

THE INTERROGATION

A tense micro-RPG by Côme Martin for 2 players (a Criminal and a Detective)



Set up: Sit in the warmest room possible, in front of each other, with some paper, pens, a die of each type (d4, d6, d8, d10, d12 and d20) and something to hide them. Decide who will play the detective and who will play the criminal. Agree on the starting situation: for what type of crime was the criminal arrested, what is still unclear after the investigation and perhaps why there's limited time before the interrogation definitively ends. There already are a few pieces of evidence to arrest the criminal; however, there might be unsolved disappearances, missing suitcases full of cash, unidentified accomplices...

Each player writes a few words on what their character feels about the following six values: Violence, Love, Duty, Justice, Reputation and Power. They secretly write down to which die each value corresponds: the higher the die, the more the value matters to the character.

The detective's file on the criminal they're interrogating is more or less detailed: they can ask them to which die each of their value corresponds. But the more they benefit from their preparation, the more they expose themselves: for each die the criminal reveals, the detective will have to tell them the score of a value during a round of interrogation.

The interrogation: It is divided in rounds during which each character will try to make the other lose dice and push him to concede things.

At the start of each round, players secretly roll their dice and write down the scores they get; they will be able to use each die only once per round, in the order they wish, but won't be able to change the dice's scores. It is at this moment of each round that the detective must tell the criminal one or several of their scores, depending on the number of values that were revealed in the previous phase.

During each round, the detective asks the criminal about an unsolved element of the case; it could be an element already introduced in the story or something that is improvised on the spot. The detective always starts the conversation. They must show through their questions the angle (the value) they will use to uncover this element: by asking about the criminal's relations with an accomplice (Love), about the reasons of doing an action in particular (Reputation), about

the fierceness of an aggression (Violence)... They give, before or after their tirade, a number which can't be higher than the score they got for the value being discussed.

The criminal must answer the question before announcing another number, strictly higher than the detective's. To do this, they can if they want change the subject, so they can add the die of another value to the first. Then it's the detective's turn, and so on.

To change the subject, the detective puts their hands flat on the table, the criminal puts theirs in front of their face. This change of value can only happen after an answer to a question has been given; once the value has changed, the previous value can't be discussed until the next round.

Furthermore, a character can dismiss one question per die they have lost during a round (a player with only two dice left can thus dismiss four questions per round). To do this, the criminal says "I won't answer without my lawyer present" and the detective says "I'm the one asking questions here".

Losing dice: The exchange continues from subject to subject, the scores of dice adding up and the numbers announced going higher and higher until one of the two players can't outbid the other or accuses them of bluffing.

If they're right, the bluffing player loses the die of the value currently being discussed; if they're wrong, they're the one losing this die. The round is then over.

If no one bluffs, the round ends when one of the players can't outbid the other; they then lose the die corresponding the last value being discussed.

When a player loses a die, they show it to the other (saying if need be the value it corresponded to). They must then concede this element of the case to the other player: the criminal confesses to the detective the missing clues, the detective admits this element won't be admissible in a trial. This concession can be colored by the different values discussed during the round. It's not possible to ask someone about a value in which they don't have a die anymore.

The interrogation ends when one of the characters loses their last die: the players then say whether the criminal will be freed or put behind bars for good when the trial comes.