

# PLOT UNFOLDING MACHINE

The Plot Unfolding Machine (PUM) is a **Game Master Emulator** that allows you to play any tabletop RPGs without a GM. On your own, or with another player.

## HOW TO PLAY WITHOUT A GM?

You've got that RPG you always wanted to play. Maybe you are missing a group, or a difficult agenda, or your friends might not be really in sync with your way of enjoying the setting you wanted to explore. Well, it is possible to play alone, or even with a friend on a similar situation, without anyone wanting to GM. Despite being a bit difficult to start, playing *GMLess* is fun and can work well. Plus it can help your GM skills!

Sounds too good to be true? Well, a little bit, yeah. Who prepares the game? Who comes up with the first scene? Who opposes the characters? Who plays the NPCs? If you played other Solo systems like Mythic, and Game Master's Apprentice, they give you a lot of resources. But in the end, **you** are the one who has to come up with content. The question is how hard it is.

Finally, how do you remember what happens as you play? As opposed to a novel, here you can't go back to make changes to the story! So, how to do it? Do you have to write the game as fiction? or speak it out loud on your own? Perhaps record yourself on the Mic, or with a camera to share on YouTube. Perhaps you want to voice it out, using a text2speech software to convert it to text. Any of these options work. What matters is, grab that RPG of yours, create PCs and put them through challenges in your ideal world, then jump into their shoes and play them!

## WHAT MAKES PUM SPECIAL?

Other solo systems kind of leave you alone when it comes to content. That works well if you have that writer spirit in you, and can come up with things on the fly easily. The question is, why do those ideas have to be entirely up to you? How do you actually put your PCs in action, and give them things for **them** to decide, and not you? PUM can answer to a wider range of questions without being setting specific and still be a compact game that acts as a short-worded GM who can help you with *less authoring*.

PUM provides a set of tools that **help you design your adventure scenes**, while letting your protagonists unfold of the plot. Eight **scene design components**, and eight **questioning oracles** can answer more than just yes and no, and you'll be able to delegate some heavy lifting to PUM. Let yourself be part of the game.

## HOW TO PLAY

- **An RPG:** A game you like, and a bunch of dice for it
- **Characters:** One or more. Two is good so they talk
- **Adventure:** An engaging plot hook & start location
- **Mood:** Look around music and art for your game
- **PUM:** Print or ready the last 2 pages of these rules

In essence, you will design scenes first (GM Mode), then play them with your RPG characters (PC mode):

## 1. SCENE SETUP (GM MODE)

Setting up a scene is an initial phase, where you are out of your PCs point of view, thinking about the next stage in your game. This is where you sit down with the GM Emulator, and together gather the minimum necessary needed to let loose your PCs to take over.

PUM provides **two** methods for defining scenes. Choose one and roll on its specified table:

1. **Expectation Checker:** You have an idea of what your PCs will attempt to do next, or where to go
  - *Ramsey goes back to the tavern, to meet back with Eleonor, and tell her about his last discoveries*
  - *Eon decides to stay a while, investigating the room further, before he leaves it. Asks the others to leave*

The expectation checker table will basically decide whether such expectation happens, or if something interrupts your PCs, or ruin their plans.

2. **Scene Prompt:** You are not sure about *what happens next*, or you expect a random event

- *Ramsey unlocks the door, and finally enters the facility... (not sure what he'll find inside)*
- *Eon disembarks from the Ship. He is finally in Bright City... (what will happen next?)*

After rolling on a table, take a few moments to think about what could it mean. This takes practice.

## 2. REFINE SCENE (GM MODE)

Aside from **six** scene designer tables, there are **eight** oracles you should get familiar with, **yes or no, what, who, intent, reason, activity, describe** and **kind of**. At this stage, ask questions about the location your PCs are in, about their surroundings, whether there is a **challenge** or a special **circumstance**. At this stage, you should use the entire PUM arsenal to set up interesting, meaningful scenes for your PCs.

One advice here: Roll the minimum amount of tables, just the enough to spark your imagination. Stop as soon as you have a picture of the scene. Avoid knowing more than what your PCs know, unless there are NPC involved (you'll have to roleplay them, so will need a general picture about them before your PCs).

## 3. PLAY THE SCENE (PC MODE)

Regardless of your choice, as soon as you have a scene, jump in your character's point of view and think what would they do, say, or try. Don't come up with everything yourself (we are not telling a story): **ask questions** to the GM emulator, ready those tables. Any question a player could ask a GM in any group based RPG validly applies. Some examples:

- *Is there any alternative entrance to the palace?*
- *Is there anyone around to help us out?*
- *How does this person look like?*
- *What is the President talking about?*
- *What is the police doing here? What do we see?*

Questions you make must be **answerable** from PC's point of view: After your PCs find a corpse, you can't ask *Who killed her!*, but rather have them figure it out.

Sometimes, you might need to know a few things in advance, for example an NPCs intention, so you know what they say or what they are trying to get from your PCs. It is unavoidable, but not so terrible, try to keep a mind note about what you as a player know, from what PCs know. Try to minimize that gap as much as possible, however.

And remember, we want your characters to take action, not you. So, whenever there is something that **relies on their skills or choices**, switch to the RPG you are playing, before they get what they are looking for.

#### 4. CONCLUDE SCENE (PC MODE)

Eventually, your scene will fulfill its meaning, one way or another, good or bad for your PCs. How long the scenes should be, and how well specified the cut of each scene is, will be mostly up to preference and practice.

You don't have to play the scenes structured and disconnected from each other, you can play the transitions smoothly without calling them *scenes*. Instead, roll the scene prompts and expectation checkers more freely.

A concrete scene conclusion moment is also a good time to write down some notes too, so even if you play with smooth transitions, remember to take a break to do a small recap. Consider the following bullet points:

- Open threads and questions
- Characters met so far
- Important notes and reminders
- Summary of the scene

#### THE POWER OF EXPECTATIONS

PUM presents players a choice between **Proposing a Scene** versus rolling a **Scene Prompt**. My advice here is always give priority to your own thoughts and ideas.

Let's zoom in a bit into what an expectation is: "*Aribeth enters the Temple of Ilmather*". Is that an expectation? **No!** Because you are not declaring what is she expecting. This example is a better fit for the Designer, to figure out what happens **after you enter**.

**However**, if you say "*Aribeth enters the Temple of Ilmather, she expects to find King Nasher*". Now **THAT** is a good expectation, as it can be twisted. The **expectation checker** can now indicate that Nasher is absent, or the doors are closed, or busy with someone.

<b>Unexpected complication</b>	Roll on the <b>Scene Complication</b> or pull any form of plot twist into your game.
<b>Interrupted by diff. scene</b>	Your expectation is interrupted, either propose something or roll a <b>Scene Prompt</b> . You may still retry your original scene expectation afterwards, if it makes sense.
<b>Even better</b>	Whatever you were expecting, the situation is better. If you are unsure, roll <b>Discovery</b>

#### RUNNING BLANK

The **Scene Prompt** table is useful when you would desire a GM told you what happened next. Either when starting a game, or in the middle of a game, right after your PCs open that door: "*What now?*"

This table is very powerful, it is completely abstract and agonistic to your game style, it just gives you a lane to think through how your adventure advances.

Many outcomes in those prompts contain a dice 🎲 icon, which means "go and roll that scene designer element" (if you need). Most times, after such prompt, you'll have enough to play. If you get stuck on any prompt, then I advice becoming familiar with the tables. Let's take a look at the **Scene Prompts** results:

<b>Scene 🎲 complication</b>	Complications are very good plot twists and fillers, they spark a lot of ideas.
<b>Scene catalyst 🎲</b>	Catalysts are <i>implicitly</i> invoking your setting tropes, the world around your PCs.
<b>Problem or challenge 🎲</b>	This reminds you to make your PCs take action. The challenge will prompt how.
<b>Risk about to trigger 🎲</b>	Risks, just like discoveries, refer mostly to dangers for your PCs threads and goals.
<b>Opportunity to make 🎲 discovery</b>	Discoveries are ways of making progress in a thread. If you know more or less how, you can skip it, but this usually helps.
<b>Someone is there</b>	Bring someone known or unknown to your game. You can use <b>who</b> or <b>describe</b> oracles.
<b>Conseq. of your actions or presence</b>	Your PCs don't go messing around, killing things and making deals. Did you think that wouldn't have any repercussions?
<b>Location specific</b>	Think of the area your PCs are in. Usually it has something unique that can reveal.
<b>Discover enemy actions</b>	It can refer either to things your enemies did before you came, or doing right now.
<b>Face active opposition</b>	What is stopping your PCs from getting what they want? or who? and how?

**Word of advice, use the designer sparsely.** It is by no means meant to be used religiously scene by scene, but rather on those moments when you need a push, and require a prompt to put you back on track.

Finally, you might also want to be familiar with the **oracles**. They might be easy to forget, but scene prompts are by no mean auto-sufficient. They need to be followed up with further questions. For example, you discover enemy actions, which **Activities** they did?

#### SCENE DESIGNER TABLES

These are all meant to sharpen up your scene setup.

But it is full of elements: **challenges**, **discoveries**, **risks**, **circumstances** and **complications**, even a **scene catalyst**. Which of them to use? and How?

There is no hard rule here, but one method you can use is the following: After deciding between the Scene Prompt or the Expectation Check, ask yourself, *do you have enough to play?* If yes, stop the scene setup. If not, proceed one table at a time until you have enough to get going, in this order: 1. Catalyst, 2. Challenge, 3. Circumstance, 4. Discovery, 5. Risk.

## CATALYST

These recall different meta-game elements of your setting. For example, history, society, character weaknesses, remote events or curiosities around. The idea is to remind you about RPG things that you may usually forget about.

This table will be normally called from a **Scene Prompt**, although nothing prevents you from using it at will, whenever you need some flavor or content material for your scenes.

## CHALLENGE

Challenges alone can be a great source of inspiration for scenes “*Strength, force or power might help*”, could mean there’s a door to be forced open, what is that door and where does it lead to? Why is it there?

Don’t underestimate **challenges**. Either by a scene expectation or a scene design. If your intention is to use those RPG mechanics you have, have your PCs drive the story, *then you need to give them things to do, put them in interesting situations so they shine!*

Challenge prompts do not indicate **how** they have to resolve them. They should prompt **situations**. Let’s run an example, your PCs finally find the king’s son location, when they open the door (Design a scene):

- **Room for hidden things or intentions:** the kid is hiding from you, perhaps he didn’t want to be found in the first place!.
- **Confronting or fighting might be one way:** someone is holding the kid as hostage and is willing to die protecting him.
- **Something to crack, unlock or enable:** The kid is jailed behind a mechanism.

### Did you notice how challenges can create situations?

Regarding when to roll for challenges: There is an explicit invocation called from **Scene Prompts** 🎲, but other than that, call them whenever you need to fill the scene with things for your PCs to interact with.

## CIRCUMSTANCE

This table is used to complicate challenges, as well as combats. It may be invoked whenever you need a bit more of flavor in any of the scenes you are thinking of. For this lone reason, Circumstances are **Challenge companion**. Let’s take a look some examples:

- **Information or knowledge is missing** could mean your characters need to gather some information to pass through the challenge. If it is a skill test, well, they have to investigate first, there is an open question. If it is a fight, perhaps the enemy is heavily armored and someone needs to find a weak spot.
- **There is elevation or vertical terrain** might make things physically trickier. For example, you are designing a scene, and you get an opportunity to find a console with encrypted information. Guess what? That data pad is on a 5 meters high post!
- **Hidden presence sneaking or watching** means there is a camera somewhere! or shady ninjas.

## DISCOVERY AND RISK

These represent outcomes, discoveries and findings that advance or hinder your PCs goals. These tables work well both in a **scene setup**, to refine them, or as well **during a scene**, when the opportunity arises.

Discoveries can be extremely useful when you want to know what do your PCs learn on a finding situation, a clue, a document or an NPC that reveals something.

1. When coming up with a Scene Design: It helps fleshing out such scene, for example if the discovery is **Learn about a location**, perhaps there is a map in the room. Remember you can combine different tables to spice it up, for example with a **challenge**: you get **Strength might help + Learn about a Location**, then perhaps the map is under heavy rubble that needs raw strength to lift it up.
2. After you have an opportunity to learn something: Perhaps you persuaded an NPC to reveal something, or you found a Terminal and your hacker could hack it: **Learn enemy weakness** means you found about illegal business trades, your PCs could use this to blackmail them.

**Risks** work very similarly. If you use the table while designing a scene, a **Lose a trace or waste time** might evoke you a situation where you have two paths to choose from, only one of them leads to mount Doom.

On the other hand, if you just failed to convince the King from sending troops to the north, what is the price? **Lose or sacrifice something** might mean the King demands you pay tribute to him for your arrogance. **Harm a relationship** may mean similar.

Let’s look at some entries that might be of interest:

<b>Answer an open question</b>	Make any question you like about a thread your PCs follow. Whatever it is, the answer is here. If you get it, answer it with an oracle.
<b>Improve a relationship</b>	Either something someone likes, or a subject that someone or a faction would approve.
<b>Confirm a hope or theory</b>	Did your characters wish for something? then this might mean it is true! This is a positive outcome towards a thread.
<b>Compromise someone</b>	Whatever happened here, it puts someone else in danger or in an undesired position.
<b>Give enemy advantage</b>	PCs action went in enemy favor, or gave an upper hand. Perhaps a prisoner escaped.
<b>Fight or get captured</b>	If designing a scene, then it is a fight. But if you were already on a fight, and you lost...

## COMPLICATION

The **Scene Complication** is best used when any of the other oracles call for it. Similarly, sometimes it can happen that the game events themselves lead to further trouble, so feel free to use any of the oracles freely, when you are in need of inspiration.

You will notice the Complication needs a **Subject**, but this table may also be used on its own, whenever you need a target or a McGuffin for any of your plots.

In summary, these tables provide value to unfolding your games with content and imagination material.

## LET'S PLAY ALREADY

Every stage we discussed so far should be part of the fun and part of the game. But let's be real, the fun begins when we can get the action rolling and our PCs are put through interesting situations.

As I said earlier, asking questions should be the driver of the game, although don't overdo it. You don't have to ask about an NPC until you know the shape of their left shoulder armor. Focus on what is relevant, the rest, indeed, you'll have to come up with it, and many times it is much faster and much more reasonable to come up with it, rather than asking.

## RPG GENRES

PUM can play mostly any genre or theme, such as romance or adventure, action or horror. It can also do mysteries quiet well, thanks to risks and discoveries.

The trick is to adjust the meaning of **Ally** and **Enemy**, a result in various oracle questions. Does an enemy mean a huge orc? Not necessarily! An enemy can be your PCs ego, drug addiction, their husband or a nightmare they have. Play around oracle prompts, without sticking too literally to their meaning.

## THE 'YES OR NO' ORACLE

The Yes or No oracle is a fantastic expectations probe. When you ask about the game through it, it will introduce tension and uncertainty.

Before you ask, make sure you are capable of handling different possible scenarios, check if the question is significant enough, and if you are not already biased toward an answer. Save yourself some unnecessary dice rolling. It is alright to be arbitrary sometimes, particularly if it improves your pace.

PUM's Yes or No oracle adds a twist: the **caveat**. Feel free to ignore it if the caveat doesn't make any sense, but don't give up so fast either, have fun with it:

<b>Don't know</b>	This means whatever you have asked on behalf of your characters point of view, cannot be known, at least not without further research, or going deeper, or just not today.
<b>Hard to say</b>	Refers to an answer which your characters might need to figure out by themselves, through a challenge or by other means.
<b>possibly</b>	Whichever yes or no, cannot be confirmed to the 100% Your characters will have to live with that for a while or find a way to confirm it.
<b>for now</b>	Things might be initially one way, but not later.
<b>unless...</b>	This caveat refers to a condition. The answer to your question for Yes or No may rely on a prerequisite or have an exception
<b>obviously</b>	This is of course a known fact, or something widely known. Or perhaps it is not only so, but in fact exaggeratedly so.
<b>but, and</b>	Use these caveats with freedom and creativity. Empower or weaken statements, add or remove elements to the answer for your own surprise.

## FLESHING OUT NPCs

One of the most recurrent needs is to come up with details about an NPC. Well, let's review the oracles we have available to flesh them out.

- **Who** is useful to know a feature, and most importantly, their allegiance (ally, or enemy, else)
- **Intent** is probably your next question. It is the most immediate, visible goal they have. It is what they say they want, their next desired course of action
- **Describe someone** can be used if you need to know how they look like, their appearance
- **Kind of role** you need to know their profession
- **Activity** to know what are they doing now
- **Reason** is a deeper, to get inside inner motivations

Knowing these will give you plenty of tools for sure. But having so many oracles for NPCs doesn't mean you have to roll all of them! Just one step at a time.

## OPTIONAL RULES

### PLOT SCORE

The following system helps you conclude your games:

Note down the thread(s) your characters follow, and assign each of them a starting **Plot Score** of **3**. When a scene ends, modify its **score** following the next criteria

Criteria	Modifier
Rolled Complication or Risk	-2
PCs failed at least one test	-1
PCs Succeeded all their tests	+1
A discovery was rolled	+2
Score the scene yourself	-2 or +2

If you fulfill multiple criteria, sum them up together. When any plot reaches **10**, start thinking of wrapping up, or when falling down to **0**, consider critical scenes.

### SCENE DIE

During Scene Setup, roll an additional **1d10** and map the numbers from **1** to **6** to the Scene Designer tables. Roll on such table. Use a **1d20** for less interference, or a **1d6** to always have a scene element incorporated.

### WILD DICE

Whenever you roll doubles on an oracle question, something happens: If both dice are 5 or less, roll a **Risk** and add it as a problem in your current scene, perhaps an interruption, or something wrong going on. On the other hand, if both dice are 6 or more, roll a **Discovery** instead, this is an opportunity to learn something useful towards your plot and PCs goals.

### EXPECTING TROUBLE

When proposing a scene, if you expect trouble, roll expectation checker twice, keeping the lowest value.

### SCENE UNFOLDING MACHINE

For extended GM Emulation, check out my auxiliary system **Scene Unfolding Machine (SUM)**. It is a separate download. The supplement provides you with **GM Actions**, **NPC Action** and prompts for **open questions** that do not belong to any of PUM's oracles.

# PLOT UNFOLDING MACHINE - EXAMPLE

## GAME SETUP

We will be playing in the world of Dragon Age, a fantasy medieval game where humans and elves may born **mages**, with powers that expose them to demonic posession and can cause terrible harm.

## THE HOOK

Eron and Setia are **Templars**, and have been invoked to the town of Niteras, to investigate demonic appearances. The Organization suspects this can be a renegade mage let loose, and the situation is dire.

Eron is trained a knight, whose weaknesses are an addiction to Lyrium. Setia is a Mage-Hunter archer, her weakness is her cold-blooded reputation.

## SCENE 1

Since I have no idea how can the game start, I will use **Scene Prompt** and a **Challenge**:

- 🎰 Prompt: Face active opposition
- 🎰 Challenge: Only a specialist can do

Alright, this is telling me the game is going to start with **Active opposition**, so I will ask an oracle 🎰 “Is this a demon?” → No - so in that case I am going to read this as someone resisting the templars from doing the job in town.

Since the Challenge said this is a **Specialist** thing, it means the Templars powers will be relevant in such scene, probably by invoking their order treaties and laws. I proceed to wrap up the **Scene Setup**: There are some complices in town trying to protect a mage that they think innocent.

Now I play with my characters point of view, 🎰 the Templars will check their abilities to detect foul magic in town, despite what townfolk say, and they succeed. Next, The templars will try to convince the guards that they are just trying to help, 🎰 and they succeed the persuasion roll.

Finally I need to know what the templars learn from the guards, and since they succeeded, we roll a **Discovery** 🎰 Learn about a location. The guards tell that there is indeed a mage, but outside, in the forest.

## SCENE 2

The templars will go to the forest the guards pointed out (🎲 **Describe area**: Knowingly Abandoned), a place not traversed anymore since (🎲 **Reason**: Matter of culture or history) there was an earthquake and it destroyed the trade routes coming across.

I will use again two **Scene Designer** elements to figure out what happens when travelling in the forest.

- 🎰 Prompt: Risk about to trigger
- 🎰 Risk: Fight or be killed
- 🎰 Challenge: Sanity, spirit or willpower tested

My scene interpretation, is that the Templars will have to resort to their powers, because they will be

facing a demon, that can be in fact banished and the combat avoided! I picture a foul demon showing up from another dimension, incredibly dangerous.

🎲 With the Templars Powers, the PCs actually fail to avoid this combat and get into a Fight. I decide this fight is incredibly difficult, and 🎰 they actually lose the fight. Taking a look at a consequence **Risk** and read there is 🎰 Expose weaknesses or plans.

Unfortunately, the demon now knows Templars are on the hunt. And happen to know that templars are **vulnerable** (weakness) to Lyrium.

## SCENE 3

The demon escaped and the templars got hurt, things doesn't look good for them.

I am deciding that they will want to take a break and make camp. However, since I am making a scene proposal, I roll on the **Expectation Checker** which

🎲 **Happens as expected**. This means the templars finally get a moment of respite and safe recovery.

## SCENE 4

The templars will want to keep looking for the Demon, so off they go. I am picturing a scene where they are travelling across the Forest but I really don't know what can happen, so let's setup the scene:

- 🎰 Prompt: Problem or challenge
- 🎰 Challenge: Charisma or a strong personality

We mentioned earlier an earthquake in this forest, but it will take a social related challenge. Based on **Charisma or a strong personality**, I read we will find a wanderer, whose 🎰 **Intent** → {Demand Plans}. He is angry, and demands the Templars to tell their leaders that “The Doomed” will never forget what happened.

The templars intimidate this crazy man and put him back in his place, 🎰 since they succeed, we learn from the man (🎲 **Scene Discovery**: New way of solving thread) that through the **Earthquake Cliffs** in the forest, the Templars might be able to track the dangerous mage faster, than through elsewhere.

## CONCLUSION

As you can see, the **Scene Setup** elements helped me unfold the plot hook, used my RPG of choice to solve problems, and made oracle questions to clarify things.

This is of course a simplified game, but you should be able to do similarly. Notice how **Discovery** and **Risk** helped figuring out what was learned or risked, and how by making additional questions, we clarified further topics.

A GM Emulator acts like a guide of few words. Try to take the most of it, by making many questions, but not that many so to slow down. At some point, it won't be able to clarify any further, and it will be up to you :)

# PLOT UNFOLDING MACHINE - SETUP

## SCENE PROMPT (1D10)

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1 Scene complication 🎲              | 6 Someone is there                        |
| 2 Invoke scene catalyst 🎲           | 7 Consequence of your actions or presence |
| 3 Problem or challenge 🎲            | 8 Location specific event                 |
| 4 Risk about to trigger 🎲           | 9 Discover enemy actions                  |
| 5 Opportunity to make a discovery 🎲 | 10 Face active opposition                 |

## EXPECTATION CHECKER (1D10)

- |   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1 Interrupted by a different scene prompt 🎲 | 6 Happens as expected        |
| 2 Scene complication 🎲                      | 7 Happens as expected        |
| 3 Happens as expected                       | 8 Happens as expected        |
| 4 Happens as expected                       | 9 Happens as expected        |
| 5 Happens as expected                       | 10 Even better than expected |

## SCENE DESIGNER

### 1. CATALYST (1D20)

- |                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 History or past recalled | 6 Local faction activities  |
| 2 Social event occurrence  | 7 An opportunity to trade   |
| 3 Setting aspect featured  | 8 Alternative route found   |
| 4 PCs backstories referred | 9 Find something of use     |
| 5 Location detail invoked  | 10 Call character strengths |

- |                             |                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 11 It's about to happen...  | 16 Test for keen senses     |
| 12 Be summoned or called    | 17 Change in environment    |
| 13 An esoteric occult event | 18 Route or path blocked    |
| 14 Someone else's troubles  | 19 Character flaws recalled |
| 15 Impacts of remote event  | 20 A danger is nearby...    |

### 2. CHALLENGE (1D20)

- |   |
|---|
| 1 Having special tools or equipment helps   |
| 2 Have to endure, resist or withstand       |
| 3 Strength, force or power can be of help   |
| 4 Things here may take long time to solve   |
| 5 Presence of magic, divine or technology   |
| 6 Room for hidden things or intentions      |
| 7 An element is hard to reach out or get    |
| 8 Something only a specialist can do        |
| 9 Presence of guards, sentinels or security |
| 10 Have sanity, spirit or willpower tested  |

- |  |
|--|
| 11 Something to crack, unlock or enable      |
| 12 Something needs protection or care        |
| 13 Magic or superpowers would be helpful     |
| 14 Driving, piloting, handling to be done    |
| 15 Charisma or a strong personality can help |
| 16 Requires keen senses or extreme intuition |
| 17 Something only for experts to understand  |
| 18 Could use a soft hand, empathy or wisdom  |
| 19 Something is broken, damaged or failing   |
| 20 Confronting or fighting might be one way  |

### 3. CIRCUMSTANCE (1D20)

- |  |
|--|
| 1 There is more trouble than expected      |
| 2 Presence of special equipment or feats   |
| 3 Deception, hazards or traps are laid out |
| 4 Information or knowledge is missing      |
| 5 There is elevation or vertical terrain   |
| 6 Location is dangerous or problematic     |
| 7 Someone supporting from a distance       |
| 8 Unexpected help or support is arriving   |
| 9 Something needs to be done in parallel   |
| 10 Time limit or intense pressure          |

- |   |
|---|
| 11 Presence of innocents or bystanders      |
| 12 Location is moving or unstable           |
| 13 There are atmospheric difficulties       |
| 14 Tactical devices may be utilized         |
| 15 Vehicle or machine can be utilized       |
| 16 May have secret passages or routes       |
| 17 Hidden presence sneaking or watching     |
| 18 Willpower, spirit or faith is needed     |
| 19 Strength, power or might is needed       |
| 20 Intellect, resolve or presence is needed |

### 4. DISCOVERY (1D10)

- |                              |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Answer one open question   | 6 Learn more about enemy    |
| 2 Meet or learn of someone   | 7 Learn about a location    |
| 3 Useful object or resource  | 8 Improve a relationship    |
| 4 New way of solving thread  | 9 Confirm a hope or theory  |
| 5 Learn enemy secret or plan | 10 Progress or solve thread |

### 5. RISK (1D10)

- |                                |                         |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Lose a trace or waste time   | 6 Give enemy advantage  |
| 2 Compromise someone else      | 7 Confirm a concern     |
| 3 Lose or sacrifice something  | 8 Harm a relationship   |
| 4 Take harm or risk own object | 9 Fight or get captured |
| 5 Expose weaknesses or plans   | 10 Fight or be killed   |

### 6. SUBJECT (1D10) + COMPLICATION (1D20)

- |               |
|---------------|
| 1 Enemy       |
| 2 Faction     |
| 3 Plan        |
| 4 Target      |
| 5 Location    |
| 6 Ally        |
| 7 Being       |
| 8 Object      |
| 9 Information |
| 10 Ability    |

- |                                     |
|-------------------------------------|
| 1 Missing, Lost, Forgotten          |
| 2 Delicate, Dangerous, Sensitive    |
| 3 Blocked, Hidden, Trapped          |
| 4 Problematic, Disastrous, Rebelled |
| 5 Dead, Destroyed, Unrecoverable    |
| 6 Broken, Damaged, Injured          |
| 7 Flooded, Overloaded, Exceeded     |
| 8 Sabotaged, Captured, Taken        |
| 9 Corrupted, Twisted, Cursed        |
| 10 False, Fake, Corrupt, Concealed  |

- |                                      |
|--------------------------------------|
| 11 Mistaken, Discarded, Wrong        |
| 12 Leaked, Discovered, Revealed      |
| 13 Unreliable, Erratic, Insufficient |
| 14 Disrupted, Modified, Altered      |
| 15 Concerning, Unsettling, Feared    |
| 16 Useless, Abandoned, Obsolete      |
| 17 Sick, Hazardous, Weak, Incapable  |
| 18 Prepared, Defended, Ready         |
| 19 Unprepared, Unarmed, Surprised    |
| 20 Delayed, Late, Hindered           |

# PLOT UNFOLDING MACHINE - ORACLES

<b>Yes or No</b>	Are there any traps? Do they accept the deal?
<b>What</b>	Recent past events, or subject matters and topics
<b>Who</b>	Determines the role of a new NPC in your game
<b>Intent</b>	Describes the intention or goal of a given NPC

<b>Activity</b>	Current doings or actions of an NPC or Faction
<b>Reason</b>	The inner motivation of an NPC for their choices
<b>Describe</b>	Visual or apparent description of an element
<b>Kind of</b>	The nature of an element. Roll each column twice.

## YES OR NO

d10	even	unlikely	likely	d10
1	Don't know	Don't know	Hard to say	, possibly.
2	Hard to say	Hard to say	Don't know	, for now.
3	No	No	No	, but...
4	No	No	No	.
5	No	No	Yes	.
6	No	No	Yes	.
7	Yes	No	Yes	.
8	Yes	No	Yes	, and...
9	Yes	Yes	Yes	, unless...
10	Yes	Yes	Yes	, obviously.

## WHO

d10	subject	d10	type
1	an unimportant	1	Ally
2	a strange	2	Ally
3	a local	3	Ally
4	an old	4	Person
5	a family related	5	Person
6	a scared	6	Person
7	an angry	7	Being
8	a desperate	8	Enemy
9	a powerful	9	Enemy
10	an important	10	Enemy

## ACTIVITY

d10	they are	d10	subject
1	Claiming	1	Business
2	Supporting	2	Authority
3	Searching	3	Place
4	Preparing	4	Faction
5	Hindering	5	Someone
6	Holding	6	Defense
7	Requesting	7	Knowledge
8	Controlling	8	Words
9	Attacking	9	Resources
10	Expelling	10	Agreement

## DESCRIBE

d10	adverb	area	someone	object
1	Curiously	Ruined	Injured	Broken
2	Specially	Ancient	Clever	Antique
3	Defensively	Abandoned	Hunted	Forbidden
4	Knowingly	Dangerous	Dangerous	Dangerous
5	Strongly	Empty	Skilled	Mundane
6	Legally	Unusual	Exotic	Rare
7	Actively	Secure	Innocent	Harmless
8	Commonly	Crowded	Famous	Legendary
9	Mostly	Fancy	Rich	Valuable
10	Incredibly	Fortified	Powerful	Reinforced

## WHAT

d10	type	d10	subject	d10	event
1	Known	1	Weakness	1	Sabotaged
2	Sensitive	2	Event	2	Exposed
3	Conflicting	3	Result	3	Discovered
4	Valuable	4	Backstory	4	Opposed
5	Surprising	5	Location	5	Destroyed
6	Personal	6	Politics	6	Hindered
7	Dangerous	7	Business	7	Observed
8	Own	8	Encounter	8	Removed
9	Secretive	9	Decision	9	Established
10	Unique	10	Request	10	Exploited

## INTENT

d10	they	d10	subject
1	Fight	1	Enemies
2	Oppose	2	Allies
3	Demand	3	Cause
4	Request	4	Situation
5	Need	5	Object
6	Offer	6	Location
7	Explain	7	Information
8	Join	8	Plans
9	Trade	9	Resources
10	Help	10	Power

## REASON

d10	an action	d10	a motive
1	Seek	1	Power or status
2	Recover	2	Revenge or a debt
3	Control	3	Glory or reputation
4	Matter of	4	Chaos or destruction
5	Need	5	Culture or history
6	Eradicate	6	Knowledge or interest
7	Deal with	7	Contract or an order
8	Desire	8	Justice or rights
9	Secure	9	Safety or survival
10	Prevent	10	Resources or wealth

## KIND OF

d10	item	ability	people	enemy	danger
1	Healing	Absorb	Fighter	Agile	Trap
2	Deadly	Harmful	Medical	Defend	Explode
3	Ingest	Utility	Civilian	Sneaky	Corrode
4	Protect	Elemental	Scavenger	Native	Terrain
5	Mystic	Enhance	Academic	Smart	Enemy
6	Tech	Natural	Faithful	Magical	Run
7	Historic	Weaken	Powerful	Animal	Secret
8	Divine	Tyring	Craftsmen	Artificial	Sound
9	Move	Healing	Wealthy	Gigantic	Damage
10	Static	Support	Enforcing	Horrible	Hide