GARROTE
COUTURE
AUG
Based on
Cthulhu Dark by
Graham Walmsley
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Jacquelinebryk.design

Bienvenue à Mode!

PHOTO BY
Clem Onojeghuo

It's fashion week in New York City. All eyes are on you--well, on the gorgeous creations you have been chosen to showcase. This is your gateway to the top. You have been invited to attend the hottest parties, walk the catwalks, drink expensive alcohols with unpronounceable names and generally bask in the glory of it all, so long as your ***ensemble*** stays in one piece.

Unfortunately, there is not ***nearly*** enough time to change before catching the train or a taxi, and you can't afford to be late. You have to brave the ravages of rain, mud, bicycle messengers, and other models determined to ruin your outfit and prevent you from getting to any functions being thrown by the shining stars of fashion week.

The models play this game every year. No one worth her Queen Anne neckline goes anywhere alone during fashion week, lest she fall prey to the ***chic*** predators that roam the streets between events. Only the strong, the cunning, or the very lucky make it to the parties or shows on time without having their ensembles shredded, stained or incinerated by models from rival design houses.

Pre-Show

Every player should have three six-sided dice and a notecard or sheet of paper. Choose two, one to be your "doing something" die and the other to be your fashion die. The third die is your Couture die, and should be put to the side. The notecard or sheet will be used to write your character's name, description, and Couture score.

PHOTO BY **Flaunter Com**

Your Model

Pick a name. Pick a designer or design house--real or fictional, it doesn't matter. Describe your model in as much or as little detail as you like; lavish description can be fun, but sometimes less is more, ***n'est-ce pas?***

PHOTO BY **Karla Martinez**

Haute Couture

Every model, from the face of the House of Dior to the new girl hired on for ready-to-wear, is carrying a precious cargo: her ***ensemble***. The integrity of the whole affair (dress, accessories, etc.) is represented by your Couture score, which starts at 1. Whenever you take an action that could damage your ***ensemble***, roll your Couture die. If you roll higher than your current Couture score, it increases by one, and the player should explain how an important part of their outfit is damaged. If your Couture score ever reaches 6, your ***ensemble*** is irreparably damaged and you are not fit to be seen by polite society. Roleplay your distress (or relief!) accordingly. If your Couture hits 5, you can see a tailor to have the dress fixed (this falls under "doing something"), but you risk wasting precious time.

Point A to Point B

To do something, roll your "doing something" die. If it falls within your oeuvre, whatever that might be, add your fashion die.

If you are willing to risk your ***ensemble*** to do it, add your Couture die.

On a one, you barely succeed with embarrassing consequences. On a six, you succeed with grace and aplomb. No matter how high you roll, you will never skip directly to the end of a scenario. For example, if you roll a six on catching a taxi, you only catch the taxi, there is no guarantee that you

✖ Failing

If you roll equal to or below your current Couture score, another player can decide that it would be ***plus intéressant*** for you to fail whatever action you are currently taking. That player rolls a die. If they roll ***higher*** than you rolled, you fail whatever action you are taking in the most embarrassing, graceless way possible.

You can, of course, avert failure by rolling your Couture die and getting an equal or higher number than your frenemy, but you will almost certainly damage your ***ensemble*** further. Sometimes victory just isn't worth it.

PHOTO BY
Quentin Keller

SHARING THE SPOTLIGHT

No one likes a primadonna, and trying to go it alone in the concrete jungle will only turn your ***ensemble*** into an unrecognizable mess. To collaborate with other players, everyone working together rolls their dice pool (this can include Couture dice!). Whoever gets the highest number describes the outcome.

AS A NOTE

Anyone rolling their Couture dice takes Couture damage as normal, ***even if they did not roll the highest number.***

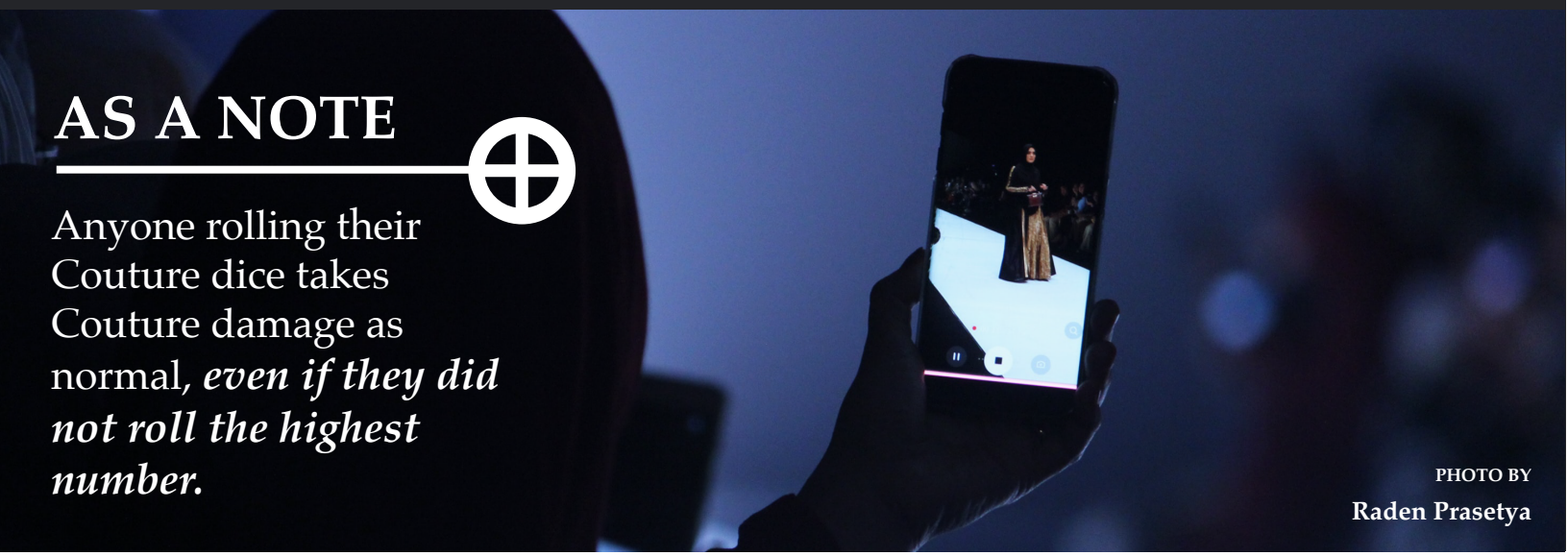

PHOTO BY
Raden Prasetya

PRODUCTION NOTES

This game is meant to be played with a GM, but could be played collaboratively if that's your thing.

The setting does not need to be restricted to New York. London, Paris, NYC, Milan and Berlin are the five most prestigious fashion week events in the world, but there are similar events on all six populated continents and Oceania. Why not set your game in Lagos, Bogota, Hong Kong, Tbilisi, or Brisbane?

On that same note, feel free go backwards or forwards in time, or to an alternate reality. How would solarpunk models destroy each other's ***ensembles***? How is tearing up a Chanel cocktail dress now different than in the 50s? In the 2450s?

Ideally, this game should be played short-form, in one or two sessions, possibly at a convention. Even the most classic silhouette falls out of favor after too long.

Remember to keep communication open among your group! If someone at the table looks uncomfortable, check in with them. Be clear about what everyone wants from the game.

Garrote Couture can be played with just a dice pool, or with charts, maps, and full fashion spreads. Use as much or as little as you're comfortable with.

GARROTE COUTURE

Jacqueline Bryk
Editor in Chief

Design and Writing **Jacqueline Bryk**
Layout **Mary Georgescu**

twitter.com/rufflejax | patreon.com/latelierdapocalypse | Jacquelinebryk.design
twitter.com/maryageorgescu | Marygeorgescu.com

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