Speed Dungeon

Or how to get through a dungeon in very short order. By Mike Holmes	

Chargen

STATS

Select a Kind, a Primary Background (AKA Class), and a Secondary Background. These can be any of the usual tropes, so a character might be of Elven Kind, with a Primary Background as a Mage, and Secondary Background as a Diplomat. A player may also describe their character's gear if they like (but note that 2 dice in gear isn't anything particularly special).

You get the following dice for each “STAT”:

- 2 for Kind
- 4 for Primary Background
- 3 for Secondary Background
- 2 Gear

REROLLS/Level

Characters start at 3rd level, which gives them 3 re-rolls per dungeon.

BONDS

Each character also has a bond with each other character in the party, that the player should describe

at some point before it can be used. A Bond is essentially a Re-Roll that a character can give to that other character when they feel the bond has come into play in a helpful way.

Breaking Bonds

A bond may also be used at any time for a character to steal a Treasure from another character, steal all of the LOOT they have on hand, or otherwise completely successfully betray the character with whom the bond is shared. If they do this, then both characters lose their bonds between each other. The character breaking the bond loses 3 RENOWN if any of the party survive the current dungeon run (see RENOWN below) and any player of a surviving character decides that their character spreads the word.

LOOT and RENOWN

Characters start with no LOOT whatsoever, and 10 RENOWN.

Challenges

When encountering a challenge as decided by the GM… a trap, a fight, a negotiation, a leap, whatever… this is termed a Challenge.

Player Die Pools

Each player creates a die pool based on the number of their dice that they feel apply, and rolls them. They may opt to roll less dice than their full pool, if they feel that one or more of their character's STATS only partially applies. If a participant or observer of the game wonders how a stat applies, they may ask the player, and that player may deign to explain if they wish.

Danger

Each player involved in a challenge may describe their character going at the challenge in a particularly all-out and dangerous way. If they do so, then they get an additional die to their pool… but so does the GM for the challenge pool.

Threat Pool

The GM rolls a number of dice based on how hard he wants the difficulty for the task to be. For each “hit” the GM rolls, a player must bid one of their hits to cancel it, or something bad happens to the party (see Consequences below). Place cancelled dice into a pool in the middle of the table, referred to as the Opportunity Pool.

Opportunity Pool

Dice in the opportunity pool can be “Claimed” with a hit which garners the player a reward at the end of the Challenge (see Rewards below).

The Results of the Roll

Once the die pools are set, the players and GM all roll their pools. Even numbers are a “hit” and odd numbers are “misses” (players may used dice with odd numbers of sides if they want an additional challenge, but any number of sides works).

Re-Rolls

A player who does not like their roll may spend a Re-Roll to discard their roll, and roll again, after all characters have rolled (this continues until no player is able to or wishes to re-roll any further). If the characters take a recovery they lose all further Re-rolls for that dungeon (see Recovery).

Spending Hits

Initial Spend and Retreat

Each player must immediately spend 1 hit from their pool to cancel a hit from the GM's pool (if they have one, which they usually will). Note that, unlike further cancellations, these hits cancelled in the initial spend do NOT go into the Opportunity Pool. A player making this spend may declare that their character is retreating out of harm's way for the challenge, and they will not receive any harm, but neither do they get to take turns in the spending rounds. If the character has NO hits to spend, then they cannot retreat.

Spending Rounds

Starting with the player that rolled the most hits, players go around the table in an order of their choosing spending hits. If two or more players both have the most hits, then they have to decide between them who should go first. If they cannot agree, they can spend hits to go first, bidding back and forth until one gives in, or they all have one hit left each, at which point the GM will determine randomly who goes first.

Cancelling Hits

Players may elect to spend their hits on cancelling out the GM's hits. They must do this, in fact, until there are opportunity dice to grab, or they have cancelled half or more of the GM's hits (including hits cancelled on the initial spend). Cancelled hits go into a pool in the center of the table called the opportunity pool.

Grabbing Opportunities

Once there are dice in the opportunity pool, players can take their turn to have their character spend a hit to take an opportunity out of the opportunity pool (in order to get Rewards, see below).

Taking Hits

On their turn, a player may have their character take one of the GM hits, without using a die to cancel it. This die can still be cancelled on a later turn. The effect of doing this, however, is simply to ensure that the GM does not assign this hit (assuming it remains un-cancelled) to any other character.

Success

If the players cancel half or more of the GM hits, then somebody can spend a hit to have the party succeed at the challenge. One player must, of course, choose to sacrifice one die to do so.

The party never partially succeeds… either everybody succeeds, or nobody does. If the party fails to leap a chasm, that means that perhaps some have, but others have not, and those who made the leap have leapt back to be with their companions.

Ending Spending

Players who have no hits to spend must pass. When all players have passed, spending ends, and the GM will narrate any failure at that point (see below), and will assign consequences.

Failure

If nobody ever spends a dice on success, then the party fails at this challenge, and the GM will narrate a considerable setback.

Consequences

For each GM hit left uncanceled at the end of the conflict, something bad happens. Often this means injury or loss of gear or the like such that their dice total is temporarily reduced by one per consequence. GM decides the nature of the loss, and should base the die lost on what they feel the results of the challenge would bring as consequences. Players should mark a -1 or more next to their stat to indicate the current condition of the stat.

STATS cannot be brought to below zero this way. If gear is brought to zero, the character suffers no additional effects, though the GM may find ways to create challenges in terms of environment or starvation due to this condition. If one of the other three STATS is brought to zero, the character is incapacitated. If a character has two STATS other than gear brought to zero, they are dying, and will likely die if they are not evacuated to recovery immediately (the GM may make challenges to see if they survive). A character brought to zero in all three STATS other than gear is dead.

Scars

If the GM assigns a consequence to a STAT that has already suffered a loss, instead of taking another -1, the player may decide to erase the -1 and lower their STAT by 1 permanently.

Rewards

For each opportunity die acquired, after the challenge the players holding them get rewards, as assigned by the GM. These can be anything, but here are typical examples:

- one EXP per die (see Leveling below)
- one treasure per 3 dice (see Treasure below)
- one LOOT point per die (see Treasure below)
- one STORY per die (see RENOWN below)

Players may suggest rewards that they think are fitting for various successes, but in the end it's the GM's decision who gets what.

Treasure/LOOT

A treasure is basically an additional gear die for the rest of the dungeon (even after recovery). If a player wants to keep a treasure between dungeons, they must spend 3 LOOT points to make it permanent (otherwise it runs out of charges, rusts, is stolen by thieves, or sold to cover random expenses, etc). Do not add treasure gear dice to the gear pool... mark them separately, as these are only invokable in the right situations (typically more narrow cases than general gear).

LOOT points can be spent when the party recovers (see Recovery below) to purchase various things, including treasures, costing 7 to obtain at this time.

LOOT and Treasures may be exchanged between the characters of willing players as they see fit.

Recovery

Players may decide to exit the dungeon, and if they do so, they may also elect to recover. When recovering they can take back as many dice as they like spending 1 LOOT on expenses for each die. Players may have their character pay for themselves, or another charitable player may pay for another players' character's recovery.

Characters may also level when recovering (see Leveling below), gain RENOWN, buy Treasures, and Cache LOOT.

Re-Rolls

When players elect to take a recovery they lose all further Re-rolls for that dungeon. Re-Rolls only

recover when characters decide to go to another dungeon. Players may return to a dungeon to which they've been, but if they do so, they immediately lose all Re-Rolls again.

Leveling

When a player accumulates 10 EXP for their character, the character goes up a level. The player may elect to take an additional Re-Roll, or they may spend 10 Loot (in addition to the 10 EXP) to train and gain a level in a trait.

When a character levels, they may reforge a bond between their character and another character with whom they've broken their bond, if the player of the other character agrees, and they can agree on how the bond is reforged.

RENOWN

During recovery a character can also spend LOOT on buying RENOWN, using the following scale:

- 1 LOOT = 1 RENOWN
- 3 LOOT = 5 RENOWN
- 6 LOOT = 15 RENOWN
- 10 LOOT = 50 RENOWN

The player whose character (living or dead) has the most RENOWN at the end of the campaign wins the game. Sorta. RENOWN has no other mechanical effects.

Accomplishments

STORIES gained are added to the character's RENOWN during recovery if another player decides that their character speaks of the accomplishments of the character with the STORIES, or if an NPC was rescued by the PC and the GM decides that they speak. If no character speaks of a PC, then the STORIES are lost, and no RENOWN is gained.

All characters finishing a dungeon (criteria for which are set out before heading to the dungeon, and which the GM may keep secret) get a reward based on how difficult the dungeon was, as adjudged by the GM. Usually characters will have to provide some proof of this accomplishment (they can't simply speak of it for each other like is the case with STORIES). A reward of 10 RENOWN is Typical for your average hold in the ground, with more epic sites giving as many as 50 or even 100 in cases where the dungeon was ludicrously dangerous.

Characters who go to recovery without having finished a dungeon lose 1 RENOWN. Characters who give up on a dungeon (to go to another instead) lose RENOWN equal to the reward they would have gotten if they'd finished it. This can be rectified by returning to the dungeon later to finish it.

Reviled

RENOWN may go negative, and characters who are in such a state are considered to be Reviled by

the public in general. For characters who are currently reviled, all things that cost LOOT during Recovery cost double their normal prices (including RENOWN itself) until the figure goes positive again.

Caching

LOOT not spent during recovery must be cached. The player should describe where their character is caching their LOOT (they may, of course, all choose the same spot). Characters may recover their cached LOOT when they take their next recovery, but the GM will devise at least one challenge to overcome when they do so, and any consequences will likely result in lost LOOT.

Heretical PVP Optional Rules

Draw up sides, roll dice (probably all of them). The side with the most hits starts, and play goes around the table clockwise. The side whose turn it is points one of their hits at somebody on another side. If the hit is not cancelled, it causes a consequence. If half or more than a side's hits have been cancelled, a player may decide to spend a hit on a success instead of trying to cancel a consequence (taking the consequence, of course, by doing so). A side taking a hit must lose a die, but may decide what die to lose.

The side with the most successes gets their way, but there are no other rewards for PvP successes.

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