

Investigation DARK

A needless hack of Cthulu Dark for more plain investigations.

Basic Rules

The basic rules come from the original *CTHULU DARK*, by Graham Walmsley. Check out the original here:

<http://catchyourhare.com/files/Cthulhu%20Dark.pdf>

The rules have been changed to remove the CTHULU MYTHOS aspect out of it.

Do Stuff:

To do stuff, you roll a d6. You get:

- 1d6 for attempting something within human ability
- 1d6 for doing something that is within your occupational expertise
- 1d6 if you use a SPECIAL SKILL.

Find the highest number on the d6s. This determines how well you succeed.

- 1- Barely succeed, or succeed at a cost.
- 6 - Succeed perfectly, or with bonuses added on

Everything succeeds because the investigation always moves forward - albeit not always with all the information you might want.

Special Skills

Your investigator has a SPECIAL SKILL. Each skill can be used three times before being depleted. It is possible for the skill to be replenished based on the rules of that skill.

Special Trait

A passive bonus you get for being you.

Failing

It is not possible to fail on an investigation roll (as the investigation must always move forward).

On other rolls, if another player or the GM feels it would be more interesting to fail, they describe how and why. The player then rolls all the applicable dice. The opposing player or GM rolls 1d6. If the opposing player or GM rolls higher, then the failure occurs.

During a failure, the GM might inflict STRESS.

Stress

Your investigator has three stress levels. Whenever they are attacked or would suffer some sort of stress, they lose a level. It is possible to recover the level with sufficient time and a description of how the stress is being treated. This is approved by the GM.

Stress can be emotional, physical, or mental.

When all of the stress has been suffered, the character cannot go on. Depending on the stress, it's possible to recover it - or they may be dead or incapacitated. It is highly dependent on the story.

NPCs also have stress levels and can have stressed inflicted upon them by PCs. The amount and type is decided by the GM and dependent on the actions of the PC. A loud yelling might inflict one stress - a gunshot might inflict all three stress levels.

Insanity Rules

The original INSANITY RULES from Cthulu Dark have not been included. You may add them back if you like.

Creating a Character

Choose a character type from the list below. Or make your own up, why not.

FAQ

Why did you make this?

I want to run a murder mystery game and I didn't want to learn GUMSHOE.

This isn't very good.

I wrote it in an hour, so no, it's probably not.

What are your influences for this game?

CTHULU DARK, obviously, but also BLADES IN THE DARK, END OF THE WORLD and POWERED BY THE APOCALYPSE games. Those are all cool, buy and play those.

I wanna use it but also make it better.

Contact Graham Walmsley (graham@thievesoftime.com) for use of the rules. As for my stuff, go for it. If you make it better, let me know so I can play your version instead.

Who are you?

My name is Chris, I'm the GM of *Silhouette Zero*, a Star Wars Actual Play Podcast. It's about short aliens and their adventures. Check it out at www.silzeropodcast.com

KID SLUETH

Your grades are bad because you just can't stop thinking about mysteries - and solving them! Somehow you always find yourself in exciting crimes, and somehow you always manage to meddle your way into making everything better.

NAME: _____

AGE: (No older than 18) _____

SPECIAL TRAIT - Animal Companion: Choose a dog, parrot, python, whatever. That's your animal pal who can help you in your investigation. It's up to you and the GM how smart it is.

SPECIAL SKILL - Nobody notices the kid: Get access to a place you shouldn't be able to because nobody notices you, or they think you're with someone else.

To recharge: change your appearance or get some piece of identification or authorization to allow you to be somewhere, or just wait long enough for people to forget you were around.

USES:

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STRESS:

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COMMON ITEMS:

The latest smartphone

A multitool

School backpack

PSYCHIC INVESTIGATOR

You see visions from the spirits of justice, or the dead, or some greater power of your choosing. You didn't choose to bear this gift, but now that you have it, you've decided to use it for good.

NAME: _____

AGE: ____

SPECIAL TRAIT - Air of Mysticism: Whether it's your clothes, your demeanor, your vocabulary or something else, people tend to get a "spooky" or "mystical" vibe around you. This makes people a little more open minded about your visions.

SPECIAL SKILL - Visions of Truth: You can ask the GM to see a vision related to the crime. Roll a d6 - the number you roll determines how clear or unclear the vision is.

To recharge: You need time to reclaim your psychic energies. Explain to the GM what the ritual is, then go perform it.

USES:

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STRESS:

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COMMON ITEMS:

A psychic foci (amulet, crystal, magic wand, etc.)

Something smelly (perfume, incense, etc.)

Business cards

FORENSIC SCIENTIST

You take the phrase “preponderance of the evidence” very seriously. You work to prove everything, and you’ll use whatever science you need to do it. Facts are truth.

NAME: _____

AGE: _____

SPECIAL TRAIT - Science Guy: People listen to you when you talk about scientific things – even if it isn’t exactly in your specific field of study. They just assume you know a lot about “science.”

SPECIAL SKILL - Evidence Processing: You use your portable lab to process evidence at the crime scene. Roll a d6 to determine how well you did the job.

To recharge: You need to go back to the main crime lab to get new supplies.

USES:

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STRESS:

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COMMON ITEMS:

Lab coat

Police CSI Identification

Portable Lab

GENIUS

There is no such thing as good or evil, right or wrong. But solving crimes is the only thing that satisfies your overwhelming intellect. If you didn't do this, you'd just be bored. And boredom is worse than death to a person of your great mind.

NAME: _____

AGE: _____

SPECIAL TRAIT - Famous and Infamous: Thanks to several high-profile cases you solved, people know who you are. Whether or not that's a good thing is up to the GM and the circumstances of the characters.

SPECIAL SKILL - Improbable Deduction: Using nothing but your massive intellect, you attempt to deduce information about the crime, Sherlock Holmes style. Roll a d6 to see how well you can piece things together.

To recharge: You need time to mope and indulge in your chosen vice.

USES:

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STRESS:

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COMMON ITEMS:

Anachronistic accessory (pocket watch, top hat, etc.)

Stash of your vice (alcohol, sweets, drugs, etc.)

Magnifying glass.

SKETCHY PRIVATE EYE

Criminals don't follow the rules, so why should you?

Maybe your methods are questionable - or illegal - but you get the job done.

NAME: _____

AGE: ____

SPECIAL TRAIT - Rough Around the Edges:

Whenever you're intimidating or you make a threat, people take you seriously. Who knows what you've done in the past - or might do in the future.

SPECIAL SKILL - Force It: If someone is not cooperating or if something is locked away, you can just force it to do what you want. Roll a d6 to determine how well you did it, and what sort of consequences you might face.

To recharge: You need time to lie low or to hide the evidence of what you did. Cause it wasn't exactly by the book, you know?

USES:

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STRESS:

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COMMON ITEMS:

Unregistered revolver

Coat and hat

Bribery money

LOCAL DETECTIVE

You've seen some stuff. You're tired. You think about retiring about once a month. But you can't - if you don't protect these people, who will? You do a good job, but they don't throw parades in your honor. The thanks of those you save has to be enough cause they certainly don't pay you well.

NAME: _____

AGE: ____

SPECIAL TRAIT - The Badge: You have authority when you use your badge. People listen to you and are more likely to cooperate with your requests.

SPECIAL SKILL - Back up: If you need to, call in for back up and the rest of the force will be on their way. Roll a d6 to see how fast or how many people show up.

To recharge: You need some time to write all the reports. Paperwork is the enemy of police work.

USES:

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STRESS:

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COMMON ITEMS:

Gun

Badge

Handcuffs

FEDERAL AGENT

You work for the FBI, or whatever federal police force there is. You deal with the big stuff – the crime lords, the terrorists, the drug runners. But everyone seems to hate you when you show up to town. Doesn't bother you though, so long as you get the job done.

NAME: _____

AGE: ____

SPECIAL TRAIT - Government Authority: When it makes sense to the GM, your jurisdiction and authority is always more powerful than those around you. That means you can get what you need from certain people.

SPECIAL SKILL - Incredible Resources: Need something? A computer, a sniper rifle, an expert on archeology? You can get it, with just a phone call.

To recharge: You need to talk over all these requisitions with your boss. Federal spending cuts are everywhere, after all.

USES:

STRESS:

COMMON ITEMS:

Federal credentials

Gun

Satellite phone