

ROLLING THE DICE

To know how well you perform an action, roll:

- ♦ One die if the task is **within human capabilities**.
- ♦ One die if it is within your **area of expertise**.
- ♦ One die if you achieved the rank of Journeyman, two if you achieved Master.
- ♦ Your Trauma die, if you **will risk your mental well being to succeed**.
- ♦ Your Harm die, if you **will risk your physical well being to succeed**.

If your Trauma die is higher than your current Trauma, increase Trauma by one.

If your Harm die is lower than or equal to your current Harm, increase Harm by one.

Your highest die shows how well you do. On a 1, you barely succeed. On a 6, you do brilliantly. If you're investigating something, your highest die tells you how much information you get, from 1 (*the bare minimum*) to 6 (*you find everything humanly possible*).

REROLLING

If you are unhappy with your roll's result, you may reroll your dice, but you must risk either physical or mental well being (and roll Harm or Trauma as appropriate).

FAILURE

If anyone thinks it would be more interesting if you failed, they describe how you might fail and roll a die. If they roll higher than you, you fail. If you roll higher, you succeed.

CO-OPERATING

To work together: everyone who is cooperating rolls their dice. The highest die, rolled by anyone, determines the outcome.

COMPETING

To oppose someone: everyone who is competing rolls their dice. The highest die, rolled by anyone, determines the outcome. If it's a tie, no one gets what they want.

The Third Age

GHOSTLINES DARK

NAME homeland	
EXPERTISE rank	
<small>ROOK, SPIDER, OWL, ANCHOR</small>	<small>YOU START AS AN APPRENTICE</small>

homeland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ SKOVLAN You do not start play with a scar. ♦ AKOROS You do not pay a coin to create a stash in a new city. You start with one favor owed to you. ♦ SEVOROS When you have downtime, choose up to two options. ♦ IRUVIA You start with expertise in two different roles. 	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> FAVORS WHO I OWE: </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> WHO OWES ME: </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></td> </tr> </table>	FAVORS WHO I OWE:		WHO OWES ME:	
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GEAR: Heavy gloves, encounter suit, cloak, breather-mask, air-tank, goggles, cable and clamps, lightning-hook, magnetic boots, spirit-flares, lightning-oil canister (4 uses), and choose one loadout, at right:	<input type="checkbox"/> Heavy lightning-hook. <input type="checkbox"/> Lightning-web thrower, bandolier of spirit bottles (4). <input type="checkbox"/> Spirit-goggles. Spare lightning-oil canister (4 uses). <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy encounter-suit (ghosts roll one less die when harming you).
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LIGHTNING-OIL: ○ ○ ○ ○	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> LEVEL 1: APPRENTICE <input type="checkbox"/> Clear 10 ghosts <input type="checkbox"/> Work 3 lines <input type="checkbox"/> Work 2 roles </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> LINES WORKED <input type="checkbox"/> Skovlan: Upper (III) <input type="checkbox"/> Skovlan: Lower (II) <input type="checkbox"/> Akoros: Duskwall (I) <input type="checkbox"/> Akoros: Heights (II) <input type="checkbox"/> Akoros: Bayside (I) <input type="checkbox"/> Akoros: Pass (III) <input type="checkbox"/> Iruvia: Islands (II) <input type="checkbox"/> Iruvia: Cloudspire (II) <input type="checkbox"/> Iruvia: Lakewood (I) </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> LEVEL 2: JOURNEYMAN <input type="checkbox"/> Clear 30 ghosts <input type="checkbox"/> Silence a ghost <input type="checkbox"/> Work 6 lines <input type="checkbox"/> Work every role </td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> ROLES GHOSTS SILENCED <input type="checkbox"/> Rook □□□□□□ <input type="checkbox"/> Spider □□□□□□ <input type="checkbox"/> Owl □□□□□□ <input type="checkbox"/> Anchor □□□□□□ </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> LEVEL 3: MASTER <input type="checkbox"/> Clear 60 ghosts <input type="checkbox"/> Silence 12 ghosts <input type="checkbox"/> Work all 12 lines <input type="checkbox"/> Train a new bull </td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> GHOSTS CLEARED □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ </td> </tr> </table>	LEVEL 1: APPRENTICE <input type="checkbox"/> Clear 10 ghosts <input type="checkbox"/> Work 3 lines <input type="checkbox"/> Work 2 roles	LINES WORKED <input type="checkbox"/> Skovlan: Upper (III) <input type="checkbox"/> Skovlan: Lower (II) <input type="checkbox"/> Akoros: Duskwall (I) <input type="checkbox"/> Akoros: Heights (II) <input type="checkbox"/> Akoros: Bayside (I) <input type="checkbox"/> Akoros: Pass (III) <input type="checkbox"/> Iruvia: Islands (II) <input type="checkbox"/> Iruvia: Cloudspire (II) <input type="checkbox"/> Iruvia: Lakewood (I)	LEVEL 2: JOURNEYMAN <input type="checkbox"/> Clear 30 ghosts <input type="checkbox"/> Silence a ghost <input type="checkbox"/> Work 6 lines <input type="checkbox"/> Work every role	ROLES GHOSTS SILENCED <input type="checkbox"/> Rook □□□□□□ <input type="checkbox"/> Spider □□□□□□ <input type="checkbox"/> Owl □□□□□□ <input type="checkbox"/> Anchor □□□□□□	LEVEL 3: MASTER <input type="checkbox"/> Clear 60 ghosts <input type="checkbox"/> Silence 12 ghosts <input type="checkbox"/> Work all 12 lines <input type="checkbox"/> Train a new bull	GHOSTS CLEARED □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□
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HARM	TRAUMA

PHYSICAL SCARS

EACH PHYSICAL SCAR DECREASES YOUR MAXIMUM HARM LEVEL BY 1.

MENTAL SCARS

EACH MENTAL SCAR DECREASES YOUR MAXIMUM TRAUMA LEVEL BY 1.

COINS

Coins on you may be lost, stolen or squandered. While on downtime, you may pay one coin create a stash in your current city. Note where it is hidden. Whenever you are in that city, you may hide some or all your coins in the stash.

stash



CHARACTER CREATION

Choose a badge and name (below). Choose a homeland and expertise. Add a scar (physical or mental) to your character. Your Harm and Trauma start at 1. Maximum for each is 6 (lowered by scars). Write a fact on the map.

NAMES

Your badge has a name on it, chosen from the registry of the Purified, as tradition demands:

Brogan, Tyrconnell, Dunvoil, Comber, Millar, Slane, Strangford, Nevis, Dalmore, Edrad, Lomond, Clelland, Arran, Scapa, Kinclaith, Coleburn, Penalten, Strathmill, Haig, Morriston, Penderyn, Danfield, Hellyers, Wasmund, Templeton, Michter, Bowman, Prichard, McKeel, Wathen, Clermont, Rowan, Booker

You also have a personal name:

Caul, Adric, Amison, Andrel, Milos, Stev, Laudius, Phin, Wester, Bragon, Vond, Mardus, Brance, Canter, Carro, Morlan, Timothy, Arvus, Clard, Kristov, Wonck, Orleace, Astin, Boury, Hance, Kale, Lanvell, Larn Lenia, Tesslyn, Veretta, Sethla, Vey, Polonia, Bry, Talitha, Arden, Candra, Cavelle, Brena, Vauri, Emeline, Volette, Lyntbia, Cyrene, Arcy, Quess, Roethe, Kamelin, Lauria, Lizete, Corille, Daphnia, Carissa, Odrienne, Casslyn, Arilyn, Naria, Vestine



AGAINST THE SUPERNATURAL

When the bulls go up against a ghost, the GM will ask each player a question, such as:

- ♦ What is disturbing or otherworldly about the ghost?
- ♦ What aspect of the ghost is still surprisingly human?
- ♦ Which of the bulls is most vulnerable to this ghost? Why?
- ♦ What supernatural effects appear around the ghost?
- ♦ Why does it make you tremble in fear?
- ♦ What does it remember of its former life?
- ♦ How does it injure the living?
- ♦ What unearthly disease does the plague ghost spread?
- ♦ Why do you recognize them?
- ♦ Why do they call your name?
- ♦ Why does it keep coming back?
- ♦ Why is it so hard to get at this ghost?

Ghost oppose rolls against them, rolling dice equal to the Line's rating. Major ghosts roll an extra die.

The bull who leads the team decides who moves first against the ghost(s):

- ♦ ANCHOR: Secure the ghost's attention and draw it into contact with you.
- ♦ SPIDER: Use a lightning-web to tether the ghost to a spirit-bottle.
- ♦ ROOK: Use a lightning hook to tear the ghost loose from the train and/or weaken it.
- ♦ OWL: Study the ghost and situation with your spirit-goggles to determine the best gambit. If you beat the ghost in a contested roll, you can determine a weakness the ghost has, or how to permanently silence the ghost.

COIN, STASH, FAVORS

When you work a line, you get paid in COIN.

- ♦ Line rating x Level = Coin earned.

You also get +Level hazard pay for being the Anchor, and +1 coin for each ghost cleared.

Your STASH is the loot you've hidden away for your retirement. The bigger your stash, the better off you'll be. Your stash is like your score in the game.

- ♦ Stash 0: Lost soul. You die alone in the gutter.
- ♦ Stash 1-10: Desperate beggar. You die on the street, cold and forgotten.
- ♦ Stash 11-20: Poor soul. You die in a reeking flophouse, awash in booze and misery.
- ♦ Stash 21-30: Meager. You die in a tiny (but warm) hovel that you can call your own.
- ♦ Stash 31-40: Modest. You die in a simple home or apartment, with some small comforts.
- ♦ Stash 41-50: Fine. You die in a well-appointed home or apartment, claiming a few luxuries.

FAVORS can be earned by working a side job, or making a bargain with another character. You can call in favors to get extra credit for work, ask for different work, request equipment, etc.

- ♦ 1 Favor: +2 ghosts cleared, choose different line assignment, request specialty gear.
- ♦ 2 Favor: +1 line worked
- ♦ 3 Favor: +1 role worked, request custom gear.
- ♦ 4 Favor: Get secret information, make a powerful contact, make a major request.

ITEMS

Ghost-clearing gear runs on leviathan oil (aka "lightning-oil"). One use will power up an item. The GM may charge further oil uses depending on circumstances and the outcome of rolls.

SPECIALTY GEAR:

- ♦ LIGHTNING CAGE. A set of portable rods, cables, and generator that can produce an electrical barrier that spirits cannot pass.
- ♦ ELECTROPLASM: The energetic residue that remains when a ghost is destroyed. Handle with extreme caution. Highly prized by devotees of Natural Philosophy.



ON THE GHOST LINES

It is the year 891 of the Imperium that united the shattered isles of the cataclysm under one rule—all glory to his majesty the Immortal Emperor.

You work the ghost lines—the electro-railroad that passes through the ink-dark deadlands between cities. Spirits of the dead, drawn to the vital essence of the living, often get entangled in the powerful electrical field generated by the trains. Line bulls like you walk the length of the cars, magnetized boots clanking and breather-mask hissing, to clear the offending spirits with your lightning-hooks before they do too much damage.

Each city of the imperium is encircled by crackling lightning-towers to create an electrical shell that spirits cannot penetrate. By law, all corpses are incinerated with lightning-oil (to destroy the spirit essence within) but sometimes, wealthy citizens, heretics of the spirit cults, or the criminal element arrange for a ghost to escape destruction at the crematorium.

So called “rogue spirits” are also dealt with by bulls like you. For a fee, of course.

EVENTS ON THE LINE

- The train has to stop.** Need repairs, damaged track, loss of power, demands of an important passenger (a natural philosopher, noble), imperial orders, spirit-well spotted, weather.
- The train can't stop.** Engineer incapacitated, throttle damaged, demands of an important passenger, imperial orders, impending weather.
- Supernatural event.** Time slows/speeds up, landscape shifts, mass delusions/hysteria, amnesia, strange weather (fire rain, black wind).
- Ghost.**
- Ghosts, several.**
- Ghost, major.** Not necessarily a human spirit. Worth 5-clears.

SPECTROLOGY

- ♦ **SOUL.** A living body with its own spirit.
- ♦ **POSSESSED.** A living body w/ 2 or more spirits.
- ♦ **HOLLOW.** A living body without a spirit.
- ♦ **UNDEAD.** A dead body with a spirit.
- ♦ **GHOST.** A spirit without a body.

SIDE JOBS

When you work a side job, make a roll as normal.

Add a die if you're working a job in your homeland. If your highest die is a 1, there's a complication. You don't get your reward. The GM will say how you make an enemy, get put in a bad spot, or are on the hook for a favor.

If your highest die is 2 or above, you get your reward. If you were working for coins, you earn coins equal to your highest die's value.

If your highest die is a 4, you work the job and also hear a rumor about ghosts. The GM will say what it is.

If your highest die is a 5, you work the job, you earn +2 coins and you get a solid lead on ghost work (GM will say what).

If your highest die is a 6, you work the job, you earn +2 coins and also choose: +1 favor, or get offered a job doing ghost work by someone who can pay well (GM will give you the details).

GM: When they work a side job, give their employer a name, homeland, and distinguishing feature. Keep track of these NPCs and use them to fill out the world around the PCs.

LEVELS

When you achieve each task on your sheet, check its box. If you check all the boxes at your current level, you level up, advancing from apprentice to Journeyman or from Journeyman to Master. When you level up, choose another job in which you have expertise. Add a new rumor or fact to the map or modify an old one.

DYING

Your maximum Harm starts at six. Each physical scar you have lowers this value by one. When your Harm equals your maximum rating, you die. This is a special moment: everyone focuses on your character's last moments alive.

Afterwards, make a new character, although the new character keeps your Lines Worked score.

GOING INSANE

Your maximum Trauma starts at six. Each mental scar you have lowers this value by one. When your Trauma equals your maximum rating, you go insane. This is a special moment: everyone focuses on your character as their mind breaks. Afterwards, make a new character, although the new character keeps your Ghosts Cleared score.

DOWNTIME

When you have downtime off work, choose one:

- ♦ **Hit the pub.** Spend coins equal to your current Trauma level. You gain a mental scar (alcoholism, depression, paranoia, etc.), then reset to your Trauma to 1.
- ♦ **Visit the physicker.** Spend coins equal to your current Harm level. You gain a physical scar (missing eye, steampunk hand, pegleg, etc.), then reset to your Harm to 1.
- ♦ **Work a side job.** Choose: bouncer, courier, craft, crematorium, crime, distillery, docks, forge, leviathan-hunting, slaughterhouse, stables. **Choose a reward:** Gain some coin, erase a favor you owe or add a favor owed.

CREDITS

v. 0.2 | JANUARY 2013 | [HTTP://NICKWEDIG.LIBRARYOFHIGHMOON.COM](http://nickwedig.libraryofhighmoon.com)

GHOST LINES DARK: Nick Wedig

ORIGINAL GAME AND LAYOUT: John Harper

CTHULHU DARK: Graham Walmsley

ART: Bob Basset (gas masks), James Paick (train landscape)

GHOST LINES DARK is a hack of *Ghost Lines* by John Harper, redesigned to use the base system of *Cthulhu Dark* by Graham Walmsley. Those guys did all the hard work.

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