each extra layer of armor work. For example, someone wearing leathers under their plate would roll 3 dice plus a bonus die but they would also suffer two penalty dice on agility related actions (one for the full plate and the other for the extra layer of armor).

Armor can be exposed to some pretty rough treatment, and may degrade after suffering significant punishment. But this circumstance is best left to role-playing rather than number-crunching.

Type	Rating	Penalty
Heavy cloth	1 point	no
Leathers	1	no
Chain	1 plus bonus die	no
Partial plate	2	yes
Full plate mail	2 plus bonus die	yes

Shields

Shields are a special case in armor since they don't reduce damage but instead have a chance in preventing it. They also come in two sizes; small and large. The use of a shield also prevents the character of using two handed weapons properly.

VS Missile combat. Shields add defense dice as 'cover'. Small providing 1 die and large providing 2 die. This is if the defender states they are using them for cover.

VS Melee combat. If the player states they are using them in combat they provide the following affects, otherwise they are simply strapped to their backs and provide nothing. Small shields add one die to your defense roll. Large shields add two dice to your defense roll but also add a penalty die to your attack roll as well.

Recovery

For game purposes, assume that about half of damage (in terms of hit points lost) comes from pain and

shock. Only the other half is "permanent." Thus, after a fight is over and the characters have some time to rest, every character recovers half of the lost hit points.

Hit Point Recovery Conventions

1) The character recovers hit points when the GM sees such recovery as reasonable. Generally, after a character receives some rudimentary first aid and has a chance to regain spent strength, the hit points return. Alternately, the GM may allow recovery under special circumstances, as when an impressive leader orders an incapacitated follower to get up and keep moving, or when dire need arises.

2) Hit point level after recovery is halfway between the wounded level and the last level after recovery. Do not use the starting (unwounded) level of hit points as a base unless the character started the fight unwounded. For example, a character takes 10 points of damage and drops from 22 to 12 hit points. He then recovers half the lost hit points and now has 17 hit points. Again he takes 10 points of damage, dropping to 7 hit points. He recovers to halfway between 7 and 17, not to half-way between 7 and his normal level of 22. He now has 12 hit points and will only get more through medical attention or prolonged rest.

3) Round hit points up, if half-way recovery results in a fraction. (This means that being wounded for 7 points twice will leave you 6 points down from normal, whereas being wounded for 14 points once will leave you 7 points below normal. Multiple small wounds are slightly easier to recover from than a few large wounds.)

4) The GM can require rolls of any kind to determine whether a character recovers. For example, if very little time has passed since a fight (normally not enough to allow any recovery), the GM may allow someone trained in first aid to make a roll, and only a success in the GM's eyes will allow hit point recovery.

5) The GM has the right to change the recovery from half-way to more or less than that. For example, it might be relatively easy to recover from being beaten with fists (two-thirds of the loss recovered), and relatively difficult to recover from serious gunshot wounds (one-third recovered). The GM has sole arbitrating power over this variation, so she can make the system as complex or as simple as she cares to.

Healing

Once a character has recovered, he can start regaining the remaining lost hit points. Hit points are regained each day, with the points regained based on the activity undertaken that day. See the Long-Term Healing table, below, to see how many hit points you recover each day.

Long-Term Healing Table

Activity	Mobile	Bed-Ridden	Critical
Active	0	-	-
Rest	1 per day	1 per 2 days	0
Medical Care	2 per day	1 per day	1 per 2 days

Active means exerting oneself normally.

Rest means taking it easy and sleeping a lot.

Medical care means being under the care of someone who knows how to treat injuries (such as a Cleric)

Mobile means you have 1+ hit points (and can move around)

Bed-Ridden means you have 0 or fewer hit points.

Critical means you are severely wounded (GM's option)

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