

DIRK RULES!

FOR TABLETOP FANTASY
ROLE-PLAYING

2+ PLAYERS AND REFEREE
PAPER, PENCILS AND DICE:
D4, D6, D8, D10, D12, D20

BY DIRK WITH A VENGEANCE

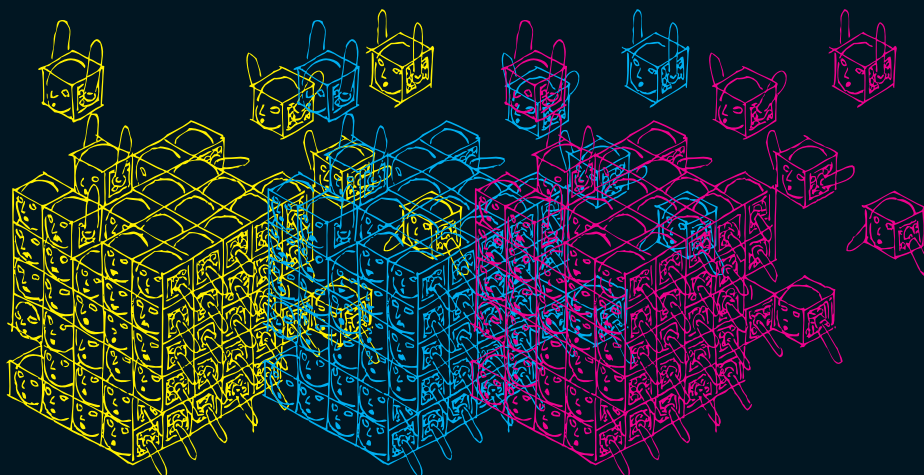
HOW TO PLAY

THE BASICS, IN BRIEF

- » THE REFEREE DESCRIBES AN IMAGINARY WORLD--OF THEIR OWN PREPARATION OR AS PROVIDED--AND SPEAKS FOR ALL NPCS (*NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS*)
- » EACH PLAYER EXPLORES THE WORLD THROUGH THEIR PC (*PLAYER CHARACTER*), ASKING QUESTIONS AND SAYING WHAT THEY DO
- » THE REFEREE ANIMATES THE WORLD AS THE PLAYERS INTERACT WITH IT, SAYING WHAT HAPPENS--BY THE ESTABLISHED RULES OR, MORE OFTEN, BY THEIR OWN JUDGEMENT

THE REFEREE

YOU HAVE A BIG JOB; YOUR RESULTS WILL DEPEND MORE ON YOUR OWN JUDGEMENT AND IMAGINATION THAN ON ANYTHING THIS TEXT CAN PROVIDE. WHEN THE TEXT OFFERS NO CLEAR ANSWERS, IT IS YOUR JOB TO MAKE THEM UP, AND TO WIN THE TRUST OF YOUR PLAYERS SUCH THAT WHAT YOU MAKE UP CAN BE BELIEVED. I FEAR THERE IS NO WAY TO RELIEVE YOU OF THIS BURDEN; YOUR ROLE AS A THOUGHTFUL ARBITER IS WHAT MAKES THIS TYPE OF PLAY WORTHWHILE, BUT IT REQUIRES SKILL AND PRACTICE. BEST OF LUCK.



STATS AND ROLLS

CHARACTER CAPABILITIES ARE MEASURED BY THREE **ABILITY SCORES**:

STR *MEASURES POWER, ATHLETICISM, TOUGHNESS AND VIGOR*

DEX *MEASURES SPEED, STEALTH, PRECISION AND REFLEXES*

WIL *MEASURES CHARISMA, KNOWLEDGE, MAGIC AND WILLPOWER*

WHEN A CHARACTER'S ACTIONS TEST THEIR ABILITIES,

THE REFEREE CAN CALL FOR A **SAVING THROW** (AKA **"SAVE"**):

ROLL A D20; A RESULT EQUAL TO OR BELOW THE RELEVANT ABILITY SCORE IS REQUIRED TO PASS.

ADVANCED THROWS (OPTIONAL)

- » IF THE SITUATION GIVES YOU SOME **ADVANTAGE**, ROLL TWICE AND TAKE THE BETTER RESULT
- » IF YOU ARE AT SOME **DISADVANTAGE**, INSTEAD ROLL TWICE AND TAKE THE WORSE RESULT
- » FOR **COMPLEX TESTS**, ROLL TWICE; IF BOTH PASS, YOU ACCOMPLISH YOUR GOAL. IF ONLY ONE PASSES, YOU ACCOMPLISH YOUR GOAL, BUT marginally: THE REFEREE MAY SPECIFY SOME COST, CHOICE OR COMPLICATION. IF NEITHER ROLL PASSES, EXPECT THE WORST
- » TO **ADJUST FOR DIFFICULTY**, THE REFEREE MAY IMPOSE A MODIFIER TO THE ABILITY SCORE FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE THROW:
TRIVIAL:+2 / DIFFICULT:-2 / LEGENDARY:-5 / UNPRECEDENTED:-10
- » FOR **CONTESTS BETWEEN CHARACTERS**, EACH ROLLS A D10 AND ADDS THEIR ABILITY SCORE; THE CHARACTER WITH THE HIGHER TOTAL WINS
- » FOR TESTS OF **PURE LUCK**, ROLL 10 OR LESS ON A D20 TO PASS

NON-COMBAT ACTIONS

EXPLORE (MINUTES)

- » THE BASIC MODE OF PLAY: INVESTIGATE YOUR SURROUNDINGS IN DETAIL, ASK QUESTIONS, TALK TO NPCs, SAY WHAT YOU DO

REST ACTIONS

SHORT REST (1 HOUR)

- » RESTORE ALL HP (*HIT POINTS*)

TEND ARMOR (1 HOUR)

- » RESTORE ALL AP (*ARMOR POINTS*)

FULL REST (1 DAY)

- » RESTORE ALL HP, AP AND DAMAGED ABILITY SCORES

LONG REST (1 WEEK)

- » RESTORE ALL HP, AP, ABILITY SCORES AND INJURIES

SKILL TRAINING (WEEKS)

- » LEARN A SKILL OR POWER FROM ANOTHER CREATURE, IF YOU CAN CONVINCE THEM TO TEACH YOU; THE REFEREE MUST SPECIFY TRAINING TIME AND REQUIREMENTS

PROJECT (WEEKS)

- » UNDERTAKE SOME MORE COMPLICATED OR PARTICULAR PLAN. SAY WHAT YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH; THE REFEREE MAY SPECIFY ANY NUMBER OF REQUIREMENTS AS APPROPRIATE (RESOURCES, TIME, EXPERTISE, LABOR OR OTHERWISE)

WHEN TIME PASSES, ROLL FOR EVENTS

WEEKS: D4 / DAYS: D10 / HOURS: D20 / MINUTES: D6+3

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. NEW OR ESCALATING THREAT* | 4. USEFUL DISCOVERY, UNDER GUARD |
| 2. USEFUL DISCOVERY, ABANDONED | 5. WANDERING ENCOUNTER |
| 3. EXTREME WEATHER | 6+ FORESHADOWING OF ONE OF THE ABOVE |

*THREATS REPRESENT THE LARGE-SCALE AGENDAS OF FACTIONS AND POWERFUL ENTITIES; EACH THREAT IS A COUNTDOWN OF 2-6 ESCALATING STEPS TOWARD SOME CALAMITY. SEE *SUPER BLOOD HARVEST #3* FOR EXAMPLE THREATS, DISCOVERIES, WEATHER AND ENCOUNTERS.

BATTLE

WHEN PRIORITY OF ACTION IS CONTESTED, CHARACTERS ACT IN **TURN ORDER**, STARTING WITH THE HIGHEST DEX.

ADVANCED INITIATIVE

- » SPEND HP TO RAISE YOUR DEX FOR THE PURPOSE OF TURN ORDER, 1-FOR-1

BEFORE THE START OF THE FIRST TURN, EACH CHARACTER WITH A READIED WEAPON CAN MAKE A FREE **QUICKFIRE ATTACK** AGAINST ANYONE IN RANGE.

DURING YOUR TURN, YOU CAN **MOVE** UP TO [DEX] YARDS*, AND TAKE ONE **ACTION**:

- » **ATTACK!** INFLICT DAMAGE PER YOUR WEAPON
- » **MISCELLANEOUS ACTION!** ANYTHING ELSE YOU MIGHT WANT TO DO WITH ABOUT 10 SECONDS*

ADVANCED ACTIONS

- » **CALLED SHOT!** DEX SAVE TO HIT SPECIFIC ANATOMY; IF YOUR DAMAGE EXCEEDS HALF THE TARGET'S STR, THEY MUST PASS A SAVE TO AVOID **INJURY**
- » **FEINT!** INFLICTS 1 DAMAGE; IF YOU PASS A WIL SAVE, THE NEXT ATTACK ON THE TARGET INFLICTS MAXIMUM DAMAGE
- » **GRAPPLE!** STR SAVE TO INITIATE OR SEIZE CONTROL OF A GRAPPLE
 - SACRIFICE YOUR **MOVE** OR **ACTION** EACH TURN TO MAINTAIN THE GRAPPLE; TAKING ANY **REACTION** ENDS IT IMMEDIATELY
 - GRAPPLED CREATURES CAN'T MOVE OR USE WEAPONS LARGER THAN A KNIFE
 - DAMAGE ROLLS AGAINST GRAPPLED CREATURES HAVE ADVANTAGE
- » **TAUNT!** D4 WIL DAMAGE TO AN ANGRY OR UNDISCIPLINED CREATURE; TARGET MUST PASS A WIL SAVE OR ATTACK YOU ON THEIR NEXT TURN
- » **ROUTE!** D4 WIL DAMAGE TO A FEARFUL OR INJURED CREATURE; TARGET MUST PASS A WIL SAVE OR RETREAT OR SURRENDER ON THEIR NEXT TURN
- » **RALLY!** ALL ALLIES MAY MAKE A FREE **ESCAPE** SAVE; THEY CAN USE YOUR WIL IN PLACE OF THEIR OWN THIS TURN
- » **FULL DEFENSE!** +1 **REACTION** AND +D6 TEMPORARY HP THIS TURN

*YOU CAN ADJUST THESE INCREMENTS TO REPRESENT DIFFERENT TIME SCALES AND SITUATIONS; YOU CAN SAFELY IGNORE THEM WHEN RELATIVE POSITIONING IS ALREADY WELL-ESTABLISHED.

BETWEEN TURNS, YOU CAN TAKE ONE REACTION:

- » **EVADE!** REDUCE DAMAGE FROM AN ATTACK BY HALF; PASS A DEX SAVE TO CHOOSE ONE:
 - YOU MAINTAIN YOUR POSITION (OTHERWISE, YOU'RE KNOCKED DOWN OR DRIVEN BACK)
 - +1 REACTION THIS TURN
- » **BLOCK!** *REQUIRES A SHIELD*; AVOID ALL DAMAGE FROM AN ATTACK; PASS A STR SAVE TO CHOOSE ONE:
 - YOUR SHIELD IS NOT DESTROYED
 - +1 REACTION THIS TURN
- » **COUNTER!** *MUST BE DECLARED BEFORE DAMAGE IS ROLLED*; YOU TAKE +D6 DAMAGE FROM AN ATTACK. ON YOUR NEXT TURN, ADD +D8 TO YOUR DAMAGE ROLLS AGAINST THE ATTACKER
- » **INTERCEPT!** *MUST BE DECLARED BEFORE DAMAGE IS ROLLED*; BLOCK SOMEONE'S MOVEMENT OR REDIRECT AN ATTACK TO YOURSELF; IF YOU HAVE A SHIELD, YOU MAY ALSO **BLOCK** THE ATTACK
- » **ESCAPE!** DEX, STR OR WIL SAVE; FREE YOURSELF FROM A GRAPPLE, ENTANGLEMENT, ENCHANTMENT OR OTHER ONGOING EFFECT
- » **MEAT SHIELD!** DEX SAVE TO REDIRECT AN INCOMING ATTACK TO A **GRAPPLED** CREATURE; *THIS DOES NOT END THE GRAPPLE*

HIT POINTS (HP)

- » **SPEND HP** TO PREVENT ANY TYPE OF DAMAGE, 1-FOR-1; THIS IS ALWAYS OPTIONAL
- » **ARMOR POINTS (AP)** ACT LIKE EXTRA HP; SPEND AP TO PREVENT DAMAGE WHEN YOUR ARMOR IS RELEVANT

INJURY AND DEATH

AFTER SPENDING HP, REMAINING DAMAGE IS APPLIED TO YOUR STR SCORE.

WHEN YOU TAKE STR DAMAGE, PASS A SAVE OR A RANDOM BODY PART BECOMES **INJURED**. IF IT'S ALREADY INJURED, IT BECOMES **LOST**. IF IT'S ALREADY LOST, YOU **DIE**.

UNNAMED CHARACTERS WHO SUFFER STR DAMAGE MUST INSTEAD **SAVE OR DIE**.

BODY PARTS

- | | |
|---------|----------|
| 1. ARM | 4. FACE |
| 2. LEG | 5. EYES |
| 3. GUTS | 6. BRAIN |

WHEN AN INJURY GETS IN THE WAY, ROLL WITH DISADVANTAGE.

DEX AND WIL DAMAGE

- » CERTAIN ATTACKS MIGHT DAMAGE DEX OR WIL, RATHER THAN STR
- » YOU CAN SPEND HP TO PREVENT THIS DAMAGE AS NORMAL
- » WHEN DEX IS DAMAGED, PASS A SAVE OR YOU CAN'T MOVE ON YOUR NEXT TURN
- » WHEN WIL IS DAMAGED, PASS A SAVE OR LOSE YOUR NEXT REACTION

EXTRA RULES

SPEED

HUMAN-SIZED CREATURES ARE SPEED 1; RIDING ANIMALS AND LARGE BIPEDS ARE SPEED 2.

MAXIMUM **MOVE DISTANCE** IN BATTLE IS [SPEED X DEX] YARDS PER TURN.

MAXIMUM **MANEUVERING SPEED** IS [SPEED X DEX] MILES PER HOUR.

MAXIMUM **TRAVEL SPEED** IS [SPEED X 100] MILES PER DAY.

DEPRIVATION

- » D6 DAMAGE EACH WEEK WITHOUT FOOD
- » D6 DAMAGE EACH DAY WITHOUT SLEEP
- » D6 DAMAGE EACH MINUTE WITHOUT AIR
 - HOLD YOUR BREATH FOR [STR/2] MINUTES
 - MINUTES REDUCED TO TURNS UNDER EXERTION

WHILE DEPRIVED, YOU CAN'T **REST**. WHEN YOU TAKE DEPRIVATION DAMAGE TO YOUR STR, SAVE OR FALL UNCONSCIOUS. IF YOU'RE ALREADY UNCONSCIOUS, YOU DIE.

DEFAULTS AND ASSUMPTIONS

WHERE THE TEXT AND THE REFEREE'S JUDGEMENT DON'T SPECIFY...

- » THE DEFAULT ABILITY SCORE IS 10
- » THE DEFAULT HP IS D10
- » THE DEFAULT DAMAGE FOR A DANGER OR ATTACK IS D6
- » THE DEFAULT WEIGHT OR VALUE OF AN ITEM IS 1

QUICK CHARACTERS

ROLL 3D6 FIVE TIMES AND ASSIGN TO **STR**, **DEX**, **WIL**, **HP** AND STARTING **GEMS**.

YOU MAY SPEND GEMS ON EQUIPMENT OR **BACKGROUNDS** (5 GEMS)

- » WEAPON TRAINING: **ADVANTAGE** ON DAMAGE ROLLS WITH A CHOSEN WEAPON TYPE
- » SKILL TRAINING: **ADVANTAGE** ON SAVING THROWS RELATED TO A CHOSEN SKILLSET:
ACADEMICS, ATHLETICS, ENGINEERING, ESOTERICA, LANGUAGE, SURVIVAL, THIEVERY
- » DESIGNER GENES: RANDOM **MUTATION** (*SBH#3*, PAGE 47)
- » PSYCHIC AWAKENING: RANDOM **PSYCHIC POWER** (*SBH#3*, PAGE 54)
- » RAISED BY WOLVES: BAD MANNERS, +1 MELEE DAMAGE
- » SHARP TONGUE: YOUR **TAUNT** AND **ROUTE** ACTIONS DEAL DOUBLE DAMAGE

EQUIPMENT

GEMS ARE THE STANDARD CURRENCY OF THE INNER WORLDS. **COMMON COSTS:**

RATIONS: 3 FOR 1 GEM	MEAGER LODGING: 1 GEM PER WEEK
COMMON TOOLS: 1 GEM	UNSKILLED WORK: 1 GEM PER WEEK
SPECIALIST TOOLS: 3 GEMS	SKILLED WORK: 1 GEM PER DAY

ADVANCED ENCUMBRANCE

YOU CAN WEAR OR CARRY **WEIGHT** UP TO YOUR STR.

ADVANCED DURABILITY AND AMMO

WHEN YOU ROLL **MAXIMUM DAMAGE** WITH A **WEAPON**, SPEND ONE **DURABILITY** OR THE WEAPON BREAKS.

CHARGES AND **AMMO** WORK THE SAME WAY, EXCEPT THAT:

- CHARGE WEAPONS EXPLODE INSTEAD OF BREAKING (D10 DAMAGE, 10-FT. RADIUS)
- AMMO WEAPONS WITH 0 AMMO CAN'T BE FIRED

MOST WEAPONS HAVE 3 DURABILITY/CHARGES/AMMO

CHARACTER IMPROVEMENT

THERE ARE NO EXPERIENCE POINTS OR LEVELS. CHARACTERS BECOME MORE POWERFUL BY ACQUIRING LOOT AND LEARNING NEW SKILLS AND POWERS FROM NPCs. PERMANENT STAT INCREASES COME FROM CONSUMABLE **POWER-UPS**:

COMMON: D4 / ARCANE: D3+3 / WILD: D6

1	CHOCOLATES: +5 MAX HP
2	MIGHT UP: +1 STR
3	SPEED UP: +1 DEX
4	MAGIC UP: +1 WIL
5	VAMPIRE BLOOD: GAIN ONE PSYCHIC POWER ; ONCE YOU'VE TAKEN THIS DARK SACREMENT, ONLY VAMPIRE BLOOD AND CHOCOLATES ARE EFFECTIVE AS POWER-UPS FOR YOU
6	INFESTED EGG: GAIN ONE MUTATION

MELEE WEAPONS

UNARMED (D4, ROLL WITH ADVANTAGE TO GRAPPLE)	0 GEMS	0 WEIGHT
STICK (D6, +1 ATTACK PER TURN, BREAKS ON 6)	0 GEMS	1 WEIGHT
KNIFE (D4, DOUBLE DAMAGE ON 4)	1 GEM	0 WEIGHT
SWORD (D6+1)	2 GEMS	1 WEIGHT
GREATSWORD (D10, DOUBLE INJURIES)	5 GEMS	3 WEIGHT
LASER SWORD (D12)	7 GEMS	0 WEIGHT

RANGED WEAPONS

PISTOL (D4, +1 ATTACK PER TURN)	3 GEMS	1 WEIGHT
MACHINEGUN (D10, WIDE AREA, 1 TURN TO PREPARE)	7 GEMS	5 WEIGHT
RIFLE (D10, MAX DAMAGE ON CALLED SHOTS, 1 TURN TO RELOAD)	7 GEMS	2 WEIGHT
LASER PISTOL (D6, REROLL '1'S)	3 GEMS	1 WEIGHT
LASER RIFLE (D6, +1 ATTACK PER TURN)	5 GEMS	1 WEIGHT
FLAMETHROWER (D6, FLAMMABLE TARGETS CATCH FIRE ON 4+)	3 GEMS	1 WEIGHT

CREATURES WHO ARE ON FIRE TAKE D6 DAMAGE AT THE END OF THEIR TURN

ELECTRIFIED NET (DEX SAVE TO GRAPPLE; D6 DEX DAMAGE PER TURN)	5 GEMS	1 WEIGHT
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SHIELDS

SMALL SHIELD (D4 BASH DAMAGE)	1 GEM	1 WEIGHT
HEAVY SHIELD (D6 BASH DAMAGE, SURVIVES DESTRUCTION ONCE)	3 GEMS	4 WEIGHT
TOWER SHIELD (IMMUNITY TO RANGED ATTACKS)	4 GEMS	6 WEIGHT

ARMOR

HELMET (BREAKS TO PREVENT HEAD INJURY)	1 GEM	1 WEIGHT
LIGHT ARMOR (4 AP)	1 GEM	2 WEIGHT
MEDIUM ARMOR (8 AP)	5 GEMS	5 WEIGHT
HEAVY ARMOR (12 AP)	8 GEMS	8 WEIGHT
FORCEFIELD BELT (6 AP)	5 GEMS	1 WEIGHT

