

# CHAOS & ORDER

## Table of Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| CHAOS & ORDER.....                                 | 1  |
| 1.INTRODUCTION.....                                | 2  |
| 2.CHARACTER CREATION.....                          | 3  |
| 2.1.Concept.....                                   | 3  |
| 2.2.Character traits.....                          | 3  |
| 2.3.Identifying features.....                      | 6  |
| 2.4.Equipment.....                                 | 6  |
| 2.5.Narrative trigger.....                         | 6  |
| 2.6.Hero points.....                               | 6  |
| 2.7.Finishing touches.....                         | 6  |
| 2.8.Sample characters.....                         | 6  |
| 3.GAME SYSTEM.....                                 | 13 |
| 3.1.Success roll.....                              | 13 |
| 3.2.Extended success roll.....                     | 17 |
| 3.3.Experience.....                                | 19 |
| 3.4.Non-player characters.....                     | 19 |
| 3.5.Objects and things.....                        | 21 |
| 3.6.Removing the character from the narrative..... | 21 |
| 3.7.Spending hero points.....                      | 22 |
| 4.CAMPAIGNS, SETTINGS AND GAME WORLDS.....         | 23 |
| 6.1.The campaign traits.....                       | 23 |
| 6.2.Non-humans as characters.....                  | 24 |
| 5.GAME STYLES.....                                 | 26 |
| 7.1.Players.....                                   | 26 |
| 7.2.Situations.....                                | 26 |
| 7.3.Larger scale.....                              | 27 |
| 6.IMPORTANT LINKS.....                             | 31 |
| 7.END AND WORDS OF GRATITUDE.....                  | 31 |

# 1.INTRODUCTION

Chaos & Order is a generic roleplaying system, with a focus on deep and detailed characters yet light and fast-flowing gameplay. It is however not only another generic rpg, but rather tries to be something even more. The rules not only can adapt to different worlds and game settings but they actually support the specifics of different game worlds. Chaos & Order is also tailored to accustom itself to different ways of play, so you can try anything from traditional strongly GM-controlled play to shared GM storytelling game.

This game does not give detailed rules of any situation. Playing a roleplaying game using Chaos & Order requires perhaps more inspiration and work than some roleplaying games would.

The game also doesn't include setting based material or information on any specific subject. This game is intended to be generic, and while it may give hints and guidelines, detailed and specific game world information must be sought elsewhere.

A short overview of these rules can be found at:

[http://www.cc.jyu.fi/~jphannil/co\\_overview.pdf](http://www.cc.jyu.fi/~jphannil/co_overview.pdf)

Additional note of the game system chapter: As stated, this game tries to support different game styles from traditional to storytelling. The examples in the game system chapters are written to follow the traditional style, to make the following of the game rules easier.

Thanks for your interest, have a nice reading and exciting games !

## 2.CHARACTER CREATION

Playing begins with players creating their characters. There can be more than one character per player or even many player per character, this is all depending on game style (see chapter game styles for more information). The basic rule is, characters are main persons (or creatures) in the story that ongoes when the game is played.

### 2.1.Concept

Creation of the character begins with player(s) writing a description of his character(s). The concept should be at least 100 words long, describing the most important aspects and features of the character. Note that in the concept, player emphasizes things that are important to him and as the traits are generated, they, as well, reflect player's view of the character's important features.

Styles of character concept may vary wildly. Some concepts include a brief summary of character's life story and his personality features, where the other concept may be an expression of the character given from another person's perspective.

### 2.2.Character traits

From a game mechanics -point of view, traits are the defining qualities of a character. A trait is an advantage, skill, disadvantage or personality feature, anything that describes him and makes him different and unique. Great strength, mathematical ability, gluttony, flying license and rich relatives are all traits.

Only the name of the trait is not enough to describe a trait in detail. For example Olympic gold medalist of weightlifting is better in lifting weights than other competitors, but they are quite experienced as well. For that every trait can be assigned by a value ranging from 1 to 10, where 1 is slightly above (or different from) average, and 10 is the peak of starting characters.

Character concept acts as guideline to form character's traits. Traits should always emphasize and clarify the concept, never to contradict it.

Example: Character is, according to his concept, a retired air force pilot with Gulf war trauma. According to this the player suggests that character has traits piloting and war trauma. If character would have a skill in playing chess this would be ok (it is not contradictory to the concept) but a skill in shapeshifting would be improper.

### 2.2.1.Trait class

Traits are divided in three classes, based on the nature: proficiency traits, personal traits and motivation traits.

#### 2.2.1.1.Proficiency traits

Proficiency traits are traits that express character's powers and skills. Usual proficiency traits are abilities and skills that you can find in other role playing games. Proficiency traits are the “positive” values of character, in every meaning of the word. Examples of proficiency traits would include mathematical ability, strength, great eyesight, speed-reading, swordsmanship and so forth. Proficiency traits answer to the question “what can character do?” or “What is character good at?”.

#### 2.2.1.2.Personal traits

Personal traits are traits that describe the character's uniqueness. The value of the trait displays difference to others more than power or skill, and so they won't always have a clearly stated positive effect on character's actions (this differentiates them from proficiency traits). Personal traits are in nature such that they can either help or hinder character's possibilities, depending on the situation. Examples of personal traits are personality quirks (such as absent-mindedness, curiousness or intolerance), ways or habits (addictions, personal preferences), physical features (like small or large size or appearance) and so on. Personal traits answer to the question “what is the character like”.

Important traits among the personal traits are racial and cultural traits.

Racial traits describe character's race (for example elf 4, Hobgoblin 2). The value of the trait describes how significant the character's racial features are (there can be an elf 2 character or elf 5 character, the elf 5 character is more “elvish” than his companion in many ways).

Cultural traits include the mother language character speaks, knowledge of the regions of his homelands, customs and traditions, but also the level in which the character is bound to his own culture and it's views and opinions of the world. It also includes culture-related basic skills, like literacy and basic education in western civilized countries or tracking in

bushman-culture, everything that is taught to every children and youngster in the culture.

Character may have many racial traits (mix-raced heritage) and multiple cultural traits (character is raised in many different cultures).

If reasonable numbers for racial and cultural traits cannot be determined, value 3 can be used for both. See sample characters later for examples of racial and cultural traits (they are at the top of the personal traits list).

If all characters are members of the same race, and the game doesn't include different races, the racial trait can be ignored completely. The same applies for cultures, if everyone is from the same culture, there is no reason to use cultural traits.

### **2.2.1.3.Motivation traits**

Motivation traits are traits that express character's motivations, drive and passions. What he/she is after, what are his dreams and goals in life. Motivation traits also include things that are important to the character. Characters motivation traits can change quite quickly, and the sum of them is always constant. Examples of motivation traits include love for someone, hate for someone, goals of the character and so on. Motivation traits answer to the question "what is important to the character". Motivation traits are not categorized by their usability (see trait usability).

## **2.2.2.Trait usability**

Traits are divided in two types, by their usability, every trait is either broad or narrow.

### **2.2.2.1.Broad traits**

Broad traits are traits that can affect many kinds of situations and they can be used in many ways. Such traits are highly usable, but they are harder to raise through experience. Examples of such traits are physical and mental basic abilities, occupations and other wide-area skills, personality traits that affect character every day and cause him trouble or advantage.

### **2.2.2.2.Narrow traits**

Narrow traits are traits that cover only the specific area mentioned. They are usually used only in one purpose and as such are not usually so effective as broad traits. The advantage of narrow traits is that they are easier to develop through experience. Examples of narrow traits are simple skills and hobbies that cover only narrow field of expertise or personality features that affect character's life rarely.

## **2.2.3.Temporary traits**

Every character can have temporary traits. These can vary from personal stress and gun shot wounds to upper hand position in critical negotiations. Temporary traits occur, when character either loses or wins major success rolls during adventures. Only difference between a real trait and a temporary trait is that temporary trait can vanish at any point of the game, usually for a purpose, be it a result of character's actions or requirement of the story.

Temporary traits usually won't need category or usability level. Sometimes they can become real traits and if that happens, both category and usability must be set. Usually a starting character won't have temporary traits, but if he does they won't cost anything.

## **2.2.4.Assigning values for traits**

After appropriate traits have been chosen for the character, and they are categorized properly, it is time to determine the trait values. The main source for the trait values should be the character concept. Depending on the approach, either point-based or free system is then used to assign values.

### **2.2.4.1.The point method**

In point method the values of the traits are calculated from points distributed to them. Normally the following amount is distributed to different traits.

**Proficiency traits:** 15 points to share to narrow traits and 15 points to broad traits.

**Personal traits:** As much personal traits can be added as the concept would suggest. They can be at any value (between 1 and 10) and be either broad or narrow.

**Motivation traits:** 10 points to motivation traits.

The cost of the trait is the same as its value. So the total sum of trait values is the amount which must not be exceeded by the point limits.

If there are not enough points to achieve this, character's description can be modified, but the modification must be kept as small as possible. A leeway of few points can also be given, if they are necessary to fulfill the needs of the concept. If this feels cumbersome and restricting, players should try to use the free method.

In some settings the amount of shared points is different, higher amount of points allow more advanced characters. More proficiency traits mean expertise, and more motivation traits mean more passion and goals.

#### **2.2.4.2. The free method**

Free method is for players who don't want to bother with point levels and character limitations. In the free method players (or player and GM, depending on the game mode) negotiate until the character pleases everyone involved. Character formed like this must have a concept and traits, but other limitations won't exist. Note that even in free mode, point values can be kept as guidelines. They are a good indicator for character's power level.

### **2.2.5. Trait combinations**

Trait combinations are handy way of pre-calculate the most important trait combinations together. If character has traits that usually combine (can be used together) that combination should be written down as combination.

The value of this combination is the value of the highest trait from the combination. In addition to this, for every other trait in the combination add +1 to the result, if the additional trait's value is at least the highest trait value -5. Details of the combined trait use are given in the chapter "game system", under "trait affinity". See the sample characters for example on using the trait combinations.

### **2.2.6. Additional notes on traits**

#### **2.2.6.1. Personal property as traits**

It is assumed that a character with a trait (be it of any type) will have all required equipment to use that trait without penalties to his trait value. Powerful objects, such as magical items or specially crafted stuff is another matter entirely. Often these should be put down as normal proficiency traits, but if the items have negative effects as well, they could be listed under personal traits. The items themselves boost the efficiency of trait use (see affinity in chapter "game system"), but can also cause rolls of their own (see success rolls in the chapter "game system" for more information).

#### **2.2.6.2. Social structures as traits**

Normally social structures are listed as personal traits, their value is a guideline to how much the structure affects situations in the game. Social structures include friends, enemies, relatives and organizations. So a member of the police force is equally a social trait as is hate for orcs. Sometimes, if social structure is very advantageous to the character, without any possible negative effects, the trait should be listed under proficiency traits. On the other hand, if character is obsessed about someone, or is using much of his energies to some social structure, it should be listed as motivation trait. Note that normal social structures need effort, you are a member of the police force only so long as you do your job and do the things you are supposed to.

#### **2.2.6.3. The values of personal traits**

Usually, traits quantify quite easily. For example a character who has strong 4 is obviously and clearly stronger than the one who has strong 2. This is simple and obvious. However some personal traits are not that easy cases. For example in a pirate campaign two guys might both have a trait called one eye, but they may have different value in the trait (in this example, let's assume 2 and 4). In this case, the one with one eye 4 is not more one eyed than his companion (I mean, how one-eyed you can get), but rather the effects of his one-eyedness are greater in the game. This includes both negative and positive effects of the trait (for this example bullying and threatening could be the positive, perhaps shooting with a musket a negative). In these cases, players needs to figure the differences on his own and to think how much they want to allow trait values interpreted as story-driving power rather than simple measurement tools.

#### **2.2.6.4. Thematic traits**

In some settings and genres, a thematic trait or a few are present. Thematic traits mean traits that every character has. It may have a special meaning and rules connected to it. Examples of this would include Beast trait for vampires, humanity for cyborgs, light and dark side trait for the well known lightsaber-using galactic protector's etc. The special rules which

apply to thematic traits should be written under the campaign template information (see more information on chapter campaigns, settings and game worlds).

### **2.2.6.5. What are good traits for character**

The answer to this question is determined by another question: 'what do players want from the game'. If players are after hack and slash, then good traits for such a game would be fighting traits. If soap opera is the target, then focus on motivation and personal traits, and especially social structures. If players want adventure, then favor traits which will lead to adventures.

Traits can be also used to focus the game to a certain area or subject. If game is about the fight between good and evil, make the characters take a stand, one way or another, through character's traits (see a note of thematic traits earlier).

Good tip for every and each genre is: be creative. C&O has freeform traits so you make your best of it. Do not simply put that character is tough 2, but let the readers of the character sheet see what he is about, tough guy of the harbors 2 would be more like it. Make the best use of the notes-section on every trait, there you can add more color and depth to the traits you have selected for your character (see sample characters for example of this).

## **2.3. Identifying features**

Character's identifying features include a short description of character's looks, possibly how he dresses and acts as well. This may be already described in the concept, but it is good to extract it to a field of it's own. If player wants, he can also draw a picture of the character.

## **2.4. Equipment**

In some settings, character's equipment and possessions must also be assigned. Note that characters usually have all equipment needed (or they at least have an access) to use their traits fully. Other equipment and possessions can then be added.

Example: Kharmon (see sample characters) has traits Bladed weapons (daggers, dual) and picking locks. For these traits he has at least two daggers and average lockpicks. Of course he has other things as well.

## **2.5. Narrative trigger**

Narrative trigger is the level, where traits (usually temporary) can cause worse effects on your character. Usually the value is 6, this can be changed. For more information on narrative trigger, see the chapter "game system" for the use of narrative trigger during the game.

## **2.6. Hero points**

Hero points are devices that can help character to perform heroic tasks. Beginning hero point count is usually 3, and it is written down to the character sheet. Note that the starting hero point total can differ from this (see chapter "campaigns, settings and game worlds" for more information on changing this). For the use of hero points, see the chapter "game system".

## **2.7. Finishing touches**

Everything is checked out and when everyone is happy with the results, the character is ready for play.

## **2.8. Sample characters**

These sample characters adventure in the various examples of this game. Here are their complete statistics as an example for character creation.

Sample characters.

### **CHARACTER 1 - Kharmon**

Kharmon is your generic fantasy world character. He has been built as very experienced beginning character, with 20 points in both broad and narrow proficiency traits, and with 10 points of motivation traits.

#### **CONCEPT**

Kharmon was born to a family with a simple background. It seemed that he was doomed to live a simple life like his

family before him. However, luck was on his side. In his youth he met some people from secret group called Order of the Eagle. Orders idea was to distribute wealth and justice to the world. Only those of pure heart were let inside. Kharmon was judged to be just and was so let in the Order. The rules in the Order of the Eagle are strict. People should not lie, ever, because lying just makes problems worse. Killing is also very restricted, and should not be done only to gain wealth or fame. Still, as the idea of the Order is to distribute wealth, the wealth has to be gathered from somewhere. That is done by getting from those that have it in plenty – and in other words, robbing. The Order gives resources, training and plans to do the robbing, but also takes it's share of the loot. In fact, all the loot is shared. Part of the loot goes to poor people and other is divided by the faction of the Order that planned the robbery.

Kharmon is really into the ideals of the order. He does not even want riches only for himself. He gets tasks from the Order and happily he does the tasks. He really believes that he is better person than most. He has one weakness, however. Jewels. He just loves them and has hard time trying not to hoard all the shiny little jewels to himself. Sometimes that causes him troubles.

In the Order Kharmon has learned to mix various potions. Some of them have enchanting properties like making one stronger for a short time. Strong effects needs strong ingredients, so Kharmon has always an eye for rare substances.

Kharmon also has his life outside the order. When not working for the order, he does hunting by trapping. That is also an ideal cover profession, as that allows him to come and ho out of town without causing suspicious looks.

#### LOOKS & IDENTIFYING FEATURES

Kharmon has reached the age of 23 but he looks a bit younger than others in his age. He is 173cm tall and weights 73 kilograms. He is blond of his hair and has yellow-brown eyes. He doesn't have any special features that would allow easy identification other than the fact that he wears big rings on his fingers.

#### EQUIPMENT & PROPERTY

Collection of daggers

Reagents for mixing potions (at the guild house of the Order).

| <i>TRAIT</i>                                 | <i>VALUE</i> | <i>TYPE</i> | <i>NOTES</i>  |
|--|--------------|-------------|---|
| <b>PROFIENCY TRAITS</b>                      |              |             |   |
| Bladed weapons (daggers – dual)              | 5            | Narrow      |   |
| Thrown weapons (daggers)                     | 3            | Narrow      |   |
| Stealth                                      | 2            | Narrow      |   |
| Treating wounds                              | 3            | Narrow      |   |
| Picking locks                                | 3            | Narrow      |   |
| Creating traps (mainly for hunting animals)  | 2            | Narrow      |   |
| Good reputation in the Order of the eagle    | 2            | Narrow      | Allows the best training, maps and other resources.   |
| Vast knowledge of mystical items             | 5            | Broad       |   |
| Vast knowledge about the beasts of the world | 4            | Broad       |   |
| Alertness                                    | 3            | Broad       |   |
| Dexterous                                    | 3            | Broad       |   |
| Potions                                      | 5            | Broad       | Knows how to mix powerful mixtures.   |
| <b>PERSONAL TRAITS</b>                       |              |             |   |
| Human  | 2            | Broad       | He is of human race.  |
| Simple upbringing                            | 4            | Broad       | Kharmon was raised in very humble and poor conditions. A thing he never forgets.                                  |
| Bound to the Order of the eagle              | 4            | Broad       | Benefits are great, but also the rules are strict.  |
| Lust for jewels                              | 2            | Narrow      | He knows a lot of jewels, and knows which are precious ones. That is also a weak spot of his morals in the Order. |

| <i>TRAIT</i>                               | <i>VALUE</i> | <i>TYPE</i> | <i>NOTES</i> |
|--|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| <b>MOTIVATION TRAITS</b>                   |              |             |              |
| Do the will of the Order                   | 5            |             |              |
| Find someone to care for                   | 2            |             |              |
| See new places, experience adventures      | 3            |             |              |
| NARRATIVE TRIGGER = 10                     |              |             |              |
| HERO POINTS = 3                            |              |             |              |
| <b>TRAIT COMBINATION</b>                   |              |             | <b>VALUE</b> |
| Bladed weapons (daggers, dual) + Dexterous |              |             | 6            |
| Stealth + Dexterous                        |              |             | 4            |

### **CHARACTER 2 – Jack Brown**

Jack is a character from 30's Chicago, built with 15 points in broad and narrow proficiency traits, and with 10 motivation traits.

#### **CONCEPT**

1935, Chicago. Jack Brown is 37-year old private investigator, or so he tells people.

To say he's just a former night guard who got himself call-card, or a drunken brawler, or a smooth-talking womanizer and a nosy glory hound would be closer to the truth. You know the type, fast cars and fast women. But he's not a bad guy really. In fact if you'd call him a do-gooder he'd probably smile and buy you a drink. You don't want to cross him that's true, and believe me, you'd be safer not to badmouth him to anyone, he's the kind of guy who hears things, and he's got that pride thing going.

Anyway, he's really a sweet guy under that slick attitude. He's not quick to judge anybody, and you got to respect that. I don't know what he wants, anything to make him famous I guess. He writes for some newspapers some times, and I've heard him say something about writing a book, so I guess that's his thing. Or was it acting, I'm not sure.

You want dirt? Well, for some years now he's been shacking up with this jazz-singer called Sammy, a really cute guy, at least 10 years younger. Hey, nothing wrong with having a roommate, with rents like they are, right? Thing is, I hear they've only got one bed. Make what you will of it, I'm just telling you what I hear. But hey, don't go spread this around, Jack's okay.

#### **LOOKS & IDENTIFYING FEATURES**

Jack's a muscular guy, average height but looks a little taller. He carries himself well and dresses sharply, but for the occasion. He's got gray eyes and a dark brown hair. He drives a 1936 Dodge Sport Coupe, red, of course. It's a gift from a lady, or so he says. He's got a dark voice and a cocky attitude, a rough sense of humor, and if he's on to something he moves with a sense of urgency, which hints that something is up. His clothes often have the smell of whiskey and cigars. In general he appears to be more wealthy and important than he actually is. He's also easy to mistake for a mobster.

#### **EQUIPMENT & PROPERTY**

Fast car

Gun, nightstick, handcuffs, lock picks and other assorted tools of the trade.

Small rented apartment

| <i>TRAIT</i>              | <i>VALUE</i> | <i>TYPE</i> | <i>NOTES</i>  |
|---------------------------|--------------|-------------|---|
| <b>PROFICIENCY TRAITS</b> |              |             |   |
| Brawling                  | 4            | Narrow      | "A fair fight is a stupid fight."                               |
| Driving                   | 3            | Narrow      | "I'm the kinda guy they build these kinda cars for."            |
| Fast Car                  | 3            | Narrow      | "Don't worry, my baby will shake them."                         |
| Style and fashion         | 2            | Narrow      | "Hey, nobody wants to talk to a guy they'd rather not look at." |

| <i>TRAIT</i>  | <i>VALUE</i> | <i>TYPE</i> | <i>NOTES</i>   |
|---|--------------|-------------|--|
| Fast thinker  | 3            | Narrow      | "I know this looks bad, but I can explain..."  |
| Good physical shape   | 3            | Broad       | "I'm a big boy. *wink*"  |
| Respected in the underworld   | 4            | Broad       | "I don't like to cause trouble. Everybody's got to make a living."   |
| Detective skills  | 2            | Broad       | "It's not about the license, it's about the smarts."   |
| Good looks and charisma   | 3            | Broad       | "Stand straight and look them in the eye. Makes a hell of a difference."                                       |
| Tools of the trade  | 3            | Broad       | "You pick up all kinds of stuff in my line of work."   |
| <b>PERSONAL TRAITS</b>  |              |             |  |
| Native Chicago dweller  | 4            | Broad       | He is a city-dweller, as he has been all his life.   |
| Alcoholic   | 2            | Narrow      | "Sometimes I start drinking. Sometimes I can't stop. It's not that bad, honest."                               |
| Womanizer   | 3            | Broad       | "Sure I love Sammy, but there's just some things he can't give me. No, I don't tell him, you think I'm crazy?" |
| Moral values  | 4            | Broad       | "Guy like that should rot in hell, or in jail, which ever comes first."  |
| Nosy  | 4            | Broad       | "I like to know what's going on. Goes with the territory, I guess."  |
| Independent   | 4            | Broad       | "I can do my own damn thinking. I don't take orders from the likes of you..."                                  |
| Proud   | 2            | Broad       | "... and I don't take shit from anyone."   |
| <b>MOTIVATION TRAITS</b>  |              |             |  |
| Love of literature  | 1            |             | Jack loves a good book, and hopes to someday publish one himself.  |
| Love for action   | 2            |             | Adrenalin and danger make him feel alive.  |
| Love for the limelight  | 3            |             | Jack loves attention and admiration, be it from Sammy, a beautiful lady or just anyone really.                 |
| Love for Sammy  | 4            |             | Jack loves Sammy dearly, and wants to give him the world.  |
| <b>NARRATIVE TRIGGER = 10</b>   |              |             |  |
| <b>HERO POINTS = 1 (Jack's campaign has only 1 hero points / session)</b> |              |             |  |
| <b>TRAIT COMBINATION</b>  |              |             | <b>VALUE</b>   |
| Driving + Fast car  |              |             | 4  |
| Brawling + Good physical shape  |              |             | 5  |
| Womanizer + Good looks & Charisma + Style & Fashion                       |              |             | 5  |
| Nosy + Love for action  |              |             | 5  |
| Respected + Charisma  |              |             | 5  |

### **CHARACTER 3 – Leonard Franton**

Leonard is a character from modern age, built with 15 points in broad and narrow proficiency traits, and with 10 motivation traits.

#### **CONCEPT**

"When going get rough, Leonard gets going." That phrase could be heard on sales speeches of Leonard Franton. Leonard works as free-lance "Problem solver" on various big cities. His specialty is his ability to fix the situation by getting right group of people to handle the job. He isn't afraid of action himself either, so he does not miss the fun by

staying out of trouble. Leonard has his darker side, too. Previously he worked for the government in an intelligence agency as chief of operations. He had interesting job, excellent salary and loving family including a cross-bred dog. He lost his family in seemingly irrational attack, which he think was an vengeance for putting group of criminals out of business. Leonard tried to catch the criminals and neglected his other tasks in work, and that eventually led to his resignation. For some time Leonard thought he had lost everything and did not even want to live. He started heavy drinking. Then, on one day which resembled his other booze filled days, he heard something that changed his life. On the very same bar where he was having his long island ice tea, he heard group of gangsters talk about the business he thought he finished before his family was killed. He learned that the group belonged to bigger organization and he had just managed to stop one branch. Leonard followed the guys and performed some street justice by killing the group in cold blood. Next day he realized his mistake – he had disposed his only clues for real murderers – he did not know if these guys were the real murderers. That gave a reason for himself to live, something to solve. He started working to get resources to solve the fate of his family. These days he gets many kinds of assignments, some times as a planner of precious shipments, security, managing bodyguards for example. Almost anything that involves money goes for him.

#### LOOKS & IDENTIFYING FEATURES

At the age of 37 Leonard still keeps long hair. He is 182cm tall and weights 93 kilograms. He’s sandalwood brown long his hair is always well kept. On missions he tends to ponytails. He’s eyes are dark brown. Leonard has a big scars on his right shoulder. Leonard is a good masker so if he wants, he can look quite a different than normally.

#### EQUIPMENT & PROPERTY

Motorcycle

Lots of spy gadgets

Collection of handguns

Two houses with furniture.

| <i><b>TRAIT</b></i>                       | <i><b>VALUE</b></i> | <i><b>TYPE</b></i> | <i><b>NOTES</b></i>   |
|---|---------------------|--------------------|---|
| <b>PROFICIENCY TRAITS</b>                 |                     |                    |   |
| Firearms                                  | 3                   | Narrow             |   |
| Security systems                          | 5                   | Narrow             | He is a wizard in designing secure system -and getting past ones.                             |
| Owens large collection of useful gadgets. | 2                   | Narrow             | Mostly “spy” stuff.   |
| Social chameleon                          | 4                   | Narrow             | He knows when and how to play rich, and when it’s better to act as a rough guy.               |
| Cooking                                   | 1                   | Narrow             | Leonard is excellent cook.  |
| Good network of contacts                  | 4                   | Broad              |   |
| Good physics                              | 3                   | Broad              | Before drinking Leonard was in excellent shape.   |
| Photographic memory                       | 1                   | Broad              |   |
| Forgery                                   | 2                   | Broad              | Fake ID’s, fake invitations, fake everything. He can handle it. Only fake money is a problem. |
| Masking                                   | 3                   | Broad              | Ability to make a person to look like completely different.                                   |
| Two houses                                | 2                   | Broad              | He owns two, a luxurious house and one small flat.  |
| <b>PERSONAL TRAITS</b>                    |                     |                    |   |
| Travelers upbringing                      | 3                   | Broad              | He is an USA-citizen, but his parents lived in a dozen different places when he was young.    |
| Alcohol                                   | 2                   | Narrow             | He knows more about drinks than most of the bartenders, but also likes to drink...            |
| Streetwise -underground                   | 5                   | Broad              | He knows the underground – but there are some people that know him too.                       |
| <b>MOTIVATION TRAITS</b>                  |                     |                    |   |
| Finding the murderer of his family        | 6                   |                    |   |

| <i>TRAIT</i>  | <i>VALUE</i> | <i>TYPE</i> | <i>NOTES</i>                                    |
|---|--------------|-------------|---|
| To be good at his work. Hone his skills and learn more.       | 2            |             |   |
| Luxuries  | 2            |             | After a while without, he knows what he missed. |
| NARRATIVE TRIGGER = 10  |              |             |   |
| HERO POINTS = 0 (Leonard's campaign doesn't have hero points) |              |             |   |

#### **CHARACTER 4 – Rolf “Royce” Bronson**

Rolf is a character from dark and near-futuristic Japan. He is built with 10 broad and 10 narrow proficiency traits and 10 motivation traits.

##### CONCEPT

Rolf was born to a rich family in Pan-Europe. At the age of 15 his father's work took him to Japan, Chiba city. He didn't quite adopt to his new environment and he got a “bad company”. He started to do petty crimes and got to learn the darker side of Chiba city. Fast cars are Rolf's passion. He is exceptionally good driver and quite good in fixing and converting them too. That needs expensive equipment but hey, he has a rich dad! His parents did not approve the surgery Rolf took to connect his brains with SVP – smart vehicle plug, but Rolf has always been quick in his decisions and did not ask. SVP:s are not that common, and simply owning one makes Rolf already into top 500 couriers in Chiba. And Rolf is not a bad one among them. His name in courier circles is “Royce” – a simple twist from old European manufacturer, Rolls Royce. Quite many still think Rolf as European. Rolf's skills have attracted Rolf a little shady but profitable jobs. Too tight morals has never been a problem for him, so he really enjoys making them.

Another passion for Rolf is Simstim. SVP has also general stim connection, which allows him to feel simstim movies. He has watched them quite a deal and one could say, that he has also learned a lot from them.

Everything Rolf does he does with passion. He lives in the moment and is not afraid of the future. That makes him good in surprising situations, as he does not get confused as most. It also has it's downside, because he does not do much of planning beforehand.

##### LOOKS & IDENTIFYING FEATURES

Rolf is living now what he thinks is the best ages – he is 21 years old. Rolf has usually purple hair, but when partying he uses fashionable rainbow colors. Most often he keeps his hair short. Originally his hair was blond, which is rarity these days. He is quite a short guy, only 166cm in height – but he thinks that is good if he ever goes to racing career. He Weights 53 kilograms. He's eyes are green. Rolf uses clothes made of real synth leather. Usually he's clothes are bright colored, but for some jobs he has to look more professional and then he wears whatever is needed.

##### EQUIPMENT & PROPERTY

Converted Hyundai rapier with head plugs

Well equipped car repair station

Colt carnivore handgun with extended clip

A short sword from last millennium

Huge collection of Simstim movies

Quite a few outfits made of real synthleather

A head plug connector, SVP model. The SVP model allows user to connect to car's controlling system giving the driver complete control of the car. It can also be used as a common data plug, which allows the use of computer by wire. Constant usage of data plug causes dizziness and numbness.

| <i>TRAIT</i>                       | <i>VALUE</i> | <i>TYPE</i> | <i>NOTES</i> |
|------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| PROFICIENCY TRAITS                 |              |             |              |
| Driving cars                       | 4            | Narrow      |              |
| Firearms                           | 2            | Narrow      |              |
| Streetwise -Chiba city underground | 2            | Narrow      |              |

| <i>TRAIT</i>  | <i>VALUE</i> | <i>TYPE</i> | <i>NOTES</i>   |
|---|--------------|-------------|--|
| Language – Japanese   | 2            | Narrow      |  |
| Mechanics (Fixing)  | 4            | Broad       | Most experienced in cars.  |
| Simstim movies  | 1            | Broad       | Has spent hours each day watching Sims.  |
| Rich background   | 2            | Broad       | Born with silver spoon in his mouth  |
| Good physics  | 2            | Broad       |  |
| Charismatic personality   | 1            | Broad       | People tend to like Rolf   |
| <b>PERSONAL TRAITS</b>  |              |             |  |
| City culture  | 3            | Broad       | He's been in the city all his life.  |
| Impulsive personality   | 3            | Broad       | Everything Rolf does – he does without hesitation  |
| Love for high speeds  | 4            | Narrow      |  |
| Needs something new, and is not afraid of it                      | 3            | Broad       |  |
| Cyber implant, smart vehicle plug (svp)                           | 5            | Broad       | Gives full bonus to driving, half bonus (round down) for computer operations, because it has a common data plug) |
| <b>MOTIVATION TRAITS</b>  |              |             |  |
| Working as a courier  | 4            |             |  |
| Simstim superstars  | 2            |             | Addicted – but does not admit that   |
| Technical toys – and weapons                                      | 2            |             |  |
| Current job to deliver hot chips to Mr. Renoir                    | 2            |             |  |
| <b>NARRATIVE TRIGGER = 10</b>                                     |              |             |  |
| <b>HERO POINTS = 0 (Rolf's campaign doesn't have hero points)</b> |              |             |  |

## 3. GAME SYSTEM

### 3.1. Success roll

Normal success roll is the heart of the C&O game system. When players understand how normal success rolls work, everything else just a mere extension of it and can be grasped easily.

#### 3.1.1. How it works

The things required when making success rolls are trait(s) of the character, difficulty of the task, luck level and severity of the results. These are explained all briefly in detail:

**Trait(s):** Usually success roll involves traits of the character, for example if a character is driving a car and he has driving-trait, it affects his performance. The higher the appropriate trait, the better chances character has to succeed in the task. If there is no appropriate trait to use in success roll, value 0 is used. Often multiple traits can be used to do the job, in this case they all help (see trait affinity). If some trait can somehow relate to a situation, but it is not totally suitable, a negative modifier from 1 to 10 can be given to it in the roll.

**Difficulty:** The difficulty of the roll is always a trait, be it a fencer who is defending himself from your lunge, or just a tree you are climbing at. Trait that opposes actions during play are called difficulties (even character traits can be difficulties when they are opposed to some action). Normal difficulty level would be 0 and easier tasks would have negative value, harder tasks positive. Difficulty 0 task is such that a character with no expertise or special ability would have 50% chances of succeeding in it.

**Luck:** Luck is determined by a dice type, from d2 to d20, with higher die representing higher amount of luck. If the situation has a high luck rating, the result is not easily determined before the roll (trait and difficulty), lesser luck will give more decision power to trait and difficulty values. Risky maneuvers, hasty situation and desperate measures often stand for high luck dice. Preparation, repeated attempts and careful maneuvers stand for low luck dice. Every game world and setting usually has default luck die, which is used when no special considerations for luck die is set.

**Severity:** The severity of the situation describes how drastic is the outcome of the situation. If say a character is walking a rope on top of 1 meter poles it is not nearly as drastic as if the same character is walking the rope at height of 200 meters. Severity is measured by a number, usually it is either 1 (normal), 2 (severe) or 3 (fatal), but sometimes it is greater than 3 or below 1. Campaign template will give guidelines for different severity levels, but it can be adjusted when necessary. The default level of severity is 1, and if severity is not mentioned, 1 is used. For more information on setting severity levels see chapter "Campaigns, settings and game worlds".

The actual success roll is performed as follows:

The player of the character takes one die of the chosen luck die type (from d2 to d20) and rolls the die. To the value of the die is added the value of the trait(s) chosen for the roll.

For the opposition, a similar die is taken and rolled. To the value the difficulty value chosen for the roll is added.

The results of the player and the opposer rolls are compared. If the result of the player is higher, the character has succeeded in the action, if the result is smaller he has failed. In a case of draw, the result is neither a success nor a failure. If that is not possible, then another roll is made until the action either succeeds or fails. The degree of success or failure determines how dramatic the success or failure is, it is the difference between the result of the player and the result of the opposer (degree of success if the roll was a success and degree of failure if the roll was a failure) *multiplied* by the severity level of the situation.

#### 3.1.2. The rule of three

The result of the success roll can be any one of the following three things. Throughout the game there are the choices when success rolls (and even extended success rolls) are made.

- 1) Result is decided using the degree of success/failure as a guideline. This may lead to other conflicts (possibly requiring another success rolls). This is perhaps the most usual way to interpret results.

Example: Kharmon is tied and put in small room and the hallway is guarded by a soldier. Kharmon manages to free himself from the ropes and is now sneaking past the guard and for escape. Guard has a level 3 trait for spotting these kinds of things. Kharmon's player explains that he will be using Kharmon's trait Stealth 2, Severity level of the situation is 1 (the default). Kharmon's player uses d6 and GM agrees. Kharmon's player rolls, a a result of 3. To this the value of the trait is added (stealth 2) and the result is 5. GM rolls for the guard, and the result is 6. This is added to the trait of the guard (spotting 3) and the result is 9. Kharmon's player's result is lower than the result of GM so Kharmon fails. The

degree of the failure is 4 (severity level was 1). GM decides that the guard spots Kharmon and shouts an alarm. Kharmon starts to run for the escape.

- 2) The result of a success roll becomes a *temporary trait*, with a value of the degree of success/failure. The trait describes the situation and the result. The target of the trait will also be chosen, it can be anyone involved in the situation.

Example: Jack Brown is trying to sneak in a secret mansion owned by a local crime lord. He knows the guarding is heavy and when he is solo he cannot do much, he tries to get a clue of their next hit, to get to their tracks so he can bust their asses later.

To accomplish this, he goes there at the darkness of the evening, wearing black skin-tight clothes and a commando mask. He makes his way to the main gate and first he tries to pick the lock. GM explains that the lock is very well-done (the crime lords don't want anybody nosing around their business), and has a level 4 complexity (difficulty to pick it). GM sets the severity level of the situation at 2 (this task is crucial to his success). Jack's player argues that he uses his trait detective skills (at 2) to accomplish the task and suggests a luck die of d6. GM agrees and so the player rolls die, a result of 1 (+ detective skills 2) = 3. GM rolls 3 (+ complexity of the lock 4) = 7. Player's result is much smaller than the GM's so Jack fails (the degree of failure is  $(7-3) * 2 = 8$ , so it is quite bad).

GM explains that Jack not only fails to open the gate, but his actions are so loud that it attracts the attention of one goon guard, which approaches, his tommy gun pointing at the direction of the noise. Jack now has a temporary trait of spotted by goon guard 8, which will affect hiding from the guard etc. Better think of something Jack, and fast.

- 3) A success roll reduces or enhances the effect of some temporary trait (or even normal trait temporarily). The degree of success/failure is either subtracted or added to some temporary trait involved in the situation. This can also happen after one success roll has failed and character is trying to avoid the incoming temporary trait with a second roll (reduction). Usual example for such activity would be toughness and armor traits used against incoming damage traits.

Example: Kharmon has done some researching on his potioncraft, and learned a new, powerful strength potion mixture, a glorious substance that gives man giant strength for a while. GM decides that the complexity of making such a potion is at level 0, severity level 1, and the degree of the success is then the degree by which the strength of the person drinking the potion will increase. Kharmon tests his new craft in the laboratory of the Order, it takes a whole day and after it he gets to roll for creation of 3 potions of strength. The first roll, Kharmon takes carefully and player uses a luck die d4, the result is 3 (+potions 5), GM has result  $3 (+ \text{difficulty } 0) = 3$ . This means he succeeded to create a potion of strength 5 (degree of success is 5). Next roll Kharmon gets more bolder and player uses d8. Result is plus 5 (+potions 5) = 10, GM gets  $7 (+ \text{difficulty } 0) = 7$ . The result a potion of strength 3. In the final potion, Kharmon becomes wild (player is using d12 as luck die) and rolls 2 (+ potions 5) = 7. GM rolls  $12 (+ \text{difficulty } 0) = 12$ . A bad failure, GM determines that the potion explodes when Kharmon is making it causing him a temporary trait of explosion damage 5. Needless to say, the half of the laboratory is ruined (somehow he manages to save the potions he made). Kharmon is going to get a long and serious talk with the leaders of the Order.

Now if Kharmon, during one of his adventures, drinks up the potions he has created, he gains a temporary trait of strength with the value of the potion's power. If Fred (a friend of Kharmon's) drinks up the potion 3, and he has already strength 4 trait, he will temporarily gain Strength 7.

Example: Leonard Franton has had a rough time in the streets and has obtained a temporary trait of bludgeoned with a baseball bat to the left arm 3. This is a usually negatively-driven trait (see later for negative effects of traits) and he goes to the local health care center. The doctor examines his arm and states that one bone is fractured. He puts a cast in it and orders Leonard to come after three weeks to see what has happened. The healing will be handled by a success roll from the doctor. The doctor has 6 trait of handling this and uses d2 for luck die. The difficulty level is Leonard's wound trait 3 and severity level is 1. GM rolls for doctor result is  $1 (+ \text{skill } 6) = 7$ . He also rolls for the difficulty, and the result is  $1 (+ \text{wound trait } 3) = 4$ . This means that the doctor has succeeded with a degree of 2. GM decides that this is taken off from Leonard's wound trait, which leaves at 1. Doctor tells Leonard (after three weeks) that the arm is healing rapidly and takes the cast off.

In some situations it may be best not to use dice at all. This is called a *karma option* and in this case the result is determined by comparing the trait and the difficulty levels, no die roll value is added to either of them. Still the severity level can change even if karma is used.

### 3.1.3.Trait affinity

In most situations character may be able to use many different traits to accomplish the task. When this occurs, the value

of the combined trait is the value of the highest trait, but other traits may give bonus to this. For every other trait that has a value of at least the highest trait -5, +1 is added to the trait value for that roll. The success roll is performed otherwise normally. Affine traits must all have a positive value, and they must be found in trait repertoire of the character. If both sides have many traits involved, both sides will have bonuses in their trait as explained.

Example: In earlier example Jack's player could have argued that he uses not only detective skills 2, but also tools of the trade 3 (a good set of picks), Nosy 4 (this is nosy business) and love for action 2 (heck, this is it, isn't it). If GM would approve all of these, the total trait value is not 2 but 7! (nosy 4 is the highest trait and there are 3 others). As we see, this gives Jack a much better chances of success, so multiple traits in this case are very helpful.

Most common trait combinations are written down at character sheet.

### 3.1.4.Using traits against the character

There are no really negative traits, all traits can be used either positively or negatively. When trait is negative it is decreasing character's possibility of success in the roll. The most usual negatively used traits include temporary traits gained from failed success rolls and nasty personal traits. Motivation traits usually work against character, if he is doing something contrary to his motivation. When trait is used negatively, the level of the trait is subtracted from values of other (positive) traits used in the roll. If there are no positive traits, negative traits can drop the trait value to negative (meaning character has below average human capabilities to succeed).

Example: If Leonard would have tried to climb a fence when wounded (see last Leonard example), his trait(s) for climbing would have been reduced by 3 (the wound level).

On the other hand, even the most negative temporary trait can also be used positively, it's only limited by player's creativity.

Example: If Leonard would like to seduce some nurse from the health care center (see earlier example concerning Leonard), he could possibly use the wound trait (usually very negative) to help him do the job.

Sometimes there are many positive and many negative traits affecting the situation. In this case they are both added up with normal affinity rules (see earlier chapter).

Example: If Kharmon would like to fight with his daggers using traits Bladed weapons (daggers, dual) 5 and Dexterous 3, he would have a level 6 trait with them. Now let's say that he has suffered two wounds, a sword slash to the left arm 2 and nasty cut in the forehead 4. With these his fighting skills would drop to 1. Affinity for the wounds is 4 and +1 for the other would 5, and when that is subtracted from the trait 6 the result is 1.

### 3.1.5.Group effort

If many persons are working together (be it characters or NPC:s) to get a better result, the result of the success roll can also be boosted. The success roll is performed normally, except the trait value. The value of the *group trait* is essentially the highest value from the group, boosted with *group bonus*. Group bonus is normally given in a form of bonus per helper (for example +2 bonus for every helper), but in special cases it can be set individually for each helper. The level of the group bonus represents the value of help in the situation. The group effort rule applies only if there are reasonably few persons (units or whatever) involved. If more than 10 are in the situation, the chances of success should be evaluated as a group against the other group, rather than counting group bonuses.

Example: Rope-pulling contest could have a group bonus of 5 per helper. This means that if three helpers in addition to the best rope-puller attends, he gets +15 bonus to his roll. If it is a chess match rather than rope pulling the group bonus could be +1 per helper. In this case the bonus for 3 helpers is only +3.

Example: Leonard Franton is searching for some expensive and very advanced gadget. It happened that one of his couriers has vanished without a trace and Leonard hopes that it can be found in his flat. With the help of his pal, an ex-police officer Fred Holst he breaks in to the flat and they start the search. They try to keep a low profile and work quick, since they don't want to take too much attention to themselves. Fred has a level 3 trait for such activities, Leonard's player wants to use traits Owns a large collection of useful gadgets 2 (he has detection gadgets) and a photographic memory 1 (he has been in the flat and knows the good hiding places) so his level in this activity is also 3. GM decides that the gadget is hidden inside his computer(it just fits) and this has a hidden 5 -trait and acts as difficulty. The severity level is 1. Group bonus is +3 per helper, since it is very useful to search with someone. Total group trait value is 6 (Leonard has trait at 3 and +3 for Fred's help). Luck die is set to d6. Leonard's player rolls a 3 (+6) = 9 and resist value of 1 (+5) = 6. Guys succeed with a degree of 3.

GM says that after few minutes of searching from the obvious places, Leonard suddenly realizes that the courier was keen on fixing and upgrading computers, so they focus their search on the tech stuff and soon find the needed gadget GM decides that no temporary traits form from this success.

In some situations only skillful help advances the efforts, for example in chess match only players who can play chess are helpful, even if there are 100 people who don't know anything about chess, the result is not modified. In such situation, only the ones who have involved trait level at least at value of highest trait value – 5 will cause group bonus for the roll.

Example: In the last example, both had trait 3 for the situation. However if Fred's trait would have been 8 and Leonard's 3, and the task would have required skillful help, Leonard's presence wouldn't cause a group bonus to the roll.

Group trait can also form a difficulty, if a success roll is made against a group.

Example: If someone would try to conceal a weapon in his pocket when both Leonard Franton and Fred Holst were questioning him, the difficulty will be formed out from their group trait. Fred Holst has a level 3 trait to spot the situation, Leonard hasn't got an appropriate trait so he is going with flat 0. Fred's result is highest (3) and the group bonus is 3, so the difficulty for concealing would be 6 against these keen eyed investigators.

Too many helpers can even interfere, rather than help the result. In this case every helper rolls a normal success roll against some appropriate difficulty and the result of each roll is added as the group bonus (note that poor results can hinder the effort, giving a negative bonus).

If group success roll ends up with traits to the participants (either positive or negative), they will be distributed to the group. If the opposition causes the traits (usually then they are negative) the opponent can choose how to distribute the traits.

### 3.1.6. Contest situations

A contest situation means a success roll, where the opposition (difficulty) comes from another being or character who has traits that oppose the action. This is handled just like normal success roll. A bonus can be given to the other side's trait if the side is somehow in more advanced position.

Both sides of the contest choose appropriate luck die and a die in the middle (rounded up) will be used for the roll.

Example: Rolf Bronson has ended up in a dangerous car competition in the shady night streets of Chiba city. This particular contest is a fast and straight short race. Rolf is pitted against Morihiro Chiba, a notorious car smuggler and racer. He has a good car and skills to drive it, giving a 7. Rolf's player uses Driving cars 4 trait, Loves high speeds 4 trait and smart vehicle plug 5 trait giving him a total bonus of 7. GM decides not to give bonuses to either of them, and the severity level of the situation is 1, since this is short and straight race only. Rolf's player chooses d6 for the luck die and GM chooses d8 for Morihiro. So a d8 is used for this contest (an average of the chosen luck dice, rounded up). Rolf's player rolls 4.  $4 + \text{trait level } 7 = 11$  for his result. GM rolls for Morihiro, a 4.  $4 + \text{trait level } 7 = 11$ . The results are the same and they hit the finish line exactly at the same time.

Note that in contest-type success rolls, the severity level of both sides can be different. A clear example of this would be a fight situation where the other uses handgun and the other only bare fists. If the gun-wielder manages to win, the severity of the result is greater than with the victory of the fist-user.

### 3.1.7. Success rolls with more than 2 sides

If multiple sides are opposed against each other in a conflict (such as a race or a competition) all competitors roll luck die and the one getting a highest trait result wins, followed by second and so on. For the luck die everyone chooses one and then an average of the ones given will be used for the roll. The degree of success for the winner is his result – the result of the one who came second. The degree of failure for each contestant is the winner's result – his result.

Example: After the race Rolf is pitted against 3 other drivers. Driver 1 has trait 4, driver 2 has 5 and driver 3 has 6 for the occasion, against Rolf's 7. Drivers 1 and 2 have a luck die d6, and driver 3 has d4, Rolf has again d8. D6 is the average of these dice so d6 will be used. Rolf's player rolls 4.  $4 + 7$  for trait = 11. GM rolls for the other drivers, Driver 1 has 1 (+4) = 5, driver 2 has 4 (+5) = 9 and driver 3 has 2 (+7) = 9. So Rolf manages to win the whole bout, followed by driver 2 and 3 at a draw and driver 1 loses. Rolf is victorious and leaves with a bit more money and lots of more reputation in his hands (temporary trait of "reputation of being fast in shady car race surroundings 2").

## 3.2. Extended success roll

### 3.2.1. Overview

Often a success roll, regardless of the result leads to another conflict and thus another success roll. In this case result is determined by series of rolls. In this series, a single roll is called a round. A round will describe, how the situation proceeds (giving a tool to describe what is happening in the situation). Length of a single round in game time is also set (it can vary wildly depending on the nature of the situation). As in the normal success roll, there is three possible ways for the extended success roll to end.

- 1) Roll ends, consequences are explained (who succeeded, what happened)
- 2) A participant of the conflict (or all participants) decide to end the conflict. Sometimes this may need another success roll(s) to achieve.
- 3) In result of a situation, someone has lost a narrative struggle (see more information in chapter “removing character from the narrative”. The outcome of the situation is described.

All special rules concerning normal success roll (trait affinity, group effort, multiple sides -rule) apply to extended success roll as well, and are handled identically.

Example: Kharmon is trying to pick a lock of a treasure chest located in a rich mansion. Kharmon's player suggests that Kharmon would be using traits Picking locks 3, Dexterous 3 and Lust for jewels 2, and GM agrees (total value of Kharmon's trait is 5). GM decides that the lock has a complexity of 5, and one round length is 10 seconds, severity is 1.

First round, Kharmon's player uses luck die d6. Roll result is 2. His result is 2 (+5 for trait) = 7. GM rolls for the lock 4 (+5 for complexity) = 9. When compared, we see that Kharmon failed the first attempt. GM decides that he has made a sound and a guard is coming to check what is happening. Guard arrives after 3 rounds.

Second round, Kharmon's player is trying still and pushes it with d8. Roll result is 6 (+5 for trait) = 11. Opposing roll results at 2 (+5 for complexity) = 7. This indicates a success with a degree of 4. GM decides that the conflict is over, Kharmon managed to open the chest. However he is soon having some company.

In addition to this, *action points* (later referred as AP's) can be added to the conflict. Action points work as a buffer before consequences from success rolls start to have an effect (temporary traits are formed or the situation ends). The degree of the success roll during a round is reduced from the losing side AP's. When AP's end, the situation continues normally (effects of success rolls begin to have an effect).

Example: Refer to last example. GM sets 5 action points for both Kharmon and the chest.

At first round, Kharmon loses with a degree of 2, so he now has only 3 AP's. Note that a guard hasn't heard a thing, so the AP loss is the only effect from the lost roll.

At second round, Kharmon wins with a degree of 4, thus dropping the chest's AP's down to 1.

Note that this wouldn't have an effect either, lock is not yet opened completely, but Kharmon is close. If he would win the next round, perhaps then he would open the chest. However if he loses all his AP's and lost even more rolls he might make a noise, or even crack the picks inside the lock.

Level of AP's is set according to situation and genre. Normally if the situation is more cinematic, flashy or just plain fun to handle with long competition, the required value could be set very high. Quick extended success rolls need only 5-10 AP's, but beating up the Big Kungfu Boss could require PC's to burn as much as 30 AP's from him. Note that more AP's always mean longer handling time for the conflict. Short guidelines for assigning AP's are found in the following table:

| <i>AP</i> | <i>SITUATION</i>   |
|-----------|--|
| 5         | Quick extended action, “realistic” level hand to hand fighting, situations where result should be quick.   |
| 10        | Medium extended action, default level for “session finale” -level of action. Gives a bit room for tactical choices and manipulation.                       |
| 15        | Long extended action, default level for “campaign finale” -level of action. Gives a lot of room for tactics. May take a bit of time for equaled opponents. |
| 25        | Extremely long extended action, epic level actions and contests that take a while to solve, even if sides are not equal.                                   |

Example: Kharmon was robbing a rich mansion while something went wrong, somehow they were alerted to his

presence even though he didn't alert anyone. "Someone has been disloyal to me in the Order", he thinks when he flees from the mansion guards. He ends up in a situation where two guards are blocking his exit to the woods and others are shouting and running just few hundred meters behind him. He must act quickly and so he tries to fight the guards as quick as possible to get to the woods and to safety. Both guards have a level 2 trait for fighting and Kharmon uses traits: dual daggers 5, and Dexterous 3, giving him a level 6 bonus. However the guards have armor, while Kharmon has not, and GM gives them a level 2 bonus for that. They also have better weapons (swords), but in this close quarter situation GM thinks that they do not count against Kharmon's knives. The guards have a total bonus of 4 against Kharmon. Help effect is 2 for the guards and situation is handled as an extended contest, with 5 AP's to all contestants. One round is worth of 5 seconds of action. Severity of blade-weapon attacks in Kharmon's game setting is 2, this is used for both Kharmon and the guards.

First round, Kharmon's player uses risky luck die d8. The guards use d6, so d8 is used for this round. Kharmon's player rolls 6 (+6 for trait) = 12. GM rolls for the guards, a result of 2 (+6 for traits) = 8. Kharmon wins with a degree of 4 (\*2 severity) = 8. Kharmon's player decides to put that 8 totally towards one guard, dropping his AP's to 0 and causing still a level 3 trait of cut to the right shoulder. Since the guard has only narrative trigger 3, he is out of the fight.

GM explains that Kharmon enters the situation with dazzling speed slashing away with his daggers. The first guy approaches, and tries to lunge our hero with his sword. Kharmon speeds up, dodges below the attack and slices with his left dagger to the guard in his shoulder (where armor is weak). The blade hits home with a grunch and blood spurts out to the field. The guard falls down yelling like a stabbed pig and holding his shoulder.

Second round. One guard is left, but he is not going to give up. The luck dice is the same, but this time the guard has only trait level 4 since he doesn't have his friend helping this time. Kharmon's player rolls 3 (+6 trait) = 9. Guards roll ends up at 7 (+4 for trait) = 11. Guards win with a degree of 2 (\*2 severity) = 4. Kharmon loses and his AP's drop to 1.

GM states that while Kharmon gets ready to finish his last opponent a strike of bad luck hits him. He stumbles over a rock and drops on the ground. Like a cat he is up again, but the guard has a better position over him.

Third round begins. This time the guard is pushing the luck and uses d8. Since Kharmon is also using d8 the dice is still d8. Kharmon's player rolls 2 (+6 for trait) = 8. GM rolls for the guard, a result of 4 (+4 trait) = 8. The results are at a tie.

GM pictures an even fight where both Kharmon and guard try to attack but are deflected with skill. The other guards are getting closer.

Fourth round begins with the same luck dice. Kharmon's player rolls 8 (+6 trait) = 14. GM rolls 5 (+4 trait) = 9. A success of level 5 (\*2 severity) = 10 for Kharmon. Guard's AP's are dropped and he has temporary trait slashed across the face 5.

GM states that while the guard is attacking, Kharmon makes a swooping counter-attack and slashes across the guards face. The guard flees in panic while his face bleeds like hell. Kharmon flees from the scene to the woods.

### 3.2.2.Flow of the extended success roll

The extended success roll is not a rigid mechanic, but rather describes the outcome of the situation if nothing special or unusual happens. Often players want such things to happen and this is why extended contests can be modified by different things.

*Traits involved* in the roll can change to accommodate happenings in the situation. This can happen either automatically, or a success in some special action (possible roll) could be required. Examples would include fleeing from combat (fighting traits become fleeing traits), changing the type of the contest from brawl to debate or something like that. Usually the AP's stay the same, only the traits will change. Sometimes the trait change involves only one person, so that the other side continues to use the trait he was using.

Example: In earlier fight, Kharmon could state that whenever he gets the opportunity, he flees. GM orders that Kharmon must first win a normal extended contest round, and then he can start running. If the guards would follow, the contest would continue as a chase (with running and health being the primary traits for this contest). Of course both sides could also be tired already from the fighting, or even injured (which would be nicely simulated with the already lost AP's and temporary traits). If Kharmon would win then he has outran the guards and gets away, if guards win, then they get some nasty hitting opportunities to our hero's backside.

*Situational bonuses* can be given to the characters or NPC:s during extended success rolls, if they have an advantageous position during that round. Sometimes it needs a successful normal success roll to be achieved.

### 3.3.Experience

In every roleplaying game, characters develop as they experience new things during their adventures. In game mechanics experience is measured by character gaining new traits and upgrading the ones he already has, or lowering or removing traits he has (for example, nasty personal traits). Motivation traits won't normally be affected by experience, but they follow a development system of their own, it is explained in the end of this chapter.

In start of every gaming session, every player gets one bump. A bump is a point that can be used in any time during the adventure. When character is using a narrow trait, and player says that he is using the bump, the trait gains +1 in it's value (or -1, if so desired and explained). The bumps can be saved and used later in other adventures. With one bump, you can raise or lower a narrow trait with one level, but for a broad trait, player needs 3 bumps to get that +1/-1 to it. Normally only one raise per trait is allowed during an adventure, even if player has multiple bumps saved from earlier gaming sessions. Note that bumps can only be used during adventure and when character is using some trait.

One bump per session is the standard, heroic experience method. In other genres, this may vary. For example in supers campaign, 5 bumps per session could be nice, but in very low-level or slow development campaigns only one bump per 2 or 3 gaming sessions could be used.

Example: Leonard's player has a bump in adventure and decides to save it for his next session. He already has one bump, so in beginning of his next adventure he has 3 bumps. Now during this session he could raise/lower one of Leonard's broad traits by one (using all 3 of his bumps), or raise/lower 3 different narrow traits during game play. He could only use one bump and save the remaining two for next session. In every case, the bump could only be used in situation, where some trait is used (and the bump would only be allowed to be spent on that particular trait).

A bump can also be used to gain new traits. If the trait is broad, then 3 bumps are needed, but narrow traits need only one bump. After the bump(s), the value of the new trait is 1 and can be risen from there normally with further bumps.

Motivation traits have their own unique way of changing. In normal game, motivation traits will shift and change. Player can change any motivation trait he wishes as long as there is a reason for it in the game. Usually this happens after some success roll (the change is then the degree of success or failure in the roll). When this happens, other motivation traits lose their value, so that the sum of all motivation traits stays the same. So if character has 10 points worth of motivation traits, raising one will cause others to drop so that the sum stays at 10.

Example: Rolf Bronson has motivation traits Working as a courier 4, Simstim superstars 2, Technical toys and weapons 2 and Current job to deliver hot chips to Mr. Renoir 2. It happens that he is subjected to higher level simstims, not normally even available, and highly addictive. GM and the player both agree that his simstim superstars -motivation trait raises up to 4. This causes his other motivation traits to drop, so his new levels are: Working as a courier 3, Simstim superstars 4, Technical toys and weapons 2, Current job to deliver hot chips to Mr. Renoir 1. This indicates that he struggles to handle his job, while the simstim is taking more and more his free time. This is surely going to affect his work, sooner or later.

Sometimes characters can get more absolute motivation. This happens when character experiences something very unique that forces him to commit himself to the fullest. Usually this happens after a very spectacular playing session. When this happens, 3 bumps are transferred to +1 motivation to be distributed for the character. So if earlier, character had for example 10 points worth of motivation traits, he now has them for 11 points.

Usually after each session, character gets 1 hero point back to his pool. A maximum amount of hero points is the amount character had them in the beginning of the game.

If character for some reason loses one of his traits (this usually happens through some event in the game) players can negotiate a substitute trait for the character. This trait usually represents the result which is caused by removing the character trait. This substitute trait could be motivation (giving character more absolute motivation), personal or even proficiency in some situations.

Example: Leonard Franton has a trait 'two houses 2' which represents the fact that he has somewhat greater resources than average person would. Now it happens that a thug burns his luxurious flat, causing a change to the trait. GM and player negotiate and result is that now Leonard Franton has a trait 'Owns a flat 1', which is proficiency trait and 'Want's to find out the thug who burned his house 1' which is motivation (giving Leonard one extra point of motivation traits).

### 3.4.Non-player characters

Non-player characters include all persons and creatures which are not normal characters. They are not the main “stars” of the story, but side characters, friends and foes who are met during the adventures. In traditional games, game master is responsible for all non-player characters (NPCs), but in different styles the responsibility of controlling the NPC characters can be shared differently.

### 3.4.1.Importance

NPC:s should be categorized by their importance in the story. This means that player(s) who control the NPC:s should think what this is for each NPC that is played during the adventure. Guidelines for assigning this is in the following table:

| <i>IMPORTANCE</i> | <i>MEANING</i>  |
|-------------------|---|
| Statistic         | NPC is non-important side character considering the story at hand. Examples would include a merchant who is selling goods for the characters or a row soldier who is attacking the characters.                          |
| Important         | NPC is important part of the story. Examples would include persons traveling with characters, arch enemies of characters and so on. The importance of important-level NPC is almost equal to that of player characters. |
| Phenomenal        | NPC is crucially important part of the story. Examples would include story arcs that are dependent of the NPC itself. The importance of NPC is even greater than of player character.                                   |

Note that NPC:s importance is not always the same as the NPC:s skill or effectiveness. Statistic NPC:s can be equally powerful and skillful as player characters. What the importance means is the NPC:s power related to the *story of the game*.

NPC:s have three defining qualities which are concept, traits and narrative trigger.

### 3.4.2.Concept

NPC concept is similar to character concept. However NPC concept is usually broader and much more brief than character concept. Statistic NPC:s can be described only by one sentence, where phenomenal-level NPC could have as much text as normal character.

### 3.4.3.Traits

NPC:s have traits just as player characters. Their description and value follow the same guidelines as character traits. However unless the NPC is of phenomenal level, it is useless to categorize or classify traits (broad/narrow, proficiency/personal/motivation/temporary). Just add a value for the traits.

Usually NPC traits are very descriptive, and they shouldn't overlap. It is pointless to put 5 different fighting traits to NPC unless it is crucial to the plot at hand. In stead NPC traits should describe the aspect of that side of the NPC totally, usually they would be categorized as broad traits, if they were character traits.

Example: A statistic guard NPC won't need traits: swordsmanship, wearing armor, alertness and halberd fighting. In stead it has a single trait called city guard and that covers all the aspects mentioned. Needless to say this guard is very one-dimensional, but that is what statistic NPC:s usually are. If the guard happens to be something more important, he should have more traits.

As the last example stated, an NPC can be fully defined by one trait. This is typical for statistic NPC:s, because it is usually only one thing that they do related to characters (guards guard, merchants buy and sell, and beggars beg). More important NPC:s have more traits than one, but still they should be very descriptive and as broad as possible. This makes handling of NPC:s much easier.

### 3.4.3.Narrative trigger

Narrative trigger of NPC:s is determined by NPC importance. Statistic NPC has a narrative trigger value of 3, Important NPC has value 6 and phenomenal NPC:s have 9 and above. The creator of NPC can naturally alter this, these are just suggested levels. See the "removing the character from narrative" -chapter after this for more information on the use of narrative triggers.

Example: Few examples of the NPC:s in the world of Leonard Franton.

**Burt Cunningham**

**Importance:** Statistic

**Concept:** Big and fat gun shop owner who has shady connections

**Traits:** Gun shop owner 2, Fat 4, Dirty 3, Shady connections 2

**Narrative trigger:** 3

**Fred Holst****Importance:** Important**Concept:** an ex-police officer who has helped Leonard many times. Considers himself Leonard's only friend and the one who keeps him out of trouble. Fred stopped his police work after he accidentally shot a kid and couldn't continue his police work for his mental state. Now his nerves have calmed down a bit but not really that much. He is 50 years old and quite small, but has very strong and charismatic voice. He has gray hair and a mustache.**Traits:** Ex-cop 3, Post-traumatic stress 2, Charismatic voice 4, Strong morale 4**Narrative trigger:** 6

### 3.5. Objects and things

In addition to NPC:s, the results of character actions can be affected by objects and occurrences of the world. If they affect characters, they do so through *object traits*, traits that are just like character, or NPC -ones. They won't need classifications or types, and they are sometimes very situational.

Objects usually affect characters in the following ways:

- 1) Object hinders character's performance, like mountain cliff is forcing character to climb. In this case the object trait is the difficulty for success rolls of the character.
- 2) Object aids character's performance, like a dense forest would help character hiding from trackers. In this case the object trait is counted along with character traits (in normal affinity fashion) in his roll.
- 3) Object is the source of the action, like a fire of certain density would burn character. In this case the object trait is the one involved in the roll and it is opposed by a trait of the character (health-trait in the case of fire burns).

When designing adventures, object traits and situational traits can be written down, or then they are created on the fly.

### 3.6. Removing the character from the narrative

In some cases, Chaos & Order character can be taken out from the narrative. These include:

- Character loses his nerve (fleeing or doing something else that player doesn't really want)
- Character loses consciousness
- Character loses his sanity (temporarily or permanently)
- Character dies

Any thing that removes the player – character contact can fall under this category and is treated equally. Some things are more permanent than others, for example losing consciousness will usually result in character waking up at some point, but if character is dead, then usually nothing can bring him back (or it is at least harder).

The level, when these kind of actions can happen is called a *narrative trigger*. The level of the trigger is written down on character sheet, and it is usually 6 for characters. If character has disabilities (traits that affect negatively in the situation) that add up (in normal affinity fashion) more or equal to character's narrative trigger, there will be a possibility to the player to lose the narrative of his character. If this happens, character will enter a so called *narrative struggle*. Narrative struggle is a character's struggle to keep the control of himself (not dying, not falling unconscious, and so on).

The nature of the (negative) traits that cause this effect will imply what are the consequences of lost narrative struggle. If for example the traits are gun shot wounds to the chest, the results can be shock, trauma and death. If the traits are losses in a public debate, the effects could be anger, fleeing from the place and so on.

Each of the consequences are treated separately, for example if character can go unconscious or die, they are both rolled separately, the character is having two narrative struggles.

A narrative struggle is a normal success roll with severity of 1. The traits used in the roll are narrative trigger, and any trait that help the character against the effect of the struggle (for example health or toughness when character is trying to stay conscious when wounded). The difficulty of the roll is the added (affine) effect of the debilitating traits. In addition to these traits, character's traits could affect the situation negatively as well (for example if character is impulsive, it might make him easier to get angry in a debate). In this case such traits are calculated in the difficulty normally.

Luck die can usually be freely chosen.

If the roll succeeds or is a tie, nothing happens, and player can continue controlling his/her character (effects of narrative struggle won't happen).

If the roll fails, the stated effect will be applied. When narrative struggle fails in this way, character gains a temporary trait which describes his state. The value of the trait is the degree of failure in the roll. So if character dies, he gains a dead trait for the level of his failure. In some situations (high-magic genre or fast hospital care) even this state may be corrected (the trait works as a difficulty factor).

Note that not all creatures in the world have the same narrative trigger. For player characters, 6 is suggested but for example statistical NPC:s value 3 is normal. On the other hand super-important -level NPC:s may have as much as 9-15 as their narrative trigger. Narrative trigger measures the *person's (or creature's) power to stay in the story*.

Example: Earlier in the extended success roll chapter. Kharmon got into trouble with two guards while escaping. After a short fight the guards got their fair share of dagger hits. Both guards have a narrative trigger of 3 (they are statistical NPC:s). The first guard got a level 3 wound-trait from Kharmon's dagger. Since this is equal to his narrative trigger he is in risk of losing the narrative. The GM states that the result would be inability to act and continue the fight (the hit was targeted to his shoulder). For this effect, the guard has one trait that helps him to resist it, tough 1. So guard's trait for this roll is 4 (narrative trigger 3 and tough 1 affine). The difficulty is 3 since he has only sustained one hit. GM chooses d6 for the luck die and rolls. Result is 3 (+4 for trait) = 7 and resisting result is 6 (+3 for difficulty) = 9. Guard fails, drops down to the ground and starts to curse and scream, he now has a trait unable to continue the fight 2. Later on he might develop wound infections and stuff like that, the fantasy world is dangerous for the wounded.

For NPC:s the narrative struggle can be handled quickly with karma option. The conclusions can be drawn from there (comparing traits and difficulties). However, to statistic NPC:s even this is too much, it can just be stated what happens if their narrative trigger is crossed (usually they just drop in a fight and so on.).

Example: GM decides that the other guard doesn't need a roll for narrative struggle. He has gained more debilitating traits than his narrative trigger (level 7 wound actually) and GM just decides that he bites the dust.

### 3.7. Spending hero points

By spending hero points, player can make his character achieve or survive in situations that he would normally not. Hero points have three possible ways to be used; boost, re-roll or free.

**Boost** means that by spending a hero point, player can add +5 to any result of a die roll.

**Re-roll** means that by spending a hero point, player can order any success roll (or a round from extended success roll) made in the game to be re-rolled. This can affect player's own rolls or even other player's rolls. This can be done after the results of the success roll have been explained.

**Free** means that spending a hero point, player can bring a major event change into the story.

The hero points can be spent in combination, as in next example.

Example: Player has an extremely crucial roll during adventure. He decides to spend 2 hero points in one roll and increase his result by +10. He is in for an extreme success, but it has cost all of his hero points.

## 4. CAMPAIGNS, SETTINGS AND GAME WORLDS

### 6.1. The campaign traits

In addition to normal game setting material (information about locations, people, politics, lands and so on) Chaos & Order has seven traits that can enhance the effectiveness of the game. The traits give short information of the campaign, and helps to focus the use of the game rules accordingly, to get the right feel to the game. One set of traits is called a campaign template. The traits are:

#### 1) Overview

This section includes the overview of the setting in few sentences. Includes the basic idea of the setting. This can be used to focus the trait selections for the characters. If the setting or game has a theme or agenda, this should also be mentioned.

#### 2) Severity levels

List of the most usual conflicts that exist in the game setting and are likely to be concern the characters. In addition to this list, for each a default severity level is assigned. This acts as a guideline to determine situational severity levels during the game. Note that the severity of the conflict has nothing to do with how often the conflict is invoked in the game world. For example in hack'n'slash -type of game combats are most common type of conflict, but the severity can still be level 1. After the information on the severity, suggested AP levels for extended contests are given.

#### 3) Character creation information

This trait includes the answers to basic character creation needs. This includes the following:

- How powerful are beginning characters ?
  - Amount of proficiency traits (broad and narrow) given
  - Amount of motivation traits given
  - Narrative trigger level for characters
  - Starting amount of hero points for characters
- Information on the allowed cultures and races player can select for his character. This includes the possibility of adding traits for them depending on the culture.

#### 4) Experience level

Trait states how quickly do the characters gain experience during sessions. This means the explanation of rules how and when bumps are distributed to the players. In addition a remark can be added on which kind of situations characters can gain more motivation traits. The situations when bumps can be used can also vary.

This section includes the rules how hero points are replenished after their use. If campaign has special hero point rules, then they are written in here as well.

#### 5) Disabilities

Trait explains what are typical disabilities (negatively affecting traits formed in failed success rolls) in the game. Also included must be mention how they are (and can be) "healed" or neutralized (and possibly the time frame it takes to be done). This information, at best, is very broad and can be only used as the basic guideline.

#### 6) Luck die suggestions

Trait gives the default luck die to be used in success rolls when there are no special luck-affecting phenomena present. Also maximum and minimum luck dice can be given if luck die is restricted.

#### 7) Other notes

Other information, special rules, things that need to remembered during game sessions, that are not included in the questions above.

Example: Kharmon's game world campaign template looks like this.

**Overview:** Kharmon lives in your everyday ordinary fantasy rpg world. Different races and nations co-exist in the same world, often warring with each other. Magic is normal of it's strength and not especially rare. Kharmon lives in a Guild, a secret organization, which is the center of the campaign. Political intrigue and shadowy scenes are as common as sights of thieves and warriors robbing treasure chests.

**Severity levels:** The most usual conflicts and severity levels involved are.

| <b>CONFLICT</b>               | <b>SEVERITY</b> | <b>SUGGESTED AP</b>   |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Melee weapon combat           | 2               | Normal (from 5 to 25) |
| Social and political intrigue | 2               | High (from 10 to 25)  |
| Magic and supernatural events | 1               | High (from 10 to 25)  |

**Character creation information:** Beginning characters start at 20 points worth of both broad and narrow traits, and 10 points worth of motivation traits. Personal traits are not limited. Trait values are limited from 1 to 10. Narrative trigger level is 6. Starting amount of hero points is 3. There are only human characters in Kharmon's setting, and they are all of the same culture.

**Experience level:** Normal heroic experience system, 1 bump per adventure. Characters gain 1 hero point after each adventure, to a maximum of 3.

| <b>DISABILITY</b>                      | <b>NOTES</b>   |
|--|--|
| Wounding                               | Wounds are healed with health roll against the difficulty of the wounds. The roll is made once per week. If the roll fails, character gains new injury in the form of infection and wound fever (it can lead to death). (Bonus may be applied to the roll if wounds are cleaned and subject is resting). |
| Social, political status or reputation | Social, political status or reputation in the Order can be positive, but also negative. It can be "healed" by successful rolls in situations where such bad status can be corrected.   |
| Magical exhaustion                     | Using magic causes exhaustion (one point when successful, degree of failure if failed) which interferes any use of magic. Magical exhaustion is healed normally one point per hour of rest.  |

**Luck die suggestions:** Default luck die to use is d6. No restrictions are given, so all luck dice from d2 to d20 can be used.

**Other notes:** Nothing special other notes are presented. See the world races for information on creating non-human characters.

## 6.2. Non-humans as characters

In normal character creation, it is assumed that all characters are human. In many campaigns non-human characters can also be present, be it either fantasy campaigns with elves and dwarves or high science fiction with lots of alien races from the galaxy. All non-humans are created with same guidelines.

Non-human characters differ from human characters by their racial trait. Racial trait is a personal trait (see personal traits for more information). It includes all the definitive qualities of a race.

Example: Elves are a race in the world where Kharmon lives in. They are agile, dexterous and cheerful folk who enjoy living in the forests. Their abilities include night vision, good hearing ability and lightfootedness. They are long-lived, they start to age at near 500 years and they are small and thin when compared to humans. Elves are peace-loving folk who do not enjoy cities or living with humans.

So let's assume a friend of Kharmon's is an elf with a trait elf 5. Now he could use his racial trait for example when spotting enemies in the dark, or walking a rope over roaring river. In some cases his race could hinder his activities, for example if he would like to hurt nature or live in the city, character would soon notice that his elven heritage would cause him lots of discomfort.

If not stated, the value of the racial trait is 3. See character creation chapter for more information on traits.

Racial traits can also have greater effects. This means that racial trait is so special that it will grant more bonus (be it positive or negative).

Example: Fairies are another race in Kharmon's world. They are nasty little (about 10 cm) creatures with wings and

practical jokers.

A Fairy character (Fairy 3) wants to hide in the bushes from approaching enemies. He is almost impossible to find (he is so tiny) and so GM gives +5 bonus to his hiding efforts. For this instance, Fairy has 5 (bonus) + 3 (fairy) = 8 bonus for hiding. GM might state the same bonus negatively if character is trying to lift something or is trying to fight against human-sized foes.

## 5. GAME STYLES

In addition to being generic in setting-wise, Chaos & Order is also generic in playing-style wise. This means C&O supports different kinds of play, from traditional gaming to shared-story styles.

The game style is defined by a set of answers to specific questions, called *style traits*. Style traits create the gaming style. Single set of traits is called a style template, and in the end of this chapter examples are given to clarify their use. In some traits, the answer is selected from pre-determined choices, but in others the answer is freeform.

If you like your gaming style, and know what you want to play, this chapter is not necessary to enjoy the game, you can keep on playing with your own style using C&O.

The traits are divided to three groups. Character-group handles player – character relationship. Situations-group handles mainly game mechanics -related issues. Larger scale includes things that handle grand scale happenings and control.

### 7.1. Players

Players-traits answer to questions concerning player-character relationship, and the handling of characters.

#### 1) *What are the roles of players ?*

Answers to question of basic player roles. Usually these would be one game master and others are players, but this may vary. Game could have many game masters with shared responsibility over the game world, or a rotating GM where a new GM is chosen for every scene. There may even be no GM/player distinction at all. In this case the responsibilities of players should be stated in this and other traits. In the answer is also defined how many characters each player controls.

#### 2) *How does the player play his character(s) ?*

This answers to question how players are playing their character(s). It has the following possibilities:

- Player tries to identify himself *as his character*. This means he tries to act and do just as he thinks his character would in the game world.
- Player tries to act and do as the game rules and character traits suggest. Usually this does not counteract with the previous possibility, but it is slightly different.
- Player tries to act and do so that the game session evolves into a story.

Note that this is only suggestion to players, it is not always possible to follow the answer by the book.

#### 3) *Who decides on character's inner feelings / motivations ?*

What player will have the final say on character feelings and motivations. In game terms this also determines who controls character's motivation traits.

#### 4) *Who decides on character's behavior and actions ?*

Answer to this states who controls the character most of the time, his actions, behavior and doings.

#### 5) *Who controls the character creation?*

This trait holds answers to character creation control. The player who controls character creation has the final say what kind of concept, traits and values are applicable for characters. This trait also determines if free method for character creation can be applied and the fact who can see character's traits.

#### 6) *Who decides how bumps are used for the character?*

This trait determines which player determines where are bumps spent on.

### 7.2. Situations

Traits in this class answer to responsibility issues during situations (and mainly success rolls and mechanics around them).

#### 9) *Why and when is the resolution mechanic (success/extended success roll) initiated?*

This trait gives the motive to resolution mechanic use, and when it does happen. This also includes the players who can initiate it. In addition to normal success rolls, the use of karma option should also be stated.

#### 10) *Who decides what character traits apply to situation ?*

Who has the final say on what traits are applicable to a situation. This also includes who can suggest them.

**11) Who creates situational traits (objects and difficulties) and can see them ?**

The player who controls situational difficulties, objects and situations that are created. This also includes the player who determines bonuses in (extended) contest -type situations.

**12) Who decides the luck die chosen, and with what grounds is it chosen ?**

This answer determines how the appropriate luck die is chosen to a success/extended success roll. Also the usual grounds on which the appropriate die is selected must be clarified. The usual reasons are: truthfulness to the situation in the game world, excitement or tactics.

**13) Who rolls the dice / can see the results ?**

Here is stated how the dice is handled during games. Also who can see the results of the die rolls are included here.

**14) Who decides the AP counts in extended success rolls ?**

This is pretty self-explanatory.

**15) Who interprets the results (with the rule of three) and describes them ?**

This is quite obvious as well. It states the person in the playing group that has the responsibility for interpreting what mechanics give to events in the game world. This also states how the situations that have resolution mechanics are played out (who narrates what, does narration happen before or after the roll, etc.).

**16) Can the interpreter cheat (and the reason why he can) ?**

This is also important, can the person who is responsible for the results cheat. Cheating in this means that the result is changed. Also the reason why this could be done should also be stated, it can be any of the following:

- Excitement, cheating creates more exciting situation
- Story, cheating drives the story forward better
- Character, cheating will create more interesting situation for character/saves him from death etc.
- Believability, cheating will create a more believable effect in the game world than following the rules would.

**16) Who decides how character's hero points are used ?**

This tells the players who decides how the character's hero points are spent.

### **7.3.Larger scale**

These traits answer on responsibility of larger scale events: scenes, adventures and campaigns.

**17) Who controls non-player character's behavior and feelings ?**

This states who controls non-player characters during adventures (and who creates them). It includes both their feelings/motives and their actions towards the game. Also the one who controls them decides their traits and abilities. See “non player characters” in chapter game system for more information on creating NPC:s.

**18) Who controls the scenes ?**

This states who controls scenes, a short adventure parts that usually have the same location and characters, just like scenes in a play or a movie.

**19) Who controls the adventures ?**

This states who controls adventures. It should be noted that the one controlling the adventure has final say on how much and when bumps are shared to the players (usually this is found directly from the campaign template).

**20) Who controls the campaigns ?**

Answer states who controls the series of adventures, campaigns

Example: This example includes few sample style templates.

**STYLE TEMPLATE 1 – THE CLASSIC STYLE**

This style is perhaps the most usual playing style. Strong GM controls the game world and each player have their own characters.

## PLAYERS

**What are the roles of players:** One player is chosen to be the game master (GM). The others are players and they all have one character to play.

**How does the player play his character(s):** Player usually tries to identify himself as his character. Players also must follow the guidelines given by the rules for their characters.

**Who decides on character's inner feelings / motivations:** Usually the player of the character handles this. However player must follow the guidelines given by the rules (motivation traits, personal traits, temporary traits) when handling them. GM can even enforce some feelings / motivations if he feels it is justified.

**Who decides on character's behavior and actions:** Usually the player of the character handles this. However when narrative struggle is lost, GM does the controlling until he thinks it is appropriate to let the player continue.

**Who controls the character creation:** GM controls the character creation, and has final say on every aspect of the characters. Of course he must be fair to all of his players, and if he wants he can give a possibility for free method of character creation.

**Who decides how bumps are used for the character:** Usually the player of the character can do this. On rare occasions GM can intervene in this process, however when he does he has the supreme power in this field also.

## SITUATIONS

**Why and when is the resolution mechanic (success/extended success roll) initiated:** The basic reason for initiation of resolution mechanic is drama ... the more dramatic the situation, the more the resolution mechanic should be used. For the most dramatic occasions, extended success roll is used. GM is the initiator of resolution mechanics and he also decides when is the karma-option used.

**Who decides what character traits apply to situation:** Player of character has the responsibility to suggest appropriate traits. GM then either accepts or rejects individual traits and the approved traits are counted in the success roll.

**Who creates situational traits (objects and difficulties) and can see them:** GM decides all difficulties, be it static or opposing trait difficulty. Bonuses for contest situations are also assigned by the GM. Usually GM doesn't show the difficulty ratings to the players, except in special cases.

**Who decides the luck die chosen, and with what grounds is it chosen:** Player usually chooses the luck die, but he has to explain why it is appropriate for the situation. GM can then veto if he feels it is not appropriate. GM can also restrict the choices of luck dice even before the player actually chooses the die. The die should be chosen for the truthfulness of the situation. For secret rolls (like sensing rolls and such that the player will not even know about, GM chooses the luck die by himself).

**Who rolls the dice / can see the results:** Usually the player rolls dice when the roll is concerning his character. GM rolls other rolls, and all secret rolls. Players can usually see other player's rolls, but if player wants only he and the GM will see it. GM is the only one who sees the results of secret rolls.

**Who decides the AP counts in extended success rolls:** GM

**Who interprets the results (with the rule of three) and describes them:** GM interpreters all results and declares what happens. This means that usually when rolls are done, player first describes what is he trying (as his character) to do, then the rolls are made and GM explains what happens.

**Can the interpreter cheat (and the reason why he can):** GM can cheat in the results. Reasons vary, but cheating should be kept as minimal as possible. Reasons for cheating are continuing of the story and believability of the result.

**Who decides how character's hero points are used:** Player of the character can decide how the hero points are spent. If using the free method (see using hero points) the GM has the final say what happens.

## LARGER SCALE

**Who controls non-player character's behavior and feelings:** GM creates, controls and plays out all non-player characters.

**Who controls the scenes:** GM controls scenes and leads characters to them. Naturally the game world must respond to character's actions appropriately.

**Who controls the adventures:** GM

**Who controls the campaigns:** GM

## STYLE TEMPLATE 2 – THE PLAYER-NARRATORS

This style includes almost traditional gm, but when characters act successfully, players get directional power, even beyond the abilities and actions of the character itself.

### PLAYERS

**What are the roles of players:** One player is chosen to be the game master (GM). The others are players and they all have one character to play.

**How does the player play his character(s):** Player guides his character as a narrator. He is aiming for a nice story and is acting just like a director or writer. Players must follow the guidelines given by the rules for their characters.

**Who decides on character's inner feelings / motivations:** Usually the player of the character handles this. However player must follow the guidelines given by the rules (motivation traits, personal traits, temporary traits) when handling them. GM can even enforce some feelings / motivations if he feels it is justified.

**Who decides on character's behavior and actions:** Usually the player of the character handles this. However when narrative struggle is lost, GM does the controlling until he thinks it is appropriate to let the player continue.

**Who controls the character creation:** GM controls the character creation, and has final say on every aspect of the characters. Of course he must be fair to all of his players, and if he wants he can give a possibility for free method of character creation.

**Who decides how bumps are used for the character:** Usually the player of the character can do this. On rare occasions GM can intervene in this process, however when he does he has the supreme power in this field also.

### SITUATIONS

**Why and when is the resolution mechanic (success/extended success roll) initiated:** Any player can initiate the resolution mechanic, for getting the narration of the game for a short while. GM can also initiate it as well. Karma-option is rarely used with characters, but often NPC:s are controlled strictly by karma.

**Who decides what character traits apply to situation:** Player of character has the responsibility to suggest appropriate traits. GM then either accepts or rejects individual traits and the approved traits are counted in the success roll.

**Who creates situational traits (objects and difficulties) and can see them:** GM decides all difficulties, be it static or opposing trait difficulty. Bonuses for contest situations are also assigned by the GM. GM may or may not show the difficulty of the situation to the player.

**Who decides the luck die chosen, and with what grounds is it chosen:** Player usually chooses the luck die. Usually he has freedom to choose it as he wishes, but it is advised that a short explanation why the die is appropriate is given.

**Who rolls the dice / can see the results:** Usually the player rolls dice when the roll is concerning his character. GM rarely rolls any dice himself, most NPC:s are guided by karma option.

**Who decides the AP counts in extended success rolls:** GM

**Who interprets the results (with the rule of three) and describes them:** Player of character interprets the results if the roll was a success. This includes a short narration of the happening, which can even have elements outside the action itself (player can introduce new plot twists and so on). GM can say stop when he feels the narration is long enough, and continue narrating the game from there. Player must keep the degree of his success as a guideline when describing the result. If result is a failure, GM narrates and interprets the rules of the failure and the game continues.

**Can the interpreter cheat (and the reason why he can):** Cheating in the results is very rare in this game style.

**Who decides how character's hero points are used:** Player of the character can decide how the hero points are spent. If using the free method (see using hero points) he has complete control over the story during the time of his narration.

### LARGER SCALE

**Who controls non-player character's behavior and feelings:** GM creates, controls and plays out all non-player characters. During players narration in success roll, he can control NPC:s

**Who controls the scenes:** GM controls scenes and leads characters to them. Naturally the game world must respond to character's actions appropriately. Player can control things during his narration (when in success rolls).

**Who controls the adventures:** GM, player can control things during his narration (when in success rolls).

**Who controls the campaigns:** GM, player can control things during his narration (when in success rolls).

### **STYLE TEMPLATE 3 – THE SHARED AND STRUCTURED GAMEPLAY**

This style includes rotating GM and rules for implementing different themes in adventure.

Each adventure has fixed number of 5 scenes. The GM's role is decided among the players by playing a straight and simple trick game (a card game). The winner of one round of cards (one card from each player) will act as a GM for that scene. The suit of the winning card will determine the nature of the scene. The nature is a theme, which is in relation to character or characters. The suits represent the following:

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Hearts   | Scene is primarily of social nature and relationships.      |
| Spades   | Scene is primarily of material wealth, items or possessions |
| Clubs    | Scene is primarily on life and death                        |
| Diamonds | Scene style is totally up to the GM.                        |

Note that when player is GM, he is playing his own character as a NPC.

#### **PLAYERS**

***What are the roles of players:*** Every player creates a character for himself. Every player is also a potential GM for the adventure, the role is decided by the cards.

***How does the player play his character(s):*** Player plays his character as a narrator. He is aiming for a nice story and is acting just like a director or writer. Players must follow the guidelines given by the rules for their character.

***Who decides on character's inner feelings / motivations:*** Usually the player of the character handles this. However player must follow the guidelines given by the rules (motivation traits, personal traits, temporary traits) when handling them. GM of the scene can even enforce some feelings / motivations if he feels it is justified.

***Who decides on character's behavior and actions:*** Usually the player of the character handles this. However when narrative struggle is lost, GM of the scene does the controlling until he thinks it is appropriate to let the player continue.

***Who controls the character creation:*** Every player creates his own characters. However the whole playing group will decide if the character is appropriate to the game or not. Every player should have a clear view of the game played, and what kind of characters are appropriate.

***Who decides how bumps are used for the character:*** Usually the player of the character can do this. The group can veto on this, but it is rare.

#### **SITUATIONS**

***Why and when is the resolution mechanic (success/extended success roll) initiated:*** The basic reason for initiation of resolution mechanic is drama ... the more dramatic the situation, the more the resolution mechanic should be used. For the most dramatic occasions, extended success roll is used. GM of the scene is the initiator of resolution mechanics and he also decides when is the karma-option used.

***Who decides what character traits apply to situation:*** Player of character has the responsibility to suggest appropriate traits. GM of the scene then either accepts or rejects individual traits and the approved traits are counted in the success roll.

***Who creates situational traits (objects and difficulties) and can see them:*** GM of the scene decides all difficulties, be it static or opposing trait difficulty. Bonuses for contest situations are also assigned by him. Usually he doesn't show the difficulty ratings to the players, except in cases when they will carry over to the next scene (and to the new GM).

***Who decides the luck die chosen, and with what grounds is it chosen:*** Player usually chooses the luck die, but he has to explain why it is appropriate for the situation. GM of the scene can then veto if he feels it is not appropriate. GM can also restrict the choices of luck dice even before the player actually chooses the die. The die should be chosen for the excitement of the situation and for the developing of the story. For secret rolls (like sensing rolls and such that the player will not even know about, GM of the scene chooses the luck die by himself).

***Who rolls the dice / can see the results:*** Usually the player rolls dice when the roll is concerning his character. GM of the scene rolls other rolls, and all secret rolls. Players can usually see other player's rolls, but if player wants only he and the GM will see it. GM is the only one who sees the results of secret rolls.

***Who decides the AP counts in extended success rolls:*** GM

***Who interprets the results (with the rule of three) and describes them:*** GM interpreters all results and declares what happens. This means that usually when rolls are done, player first describes what is he trying (as his character) to do, then the rolls are made and GM explains what happens.

**Can the interpreter cheat (and the reason why he can):** GM can cheat in the results. Reasons vary, but cheating should be kept as minimal as possible. Reasons for cheating are continuing of the story and believability of the result.

**Who decides how character's hero points are used:** Player of the character can decide how the hero points are spent. If using the free method (see using hero points) the GM of the scene has the final say what happens.

#### LARGER SCALE

**Who controls non-player character's behavior and feelings:** GM of the scene creates, controls and plays out all non-player characters. For NPCs that are involved in more than one scene, the GM must share the NPC concept and traits with the GM of the next scene.

**Who controls the scenes:** GM of the scene controls scenes and leads characters to them. Naturally the game world must respond to character's actions appropriately.

**Who controls the adventures:** The group as a whole (after all, the GM changes).

**Who controls the campaigns:** The group as a whole (after all, the GM changes).

## 6.IMPORTANT LINKS

The following links could prove handy when using Chaos & Order:

'Dumb' character sheet for electronic use

[http://www.cc.jyu.fi/~jphannil/CO\\_Hahmolomake.rtf](http://www.cc.jyu.fi/~jphannil/CO_Hahmolomake.rtf)

'Dumb' character sheet for printing

[http://www.cc.jyu.fi/~jphannil/CO\\_Hahmolomake\\_print.pdf](http://www.cc.jyu.fi/~jphannil/CO_Hahmolomake_print.pdf)

Nice character sheet for printing, made by Arto Koistinen

[http://www.cc.jyu.fi/~atkoisti/co\\_cs.pdf](http://www.cc.jyu.fi/~atkoisti/co_cs.pdf) (page 1)

[http://www.cc.jyu.fi/~atkoisti/co\\_cs2.pdf](http://www.cc.jyu.fi/~atkoisti/co_cs2.pdf) (page 2)

Chaos & Order change log

[http://www.cc.jyu.fi/~jphannil/co\\_changelog.txt](http://www.cc.jyu.fi/~jphannil/co_changelog.txt)

## 7.END AND WORDS OF GRATITUDE

The main source material I have used as an inspiration when creating Chaos & Order are mainly free roleplaying games distributed in the Internet. The most important influences are from the following games:

- The Ladder by Paul Elliott
- Fudge by Steffan O'Sullivan
- Synthesis by Mike Holmes and J.B. Bell

So a nod of thanks and appreciation for the creators of these games.

Thanks go to the following persons and organisations:

- Mike Holmes, for your undying interest and energy concerning helping this project
- [The forge \(http://www.indie-rpgs.com\)](http://www.indie-rpgs.com) forum
- Risto Ravela and Joonas Palomäki for their excellent sample characters and lots of good advice
- Arto Koistinen for the nice character sheet
- #gamedesign.fi irc-channel
- #praedor irc-channel
- #ropeteoria irc-channel
- Energetic playtesters: Miika Hannila, Manu Piispanen, Harto Niemonen, and “shaman42”.

Without your contribution, Chaos & Order wouldn't be the same, thank you.

© 2002 – 2004 Petteri Hannila