

# Newsies and Pickpockets

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# Newsies and Pickpockets

## THE FRIENDS EDITION (OR BETA)

Being a game of imagination, role-playing and wonder by Miguel de Luis, on the adventures of a bunch of kids earning their pluck by their own in an Edwardian world filled with crazed inventors, fagins, strange conspiracies and exotic foreigners from countries you never heard about and an ounce of steampunk.

- ☛ Try *by accident* a flying machine and check if the moon is on fire!
- ☛ Dodge bullies and pickpockets.
- ☛ Expose corrupt politicians.
- ☛ Find the *true* story of your *real* family.
- ☛ Look for treasure in the sewers, mind the *living statues*.
- ☛ Live at the Newsboy Lodge.
- ☛ Travel to exotic locations.
- ☛ And more, much more.

## THANKS DUE TO

- ♥ Tammy Warren
- ♥ The Helpful inhabitants of RPG.net
- ♥ The Groupers of the Steampunk yahoo group [add link]
- ♥ My friends at Porto, my local friendly game store [add link]
- ♥ This guy
- ♥ This other guy

## CREDITS DUE TO

**Editor:** The Friends edition has not been edited, as it will soon be made evident :)

**Illustrator:** Joyce Anne Martin. (Though I still need to improve my desktop-publishing skill, sorry dear friend).

**Some illustrations:** <http://www.fromoldbooks.com>

## PREFACE TO THE FRIENDS' EDITION

What you have here is the result of hours of work squeezed from other responsibilities. Most of it has not been written when this poor Spaniard of yours is at his prime. Late nights and early dawns have seen the creation of more than a few of its pages. It is largely unedited, and so you could spot some goofs, sometimes because I changed my mind on the fly about some rule or another.

However, I have playtested it with my friends from my local gaming store and they all loved, so they are either good friends or this game has something good in it.

If you at all can, I'd like you to ask you to:

- ♥ Suggest Improvements of any kind
- ♥ Spot any goofs
- ♥ Suggest or write new adventures
- ♥ And most important of all share your experiences.
- ♥ Don't worry about Grammar and Spelling unless it's killing you, because I'll be hiring an editor for that.

Everybody who helps will be fully credited, unless you ask to remain anonymous, of course.

# Contents

<b>I The Rules</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1 Introduction.</b>	<b>10</b>
1.1 Newsies & Picpockets, a roleplaying game. . . . .	10
1.2 Dice: . . . . .	12
1.3 Miscellanea . . . . .	13
1.3.1 Quality Grades . . . . .	13
1.3.2 Definitions . . . . .	13
1.3.3 The game and real life. . . . .	13
<b>2 Characters</b>	<b>15</b>
2.1 Who "ist" you? . . . . .	15
2.2 Attributes . . . . .	16
2.2.1 These are your attributes . . . . .	16
2.2.2 This is how you generate your Attributes. . . . .	17
2.3 Pace. . . . .	18
2.4 Skills . . . . .	18
2.4.1 These are your skills. . . . .	18
2.4.2 That's how you generate your skills. . . . .	18
2.5 Chits . . . . .	19
2.5.1 So what are Chits? . . . . .	19
2.5.2 That's how many Chits you begin with. . . . .	19
2.6 Equipment. . . . .	20
2.6.1 Dress up or fade away . . . . .	20
2.6.2 Wealth . . . . .	21
2.6.3 Other useful stuff . . . . .	21
2.7 Background. . . . .	23
2.7.1 Background Table . . . . .	24
2.8 The Newsboy Pack . . . . .	25
<b>3 Testing skills and attributes</b>	<b>27</b>
3.1 This is how you play this game. . . . .	27
3.2 Basic Checks . . . . .	28
3.2.1 Choosing the skill and the dice. . . . .	28
3.2.2 The Target Number. . . . .	28
3.2.3 Fumbles . . . . .	30
3.2.4 Spectacular Success . . . . .	30
3.3 Competitive Tasks. . . . .	31
3.4 With a little help from my friends. . . . .	31
3.5 Quick and dirty or slow and neat. . . . .	32
3.6 Trying again. . . . .	33

3.7	Fallen Dice . . . . .	34
3.8	Detailed Skill List . . . . .	35
3.8.1	Strength Skills . . . . .	35
3.8.2	Agility Skills . . . . .	35
3.8.3	"Eyes & Ears" Skills . . . . .	36
3.8.4	Education Skills . . . . .	36
3.8.5	Charisma Skills . . . . .	37
3.9	Scenes . . . . .	38
<b>4</b>	<b>Wealth and stuff.</b>	<b>40</b>
4.1	Wealth: a few interesting rules . . . . .	40
4.2	Equipment Rules . . . . .	40
4.2.1	Definitions . . . . .	40
4.2.2	Limits . . . . .	40
4.2.3	Equipment Quality . . . . .	41
4.3	Rating prices. . . . .	41
4.4	Stuff you can buy . . . . .	42
<b>5</b>	<b>Chits</b>	<b>43</b>
5.1	Chits . . . . .	43
5.2	Using Chits . . . . .	43
5.3	Earning Chits . . . . .	48
5.4	Maximum number of Chits . . . . .	50
5.5	Sharing Chits . . . . .	50
5.6	Losing Chits . . . . .	50
5.7	No Chits? Big problem. . . . .	51
<b>6</b>	<b>Fights and chases.</b>	<b>53</b>
6.1	Sequence . . . . .	54
6.2	Surprise . . . . .	54
6.2.1	The Surprise Roll . . . . .	54
6.2.2	Effects of surprise. . . . .	55
6.3	Initiative . . . . .	55
6.4	Shooting and Ranged Attacks . . . . .	55
6.4.1	Target Number . . . . .	55
6.4.2	Dodging ranged attacks . . . . .	56
6.5	Movement . . . . .	56
6.6	Close Combat . . . . .	57
6.7	Damage . . . . .	57
6.7.1	The Damage Roll. . . . .	57
6.7.2	The Damage Scale. . . . .	60
6.7.3	Effects of Damage in non living objects. . . . .	60
6.8	Checking for victory. . . . .	60
6.9	Healing . . . . .	61
<b>7</b>	<b>Rumors and follies.</b>	<b>62</b>
7.1	Rumors . . . . .	62
7.2	Rating Rumors . . . . .	62
7.3	New Rumors . . . . .	63

<b>8 Character Advancement</b>	<b>64</b>
8.1 It's your birthday!	64
8.1.1 This is what you get	64
8.1.2 Spending Attribute points:	64
8.1.3 Spending Skill Points	64
8.1.4 Other effects of your Birthday.	65
8.2 Seasons	65
8.2.1 Spring	66
8.2.2 Summer	67
8.2.3 Fall	67
8.2.4 Winter.	67
<b>9 Optional Rules</b>	<b>70</b>
9.1 Weather	70
9.2 Poison	71
9.2.1 Red Poison.	71
9.2.2 Blue Poison.	72
9.2.3 Green Poison.	72
9.2.4 White Poison	72
9.3 Selling	73
<b>II The World</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>10 The Newsboy Lodge</b>	<b>75</b>
10.1 Welcome to the Lodge.	77
10.2 What's in the Lodge?	77
10.2.1 Minimum rooms.	78
10.3 The Lodge Timetable	78
<b>11 The Newsboy Code</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>12 The World and New Paris City</b>	<b>82</b>
12.1 Introduction.	82
12.2 History	82
12.2.1 In which year are we?	82
12.2.2 History as rumors.	82
12.3 The world at Large	83
<b>13 New Paris City</b>	<b>84</b>
13.1 Royal Island	84
13.2 Old Harbor	86
13.3 Inner Expanses	87
13.4 A bundle of Newspapers.	88
13.4.1 The New Paris Dove	88
13.4.2 The Hawk	88
13.4.3 The Children's Newspaper	88
13.4.4 The New Paris Star	89
13.4.5 The Lighthouse.	89
13.4.6 The Prometheus Herald.	89
13.5 West Gate	90
13.5.1 Introduction	90
13.5.2 The Plus Ultra Park	90

13.6 Outer Expenses . . . . .	90
13.6.1 The Hook . . . . .	91
13.6.2 The Farwells . . . . .	91
13.6.3 The Altberg Bank . . . . .	92
13.7 Concordia . . . . .	93
13.7.1 Cadened . . . . .	93
13.7.2 The Beach . . . . .	94
13.7.3 L'Orient . . . . .	94
13.7.4 Point South . . . . .	94
13.8 Decree Slums . . . . .	96
13.9 Everything else . . . . .	96
13.9.1 The sewers and the underground. . . . .	96
13.9.2 The New Paris Elevated Train Company. . . . .	97
<b>14 Crimes, justice and punishment.</b>	<b>98</b>
14.1 Crimes . . . . .	98
14.2 Police Forces . . . . .	99
14.3 Punishment . . . . .	99
14.3.1 The Reform Schools . . . . .	99
14.3.2 Alternatives . . . . .	100
<b>III The Adventures</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>15 A little Structure</b>	<b>102</b>
15.1 Introduction . . . . .	102
15.2 Adventure Structure . . . . .	102
<b>16 The Hidden Prince</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>A A cast of stock Non Player Characters.</b>	<b>110</b>
A.1 Humans . . . . .	110
A.1.1 Average NPC Adult . . . . .	110
A.1.2 Average NPC 12 y/o Boy . . . . .	110
A.1.3 13 y/o Bully . . . . .	111
A.1.4 Pickpockets . . . . .	111
A.2 Mechanical Constructs . . . . .	111
A.2.1 Mechanical Guard . . . . .	112
A.3 Animals . . . . .	112
A.3.1 Dog, Alsatian (German Shepherd) . . . . .	112
A.3.2 Cat . . . . .	112
A.3.3 Horses . . . . .	112
A.4 Monsters . . . . .	112
A.4.1 Zombie . . . . .	113
A.4.2 Giant Spider . . . . .	113
A.4.3 Apollinarian. . . . .	113
<b>B Sample player-characters.</b>	<b>115</b>
B.1 Danny, the Professor . . . . .	115
B.2 Mary "Magpie" Brugess . . . . .	115
B.3 James "Dreamer" Farrell . . . . .	116
B.4 Anne "Goldfinch" Hollister . . . . .	116
B.5 Fred "Wardrobe" Listz . . . . .	117

B.6 Billy “Mouse” Elliot . . . . . 117

**Part I**

**The Rules**

# Chapter 1

## Introduction.

### 1.1 Newsies & Pickpockets, a roleplaying game.

Have you ever played a roleplaying game before? I mean the kind you play around a table, together with your friends. In that case you know the drill so well I'm glad you are reading this chapter. That's fortunate, because *Newsies & Pickpockets* uses *loaded dice* and you need to read about them right now, so go straight to section 1.2 titled Dice.

If you have not played a *roleplaying game* then we need to do some talking. A roleplaying game is a game played by a group of people, each playing a character. As we *roleplayers* love big flashy words, we call them *player characters* or PCs for short. These characters are supposed to be living in some imaginary world, either the one presented in this book, or some other such as Narnia, Middle Earth, or just one of your own fantasy. The setting may also be historical, such as living during the times of the Three Musketeers, or of the pioneers of the American Old West. The time may be now, the past or the future. History may be as it actually took place, but alternate history may also be the foundation for a great game. What if Rome didn't fall to the barbarians? What if the Saxon shieldwall held and William the Conqueror of England was defeated? What if the Cherokee had managed to establish a recognized state?

But roleplaying games aren't about worlds or powers or anything. These are the bells and whisksers. Roleplaying games are all about stories, simulation and fun and, above all, heroes.

#### So, who is a hero?

Some time ago, when I was a teacher, I met this boy in a boarding school. He was a quite hard working kid, always striving for the best, the kind of pupils teachers like. So one day one of his friends went and asked him: "J, why do you study so hard?" His answer was "Because it feels so great when I go to bed". The other kids sighed in relief and one of them went and said: "You are as lazy, just like us". Our hero answered nothing but nodded his head and then looked at me with a face that said "they didn't get it." I think I understood: it feels great to go to bed when you have done your best. If you live your own life to its fullness, you are a hero, and that's what *Newsies & Pickpockets* is all about.

These heroes need something to do, an *adventure*. Getting up at 4 AM on a Sunday morning might seem tough enough. Then, suppose you are twelve years old. Pickpockets and worse hide in the still dark alleys that lead to Newspaper's Row. There you go, under the chilly

snow, your pockets filled with hard earned coins to buy your papers, that you will sell for a profit. All you have to prevail, and perhaps defeat a ghost, a felonious foreign spy or a mad scientist, you have your wits and your friends.

In a novel or film, heroes rarely fail at all. They can get kicked in the first scene or through the whole action, but at the end, most often, they beat the bad guys. That's not guaranteed in *Newsies & Pickpockets*. If you think hard and play smart, you will win, but any mistake could have dire consequences for your character.

That's why we have a *Game Master* (GM). She or He is a referee and narrator combined into one. The Game Master should know the rules thoroughly, keeps all the secrets of the story and decides the outcome of characters actions. He's also in charge of playing the game world: the weather, the events and its inhabitants: the *Non Player Characters* (NPC).

I know from first hand experience that it's fun to be a Game Master. And, while not easy, it's not incredibly hard either. Let's suppose Elizabeth is the Game Master in a high fantasy game with knights, dragons and all that old fashioned stuff.

She could begin the game describing a basic situation. "You are walking through a thick forest when, suddenly, a strange whistling sound and a startling breeze surprise you. As you turn and looking up, through the branches and leaves, you spot a red dragon, flying. What do you do?"

The Player-Characters are then free to attempt any action they like. Do they want to hide? That idea is fine, and probably smart too. Fight? Then pray, but you can try. Invite the beast to dinner? Feel free to; just don't blame me if you become the main course. The choices you make often have consequences beyond that of the original issue, and are often part of what sub-plots may happen in the game or story.

The Game Master, aided by the rules and, usually, some rolls of dice, will determine the outcome of your intended action and so the game can progress to the end of the story, which can be quite surprising.

Who wins? In roleplaying games there is no easy answer to this question. Unlike most conventional games, there is no scorekeeping of "Us" versus "Them". In that sense, there are no winners or losers. If you have lived a good story and it has been fun, then consider yourself a winner...

I guess I could keep writing on and on, but the best way to understand a game is to see one being played.

Martin (acting as the Game Master): *"OK, so you are going to follow that pickpocket down to the sewers or not? You have five seconds."*

Tammy: *"I say we go. I want my stuff back."* Tammy plays a 12 years old daredevil kind of newsgirl.

Daniel: *"I don't know, there can be crocs down there, you know."* Daniel's character is just 9, and not exactly brawny.

James: *"Crocs, yeah, come on, let's go"*. James' character at 13 has all the potential, but none of the motivation to be a bully.

Daniel: *"And what about the ghost we saw yesterday?"*

Tammy: *"You don't know if it was really a ghost, do you? And, whatever, we beat it"*.

Martin: *"Are you going or not? The pickpocket is running away as you speak"*.

Tammy and James: *"We go!"*

Daniel: *"OK, but don't blame me if you end up in the gator's belly"*.

Martin: *"OK, as you go down to the tunnels, you realize how dark they are, not to mention damp and smelly. Are you sure you want to go on?"*

Daniel: "No".

Tammy: "What?! Of course we want to".

James: "I'm with Tammy".

Martin: "OK, I want all of you to make an Eyes-and-ears check. Roll your dice, the target number is 13".

Daniel: "I've got a 14; am I OK?"

Martin: "Yes".

Tammy: "Oh, oh, I've got a 12".

James: "And it's an 8 for me, my luck, always my luck!"

Martin: "OK. So Daniel you stop right in time, but Tammy and James walk confidently right into a stream of water. It just covers up to your elbows, but, I'm sure you know what kind of water this is, do you?"

Daniel bursts in laughter.

Martin: "Now, Daniel, you might have heard something to your back. Make another Eyes-and-ears check, please, the target number is just 11 this time".

Of course this is just a small excerpt of a game session, but I feel it's good enough to get a feeling of what's all roleplaying about. Don't worry, I began just with one book and some dice, back in the times when there was no Internet and none of my friends knew anything about roleplaying games. You'll figure it out just fine, and remember, it's OK if you don't do it perfect the first time.

## 1.2 Dice:

*Newsies & Pickpockets* uses only normal six sided dice. However, they are made stronger or weaker than regular dice, just by the way you read them.

**Fool Dice. (fd)** When you roll a "Fool Dice" you ignore any result higher than 4. That means that if you get a 5 or 6 you read it as if it were a 4.

**Weak Dice. (wd)** When you roll a "weak Dice", you ignore any result higher than 5. That means that if you get a 6, you read it as if it were a 5.

**Normal Dice. (nd)** These you read normally. A 1 is a 1, a 2 is a 2, a 6 is a 6 and so on.

**Swell Dice (sd)** When you roll a "Swell Dice", you ignore any result lower than 3. That means that if you get a 1 or a 2 you read the dice as if it were a 6.

### Tips with dice:

- ☛ Use different colors or sizes for each kind of dice, as that will avoid any chance of confusion.
- ☛ Failing that, roll dice in order fool dice first, then weak, then normal, then swell.
- ☛ You could play with just one single dice; however it would be better to have two sets of three dice, each set of a particular size or color.

## 1.3 Miscellanea

### 1.3.1 Quality Grades

On *Newsies & Pickpockets*, every object can be graded in the traditional school grades of A, B, C, D and E. C is pretty ordinary, cheap stuff, A is great and E is barely usable trash.

A prince would only wear A clothes, unless he swaps them for the E's of the beggar as in the Mark Twain's tale. An "E" ship is always leaking and likely to sink at the first storm. A 'C' newspaper is what most people read. Newsies are, there is no shame in telling the truth, rather poor and they are used to wear and use mostly D quality stuff: hand-me-downs, used clothing bought in a shop or traded between themselves.

### 1.3.2 Definitions

**Real or Game Time:** When I refer to Real Time in the rules, I mean to the time spent in the real world. So Game Time is the time as it is spent in the Game World. The distinction is important to avoid misunderstandings in the game. Such as people ringing your door at dawn if you told them something like "Hey, we are meeting tomorrow at 5 AM!"

**Player Character (PC):** Any character played by a player, usually just one character per player.

**Non Player Characters (NPC):** Any character, animal or monster, spirit or ghost who is not played by any player. These are usually neutral but can be either friends or foes. They are all played and controlled by the Game Master.

**Game Master (GM):** The person who is in charge of interpreting the rules, narrating the scene and insuring that everyone has a great time.

**Attribute:** Major stats which define the capabilities of a character. In *Newsies & Pickpockets* these are: Strength, Agility, Health, Education, Eyes & Ears, Education and Charisma.

**Skill:** An area or field of expertise. Each skill is linked to one attribute

**Newsies & Pickpockets:** This game.

**New Paris:** New Paris is the city (and the state) that is designed to be the main location for the game<sup>1</sup>. It's just south of New York, and it's just as lively, with a brilliant cultural life, a few decrepit, crime ridden areas and lots of misteries.

### 1.3.3 The game and real life.

#### Real life can get real tough.

Even today, there many homeless children living on their own, and selling papers or doing other stuff to survive. Perhaps closer to home than you think. This game does not try to simulate real life, but the imagined life of novels and films, and even those interpreted from a modern perspective. There it's easier to survive and there always seems to be a caring person around. Yes, it's true that death persecutes Oliver Twist and that Gravroche -from *Les Miserable* - dies, but the first always finds a twist in the story who saves him, and the later dies heroically.

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<sup>1</sup>But you can have your games set just anywhere

**Boys and Girls.**

It is less known, but it is true that many girls work on the streets of New Paris as peddlers, newsies, blackboots and in other street business. They are less visible for two main reasons: society prejudice and protection. It's not that people would buy less papers from girls than boys, but the collective ideal that girls should stay at home helping their mothers is still strong enough for people to refuse to see. Second, many girls feel they are safer in the streets by pretending to be tough or in other words, by pretending to be boys. Being young enough, everything required is a haircut and a change of clothes.

Players can play a Character of any gender they prefer. It is OK if you want to play either a boy or a girl. Remember it's just a game, but don't make anybody play a character they don't like. It's just boring.

**Girls and the Newsboy Lodge.**

I will be telling you more about the Newsboy Lodge on Chapter , but for now, let's say it's a very cheap hotel for Newsboys. Now, what about the girls? My take is that they had separate dorms in the Newsboy Lodge, but perhaps the Game Master or Players would prefer a separate institutions, and such there would be a Newsgirls Lodge. Or you could say there is no Newsboy Lodge for girls, or for anybody, or it's just filled up. Please note that if you decide there's no Newsboy Lodge or similar institution in your adventures , then it would be easy for the Characters to be quite homeless.

**Racism and other stupid discriminations.**

One of the good things of a game of fantasy, even of low fantasy as this one it's that you don't have to repeat the silliness of real life. And so racism is virtually unknown in the general population. In New Paris, unless said otherwise, suppose that at any area, half the population will be white. There's no perfect place and surely New Paris City can improve in this regard, but, for most situations you can assume people would no mind much the color of your skin.

However, New Parisians surely discriminate against the poor, especially in Royal Island. If you look poor it's because you deserve being poor and you should know your place. It's unamerican as unamerican can be, but that's the way of Royal Island.

**Issues to avoid.**

There are a few issues I have consiently avoided in this game as sexual abuse, self-harm, severe emotional distress or the use of drugs and I earnestly recommed you to avoid them as well. Trust me, as a former volunteer working with street children I saw some of these and it's nothing I'd be gaming about, period. It hurts even as I type.



## Chapter 2

# Characters

Good characters make great stories. If you know who the characters are and what they want, just add a complication and a setting and you have an adventure. In *Newsies and Pickpocketes*, player characters are not the usual lot of extraordinary guys with uncanny powers, but mere boys and girls from nine to fourteen years old when they first enter the game, and never older than sixteen. Once a character hits his seventeenth birthday, he is retired for the game. Moreover, they are both poor and orphans, living on their own in the streets of New Paris. What they do have is some extra luck, but this little benefit will run out fast in the face of adventure.

This game makes use of a few numbers that describe your character. These tell how many dice you need to roll when your character tries to run away from a ghost, or what happens if it falls down the stairs; how strong he is, or the skills he commands, etc.

In this chapter you will learn how to create your own characters. It is important that you skim through it first, so you have a better idea of what decisions to make. You will need a few dice, pencils and papers – an index card will do – so you can note down all the information.



### 2.1 Who "ist" you?

#### Age

We need to know how old your character is. Roll one dice. Note the number down and add 8. That's your character's AGE. If you rolled a 4, your character will be 12, as  $8 + 4 = 12$ . If you are smart you'll soon see that your character can be of any age from 9 to 14.

If you (not your character, but you the player) are younger than 16, you don't need to roll. Just choose how old is your character. Remember that your character can not a day younger than 9 nor older than 14.

Is it better for a character to be young or old in this game? That's a tough question. If you are older, you'll generally be stronger and know more stuff. But if you are younger you'll be luckier. In fact, you'll have more "Chit Points", but we'll speak about those later.

**In short:**

☛ Roll 1 dice, add 8. The result is your Character's Age.

**Name and Gender**

Next, we need to know your character name. Choose one, anyone you want and note it down. Choose your character gender too. In this game it doesn't matter if your character is a boy or a girl, except when he or she goes to the restroom. It's OK if you are a boy and you want to play a girl<sup>1</sup> and the other way around, but you don't have to.

**In short:**

☛ Choose any name you want for your character.

**Birthday**

Finally, we also need to know about your birthday. You can choose any day of the year but Christmas and January 1st. This is important, because on Newsies your Character improves all of a sudden on your birthday. The Game Master does not need to tell you the date in which the game begins, so don't ask.

**2.2 Attributes**

Attributes are the figures that define your character basic capabilities. It is important that you understand what each one of these is used for.

**2.2.1 These are your attributes**

**Strength (STR)** measures how strong you are. A character can use *strength* to lift a heavy weight, break up stuff, throw a stone to see how far it reaches or fight off a bully. Adults tend to be much stronger than any newsboy. As this game is concerned girls can be just as strong as any boy.

**Health (HTH)** is a measure of your character's resistance to sickness, fatigue, poisons, bullets and thrown cream cakes. Your character could be exposed to all of these and worse.

**Agility (AGI)** tells you how graciously your character moves. A character with low *agility*, will never be a good athlete, nor ever do well at most sports. *agility* is also important to handle a bike, ride, running or even to hide from a band of gangsters.

**Education (EDU)** measures how much the character knows about the world. It's not just school stuff; anything that can be known and learned falls within the range of *education*. So if your want Character to be a mechanic or know how to dress a wound, you'll want his *education* attribute to be as high as possible.

**Eyes & Ears (E&E)** measures how well your character can understand what's going on around him. Please remember that it does include *all the five senses*, not just sight and hearing. If your newsie needs to find a secret message hidden under a rubble stone, follow the scent of a solvent to the secret laboratory of a mad scientist or listen

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<sup>1</sup>Perhaps you'd like to know that many homeless girls who live on their own, pretend to be boys, to look tough.

the whisper of a foreign spy, then you'd better have an *Eyes & Ears* attribute as strong as possible.

**Charisma (CHA)** is how cute, swell, nice, handsome, cheerful, good looking and cool your character is, all rolled into one attribute. *Charisma* is great when you want to sell papers to the public or learn a new language like Transylvanian, sign, beg, convince or juggle for money and fun.

Note that all humans have a least one weak dice assigned to each of these attributes, as will most animals. A few monsters, like ghosts, will not need each and every one of those.

### 2.2.2 This is how you generate your Attributes.

We pay for new dice with Attribute Points (AP) You begin with as many *attribute points* as your age plus seven.

#### In short:

$$\heartsuit AP = AGE + 7$$

With those attribute points you can buy dice for your character's attributes. Every weak dice costs 1 attribute point, while a normal dice costs 2 attribute points. You can also upgrade a weak dice into a normal dice for 1 attribute point. *A player character can't have more than a total of four dice of any kind or combination in any one attribute.* Adults can have up to six, but then you haven't grown up yet<sup>2</sup>. *Every attribute must have, at least, one dice allocated.*

In case you are wondering, you can't buy any *swell* or *fool dice*. Your character's *skills* can improve your *normal dice* into *swell dice* or, in some cases, *down-grade* your *weak dice* into *fool dice*. These will be explained in more detail the following chapter.

Be wise when you split up those dice. If you get very strong but you are so ugly that dogs ran away from you, you aren't going to sell many papers. And you can be as cute as a kitty, but if you stay most days in bed sick, you aren't going to be of much help, either.

#### In short

- ♥ 1 weak dice (wd) = 1 attribute point (ap)
- ♥ 1 normal dice (d) = 2 ap
- ♥ Upgrade 1 cp into 1 d = 1 ap
- ♥ Maximun number of dice in any single attribute = 4
- ♥ Minimun number of dice in any single attribute = 1
- ♥ You can't buy any Swell or Fool dice.

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<sup>2</sup>As *normal dice* are not twice as powerful as *weak dice* -you just read a six as if it were a five- it is a good idea to buy weak dice only until you have four dice in any single attribute, then buy your normal dice.

## 2.3 Pace.

Pace is a measure of your character speed, expressed in how many yards you walk per turn<sup>3</sup>. Your character's pace depends on his age. For anybody younger than 9; one Pace equals 2 yards per turn, for 9 to 11, that's 3 yards per turn, for 12 to 14 it's 4 yards per turn, while 15 years old and older move at 5 yards per turn.

Obviously, your character can move faster by running or sprinting, but we will leave those details for the chapter dedicated to fights and chases. Right now, all you have to do is to record your character's pace on the character sheet.

## 2.4 Skills

### 2.4.1 These are your skills.

Skills are stats just like *attributes*, only less broad. Agility, for example, says how well you move in general, while "Riding Bicycles", a skill, tells how good you are handling a bike.

**This game has 21 skills open to player characters, these are:**

FISTICUFFS (STR), ATHLETICS (AGI), RUNNING (AGI), RIDING BICYCLES (AGI), HEALING (EDU), DODGING (AGI), THEATER (CHA), CRAFT (EDU), SWEET TONGUE (CHA), STREETWISE (EDU), ACADEMICS (EDU), LOCKS (AGI), MECHANICS (EDU), STEALH (AGI), OBSERVATION (E&E), LANGUAGES (CHA), SHOOTING (E&E), THROWING (STR), VEHICLES (AGI), SWIMMING (AGI) AND PICK POCKETS (AGI)

I hope you can figure out by yourself that *athletics* is good for climbing, jumping and playing football; that *fisticuffs* comes handy for brawling, and that *healing* helps to fix people after that. But other skills might be a little harder to figure out. Don't worry, if you need help, the skills are better explained in chapter (3)

Every skill is linked to an attribute, as it is shown in brackets. For example, Academics (EDU) is a skill linked to the EDUCation attribute. That means that if you are *good at academics* - an education skill, you roll using your Education dice, but upgraded

### 2.4.2 That's how you generate your skills.

First, find out how many skills your character is *good at*. These are as many as his AGE minus 6. So if your character is 9, he's *good at* 3 skills. Note them down on your character sheet or your scrap of paper under "GOOD AT".

Then, find out how many skills your character is *bad at*. These are 18 minus his AGE. So if your character is 12, he's BAD AT  $18 - 12 = 6$  skills. Record these down on your character sheet or your scrap of paper under "BAD AT".

In those skills that you have not chosen to be either *good at* nor *bad at*, you are *not bad at*. We will deal with the exact meaning of these later in the "Main Rules" Chapter. Right now, all you need to know is that being Bad At some skill decreases your chances at completing any tasks associated to that skill because it "*downgrades*" your dice. Being "Good AT" does just the opposite.

<sup>3</sup>A turn is a vague measure of time, being roughly equivalent to "just a minute"

As you can see, the older your character is, the more skills he or she will be “good” at and the less skills he will be “bad at”. That makes perfect sense, though it makes younger character weaker. However, in the next section “Chits”, you will find a system that somehow compensates for that, specially if the player is smart and creative.

### **In short**

- ☛ A player character is “good at” as many skills as his AGE - 6
- ☛ A player character is “bad at” as many skills as 18 - his AGE
- ☛ The player then chooses freely the skills he is good or bad at. He records these in the Character Sheet.
- ☛ Any skill not chosen as either “good at” or “bad at” is a “not bad at” skill. The player *may* record these in the Character Sheet for reference.

Choose wisely, if your character is bad at *Fisticuffs*, he’d better be good at *Running*. Did you notice the abilities’ abbreviations in brackets next to the Skill name? These are important. I will tell you more in the chapter, but just so you know, being “Good at Riding Bikes”, a skill of agility, makes your agility dice better when you are riding bikes, while being “Bad at Riding Bikes”, will make your agility dice worse. So if you have a lot of dice in agility, being “Good at Riding Bikes”, you will become a fantastic racer, but if you have few and bad dice in agility, you’ll only be average.

### **Can you read?**

If your Character is *bad at academics* he or she can’t read. If your Character is *not bad at academics*, roll one normal dice, on an odd result your character can’t read. If your Character is *good* at academics he or she can read perfectly.

If your character can read, check the appropriate box in the character sheet or write it down.

## **2.5 Chits**

### **2.5.1 So what are Chits?**

*Chits* are points a player can use to buy favours from the Game Master like rolling your dice again or make your dice stronger. *Chits* can also be used to avoid death or even change the flow of the story, at an increased cost. Yet, don’t be too happy about spending them, because *chits* are hard to refill and if you run out of *chits* your character could become a crybaby who would rather whine than trying anything hard enough.

I’ll be telling you more about chits later in Chapter (5), but as for now remember that the more you have the better.

### **2.5.2 That’s how many Chits you begin with.**

You begin with 20 - AGE chits. So if your character is 12, you have 8 chits; if your character is 9 you have 11 chits and so on.

During the game you will be able to earn more Chits, and share them with other players. However, the maximum number of Chits you can have at any time it’s your *starting chits* doubled. This maximum does not change as your Character grows older in the game.

**In short**

- ☛ Use *chits* to buy favors from the game master
- ☛ Every player character begins with 20 - AGE *chits*.
- ☛ Player characters can have up as many *chits* as twice his age.
- ☛ Non player character don't have any *chits*.

**2.6 Equipment.**

I told you, newsies are poor orphans and unless you want to starve, you'll have to earn the money for your butter yourself. However, even so, you begin the game with a few items and some money.

**2.6.1 Dress up or fade away**

First let's see how well clothed you are. Roll two dice, and then check the number you get in the following table.

**Clothes Table**

Dice	Clothes Grade
2	A
3 to 4	B
5 to 6	C
7 to 10	D
11 to 12	E

So what do those letters "A" to "E" really mean? "A" is best quality, "E" is worst, and you could leave it at your own imagination to provide the details. But just so you know better, I'm offering some suggestions below.

**E grade clothes kit.** If your character is wearing *E grade clothes*, he looks just like Oliver Twist right after arriving to London. He only owns a shirt, knee long breeches and his underwear, and that's that. So you are barefoot, which could be nasty in winter<sup>4</sup>.

**D grade clothes kit.** If your character is wearing D grade clothes, he looks a bit better, but not much. He has everything the E kit has, plus he gets a worn out jacket and a newsboy cap and perhaps some very ragged boots or shoes, reserved for foul weather. I'm afraid that probably some piece of your clothes is two sizes larger or one shorter than you want them.

<sup>4</sup>That aside, being barefoot it's not much of an issue; it's normal for children to go barefoot in New Paris City, even outdoors, but don't expect being admitted in any fashionable place without decent shoes, and don't even think about selling some of the most expensive papers, you street rat.

**C grade clothes kit.** If your character is wearing C grade clothes, he looks like the average child of a working family on his way to the factory or, if he's lucky enough, to school. He has a shirt, his trousers<sup>5</sup>, a jacket, a newsboy cap, a pair of shoes and two pairs of socks. Everything is of plain color, but reasonably clean and well made. You will not need to worry about winter much with these clothes; it would still feel cold, though.

**B grade clothes kit.** These clothes are a little better, they include everything C quality clothes have plus a waistcoat and some cheap handkerchief with your initials sewn on them and a scarf for winter. You also have plenty of underwear, so you don't need to get your undies clean every night.

**A grade clothes kit.** It is a rare sight to see a newsboy in this rich boy outfit. they include everything B quality clothes have, but much better made and with bright colors. In this outfit it's how you want to sell "The Hawk" or some other fancy newspaper in Benjamin Franklin's park. In A grade clothes you pretty much look like Little Lord Fauntleroy, which is generally best anywhere but in some dark alleys. If you have any reason to go there, you'd better buy some C or D quality clothes.

## 2.6.2 Wealth

We need to know when your character can afford something, and for that there's nothing like good old-fashioned money. I'll be telling the exact details at chapter 4, right now, all you need to do is roll two dice add your character's Age and multiply it by 10, the result being how many cents your character begins with.

### In short:

☛ Starting Wealth = (2 dice + AGE) x 10 cents.

**Example:** Anne is creating Tom, a newsboy, is 12. She rolls two dice getting a 7. Now  $7 + 12 = 19$  which means Tom begins with  $19 \times 10 = 190$  cents or \$1.90

## 2.6.3 Other useful stuff

There is nothing as full of wonder as the pockets of a child. Well, to be completely honest, full of wonder and plain, old fashioned garbage. Most players in their sane minds would never waste their efforts in those. So, instead of buying or choosing your equipment before the game, you must roll in a table. If the dice show their uglier side to you, remember that even the most seemingly insignificant item can come handy to a lively mind.

Roll two dice. But you don't add them. Instead, you choose one to be the first dice, and the other to be the second dice. Then check the table, knowing that the first dice will be the first number and the second dice will be the second number. So if you get a 1 in your first dice and a 4 in your second dice, check the "14" on the table below and grab a notebook.

*You must roll at least once and up to seven times on the Random Stuff table, on the following page. Be careful, because if you roll a double six (6 6), then you lose everything, including your money and you will not be able to roll again.*

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<sup>5</sup>long or short, your choice, but mind the weather

### Random Stuff Table

Dice	Result	Dice	Result
11	Cheap toy	41	Pack of expensive sweets
12	Flute	42	Mouse Trap
13	Pencil	43	Warm Sweater
14	Notebook	44	Quilt
15	Pen and ink flask	45	New Paris Map
16	Double headed coin	46	Football
21	Whistle	51	Cloth Bag
22	Harmonica	52	Prayer Book or Bible
23	Book	53	3 NPET Tokens (2)
24	Marbles	54	Magnifying Glass
25	Slingshot	55	Postage (3)
26	Pendant	56	Blackboot kit
31	Bowl	61	Bycicle! (4)
32	Sausages (1)	62	Baseball cap
33	Hammer	63	Animal Friend (5)
34	Sewing Kit	64	Backpack
35	Candles (1)	65	12 feet of rope
36	Matchbox	66	Robbed! (6)

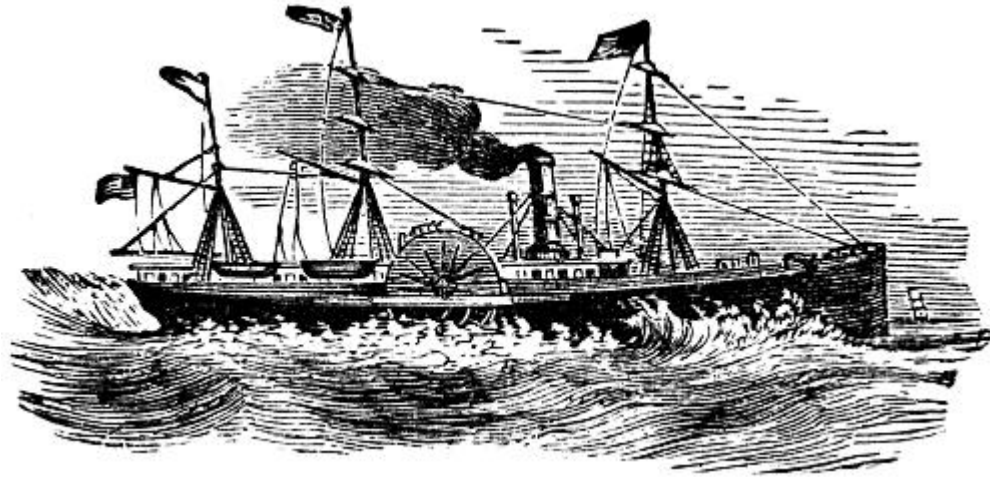
#### Notes:

1. Roll two dice to determine how many units you got.
2. Each NPET token is good for one way travel to anywhere in New Paris.
3. Good for 4 letters addressed anywhere within the state of New Paris.
4. Old and rusty but working.
5. A small cute and harmless animal.
6. You've been robbed. You lost everything you got on this table. Futhermore you lose all your money and your clothes rating drop to E. *You can't make any futher roll on this table.* Tough luck!

#### In short:

- ☛ Roll for your clothes.
- ☛ Roll for your money. You begin with  $(2 \text{ dice} + \text{Age}) \times 10$  cents.

- ☛ Roll at least once and up to seven times in the the Fabulous Table of 36 Miscellaneous Stuffous.
- ☛ Notice that if you roll a double 6 you lose everything you had.



## 2.7 Background.

How come did your character become a Newsboy living on his own in the streets of New Paris City? Everybody has a story and a good one can help a poor orphan with a good imagination to sell some newspapers. Beyond that, knowing where you are coming from will make your character something more than a bundle of numbers and stats.

Are you really an orphan? If your parents are alive then what's about them? Is your father in prison for life? You might want to keep that to yourself, though. Is your mother locked in an asylum for her own safety? Or are they so poor, the best thing they could do was to buy you a ticket for New Paris City and pray? What became of your brothers? Perhaps you could be a sibling of another character, just ask another player if you think that would be cool. Were you born in America or are you an immigrant? By the way, where you were born? In New Paris City or did you, as many others, travel there for the opportunity to make your dreams true? Which are your dreams? Fancy being a lawyer, perhaps the President despite all odds or do you want to test your chances at baseball?

Add all the detail you know, and then note it down on your Character Sheet. But please, do speak with your game master to check that your family story fits the adventure. He might be thinking in a story about kids who just arrived from Europe or about the children of a scientist murdered by a nefarious rival or...

If you aren't that sure about where your Newsie is from, you can use the Background Table which you will find in the following page.

### 2.7.1 Background Table

Dice (3d)	Area	Parent
3	Royal Island	Prison
4	Royal Island	Prison
5	Decree Slums	Dead
6	West Gate	Dead
7	West Gate	Adventure
8	Outer Expanses	Dead
9	Concordia	Hospital
10	Concordia	Missing
11	Inner Expanses	Missing
12	Concordia	Missing
13	New Paris State	Missing
14	USA	Unknown
15	USA	Unknown
16	Decree Slums	Adventure
17	Immigrant	Unkown
18	Immigrant	Adventure

Roll once for place of birth, and once each for each parent.

**Dead,** your father or mother is dead and unless the information is wrong there is nothing anybody can do about it.

**Prison,** your father or mother is serving a very long sentence in prison, possibly life. You can only visit once a year and he or she doesn't write you much. Yeah, it's kind of sad.

**Hospital.** Your father or mother suffers from a long term sickness that makes him/her stay in hospital or some other facility. If it's not a transmissible or mental, you could be allowed to visit once a week.

**Missing.** You don't know where your father or mother is. Perhaps they just did not come for work or their ship sunk and the body was never found. Or maybe your father had to run away from police or creditors.

**Unknown:** You have no idea of who your father or mother is. If you know your father but not your mother, consider that your father was simply somebody who cared for you, perhaps for his kind heart or perhaps to send you to beg or pick a pocket or two, just as Fagin did with *Oliver Twist*. If both your parent are mother are unknow then you spent your first years in an orphanage until you decided you were old enough to care for yourself.

**Adventure:** You aren't quite sure; perhaps it's a story you made up for yourself when you were very little, perhaps somebody told you to comfort you, but you believe your parent is doing something special. It could be that you are the secret son of a prince of some small nation in central Europe or that your mother is an elf or working in a mission somewhere far, far away.

In New Paris, as in real life, many newsboys (and girls) lived with their families. *Player-characters, however, are all on their own.* Parents (and uncles, grandparents and any adult family member) are either, dead, unknown, far away, locked in prison or unable to help or even make contact with the player character. In practical terms, every player character in this game is an orphan.

### In short

- ☛ Figure out your character's story.
- ☛ Remember that your character parents and any other grown up family members must not be able to help. They could be dead, sick, in prison, lost in the jungle...
- ☛ *If you want*, you can roll in the background table.

## 2.8 The Newsboy Pack

*Newsies and Pickpockets* assumes all Player Characters are friends who care for each other. So, it is a good idea that Players coordinate themselves when they are designing their characters. Pay attention of what each of you is going to be good or bad at. Ask the game master for hints about what could be needed in the game. If the game master says the adventure is all about spies, then you'd probably want to be Good At Stealth or Languages. Think, what could happen if everybody is Bad At Streetwise?

Also, you should have a story that explains why you are all friends. Some of you could be siblings or cousins. Perhaps you all arrived to the New Paris in the same ship from Europe and your parent died during the journey. Usually, you just met in the streets, got along well and decided to be friends. Or there could be other reasons. Or perhaps the game master wants you meet as the first scene you play in the Adventure. So ask your game master first.

### In short

- ☛ Make sure your characters make a good team.
- ☛ Make up your Newsie Pack story.
- ☛ That's that!

Now you have your character ready to go sell some papers and save the world at the same time. The question is, are you up for the challenge?

## Character Creation, an Example.

Let me guide you as I create a character using the rules. First of all, I roll for AGE. I take one single dice and roll it, getting a 4. So my character's age is  $8+4 = 12$ . I also decide I want him to be a boy and his name to be Allan Krebs.

Then I need to buy dice to put in his attributes. He's 12 so I have  $12 + 7 = 19$  AP to buy my dice. I decide to buy only weak dice, as they give more bang for the buck. I buy 3 wd for Strength, 2 wd for Health -so Allan is a little weak-, 3 wd go to Agility, 4 wd to Education -I want Allan Smart-., 3 wd for "Eyes and Ears" and the last 4 wd go to Charisma. No attribute has more than four dice, and each one has at least one, as the rules command.

Strength 3 wd Health 2 wd Agility 3 wd Education 4 wd Eyes & Ears 3 wd  
Charisma 4 wd

Then I decide on which skills Allan is good and bad at. As he is 12, he's Good At  $12 - 6 = 6$  skills. I choose Academics, Sweet Tongue, Observation, Streetwise, Running and Shooting.

He'll be Bad at  $18 - 12 = 6$  skills. I choose Pickpockets, Locks -he's no thief-, Vehicle, Mechanics, Craft, -nor he's good fixing stuff- and Riding Bicycles.

He'll be just ok in the remaining 9 skills. These are Fisticuffs, Theater, Languages, Athletics, Healing, Stealth, Dodging and Throwing. I don't need to note these down in the character sheet, but I'm going to do it anyway, to speed up the game.

Allan is *good at* Academics, that means he can read, without the need of rolling any dice.

Allan is 12, that means he will begin with  $20 - 12 = 8$  Chits. His maximum number of Chits is twice this number or 16, even as he grows older later as the adventures go on.

Let's see about his stuff now. I roll two dice for his clothing. I roll on the table and, argh!, I got an 8, so Allan's clothes are D grade. He's barefoot<sup>6</sup> and his clothes could use a little mending and cleaning, I'm afraid.

Money, that's what I want. Allan is 12 and I roll an 8 on two dice so I get  $(12 + 8) \times 10$  cents =  $20 \times 10$  cents = 200 cents or \$2.00.

I decide to try my luck in the Random Stuff Table, rolling 7 times (the maximum) in the table. On my first roll I get a 3 and 2, a 32 which means 6 candles. I make another 6 dice throw get 6 more candles, a pack of expensive sweets, let's make them Turkish Delights (yummy), and a Harmonica (that's cool) a notebook and a bowl, a curious mix.

Finally I go to see my background. I'm not sure of where I want him to be from, so I'm rolling in the Background Table. I got an 11, so he's from the Inner Expanses. Then I roll again for his father and mother, getting a 12 and a 14, meaning that they are both missing.

I note everything down in a Character Sheet and Allan's ready for great adventure in New Paris.



<sup>6</sup>He could be wearing some very old shoes.

## Chapter 3

# Testing skills and attributes

### 3.1 This is how you play this game.

Some friends are sitting at a table, one of them is the game master<sup>1</sup>, the rest are the players, each one playing the role of a player character. The game master describes the scene.

“You enter the alley with soft feet and wild hearts, trembling at what could be hidden among the shadows. The air is filled with the stench of putrid fruit that piles against a corner. What could possibly hide behind it? Ghosts were supposed to exist only in fairy tales, but right now you aren’t so sure. Was that a step you heard? Now, tell me, what are you going to do?”

Rick, one of the player characters, decides to take the lead. “I am going to shoot at the fruit pile with my slingshot, and if anything moves, we run away like crazy”.

If the game master is sure about the success of an action, he simply grants a success and that’s that; no dice required<sup>2</sup>. If, in the other hand, the action is impossible the game master simply forbids it.

The game master is sure that Rick can’t miss a fruit pile, and answers, “OK, Rick”, as you point and shoot, the stone hits the rotting fruit pile. After a split second, you all see a ferocious, rabid cat, foam coming out of its mouth, emerging out of the fruit pile. Now, tell me, what are you going to do?”

The group’s answer is unanimous: “Run for it!” Perhaps the game master is exaggerating a bit on his description of the cat, but they aren’t taking any chances with a rabid feline.

Now the game master has a little problem, will they be able to outrun the cat through the maze of trash ridden alleys or not? That’s why you have rules. They decide who can do what and what the results of your actions are, striving to be fair, fast and fun.



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<sup>1</sup>Also known as Referee

<sup>2</sup>For example if a player says that his characters wants to walk to an Apple Stand and the game master will, probably, grant it, without asking any dice roll.

## 3.2 Basic Checks

### 3.2.1 Choosing the skill and the dice.

Basic checks<sup>3</sup> allows us to determine whether a character has been successful or not. It is one of the most used rules in every game session, so it is important to pay attention.

1. Make sure you know what *action* the player character is attempting and what the consequences could be. For example if a player shoots a rat with his slingshot, the action would be shooting and the possible consequences are either a miss, or a hit. Sometimes you'll need to ask the player to make sure you understand what he's trying to do.
2. The Game Master is the only one who can determine the consequences of any attempted action.
3. The Game Master then determines which *skill* is more appropriate for the *action* being attempted<sup>4</sup>.
4. *If there's no appropriate skill*, the Game Master should choose an *ability* instead<sup>5</sup>. Again, the game master's decision is final.
5. Use the dice of the attribute linked to the skill, *upgrading or downgrading* them if necessary:
  - ☛ If the character is "Good At" the appropriate skill you upgrade the dice of the linked attribute. So weak Dice become OK Dice (or normal dice), while OK Dice (or normal dice) become Swell Dice.
  - ☛ If the character is "Bad at" the appropriate skill you downgrade the dice of the linked attribute. So weak Dice become Fool Dice, and OK Dice (or normal dice) become weak Dice.
  - ☛ If the character is neither "Not Bad At" the appropriate the skill you use the dice of the linked attribute without any modifications.

**Example:** *Allan is good at Sweet Tongue, a skill linked to the Charisma attribute. He has 4 wd in his Charisma attribute. When he tries any Sweet Tongue action, such as asking a newsgirl for a date, he upgrades those four weak dice into four normal dice.*

### 3.2.2 The Target Number.

The game master then decides a Target Number (TN). If the player rolls equal or more than the Target Number he succeeds. If he rolls less than the Target Number he fails. A task of average difficulty will demand a Target Number of 10, a very easy task will need just a TN of 4, while a very hard task can only be achieved with a TN of 14 or more. (You'll find a more detailed table soon enough).

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<sup>3</sup>Also known as skill tests.

<sup>4</sup>For example *shooting* is appropriate when the action is shooting a rat with your slingshot; academics is appropriate for reading.

<sup>5</sup>For example, let's suppose that a newsboy finds one of the first photographic inventions, and wants to take a picture of their friends. Now, there is no skill for photography, so the Game Master, might decide you use your *education* attribute instead.

**Example.** Let's suppose Rick is shooting a can with slingshot. We know you use the Shooting Skill for shooting, so that's certainly appropriate. Shooting is linked to Eyes and Ears, so Rick goes to his Character Sheet, where he sees he has 3 weak Dice in Eyes & Ears, not so good. Yet, Rick is also "Good At" Shooting, so he upgrades those three weak Dice to normal Dice. The game master says that hitting the can will require a TN of 11 because it's quite far away. Rick rolls his three OK Dice and gets a 13, hitting the can right in the middle with a satisfying noise and watches as it falls and rolls down on the pavement. Had Rick been "Bad At" Shooting, then he would have had a problem, because he would have downgraded his weak Dice, to Fool Dice, and it's hard to get an 11 with 3 Fool Dice, unless you use some Chits<sup>6</sup>. If Rick would have been neither "Good At" nor "Bad At" Shooting, he would have used the three weak Dice of his AGI score, and he would have had some chance of hitting the can.

### Do not roll dice if

Remember that if the game master is sure that you will succeed (or fail) you don't need to roll any dice. The game master, to speed up the game, can even decide that a Player Character (but not Non Player Characters) automatically succeeds at an easy task. Reserve dice for the important stuff only. This is how it goes:

**Impossible Tasks:** The attempt is genuinely impossible, such as flapping your arms to fly. The attempt fails automatically, no matter the dice rolls or the Chits Spent.

**Trivial Tasks:** These are so easy that you are guaranteed to succeed; then the game master does not need to require a die roll, except if the task is attempted under stress such as a fight or emergency.

**Very Easy Tasks:** The game master may decide that the player character succeeds automatically, except if the task is attempted under stress such as a fight or emergency.

### Target Number Table

This Table is only a guideline for the game master when he has to determine a TN. So yes you could use a TN of 5 or 7 if you think that would be the most appropriate for any given situation<sup>7</sup>.

Difficulty	Suggested Target Number
My lil' bro' could do that	4
Very Easy	6
Easy	8
Average	10
Hard	12
Very Hard	14
Experts only	15 or more

<sup>6</sup>Chits are discussed in chapter 5 on page 43

<sup>7</sup>Note that Average – or normal – Difficulty means Average for an adult without special training. So dressing a wound would be of Average Difficulty using the Healing skill. In any case, remember *that these are guidelines*, not the Bible. The game master can change this table, or disregard it altogether.

### 3.2.3 Fumbles

You fumble whenever you either roll 7 points or less than your Target Number or you roll a 1 in each and every one of your dice<sup>8</sup>.

A fumble could not mean anything more serious than making a fool of yourself before your friends, like falling off your bike, tripping down on the ground or answering to your teacher that King George the Fifth was the first US President. However it could have very dear consequences, especially when running away from a ghost or in a fight, so watch out.

### 3.2.4 Spectacular Success

A Spectacular Success is the exact opposite of a fumble. *You get a Spectacular Success whenever you roll 7 points, or you get a 6 in each and every one of your dice.*

When you get a Spectacular Success, you get additional benefits; you'll sell your newspapers much faster -giving you time to do something else or sell more papers-, you don't only know about George Washington, but you can tell your teacher the size of his shoes. In an emergency, a Spectacular Success could save the day.

#### In short

- ☛ The player tells the Game Master what *action* his character is attempting.
- ☛ The game master determines the appropriate skill. If there is no appropriate skill, he chooses an attribute instead.
- ☛ If the character is good at the skill, he upgrades<sup>9</sup> the dice of his linked attribute.
- ☛ If the character is *bad at* the skill, he downgrades the dice of his linked attribute<sup>10</sup>.
- ☛ If the character is *not bad* at the skill or if he's using the attribute, he uses the dice of the attribute as they are, without upgrading or downgrading them.
- ☛ The game master determines the Target Number of the action, as he sees fit<sup>11</sup>.
- ☛ The player rolls his dice, adding the results. If the total is equal or greater than the TN he succeeds. If the total is less than the TN, he fails.
- ☛ If the total is less than the TN - 7 or all your dice show 1s, it's a fumble.
- ☛ If the total is greater than the TN + 7 or all your dice show 6s, it's an spectacular success.



<sup>8</sup>It's a good thing that Swell Dice do not have any 1s. That means that if you have 3 wd in Education, for example, and you are good at Academics it would be unlikely for you to fumble unless you face a difficult task.

<sup>9</sup>Normal dice becomes swell dice, weak dice becomes normal dice.

<sup>10</sup>Normal dice becomes weak dice, weak dice becomes fool dice

<sup>11</sup>A TN of 10 is average, 14 is very hard and 6 is very easy.

### 3.3 Competitive Tasks.

Now, you know how to test if a character succeeds at any given task. You ask the game master for a Target Number, you roll your dice, add them up, and if you get as much as the Target Number or higher then you succeed, else you fail. But what if two or more characters are competing to achieve the same task?

We could be trying to see who can run faster or playing a football game. each character rolls his dice, whoever gets the high result wins. Ties are ties, if two or more character gets the same result they performed equally well.

If the task was hard enough without competition, the game master might assign a minimum Target Number; if no character achieves this minimum they all equally fail.

For example, let's suppose Tim and Pip are both competing for the chance to earn a scholarship at the New Paris Ateleir School of Arts. There's only one remaining scholarship, but still the school demands a minimum level of skill for admittance, so the game master determines both competitors will need a TN of 15 or more. Should they both fail, none of them would get the scholarship.

Those who fumble, lose automatically. Those who get an spectacular success double their total.

#### In short,

- ☛ In a competitive task every character rolls his dice, the largest total wins.
- ☛ The game master *may* assign a minimum Target Number.
- ☛ Fumbles lose automatically, spectacular successes double their totals.

### 3.4 With a little help from my friends.

What if two or more characters are trying to achieve the same task? First of all the Game Master must make sure that team work does indeed help in the given situation. Running or shooting are examples of skills which are mainly individual in nature, while lifting a carriage from the body of an unfortunate newsie does indeed benefit from as many arms as possible.

The game master determines the TN as usual. Then one of the characters is chosen to be the leader. The rest of the characters are considered assistants. The leader rolls his dice normally. The assistants roll but get their result halved, rounded up, and then they can add all their points to the grand total.

The game master may also assign a maximum number of helpers.

Let's say that Tiny Tim and Pip Wee are carrying a huge basket filled with eggs, hopefully without breaking any one. The game master determines this is a feat of Strength and assigns a TN of 10. That's bad news for for either Tim (STR 2 weak dice) or Pip (STR 2 weak dice) so they decide to cooperate. Tim is chosen to be the leader and he rolls a 5 and a 3, for a total of 8. Pip, the helper rolls a 4 + 3 = 7, halved to 3.5, rounded up to 4. The grand total is 8 + 4 = 12, which is greater than the Target Number (10), so they succeed.

### Fumbles and Spectacular Successes

Any player who gets a 1 on all of his dice, makes the whole group fumble. The group can also fumble if the grand total is seven under the Target Number.

The group can get an spectacular success is if the Grand Total is seven over the Target Number or everybody gets a 6 on all their dice.

#### In short

- ☛ The game master must agree that the task can be done in a group.
- ☛ One of the characters is chosen to be the leader, the rest are considered assistants.
- ☛ The leader rolls his dice and add them up normally.
- ☛ The assistants roll their dice, but halved –rounded up– .
- ☛ Add up the leader's and the assistants' rolls to find the Grand Total.
- ☛ If the Grand Total is equal or greater than the Target Number, the group succeeds.
- ☛ If anybody fumbles the whole group fumbles.
- ☛ If the Grand Total is lower than the TN - 7, it's a fumble.
- ☛ If the Grand Total is greater than the TN + 7, it's an spectacular success.

## 3.5 Quick and dirty or slow and neat.

The game assumes that most tasks are instantaneous or else can be accomplished in less than two minutes. However, there are times when you don't want to bother with all the detailed Chapter 6 Stuff. What then? Then, the game master assigns a time frame to the action, according to his own good sense. If the player wants to speed up their actions "just a little bit" the Game Master should raise the Target Number by 1. If the player wants to do the action in half the time, the Game Master should double the Target Number.

If the Players are happy with slowing down their actions "just a little bit" then the game master can lower the Target Number by 1. If the players want to do it slow and safe, the Game Master should lower the Target Number by 5.

Let's suppose that the players need to know how much time it would take them to do their homework<sup>12</sup> for the Newsboy Lodge Night School. After thinking for a while the game master says that it would normally take two hours. The players are not happy about that, so they ask to speed up that time by one third for a final time of one hour and twenty minutes. The game master thus determines that normally to get an A in that homework would require a Target Number of 8, but as they are speeding up, he raises it up by 1 to a total of 9.

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<sup>12</sup>Normally, you don't even roll for doing your homework, but these players are trying to get to college, eventually, so they want great grades.

**In short,**

- ☛ If the player wants to speed up their actions "just a little bit" the Game Master should raise the Target Number by 1.
- ☛ If the player wants to do the action in half the time, the Game Master should double the Target Number.
- ☛ If the Players are happy with slowing down their actions "just a little bit" then the game master can lower the Target Number by 1.
- ☛ If the players want to do it slow and safe, the Game Master should lower the Target Number by 5.

**3.6 Trying again.**

Most actions can be attempted more than once. In each case the game master must be satisfied that the characters still have the time, the materials and any other requirement. A fine chinese vase which fell down, rolled and broke into smithereens can't be "*tried again*". A drawing that went wrong can be "*tried again*", provided that you have pencil and paper.

The game master will like to use the same Target Number of the first attempt *unless there is good reason* to change it. A second or third attempt at escaping from the watch of some kidnapers will be harder, as the criminals would be in alert. On the other hand, a second attempt at solving a mathematics question should be sightly easier.

However, if a character tries again but fails, he must pay one chit for the opportunity to attempt that same task again.

For example, let's say Bobby Cantdolaces is trying to open the lock of a door. Unfortunately, he's Bad At Locks, and has only 2 weak dice in AGI. As he is Bad At Locks, he downgrades those 2 weak dice to 2 fool dice. The game master asks him for a TN of 8, which is a bit hard with just two fool dice. The player decides to try again and the game master concedes he has a better chance to pick the lock, now that he's familiar with it, lowering the TN to 7. Poor Bobby rolls his dice again and fails again. Now Bobby has heard that the corpse with whom he shares the room in which he's locked, came all the way from Transylvania and he does not want to test any legends about vampires. So, he pays the 1 chit for another go with a TN lowered to 6, and this time he succeeds<sup>13</sup>.

Please, make sure that everybody understands that *trying again* is not re-rolling. When you re-roll, you are rolling your dice again, but it's still the same action. However, if you are "trying again" you are making a new attempt<sup>14</sup>.



<sup>13</sup>As you will learn in chapter 5 on page 43, Bobby could have used one chit for a re-roll in any of his earlier attempts. He chose not to do so, because it was 9 AM when a vampire sleeps, and he needed to lower that target number.

<sup>14</sup>For example if the characters doing their homework in the earlier example, "tried again", they would have to erase everything they did and start all over again.

**In short**

- ☛ A character is "trying again" when he attempts a task once he has tried and failed before.
- ☛ The game master must be assured that the action is still possible.
- ☛ Have the characters used up the materials / tool / fuel...?
- ☛ The game master can adjust the TN of the action if any successive attempt makes the action harder or easier.
- ☛ If the player fails three times in a row, he must pay 1 Chit for the opportunity to have a fourth attempt.

**3.7 Fallen Dice**

Any dice that falls off the table *when testing for a skill or attribute* is read as a "1". Both Players and the game master should be careful when throwing their dice, for their own benefit.



## 3.8 Detailed Skill List

As promised, here it's the detailed Skill List, organized by their linked attribute<sup>15</sup>. You don't need to learn it by heart. It's mostly reference and guidelines for the game master and players<sup>16</sup>.

### 3.8.1 Strength Skills

**Fisticuffs (STR)** Fisticuffs is the appropriate skill when you get into a fight as long as you fight with your own body or with hand to hand weapons, such as a stick or even a sword. You can use this skill too in a friendly wrestling competition or mock boxing. Don't use this skill for throwing a stone or using a slingshot, for that's the core of the Throwing and Shooting skills<sup>17</sup>.

**Throwing (STR)** Throwing is the skill of choice when you are throwing anything, either a carefully crafted javelin or throwing knife to the most humble stone. You can "try again" as long as you don't run out of objects to throw.

### 3.8.2 Agility Skills

**Athletics (AGI)** Athletics is the appropriate Skill for any action dealing with any sport or similar activity not already covered by other more specific skill such as Running or Riding Bicycles. So, whenever a Character is trying to climb a wall, play baseball or football, or jump over a fence, this Skill would under most circumstances be helpful. A fumble in this skill can mean that you trip yourself over, perhaps suffering a few cuts and bruises<sup>18</sup>. You can usually "try again", unless you are involved in a competition.

**Running (AGI)** Running is the appropriate Skill whenever the characters are trying to run away from a criminal by foot, when participating on a race with their friend or when trying to arrive on time to catch the Elevated Train or the Subway. A fumble in this skill will usually mean that you trip yourself over, perhaps suffering a few cuts and bruises. You can usually "try again", unless you are involved in a competition or you are being chased.

**Riding Bicycles (AGI)** Riding Bicycles includes not only the capacity to drive a bicycle but also to do its basic maintenance. The Mechanic Skill (not Crafts) is also adequate to maintain a bicycle, but not to ride it. As like in Running and Athletics a fumble in this skill will usually mean that you fall off your bike, perhaps suffering a few cuts and bruises. You can usually "try again", unless you are involved in a competition or you are being chased.

**Pickpockets (AGI)** This skill is useful for the obvious task of stealing wallets, watches and expensive handkerchiefs while the poor victim doesn't notice. A failure in this task indicates it notices before you get to steal anything. Stealing from an unwary old lady should demand a TN of 12 -but who would be such a crook? However stealing from a policeman commands a TN of 16 or more. For other victims the game master should use his good sense.

<sup>15</sup>There are no skills linked to Health

<sup>16</sup>But please, note the Language Skill works in a different way. In fact it's so special it has its own section.

<sup>17</sup>You'll find more details on how to use this skill in Chapter 6 on page 53

<sup>18</sup>See the damage table on page 60

**Locks (AGI)** This skill comprises the ability to open locks and safes, provided you have the proper tools. Opening the door of a poor tenement house is relatively easy, requiring a TN of 12. A basic safety lock should require at least a TN of 13 to be opened; a safe would require at least a TN of 15. With improvised tools increase the TN by 3 to 5. A fumble means you harm your tools, making them unusable after they are properly repaired. You can usually "Try Again" unless you don't fumble.

**Dodging (AGI)** Dodging is an ability mostly used in a fight to avoid being hit as discussed in Chapter 6 on page 53, but it can also come handy to avoid being run over by a train, carriage or a horse. You can not "Try Again" to dodge the same attack.

**Stealth (AGI)** This Skill comes handy when playing hide-and-seek, especially if the one who seeks you it's little Pete and his pet rottweiler. In short, it's good for both hiding and moving silently without being, hopefully, detected. You can not usually "Try Again" once you've been discovered.

**Swimming (AGI)** All playing characters are assumed to be able to swim except those who are specifically "Bad At" swimming so you don't need to roll for this skill if the water is relatively calm.

### 3.8.3 "Eyes & Ears" Skills

**Observation (E&E)** Observation is great in order to discover someone trying to hide from you, trying to read a note in the dark or recognizing a face among the crowd.

**Shooting (E&E)** Shooting includes the skill and basic operation of any weapon that shoots a missile of some sort up to a carbine, an airgun, a revolver or a small powered shotgun. For anything heavier you'd need the Rifle skill, not open to Newsies, or the Artillery skill, which is also not open to Newsies. You can try again as long as you have ammunition.

### 3.8.4 Education Skills

**Vehicles (EDU)** The Vehicles skill is useful to operate and maintain any land vehicle except a bicycle. This includes trains, and stagecoaches, but not riding a horse. You can try again unless you are being chased or undertaking some competition.

**Healing (EDU)** Healing covers everything from dressing the leg of a puppy to minor surgery.

**Crafts (EDU) and Mechanics (EDU).** Crafts covers all sort of crafts, maintenance and repairs who have no relation with electricity or mechanics. So sewing, carpentry, masonry, drawing, painting, and so on, are all covered by this skill. However repairing a train's engine or some new wonder of science such as a horseless carriage is covered by Mechanics.

A fumble at any of these skill lowers one level the quality of the item<sup>19</sup>.

You can usually "try again" as long as the materials are not used up by the attempt<sup>20</sup>. Crafts can be a pretty useful skill in the hands of the right player, provided that there are enough, tools materials and time available.

**Academics (EDU)** Academics is just a glorified term for "school stuff". So History, Biology, Botany, Philosophy and in general all school, high school and university subjects not covered by other more specific skill belong to Academics. Use this skill when a

<sup>19</sup>So B Clothes turn to C, C to D, and E, well you better get a barrel or something.

<sup>20</sup>For example, you can try again to draw as long as you have paper or an eraser handy.

character wants to know the meaning of some word, know the poisonous effects of some plant or research in a library.

### 3.8.5 Charisma Skills

**Theater (CHA)** Being good at theater helps you to perform on the streets for a few dimes, juggle or even run a puppet show for the wee-ones.

**Languages (CHA)** Languages is in fact, two skills in one: a) how many languages you know well enough to have a basic conversation and b) communicating through mimic and gestures. Not that standard sign languages are considered languages, not mimic and gestures.

A character who is “*Good at*” Languages is entitled to test this skill the first time he needs to use a foreign language. If the test is successful the character can use that language, failure means the character is not able to communicate in that language and is limited to mimic and gestures. The Game Master should assign a Target Number following his good sense, taking into account the character’s background. A Target Number of 12 is suggested for Common and easy languages; while Rare or Hard tongues should get higher numbers. Note that, this test cannot be repeated except by spending Chits.

A character who is *not* “*Good at*” Languages can only speak English.

Communication by mimic is a question of assigning a TN, that should be 10 for basic instructions. Failure would usually result in misunderstandings which could be funny, offensive or disastrous.

You can’t usually “try again” this skill. Enjoy the misunderstandings of getting lost in translation.

**Sweet Tongue (CHA)** This skill is used to convince people to hold your opinions and make them agree to do what you want. It can be used even, God may forbid it, to tell some untruthful story to a policeman who have just found you with a gold watch which accidentally fell in your pocket. TN varies wildly, a story about a watch which by accident fell in a newsboy’s pocket should command a TN of 15, at the very least.

A fumble means the other person is angry enough he would no longer pay attention to your words in one full week and could have the reverse consequences that you intended.

You can try this skill again, as long as you don’t fumble, yet each attempt raises the TN by 1.

**Streetwise (CHA)** Streetwise makes you aware of the the places and people you ought to know -or avoid- in New Paris.

You can’t usually “try again” this skill, if you don’t know then you don’t know.



### 3.9 Scenes

A scene is any goal attempted by a character or group of characters that require more than one simple action and involves more than one skill. Normally, you roleplay and simulate each and every of the actions attempted, but sometimes, to speed up the game, the game master and the players can agree to solve the whole scene with just one single dice roll.

#### Rules:

1. The game master describes the situation, as he or she always does, and the players share what their characters intend to do, as usual.
2. A player or the game master propose to solve the situation as a scene.
3. The game master assigns a number from 1 to 6 that the players must roll or better in one single normal dice, and warns the players of the consequences if they fail the dice.
4. The players vote. If at least half plus one of the players agree with the proposal of the game master, accepting the consequences that the game master warned them for failure.
5. The youngest player roll the dice.
6. Chits<sup>21</sup> can only be used in scene to buy re-rolls or to get a “Not quite dead” favor. Re-rolls for scenes are much more expensive, costing 2 Chit per player.
7. The game master applies the consequences of success or failure, according to the result they got on the dice.

Let's suppose the Player Characters are following a suspected spy to sneak into his hideout. That would need several skills (Stealth and Observation) and actions. You would probably want to roleplay that scene in detail, of course, but let's suppose it's late in the evening and you are running out of real time to play. After hearing the players' plan and assessing the situation, the game master think they have a fair chance of succeeding. He tells the players they need to get a 4 or better in one normal dice, but that if they fail they will be captured by the spy and imprisoned in some dirty cellar. The players are OK with it, so they roll the dice. Unfortunately, they get a 3, so they want to buy a reroll, which comes expensive at 2 Chits per player.

### Back from our previous story

Veteran roleplayers may have enough with the rules as explained before, but I have preferred to continue the sample game session, so you can see how I see them implemented in a real game.

Martin: "OK. So Daniel you stop right in time, but Tammy and James walk confidently right into a stream of water. It just cover up to your elbows, but, I'm sure you know what kind of water this is, do you?"

Daniel bursts in laughters.

Martin: "Now, Daniel, you might have heard something to your back. Make another Eyes & Ears check, please, the target number is just 11 this time."

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<sup>21</sup>The use of chits is explained in Chapter 5 on page 43

Daniel: "OK, no problem, I'm good at observation, I have 3 weak dice, so I upgrad them. 3 normal dice, thank you." Daniel rolls the dice. "I've got a 4,6,3, that's 13".

Martin: "Higher than the TN, great. Daniel, definitively, you've heard the steps of someone at your back. What do you do?"

Daniel: "I turn around real fast."

Martin: "Daniel, as soon as you turn back, you see it just for a second, a rat running fast and then disappearing within the darkness".

Tammy: "Well, what do we do, now?"

Martin: "Whatever you want, as always. I suggest you get out of that... er... stream and see if you go north or south."

James: "Any hint of where did the pickpocket go?"

Martin: "Yes, too bad it's so dark down here."

Daniel: "I'm trying anyway."

Martin: "Well, it's a 16 TN this time, you'd better have some good rolling of dice."

Daniel rolls dice: "Hey, got all sixes!"

Martin: "An spectacular success. Daniel, by sheer luck you spot er... 25 cents in coins spread southwards in pennies."

Tammy: "Great, Daniel, now, grab the money and go fetch him!"

James: "I think we should make a torch first. Martin, anything we can make a torch of the stuff around here?"

Martin: "Hmm, that would be too much luck..."



# Chapter 4

## Wealth and stuff.

### 4.1 Wealth: a few interesting rules

Player-Characters are supposed to be able to feed and provide for themselves in a long term basis. Most newsboys (and girls) will live at the Newsboy Lodge or some similar institution where they can stay and get some basic meals for a token payment. Everything else, however, even school costs money and the player-characters should be aware of the cost and the consequences.

#### School

Characters who don't attend a school of some sort regularly cannot raise their Education attribute at their birthday<sup>1</sup>.

### 4.2 Equipment Rules

#### 4.2.1 Definitions

**Large object:** A large object is anything that would not fit inside a pocket.

**Small object:** A small object is anything that would fit inside a pocket.

#### 4.2.2 Limits

- ☞ Large Objects: A newsboy can carry as many large objects as dice he has allocated to strength, whether these are weak or normal dice. Using a bag or backpack doubles that number.
- ☞ Small Objects: A newsboy can carry up to twelve small objects or any number if he is using a bag or backpack.

Note: These limits are, as always, a guideline for the Game Master, who can use his good judgement to disallow any newsboy to carry an elephant as if it were just one large object.

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<sup>1</sup>See more in chapter 8 on page 64

### 4.2.3 Equipment Quality

In the Character creation chapter you saw that there were five qualities of clothes from A to E. We use a similar system for any item; according to the following guidelines:

- ☛ A: Good quality; 1st Class Service.
- ☛ B: Standard quality; 2nd Class Service.
- ☛ C: Cheap, mass produced product; 3rd Class Service.
- ☛ D: Second hand or badly manufactured product; questionable service like riding in a lifestock car.
- ☛ E: Barely usable, worn out or unsafe product; unsafe service, like riding on the top of a train car.

### 4.3 Rating prices.

On New Paris prices are going up and down all the time; something might be cheap in one shop and just around the corner hugely expensive. As such, instead of giving an exact price for items and stuff, the Game Master may choose to rate them, according to the following scale:

Rating	A	B	C	D	E
Minimum Value	\$10	\$5	\$1	\$0.20	\$0.01
Usual Value	\$25	\$7	\$3	\$0.50	\$0.10
Maximum Value	-	\$15	\$6	\$1.50	\$0.30

So if your pin is rated at E, you could find it for 1 to 30 cents in shops. The Game Master should choose the exact price whenever the Player Characters want to buy something. If in doubt, just use the usual value.

Inflation – and rarely deflation – might change the values of the whole table. A good, simple way to add stress to the player characters is to begin a new adventure telling the players that inflation has made all prices rise and making newspaper sales harder to make as a result of an economic crisis.



## 4.4 Stuff you can buy

**Price Table**

Name	Size	Price	Quality	Notes
Clothing D	Large	\$2.50 - C	D	a,b
Clothing C	Large	\$7 - B	C	a,b
Clothing B	Large	\$10 - A	B	a
Clothing A	Large	\$20+ A	A	a,c
Shoes	Large	\$3.50 C	D	a
Sport shoes	Large	\$5 B	B	a
Candle	Small	5 cents E	C	
Deluxe Slingshot	Small	\$2.00 C	B	d
Street Fast Food	Small	45 cents D	D	
Cafeteria Meal	Large	60 cents D	C	
Deluxe breakfast	Large	\$2 C	A	
School Book	Large	\$4 C	C	
Cheap School Book	Large	50 cents D	D	e
School Supplies	Large	\$1.75 C	C	f
Newspaper bag	-	Free	C	g
Backpack	-	\$2 C	D	
Medication, rare	Small	\$30 A	B	c
Medication	Small	\$5 B	B	

**Notes:**

- ☛ a) It does not count as an object if worn
- ☛ b) No shoes
- ☛ c) Rare
- ☛ d) For “pampered” kids. Most boys build their own, using their craft skills (or get an older brother to build it for them).
- ☛ e) School books, printed in cheap newspaper grade unbound paper for the use of poor students. Meant to last for one school term only.
- ☛ f) Includes 2 black pencils, eraser, a wooden ruler, a cheap 48 pages notebook, sandpaper (to use as a pencil sharpener), a simple pen and a case.
- ☛ g) Given for free to the newsies with higher sales; has newspaper’s logo.

# Chapter 5

## Chits

### 5.1 Chits

The player characters of this game are lucky. It's like the world or the angels want to compensate them for having it rough. Or perhaps they are destined to some great fate. In any case, when things get really tough, they more often than not, escape safe and sound until their special star fades.

Good acts and, specially, heroic deeds can recover the favor of the angels, making that special star shine again and recover or even gain chits up to the character's maximum.

Chits give a major advantage to the smart player who is able to use them creatively. True, sometimes the best you can do, is to re-roll some critical dice throw, but there are better strategic options which pay better in the long run.

### 5.2 Using Chits

Whenever a player character wants to purchase one favour, he should announce it to the game master, who must then approve the request. The game master would do so, as long as the player is not asking anything weird, uncanny, unsportive or against the rules. The player then "pays" the favour's price in chits to the game master, who will then grant it. The benefits of such a favour should be narrated in a way that shows the role that luck played<sup>1</sup>.

You may use markers, pawns or fake money to represent Chits or you could simply mark them off from the Character Sheet.

The table on the following page details how many Chits you can use for any such favour. Remember that you aren't limited by the table; the players should feel free to ask for any favour not included in this table, as long as the Game Master approves them, and the Game Master should assign a fair price in Chit Points.



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<sup>1</sup>In other words, the game master will say something like "luckily, the bullet was defective and drops to the ground, harmesly" or "the assassin forgot to load his revolver", or whatever feels appropriate to the situation.

**Using Chits Table.**

Chits Spent	Favour Won
1	Something nice happens
1	Give me a clue
1	Ha! Missed me
1	Re-roll
1	Still breathing
1	Double or nothing
1	Let me try something cool
1 or more	Found it!
1	I'm a hero
2	Each extra dice
3	Just hurt
3	Something helpful happens
3	Each extra swell dice
3	Triple or nothing!
4	Just a Scratch
5	Can't touch me

**Explanations****Something nice happens:**

For 1 chit you can get some nice event to happen to your character that would be a relatively small help in any given situation. For more substantial help you'd need to pay 3 Chits, as discussed below at "Something Helpful Happens". In any case this event must be plausible and make sense.

Examples of nice events include: A kind old lady buys you an apple when you are hungry, a small brave dog comes to your defense in a fight; seeking employment a lawyer trusts you to deliver some important documents to a client, if you do it well, you'll have earned yourself a job; as the common hospital room is filled, you get your private room in hospital, just as rich kids, or perhaps you meet a friendly Civil War veteran just two days before your American History exam at the night school.

**Give me a clue.**

For 1 chit you can ask the game master to give you a clue about some secret or mystery or some element of the plot, but the game master can be as straight forward or enigmatic as

the story requires. For example instead of just saying: “The butler did it”, the game master could say “The master of politeness is stained in red”.

### **Ha!, missed me!**

For 1 chit you can dodge any attack delivered by a non-lethal weapon or any unarmed attack – such as a kick –. The attack is assumed to have failed so your character can act normally.

### **Re-roll:**

Choose any dice you have already rolled and re-roll them again, at a cost of 1 chit per dice. You can re-roll all your dice for a total cost of 3, though.

### **Still breathing:**

Whenever the game master announces your character dead for any reason, you can pay 1 chit to keep your character alive. However, he is still gravely injured, cannot would remain he would have to spend the rest of the adventure and up to a full season in hospital.

### **Let me try something cool.**

Sometimes you just need to be attempt something cool like jumping on a horse and then through a window to dodge a particularly nasty bully. The problem is that the game master can assign an impossible Target Number to such daredevil actions. In that case you can pay 1 Chit to lower that TN to 12.

Remember that the game master must agree that

- ☛ your action is cool enough – dangerous is not always cool – and
- ☛ it has to be physically possible – even if unlikely – for a human.

### **Found it!**

Whenever you character needs an item that it’s reasonable for your character to own, or somehow find, you can pay 2 chits and you’ll character will either have it in his pockets, or find it easily somewhere. The object must not weight more than 5 pounds, nor cost more than \$1 per chit<sup>2</sup>.

### **I want to be a hero.**

For heroic actions, in which you, out of your good heart, without any material reward, risk your life for the sake of others, or out patriotism, you can pay 1 Chit to lower the TN to 10.

As in “*let me try something cool*” the the Games Master must agree that

- ☛ the action is heroical enough and
- ☛ it has to be physically possible -however unlikely- for a human.

<sup>2</sup>So a 20 pounds item will cost you 4 chits and 3 chits will “buy” you a \$3 coat.

**Double or nothing!**

Just as it says, pay 1 Chit for the opportunity to double the result of all your dice. The whole thing is a gamble, that could turned against you if you get unlucky again. See how it goes.

1. If after rolling your dice, you'd rather not like them and want a chance for double or nothing, you tell the game master.
2. He then would announce what is at stake. Usually you just would lose 1 to 5 extra Chits and fumble at your attempt, but the game master could say your character could be hurted, or just fail spectacularly before all your friends. If you agree with the consequence, you then spend your Chit, and roll one normal dice.
3. On an even result you get to double your original throw.
4. On an odd result, however, you'll face the consequences that the gamemaster announced.

Let's say you are playing baseball. You rolled a mere 8 – according to the game master just enough to advance to first base –, but the game master told you a 15 would grant you a home run, and you desperately want that. So you announce the game master you are taking your chances at "Double or Nothing" and want to know what the consequence of failure could be. The game master, perhaps in a mischevous mood, announces that if you don't roll higher than your original throw, you will get your pants falling down for the general merriment of all your friends and rivals watching the game and you'll have to pay one extra Chit. You agree to those terms, and you reroll again. Thankfully, this time you get a 4, an even result, so you double your original throw, for a total of  $8 \times 2 = 16$  points, more than enough to do a home run.

**Each Extra weak Dice**

Before or after you roll the dice, two chits buy one extra weak Dice, to roll immediately to your throw. These extra dice are lost as soon as they are used.

**Just hurt**

You can pay 3 chits to reduce a Grave or Dead damage result to Hurt<sup>3</sup>. You could say the bullet did not touch any vital organ, the sword did not cut deeply or you fell on soft ground. In any case you only got half as many damage.

**Something Helpful Happens**

For 3 Chits, you can ask the game master for a helpful event to happen. This event must be plausible without recourse to fantasy and make sense (so restrain yourself) and cannot fully solve the situation on its own (if you are selling papers, for example good weather would definitively help, but you can't get someone to buy all your bundles, no matter what good excuse you can come up with). In any case, the game master's opinion is final on this matter.

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<sup>3</sup>You will see more information about damage in section 6.7.2 on page 60.

Examples of helpful events include: A nurse on his way to hospital finds you hurt and decides to help, an angry wolfhound appears just between you and the muggers who would rob you, the train you were to miss is delayed, the thundering rain which was going to doom paper sales stops until you finish your last bundle, facing trial your case is assigned to a judge who has a soft spot for newsies, a new shoe shop opens and everything is at a 25% off the price.

### **Each Swell Dice**

Before or after you roll, three chits buy one extra swell Dice. You must roll your new dice immediately and add the result to your throw.

### **Triple or nothing:**

Just as it says, pay 3 Chits for the opportunity to triple all your dice. The whole thing is a gamble, that could turned against you if you get unlucky again. See how it goes.

1. If after rolling your dice, you'd rather not like them and want a chance for triple or nothing, you tell the game master.
2. He then would announce what is at stake. Usually you just would lose 3 to 7 extra Chits and fumble at your attempt, but the game master could say your character could be hurt, die, or just fail spectacularly before all your friends. If you agree with the consequence, you then spend your 3 Chits, and roll one normal dice.
3. On an even result you get to double your original throw.
4. On an odd result, however, you'll face the consequences that the gamemaster announced.

### **Just a Scratch:**

At the cost of 4 Chits you can trade the effects of any single injury for a -1 malus<sup>4</sup>. This is a pretty expensive option so use it with care. Please note that you can't use it for any previous injuries not for accumulated damage; it must be used immediately after having been hurted.

### **Can't touch me.**

For 5 Chits your character survives any single attack or accident, suffering no effects whatsoever.

### **New favors**

The game master can grant any "favors" not included in this list at a reasonable cost in Chits.

### **In short**

Whenever you player needs a favor, see the favor table, pay the Chits and then follow the rules. If the favor is not included in the table, the game master may (or not) concede the favor at a reasonable cost in Chits, using the table as a guideline.

<sup>4</sup>You will see more information about damage in the next chapter.

### Back from our previous story

Martin: "An spectacular success. Daniel, by sheer luck you spot er... 25 cents in coins spread southwards"

Tammy: "Great, Daniel, now, grab the money and go fetch him!"

James: "I think we should make a torch first. Martin, anything we can make a torch of around here?"

Martin: "Hmm, that would be too much luck..."

James: "OK, I'm pushing my luck here, Martin what if I pay you 1 chit?"

Martin: "Make them 3, and it's a deal"

Tammy: "3? For one stupid torch?"

Martin: "One stupid torch you need now, a torch which would be quite handy, you know".

Daniel: "I think 2 Chits is fair for a torch."

Martin: "OK, it's 2 Chits, but it's final, take it or leave it."

James: "I take it. Here's my 2 Chits."

Martin: "Great, thank you. You all start searching for materials to make up a torch but there's nothing you can see around here. Finally, as you are about to give up, James steps on something and falls on the ground, bottom first<sup>5</sup>.

### 5.3 Earning Chits

The initial supply of chits might seem generous, but I'm sure they can run out quite fast, so you can be happy that there are a few ways of replacing those. However, Chits are not earned easily, as you can see in the table below.

Event	Chits Earned
Act of Kindness	See rules
Helping a rival	2
Helping an enemy	3
Heroic Generosity	2
Outstanding Honesty	2
Winning the adventure	See rules
Earning a competition	1
Saved somebody's life	3
Heroic Feat	2
Major Festivities	Varies
A stranger helps you	2

<sup>5</sup>Note that, usually, James would have got to check Agility to avoid such fate, but as it's just for a bit of fun, the players are letting the game master to get away with it.

**Act of Kindness.** As every newsboy knows, God helps those who are kind and good. It might not agree with your opinion about how things go in real life, but that's the way it is in this game. So, whenever a Character performs a random act of kindness towards somebody who is neither a friend and cannot easily answer in kind, roll a normal dice. If you get a 5 or 6, you earn 1 Chit. The game master must be satisfied that the act is appropriate to the adventure, ethical and demands significant effort from the character<sup>6</sup>.

**Helping a rival.** If you help somebody who is definitively not a friend and a rival in some kind of competition you get one Chit. Another newsboy who makes fun at you because you sell less qualifies as rival. That straight A girl who tells the whole world every time you get a C or worse does qualify as a rival too. A friend, who sometimes makes a joke, does not. However by helping a rival you must not do anything unethical or that would unlawfully harm anybody else. Again, the game master must be satisfied that the act is appropriate to the adventure, ethical and demands significant effort from the character.

**Helping an enemy.** An enemy is a most serious form of a rival. Examples of enemies include a bully who is after you, a crooked cop, somebody who has robbed you and so on. However by helping a rival you must not do anything unethical or that would unlawfully harm anybody else. So you don't get 3 Chit points just by helping a gang to steal a pastor. Again, the game master must be satisfied that the act is appropriate to the adventure, ethical and demand significant effort from the character.

**Heroic Generosity and Outstanding Honesty.** This time the game master must not be only satisfied that the act is appropriate to the adventure, ethical and demand significant effort from the character, the action must be extraordinary. Ordinary honesty, like not shortchanging or keeping your word does not grant you any Chit. Returning a wallet you found on the street with \$20 or confessing a crime when nobody has a clue you did it, would indeed qualify. Likewise heroic generosity means an extraordinary effort either in money or kind. For example spending a full week volunteering at a soup kitchen for 8 hours a day, or donating your full earnings of a week, or sharing your food even when you are hungry yourself.

**Winning the Adventure.** Once the game master is satisfied the players have finished an adventure successfully, he will grant a number of Chits to the whole gaming group. It is the players responsibility to divide the whole lot as they believe it's fair. Some groups can simply divide the points evenly, others can choose to reward the best players -or the one who brought the pretzels and soda. The exact number of Chits will vary from adventure to adventure, generally the harder the adventure is, the more Chits the group will receive.

**"Saved somebody's life".** Just as it says, whenever a player character makes a significant effort to an action that decisively helps in the rescuing of somebody from a he certain danger he gains 3 Chits.

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<sup>6</sup>For example giving a flower to a homeless lady, while nice will not grant you the chance of getting a Chit; spending half an hour to find the parents of a five years old girl who got lost in the city would.

**Heroic feat.** 2 Chits are awarded to any heroic feat that does not lead to saving somebody's life.

**"A stranger helps you".** If a NPC, who does not know your character, helps you when you are in some great trouble out, you receive 2 Chits.

*"In fact, if it had not been for a good-hearted turnpike-man, and a benevolent old lady, Oliver's troubles would have been shortened by the very same process which had put an end to his mother's; in other words, he would most assuredly have fallen dead upon the king's highway. But the turnpike-man gave him a meal of bread and cheese; and the old lady, who had a shipwrecked grandson wandering barefoot in some distant part of the earth, took pity upon the poor orphan, and gave him what little she could afford –and more– with such kind and gentle words, and such tears of sympathy and compassion, that they sank deeper into Oliver's soul, than all the sufferings he had ever undergone. Oliver Twist, Chapter VIII"*

**Major Festivities.** On certain specific days, such as Christmas, there is so much fun and goodwill that your character recovers his energies and optimism. For details refer to Section 8.2

## 5.4 Maximum number of Chits

The Maximum number of Chits a player-character can have is twice his starting chits. So a player-character who begins adventures being 9 years old, could keep up to 22<sup>7</sup> Chits even when after his 15 birthday. A player-character who begins adventures at 14 can only have up to 12 Chits at any given time.

☛  $\text{Maximum number of Chits} = (20 - \text{Starting Age}) \times 2 = \text{Starting Chits} \times 2$

## 5.5 Sharing Chits

Players can transfer Chits to another player character. For every 3 full points you share, the other character receives 2, or if you share 2 points the other character would receive 1 point. As you see, sharing 3 points gets a better rate, but that's quite a good number of Chits to share, so reserve that for an emergency.

And no, sharing Chits does not qualify for either a Act of Kindness or Heroic Generosity, so you do not earn any Chits by sharing them. However, you can consider yourself a good friend, tap yourself on the back and smile proudly.

## 5.6 Losing Chits

There is a difference between spending and wasting chits, and then you can lose. A player can waste his Chits for re-rolls that were not worth it or he can save them for when they are sorely needed. However, there are actions and situations which will make you lose Chits for no benefit at all. These are introduced for game balance and to help players to roleplay and think more.

There are basically three kind of situations that will eat your Chits up. First of all, losing at something you are good or have committed significant effort; second acting against the

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<sup>7</sup>Starting chits = 20 - Age; 20 - 9 = 11

Newsies Code<sup>8</sup> and third significant emotional distress. Some of these situations are detailed in the table below. As always the game master should use his discretion and remember that it is a guide, not a Law.

### Losing Chits Table

Event	Chits Lost
Fumbling at something you are "Good at"	1
Fumbling after using 1 or more Chits	1
First time your character steals	3
First time your character begs	1
Loses at some competition	1
Cowardice, if friends are in danger	2
Going hungry, per day	1 or 2
E clothes in cold weather	1
D or E clothes in freezing weather	2
Homeless, per week	1

**Stealing.** Caught or not, your character loses 3 Chits the first time he steals.

**Begging.** The very first time – only – your character has to beg money to strangers your character loses 1 chit, for the humiliation felt.

**Going hungry.** Every night you go to bed without having been able to eat at least a full meal, you lose 1 Chit or 2 if the weather is cold or worse.

**E clothes in cold weather.** E grade clothes are not warm enough to protect you in cold weather. For every full day that you have to face in cold weather, you lose 1 Chit<sup>9</sup>.

**D or E clothes in freezing weather.** Freezing weather is severe enough that only C grade clothes or better can protect you. For every full day that your character has to face in freezing weather with D or E grade clothes on, your character loses 1 Chit.

Please note that you cannot lose more than five Chits in any given season due to hunger, foul weather and homelessness. The Game Master may choose to ignore the losing of any Chits between adventures.

## 5.7 No Chits? Big problem.

Having no Chits means something more than just not being able to re-roll or buy any favors from the game master. Your character believes he's out of luck and feeling deeply sad. Call it a depression if you like, but I would not get that pretentious. Anyway, why being so sad is a problem? Because until you get, at least, 1 Chit point -or somebody shares with you- every time you attempt an action that demands a dice roll you have first to roll one normal dice in the following table.

<sup>8</sup>See chapter 11 on page 80

<sup>9</sup>More rules about weather in Chapter 9 on page 70

### No Chits, Big Problem Table

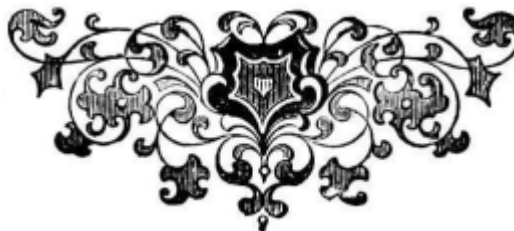
Dice	Result
1	"I know I'll fail". TN +1
2	"An angel smiles". Gain 1 Chit
3	You give up the attempt
4 - 6	No effect

#### Exceptions:

1. You don't roll on this table while in a serious fight or emergency. Adrenaline and instinct just don't let you die without a fight.
2. Non player character (NPC) don't have Chits, but they neither use this table. See more about NPC on Chapter Gamemaster.

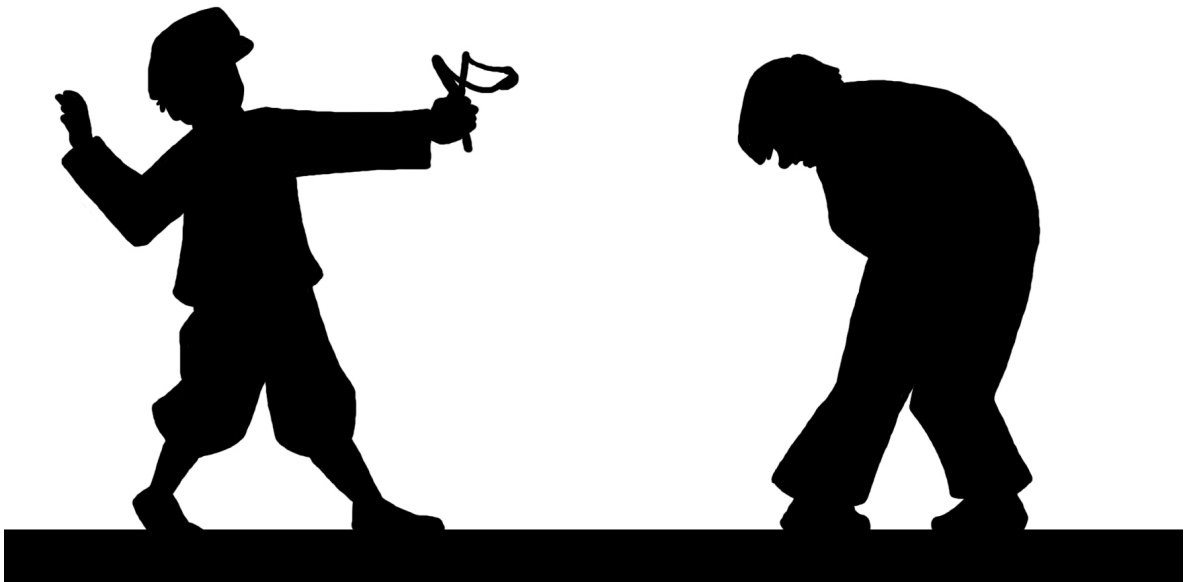
#### Explanation of results

- ☛ "I know I'll fail". Your character is so convinced of being a failure that he is unable to do a full effort. Raise the Target Number by "1" and better luck next time.
- ☛ "An angel smiles". Call it God's help, call it endorphines, call it what you like. The thing is that your character just recovered from his sadness as young persons often do. You get 1 Chit, use it with care.
- ☛ "You give up the attempt". Instead of trying, your character blames his bad luck, the world, his parents, his friends, or starts whining, or rolls himself up in ball or whatever but trying what he intended to do. You can try again once you are over it, in five minutes.
- ☛ "No effect". Just as it says, you roll your dice normally.



## Chapter 6

### Fights and chases.



Fights and chases share two qualities. They are chaotic and dangerous. One single shooting in the whole adventure could be deadly to all the characters. Needless to say, *Newsies* is not a game about killing monsters and plundering their treasure, and combat could well be limited to a cream cakes battle. Smart players would avoid trouble if at all possible, finding a better alternative.

Yet sometimes there are no better alternatives and, to be frank, not every player is smart. If you deal with nefarious spies, mad scientists or even have to dodge a band of young bullies, sooner or later, you could end up in a fight. A bully would probably limit himself to knock you down and get all your stuff, but an evil wizard and his zombies might be less kind. In other words, even if it's not essential to the stories, we need to address combat with care.

Bear in mind that *Newsies & Pickpockets* tries not to be overly realistic, it does not attempt to mimic real life, rather we're trying to simulate stories, comics and films. As such, and in the name of good fun, I'd beg the adults around to remember the fun when they were ten years old made their toys fight each other.

## 6.1 Sequence

To have some control in the chaos of combat, *Newsies & Pickpockets* has a sequence of actions. Take it like a to-do list for combat. You first have to do something, then you do something else. It's a bit artificial, I know, to say that you first shoot then move then fight or that fire "fights" when it burns but many games have used a similar structure and it works out quite nicely. So let me introduce you to the full sequence below. I'll be expanding it right away.

1. Surprise<sup>1</sup>
2. Initiative Roll.
3. Shooting / Throwing / Ranged Attacks
4. Movement / Reaction Phase
5. Close Combat
6. Check for victory

## 6.2 Surprise

This fase of the sequence is optional. In most circumstances both warring parties would be aware of each other, and in that case there is no need to roll for surprise; go directly to the Initiative section. Yet when a group is ambushing another we need to see if they have achieved their goals.

### 6.2.1 The Surprise Roll

1. The ambushers roll for stealth, using the character with the worst odds.
2. Nobody can help in that roll.
3. The ambushed group rolls for observation, using the character with the best odds.
4. Apply modifiers<sup>2</sup>.
5. If the ambushed party rolls a lower number than the ambusher party then they have been surprised.
6. If the ambushed party rolls an equal or higher number than the ambusher party then they have not been surprised; continue with the normal sequence.



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<sup>1</sup>This step of the sequence only takes happens when there is a chance of surprise.

<sup>2</sup>Add or subtract the modifiers to the result of the ambushed.

Situation	Modifier
Night	-3
Rain or worse	-2
Familiar Location	+1
Main street	+2
Unaware	-5
Sewers	-3
Sneaky alley	-1

### 6.2.2 Effects of surprise.

1. The succesful ambushers choose how close they are to the ambushed party.
2. The surprised characters cannot move, shoot or attack for the rest of the turn.
3. The succesful ambushers can act normally.
4. Proceed to section 6.4, as there is no need to roll for initiative.

## 6.3 Initiative

1. Every character rolls for Running<sup>3</sup>.
2. Characters act in order according to their totals.
3. In an event of a tie:
  - ☛ Player Characters act first, if still tied.
  - ☛ Younger Characters act first, if still tied.
  - ☛ Roll again until you break the tie.

## 6.4 Shooting and Ranged Attacks

1. Attacks by shooting are resolved just as like any other skill check, using the appropriate skill.
2. In Newsies, all weapons are considered to be in range<sup>4</sup>.

### 6.4.1 Target Number

1. For most weapons, the Target Number is 6 plus 1 for every full 10 yards of distance
2. For short range weapons, the Target Number 6 plus 1 for every full 5 yards of distance.
3. For Extreme Short Range weapons is 6 plus 1 for every full 2 yards of distance.
4. Add 2 if the target is smaller than a bottle or a can of meat.

<sup>3</sup>If using a bicycle or vehicle use the appropriate skill to ride those

<sup>4</sup>You can always try to hit, no matter how far the target is.

Example. Pip wants to hit a can which is at 30 yards away, using his slingshot. The slingshot is a short-range weapon, so the Target Number for this roll is  $6 + (30/5) = 6 + 6 = 12$ .

### 6.4.2 Dodging ranged attacks

1. All missile and thrown attacks can be dodged<sup>5</sup>, provided that the character is aware of the attack and can see his attacker.
2. The Target Number to dodge an attack is the number the attacker rolled.
3. Double the Target Number if dodging a bullet.

## 6.5 Movement

Every character, animal or vehicle in this game moves one Pace per Turn at their normal speed. The trick lies in that some Paces are longer than others. For anybody younger than 9; one Pace equals 2 yards per turn, for 9 to 11, that's 3 yards per turn, for 12 to 14 it's 4 yards per turn, while 15 years old and older move at 5 yards per turn. A table below these lines details more examples, and the Game Master can use these for anything not covered here, like giant apes or aliens from outer space.

That's your basic walking movement, but there would be times when you want to go much faster. For that you have to roll either on Running, Riding Bicycles or Vehicles, depending if you are on feet or using some modern vehicle. The Target Number should be determined by the Game Master, taking into account the state of the ground, the weather and any other appropriate circumstances. If everything is normal, the TN should be 10. If you pass the test the character doubles his pace<sup>6</sup>; triple it if the character achieves a spectacular success.

However, if you fumble, you only move one Pace and then suffer a mishap. If you are running or in a bicycle when you suffer the mishap, you trip and fall to the group, possibly getting a few bruises. If you are inside a vehicle, then both drives and passengers could suffer a life threatening wounds<sup>7</sup>.

You are / You are using	Pace
9 to 11 years old	3 yards
12 to 14 years old	4 yards
15 and older	5 yards
Swimming	Take 2 from your usual pace
Bicycle	Double your usual pace
Horseless Carriage	13 yards
Light Horse Carriage	14 yards
Horse	15 yards
Heavy Horse Carriage	10 yards

<sup>5</sup>Yes, it does includes bullets and ninja stars.

<sup>6</sup>Or that of the vehicle he's using

<sup>7</sup>Details can be found in section 6.7 on the following page.

## 6.6 Close Combat

1. Every character can only attack once per turn<sup>8</sup>.
2. A character who is facing an enemy at less than *two yards* or so, can attack in close combat.
3. The attacker rolls for the appropriate *weapon* skill, or *fisticuffs* if fighting unarmed.
4. The attacker should add or subtract the appropriate modifiers that the Game Master imposes on the roll, to provide for special circumstances. A table with *examples* is provided below.
5. The defender rolls using his dodging skill.
6. If the defender rolls higher or equal than the attacker, the attack has failed.
7. If the attacker rolls higher than the defender, the attack has been succesful and the defender will probably suffer some form of harm.

Circumstance	Modifier to Attack Roll
Low light	- 1
Restrained Space	- 2
Defender in higher ground	- 2
Defender surprised (first round)	+ 3
Attacking from the rear	+ 5
Attacking from the side	+ 1

## 6.7 Damage

When your character gets hit, he will more likely suffer from damage, and in some cases death (unless you use one of your handy Chits). Combat in this game as in real life would be quite deadly. Fortunately, most often you will not be using real weapons. Honest traders do not sell real weapons of any kind to children, and weapon possession while lawful is not common in New Paris City. Rarely, in most campaigns, that you will ever see a gun used in anger. However, if you do, you better run, because those things kill fast.

### 6.7.1 The Damage Roll.

- ☛ Test your Health against against the Damage Rank of the weapon which hit you.
- ☛ The Damage Rank of unarmed attacks is equal to a roll of the attacker's Strength dice<sup>9</sup>. (STRr)
- ☛ The Damage Rank of most hand to hand weapons is equal to a roll of the attacker's Stregth dice plus some modifier.
- ☛ The Damage Rank of most missile weapons is a fixed number.

<sup>8</sup>Except in very special cases, as determined by the Game Master

<sup>9</sup>Pip's Strength is 3 weak dice, so whenever he hits an oponent he'll roll 3 weak dice, the total being the Damage Rank of the attack.

☞ The effects depends on the nature of the weapon and your roll.

**Non Lethal Weapons** are those which in a novel or story can not normally kill an adult. In real life, it's perfectly possible to kill somebody with a cane or by stoning them, though it is rare for that to happen in a story; and remember that it is stories, films and comics what we are trying to simulate, not real life.

**Success.** If your character has passed the Health check he is uninjured, he was tough enough so there's nothing to worry about.

**Fail.** If your character has failed the Constituion check you will receive a Bruise. Each bruise gives you a malus of 1 to all your actions.

*For example, you are involved in a fight with a band of bullies. They hit you seven times in the face (ouch!). That means you have to test your Health seven times. You are lucky (or tough) enough to pass five of these checks. But you failed two of these so you received two bruises. Now you are at minus 2, so every time you roll the dice to check for a skill or attribute, you subtract 2 points to every roll. If you later receive another bruise, you'll be at -3 and you'll have to subtract 3 points to every roll, and so on.*

**Fumble.** If you fumble the check you move 1 step in the Damage Scale. This is explained further below, but it means you go from "Swell" to "Hurt", from "Hurt", to "Grave" and from "Grave" to "Dead".

**Toy Weapons** Toy Weapons are toys that cannot kill an adult<sup>10</sup> in at all. In fact, most can only cause some embarassment. We are speaking of such terrible instruments as cakes, splashing of water and the like.

**Success.** If your character has passed the Health check he is uninjured, he was tough enough so there's nothing to worry about.

**Fail.** If your character has failed the Constituion check you will receive a Bruise. Each bruise gives you a malus of 1 to all your actions. However, unlike the case of non-lethal weapons all the *damage* toy weapons make is "*healed*" right after the end of the fight, so remember to record the toy weapons damage separately.

**Fumble.** Your character is so embarrassed that he will not be able to act at all for one turn, either crying as a baby or shouting ferocious threats in anger.

**Toy Weapons vs Lethal Weapons:** If any Lethal or Extremely Lethal Weapon is used in the action, Toy Weapons cease to make any harm at all. When you see a shotgun nobody worries about a slingshot.

**Lethal Weapons** Lethal Weapons are those which can kill somebody in a story, though most of the times the afflicted character survives. We are speaking of knives, the teeth of a strong dog and very small pistols like a Derringer.

**Spectacular Success** Luckily, the attack was too weak, your character is unharmed.

**Success** If your character passes the Health check he is still bruised. So you will receive a -1 bruise.

**Fail** If your character fail the check he moves 1 step in the Damage Scale that goes from Swell to Hurt to Grave and to Dead<sup>11</sup>.

**Fumble** If your character fumbles he will die unless you spend a Chit right away.

<sup>10</sup>In real life silly accidents are always possible.

<sup>11</sup>More details will be provided on section 6.7.2

**Extremely Lethal Weapons** Extremely Lethal Weapons are those which can kill an adult in one single attack and often do so in stories. Examples include swords, revolvers, rifles or large fires. You are advised to be very careful when somebody uses them.

**Spectacular Success** Even with a spectacular success your character receives one bruise. Consider it a scratch.

**Success** If your character passes the Health check your Character moves 1 step in the Damage Scale.

**Fail or Fumble** If your character fails or fumbles he will die unless you spend a Chit right away.

### Weapons (and other sources of damage)

Weapon	Type	Damage	Range
Animal	Non Lethal	STRr	-
Animal, Dangerous	Lethal	STRr	-
Cane or Stick	Non Lethal	STRr+1	-
Stone	Non Lethal	STRr -1	Short
Knife	Lethal	STRr +1	-
Knife, Thrown)	Lethal	STRr	Short
Derringer	Lethal	13	Short
Revolver	Extreme	15	Short
Rifle	Extreme	15	Normal
Shotgun	Extreme	18	Short
Blowpipe <sup>12</sup>	Toy	9	Short
Fall	Lethal	2 per 3 feet	-
Small Fire	Lethal	13	-
Large Fire	Extreme	13	-
Run Over by Carriage	Lethal	13	-
Fallen debris <sup>13</sup>	Lethal	12	-
Falling off a bike	Non Lethal	12	-
Falling while running	Non Lethal	9	-
Slingshot <sup>14</sup>	Toy	10	Short
Cake	Toy	15	Extreme Short Rage
Thrown tomatoes, etc	Toy	10	Short
Rolled Newspaper	Toy	STRr	-

<sup>12</sup>Blowpipes can use poisoned darts. Any succesful hit will deliver the poison, see 9.2 on page 71

<sup>13</sup>Fallen debris can be dodged, beating a Target Number of 11.

<sup>14</sup>Lethal for small animals; starving kids use them for hunting rats, sparrows and the like

### 6.7.2 The Damage Scale.

The damage scale is an easy way to say how hurt somebody is. Everybody starts at Swell. The next step is Hurt. From Hurt you go to Grave, which is a serious condition, and then it is death. Each of these conditions has its effects on what your character can do; these are explained below.

**Swell** Your character is perfectly healthy, you have nothing to worry about. Bruises are out of the Damage Scale, no matter how many bruises you get, you still retain your Swell status. So you can be Swell and still be at 5 bruises.

**Hurt** Your character is suffering from a wound or sickness that it's serious enough to hinder your actions, but not so much to worry about your life. You are at - 5 at all your actions (which it's in addition to any bruises). So if you have - 3 in bruises, you are down to - 8.

**Grave** Now, it's when you are in real trouble. You are wounded, so you are at -5 at all your actions plus any bruises, just as when you are Hurt. However, it hurts so much as you need to roll for HTH TN(10) just for standing up. Walking requires a TN of 12. Running and other straining physical activities are next to impossible.

**Dead** If you don't spend a Chit immediately, your character is quite dead, and there is nothing your friends can do about it, except arranging for a decent burial and pray. The Game Master might let you to say up to 25 last words.

### 6.7.3 Effects of Damage in non living objects.

For non living objects, the Game Master should assign a fake HTH attribute. "Bruised" items will only need a paint job, but would suffer no harm. "Hurt" items lose one rank of Quality. "Grave items" lose two levels of quality. "Dead" items are considered destroyed for all functional purposes.

## 6.8 Checking for victory.

Once all the characters have had the opportunity to act the turn is over. Then the Game Master should check for victory if any of the following conditions are met.

- ☛ The Non Player Group has been surprised in this turn.
- ☛ It's a non serious fight<sup>15</sup> and The Non Player Group has suffered more bruises than the Player Character group in this turn.
- ☛ The Non Player Group has suffered more *hurt* (or worse) results than the Player Character group in this turn.
- ☛ The Game Master considers that the Non Player Group has little chance to win.

To check for victory, the Game Master rolls 3 normal dice. The usual Target Number is 11, but the Game Master can increase or decrease this number according to the circumstances of the fight.

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<sup>15</sup>Like in a cake throwing battle.

**Success:** The Non Player Group keeps fighting another turn.

**Fail:** The Non Player Group will try to break off combat right away, saving their belongings and helping the injured members of their group, if any. If the players decide to run after them, uninjured non player characters will defend themselves if attacked, hurt or worse non player characters will surrender as soon as they are in close combat range.

**Fumble:** The Non Player Group will run away immediately, as fast as they are able, dropping whatever they are carrying and forsaking any injured members of their group. If the players decide to run after them, the non player characters will surrender as soon as they are in close combat range.

## 6.9 Healing

**Bruises.** Bruises are healed after a good full night of rest.

**Bruises from toy weapons.** These are healed immediately after the fight is ended.

**Hurt or Grave.** A hurt or grave character needs some form of medical attention. The healer (doctor, nurse or amateur) should roll for Healing with a Target Numer of 11 if the character is hurt or 14 if he is grave. This roll encompasses all the healing attempts in any given day and can only be tried once a day.

**Fumble:** The character gets worse. Hurt becomes Grave and Grave becomes Dead (unless the character spends 1 Chit).

**Fail:** Roll 1 dice. On a roll of 1 the Character gets worse, just like if the healer had fumbled. On a roll of 2 to 4 the Character stays hurt or grave. On a roll of 5 to 6, the character gets better. Grave becomes Hurt and Hurt recovers to Swell but with 5 bruises which will heal normally after a good full night of rest.

**Success:** The character gets better. Grave becomes Hurt and Hurt recovers to Swell but with 5 bruises that will heal normally after a good full night of rest.

**Exceptional Success:** The character gets better. Grave becomes Swell but with 5 bruises that will heal normally after a good full night of rest, while Hurt recovers at once.

If the character receives no medical attention, roll 1 dice. On a roll of 1 or 2 the character gets worse. On a roll of 3 to 5 the Character stays hurt or grave. On a roll of 6, the character gets better.



# Chapter 7

## Rumors and follies.

### 7.1 Rumors

The streets of New Paris City are paved with the stories of its inhabitants and urban legends. Not a small number of them are completely false. Yet even the most uncanny could be true to the last letter, or at least have a little resemblance to the truth. In this book, I have detailed just a selection of these. Some are linked to a location like the ghost children who haunt the New Paris sewers or a date such as the extraordinary opportunity for works at Christmas.

Detailed in the second part of this book, you will find a selection of rumors, most of them linked to places or dates. Adventures and Campaigns can include their special rumors to add some variety to the game. Moreover, the Game Master and the other players can suggest other rumors at any time, even in the middle of a game, as explained at the end of this section.

### 7.2 Rating Rumors

Rumors are rated with the standard grades from A to E, with A being the most credible, and E the least likely to be true. "Tomorrow it's Sales at Wesson & Wesson General Store" would probably be a B class rumor, while "There is a Goblin hidden at Wesson & Wesson General Store" would certainly be an E class rumor. A Game Master can choose which of the rumors are true or not, based on his own preferences and the needs of the game or roll three normal dice and consult the following table.

**Rumors Table**

(Roll three dice)

Grade	Truth	Half Truth	False
A	9+	5 to 8	4 -
B	12+	7 to 11	6 -
C	14+	9 to 13	8 -
D	16+	12 to 15	11 -
E	18	12 to 17	13 -

10+ means "10 or higher";

5 to 8 means "5, 6, 7 and 8";

4 means "4 or less".

**Truth** A result of truth means that the rumor is true exactly as told, with perhaps some minor difference necessary to adapt it to the adventure being played and the previous actions of the players.

**Half truth** means that at least one of the major elements of the story or prophecy is false. For example, let's suppose a Rumor says that "there is a ghost dog which attacks newsies on sight every night at 2:00 AM in some unnamed alley. A Half truth result could be interpreted as that the dog is not a ghost, or that it does not attack newsies, or that it is a friendly ghost puppy.

**False** means that the whole story is false, either because it has never happened, it did happen but it has ceased to do so or because the real events are so divergent from the truth as having little consequence (i.e. the "goblin" at "Wesson & Wesson General Store" is nothing but a decorative statue).

### 7.3 New Rumors

Both Game Masters and players can introduce new rumors at any time, even in the middle of a game. In the case of the Game Master, he chooses the grade of the Rumor. If a player suggests a rumor, it would be the Game Master who assigns its grade. A Game Master could of course veto a rumor that it's just too wacky.

When to choose or roll for rumors? Unless the specific rules from an adventure tell you otherwise, the Game Master is free to choose the time to roll for rumors. You could roll for rumors when preparing the game, when the players characters first enter a location, when the players defeat some enemy or just when you want to add some little spice to a game.

You can also roll for Rumors when you go to check a, situation or event of the game world for which there is no specific rule. *For example*, let's suppose that the characters are breaking and entering into some dusty cellar, and you'd like to know if there are any nearby cops. You could treat the situation as the rumor "There is a couple of policemen within hearing distance" and grade it with a D. Rolling an eleven on three dice, you determine that there is no immediate police trouble – or help – for the player-characters<sup>1</sup>.



<sup>1</sup>There is no need to tell them, though!

# Chapter 8

## Character Advancement

### 8.1 It's your birthday!

#### 8.1.1 This is what you get

Before you start an adventure, the Game Master should -at the very least- tell the players the Season in which the adventure begins. If a Character's birthday falls in that Season you heard well, Season, not day the Character immediately reaps the following benefits<sup>1</sup>:

- ☛ 1 normal dice of Chit Points.
- ☛ 1 Attribute Point.
- ☛ 1 Skill Point, plus 1 Skill point for every "won" Adventure since your last birthday.
- ☛ Obviously, age is raised one year.

Attribute Points are used exactly as they were used in creation rules. These are repeated here for convenience, so you don't have to go scrolling or flipping pages. We pay for new dice with Attribute Points (AP). You have as many AP as your character's AGE. So if your character is 12, you have 12 AP, easy.

#### 8.1.2 Spending Attribute points:

1. Weak dice are 1AP each.
2. You can upgrade a weak dice into a normal dice for 1 AP.
3. You can't buy any Swell or Fool dice. Buy your dice and split them among your attributes.
4. Your character can't have more than four dice in any Attribute.

#### 8.1.3 Spending Skill Points

Each Skill Point entitles you to either:

1. Turn a skill in which you are "Bad at" into "Normal at"
2. Turn a skill in which you are "Normal at" into "Good at"

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<sup>1</sup>These benefits are, of course, received just once a year.

### 8.1.4 Other effects of your Birthday.

**Clothes** As already told in the Character Chreation Chapter, and repeated here for convenience, on the birthday season your clothes do not longer fit you, as they are one size too short. If you keep them, their quality will drop one level. A becomes B, B becomes C, C becomes D, D becomes E and E just can't go any worse.

**Other Equipment:** It's not necessary to roll for any other equipment; it's just too time consuming, for little effect. But if you have the time<sup>2</sup>, you can roll for any item your character has. On an odd result, the quality of that item will drop one level, just like in clothes.

**Being 15.** At your 15th Birthday your character will no longer considered to be a child. Reveal in the glory of knowing that from now on you can have up to six dice in any attribute. A more unfortunate effect is that you can no longer stay at the Newsboy Lodge and instead you will have to look for a home or room to rent, so you should plan well in advance. Get an education and, if possible, a good job, perhaps even as a journalist, now that surely you've learned a bit about what the public wants to read!

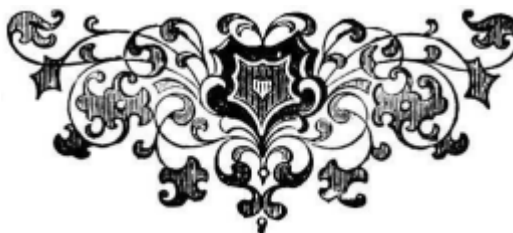
**Being 17.** Newsies & Pickpockets is a game about boys and girls and once you get 17 your Character becomes a Non Player Character. Let him go and create another Chacacter and keep on the fun.

## 8.2 Seasons

On *Newsies & Pickpockets*, there is, quite literally, an adventure every season. Once the adventure is over the characters return to their usual ordinary lives selling newspapers, cleaning boots, doing errands, dodging bullies, studying, having fun and in general trying to live a swell life. Yet even in those less glamorous times, there are some great days to remember. Each those special days grant special benefits for the player-character.

If those days happen while the characters are involved in an adventure session, the Game Master should grant the benefits suggested below as soon as it makes sense within the game<sup>3</sup>.

If those days fall between adventures, the Game Master should grant them before the beginning of the next game session.



<sup>2</sup>Or the Game Master wants to keep the players busy while he's checking his notes.

<sup>3</sup>For example, if the character have been kidnapped by a mad wizard on Christmas, then they will probably not see any presents until they escape from the criminal.

### 8.2.1 Spring

#### April's Fool

April's Fools is not a festivity celebrated by any self-respecting gentleman in New Paris. Among newsies, however, it is a day of complete mayhem and fun, though a few could get, as the saying goes, more than they bargained for.

**Choose your risk and roll 1 dice**

Bargain	Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
1	Lose 1 Chit	Lose 2 Chits	Lose 4 Chits
2	Find Clothes(1)	Find a lead(4)	Find a contact(7)
3	Bedraggled(2)	Bruised(5)	Hurt(5)
4	Find \$1	Find \$3	Lost!(6)
5	Luck Swap(3)	Find \$10	Robbed(8)
6	Earn 1 Chit	Earn 2 Chits	Earn 4 Chits

1. Somehow, you ended up with a full clothes kit that some rich kid lost in the action and it's to ashamed to look for it. You have acquired a C clothes kit of your age.
2. Somebody should have told you not to trust *new friends* on April's fool. Unfortunately, you were too naive and your clothes are covered with a mass of eggs, paint and mud that will not be cleaned easily. Lower your clothes rank one grade<sup>4</sup>.
3. Luck Swap. Choose another *player-character* at *random* and swap his Chits with yours.
4. Somebody has told you something about a treasure... The Game Master should give you a hint about a secret treasure or an important element of the next adventure; but be aware that it could all be a good joke.
5. Hurt. Sometimes pranks go too far, and this is one of those instances. You have got hurt as per the *Fights and Chases* rules, and you are going to need some medical assistance.
6. Lost. You lost one item of your equipment, chosen at random by the Game Master.
7. Find a contact. Your pranks have been so fun that you have impressed somebody. Choose any neutral non player character to be good disposed to you. Warning: if the non player character reveals to be a secret enemy he will just pretend to be your friend.
8. Robbed. You have lost all the money you didn't have on safe storage (either at the Lodge or a Bank).

<sup>4</sup>A turns to B, B to C, C to D, D to E and E remains at E

## 8.2.2 Summer

### July the 4th

July the 4th is the only major summer festivity in New Paris, being considered both a national and local event, as New Paris was able, like New Orleans in the south, to keep the British at bay. Many New Paris citizens dress up as *patriots or redcoats* and hold pantomimes and reenactments of the combat. The “ragged pirates regatta” is the heyday of the festivity with hundreds of makeshifts boats sailing – or rather struggling to keep afloat – from New Harbor to Royal Island, to commemorate a frustrated assault of the Royal Marines. The traditional prize for the first group of children is a push-cart load of sausages, donated by the local butchers.

Benefits:

- ☛ 1 dice of Chits.

## 8.2.3 Fall

### Halloween.

Only children celebrate Halloween in New Paris. Even so, there are strange events happening on this date. If Halloween arrives while the characters are in adventure, Game Masters are entitled to reroll once all failed rumors checks of grades D and E. There are no special benefits on Halloween, though.

Rumors:

- ☛ E A team of recruiters from a school of wizardry in Scotland is looking for suitable candidates.
- ☛ C A group of rich teenagers pranksters is hiding in one of the cemeteries of New Paris, ready to wreak havoc on unsuspecting children.
- ☛ E Ghosts can take an almost human form in the cemeteries.

### Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving is not a major festivity in New Paris, especially among the Royal Island gentry who consider it an “English thing”. However the Newsboy Lodge holds a special dinner together with a night singing contest on the Plus Ultra<sup>5</sup> park in West Gate, that attracts donors and general public.

Benefits:

- ☛ 1 Chit
- ☛ 1 dice of Chits if your character is “Good at Singing”

## 8.2.4 Winter.

### Christmas

Christmas in New Paris are very special. First of all, snow will always cover the streets of New Paris. If it has not snowed before, it will always start to snow with the dawn of December the 24th and it will keep on snowing until the streets are well covered in white.

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<sup>5</sup>Latin for “Beyond”

Yet, all that snow will not hinder the merriment of the people from New Paris, who will no doubt to take the streets to congratulate each other and, of course, to buy the Christmas Special Editions of their favorite newspaper.

Each PC gets:

- ☛ 3 free Chits
- ☛ 1 present from Santa<sup>6</sup>.
- ☛ Extra money from selling the Christmas Special Editions \$1 + 6 dice in cents.
- ☛ Your character must spend at least 10% of his money in presents to friends; these can be other Player-Characters

Rumors:

- ☛ E The devil is chained this day, no crimes will be committed on Christmas day.
- ☛ E Santa is searching a good child or children for either
  - do something very special, even fantastic,
  - give him a magical present,
  - recruit a new "elf".
- ☛ C The New Paris Children's Hospital is hiring "elves" to deliver presents to the children hospitalized there, and they are paying 50 cents for just an evening of smiling. Good carol singers can get up to \$2. Those wearing D clothes or worse need not apply.
- ☛ B The New Paris and New York Telegraph company is looking for messengers to work December the 24th through the 25th, paying 50 cents for each 8 hours.

### **New Year**

The general merriment of this day is somehow made dull by the many gangster who take benefit of crowds to pillage and plunder the unsuspecting.

Benefits:

Decide if your Character spends New Year's night at the Lodge.

- ☛ If your character spends the night at the Lodge, you earn 1 Chit.
- ☛ If your character takes to the streets at night roll 1 dice
  - On a roll of 1 to 5 Your character earns 4 Chits
  - On a roll of 6 Your character is assaulted and robbed. You are hurt, as per the damage rules, your clothes become E and you lose all the money you didn't have on safe storage.

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<sup>6</sup>These includes oranges, candy, a cheap toy or musical instrument like a harmonica and perhaps some clothing.

**Mardi Gras**

Mardi Gras is one of the second largest celebration of the New Paris calendar. From the grandest ballroom in Royal Island to the darkest slums of Decree, all the city dress in costumes, dance, play music, sing and do all kind of pranks. It is common for friends to pretend to kidnap the children of their friends and hold the children in supposed confinement for a sleep over. Parentless children, such as the heroes of the game, almost never enjoy this tradition.

Each player character gets:

☛ 1 Chit

☛ Extra money from selling the Mardi Grass Special Editions \$1 + 6 dice in cents.

A story (Rumor E) has it, that elves appear on this date to exchange their own children for humans, and everybody 13 or younger is eligable.



# Chapter 9

## Optional Rules

### 9.1 Weather

In this game we define weather in terms of how the Characters feel its effects, and not in Celsius or Farenheit degrees. There is no thermometer in the Newsboy Lodge, and most newsies can't understand degrees anyway. So the weather can be Hot, Warm, Cool, Cold and Frozen:

- ☛ A . Hot. Hot weather is usually good news for the Newsies, blackboots and all kind of peddlers. Temperatures in New Paris are almost never too hot and except for sweat, there is no much to worry about, most days. The sun is shining, the clouds are little more than decoration in a perfectly blue sky and kids get fun in and around the fountains. However hot weather sometimes brings strong winds and or showers with it, which would pretty much ruin the day for selling. Sickness are also more common in hot weather, so mind where you buy your food.
- ☛ B. Warm Warm weather is normally the best possible weather for selling any kind of wares on the streets. It could occsionally rain with warm weather, though it is rare enough. In New Paris, most days tend to be warm and sunny; it could rain which would spoil the days somehow, but not very intensely.
- ☛ C. Cool. Welcome to the most common day in New Paris, the temperature is tolerable, but the sky is overcast and rain is almost constant. Old people get their coats and start complaining, though newsies still can handle it OK, even if barefoot and wearing a thin shirt.
- ☛ D. Cold. Here it's when climate begins to be uncomfortable. It's not only the temperature in itself, but the heavy rain, winds, and even snow that are often associated with this weather, the ones which can give newsies with D or E clothes and specially those homeless, cause for concern. Selling will usually drop in the streets, though it is still possible to sell your wares in the cafeterias and public places.
- ☛ E. Frozen Extremely cold temperatures are exceptional in New Paris, even in winter, but when it happens it is often accompanied by heavy blizzards that pretty much paralyzes the city. Sleeping in the rough under this weather could be fatal.

The Game Master has a considerable leeway at interpreting these categories. How much warm is Warm? That's up to you, how constant is the rain? Again use your good sense. Ask yourself, "would it be good for the game?", "would it be good for the story?", would it be fair to the players?" And let these guide your thoughts.

What about tornados, hurricanes and other truly exceptional events? New Paris is not completely devoid of these, but these situations would probably dominate the story so much that must only be introduced when the adventure requires it. The Game Master can pretty much ignore the tables below about the weather or assume it's Warm in Summer, Cool in Spring and Fall and Cold in winter. However, if the Game Master wants to spice things a bit he can either choose another weather condition or roll in the following table before the adventure begins.

### Initial Weather Table

Roll two normal dice, add the results together and consult the column of the season in which the adventure takes place.

Dice	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
2	Frozen	Cold	Frozen	Frozen
3	Cold	Cool	Cold	Frozen
4	Cold	Cool	Cold	Frozen
5	Cool	Warm	Cold	Cold
6	Cool	Warm	Cold	Cold
7	Cool	Warm	Cool	Cold
8	Cool	Warm	Cool	Cold
9	Cool	Warm	Cool	Cool
10	Warm	Hot	Cool	Cool
11	Warm	Hot	Warm	Cool
12	Warm	Hot	Warm	Cool

For the following days, roll 2d on a roll of 5 to 8 the weather does not change. In any other result, roll again on this table.

## 9.2 Poison

On Newsies & Pickpockets, to keep the whole thing simple, there are only four poisons: red or killing poison; blue or slumbering poison; green or paralyzing poison and white or slaving poison.

### 9.2.1 Red Poison.

Red poison is the most dangerous in the game as it can easily kill a player-character, especially if he's already injured. Make the victim test his Health attribute against a Target Number of 12<sup>1</sup>.

☛ On an Spectacular success: No effect.

<sup>1</sup>The Game Master can change this Target Number

- ☛ On a Success: The character worsens one rank in the damage scale.
- ☛ On a Failure: The character is Grave if he was either Swell or Hurt. If he was previously grave he dies immediately.
- ☛ On a Fumble: The character dies immediately.

### 9.2.2 Blue Poison.

Blue potion is the favorite of kidnapppers as it makes the victim falls in a deep slumber and it's generally safe. Spies or criminals who want to avoid the complications of a murder often resort to this poison to sleep a bank guard or a newsboy who was in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Make the victim test his Health attribute against a Target Number of 13<sup>2</sup>.

- ☛ On an Spectacular success: No effect.
- ☛ On a Success: The character needs all his willpower to remain awake, he is under a malus of -3 to all his Attribute and Skills checks for the next hour. This malus does not accumulate to those consequence of bruises or of a Hurt or Grave condition, as the Blue Poison acts as a pain-killer.
- ☛ On a Failure: The character falls asleep immediately, not awaking until after 1d hours.
- ☛ On a Fumble: The character falls asleep immediately. After an hour or so, the victim respiration will become irregular and it will be evident that he needs medical attention. If the victim is not taken to hospital in 24 hours, he will never wake up.

### 9.2.3 Green Poison.

This poison is almost always used by some undead monsters and certain animals, like the mythical giant spider living in the sewers under Point South<sup>3</sup>.

Make the victim test his Health attribute against a Target Number of 14<sup>4</sup>.

- ☛ On an Spectacular success: No effect.
- ☛ On a Success: The character has trouble to coordinate his movements; he is under a malus of -5 to his Agility and Agility related skills for one hour.
- ☛ On a Failure: The character falls to the ground at once, being unable to move any muscle down his neck for one full day. He keeps the use of his senses and is able to speak.
- ☛ On a Fumble: The character dies, at once.

### 9.2.4 White Poison

This is poison is a myth of dime novels; the Game Master *may* treat its existence as an E graded rumor.

Make the victim test his Health attribute against a Target Number of 11<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>2</sup>The Game Master can change this Target Number

<sup>3</sup>See page 94

<sup>4</sup>The Game Master can change this Target Number

<sup>5</sup>The Game Master can change this Target Number

- ☛ On an Spectacular success: No effect.
- ☛ On a Success: The afflicted character feels pain if he disobeys any command. For each act of disobedience he's harmed by one -1 bruise. The effect will wear off in 1 hour.
- ☛ On a Failure: The afflicted character feels pain if he disobeys any command. For each act of disobedience he's harmed by one -1 bruise. The effect will wear off in 1 day.
- ☛ On a Fumble: The character becomes a puppet, he'll not do any conscious action at all unless commanded to do so. If commanded, the character will do anything asked unless they understand it involves killing or harming somebody, even themselves. The effect will wear off in 1 day.

### 9.3 Selling

Newsies and Pickpockets is not a game about selling newspapers, it's a game about adventures. Most of the time you might assume the player-character makes their daily sales, save a bit, pay their expenses and waste the remainder in candy or a new baseball. However, if the adventure requires it, or they are almost bankrupt, the Game-Master might want to check how well their sales have been.

#### Rules

1. Every character should check for Sweet Tongue once for each hour devoted to selling.
2. The Target Number is 8 + the newspaper unit price in cents<sup>6</sup>.
3. Add or subtract the following modifiers to the dice roll.
  - (a) Area: + 2 If selling in a good area for that particular newspaper. -2 If the paper sells bad in that area
  - (b) Weather: + 2 Hot - 2 Cold - 4 Frozen
  - (c) Clothes: + 2 A grade clothes; +1 B grade clothes; -1 D grade clothes; -2 E grade clothes<sup>7</sup>
  - (d) Extra Edition: +1
  - (e) Time of the Day: +1 7 to 9 AM; -1 12 AM onwards; +1 3 to 4 PM (Evening Edition); - 12 Yesterday's edition.

#### Results

- ☛ On a Fumble, the Player Character does not sell a single newspaper.
- ☛ On a Failure, the Player Character sells 1 d newspapers
- ☛ On a Success, the Player Character sells 4 sd<sup>8</sup> newspapers.
- ☛ On a Spectacular Success, the Player Character sells 4 sd<sup>9</sup> + 12 newspapers

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<sup>6</sup>See section 13.4 on page 88

<sup>7</sup>Double the penalty if selling some fancy newspaper.

<sup>8</sup>Swell dice, ignore any result lower than 3

<sup>9</sup>Swell dice, ignore any result lower than 3

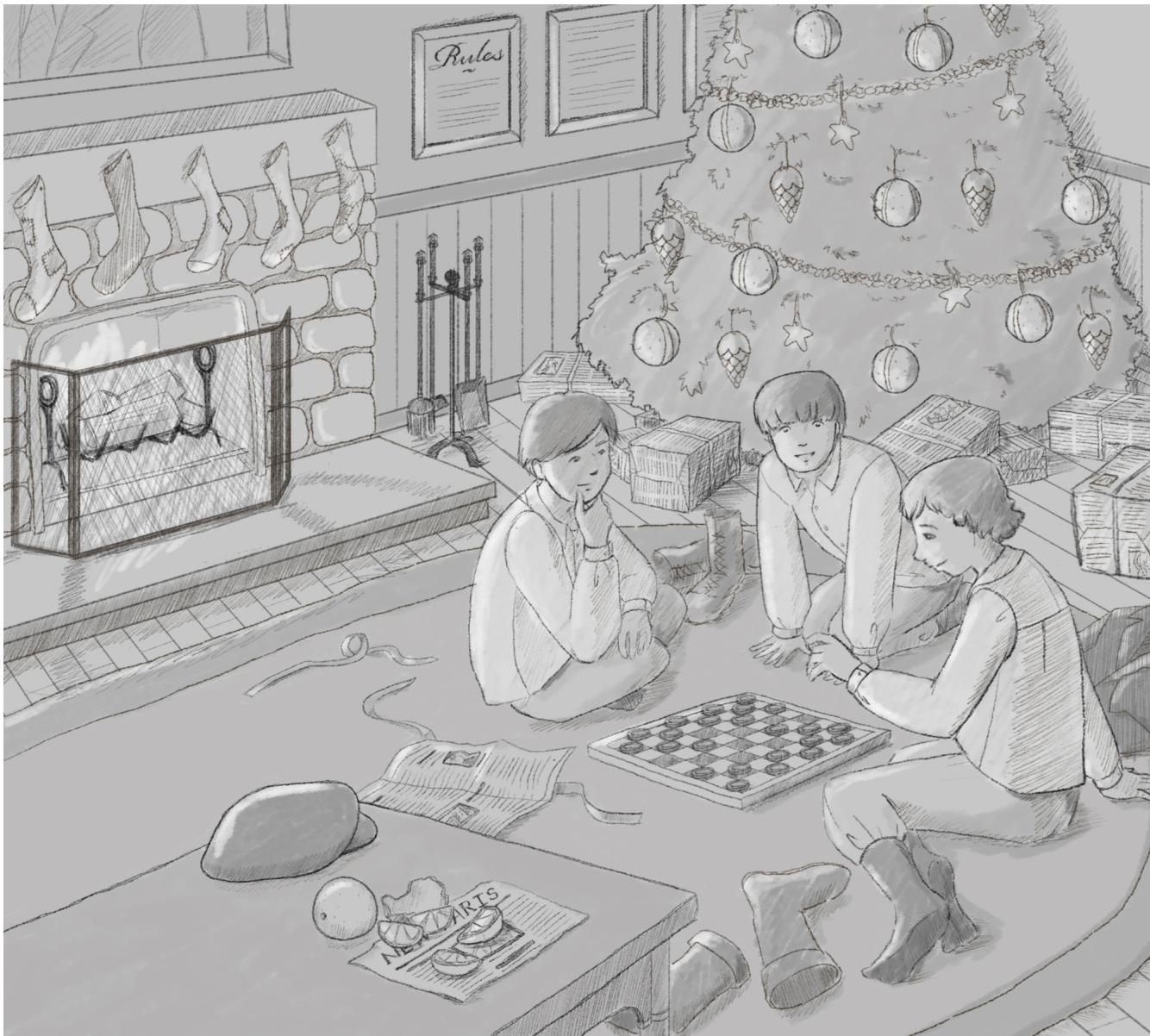
**Part II**

**The World**



## Chapter 10

# The Newsboy Lodge



## 10.1 Welcome to the Lodge.

Somewhere in the Inner Expanses, near Newspaper Row, you can find the Newsboy Lodge. That is where most newsies living on their own sleep, eat and even study. There are many reasons to go there, in a newsboy own words. . .

First it is cheap, because the New Paris Society for the Protection of Children pays most of its expenses. That people are a group of old kind ladies and a few young men with birds in their minds. But don't worry you'll want to see them often, anyway. Yeah, you still have to pay, but it's much cheaper than anywhere else, and you get a clean bed with that.

Second it has rules. Yeah rules, it means if somebody steals from you, or tries to be a bully or get nasty or whatever, he goes out, the wardens and the rest of us newsies will see to that. Sure, rules can get stupid at times, but it's better than waking up and see they snatched your boots.

Third, if you pay a bit more, you can have dinner and breakfast. Lunch? You care for that all by yourself. It wont taste like your mom's but it's OK. Well, you won't really know well how it tastes. After a honest day, you'll just gulp it down in you.

Fourth, there is a school. And you only have to attend if you want to. But it's better if you go because you get an education, can learn stuff and then get a job or a trade. But you'll have to bring your own pencils and stuff, but if you ask it nice, they'll borrow. And you have to pay for the teachers too.

Fifth, you get a locker, so you can keep your important stuff there. It ain't a warehouse, so be smart with what you keep. They'll also keep your money, but you don't want to put it in your locker, it's not like it's a safe, you know. You go, speak with the clerk and he'll note it down in a big black book and puts it in a safe or goes to the bank. Then when you want your money, you go to the office and ask, you'll have to sign a paper and that's all. The clerk does not make any questions, most times. Sixth, what better place to get along with many other newsies who can help you?

### Prices at the Newsboy Lodge per week

- ☛ Stay (Bed & Breakfast) D
- ☛ Stay (Full Board) C
- ☛ Dinner only D
- ☛ School D
- ☛ Locker E (free for residents)
- ☛ Money Deposit (free, residents only)
- ☛ Loans. New newsies can sleep and eat for their first week, and they will have up to 1 month to pay off their debt.

## 10.2 What's in the Lodge?

In most circumstances, there is not much detail to describe the Newsboy Lodge in details, as it is a place of rest and a meeting place, not much unlike an inn of the fantasy literature and games. The Game Master has full liberty to tailor the Lodge to the needs of the game. However, there are few guidelines that the author of this game considers reasonable to keep the flavour of the setting.

### 10.2.1 Minimum rooms.

At least every Newsboy Lodge should have.

**Dorms.** At least one room per gender stuffed with double beds and little privacy. Usually there would be no other furniture with the possible exception of some shared wardrobes or personal lockers.

**A kitchen.** Completely forbidden to the users, these should be a fairly large kitchen, with all the means to cater for all the residents and some others children -newsboys or not- who come to dine here. Breakfast is served to residents only. Lunch is provided only for the sick.

**A common room.** The common room can be large, encompassing a full level of the Lodge or a number of smaller common rooms divided by activities, gender or age, according to the need of the adventure the Game Master is forseeing<sup>1</sup>. In any case it should contain a library, some comfortable but old armchairs and sofas, a chimney, a pool and tables on which to play games or read.

**A dining room.** A large room, with tables, chairs and a few cabinets for the cutlery and saucers. It should be large enough to accomodate all the residents and a few more in no more than two shifts.

**Two bedrooms** for the wardens and one shared bedroom for the janitors and other live-in workers, separated by gender.

**An office** for administrative purposes. It should have a small safe where Newsboys can deposit their money and to pay for daily expenses; though in practice most of the money is placed in a common bank account.

**A school room** Equipped with furniture so the newsboys can keep their stuff.

**Bath and restroom.** At least one of each category.

**Infirmary.** With one bed for every twenty residents or so, plus a small room for the nurse in case she or he has to stay at night.

## 10.3 The Lodge Timetable

Again, a mere suggestion, I hope this timetable can be useful to Game-Masters.

Time	Weekdays	Sundays
4:00	Wake up and Hygiene	Bed Time
4:30	Breakfast	7:00 Wake up and Hygiene
6:30	Lodge Closed	8:00 Breakfast
13:00	Lodge Open - School	Lunch
16:00	School or A.L <sup>2</sup> .	Cleaning
17:00	School or Free time	Recreation
19:00	Dinner	Dinner
21:00	Lights out	Lights out

<sup>1</sup>Or his wishes

As you can see the residents wake up quite early, so they can be at the newspaper's doors. Most children eat their breakfast as fast as possible and run to ensure themselves the best selling spots. In any case, all healthy residents must leave the Lodge<sup>3</sup> by half past six, so the Lodge can be cleaned and the wardens can keep their administrative works. Children seeking admission can ask at any time, day or night, though.

At one o'clock the Lodge opens again, but only for those who are paying for the midday lesson, which is roughly the equivalent of first to second grade, more advanced lessons are at the evening. Both residents and non residents are welcome in the school, provided they pay their dues.

The Lodge is fully open again at four o'clock, with the residents being able to attend school or use the common room for recreation, socialization or even doing their homework; dorms are out-of-bounds until eight o'clock.

Right after dinner one of the wardens shares a daily tip, story or message, reminds the residents of some rules and gives Good Night.

On Sundays, the Lodge is never closed, and there's always some form of common recreation at five o'clock, which is usually some form of comic play and music.



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<sup>3</sup>The Lodge remains open under special circumstances like specially harsh weather.

# Chapter 11

## The Newsboy Code

Every human group has some rules which its members are supposed to follow. Newsies are more a class, or a group of reference more than a group of belonging. In other words, newsies do not consider each and every newsboy or newsgirl their family, but feel somehow linked to them. So, in truth there is no newsboy code; there are many small bands of newsies and each band has its own code. In most cases, but for a pack or two of newsgirls, the code is more assumed than written or even spoken. Rather than a law the code express what other newsies of your same pack are expecting from you, and what you can expect from them. Players are heartly welcome to draw their own Newsies code. However, speaking in general terms, most groups use a code similar to these Seven Rules.

### **1. You care for each other.**

That's the basic. If you don't care for us, why we should care for you? Can you live on your own? You don't need no help? You feel better if nobody is telling you anything? Then be with nobody and leave us alone. If you care for us, we'll care for you, get you to the doctor if you are sick, and buy you medicines if we can spare a day eating air. You know air is tasty when you are helping a friend. If you get in trouble, we'll sort it out. And you'll do the same for us.

### **2. You don't get anybody in trouble.**

Including yourself, but if a cops asks about somebody and he has not like killed somebody or stolen an old lady or bullied somebody smaller than him or did something nasty like that, you don't go telling. Nor you go and tell any lies about anybody, nor jokes, 'specially if he's being in the pens<sup>1</sup> before, cause somebody could hear and he'd be in trouble. And you too, we'll see to that.

### **3. You aint no slacker.**

We are all working hard to sell our papers. If you get lucky and sell yours soon, you help those who aren't so lucky, they will help you another day. If you are too good for us, then you can rather go and leave us alone. If you wake up too late, or just don't care about selling, or can live without butter, that's your choice, but we believe it's kinda tough being poor, and the sooner we get rich, all the better.

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<sup>1</sup>Reform School

#### **4. You aint no coward. And if you aint brave, you fake it.**

We don't mind about people peeing in their pants. Well, we'll, by Jingo, laugh at it, but we don't mean anything wrong, it's just too funny. But if you run away when the rest of us is like in big trouble, then you'd better not come back. We could forgive you if it's something very, very scary... or not.

#### **5. You care for toddlers and old people.**

If you see a small kid cryin' all alone and there's nobody around helpin', you go and fix it yourself. You don't want a wee one endind up like us, do you? Tell us, we'll all help find him his parents or find him a place so he doesn't has to sleep in the *pet*<sup>2</sup>; remember that? If you don't care about the kid, go to the next corner, turn west and keep walking 'till you get to California and then keep swimming until you see China.

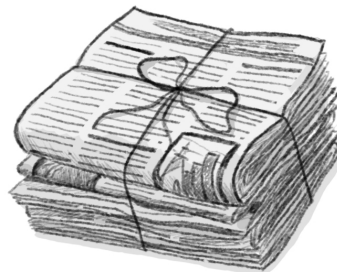
Don't make fun of old people, it aint no funny at all. If you are sitting in the *pet*<sup>3</sup> and an old lady comes in, you let her your seat.

#### **6. You keep yourself clean and tidy.**

How clean? Boy, you don't need to rub your pants with a cotton ball to show us, but, please, do not smell. Nor do something smelly, 'pecially not when you're with a client, you give us all a bad name. And I don't care if you called us girl or anything, we want no pigs around here.

#### **7. You don't do no crimes.**

So you don't steal, you don't shortchange<sup>4</sup> and you make no fuss. If you do, besides being mean and evil, you put the whole group in trouble, because you are giving us a bad name. We aren't telling the cops if you do things like taking an apple, but we will be mad with you if you go bullying, and if you keep doing things like that without good reason, we will send you away. And if you do something really wrong and mean, then we don't tell the cops, we will beat you up and take you to court ourselves.



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<sup>2</sup>An underground station.

<sup>3</sup>The New Paris Elevated Train Company or NPET

<sup>4</sup>Some groups don't mind a little shortchanging or even pickpocketing

## Chapter 12

# The World and New Paris City

### 12.1 Introduction.

The world of Newsies, a roleplaying game, is in much respects identical to that of real Earth on the turn of the XIX to the XXth centuries. The Game Master can start his game in any year from 1890 to 1910, though you don't need to bother with exact dates. There are some differences, the more obvious of it, the state and city of New Paris, located in the East Coast, somewhere south of New York and north of New Jersey. Of course that means that the geography of the American East Coast is slightly changed to make space for it. A second difference is that the American Civil War was more bloody than in history, which had a devastating impact in American political thought, that has led to the rise of two new parties: the Centralist who desire to put an end to the states and reinforce the powers of the President and the Utopists who are displacing the socialists as the leaders of a revolution; meanwhile the traditional Republican and Democrat parties hold the upper hand on the elections, though that could change at the first economic recession.

### 12.2 History

#### 12.2.1 In which year are we?

It's around 1900. We call the year in which the player-character begin their adventures as the first year. If the campaign continues long enough the following year would be called second, third, fourth and so on. However, the Game Master if he so chooses, can use any year from 1880 to 1914, just before the Great World War.

There is, I feel, no need to turn this game into a history book. These days the Internet is loaded with information and reference materials; a search for "Victorian", "Edwardian" or "Belle Epoque" should give you more than it's necessary to inspire any game.

#### 12.2.2 History as rumors.

I suggest to treat history as rumors. You may assume that any unchallenged, widely known fact of history is, for the purposes of this game, an A grade rumor. The more obscure, less likely and less known a fact of history is, the lower should be its grade.

**For example:** The name of the President of the United States of America at any given date should be an "A" grade rumor. The fact that Empress Sisi of Austria did love her husband the emperor could be treated as a "B" or "C" grade rumor. Which nation was

really the first to invent the submarine (or most inventions) could be treated as a “C” grade rumor, for these are widely debated issues. If the British used pork fat in their ammunition could be treated as an “D” grade rumor.

The fun is that any player can ask to challenge a fact of the history of the real world as if it were a rumor; but only the first time it’s introduced<sup>1</sup>.

### 12.3 The world at Large

This section is empty in the Friends Edition, because I know my friends are smart enough to know it all about the Edward Period :)



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<sup>1</sup>So if you have already determined that the Wright brothers did invent their planes, you cannot later challenge that fact in case you'd like your character to be the inventor.

# Chapter 13

## New Paris City

### Introduction.

New Paris is divided into six precincts: Royal Island, Harbor, Inner Expanses, Older Expanses, West Gate and Concordia. Not considered precincts for administrative purposes, but still distinctive enough to merit a section it's the Decree Slums.

### 13.1 Royal Island

Royal Island is in fact the peninsula where the French settlers landed in 1599. It was soon surrounded by English colonies, being ultimately captured in 1732 after months of siege by land and sea. Today, it is the most fashionable section of the city. Destroyed in the war of 1812, it was extensively rebuilt paying a close look to the most charming quarters its European namesake. Since then, it has attracted the wealthy, the powerful and the intellectual. Few newsboys are native of this area, yet more than you might think at first sight, for not a small number of maids and servants live in their masters homes, and not all the love stories between a lovely maid and a sparking young gentleman have a happy ending.

If there is a place in America where people are conscious of their class, that is Royal Island. Royal Island finds its southernmost limit in the St Louis Fort (4)<sup>1</sup>, a star shaped fortress



<sup>1</sup>Numbers in brackets refer to the map

built according to the specifications of the Marquis of Vauban, a renowned French Engineer, who being an orphan slowly raised to the ranks of the aristocracy. Though officially renamed twice as Fort St George and lately Fort Liberty, the people of New Paris still refer to it as either the St Louis or French Fort. Today it serves as the permanent Headquarters of the 5th Infantry Regiment. Its long, wide avenues with ample sidewalks, adorned by trees and Art-Nouveau and Neoclassic statues compete with the houses and public spaces in their display of beauty. Nothing that is dirty, blemished or plain is looked with favor in Royal Island.

The best architecture of the city is located around the Flower Square. There it lays the Grand New Paris Opera Palace (7), a modernist building decorated with motives of famous operas and classic plays. At its front, across the square, tens of students and the odd professor enter or leave the New Paris Centennial Library (8) host, behind its sturdy neoclassical walls, of thousand of volumes. The Hall of Conferences, found at the first floor of the Library, has become internationally famous. The likes of Hegel, Darwin, Feurbach, Maxwell and Carnagee have given vivid and hotly debated conferences. Such occasion congregate an audience open to the most expensive scientific and philosophical journals, and more than one poor lad of a quick mind have found a way to build up an education just by listening to its weekly sessions and contacts to promote his advancement in life. So, in many ways, the Centennial Library offers ways of advancement to those with an academical bent.

During the night, Royal Island keeps its life thanks to the many gaslight lanterns which escort its streets. The blessing is being received with increasing disgust by the most conservative, who for some reason object, to see a too cheerful youngster yelling the last opera with a voice too proud and not fully sober. Rumor (D) has it, that some of these youngsters have been kidnapped by the servants of some angry old gentleman with ample means and good contacts. On vacations, students from the nearby and prestigious University of Mount St. Michel are regular patrons, some say permanent residents of the most romantic cafés. There, listening to chamber music, whether in the Sitzimlebem (9) the Kaiser und Koëning, the Hope & Glory or the Mizpelt, they debate with furious passions the latest scientific theory, philosophical essay and the coming but always *not-yet* Utopist revolution. Meanwhile, some too conservative to be conservative students gather around a good cup of wine and the latest sensations on the piano in cafés like the New American, the Jingoist and the Tripoli. There a revolution for the disolution of the states and the building of a strong central government and an even stronger military are as often proposed as quickly turned down for another bottle. The Naiad café is almost never the home of the student, but rather the rally point of young women who consider themselves "the spear point of the Avant Garde", the revolutionary philosophers who are to change the world from a feminine point of view and place of being. They are often ridiculed for their radical ideas which include the strange notion that women are mature enough to vote without assistance or influence of their husbands.

The Famous Four of New Paris City is the informal name assigned to its most important hotels. First things first, it is quite hard to get an employment in these ones because they pay well. Half of the staff, of which there are several hotel boys and apprentices live and eat in the premises for a slightly smaller salary, with the remaining residing in the Inner Expanses or Concordia. However, its long hours of work and few free days, even in Christmas do not leave much time for adventuring. The Glory of the Nile, filled with orientalist painting and decor is looked with some contempt as being the place of choice for the new rich. But it sports its own theater, open to the general public, which offers a variety of Asian, Eastern European and Northern African music hardly found anywhere else around the nation. Contrary to the general belief spread by "My Love, My Light, My End" a romantic novel on the misadventures of a writer who commits suicide after finding that he loves two lovers with equal passion, and yet believes true love must be devoted to just one

woman, the Glory of the Nile does not admitt unmarried couples as clients. The New Paris Hotel, the oldest of the Famous Four, beats them all for their cooks and waiters, indeed it is not unheard to register as guests for the pleasure of dining its delicacies. The Palace of the Moon has a reputation for being a nest of foreign spies and plotting politicians, though it is probably false (Rumor D). A more sober guide should tell you that the Palace of the Moon tends to attract a rather excentric lot of guests and that its staff is the most helpful. Finally, Hotel Concordia offers a very conservative look, in its neoclassical building. For their business guests, the hotel has a team of secretaries and clerks in the premises, as well as meeting and office rooms.

### **Rumors:**

- ☛ Librettos can be sold for profit. (A)
- ☛ "In a few days the best scientist in the world is giving a conference in the Hall". (D)
- ☛ "A famous person is looking for a young boy who makes no questions and can guide him through the worst of New Paris City" (D)
- ☛ "Speaking about "My Love, My Light, My End" to the Glory of the Nile staff will make your stay much less pleasant. (C)
- ☛ The Palace of the Moon has a reputation for being a nest of foreign spies and plotting politicians, though it is probably false (Rumor D)

### **Petit Street**

**Location:** Royal Island, near the New Paris Library

**Description:** Informally known as Petit Street for ages, the name was officialy recognized only recently. Petit only sports six buildings on each side, each divided into small single room apartments. The rooms are furnished with provenzal style decoration,. However, as both kitchen and bathroom are shared, these apartments are favored only by those maids who don't live in their master's.

**Buisnesses:** There are only two buisnesses in Petit, the Petit Café a four tables Café and Tea House and Mrs Whitecotton Shop, a small general store specializing in housemaking supplies.

**Good Market:** The Dove, Poems

Rumors:

- ☛ (E) Bad behaved children who do something nasty in this street can wake up transformed into were-mice for one full day. (Source "The bully who woke up as a mouse", a children's story.

## **13.2 Old Harbor**

While geographically part of Royal Island the Harbour district is distintive enough to deserve its own section. Here the preoccupation for art and culture quickly gives way to mercantilism and industry. Besides the warves themselves and the warehouses, the most distintive building of Old Harbour it's the Wesson & Wesson General Store, located at the precinct line

between Old Harbour and Royal Island. Built in the guise of a German Tower, and considered by the most learned a "pastiche" of medieval and renaissance art, it still succeeds at attracting crowds from the whole of New Paris and beyond. Its nine levels are renown all around the nation for the superb quality, rich variety and heavy prices of the goods sold here. Nobody with C clothes or worse would be admitted as clients in this place, though it could be a source of employment for boys and girls of any age as shopping aides carrying the client's parcels or as apprentices in various roles; the company would provide for their uniform, though entry requires good contacts, except in times of heavy sales. Another place of note it's the Captain James K. Tiberius Sailor School which accepts students sent by the court on probation in exchange for a minor sentence, though most boys choose to enter on their own volition. While conditions are much less severe than those of a typical reform school and their students are free to roam the streets on weekends, boys placed by the court must remain there until the obtention of their Able Sailman certificate, a process which usually lasts at least three years. Boys graduated from this school have very good prospects at both the merchant and the US Navy.

#### Rumors:

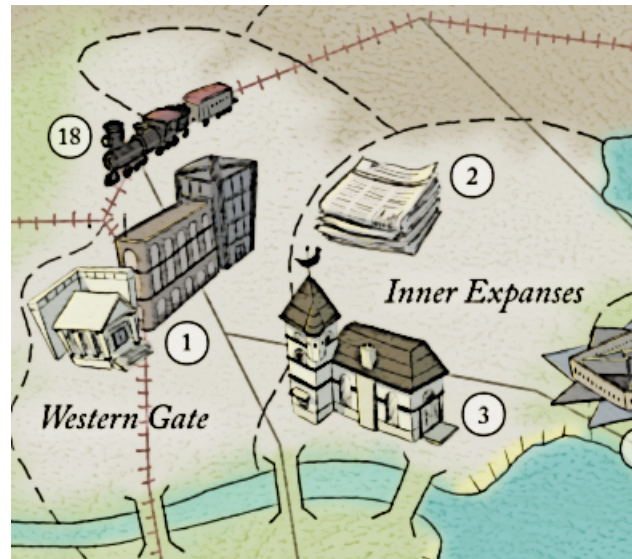
- ☛ The Flying Dutchman will *almost* dock here next Halloween (E)
- ☛ "I know somebody who knows an old sailor who knows about the hidden treasure of Blackbeard, the pirate" (D).

### 13.3 Inner Expanses

This area was the first area to be settled, right after Royal Island. It suffered much less in the war of 1812 becoming the fashionable part of the *antebellum* city. However, after the reconstruction of Royal Island, the Inner Expanses quickly became poorer and poorer. Today, the once proud homes of the wealthy have become tenant houses, each room housing an entire family of immigrants from all around Europe. Italian, German, Yiddish, Polish and French are among the many languages which compete here with English.

The proximity of Inner Expanses to Western Gate and Concordia, through the river Onhattan is bringing back some prosperity to the area, though in some cases that has forced some residents to move elsewhere as more modern buildings and new businesses open to replace their old homes. The most vibrant of these is *Newspaper Row* (2), an area of four streets boiling with the activity sprung by newspapers and publishing houses.

It is little wonder that New Paris Children's Aid society bought and rebuilt an abandoned mansion here to serve as the Newsboys' Lodge (3) as it came cheap and allows its *clients* easy access to the newspapers and many opportunities of advancement.



## 13.4 A bundle of Newspapers.

The most famous of the, quite literally, dozens of competing newspapers<sup>2</sup> scattered all over New Paris are:

### 13.4.1 The New Paris Dove

Founded in 1850, the New Paris Dove, produces a Basic English, illustrated, sixteen pages newspaper targeted to housewives and working women. Its stories have a feminine focus and a local feel; and that is supplemented with housekeeping, tips in the working place, beauty, and lately politics. The Dove is particularly vocal on the suffragette movement and supports women vote, which has branded it as “Irresponsible” in the eyes of the conservative.

Published daily, the New Paris Dove sells better in Concordia, then Royal Island, the Expanses and West Gaste.

**Prices:** 2 cent (unit) — \$1.50 bundle of 100

**Reliability:** B

**Quality:** C

### 13.4.2 The Hawk

The most conservative daily newspaper in New Paris, The Hawk, still officially operates from its offices in Royal Island, though most of the work is carried out in Newspaper’s Row. The Hawk has a strict policy for their newsboys, accepting only those who are *warranted* by other newsboys. Nobody wearing C grade or worse clothes needs apply.

The Hawk sells well only in West Gate and Royal Island, though, it’s possible to sell a few in Concordia.

**Prices:** 10 cent (unit) — \$4 bundle of 100<sup>3</sup>

**Reliability:** B

**Quality:** A

### 13.4.3 The Children’s Newspaper

Packed with comic strips, the Children’s Newspaper leaves a little room for simplified news, and tips about homework, good manners, religious practice, jobs and making friends. Published every Saturday. The Children’s Newspaper sells better in Concordia, then Royal Island<sup>4</sup>, then West Gate, being hard to sell anywhere else.

The Children’s Newspaper is owned by The Dove and it’s the most friendly to accept contributions from very young persons<sup>5</sup>, paying 60 cents for a 300 words unsolicited article of average quality.

**Prices:** 3 cents (unit) — \$2 bundle of 100

<sup>2</sup>Most of which close in a year, only to sea new ones to open.

<sup>3</sup>Many newsboys pool their money to buy a bundle.

<sup>4</sup>Rich fathers consider the comic strips a questionable influence for their children, though mothers tend to think the opposite.

<sup>5</sup>The Game Master could ask for an Achademics check, with a TN of 15 for the first trial, lower it to 13 on the second and successive trials. After the character has sold his first article, TN could be set at 11.

**Reliability:** A

**Quality:** B

#### 13.4.4 The New Paris Star

The New Paris Star is little more than a four pages newspaper packed with large titulars and dozens of minimalist articles written in very simple English and *Mr Oldstyle*, a daily comic strip poking fun at the expense of the Royal Island gentry.

Newsies that sell the Star are nicknamed “inkpots”, as the Star’s ink takes an hour to dry, staining the hands and clothes of their young sellers.

The Star sells well in both Expanses and the poorest areas in Concordia.

**Prices:** 1 cents (unit) — 0.50 bundle of 100

**Reliability:** C

**Quality:** D

#### 13.4.5 The Lighthouse.

A daily evening news publication, the Lighthouse’s bundles are available for distributors at four o’clock. The Lighthouse tries to attract its clients through well written and researched news articles and practical information about small business management.

The Lighthouse sells well in West Gate and Concordia, but it’s hard to market anywhere else.

**Prices:** 2 cents (unit) — 0.80 bundle of 100

**Reliability:** A

**Quality:** C

#### 13.4.6 The Prometheus Herald.

The Prometheus Herald is the voice of the Utopist Movement, a largely disorganized mass of young radicals with little in common but their desire of constitutional reforms and the wealth of their parents. The Prometheus Herald regularly features a column for translated articles from the most extremist philosophers in Europe and elsewhere.

Like The Hawk, The Prometheus Herald has a strict policy for their newsboys, accepting only those who are *warranted* by other newsboys. Nobody wearing C grade or worse clothes need to apply.

The Prometheus Herald has a relatively small but fanatically loyal following in Royal Island and Cadened in Concordia, being hard to sell anywhere else.

**Prices:** 8 cents (unit) — \$3.50 bundle of 100<sup>6</sup>

**Reliability:** C

**Quality:** A

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<sup>6</sup>Many newsboys pool their money to buy a bundle.

**Rumors:**

- ☛ Newsies selling the Prometheus Herald have been arrested on occasion for no good reason, with their bundles confiscated. (C)
- ☛ Mr Hawk, controls both The Prometheus Herald and The Hawk, and hires the same journalists for both newspapers. (C).

## 13.5 West Gate

### 13.5.1 Introduction

West Gate means business, big business. Here it's where you see the first skyscrapers, second only to New York. This is where you can see armies of clerks heading every morning to their jobs and back home. It's a great market for both newsies and blackboots early in the morning, and food vendors. West Gate features its Stock Exchange(1), the most important financial institution in the Western Hemisphere, if not of the world. Only a selected few of the newsies can sell their papers there, but those who get inside, would be able, not only to sell a few bundles daily, but, with persistent effort, great charm and a happy day or two, to make great business contacts. A whole campaign could be devoted to this endeavour.

### 13.5.2 The Plus Ultra Park

*Plus Ultra*<sup>7</sup> Park is the most modern park of New Paris built to commemorate the exploration and colonization of the American continent. As such, it is widely used for patriotic events and it's the place where the Newsboy Lodge holds its annual Newsboy Singing contest in Thanksgiving.

Besides an open air auditorium and a series of small neo-classic temples to the explorers of America and famous Native nations, the park features four gardens displaying the flora of the United States, Mexico, South America and Europe.

**Rumors:**

- ☛ George "Owl" Henson, a lawyer, is looking for a new errand boy and apprentice, to live-in at the office. It must be well mannered, schooled, honest, discreet and hard worker. (C)
- ☛ The foundations of the Stock Market building are weak and could fall overnight (D)

## 13.6 Outer Expanses



<sup>7</sup>Beyond

The Outer Expanses is the main industrial area of New Paris, concentrating the vast majority of factories and other industrial facilities which deal mainly with manufactured goods. It also includes the New Harbour where most of the trade arrives to New Paris as the old harbour in Royal Island has become increasingly inadequate.

Children are a substantial part of the work force. The hours are long, the pay is short and conditions can be dangerous, prompting not a few number of children workers to seek self-employment as newsies or in other trades. Many of the workers come from Inner Expanses and the Decree Slums with a few from Concordia, though these tend to occupy the highest ranking positions.

### 13.6.1 The Hook

The Outer Expanses Industrialists saw an opportunity for profit housing their own workers, and so the neighbourhood known as “The Hook” was born. The area is a closely packed group of high buildings filled with small appartments just north of New Harbour Station bursting with immigrant families from Italy, Ireland and Poland.

The vast majority of the residents are working for the corporation which owns their homes, a circumstance which places them in a weak position when it comes to the bargaining table.

### 13.6.2 The Farwells



The Farwell family operate a small ketch which serves both as home and business. The Farwells deal in books, tools, spice, exotic dried fruits, teas, novelties and other speciality wares brought according to demand and their own fancy from Europe, Africa, China and the islands of the Southern Seas, where they spend the winters.

Their colorful ketch the “Fair Moonlight” anchors around Warren Island from two to three weeks, according to need and business every year, usually around April

#### Members of the Crew

- ☛ Family members: Arthur 35 y/o, Elizabeth 34 y/o, Peter 16 y/o, Susan 14 y/o, Perceval 12 y/o, Harry 11 y/o, Lucy 9 y/o, Pip 8 y/o and “Saddy” a golden retriever.

- ☛ Hired: Usually one or two seamen, or even a few apprentices.

### Rumors

- ☛ The Farwells will hire up to twelve newsies to market their wares as they arrive to New Paris (B)
- ☛ The Farwells could hire up to 7 boys or girls of good disposition for their next round-the-globe, year round journey (C).
- ☛ The Farwells are, in fact, a family of immortals, wizards or something like that. (E)
- ☛ The Farwells often sail into worlds that are beyond the veil of dreams. (E)

### 13.6.3 The Altberg Bank

Description: The Altberg bank is one of the many small banks of New Paris. It's among those that accept to open a saving account to any newsboy, no matter how young the chap. Though, it demands a minimum first deposit of \$5; failing this a newsboy's best option is to deposit at the Newsboy Lodge.

Location: The main office is in Newspaper Row, it has branches in Royal Island, Concordia and Outer Expanses

Quality of its services: B.

Rumors:

- ☛ There's an open position for an errand boy (B Clothes or better only) (D)
- ☛ The Altberb Bank is about to go bankrupt. (E)
- ☛ The vaults of the Altberg Bank hold something uncanny (E).

## 13.7 Concordia

Concordia is the most modern, middle class and liberal precinct of New Paris. Its residents see it as an assortment of four main areas, each on with its distinctive flavor. North to south, these are: the Beach, Cadened, L'Orient and Point South. The beach itself actually extends into the Old Expanses, yet when New Parisians think on "the Beach" they usually meant its surrounding area in Concordia. The place differs not much from Cadened for most of the year, except for the smaller number of children who live here and its reputation for being a dull place where nothing ever happens. However, as the summer sun heats New Paris, and the beach is flooded with families searching for some respite, scores of business, seem to sprout from every where like spring poppies.



### 13.7.1 Cadened

This is a mainly residential area which is also the favorite of the poor students and artists for it has its share of alternative (read cheap) cafes and the occasional charming park. The whole place has the feel of a village that got somehow surrounded by the city. Inhabitants of Royal Island consider Cadened little more than a bad imitation of their own *quartier*. However, it is a pleasant place to live, filled with nice, charming hard-working people who earn their living in small workshops instead of factories and almost devoid of serious crime. This is the place where a young Cecil Fauntleroy might have lived.

#### Miss Doherty's School for Orphan Girls.

This school is, in fact, a cute small home for twelve children of up to 13 years of age. Miss Doherty, died ten years ago, out of old age, and today two of "her girls" run the home. Anne, 14, the youngest of the two, chose to remain there, caring for the "wee-ones", earning some money as she finishes her education at the Sangers Secretaries and Administrative Studies Academy, not far from the school. Sylvia of 25 years of age keeps the paperwork and supervises the older girls. Tuition is given by volunteer teachers sent by the New Paris Society for the Protection of the Children. The place has three bedrooms for the girls, split into age groups, and three more for the resident workers, one of which, Miss Doherty's room is kept unused but clean, just as she left it at her death. Though most of the girls growing up here end earning scholarships for further education and / or typically searching jobs as teachers or in clerical positions, it is possible that one or two, more prone to adventure than studies decide to sell papers instead, perhaps with the hope of beginning her own enterprises one day.

#### Doctor Doiknow's Spiritual Cabinet.

The most curious building in the whole Cadened area is Dr Doiknow's Spiritual Cabinet (12). The place is, according to the doctor's advertising a *place of spiritual healing and communication with the never departed*. Clients are led to a small, dimly light, red

room with a mahogany table on its center, where Dr Doiknow or some of his hired mediums *consult the spiritual lights* and *serve as passages to the Spiritual Grand Parallel Plane*<sup>8</sup>. The gaudi outlook of its external walls and whimsical gargolies, the smell of incense and the sound of a distant piano only help to make the experience much more credible.

Dr. Doiknows always closes on Halloween, a time when his neighbours often see – or imagine – strange beings through the windows or around the home.

### 13.7.2 The Beach

At the rise of the sun, with the first low tide of the day, a small group of women and children search for sea-food on the sands of New Paris beach, braving the chilly waters of the Atlantic in their bare feet. The rest of the day, the whole place is almost deserted.

During the summer, however, the landscape changes radically as those who can afford a break from their work laze on the sand. It makes a great opportunity for selling newspapers, sweets and refreshments, yet the enterprising newsboy should be wary of the pickpockets, especially if he's tempted to have fun by the sea.

Older newsboys who are good at swimming might be hired as lifeguards for the Summer Season.

### 13.7.3 L'Orient

Located between Cadened and Point South, L'Orient was born when affluent settlers from elsewhere in the United States and Europe did not find a warm reception in the then more fashionable Inner Expanses. L'Orient is now famous for its shops, attracting clients from all over the state of New Paris. The *higher classes* of Royal Island would never be seeing shopping here, preferring the more luxurious shops of their own *quartier*, but are not above sending their maids in the search of some unbelievable sale.

L'Orient sports a zoo, which is little else but a glorified park filled with rows of small cells for animals, including an old mountain lion. The aligators pond was recently transformed into a fish pond since a strange incident took place two years ago.

The Shiloh Children's Hospital (13) is a charitable institution which provides cheap care for sick or injured children up to the age of fifteen. No child is ever denied treatment for lack of money, though money helps with some extras as not having to share the room — or the bed.

### 13.7.4 Point South

Point South is an experiment in human habitation created by the so-called father of the Utopist movement, Mr Prometheus Goodwill. He took inspiration on the spider's web for the disposition of the streets, and beehives for the homes. The resulting are is a whimsical neighbourhood of twisted streets and hexagonal-shaped two bedroom apartment buildings which failed to attract the intellectual elite, the *new cabin philosopher class*, with which Mr Goodwill dreamed.

#### Mr Prometheus Goodwill home.

Mr Goodwill home is a radical construction shaped in the guise of an Egyptian temple surrounded by a large and wild garden in the very center of Point South. Vacant since Mr Goodwill's death, the deserted house strangely seems in pristine conditions.

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<sup>8</sup>It's up to the Game Master to determine if it all a fraud, there's some truth to it or that even, in spite of the fraud, a ghost can decide to act on its own.

**Effesians Church.**

This church was built right before Mr Goodwill's death, and has become the most vibrant protestant congregation in New Paris. It is rumored (D), that the construction of this church was what killed Mr Goodwill, a noted free-thinker.

**Rumors**

- ☛ An Egyptian pagan priests lives in Point South and he or she has strange powers to bless and curse. (D)
- ☛ An outcast member or members of a small Royal Family lives secretly in Cadened (D)
- ☛ There is at least one ghost child haunting the Shiloh's Hospital. They can be seeing praying or mourning when some doctor or nurse makes a mistake. (E)
- ☛ The cocrodiles from L'Orient Zoo escaped and live today in the sewers (D)
- ☛ A man sized spider lives in the sewers under Point South. The critter is poisonous and is smart enough to open a manhole in the night as it waits for rats, a stray cat or some other unsuspecting victim. (E)
- ☛ If a kid gets lost somewhere in New Paris, he could wake up in a cell in Point South, head shaved, dressed only in a long white shirt, his hands tatoood with strange Egyptian/Sumerian/Pagan symbols. (D)

## 13.8 Decree Slums

Nicknamed the den of perdition, this is the place where you end up when you have run out of choices. Though the slums are a city on itself and some areas are more akin to the Hook, in most cases row after row of decrepit houses and one family to a room apartments fill its streets. Like the Inner Expanses it used to be a rather wealthy neighborhood, yet after a sudden epidemy in 1890, its residents fled the place, which was later colonized by the desperate. As a result it is a maze of narrow streets, at times not much wider than a man, underground passages, covered bridges and secret cellars. Many among the newsies are born here, though it is not a good place to sell papers as your clients are as likely to steal as to buy. In fact, rampant violence is one of the very reasons many boys decide to try their luck anywhere else. The Constabulary force has largely left the Decree Slums to its own residents and only when pressured by the public attempt some show raid that usually ends up arresting the unlucky got in their way.

The reputation of the Decree Slums is so strong, newsies from this area tend to keep their origins to themselves; they know the general public will see them as pickpockets and ruffians, and it's tough to sell newspapers that way.

People from the Decree Slums place a very high value on their burial, saving every bit to assure a "respectable tombstone"; most newsies from this area follow this custom.

### Rumors

- ☛ The slums are built on an ancient burial ground (B)
- ☛ The residents can resort to lynching (C)
- ☛ There are several pickpockets and beggars hideouts led by adult fagins (A) .
- ☛ If you dig deep enough or have maps, you'll be able to find treasure (D)
- ☛ A few residents have coffins filled with gold and stolen valuables. (D)



## 13.9 Everything else

### 13.9.1 The sewers and the underground.

Under the ground of New Paris there is a world of which most of its residents are unaware. This is the kindom of the rumors, criminal conspiracies and strange stories. What we know as certain, however, is that the entrance to the sewers are locked, but that its locks are easy to pick, and often the sewers workers leave them unlocked on purpose or by mistake. Prior to the construction of the Newsboy Lodge, it was not uncommon to see children taking refuge inside the sewers system. Today it is rare, though it is believed to still happen. The typical New Paris sewer can be described as a canal of unsavory water, surrounded by two humid, slippery walkways, sometimes connected by a filthy iron bridge.

### The Flea Treasure

Location: Somewhere in the sewers.

Description: The Flea was a famous thief and poisoner of the mid XIX century who was hanged for his crimes without ever revealing his treasure. His mother died exactly one year afterwards, a letter signed by "The Flea" was found half burnt near the stove, telling about the treasures. Unfortunately most details were lost and all attempts to recover it have found nothing but failure.

Rumors:

- ☛ The cache includes a fine selection of poisons (B).
- ☛ One of his potions will stop aging (including growing up) for 1d6 years (E).
- ☛ An undead of some sort guards the treasure (E).

Note: The Game Master can treat the whole thing as a C grade rumor.

### Rumors:

- ☛ There are secret doors in the sewers that lead to underground cells, where the criminals of New Paris keep their kidnapped victims. (D)
- ☛ An aligator, escaped from the Zoo, made his way into the sewers and lives here, preying on rats and the occasional too curious kid. (E)
- ☛ A pack of seven newsboys play here on the tunnels a strange game about dungeons and goblins and things like that, dressed up as knights and wizards. They obey some strange leader who calls himself Game Master (D).

### 13.9.2 The New Paris Elevated Train Company.

That's its official name, but most newparisians, and every newsboy, calls it the NPET or even the Pet. As in "I'm taking the Pet to the school", when they mean the urban rail. There are only two circular lines: Clockwise and Counterclockwise or just Clock and Counter in the New Paris slang. Both lines are mostly underground today, though a few elevated sections remain.

Clients access the trains through mechanical gates that must be fed with coinlike tokens (Price \$0.10 E). It is possible to sneak under these, and fool the NPET workers, but if caught it would be considered a D class crime<sup>9</sup>, so it isn't probably worth it. In winter nights, homeless adults (and children who distrust the Lodge), hide and sleep in the underground stations and tunnels until the NPET workers or cops make them go. Though it's technically a D class crimes, charges are rarely pressed, but the station workers have been forcedly evicted those on occasion.



<sup>9</sup>See section 14.1 on the next page

## Chapter 14

# Crimes, justice and punishment.

### 14.1 Crimes

I do not expect any hero to commit a crime. Yet it is not impossible for them to go falsely accused, in most games this chapter will never be implemented, so feel free to skim through it, paying attention to E crimes, you never know when you get overboard in a prank. While New Paris Criminal Law is as complex as any of the other states, newsies simplifies the crimes in the usual 5 grades, from A to E. Each grade has a corresponding level of sentence.

**E crimes** are only misdemeanours from which you could even get away with, even if caught, with only a talk from the cop<sup>1</sup> or mending the mess you did. E crimes include too strong words in a polite setting, spitting, breaking a window while playing baseball, shortchanging, playing too rough and that kind of stuff. However, don't go happy committing E crimes, you'll lose friends fast, people would end up thinking you are better to be left alone, and the cops could get angry enough to judge you as if you have committed a D crime. The beat cop "judges" E crimes on the spot, there's no procedure for trial, just make sure you answer his questions.

**D crimes** are those which are both petty and nonviolent. Examples include shoplifting, pickpocketing, minor scams and insulting an agent of law, which does include cops. A newsboy under arrest would be escorted, most often unshackled, to the Precinct Constabulary House Jail. After a summary trial, the culprit can be condemned to a small fine up to \$5, 1 to 15 days in jail or up to 30 days of "Reformation Work", which usually means cleaning the sewers or some other dirty job but the Game Master could get creative. Offenders can be sent to a Reform School for an indefinite, often short, period of time.

**C Crimes** are those which are either petty and violent, or non violent but not so petty. In most cases, a boy condemned for such a crime would be sent to a reform school from at least one full season up to four years. Though exceptional behaviour during the program the Sentence can be shortened and the Newsie put on parole after serving at least the first fourth of the sentence. Less serious sentence could receive a heavy fine of at least \$5 and up to \$100 and / or up to 30 days in Jail.

B and A grade crimes are actions that demand a serious response by the authorities with the culprit spending many long years in prison or worse. However, it is highly against the spirit of the game for a player character to commit those actions.

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<sup>1</sup>You lose 1 Chit for the stress

## 14.2 Police Forces

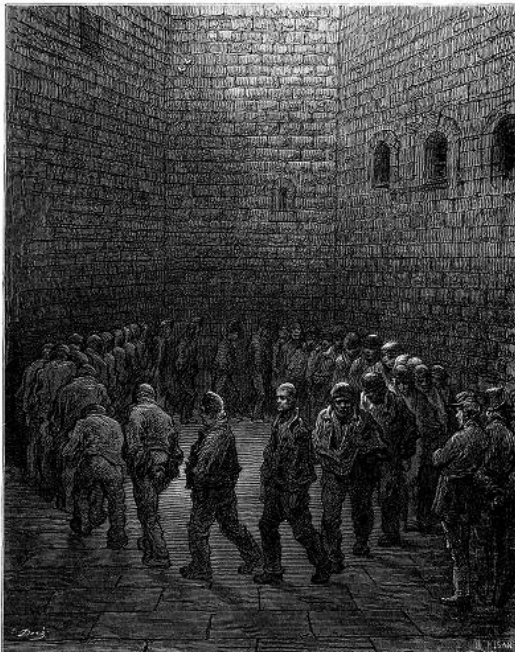
The New Paris City counts with two major arms of defense against crime and misdemeanour. First is the New Paris Constabulary, a professional police force that is largely visible in Royal Island, both harbors, West Gate and Concordia and almost completely absent from Decree and sparse in Outer and Inner Expanses. Its methods are primitive at best, with only a small number of detectives trained in methods of investigation. These are only available for the most important crimes. However, the vast majority of the Constabulary Officers are honest and fair enough to recognize when they are making a mistake.

Each of the precincts counts with a major Constabulary House complete with sleeping facilities for the officers, jails and a small Hearing Room for the speedy trials of minor crimes.<sup>2</sup>

The second arm of New Paris' Law and Order is the Night Watch, a volunteer police force, largely present in the Expanses and Concordia. Its members are mostly volunteers, some of which are retirees from the Constabulary or the army. Their members can legally arrest but only as an immediate measure, taking the suspect right away to the Constabulary or a local court. The Night Watchers are much more likely to use their guns in a stressful situation, but again most of them are honest and upright citizens trying to do a job for which they are not always completely qualified or fit.

## 14.3 Punishment

### 14.3.1 The Reform Schools



New Paris main response to juvenile crime, the Reform Schools, combine strict discipline, humiliation, token schooling and long hours of labour to try to turn *delinquent, vagrants, beggars, ruffians and pickpockets into honest citizens*. Recreation is limited to one hour on work days and the evening of the Sundays and often limited to a bare playground surrounded by high walls and armed guards. Material conditions, however, are generally acceptable, as the Reform School themselves are not older than ten years old.

Children convicted for C grade crimes are eligible for parole on the last day of each month. Children convicted for D grade crimes can be freed at any time by the Reform School Principal.

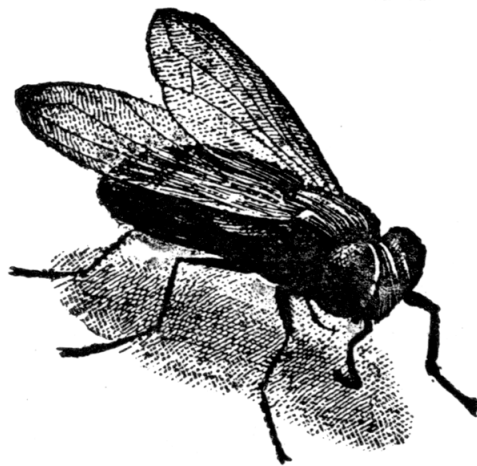
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<sup>2</sup>(D or rarely E grade crimes)

### 14.3.2 Alternatives

First offenders of C or D crimes who aren't considered hardened enough can be placed under the authority of a guardian, which usually ends up meaning some form of indentured servitude. Exceptions include Professor Regenstein, a soft-hearted and wealthy philosopher, and Rachel Borowitz a mystery writer and, some say<sup>3</sup>, supernatural detective.

This placements last for one season, though in a few cases it can turn into fostering.



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<sup>3</sup>Rumor D

**Part III**

**The Adventures**

# Chapter 15

## A little Structure

### 15.1 Introduction

Adventures are the heart of every roleplaying game. Perhaps one of role-playing many virtues is that you can play virtually any adventure you can dream of. With a little ingenuity and some effort you could adapt the rules to your own liking and setting. Designing your own adventures it's even easier. It may seem daunting to the novice Game Master, but once you design two or three you will agree the only thing you really needed was confidence. So I could have left Newsies with no adventures at all, in the trust the gamer would figure out by himself what to do; just as I learned by myself long ago. However, I also know we are often starved for time, and that stress and responsibilities affect our creativity. So from its very inception, I designed Newsies with the idea that it would be a complete game, without a strict need to add any expansion. So in the end I decided to go for a compromise, using a technique I first encountered on the pages of the sadly gone Spanish roleplaying magazine *Lider* and that many fine games, like Prince Valiant, Twilight 2000 or Time Lords have used too: what I'm calling the summary adventure.

Instead of page after page of prose you get a few paragraphs with the essential information you strictly need to run the adventure, but not more. I know that once the foundations of an adventure has been established is easy to fill up the other details even during the game and that, no doubt, it's much easier to adapt to the player-characters that the players have actually create.

For the sake of being a little sistematic, and to help the novice Game Master, I've set up an Adventure Structure, that I will explain below. You are, of course, not required to follow this structure when you design your own adventures, but it is important you understand it if you want to use the sample adventure included in this book at all. More adventures will appear on the game webpage at <http://www.newsiesandpickpockets.com> .

### 15.2 Adventure Structure

1. "Extra, Extra, read all about it!": Abstract. This is a narrative summary or hook of the adventure
2. "Start here": Intial situation, explaining what the players are doing when the game begins. It could be pretty well an action scene.
3. "Friends, Foes and innocent bystanders": A detailed list of Non Player Characters, with the needed stats; it could include notes about the player characters too if, for example, it's important for the story that all are able to swim.

4. "All you want is...": Goal or goals of the adventure.
5. "First Act" The first act introduces the characters and the conflict. Often an Act will have two or more alternative exits leading to some other Acts. Obviously a Summary Adventure cannot cover all possible combinations and situations that
6. "Second Act" The second acts deals with the efforts of the player characters and their opponents to solve the conflict.
7. "Third Act" (And fourth, fifth, etc). The third act deals with the resolution of the conflict itself, and what surprises could be in store. Most adventures should last for three acts only.
8. "It all turned out to" In this section the author of the adventure should detail the possible rewards for the players if they "win" the adventure and the sad consequences of defeat. This should include things like money, equipment, Chits gained, contacts made and skills gained, if any.
9. "Rumors" This section adds rumors and possibly variants that you could include in the adventure, either to spice it or increasing its difficulty if you discover the players are having too easy a time. Of course with increased difficulty comes an increased reward and the number of Chits gained could possible change according to the variants you use. It goes without saying that you can design your own variants to the adventure.
10. "Bits and notes" This section is optional, use it for anything that doesn't fit anywhere else like optional rules or special equipment -like a pair of steampunk night vision goggles- .



# Chapter 16

## The Hidden Prince

### Extra, Extra, read all about it!

After a terrible long adventure, fatty Prince Albert of Borgonnia<sup>1</sup>, escaping from the Prussian plot which doomed his family and a friend unfortunate enough to look almost like him, has arrived as a stowaway to New Paris.

### "Friends, Foes and innocent bystanders"

#### Prince Albert

♥ Age 12 Birthday Winter

♥ STR 3 wd    HTH 3 wd    AGI 3 wd    EDU 2 wd, 2 d    E&E 3 wd    CHA 2 wd

♥ Pace 4 Chits<sup>2</sup> 8

♥ Good At: Stealth, Academics, Fisticuffs, Riding Bycicles, Languages, Observation

♥ Bad At: Theater, Running, Pickpockets, Athletics, Crafts, Locks

♥ Stuff: Clothes Grade D                  Golden Griffin                  50 cents in Borgonnian money

Prince Albert, the youngest child of the Borgonnia Royal Family was destined to inherit a castle and, as many princes of their time, become a general of the Borgonnian Army. A Prussian plot changed all this when, while he was playing hide and seek on the Royal Residence gardens, his whole family was killed before his very eyes, along with Pierre his best friend and many other nobles of every age and gender. Not knowing what to do, he diaspeared into the forests that surround the palace and drifted away until he was able to board a french ship in Caen that he believed destined to England, Borgonnia's best ally.

In the confusion, the plotters did not discover the boy's survival until three days later, and since then they have done all that is possible to cover the fact and kill him secretly. Meanwhile they are acting high and low in the Borgonnia House of Commons to nominate a Prussian noble as the next King of Borgonnia. Several *anarchist terrorists* have already been arrested by the Prussian Criminal Police. The Prussian authorities will, as a matter of course, deliver the poor scapegoats to the Borgonnian authorities for trial. Of course, the unfortunates will die on transit, while *trying to escape*, one week after the beginning of this adventure.

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<sup>1</sup>Located between France and Germany

<sup>2</sup>If used as a player-character.

Albert was found by one of the ship's mates on his second day, and since then has been put to hard work as a cabin boy and then made to land in the first port of call, New Paris.

When the story begins Albert wears the rags of what used to be one of his many light summer outfits and looks just slightly overweight, after weeks of adventures and privations. He is also, confused and doesn't know who to trust. His only remaining possession of value is the medalion of the Order of the Golden Griffin of which he's a member by birth.

Prince Arthur is not used to dealing with low-class children -except a few palace pages- and will act defensively. He is used at restraining his emotions, masking them under a sad smile if he finds himself in trouble. Unfortunately for him, his English is both extremely formal and plagued with grammatical mistakes.

Prince Albert should *usually* be a non player character, yet an enterprising Game Master might offer it to a veteran role-player.

### Hans Dasistnorm

♥ Age 32

♥ STR 5 d          HTH 4 d          AGI 3 d          EDU 3 d          E&E 3 wd          CHA 3 wd

♥ Pace 5

♥ Good At: Stealth, Athletics, Fisticuffs, Shooting, Languages, Observation, Pickpockets, Locks, Vehicles.

♥ Bad At: Swimming, Theater, Sweet Tongue.

♥ Stuff:

- Always carried: Clothes Grade B. Revolver with ammunition. Derringer with two bullets.
- At the Prussian consulate in Royal Island: Blowpipe, blue poison, red poison.

Hans is a Prussian agent encharged with the mission of discreetly eliminating the threat that Prince Albert means to Prussia's prestige and the eventuality of a war with the British Empire. He is ruthless, methodic and efficient, but feels at lost in America. He is, of course, able to speak English, yet with a marked German accent. Hans is just one of the many other Prussian agents activated by Prussian embassies around the world, so he's not particularly hopeful of finding the prince, still duty demands his best effort. Han will not use his weapons, except as noted in the text or he seriously fears for his life.

### Start here

#### Exterior. A Street in Point South. 7:30 AM. Date: the day before Halloween.

Allow the player-characters to buy one newspaper bundle of their choice and means<sup>3</sup>, and start the adventure gathered in some street of Point South<sup>4</sup>, from where they plan to disperse. As they are about to say goodbye to each other, Hans, will enter the street with a black and white photograph of Prince Albert in his tennis outfit. To the player-characters he will look just like another fatty rich kid, the only hint at his royal status being a small crown stitched on the breast of his shirt. Hans will tell the children that Albert has fits of madness in which he believes himself to be some tragic character, like a prince of Denmark or a Duke of wherever. His worried family are rich French winemakers who have hired him

<sup>3</sup>See section 13.4 on page 88

<sup>4</sup>See section 13.7.4 on page 94

as a Private Investigator. Then, he will offer the newsboys the handsome quantity of \$50 if they discreetly deliver the boy to him or to the Prussian consulate in Cadened, Concordia – he'll explain he has friends there. Before waving the player-characters goodbye, Hans will share how sad Albert's mother is, "*the boy might be a little crranky in his head, but she still loves him*<sup>5</sup>".

Hans will refuse to hand them the photograph, nor he will advance any money for expenses.

### **First Act.**

Inform the players that they can sell<sup>6</sup> their newspapers normally and still keep an eye for Arthur. They have made quite an investment of their starting money, so they will probably be quite concerned for the success of their business.

After two hours of selling, they will see a group of six<sup>7</sup> to eight bullies<sup>8</sup> running after Arthur. The poor boy, still a bit overweight and not used to running, will trip over a basket of fruit that lay by a grocer's window and fall, belly first on a wagon load of tomatoes. The bullies will proceed to attack Arthur and rob him of his remaining valuables. In 1 sd turns, the shop keeper<sup>9</sup> will appear armed with a broom<sup>10</sup>; in 2 sd turns, two members of the Constabulary will arrive. The shop-keeper will attack any child in sight, treating all as trouble-makers; the Constabulary will act with much more sense.

Should the player character intervene, the bullies will fight them until defeated or the arrival of the constabularies. The bullies will make their best attempt to take all valuables from player-character, including shoes and coats, but not any newspaper.

After the fight is over, the player-character may want to earn the trust of Arthur. The boy, however, will claim to be an orphan from Caen, France, who has just arrived at New Paris from France. He will stick to his story because he does not expect anybody to believe the truth. Under no circumstance he will go to the Prussian consulate, but might agree to join the player-character group selling newspapers and seeking admittance in the Newsboy Lodge. The Game Master might hint the players that it can take several days to break the *shields* of a stray child, especially of one who has just been on a fight.

Assuming that the player-characters earn Arthur's confidence, let them finish selling their newspapers, and then spend the rest of the day as they see fit: trying to earn some extra money, having fun or exploring the city, with as much or little detail as the Game Master wants. It can go from telling "and you spend together the rest of the day" to a full adventure on its own.

### **Notes**

- ☛ The bullies don't know anything about Arthur, they just saw him as an easy target.
- ☛ If the player-character intervene it would be much easier for them to earn the trust of Arthur.
- ☛ Don't roll dice to determine if the player-characters win Arthur's trust or not; let them role-play it.

<sup>5</sup>The Game-Master may secretly check Hans theater skill against a Target Number of 11, on a failure, he should tell the players that Hans does not seem completely sincere, that perhaps he's only concerned about the reward.

<sup>6</sup>See selling rules on section 9.3 on page 73

<sup>7</sup>Adjust according to the size, equipment and abilities of the player-characters.

<sup>8</sup>See Appendix A on page 110

<sup>9</sup>Treat him as an "Average Adult", see Appendix A on page 110

<sup>10</sup>Treat as a stick

## Second Act

### Exterior. Newspaper Row. Dawn. Date: Halloween.

Right after their pumpkin soup breakfast, the player-characters have arrived to Newspaper Row, as everyday to buy their bundles. While waiting on the line, for the warehouse to open, Arthur will try to open a bit, if the player-characters seem to listen he'll share that there's some bad man after him, "*He thoroughly detested my father and murdered him and he wants to murder me too.*" If the player-character suggest going to the Constabulary, Arthur will say something like "*I reckon my father had some unsolved matters with the authorities and I assume they reckon I also commit something very wrong.*"<sup>11</sup>.

Right after that, the player-character will spot Hans along with any bully who was not arrested by the constabulary officers walking at them. Hans is carrying his blowpipe with six blue poisoned darts under his coat. His plan is to make the player-characters and Arthur run away, lead them to some narrow, dead end street, put Arthur to sleep and take the boy to the Prussian consulate, where he will wait for instructions from Berlin. He'll let the other children to the bullies, who will do their best to rob the kids.

At this time of the day, the Constabulary will not arrive until 1 sd turns after somebody is smart enough to shout for police<sup>12</sup>. When that happens both Hans and the gang of bullies will run away.

## Third Act - Prince Arthur escapes.

If Arthur escapes, he will decides to risk his chances sharing the whole truth with his new friends. Borgonnia lacks a consulate in New Paris and going to the embassy in Washington D.C. by train would be expensive and dangerous<sup>13</sup>. Arthur doesn't want to try the American authorities for the reasons explained in the previous Act. Their best option is to try the British Consulate in Concordia, just around the corner from the Prussian consulate.

In a last ditch effort, Hans will be guarding the Consulate, anticipating the moves of Prince Arthur. Five clerks<sup>14</sup> from the consulate will be at their disposal. These will try to block, distract, hold and otherwise keep the player characters from helping Arthur, while Hans tries to kidnap Arthur again; on a last chance, he'll go as far as to use red poison. Hans will only resort to his guns if his own life is at risk.

A couple of constabularies will come 1 sd after somebody calls out for them, making the clerks run away. However, this time Hans will face the cops until he's grave, dead or arrested.

Once Albert is in the British Consulate, the player-characters will have to help him to convince the officials that he's indeed Prince Albert of Borgonnia; a feat made possible in part for the show the Prussian Consulate has made.

☛ Hint, if the Game Master needs to provide one: Smart player-character may take advantage of the things kids do on Halloween.

<sup>11</sup>The United States have much more interests in Prussia than in Borgonnia, and while Arthur is no expert in foreign policy, he's not sure of how the American authorities would react; that if they don't lock him up in an asylum in the first place.

Player-characters would perhaps believe that the boy's parents were involved in criminal business of one kind or another.

<sup>12</sup>Or 2 sd in any case

<sup>13</sup>At least another Prussian agent should be in that train. If necessary create a non player character with Hans' stats or something like him.

<sup>14</sup>Treat him as an "Average Adult", see Appendix A on page 110

### **Third Act - Albert is captured.**

In this case, the thing to do would be to rescue him. The Constabulary will be a hard time believing that the Prussian Consulate is involved in the kidnapping of child, especially on the testimony of a bunch of newsboys, but let them try if so they wish. Newspapers will be as skeptical and at most will publish a small article on their next edition about a missing French child or a fight among *street rats*.

If the player-characters don't decide to give it up, their remaining choice is to sneak in the Prussian consulate. The building is a two stories gothic-looking structure with a cellar, in which Albert is kept barely awake and chained to his bed.

The players have up to 11 o'clock of the day after Halloween to save Albert. At that time, a telegram from Berlin will order Hans to *execute the special command*. During work hours Hans, together with the consul and twelve clerks, all loyal to the Prussian government, remain and work in the premises. They will slowly begin to return to their own homes at five o'clock. At night only Hans and the consul and two clerks will remain. One clerk will be in the cellar with Albert at all times.

If the player succeeds at rescuing Albert, there should be a short flight to the British Consulate, handled just like in the case that Albert was not kidnapped, with just the modifications brought by the course of action and the story.

### **"It all turned out to"**

Supposing that all goes well and Arthur arrives at the British Consulate he will be fine for the time being. Heavy diplomatic maneuvers will keep the information to slip into public knowledge to advert the possibility of a war, which in the short run will be devastating for Borgonnia and in the long run terrible for Prussia. Instead, Prussia will agree to pay a secret compensation and send the homicides to be kept in a British prison ship.

Prince Arthur will come back to his homeland to be cheered by all and then proclaimed by the Borgonnia House of Commons as Crown Prince, together with a regent. Arthur will invite his new friends to go with him, this time in the HBMS<sup>15</sup> Audax, the Borgonnian Flagship<sup>16</sup>, and then live in palace. If the player character agrees adventures are not over, for the Prussian plots against Borgonnia will continue, so let them spread 3 normal dice worth of Chit points among their characters.

If the player-character would rather remain newsies – which doesn't seem quite realistic – then let the players spread 3 swell dice worth of Chit points among their characters. Add to the lot a contact in the Borgonnian embassy. Whenever they are in trouble, or short of money, a telegram to the Borgonnia embassy will mean certain, yet perhaps delayed, help.

### **"Rumors and Variants"**

1. A slow but ponderous mechanical man guards the Prussian Consulate (D)
2. Let Hans use White Poison on Player-Characters. (D)
3. A ghost appears at the cellar of the Prussian Consulate every Halloween Night. He, She or It has remained undetected as usually nobody goes to the cellar at night. (D)

<sup>15</sup>His Borgonnia Majesty Ship

<sup>16</sup>The Borgonnian Navy has its main base in Antwerp, Borgonnia

## ”Bits and notes”

If you want to go a little steampunk, you could add any or both of these two cool spy tools.

### Mechanical Dragonfly

Made of silk and thin aluminium, the mechanical dragonfly works on a diminutive gasoline engine. It’s equipped with a needle which will harm nobody, unless it’s loaded, as usual with up to three doses of poison.

The Mechanical Dragonfly follows human heat, thanks to an uncanny prussian heat detector, ten seconds after being activated, so it must be guided in the general direction of its victim.

♥ STR 1 wd      HTH 1 fd<sup>17</sup>      AGI 4 d      EDU —      E&E 3 wd<sup>18</sup>      CHA —

♥ Pace 6

♥ Good At: Flying, Dodging.

♥ Bad At: Nothing.

♥ Stuff: Up to three doses of potion.

### Warning Wagner

In the guise of small bronze valkiries, these will play a extremely loud version of a famous Wagner piece if stepped or touched. Two of these will be placed on the floor of the Prussian Consulate, right under the cellar window. If the player-character aren’t careful<sup>19</sup> make them check Agility against 13 to avoid setting them in action.



<sup>17</sup>fd = fool dice, treat any result larger than 4 as 4

<sup>18</sup>Heat following sensor only.

<sup>19</sup>They aren’t watching for traps, etc.

# Appendix A

## A cast of stock Non Player Characters.

### Caveat:

This list of Non Player Characters and monsters has *not* been generated following the rules for Player Characters<sup>1</sup> and they should be used either as minor characters of the adventure or as reference.

### A.1 Humans

#### A.1.1 Average NPC Adult

♥ Age 33

♥ STR 4 d      HTH 4 d      AGI 3 d      EDU 3 wd      E&E 3 wd      CHA 3 wd

♥ Pace 5

♥ Good At: Craft.

♥ Bad At: Nothing.

♥ Stuff: B grade clothing; Usually around \$3 in pocket money; cheap watch; two NPET tokens.

#### A.1.2 Average NPC 12 y/o Boy

♥ Age 12

♥ STR 4 wd      HTH 3 wd      AGI 3 d      EDU 3 wd      E&E 3 wd      CHA 3 wd

♥ Pace 4

♥ Good At: Nothing or the Game Master chooses 6.

♥ Bad At: Nothing or the Game Master chooses 6.

♥ Stuff: C grade clothing; Usually around \$0.20 in pocket money; baseball or cheap toy.

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<sup>1</sup>Appendix B on page 115 contains a few ready-to-play player Characters.

**A.1.3 13 y/o Bully**

☛ Age 13

☛ STR 2 wd 2d      HTH 4 wd      AGI 3 d      EDU 1 wd      E&E 3 wd      CHA 2 wd

☛ Pace 4

☛ Good At: Fisticuffs, Dodging, Throwing, Athletics.

☛ Bad At: Academics, Running, Healing, Theater, Sweet Tongue.

☛ Stuff: C grade clothing; Usually around \$0.30 in pocket money; baseball cap, sling-shot.

**A.1.4 Pickpockets****Veteran Picpocket**

☛ Age 14

☛ STR 3 wd      HTH 2 wd      AGI 4 wd      EDU 3 wd      E&E 4 wd      CHA 4 wd

☛ Pace 5

☛ Good At: Running, Athletics, Dodging, Pickpockets, Locks, Theater

☛ Bad At: Academics, Vehicles, Mechanics

☛ Stuff: B grade clothing; Usually around \$0.30 in pocket money; four sets of caps and hanckerchiefs to change his appearance in a spot.

**“Tender feet” Pickpocket**

☛ Age 10

☛ STR 2 wd      HTH 2 wd      AGI 4 wd      EDU 2 wd      E&E 4 wd      CHA 3 wd

☛ Pace 5

☛ Good At: Running, Dodging,

☛ Bad At: Academics, Vehicles, Mechanics

☛ Stuff: D grade clothing; Usually around \$0.05 in pocket money.

This kind of pickpocket is desperate for affection and will follow almost any adult, good or bad, anywhere.

**A.2 Mechanical Constructs**

The following mechanical constructs are an impossibility for science, at least in New Paris, yet that doesn't stop a few deranged “*scientists*”.

**A.2.1 Mechanical Guard**

☛ STR 6 d            HTH 6 d            AGI 3 d            EDU —            E&E —            CHA —

☛ Pace 4

☛ Good At: Nothing.

☛ Bad At: Fisticuffs, Dodging.

☛ Stuff: Nothing or some Hand to Hand weapon.

The Mechanical Guard is programmed, with punch-cards which are inserted in its head, to perform a circular route. It will attack anything which gets in its way, sounding a loud alarm. Its battery lasts for two hours of continued operation, so its range of uses is limited.

**A.3 Animals****A.3.1 Dog, Alsatian (German Shepherd)**

☛ STR 2 d 1 wd        HTH 3 d            AGI 4 d            EDU 1 wd        E&E 3 d            CHA 2 wd

☛ Pace 5

☛ Good At: Dodging, Observation, Fisticuffs, Running.

☛ Bad At: All human skills

**A.3.2 Cat**

☛ STR 3 wd            HTH 3 wd            AGI 5 d            EDU 1 wd        E&E 3 d            CHA 3 wd

☛ Pace 4

☛ Good At: Dodging, Observation, Fisticuffs, Athletics.

☛ Bad At: All human skills.

**A.3.3 Horses**

☛ STR 3 wd            HTH 3 wd            AGI 5 d            EDU 1 wd        E&E 3 d            CHA 3 wd

☛ Pace 15

☛ Good At: Running.

☛ Bad At: All human skills.

Horses, mules and carriages can still be seeing along with more modern vehicles in New Paris, especially transporting cargo.

**A.4 Monsters**

This is a list of examples of what could be in stock, should any of the most uncanny rumors be ever true.

**A.4.1 Zombie**

☞ STR 4 d      HTH 6 d      AGI 2 wd      EDU 1 wd      E&E 2 wd      CHA 1 fd

☞ Pace 3

☞ Good At: Fisticuffs or Craft.

☞ Bad At: Everything else.

☞ Stuff: Usually D to E clothing, Usually some improvised weapon or tool.

Zombies in N&P will either be working as slaves or guards, in the secret hideout of some mad wizard or doctor. A candle will harm a Zombie as if it were a sword, and salt act on them as if it were red poison.

**A.4.2 Giant Spider**

☞ STR 3 d      HTH 4 d      AGI 4 d      EDU 1 wd      E&E 3 d      CHA 3 fd

☞ Pace 4

☞ Good At: Fisticuffs, Dodging, Running, Athletics, Observation, Streetwise (sewers only).

☞ Bad At: Shooting, all human skills.

This monster takes refuge in the sewers and for the most part eats cats, small dogs and rodents, but it could attack anybody. The giant spider is no larger than a dog, though it's green poison makes it dangerous. Once subdued, the victim will be rolled in silk and then transported to the web for later consumption.

The Game Master might choose to make the Giant Spider able to speak. In that case EDU should be at least 3 wd, and the monster could negotiate with its subdued prey, perhaps to help it at acquiring food or help it with some more complex objectives.

**A.4.3 Apollinarian.**

The Apollinarian<sup>2</sup> is a strange kind of undead, created by powerful sorcerers using a secret ritual on a *deceased* body. Though, rumor has it that the angst for losing a loved one, could also create one. In any case, death should not be older than two months at the time of its creation. Once the spell is cast the body transforms within hours into the perfect servant.

An apollinarian resembles the person - or animal - which it once was. However it is free of any ailments, sickness or other impariments. Moreover they are strikingly beautiful, and apparently of a young age. Apollinarians appear to be of any of three ages: 13, 23 or 33. Those who died at 12 or younger are risen as 13 years old, those who died older than 12 but younger than 34 are risen as 23 years old and those who died 34 or older are risen as 33 years old.

If harmed by a weapon they would not bleed, and when smitten or otherwise 'killed' they will fall to the ground as in a sleep, from which they will not awake until the ritual is repeated. An apollinarian can get sick or poisoned but if it survives the first 24 hours, it will recover instantly in the next dawn.

An apollinarian is at all times very polite and warm, it would never be angered, nor show fear or its related emotions but it could cry out simpathy. They will obey every command

<sup>2</sup>I first created the Apollinarian for True20, being a fan of that game, yet I could not resist to add it here too.

that they receive, and if ordered to kill they would do so with the utmost courtesy for their victim. They retain the basic skills and knowledge when they were living, but again will only use them as ordered to.

Apollinarians cannot leave a designated area, of roughly one acre or less of surface. So they are normally used as labourers and house servants, where they work without a single complaint for ages to come. If an apollinarian is ever forced out of their area, they will become paralyzed neck down until they are returned.

Apollinarian only eat ambrosia<sup>3</sup>, needing a spoonful for day, else they would fall in a deep sleep.

An apollinarian can be restored to mortal life by taking it to a Church or other sacred space. Their emotions would turn back to normal, but they will retain their appearance. From that point on the apollinarian will age normally. Apollinarians who were previously 'killed' would wake up gravely injured, sick, burned, starved or in other grave condition as appropriate to the cause.

To change any creature into an Apollinarian, just add 1 d to its Charisma Attribute.

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<sup>3</sup>Honey mixed with milk

## Appendix B

# Sample player-characters.

### B.1 Danny, the Professor

☛ Age 14 Birthday July the 4th

☛ STR 3 wd    HTH 3 wd    AGI 3 wd    EDU 3 wd, 1 d    E&E 3 wd    CHA 2 wd 1 d

☛ Chits 6 Pace 4

☛ Good At: Theater, Sweet Tongue, Shooting, Craft, Healing, Streetwise, Observation, Stealth

☛ Bad At: Pickpockets, Locks, Vehicles, Shooting

☛ Stuff: Clothes Grade B,            \$1.80,            Whistle,            Football,            Bicycle,

☛ Background: USA (New York), Father Dead, Mother Missing.

Suggested Role: Danny is a good samaritan, always helping those in need. He's always looking for any new kids, trying to keep them from trouble and teaching them the basics of the newsboy trade until they are able to fend by themselves. Danny is mostly self-educated and so his science is a strange mix of facts with little structure, he could do good at school and his secret vocation is to lead a congregation some day.

### B.2 Mary "Magpie" Brugess

☛ Age 12 Birthday July the 4th

☛ STR 2 wd    HTH 3 wd    AGI 2 wd 1 d    EDU 3 wd    E&E 3 wd    CHA 3 wd 1 d

☛ Chits 8 Pace 4

☛ Good At: Theater, Languages, Sweet Tongue, Shooting, Stealth, Pickpockets

☛ Bad At: Fisticuffs, Healing, Academics, Locks, Vehicles, Throwing

☛ Stuff: Clothes Grade C,    \$2.10,    Whistle,    Double-Headed Coin,    Harmonica,

☛ Background: West Gate; Father Dead; Mother Unknown

Suggested Role: Mary did not know her mother and his father died when she was still three. Parentless, she became an easy prey for a certain *fagin*<sup>1</sup> who made her steal until she felt strong enough to escape to a new life.

<sup>1</sup>New Parisian slang for the adult leader of pickpocket gang.

### B.3 James “Dreamer” Farrell

♥ Age 12

♥ STR 3 wd      AGI 2 wd      HTH 3 wd      EDU 4 wd      E&E 3 wd      CHA 4 wd

♥ Good AT: Academics, Languages, Sweet Tongue, Mechanichs, Observation, Swimming

♥ Bad AT: Athletics,      Running,      Dodging,      Locks,      Pickpockets      Theater

♥ Chits: 8 Pace 4

♥ Possessions \$2.10, “A” Grade Clothing , Magnifying Glass, Bicycle, Baseball, Cat, Whistle, Warm Sweater, New Paris City Map.

♥ Background: Outer Expanses. Father Missing. Mother Dead.

Suggested Role: James Farrel is a 12 years old boy from the Hook in the Outer Expanses of New Paris City. His dad went West, trying to find a better future for the family but James hasn’t heard of him in two years; his mom died nine months ago. Unable to pay the rent on his own, James Farrell survives at the Newsboy Lodge, selling papers. He’s lucky to have kept his best Sunday clothes, because that means he can sell the best and most expensive newspapers and go where many other newsboys won’t ever be admitted like the Grand Opera House of New Paris.

James dreams of earning admission and a scholarship at some boarding school, so he can become a “learned, important man”, just as her mother advised him to become in her death bed. Being a “nerd” and somehow of a “rich boy” among other newsies, he wishes to be a little more popular.Of course, he’d also wish to know about his dad, which he fears to be dead or worse; and failing that he strives to be around adults, be popular among them, perhaps gaining a mentor of sorts. That would make his day.

### B.4 Anne “Goldfinch” Hollister

♥ Age 10 Birthday July the 4th

♥ STR 3 wd      HTH 3 wd      AGI 3 wd      EDU 3 wd      E&E 2 wd      CHA 3 wd

♥ Chits 10

♥ Good At: Healing, Theater, Mechanics, Languages

♥ Bad At: Pickpockets, Locks, Vehicles, Shooting, Throwing, Observation, Fistifcuffs, Locks

♥ Stuff: Clothes Grade D, \$1.50, Cheap doll, Flute, Bowl, Magnifying Glass, Pen & Ink Flask, Matchbox

♥ Background: United States (Virginia), Parents Dead.

Suggested Role: Anne is a pretty absent-minded girl who has traveled all the way from Virginia to New Paris, after escaping from an orphanage of dubious quality. Since escaping she has been able to feed herself singing on saloons and doing all sort of odd jobs, but her clothes are ragged after weeks of traveling by foot and jumping on livestock trains.

## B.5 Fred “Wardrobe” Listz

☛ Age 14 Birthday July the 4th

☛ STR 3 wd 1d     HTH 4 wd     AGI 4 wd     EDU 2 wd     E&E 3 wd     CHA 2 wd

☛ Chits 6 Pace 4

☛ Good At: Fisticuffs, Athletics, Running, Dodging, Streetwise, Stealth, Observation, Swimming

☛ Bad At: Languages, Stealth, Vehicles, Healing

☛ Stuff: Clothes Grade C, \$1.90, New Paris Map, Hammer, 3 NPET Tokens

☛ Background: Concordia, Father and Mother Missing.

Suggested Role: Fred is the kind of friend you want to have around in a fight. He’s not a genius, but neither dumb; he’s just not much interested in class, beyond the basics. Fred’s secret dream is to join the New Paris Constabulary someday. Fred can be quite patient, but once he’s angry you better run.

## B.6 Billy “Mouse” Elliot

☛ Age 11 Birthday July the 4th

☛ STR 2 wd     HTH 2 wd     AGI 4 wd     EDU 3 wd     E&E 4 wd     CHA 3 wd

☛ Chits 9 ; Pace 3

☛ Good At: Stealth, Observation, Running, Sweet Tounge, Streetwise

☛ Bad At: Fisticuffs, Academics, Languages, Vehicles, Theater, Throwing

☛ Stuff: Clothes Grade E<sup>2</sup>.

☛ Background: Decree Slums; Father Missing; Mother Dead.

Suggested Role: Billy is of that kind of quick, easy going and generally cheerful kid who always try something cool and hopes fo the best. Before becoming a newsboy, Billy spent two months hiding in the sewers and feels quite easy there.

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<sup>2</sup>Poor Billy was robbed of all his stuff



# Nomenclature

**Agility(AGI)** tells you how graciously your character move. A character with low agility, will never be a good athlete. agility is also important to handle a bike, ride, running or even to hide from a band of gangsters.

**Attribute Points(AP)** Points used to buy Attribute dice. You begin with as many attribute points as your age plus seven.

**Attributes** The figures that define the basic capabilities of a character.

**Attributes** The figures that define the basic capabilities of a character.

**Charisma(CHA)** is how cute, swell, nice, handsome, cheerful, good looking and cool your character is, all rolled into one \*attribute\*. Charisma is great when you want to sell papers to the public or learn a new language like Transylvanian, sign, beg, convince or juggle for money and fun.

**Crap Dice** When you roll a Crap Dice, you ignore any result higher than 5. That means that if you get a 6, you read it as if it were a 5.

**downgrading** Worsening the dice assigned to a skill or attribute: from normal dice (d) to weak dice (wd) and from weak dice (wd) to fool dice (fd)

**Education(EDU)** measures how much the character knows about the world. It's not just school stuff; anything that can be known and learned falls within the range of education. So if your Character wants to be a mechanic or know how to dress a wound, you'll want his education attribute to be as high as possible.

**Eyes&Ears(E&E)** measures how well your character senses work. Please remember that it does include all the five senses, not just sight and hearing. If your newsie needs to find a secret message hidden under a rubble stone, follow the scent of a solvent to the secret laboratory of a mad scientist or listen the whisper of a foreign spy, then you'd better have an Eyes & Ears as strong as possible.

**Fagin** New Parisian slang for the adult leader of pickpocket gang.

**Fool Dice** For example when you roll a Fool Dice you ignore any result higher than 4. That means that if you get a 5 or 6 you read it as if it were a 4.

**GameMaster(GM):** The person who is in charge of interpreting the rules, narrating the scence and insuring that everyone has a great time.

**Health(HTH)** is a measure of your character's resistance to sickness, poisons and damage and make no mistake, your character could be exposed to all of these and worse.

**Large Object** A large object is anything that would not fit inside a pocket.

**NonPlayerCharacters(NPC):** Any character, animal or monster, spirit or ghost who is not played by any player. These are usually neutral but can be either friends or foes. They are all played and controlled by the Game Master.

**Normal** These you read normally. A 1 is a 1, a 2 is a 2, a 6 is a 6 and so on.

**PlayerCharacter(PC):** Any character played by a player, usually just one character per player.

**Quality, A** Good quality, 1st Class Service

**Quality, B** Standard quality, 2nd Class Service

**Quality, C** Cheap, mass produced product; 3rd Class Service.

**Quality, D** Second hand or badly manufactured product; questionable service like riding in a lifestock car.

**Quality, E** Barely usable, worn out or unsafe product; unsafe service, like riding on the top of a train car.

**RealorGameTime** Real Time refers to the spent in the real world while game time refers to the time spent in the game world.

**Skill** An area or field of expertise. Each skill is linked to one attribute

**Small object:** A large object is anything that would not fit inside a pocket.

**Strength(STR)** measures how strong you are. A character can use \*strength\* to lift a heavy weight, break up stuff, throw a stone to see how far it reaches or fight off a bully. Adults tend to be much stronger than any newsboy.

**Swell** When you roll a Swell Dice, you ignore any result lower than 3. That means that if you get a 1 or a 2 you read the dice as if it were a 6.

**Target Number** Number that the character must roll equal or better in order to pass a skill or attribute check. The usual Target Number is 10.

**upgrading** Improving the dice assigned to a skill or attribute from weak dice (wd) into normal dice (d); and from normal dice (d) into swell dice (sd).