Steps in Paradox

Paradox is the latest attempt to create a viable system for Karbon.

As you play the game you will narrate the fiction, doing so in an endless give and take with the other players of the game. This allows you to explore the Agendas and situations that develop in the landscape of the fictional world you are all creating together. You will however occasionally trigger rules that interrupt and tell you what is happening in the story. This is called: to step or stepping.

Stepping

When a player with the Role of Agent or Narrator decides, a step happens in the rules. This is triggered from actions that fit the step guidelines. In general, things with dramatic weight trigger a step. One step may lead to another, and so on until many are taken in an action sequence.

The formula for the process of a step is always the same:

1. A dramatic moment occurs in the fiction, as identified by a participating player.
2. A character takes <fictional action>.
3. The Narrator decides Advantage, using the Advantage rules.
4. A player rolls the dice using the determined Advantage rules:
    1. The roll succeeds and triggers <condition>.
    2. The roll fails and triggers <trouble>.
5. Opposing player can respond to a condition with Sidestep.
6. Acting player can repsond to trouble with a Sidestep.
7. The fictional fallout is narrated by the other player (the one that didn't roll the dice).

Ok, so there is some fancy game jargon in there. You will likely understand clearer after a simple example:

Tom's playing Agent Jagger who has confronted a violent criminal in a dark alley. Before he knew what was happening, the criminal pulls a gun on him at short range. This is a dramatic situation, I mean, that is pretty obvious. The Narrator Kim moves to step 2 and says: The Criminal pulls the trigger, firing on Agent Jagger point blank! Now the Narrator uses rules magic to decide on Advantage, and awards the criminal one level of it. The narrator rolls the dice and succeeds, triggering a condition. In this case, harm on Agent Jagger. Tom can now respond to this if he has a rule that allows a Sidestep, possibly skirting the condition(harm). He has nothing, and has to face the music. Agent Jagger is shot!

Steps are always defined in this manner:

- **When you <take fictional action>, roll X+. If you succeed, <condition>, otherwise <trouble>.** See Dice Rolls below.
    - X is a number from 2 to 6, the lower the number the greater your chance of reaching

<condition> and avoiding <trouble>.
    - <condition> is something that changes the state of the game in a meaningful way, it could be anything from dealing harm to an enemy to restoring the software of an malfunctioning computer. Regardless of specifics, conditions always lead to the chance of a data adjustment. Harm leads to the chance of being incapacitated or killed, and restoring leads to the chance of being operable. Data adjustment is always something meaningful in the fiction that is recorded on a notecard. See Contention for more about how we handle data.
    - <trouble> is just what it sounds like, each is a cue to the Narrator to consult certain specific rules that might cause problems for the agent. The Narrator can always opt to select out any adjacent for of trouble for the one listed if it fits the fiction better. See Trouble.

Simple Steps

Simple Steps are available to all characters for all applicable situations unless the Narrator rules otherwise. If you deny a character the use of a Simple Step as the Narrator, you must supply a reason it can't be used in the current circumstances. You can find all the rules for Simple Steps here.

There are 30 Simple Steps. 24 are split between the 12 Duties specifically and 6 are shared common steps.

The 6 common Simple Steps:

- Audacious Stunt, Brute Force, Help/Hinder Other, Mark Detail, Play Other, Work Intuition

The 24 specific Simple Steps:

- Handling: Coerce Other, Inspire Other, Interview Other, Lead Other, Persuade Other
- Knowing: Know Details, Know Keys, Know Leader, Know Somebody
- Running: Run Silent, Run Smart, Run Syndicate, Run Tactical
- Working: Work Angle, Work Expertise, Work Hardware, Work Network, Work Science, Work Shadows, Work Syndicate, Work Wire
- Focused: Examine Details, Explain Science, Design Solution

Explicit Steps

Explicit Steps are unique Steps only for your character. You get to create them using a toolkit (small set of rules) in a very natural way. Explicit Steps are powerful, but almost all of them require you to spend Cool.

Advantage

Advantage is a currency used in the game to represent how well positioned an Agent is in any given situation. You have an amount of it, like say 3 Advantage. The opposite of this is Disadvantage, which is what you get if you were to have negative Advantage. Advantage -2 is 2 Disadvantage.

Dice Rolls

When you make rolls in Paradox you will be rolling three dice. These are specifically a six-sided die (d6), an eight-sided die (d8), and a ten-sided die (d10). A die succeeds when if meets or exceeds the target of a roll. If the roll is 4+, then dice that come up 4 or more succeed.

There are two colors of dice in the game: open black and restricted red. Open black dice are the dice you want, they have no special rules or restrictions. Restricted red dice come with a simple rule: All rolled restricted dice must succeed in order to win the roll. This means if you are rolling a restricted red d6, another red d8, and a black d10: Both the d6 and d8 must succeed in order to win the roll.

The best roll allowed is a restricted d6 with an open d8 and d10. This is how rolls begin. If you have Disadvantage, those open dice might turn into restricted ones, like so:

- 1 Disadvantage: restricted d6 and d8, open d10.
- 2 Disadvantage: restricted d6, d8, and d10.
- 3 Disadvantage: restricted d6, d8, and d10, +1 target number.
- 4 Disadvantage: restricted d6, d8, and d10, +2 target number.
- 5 Disadvantage: restricted d6, d8, and d10, +3 target number.

If you earn advantage on a roll, each level of Advantage lets you choose to either: increase the Cool of a winning outcome one OR lower the target number one. The target number of a roll is never lower than 2+.

The amount of dice that succeed in a roll beyond one count as Cool for the outcome. Cool is a currency you can spend for various effects in the fiction, generally the Condition rules determine how you can use Cool.

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