FLASHBACKS

The rules don't distinguish between actions performed in the present moment and those performed in the past. When an operation is underway, you can invoke a flashback to roll for an action in the past that impacts your current situation. Maybe you convinced the district Watch sergeant to cancel the patrol tonight, so you make a Sway roll to see how that went.

The GM sets a stress cost when you activate a flashback action.

- 0 Stress: An ordinary action for which you had an easy opportunity. Consorting with a friend to agree to arrive at the dice game ahead of time, to suddenly spring out as a surprise ally.

- 1 Stress: A complex action or unlikely opportunity. Finessing your pistols into a hiding spot near the card table so you could retrieve them after the pat-down at the front door.

- 2 (or more) Stress: An elaborate action that involved special opportunities or contingencies. Having already Studied the history of the property and learned of a ghost that is known to haunt its ancient canal dock—a ghost that can be compelled to reveal the location of the hidden vault.

After the stress cost is paid, a flashback action is handled just like any other action. Sometimes it will entail an action roll, because there's some danger or trouble involved. Sometimes a flashback will entail a fortune roll, because we just need to find out how well (or how much, or how long, etc.). Sometimes a flashback won't call for a roll at all because you can just pay the stress and it's accomplished.

If a flashback involves a downtime activity, pay 1 coin or 1 rep for it, instead of stress.

One of the best uses for a flashback is when the engagement roll goes badly. After the GM describes the trouble you're in, you can call for a flashback to a special preparation you made, "just in case" something like this happened. This way, your "flashback planning" will be focused on the problems that _do _happen, not the problems that might happen.

Limits of flashbacks:
A flashback isn't time travel. It can't "undo" something that just occurred in the present moment. For instance, if an Inspector confronts you about recent thefts of occult artifacts when you're at the Lady's party, you can't call for a flashback to assassinate the Inspector the night before. She's here now, questioning you—that's established in the fiction. You can call for a flashback to show that you intentionally tipped off the inspector so she would confront you at the party—so you could use that opportunity to impress the Lady with your aplomb and daring.

Flashback examples:

> *"I want to have a flashback to earlier that night, where I sneak into the stables and feed fireweed to all their goats so they'll go berserk and create a distraction for our infiltration."*
>
> *"Ha! Nice. Okay, that's seems a bit tricky, dealing with ornery goats and all... 1 stress."*
>
> *"Should I roll Prowl to sneak in and plant it?"*
>
> *"Nah. Their goat stable security amounts to a stable boy who is usually asleep anyway. You can easily avoid their notice."*
>
> *"So it just works?"*
>
> *"Eh... not so fast. When you want the distraction to hit, let's make a fortune roll to see how crazy the Fireweed Goat Maneuver gets. Three dice."*

"The engagement roll is... a 2. Looks like a desperate situation for you! Hmmm. Okay, so you're inside the gang's compound at the docks, slipping up through the shadows next to some huge metal storage tanks. But then all the electric lights come on. The big metal warehouse door rolls open, and you hear a heavy wagon coming in through the gate. Looks like they're getting a delivery right now, and a bunch of gang members are out to receive it. They're about to be on top of you. What do you do?"

"Hang on, I want to have a flashback."

"Okay, for what?"

"Uh. Something... helpful? Damn, I don't know what that would be. Anyone have ideas?"

"Oh, what if you Consorted with your docker friends yesterday and they blabbed about this delivery, so we rigged it with a bomb."

"Oh man, that's hilarious. But kind of nuts. I guess 2 stress for that?"

"Sounds good. But let's make that Consort roll and see if your docker friends made any demands or complicated anything for you. Then we need to find out how well this bomb works. Who was in charge of that?"

"I did it. I'll roll Tinker to set the fuse just right. Hopefully."