So a while ago I was DMing for my friends and we were approaching the end of our 2-year long campaign – after a rough week at work I realized that we were playing in about half an hour and I had done zero prep for that session. I knew it was going to be a heavy combat session and I had finished scripting this really basic, sort of abstract generator to fuel my own improv-heavy DMing style. So i used it. And now I’m here to share with you all about how it changed the way I run my D&D games.

Hi! My name is Atty, and I’m an associate game designer at Improbable where I’m working on Redacted and doing cool Redacted things. I’ve also been DMing D&D for 3 years and I’ve recently started trying out other TTRPGs. Fair warning that there’s gonna be a lot of Homebrew content in this talk (it’s being generated) so if you’re uncomfortable with the idea of homebrew in your games, I ask that you at least hear my story

First, without going into too much detail I want to break the illusion of this mysterious generator and show you all how basic \*cough\* genius the code actually is –

So the code itself uses matt colville’s philosophy of action oriented combat as a framework or syntax for generation – I’ve been using this combat philosophy for 2 years now and its worked well for me so I decided to model the generator around it. I have a bunch of enum lists with various game relevant data as well as meta-suggestions. For different difficulties I have different min and max ranges for determining universal integer modifiers for stuff like health, spell slots etc.

1. Combat generator details
   1. Action oriented combat as the framework/rules/syntax for generation
   2. Room for interpretation
2. Lessons
   1. Yes-and during the prep period for the DM
   2. Suited to your improv style – what would it look like for a rules heavy DM?
   3. Learning to embrace the chaos and having fun with it
      1. Fear in your players eyes
   4. What else could we generate in our TTRPGs?
      1. Encounters? NPCs? Dungeons?
      2. Focus less on the preparation and turn your attention to having fun in the session
         1. No more – “fuck I didn’t expect that”, “this is going off the rails and I’m anxious”
         2. Personally, not knowing what the session was going to look like I had an excuse for not having all the material prepped
3. I coded it over the course of a couple of weekends to brush up on my python after spending way too much time in blueprints