Story of Adventure

A Table-Top Role-Playing Game

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Chapter 6

Challenges

Passing challenges are the core to every game, let alone role playing games.
In S.O.A., you will almost always want acquire numbers as high as possible to pass these challenges. You will have plenty tools to help you in this goal: dice rolls, attribute effects & modifiers, and skills/techniques.

6.1 The Total

Challenges are vast and varied in the world of S.O.A. , but regardless of whether you're fighting a mobster demi-god, sweaving around asteroid-belt ring worms, or painting a fence your outcome proceeds based on *The Total*. *The Total* the is result of all possible rolls, modifiers, and any other ancillary variables that have some influence in the situation at hand. In general it is an overall measurement of how well you did given the circumstances of the challenge, and influences everything from baseline success to damage calculation.

6.1.1 Determined Threshold

The *Determined Threshold*, sometimes just referred as the *Threshold*, is a baseline that must be met or surpassed for success in the given challenge. In general the higher the number, the more difficult the challenge is both thematically and mechanically. There are many *Threshold*s variations, but

they will always be a measurement of something within the challenge such the number of successes, the overall total, or even the number of failures. Depending on the challenge faced the *Threshold* can be set by the GM or by another character's actions.

...... New Players! ....
The GM may or may not tell you what exactly this threshold is.
....

_____ A Note to the GM _____
Sharing this information may create tangable tension, but hiding it should be flat out scary. Pick your moments well.

6.2   Success, Pass, & Fail

An important semantic to define is *Succeed* vs *Pass*:

- Success ⠶ One instance of the requirements of the Challenge has been met.

- Pass ⠶ The Challenge is completed and the result is in your favor.

- Fail ⠶ The Challenge is completed and the result is not in your favor.

In most Challenges meeting the *Threshold* requirements will allow you to pass, but sometimes the overall result will also be altered by the *Degree* between the totals of those taking part.

_____ A Note to the GM _____
Not every fail needs to result in disaster. Neutral results can also occur when you try to do something and fail.

6.2.1 Degree of Success and Failure (DSF)

In all cases that do not result in a tie (i.e. most of them) you will pass or fail by an amount referred to as its *Degree*.

$$InitiatorTotal - DefenderTotal = Degree$$

Degrees can be used intuitively to interpret specific results from a binary pass or fail state, and can also be used as a variable to be used in further calculations (e.g. Damage[1]).

6.2.2 Damage Calculation

If a challenge deals *damage* it is calculated by the DSF[2] from that challenge. Once calculated, it will then be distributed to the receiver's Health and Energy as necessary. Players will generally be able to distribute their damage between Health and Energy as they see fit, however some situations may force all of the damage onto one or the other without compromise.[3]

6.2.3 In Case of a Tie

A tie. An event that is only spoken of through whispers. The appearance of a realm of sheer impossibility in which neither success nor failure can exist. The brief moment that it breaches the mortal plane is enough to send ripples throughout the galaxy, shifting environments and worldviews alike. It is a curiously benevolent impossibility, as all those who witnessed a tie found themselves receiving 1 Cool Token[4].

6.3 Character vs Obstacle

Obstacle Challenges are initiated between your character and something that is relatively non-sentient. These are generally the most basic challenge that will be encountered, and in most cases will be decided by whether the applicable Attribute check passes or fails. The threshold, total, and any other

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[1]Damage Calculation, pg. 19
[2]Degree of Success and Failure (DSF), pg. 19
[3]Damage Types and Diversion, pg. 23
[4]Cool Tokens, pg. 20

applicable number for an *Obstacle Challenge* is determined
directly by the GM.

6.4   Character vs Character

Character Challenges are initiated between one to many
characters. They can be more involved than *Obstacle
Challenges*, and will generally take place during encounters.
In *Character Challenges* one character acts as an initiator and
proceeds with an Attribute check to form a total and/or
threshold that the other characters need to meet or defend
against with an Attribute check of their own.

6.5   Cool Tokens

Cool Tokens are an elusive trinket that, when exchanged,
grant you a *alternate* d100 to be used in your upcoming
challenge. Both d100s will be rolled for that challenge, and
you'll be able to alter the results by choosing which d100 you
want to use, or even both! The boons offered by Cool Tokens
are great, but they have strict guidelines for usage. To spend a
Cool Token you must announce it to the GM, and you also
must not have started rolling for that challenge.

Only the most daring will be able to earn Cool Tokens. While
their awardance is at the GM's digression, generally those who
make creative and...riskier plays will find themselves with a
Cool Token in hand. It ultimately is a reward for players who
think outside the box, and can be given by the GM when they
feel like it will make the story better.

It may build character; it may be narratively interesting; it
may be a character flaw; it may be a failed roll during high
tension; It could be anything, but it must be cool.

――――― A Note to the GM ―――――――――――――――

It is recommended for the maximum Cool Token cap to be 1
per player, but this is just a suggestion and ultimately left up
to you to decide in your campaign.

...... New Players! ....

"Cool" is subjective, but this does not excuse stupidity. Never assume the GM will give you Cool Tokens. Roleplay appropriately and see what happens.

....

Chapter 7

Health and Energy

7.1 Health

Health is a crucial metric that represents tangable, lasting damage to a character's body. Too much Health damage could result in a *permanent wound.* Your *Maximum Health* is equal to your total spent AP[1].

...... New Players! ....
Keep your guard up! Although most damage can get absorbed by energy, some situations may utilize *Direct Damage* which can force all of the incoming damage to Health!
....

7.1.1 Damage Types and Diversion

Damage can be delivered in two forms:

- Normal Damage : Threatening, but mitigatable. Normal damage is able to be shielded by Energy reserves, and can be allocated between Health and Energy as *the receiver* sees fit.

- Direct Damage : Terrifying, and very much life-threatening. This type bypasses all defenses and is delivered exclusively to Health.

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[1]Attribute Enhancement and AP, pg. 31

7.1.2   Permanent Wounds

Permanent Wounds are lasting injuries or conditions that will be with your character throughout their campaign(s).

7.1.3   Death

If a character's Health falls to or below 0, the character is dead. The good news is that death doesn't have to be permanent! This may be an opportunity for your friends to go on an adventure to revive you while you train in the afterlife. However, if the player desires, they may instead create a new character to be recruited by the adventuring party. Just know that it is a *choice* and not a neccessity.

7.2   Energy

Energy is a critical resource within S.O.A. with a variety of uses from executing Techniques[2] to mitigating critical injury. Managing how and when to use your Energy is vital to survival. Your *Maximum Energy* is equal to double your *Maximum Health*.

7.2.1   Technique Resources

To use a Technique[3], an Energy cost must be paid. The starting cost is 10 EN and with each level of Advancement[4], the cost increases by 5 EN.

7.2.2   Overexertion

When a character's Energy falls to to 0, the character is overexerting themselves. All instances that would normally go to Energy instead go to Health. You may choose to pass out at any time when overexerting yourself– even if there are challenges you are currently participating in.

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[2]Techniques, pg. 40
[3]Techniques, pg. 40
[4]Advancement, pg. 43

7.2.3 Passing Out

When you pass out, you may not act in any way until rested or
healed.

...... New Players! ....
It is *universally* frowned upon to attack a passed out
opponent, and only the most evil character would spitefully do
such an act.
....

Chapter 8

Encounters

Encounters are major, generally combat focused, events. The structure of how events take place are usually unimportant but are still expected to occur frequently. Encounters are organized as such:

1. **Encounter**
   This encapsulates the entire situation. *Encounters* proceed over a predetermined or indefinite number of engagements known as *Rounds*. An encounter ends when:

   - The predetermined Round countdown reaches 0

   - Only one team is able to take Turns

2. **Rounds**
   These encapsulate *every* character's Turn. After every character has had their Turn, a new *Round* begins.

3. **Turns**
   These encapsulate the *selected* character's Actions. In most instances each character takes one *Turn* per Round

4. **Actions**
   These are how characters actually do things. In most instances each character will take two *Actions* per Turn.

8.1   Actions

Character *Actions* encompass everything that they can do during encounters. Each character will generally only be able to take *two* actions during their turn so it is important to know how they differ. Actions are as follows:

- An Attribute check vs a character or obstacle within the encounter location. If the target is a character, they may execute a response Attribute check where applicable[1].

- Charge an Attribute to temporarily increase its BURST rank for the next action.

- Execute a Technique[2]. The target may perform a response Attribute check depending on the context.

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[1]Attribute Usage, pg. 32
[2]Techniques, pg. 40

Part IV

Character Creation

Chapter 9

Character Attributes

9.1   Attributes

Your character's actions and abilities are built around 5 Attribute categories: Power, Knowledge, Endurance, Speed, and Foresight. Each Attribute gives a purely bonus-based benefit, which means that it's fine, and expected, for your character to have 0's in some of their Attribute categories. Thematically a 0 just means that your character will be average in that area; you will still be able to make all of your necessary rolls– you just won't get any bonuses!

9.1.1   Attribute Enhancement and AP

Throughout your campaign(s) your Attributes will be able to be enhanced by spending Attribute Points (AP). Each point spent will increase the Attribute directly by the same amount. New characters will start with 50 AP to allocate how they wish. Afterwards they'll be earned at the end of a session, or by some other alternate means.

...... New Players! ....
Since new characters start with 50 AP this also means their starting Health is 50 and their starting Energy is 100 so be careful!
....

9.1.2   BURST

When an Attribute reaches **100**, it triggers a BURST! This surge of power permanently upgrades the character's proficiency with that Attribute, but the shock also reduce that Attribute down to **10**.

...... New Players! ....
Moderation is important! A BURST can be a powerful upgrade, but triggering too many at once could leave you in a tight spot. I recommend keeping a few Attribute scores high until the others have recovered from the shock.
....

9.2   Attribute Usage

Your character's Attributes are the core of everything that they do in Story of Adventure. Most, and possibly all, of your character's actions will involve forming a total using 1 or more Attribute. Each Attribute has its own method of being calculated as well as conditions for passing and failing[1].

Usage Notation

The notation for this section is as follows:

- d100 refers to a number from 1 to 100. This can be from either two ten-sided dice rolled to create a number with a range of 100, a random number generator, or however you decide to generate it.

- **XXX** refers to the Attribute 's process and everything that it entails.

- [XXX] refers to the value of the Attribute itself.

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[1]Success, Pass, & Fail, pg. 18

9.2.1   Knowledge [KNO]

$$d100 + [KNO] + Skill$$

Use all of the Skills that you know to form a total

⋮ How it works ⋮

Roll a d100 and add [KNO] as well as the scores of **all** Skills[2] applicable to the challenge. If your total is above the target threshold then you pass, otherwise you fail.

⋮ Where it's used ⋮

Any time your character attempts to understand something or you would otherwise ask, "Does my character know/notice..." you may execute a **KNO** action.

⋮ BURST ⋮

Unlike the other Attributes, KNOdoes not scale directly with your BURST rank. Instead, after a BURST is triggered, add 100 Skill Points[3] into your existing Skill(s) however you wish.

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[2]Skills, pg. 39
[3]Skills, pg. 39

9.2.2   Power [POW]

$$(d100_1 + [POW]) + (d100_2 + [POW]) + ...$$

Break through by building the biggest total possible from a set amount of rolls

⦂ How it works ⦂
Roll 2 d100s, add [POW] to each result, and then add them together.

⦂ Where it's used ⦂
Any time your character attempts an above average feat of strength (e.g. striking, imparting a telekinetic force, lifting something) you may execute a **POW** action.

⦂ BURST ⦂
Roll a number of additional d100s equal to your BURST rank. Add [POW] to each roll and add them to your total.

9.2.3   Endurance [END]

$$(d100 + [END]) + Target\ d100_1 + Target\ d100_2$$

Brace and mitigate the opposing total by absorbing rolls

⋮ How it works ⋮
Roll a d100 and add your [END]. Then take 2 of the lowest
opposing d100 rolls and add them to your total.

⋮ Where it's used ⋮
Any time that your character needs to brace themselves
against something, focus, or otherwise endure the effects of
something you may execute a **END** action.

⋮ BURST ⋮
Take an additional number of d100s equal to your BURST
rank from the opposing total.

9.2.4   Speed [SPD]

$$\text{total } (d100 + [SPD]) \text{ until pass or fail}$$

*Throw caution to the wind and blitz forward to build a total
with as many rolls as you can make*

⫶ How it works ⫶
Before rolling starts a threshold is determined by the GM.
Afterwards roll 2 d100s, and for every roll that is above the
threshold, add that roll and your [SPD] to the total. Any d100s
that are below the threshold are removed, and then the
process repeats with the remaining d100s. The process is
repeated until a target threshold is reached, or you run out of
d100s.

⫶ Where it's used ⫶
Any time your character is attempting to do something
abnormally fast (e.g. a quick getaway, a rapid series of blows,
hastily typing something) you may execute a **SPD** action.

⫶ BURST ⫶
Roll an additional number of d100s equal to your BURST
rank.

9.2.5   Foresight [ESP]

guess within $[ESP]$ against the opposing roll

Predict what an opposing total will be to reverse a portion of it back to the user

⁝ How it works ⁝
Before an opposing action, you declare what you predict the resulting total will be. You don't roll at all, and your starting total is what you guess. If the distance between your guess, and their total is less than your [ESP] then you may steal their highest roll and add it to your total.
In *Character vs Obstacle*[4] challenges the GM will announce an amount of d100s that you will need to guess the sum of.
In *Character vs Character*[5] challenges you will need to guess what the total of their action will be.

⁝ Where it's used ⁝
Any time your character is using their intuition to sense or predict something (e.g. where an attack is coming from, breaking something's disguise, the weather) you may execute an **ESP** action.

⁝ BURST ⁝
Increase the number of guesses by your BURST rank, and steal the next highest d100 roll per successful guess. Your starting total is the highest of your guesses.

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[4]Character vs Obstacle, pg. 19
[5]Character vs Character, pg. 20

Chapter 10

Abilities: Skills and Techniques

Abitites are extra modifiers for your Attributes during various situations. Generally they will work by replacing $[XXX]$ with $([XXX] + [Ability])$ in the usage formula. There are 3 categories for abilities: Skills, Techniques, and AWESOME/AWFUL.

10.1   Skills

Skills represent your general knowledge of all things, and provide bonus(es) specifically to your KNO challenges. Their bonus is directly equal to the amount of Skill Points (SP) allocated to them. They affect the formula as so:

$$d100 + ([KNO] + [Skill])$$

As an example, if your character has a [KNO] of 20 and a Knitting Skill of 37; then in a Knitting challenge, you will add your d100 roll to **57** instead of 20 to calculate the result.

...... New Players! ....
Skills are used to perform a variety of quick tasks and can flesh out your character's past, present, and future. Before using Techniques, make sure you understand Skills first.
....

10.2   Techniques

Techniques are advanced maneuvers representing specific uses of Attributes during challenges. Each Technique is tied to a specific Attribute action, and the actions are processed as normal. However each Technique also has its own rules to follow, and will add new conditional boosts or effects depending on various factors of your action. Unlike Skills these are not automatic boosts and cost Energy to use; starting at 10 EN and increasing by 5 EN per Advancement (Adv).

...... New Players! ....
Typically Techniques will generally be used in character vs character challenges, but they can be used wherever applicable– even in obstacle challenges!
....

10.3   AWESOME/AWFUL

AWESOME/AWFUL (A/A) abilities represent a character's fringe expertise– the areas that they are the best and the worst in. AWESOME/AWFUL abilites are action-wide scenario boosts. In an action where the character's AWESOME ability is applicable add *50* to that Attribute, and conversely subtract *50* when an AWFUL ability is applicable. Due to the increased risk, when an AWFUL ability is rolled the player will earn 1 Cool Token.[1].

...... New Players! ....
There may be situations in which your Skill or Technique is a negative number. This acts the same as when it is a positive number but you subtract instead of add. You are, afterall, adding a negative number.
....

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[1]Cool Tokens, pg. 20

_____ A Note to the GM _____

This may seem like a free bonus, but to make your campaign(s)[2] more interesting I recommend you, or even the player, try to put the character in AWESOME/AWFUL situations.

Chapter 11

Character Development

Characters will always be developing as they're used and can undergo lasting changes at the end of, or even sometimes during, a session.

11.1   Advancement

The GM may give players the opportunity to advance one Attribute and/or ability

11.1.1   Earning Attribute Points

When given the opportunity, you can pick an Attribute you used during this session and roll a d10. The Attribute is increased by a number of AP equal to the number rolled.

11.1.2   Ability Advancement

When given the opportunity, you may choose to either advance an existing ability or add a new one.

11.2   Injuries & Enhancements

You will experience physical, mental, and spiritual changes on your journey. I recommend keeping track of these over the campaign.

11.3   Possessions

You will acquire a lot of artifacts, equipment, and trinkets over your journey. (author's note: right now it's all one area. I'm considering segmenting based on playtesting)(editor's note: we may need to reorganize a bit at some point yes)

11.4   Persons, Places, & Things of Interest

Part V

Advanced Mechanics (Experimental)

Chapter 12

Temporary Battle Damage

The locations are specific and the impact of losing health temporarily limits a character's abilities.

- Head
  - Always damage ESP.
- Body
  - Always damages END
- Arms
  - Typically damages POW
  - May also damage SPD
- Legs
  - Typically damages SPD
  - May also damage POW and/or END

This battle damage may be recovered over time. This is the same way you woud normally recover health but it would go to specific parts of the body instead of to the normal health pool.

Chapter 13

Reactive Maximum Energy

Recalculates at the *beginning* of each turn. This way, plans aren't disrupted mid-turn.

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