

IT WAS A CLEAR AND SUNNY DAY OR THE KEY TO THE MYSTERY

A mini-RPG of metaphysical investigations, for 3 to 5 people and without a MC, written by Côme Martin in September 2018.

While you investigate on a disappearance, signs are multiplying: this case is hiding something big, something which might just change about everything...

It was just beginning, and everything was already muddled... Start by agreeing when and where your investigation takes place. A standard setting would be a crowded city, nowadays.

Create your PCs: each is defined by 2 positive Traits, 2 negative Traits and a Symbol they obsess over: a geometric shape, a number, the face of a child, three whistled notes, a weird sentence, the picture of a place... the more specific the Symbol is, the better, and several PCs can share the same. Each PC is close to at least another one: these characters will lead an investigation together, they should have reasons to trust each other. It's probable the PCs know about each others' obsessions.

Together, create a NPC who will disappear at the beginning of the session and kickstart the investigation. The PCs should have a close relation to the disappeared or at least a reason to go looking for them.

Finally, take 6 pieces of paper. On the front of each, write one of the PCs' Symbols and others of your invention.

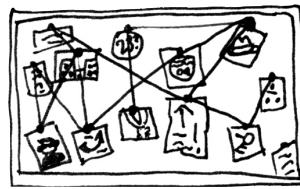
On their back, write a game chang-

er, the most metaphysical and/or post-modern you can think of: the PCs are all the same person, one of the PCs is the culprit, no one's disappeared and the NPC never existed, the whole situation is a movie shoot, the PCs are dead but don't know it, every other scene is a dream... If you can't come up with enough ideas, leave some blanks for now. At the beginning of the game, each paper shows the Symbol on their front.

I was starting to make sense of this case... The session is divided in short or long chapters, each focusing on one of the PCs. The player of this focus PC frames the scene: they freely choose if their actions fail or succeed, guided by their Traits and what happens in the story. Players whose PCs are not present during a chapter are invited to play the weirdest NPCs they can come up with.

A chapter must always deal with the ongoing investigation and describe the discovery of at least one Symbol, which is interpreted as a clue leading to the disappeared NPC. To describe the discovery of a Symbol, the player of the focus PC rolls 1d6 and puts the die on one of the papers, which means they discover a representation of this specific Symbol (written on a wall, heard in a conversation, read in a book...). A PC can discover as many Symbols as they want during a chapter.

The first chapter should focus on the discovery of the disappearance and/or the beginning of the investigation. The next chapters follow the same rules, but if a player gets a result already present on one of the papers when they



roll, they must stack their die on top of the present die or dice, not next to it.

It's also possible to decide which Symbol is discovered instead of rolling for it, by directly stacking the die on one of the papers.

To better control the session's flow, play with dice of different sizes, to build strong or fragile foundations, depending on what you want.

I could see clearly now... When a player tries to put a new die on a stack and it collapses, the paper on which they were put is turned over: the focus PC becomes aware of the ontological shift written on its back. It's not a sudden swing, more of a doubt which will begin to grow in this PC's mind (as well as the others', maybe). The Symbol written on the front of this paper can still be discovered but it's now related to this shift. It's not necessary to stack up dice on this paper: each die players put on it reinforces the doubt about the reality of this shift.

During the course of play, several game changers will end up being present simultaneously; don't try to make them inter-coherent. The PCs and/or the players can focus on only some of them at the same time, or decide some of them are red herrings.

I needed to end it all, and quick... The game concludes when the PCs realize the absurdity of the investigation, and maybe even their existence and/or all reality. Conclude with an shared epilogue, a scene where all the PCs are present: each of them mentions an element let unsolved during the game and which will remain so forever.

