

**diesel
city
drivebys**

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This is my entry into Game Chef 2008, using Jason Morningstar's "Lowrise" art set as inspiration. This game is for one GM and 2-5 players. It uses several six-sided dice for resolution.

Set in ITC Lubalin Graph



WELCOME TO DIESEL CITY

The following excerpts are all clippings from the 1978 tourist guide to Diesel City:

HISTORY:

Does anyone really care about the history of Diesel City? Famous for the three M's — Motorcars, Music and Murder. After the collapse of the US motorcar industry that was the heart of Diesel City, people and capital left the city center for suburban communities, and the city's social and economic infrastructure buckled, leaving the community fractured and impoverished. The murder rate soared to the highest in the United States, as the city became increasingly viewed as dangerous and in perpetual decline, gangs began to seize territories.

ECONOMY:

Diesel City's economy used to rely heavily on the motor industry, but with the recent rise of the foreign-built 'economy' car, Diesel City is rife with unemployment. But the black market is thriving. There is a lot of money in the hands of Diesel City criminals, changing hands quickly

and flowing from the street corner junkie upwards through gangs and up to the crime bosses who really run this town.

RELIGION:

There used to be a strong faith in God within some of Diesel City's communities, but that is being replaced by the worship of money. Even local TV and radio evangelists will offer you guaranteed entry to Heaven for the right price. Make a donation, and you will be saved.

POPULATION & PEOPLE:

The population of Diesel City is approximately 1.5 million inhabitants, although that is falling rapidly, as those who can afford to leave for the suburbs are doing so, and the rest often try to kill each other. Most communities that remain in Diesel City are split down race lines, and three quarters of the population left behind are black.

THE POLICE & CRIME:

Carjackings, robbery, muggings and drive-by shootings are all common in Diesel City and locals know to use caution at all times. The DCPD are struggling to keep a lid on the skyrocketing crime figures. They are tough, well-armed, and aren't afraid of calling for backup. Before you know it a minor infringement can escalate into a full-blown showdown.

PERSONAL SAFETY:

There isn't a single neighborhood in Diesel City that could be described as "safe", so carrying a weapon (two is better) at all times is always the prudent thing to do.

CUSTOMS & IMMIGRATION:

Due to Diesel City's infamous popularity with smugglers, customs officials are known to be thorough in their searches! The best advice is don't get caught.

INSURANCE:

All businesses need protection. You never know what kind of "accidents" can happen. Remember, insurance is always money well spent.

SHOPPING & MONEY:

Despite the economic downturn, there is always something new to buy in Diesel City. You can never have too many clothes, cars, guns or

places to hide out. Remember, spending money feels good, you need to spend money to look good and having the latest gear can be pretty important to those around you. Just remember that money isn't everything and some things — like respect — can only be earned, not bought.

Areas of Interest

DOWNTOWN:

Diesel City's skyline is, like most of Diesel City, misleadingly beautiful. At night the buildings are illuminated and give an enticing illusion of glittering perfection. The most outstanding of which are the five towering erections of the Diesel Motors' Resuscitation Center, completed just last year.

THE JUDDERY PROJECTS:

This public housing complex of thirteen towers and four-hundred low-rise units packed together just outside downtown Diesel City was built shoddily by the lowest bidder 25 years ago. Fallen into total disrepair, the heaters don't work and the neighborhood is home to the Young Punk Corporation. They have tenants perched on the high-rise towers ready to shoot at the cops officers and other outside influences, to keep them out.

CRASS CORRIDOR:

This once-thriving region running along Crass Avenue into Downtown is one of the artistic focal points of Diesel City. Music has always had a home here, and students of the nearby technical schools and universities give this neighborhood a bohemian atmosphere.

BRINKMOOR:

This neighborhood was built during the boom in the American automotive industry to provide homes for the factory workers. With the collapse of the US car industry, half of the people trapped here are living below the poverty line.

UPHILL GARDENS:

This low-rise public housing complex is on the west side of Diesel City, close to some of the most affluent neighborhoods. Over 2000 mostly two-

story multi-family buildings are pushed together, and this is a home turf for the Captain Bloods.

EASTERN PROMISE MARKETPLACE:

This historic commercial district a selling point for a wide variety of produce, meat, spice and other products. During the day it is bustling with farmers and buyers doing their thing for the wholesale food distribution industry — dodgy trading, taking bribes, selling diseased meat, At night it is dark, desolate and very dangerous.

THE KRANK GYM:

This boxing gym in the basement of an old recreation center is where amateur boxers on the cusp of becoming world champions train. Because of that, this place has got a reputation of it's own, and is a prestigious place for kids who want to box, rather than brawl their way out of poverty.

THE DIESEL SALT COMPANY:

This massive operation spreads out for 1500 acres a quarter-mile underneath Diesel City. The only way into the mines are via two shafts surfacing at the DSC aboveground complex.

Infamous Gangs

CAPTAIN BLOODS

(Uphill Gardens)

Dressed in flamboyant Pirate styled outfits, this hip-hop dance crew have grown to several hundred members. It is known that these guys are big players in many criminal rackets including extortion, robbery, and heroin trafficking. These guys like being outrageous, committing several notorious mass robberies, including a hijacking and robbery of concert goers at a rock concert last year that drew the DCPD riot squad.

YOUNG PUNK CORPORATION

(Juddery Projects)

Formed by a small group of teenage friends in the Juddery Housing Projects last year, this up-and-coming gang are doing well and growing quickly by selling drugs on street corners. Even though they are young kids they have become major players in the heroin racket within the city, and are hungry for more.

Radio Stations

WGTA 101 is the primary radio station serving the Diesel City area. They have a diverse playlist, managed by DJ legend: "Baby" Arthur P. Some popular songs of WGTA were playing at the time include:

PLAYLIST

- "Hollywood Nights" - Bob Seger and the Silver Bullet Band
- "Night Fever" - Bee Gees
- "Denis" - Blondie
- "Knock on Wood" - Amii Stewart
- "One Nation Under a Groove" - Funkadelic
- "Flash Light" - Parliament
- "The Passenger" - Iggy Pop
- "I Love Livin' In The City" - Fear
- "Kick Out The Jams" - The MC5
- "Get Out of Denver" - Bob Seger
- "Great White Buffalo" - Amboy Dukes
- "Stranglehold" - Ted Nugent



gang Life '78

The poverty and urban decay percolating through the late 1970s makes the gang lifestyle attractive to many in Diesel City. Gangs take great pride in their physical appearance and style, appear to party all the time, have money, connections and respect, which attracts many young people. Most gangs are dedicated to a single ethnicity (Black American, Italian American, Hispanic, Russian, etc.) and are a focal point of racial unity and pride, amidst the racial intolerance and strife afflicting the city.

But gang life is a never-ending circle of hustling, dealing, running from the cops and defending your turf and business from your rivals. If you don't you can expect to be brutally killed by your rivals, or, if you are lucky, thrown in jail and put on Death Row — you'll probably live longer there than on the streets if you can't take care of yourself and your people.

Most gangs run just one racket — prostitution, drugs, protection, whatever. But some gangs spread out and do a lot of different types of

business. The day to day running will make a small profit and can be left to the minor members of a gang. But sometimes, the major players need to come and take care of business themselves. But the personal touch usually gets results, and results bring cash.

But a criminal businesses cannot grow without having two things — turf and opportunity. Nobody is going to deal from a street that is another gang's turf. And the turf in Diesel City is fiercely fought over. If any gang sees some turf that isn't adequately protected, they are going to go in and take it over, guns blazing if needed. Turf wars are serious business. Gangs are also known to be ore subtle, corrupting people's loyalty and persuading 'clients' to buy from them, rather than their rivals, taking the business for themselves.

When you get big enough to get recognition from the men who run the city, you might be lucky enough to be given assignments. An assignment could include any number of different jobs, from arson to murder. If you do well in handling an assignment, you will get more work for more money. If you fuck up, then your Boss is going to have to clean up the mess you made, and that doesn't ever happen more than once. Getting away with shit once is rare enough.

The cops sit on top of this, trying in vain to stop Diesel City tearing itself apart in flames because of all the gang conflict. They are trigger-happy, corrupt, and prone to violence. But getting one over on the cops is the best way to earn respect. No man got to be the Big Dog by playing nice with the cops.

Gangs

Every gang is based in one neighborhood (although their turf might expand outwards to cover a large part of the city). Gangs can be identified by the clothes they wear, the graffiti tags they use, the hand-gestures and the dance moves they perform. Most gangs are known by the city street of housing project that the movers and shakers of the gang lived in when they started. Gangs are also rated on a number of traits:

TURF:

The size, location, usefulness and potential income of a gang's territory are all measured by it's Turf rating. As it's a combination of all of these things, a few houses with good links to the highway, on a popular street

for horny businessmen to find some action, and off the police patrol routes is going to have a higher Turf rating than half-a-dozen blocks of bland suburbia.

MUSCLE:

This relates both to the number, toughness, and aggressiveness of the gang members, as well how much firepower they have access to. A gang can never have a Muscle rating higher than it's Turf rating. On the other hand, a high Turf rating with a low Muscle rating is only shakily held. If a gang war breaks out, this is the trait you will be needing.

LOYALTY:

How loyal the non-player characters are to the gang, and how much the gang means to them. A gang can never have a Loyalty rating higher than the total of all the gang's Business traits. If Loyalty is high then gang members will be willing to die for the gang. If it's low, then they are grumbling and looking for a way out, if not trying to sell the gang out.

CONTACTS:

If your Contact rating is high, the gang could have lots of people on the street, watching out for what's happening. Or maybe they have got a few sympathetic ears in the city government or police. The gang is on the ball, and has a good amount of influence. A low Contact rating, on the other hand, means that the gang are barely aware of what's going on inside their turf, let alone outside it.

BUSINESS:

Most gangs specialize in one criminal enterprise, although it is possible for bigger or more well-organized gangs to run multiple rackets. The earning potential of each racket is a separate Trait. The total of all the business traits for a gang can not be higher than it's Turf Rating. The rackets are:

PROSTITUTION: At a low rating, the gang might pimp a few streetwalkers or crack whores. A high Prostitution rating means that the gang could run several brothels and high-class hookers.

DRUGS: At a low rating, the gang might have a few street-corner sellers, whilst at a high rating the gang controls a lot of drug traffic, and is involved at all levels of the drug trade.

EXTORTION & PROTECTION RACKETS: A low-rating, small-time Protection Racket means that the Gang is only protecting a handful of small businesses. Higher rating rackets cover more businesses for higher values.

GAMBLING: The house always wins. At a low rating, the gang might run cash games out of a back room, or keep a shady book. At higher levels, a Gambling gang would take a cut of events it runs, like bare-knuckle boxing, dog-fighting, etc.

ROBBERY: Gangs with a low rating in robbery are mostly small time thieves, who steal bags, burgle TVs and contact muggings. Larger organizations tend to be able to fence bigger stuff and steal delivery trucks and cash vans, rob from warehouses and steal high-value cars to order.

LOAN SHARK: Small-time loan sharks only deal with fairly small debts with locals down on their luck. As the rating increases, the amount of money the gang can offer increases, and they can have some big businesses in their pockets from it.

CASH:

Gangs also have a shared pool of cash that they have easy access to. For sake of simplicity, assume that any of the player characters can access any amount of the gangs CASH reserves at any time.

However, the Big Dog (i.e. the player character with the highest number of Respect points) can stop any expenditure of CASH by another member of the gang, if he wants to. If the Big Dog is in Intensive Care, or is Arrested, then this power falls to the player character with the next highest Respect, and so on.

Bosses & Assignments

When your gang gets big enough, then the men who really run Diesel City will take an interest in you. Crime bosses often want "odd-jobs" done, no questions asked, and these jobs get assigned to up-and-

coming gangs. Usually, bosses start with a simple task, like smashing up a few shops or setting a warehouse on fire. But if your gang succeeds in these kind of assignments, as well as getting paid — \$500 or so — they will get given bigger jobs — like killing some target who the Boss wants rid of for example — which will be higher paid — \$2,000, then \$5,000 and before you know it \$10,000.

If you really impress a Boss, and are a good worker, he will tell other Bosses your names, and you will get more and more work. Now this is all, good, high-paid stuff, but don't let it take your eye off the gang's businesses, as rivals will know that you're not paying attention, and will com in and try and cut you off at the ankles. And nobody wants to go down like that.

Creating the Player Gang

At the start of play, the entire group should agree what kind of gang they want to be in. They should all decide on what the gang is called, it's home turf, and how the gang is identified. Once that has been done, the numbers can be brought into play.

The starting ratings for TURF is 1. MUSCLE, LOYALTY and CONTACTS all start at zero. There is also one point that can go into one of the six business rackets. The exact description of the gang's turf and business — is it a cul-de-sac under a highway turnpike, or is it a run-down block in the projects? How do you run your racket? And so on. Starting gangs have no CASH reserves.

For example: You and a couple of other players have decided to play a game of Diesel City Driveby, with me being the GM. We all like the idea of pimp-style, with the purple velour, zebra print and pimp hats, shoes and canes. So we come up with a gang with those clothing styles as their distinctive look. We will base them out of Brinkmoor, calling the gang "The Brinkmoor Pimps" with stunning originality.

The Player Gang is set up like this:

NAME: The Brinkmoor Pimps (Brinkmoor)

STYLE: Purple velour & Zebra-print pimp hats, canes and shoes.

TURF: 1

MUSCLE: 0

LOYALTY: 0

CONTACTS: 0

BUSINESS: 1 (Prostitution 1)

CASH: \$0

The home turf is a few apartments above a barely-going row of small shops. Three of the five units are boarded up and the remaining two are a struggling pawnbrokers and a liquor store. The streetwalkers work on the street outside the shops, sometimes taking their Johns into one of the apartments, if they are being all fancy.

After creating the player gang, the group should decide on their two nearest rivals. The details of creating these rival gangs can be done jointly by the entire group again, or by the GM, or some combination of both.

The first rival will be in the same kind of situation as the player gang, a small group of guys just starting out. in the same neighborhood. They will have a TURF of 1, a point in one of the business rackets that the player gang are not involved in, and a rating of 1 in two of the three of MUSCLE, LOYALTY and CONTACTS, with the remaining one having a rating of zero. This gang has 2d6 CASH tokens available to it (\$200-\$1200).

For example: The group decide that the first rival gang are based a few blocks up the street, outside a closed used-car dealership. They are involved in the drug trade. The group decides that these guys have some loyal armed thugs, but they aren't too subtle. So the first rival gang looks like this:

NAME: The Jim Street Boys (Brinkmoor)

STYLE: Army Jackets and berets.

TURF: 1
MUSCLE: 1
LOYALTY: 1
CONTACTS: 0
BUSINESS: 1 (Drugs 1)
CASH: \$800

The other rival will be a bigger gang looking to consolidate its position in the gang hierarchy and crush any 'little guys' who appear in the cracks. This gang will have a TURF of 4, a rating of 2 in both the player gang's racket and the first rival gang's racket. The MUSCLE rating will be 1d3+1, LOYALTY will be 1d6-1 and the CONTACTS rating will be 5-LOYALTY. This gang will have 8d6 CASH tokens available to it (\$800-\$4800).

For example: The group pick the gang who wants to control the main road that passes through the heart of Brinkmoor. These guys will be the real "Party Providers" who concentrate on getting their clients both high and laid. They are going to be stylish and flash, dressing in tight jeans and silver jackets. The GM rolls a 1 on a six-sided dice for the MUSCLE, and a 3 for the LOYALTY/CONTACTS.

NAME: The Party Knights (Brinkmoor)
STYLE: Tight black jeans, silver jackets.
TURF: 4
MUSCLE: 1
LOYALTY: 2
CONTACTS: 3
BUSINESS: 4 (Prostitution 2, Drugs 2)
CASH: \$3100

Creating the Player Characters

Once these three gangs have been created, the players are then free to create their characters. Each character must be one of the initial members of the player gang, and one of the player characters will be the Big Dog of the gang, and will be in control of it when it comes to gang actions.

Each character should have a name and a short physical description. Each character starts off with a WANTED RATING of zero, zero REROLLS, and RESPECT equal to the roll of one six-sided dice. In addition, it is assumed that all characters are able to drive cars, ride bikes and shoot firearms as well as any normal guy in the street.

But how do we distinguish between the skinny, chatty kid who has a way with the ladies and the fat, loud, unpredictably violent, gun-nut? That's where Traits come in.

A trait is a short description ("Smooth Talker" or "Good Shot") and a rating of how important that trait is. Player characters start with 10 points which they can spend on Traits, but only a single trait can be rated at four, all the others must be rated at three or less.

A player also has to take 2 points worth of Negative Traits. These traits are short descriptions of things that generally won't help the player character ("Overweight", "Dopehead"). They can, however, be used to get rerolls, which come in handy when luck turns against you, however.

Each player character also starts with a small Knife (2) and, if they want, a Pistol (2).

For example: It's turn to create your member of the Brinkmoor Pimps. You go for a lover, not a fighter, style of guy. You go for "Big Bobby" as a name, and describe him as a relaxed fat black guy, dressed in an expensive purple velour lounge suit. He has a matching pimp hat — with ostrich feather — and zebra-print Converse sneakers. You also want a silver-topped pimp cane as an item of equipment!

Traits are obviously "Smooth Talker (4)", "Cool as a Cucumber (3)", "Mean backhand (2)" and "Strong (1)". His negative trait is also easy: "Overweight (2)". You also ask if you can have the cane as an item of equipment, so I let you. Your character sheet ends up like this:

NAME: Big Bobby

GANG: Brinkmoor Pimps

LOOK: A relaxed fat black guy, dressed in an expensive purple velour lounge suit, matching pimp hat — with ostrich feather — and zebra- print sneakers.

WANTED RATING: 0

REROLLS: 0

RESPECT: 5

TRAITS:

Smooth Talker (4)

Cool as a Cucumber (3)

Mean Backhand (2)

Strong (1)

Overweight (2)

EQUIPMENT:

Pimp Cane (2)

Revolver (2)



TOOLING UP

This chapter describes how equipment works. Some example weapon ratings.

Small Blade (Shiv): +1

Big Blade (Combat Knife): +2

Sword: +4

Club/Nightstick: +2

Small Pistol: +2

Big Pistol: +3

SMG: +4*

Shotgun: +4

Hunting Rifle: +5

Assault Rifle: +6*

Machinegun: +6*

One-shot Rocket Launcher: +8*

* = Obviously Loud & Illegal



getting shit done

During play everybody gets to contribute to how the game develops. The GM gets to present the situation and he gets to portray the NPC characters and events in a way that the other players cannot just sit idly by. The players are responsible for describing what their characters do in the developing situation. Sometimes dice will get involved to resolve conflicts that occur in the game world.

The GM gets to set the scenes as well. This is usually in response to the player characters actions, but it's the GM's job. He should describe the situation, the location, where all the characters start within the scene, and maybe what they were doing immediately before the scene starts. Then it's up to the players to describe what their characters are doing and so on. The GM then gets to describe what everyone else does; the supporting characters and the antagonists. Whilst the GM has the final say over the details of the imaginary sets where the action happens, everyone should suggest details and add color to the setting as required.

But if that's all there is to it, why the long chapter of rules? Why do we need dice? Well, when people are describing what their characters are doing, everybody should look for a conflict of interest between characters. If anybody can see such a conflict, then they have a duty to call it so we look about using the rest of the rules in this chapter. If, on the other hand, there isn't a conflict of interest between two characters, then we don't bother rolling dice or anything; what is said is what happens.

What's a conflict of interest? If your character starts doing something and then some other dude is opposing him, or is doing something that ain't going to work with what your character is doing, then it's a conflict of interest. It's that simple. You'll know them when you see them!

This is different to a lot of other games, where you roll to see how well you can do something or another. If there isn't anybody opposing your character in the fiction, then you don't roll. Stuff like climbing over a fence or DJing a hip hop set don't require rolls unless there is another character who is messing your guy's shit up somehow.

This goes for all physical and mental situations. We go to dice if my character is trying to get his drugs off of your character for below the asking price, just as we would if my character was trying to stick a shiv between your ribs. Both cases are conflicts of interest, so we have to start looking at getting the dice out. We will see exactly when the dice come into it a little later.

Some of you guys might be thinking "what the hell? If players don't have to roll dice to climb to the top of a building, then we are going to have a whole bunch of Spidermen walking up walls! The game will be chaos! What gives?" Well everybody sat at the table should realize that people just don't walk up walls in real life, so they shouldn't try it. But sometimes things aren't that black and white, so here's a rule to deal with it: Everyone's actions and descriptions should meet the most critical player's standards. As GM, it's your special responsibility to pay attention, figure out what those standards are, and to press the group to live up to them. That means the GM has a veto power over things, but he should use it wisely.

So When Do We Roll Dice, Exactly?

Make sure that there is concrete motion on both sides of the conflict. For example: "He runs for the door!" vs. "I stop him." doesn't work — "stop him" how? Instead wait until there is something concrete happening to stop him, and ask if it isn't said automatically. So "He runs for the door!" vs. "I tackle him!" is fine. Concrete action on both sides. Similarly don't go to the dice when it's just "I seduce her" vs "she doesn't want to be." Instead, wait for concrete action: "I seduce her" vs. "she tries to give you the brush off."

Or in other words, we go to the dice once the characters involved have just started acting (dashing towards the door, rolling her eyes at the doofus trying to chat them up, etc.) but before the effect those actions have are clear. Then the dice system happens, and the results of that let us describe what the outcome of those actions are, and how that changes the situation.

Let's have an example: Say that you describe Bobby going over to a girl in a bar and being all chatty and flirty. That's a concrete action, which is what we are looking for. It doesn't matter what you want at all, just what you are doing. I'm the GM, and the girl is my NPC, who I know has an abusive boyfriend. I describe her as being all nervous and is trying to get away from your character by making a bunch of excuses.

A Note About Descriptions

Diesel City Life is all about being interesting, and being generic or repetitive ain't that interesting, right? So the GM has a duty to warn any player who starts slipping into that trap ("Uh, I hit him."), and remove one die from the player's Action Pool if they continue to do so. If you keep repeating an action over and over, the GM should deduct a cumulative -1 die penalty for each repeated attempt. So if you failed on this attempt to hook up with the girl, you would lose a die if you kept up the same thing. If you changed tactics, however, by grabbing her, pulling a gun, or whatever, the repeating action penalty would not apply.

But on the other hand, if your description makes anyone or everyone say "Cool!" (or grin, or nod, or whatever) then the GM has a duty to notice that as well and give you a bonus die or two for your Action Pool.

But the GM has to remember that he isn't the judge of quality role-playing. He shouldn't be there stroking his chin and making sure that the players are 'acting' to a high enough standard. He just has a job to watch when people are reacting well to what's been said. Likewise, players shouldn't think that everything requires long, drawn-out, extravagant descriptions of actions; they just have to make sure that the description of a character's action is grounded in that character's situation, adding a little detail or nuance; I'm not just hitting you with a crowbar, I'm holding it with both hands and thrusting it spear-like into your chest.

These details are important because they make answering questions that may arise later easier to answer. The clearer picture we have of what the character is actually doing the less confusing interpreting later rule applications become.

Using Traits

Now that we all know what's going on in the game world at that point, all the players decide which Traits they are going to use to help them get what they are after. In general, this should be obvious from the preceding descriptions, but the GM has the final say in determining which Traits can be used, and which ones can't.

A player can use one of his own character's Traits plus a Trait that comes from a piece of equipment that is in use. In addition, it is also possible for a player to use a Trait that another character has, or a Trait that has been placed on the scene.

Now the applicable Traits have been decided, each player adds a number of six-sided dice into his pool equal to the Trait rating of each applicable Trait. Finally, a player gets to add any Advantage dice they are holding, as well as any bonus dice awarded by the GM for description.

In summary, the number of dice a player rolls is equal to the sum of:

- the Rating of a single player character Trait
- the Rating of a single Trait from an item of equipment that the player character is using.
- the Rating of a single Trait from another character.
- the Rating of a single scene Trait.

- any held Advantage dice.
- any bonus dice awarded by the GM.

So, in our above example, you decide to use Bobby's "Smooth Talker (4)" trait, but there is nothing else that's really applicable, so you get four six-sided dice to roll. I decide to resist with the girl's "I'm afraid of my Boyfriend (2)" trait, and again, nothing else is really applicable. So I pick up two six-siders and get ready to roll.

Negative Traits

Normally, negative traits are used by those opposing a character. But the player can choose to narrate his own character's negative traits being a disadvantage on any action. That player has to give dice equal to the appropriate trait's rating to the player controlling the character opposing his, which can be in addition to any negative trait that player is already using.

OK, so why would anybody do that? Because for each die given away in this fashion, that player gets to add one Reroll to his character. These can come in handy when the time comes, as can be seen below.

Let's say that you describe your character being all fat and sweaty in the girl's face, which means you have to give 2 dice to me because of Bobby's "Overweight (2)" Trait, giving me a total of 4 dice. You do get to add two Rerolls to your total however, so it's not all bad!

OK, We Are "At the Dice". Now What?

Everybody rolls, and works out which dice are 'succeed' and which dice 'fail'. Dice which rolled 1, 2 or 3 have failed. Dice which got a 4, 5 or 6 have succeeded. Everybody should work out how many successful dice they have.

Whichever player has got the most successful dice gains the advantage over the others. That player gets number of Victories equal to the number of successful dice he rolled. Note that there isn't subtraction of successes, unlike a lot of other opposed roll systems!

So looking at our example, let's say that you rolled 1, 3, 4, 6, and I roll 2, 3, 5, 5. You have two successful dice (the 4 & 6), and I have the same (both 5s). As we both have the same number of successes, nobody will

gain a clear advantage, and nobody gains any Victories. The game continues with nothing really getting resolved just yet.

Rerolling

Sometimes, things just don't go smooth. If you roll a bunch of dice and don't get enough failures, you can choose to use some of your character's Rerolls (see above on how to get these) to help him out.

Each Reroll spent in this way allows the player to reroll one of his dice that came 1, 2 or 3. The rerolled score stands, although the player is free to spend another reroll to try again with that dice, should it still be a failure.

Back to the example: You are not to accept a continuing struggle, but you have got some Rerolls in the bank. You spend one of them to pick up the 1 and reroll it. This time it comes a 6!

That makes your roll 3, 4, 6, 6, for three successes to my two! That means you have the advantage, and have three Victories over my character.

Advantage?

So you have some Victories over me. Now what?

Firstly, the action you described has some kind of effect. The exact details of the effect depend on how you use those Advantage dice, what people want the characters to do and what makes sense in the context of the game world so far.

But it's important to note that no dice roll can make any character (PC or NPC) do anything. So even if you lose a roll, you can choose not to give in, but always at the cost of your next action leading further and further to failure, because the advantage is going to the other side.

In our continuing example, you got 3 Victories over me. But that doesn't mean that I'm forced to make the girl act in any particular way, as long as the momentum of the situation goes in your favor.

I can have the girl blurt out something about being scared of her boyfriend, if I want. You can then add your 3 Victory as Advantage

dice to your next dice pool if you try to get the woman to explain why she's afraid of her boyfriend.

Or I can even have the girl try to storm off. This goes totally AGAINST the outcome of the dice in terms of the girl's behavior but that's perfectly fine because you can add your Victories as Advantage dice into a new roll — perhaps you have Bobby snag the girl's arm to stop her from fleeing. "Hey, baby, what's the rush?"

Or perhaps I say "Fuck it, yeah, she goes home with you." But I'm free to start the next scene with the girl being incredibly hostile, maybe even violently so, screaming, "You bastard! Why did I listen to you! Oh my god, he's going to KILL ME!" Winning a dice roll gives you a short-term advantage, not mind-control.

Being Prepared

Normally Victories can only be used as Advantage dice when your next action follows on directly from the action you just did. However, there are times when you want to do some snooping around, banking an advantage for later use. Does your character know anything about the meat packing plant? Are there men loyal to him in the area? The degree to which the answers these questions are useful are of course measured by the victories scored on the roll.

So if you want your character to prepare for a robbery by taking a look around a rival gang's lock-up, he would have a conflict of interest with the rival gang boss, who presumably doesn't want anybody asking too many questions. So you roll for your character and I would roll for the rival gang boss, even if that character isn't physically present in the scene.

If you win, you can store the Victories you get for use as Advantage dice later, when the robbery takes place. This advantage could be described as knowing where the door looks weakest, or spotting the guard patrol patterns, etc. So now, even if your character doesn't actually go in on the robbery, if he has chance to tell this information to another character, then they can use those Advantage dice instead when he tries to break that door open.

If I win, on the other hand, then I get to store Victories that I could spend as Advantage dice when the gang deals with your character. But an

advantage is only useful once; after you have used the Advantage dice, that advantage is lost.

Another way of looking at this is letting you add a 'one-shot' Trait to your character, the character in opposition to him, or the scene, which can be used as you would any other Trait, but only once. After you get the advantage dice, the Trait is "used up" and is no longer useful.

It should be noted if the answer to any of these questions are obvious from previously established fiction then no roll is needed. For example it might have been stipulated early on that the character has never been to this area in his life. Thus the question, "Are there men loyal to me in the area?" is pretty pointless. The answer is an obvious, "No."

Getting Hurt

OK, so this is all well and good, but sooner or later somebody is going to want more than an advantage, and wants to damn well break someone's face. It works in almost the same way as you would expect; roll dice and get some Victories. But your character's action was to shiv some guy in the ribs, and you get a total of 4 victories over him.

You can then give him the trait "Knife in back (2)" instead of taking those Victories as an advantage. As being stabbed in the back isn't a "passing disadvantage", these 'sticky' Traits cost twice as many Victories as its rating (so a 3 point trait requires you to spend 6 Victories on it). Unlike the one-shot traits described above, these Traits don't get "used up" when a character calls upon them; anybody should be able to use this Trait against him for as long as this poor character has it.

The description of the Trait should reflect the manner in which it was obtained, and the rating awarded to it. A 3 point Trait wouldn't be described as just a "Twisted Ankle", and a 1 point Trait isn't a big enough deal to warrant a "Shattered Spine".

If somebody has 10 or more Victories over a character, then they can put that guy down. The victim is dying and in need of immediate intensive care. If that's possible, then he gets a 5 point Trait — "In Intensive Care" or something. If he doesn't get that help, then he's dead, and it's time to create a new gang member.

Oh yeah, if you go into a hospital, they are going to remove any illegal stuff you have on you before you are going to get treated. And speaking of treatment...

Getting Rid of Traits & Healing

If your character has been stuck with an unwanted Trait, you are going to have to spend some cash to get rid of it. Even lying on the couch at home getting drunk and watching daytime TV ain't free.

Removing a 1pt Trait costs \$100. Reducing a 2pt Trait down to a 1pt trait costs \$500. Reducing a 3pt Trait down to a 2pt trait costs \$1000. Getting that 4 point Trait down to 3 points costs \$2500. And getting out of Intensive care and reducing that 5pt Trait down to a 4 pointer costs \$5000. If it makes sense to do so, you may reword the trait slightly to reflect it's healing nature ("Punctured Lung (3)" might change to "Heavily Bandaged Torso (2)").

Yes, that means if you get dragged into intensive care you can be back on the streets fully patched up as soon as you give the good doctors just \$9100. Isn't capitalism great! If you don't have the money, then your character is just are going have to used to living with unwanted Traits.

Not that it's impossible to get rid of the negative Trait(s) you gave your character during character creation, no matter how much you spend.

Chapter Summary

Victories can be used as Advantage dice in the next roll, or can be spent to place new Traits on characters or the current scene.

One-Shot Trait (1) = 1vp

One-Shot Trait (2) = 2vp

One-Shot Trait (3) = 3vp

One-Shot Trait (4) = 4vp

Sticky Trait (1) = 2vp

Sticky Trait (2) = 4vp

Sticky Trait (3) = 6vp

Sticky Trait (4) = 8vp

Needs Intensive Care = 10vp

Healing Costs

1pt →gone = \$100

2pts → 1pt = \$500

3pts → 2pts = \$1000

4pts → 3pts = \$2500

Intensive Care → 4pts = \$5000



the cops

The Diesel City Police Department are a constant hazard for gangs. Most of the time, if you keep your head down, you won't attract too much attention. But attracting attention — and dealing with it — is what makes people give you the proper Respect. No man got to be the Big Dog by playing nice with the cops.

Luckily, the DCPD are as corrupt as they are violent. If things don't go to plan, then a few well-placed bribes will get you back on the streets in no time.

Call 911!

Being in a gang generally requires performing illegal acts. If a character is too blatant, or he is being watched, then the GM can have the cops become involved by giving the character a WANTED RATING. Most illegal acts will place the character at WANTED RATING 1, but extreme violence, such as reports of automatic weapons fire or

explosions, or major civil disturbance — riots and so forth can put the characters on a WANTED RATING of 2 or sometimes even 3.

If the character is trying to avoid detection by the police, then it comes down to a conflict much like any other. The player rolls his dice as normal, and the GM rolls dice according to the neighborhood where the player is doing his thing. The GM can also use the character's "Known to the Police" trait as well. If this is inside the player gang turf, the player can use the player gang's CONTACT rating as bonus dice, because the gang's informants would be giving your character a "heads-up".

If the character has the trait "Known to the Police" and he alerts the police, his WANTED RATING will start at least at the level of the trait; so a high profile criminal acting illegally, if noted by the police, will warrant a major police operation.

- HIGHLY AFFLUENT SUBURBIA: 9 dice.
- AIRPORTS & GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS: 8 dice.
- DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL: 7 dice.
- SUBURBIA: 6 dice.
- DOWNTOWN OUTSKIRTS: 5 dice.
- WEALTHY CITY HOUSING: 4 dice
- BLUE-COLLAR HOUSING: 3 dice
- INDUSTRIAL UNITS: 2 dice
- OUTSIDE THE PROJECTS: 1
- INSIDE THE PROJECTS: 0 dice

Example: Bobby is dealing drugs outside a dance club on the edge of his turf close to downtown. It's risky, but the payoff would be well worth it. As he is making a sell, a DCPD cruiser drives past. We go to dice to see if Bobby gets spotted. Bobby's player described him just carrying on with the deal, making out like he is just chatting to this right dude here, all normal like, and rolls his "Cool as a cucumber (2)" Trait, plus the gang's CONTACTS rating, just 1 point, for a total of 3 dice. As Bobby doesn't have any kind of "Known to the Police" Trait, the GM just rolls five dice for the cops.

Wanted Rating

The Wanted Rating of a character shows how much effort the cops are putting into arresting him. It roughly defines how many police are after him, using what equipment, and kind of approach. Tempers are short in

the DCPD, and guns come out very quickly. The Wanted Rating also sets the number of dice the GM rolls when the Police are in conflict with a character.

WANTED RATING: 1

(2 dice)

The police will tend to be unarmed when dealing with the character, although they do always have a nightstick to hand. If the police vehicles are involved, they will try to box the character in, rather than being too aggressive.

WANTED RATING: 2

(4 dice)

Although the police will still try to arrest you, they won't hesitate in shooting you if you try to resist arrest. Police cars & boats are more aggressive, and will try to run the character down, or ram his vehicle off the road.

WANTED RATING: 3

(6 dice)

Higher numbers of police will be called, and they will be happy to shoot-first-ask-questions-later. Police cars & boats are more aggressive, and will try to run the character down, or ram his vehicle off the road, and Police Helicopters may also get involved. The police will set up roadblocks and deploy stingers to try and puncture the tires of the vehicle the characters are using.

WANTED RATING: 4

(8 dice)

SWAT vans begin to appear, with well-armed and gung-ho assault teams ready to come in and take down the characters down quickly. Cops will shoot from police cars, boats and helicopters if it's a chase situation.

WANTED RATING: 5

(10 dice)

The FBI are called, and whole districts can get blanketed in a heavy police presence. Several SWAT vans and police helicopters will surround the character very, very, quickly.

WANTED RATING: 6

(12 dice)

The police have given up at this point and mobilized the Army. Military vehicles — you know, tanks, attack helicopters, ground- attack aircraft — will have no hesitation in taking down a city block in order to stop the character.

No Respect for the Law

The only real way of losing a wanted rating is to get away. Regardless of being on-foot or in a vehicle, this will result in a chase. This is run as a conflict much like any other, where the players should describe what actions their characters are doing in order to get away from the cops. Remember, adding interesting detail to this description will get the players bonus dice. The player can then make a roll using whatever Traits would make sense in that context. The GM rolls dice for the police based on the current WANTED RATING of the character, plus any negative Traits of the chased character that the GM elects to draw upon.

If the player wins, the action the character performed is successful, and the number of victories won can be spent as an advantage next round, or the player can fight back, giving the cops a negative Trait in the normal way. However, doing so will generally make the cops call for backup, raising the character's WANTED LEVEL by one, up to a maximum of 6.

However, if the player chooses, he can reduce his character's WANTED RATING by one point per two Victories spent in this way. When a character's WANTED RATING drops to zero, the police has lost him, and as long as he doesn't do anything obviously illegal for the rest of the scene, drawing the cops back on him, he has gotten away with it.

If the GM gains more successes, the cops actions manage to close the gap or somehow contain the characters. The victories the GM has earned can be used as an advantage, to give the chased character (or his equipment — like a car, for example) a negative Trait in the normal way.

The Police can't force a character to quit and get arrested, but if their Advantage mounts higher and higher, the player will know that the GM might elect to just shoot and leave his character needing a hospital. But

if the character surrenders to the cops, they shouldn't inflict any more negative traits, and will simply arrest him there and then.

Generally, if the cops are chasing a character when he is in need of serious medical attention, they will throw him in intensive care and arrest him.

But if your character manages to get away from the cops completely without getting hospitalized or arrested, that's going to show what a badass he is to the rest of your gang. Your character will gain Respect equal to the highest WANTED RATING he had whilst being chased.

Getting Arrested

If your character ends up being needing a hospital, or if he surrenders to the cops, he loses all of the illegal gear he was carrying, and is going to have to buy them off. You can either describe this as hiring a good lawyer, or bribing a cop to look the other way, paying the fine/bail, whatever. The cost depends on your character's Wanted Rating.

Wanted Rating 1: \$100

Wanted Rating 2: \$1000

Wanted Rating 3: \$2500

Wanted Rating 4: \$5000

Wanted Rating 5: \$10000

Wanted Rating 6: \$20000

If there is no way to pay the required money, then it's time to create a new gang member, as this character is going to be locked away for a long time.

As soon as the money is been paid, your character is free to go about his business (if he got shot or something, buying off any negative traits is a separate issue). His Wanted Rating will be returned to zero. You don't get any Respect for being arrested, however.

The character will also be given a new Trait: "Known to the Police" at a rating equal to the Wanted Rating - 2 (That is, if you were arrested when you had a Wanted Level of 2 or lower, the police aren't really watching you go about your business. But if the military got involved, then you can bet your ass that they will be keeping you under surveillance, with

a level 4 Trait). This trait can be bought down in the same way as any other negative Trait.



the big dog

Gangs are not run by a democracy. In any gang, only one person calls the shots; he is called the Big Dog and is the member with the highest Respect. If the Respect levels change, then there can be an internal struggle for control, but it is a good idea for the player of the Big Dog to consult with the other players about how to run the gang, even if the character would not, as the aim is for everyone to have a fun game.

Selling Out

If you are real short of cash, anybody can Sell Out. For each point of Respect your character loses by Selling Out will get \$100 which you can add to the Gang's shared stash or — more likely — use for your character's own ends. This is a good way of buying your way out of an arrest if the gang hasn't got enough CASH to spend on you.

If you were the Big Dog before you Sold Out, you might not be any more. This is a good way for the second-place man in a Gang to take control: Wait until the Big Dog gets into trouble with the cops, and then

don't let him use the Gang's CASH reserves to get out. That will force the Big Dog to sell out, lose Respect, and therefore control of the gang.

If you are thinking about doing this, remember that this is a sure-fire way of making an enemy...

Taking Care of Business

Whilst the minor non-player gang members can be left to keep the rackets running without involvement, they don't generate a lot of disposable income that way. If more CASH is wanted, then the player characters have going to have to step in and take care of business themselves.

Depending on what rackets the gang are involved in, the GM can pick a job from the suggestions presented below, or come up with something of his own plans. If the job is taken care of successfully, the gang earns \$500 per point the gang has in the appropriate Racket.

PROSTITUTION:

Jobs include recruiting hookers, delivering girls to private parties. Taking care of johns who have been beating the girls. "Educating" girls who try to quit the game, or who don't pay up.

DRUGS:

Jobs to get cash out of the Drug trade include picking up "packages" from guys outside the city. Going into concerts and dance clubs selling and recruiting pushers. Getting rid of the bodies of overdose victims who died on the gang's turf. Dealing with people who aren't paying up.

EXTORTION & PROTECTION RACKETS:

Generally this involves going into one of the stores or locations that isn't paying it's protection dues and smashing the place up or setting it on fire, often under the guise of another gang.

GAMBLING:

Jobs for gambling rackets might involve "convincing" players to throw their game, drugging racehorses. Maybe even setting up and promoting dodgy 'sports' events like bare-knuckle boxing, dog-fighting, etc.

ROBBERY:

Robbery jobs can vary from a bit of B&E or a mugging spree. But at higher levels, a decent Robbery job might be holding up a bank, hijacking a cash van, or stealing a bunch of expensive sports cars. Robbers also have to deal with fencing their stuff, which might require taking stolen goods to the airport or the edge of the city, for example.

LOAN SHARK:

Jobs for this racket are often debt collections. The characters might need to take enough cash or goods from a debtor, if he has anything to take. And if he doesn't, well he's going to need a good beating to remind him of how important his debts are to the gang.

Gang Actions

Gangs are always struggling over turf and business. The Big Dog of a gang has the final word over what the gangs do, but they often fall into the categories below, and if all the players want to determine how things go without their characters getting directly involved, it shows how to handle that as well.

TURF WAR:

One gang goes into a rival's turf, shoots away any resistance, and declares the area to be under their control. Sometimes this works, sometimes the attackers have to turn back from a hail of gunfire.

The player/GM in control of the attacking gang rolls dice equal to the attackers Muscle rating plus the defender's Turf rating. The player/GM controlling the defending gang rolls a number of dice equal to his gang's Muscle and Loyalty ratings.

If the attacking player wins or the conflict ends in a draw, the attacking gang gains a point of Turf, and the defender loses a point of Turf. Because a gang's Muscle rating and the sum of all its Business traits must not be greater than the Turf rating, the defending gang may also have to lose points on those traits as well. If the Turf rating of a gang drops to zero, the gang scatters and are lost to the winds.

If the conflict ended in a draw, the attacking player loses a point of Loyalty or Muscle (defending player's choice), because the defenders put up such heavy resistance.

INCREASING BUSINESS:

All the criminal opportunities within Diesel city are strongly fought over. Now this isn't always a war of guns and violence. Persuasion, backstabbing and rumormongering are all useful weapons in trying to get clients to use your gang's business rather a rival.

The player/GM who has control over a gang should declare which racket they wish to increase (prostitution, drugs, etc.) and which gang they wish to take business from. The targeted gang must have at least 1 point in the targeted racket, and the total Business ratings of all the rackets for a gang can not be higher than it's Turf Rating.

The player/GM in control of the attacking gang rolls dice equal to the attackers Contact rating plus the defender's Business rating of the targeted racket. The player/GM controlling the defending gang rolls a number of dice equal to his gang's Turf and Loyalty ratings.

If the attacking player wins or the conflict ends in a draw, the attacking gang gains a point of Business in the targeted racket, and the defender loses a point of Business from the targeted racket. If the conflict ended in a draw the attacking player loses a point of Contacts or Muscle (defending player's choice), because the defenders found and killed some of the guys doing the persuasion.

RECRUITING:

A gang can choose to spend money trying to hire more Muscle to protect their turf. Remember, a gang's Muscle rating may not be higher than the gang's Turf rating. The player in charge of the gang should roll dice equal to the gang's Loyalty rating, plus an additional die per \$500 dollars spent. The GM rolls dice equal to the current Muscle rating (as the more muscle you have, the harder it is to find more).

If the player wins the conflict, the gang gains a point of Muscle. If the GM wins, the gang loses a point from one of it's business traits — they were too busy trying to recruit more gangers that they didn't concentrate on running their businesses properly. In the event of a tie, the gang loses the spent money, but is otherwise unaffected.

BUILDING LOYALTY:

A loyal gang is a useful gang, and gangers like money. The player controlling a gang can choose to increase the loyalty of his men by

rolling dice equal to the gang's Contacts rating, plus an additional die per \$500 dollars spent. The GM rolls dice equal to the current Loyalty rating.

If the player wins the conflict, the gang gains a point of Loyalty. If the GM wins, the gang loses a point from one of it's business traits — they were too busy trying to please the gangers that they didn't concentrate on running their businesses properly. In the event of a tie, the gang loses the spent money, but is otherwise unaffected.

FINDING CONTACTS:

Getting eyes and ears on the streets how a gang stays one step ahead of the game. The player controlling a gang can choose to increase the gang's contacts by rolling dice equal to the gang's Turf rating, plus an additional die per \$500 dollars spent. The GM rolls dice equal to the current Contacts rating.

If the player wins the conflict, the gang gains a point of Loyalty. If the GM wins, the gang loses a point from one of it's business traits — they were too busy trying to please the gangers that they didn't concentrate on running their businesses properly. In the event of a tie, the gang loses the spent money, but is otherwise unaffected.

Getting Involved in Gang Actions

If the players want to increase the number of dice that the Big Dog player will roll for Gang actions, they can go out and get involved. The players should tell the GM what they are going to do to help the gang. This should be a medium-term goal like "scout the turf of the rival gang" before a turf war. The GM should announce how many extra dice the Big Dog player will have to roll for the gang action if the player characters succeed.

Getting Noticed

After a gang gets a TURF rating of 3 or higher, major crime bosses will start to pay the gang some attention. Before this, player characters can attempt to make contact with Bosses, but it's up to the GM and the conflict rules to determine if this contact is successful. The first Boss that the player characters make contact with will be rated at level 1.

The details of the Bosses that come into contact with the player gang are created by the GM, but the players are encouraged to make suggestions.

Once contacted, the Boss will give the gang various assignments. Usually, bosses start with a simple task, like smashing up a few shops or setting a warehouse on fire. The reward for completing an assignment successfully is given below:

1st Job: \$500 per Boss Level.

2nd Job: \$1,000 per Boss Level.

3rd Job: \$2,000 per Boss Level.

4th Job: \$5,000 per Boss Level.

5th and later Jobs: \$10,000 per Boss Level.

The difficulty and danger of an assignment is proportional to the amount it is worth to the boss. A job which pays \$500 might just require the gang to smash up an unguarded betting shop, whereas a \$20,000 assignment might require the gang to break a notorious criminal sentenced to Death Row out of DCPD's central police station, and murder the judge who put him there.

If the gang successfully completes the 5th job for a Boss, he will pass their names onto another Boss. This Boss will be a level higher (i.e. a Level 1 Boss will put the player gang in contact with a Level 2 Boss) and he will pay better, and have bigger assignments.

If the players fail to complete an assignment and survive, that Boss will never offer the player gang an assignment of that value or higher ever again. If the players fail to complete a second assignment and survive, then the Boss will not contact them again, and might, if the GM wishes, call a hit on the player characters.

Final Words

I would like to say thank you to:

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Thank you all!