

Fetch This!

A Chronicle of Revenge and Rebellion Against Our Human Overlords

INTRODUCTION

Humans. Every since they made the trip down from the treetops they've been trouble. On the wide plains they hunted us for our flesh; this we understood. We have also done so since time immemorial. But these humans, they took more than our flesh. They took our skins and put them over their own. They took our land and made it unrecognizable. They took our young and raised them in their lairs. They did things to us beyond our comprehension and beyond our forbearance. Now is time for us to act. Now is the time for our revenge.

In this game you play the animals getting their revenge. But this is not revenge writ large, not Revenge with a capital R. We animals are small, subtle, and clever and so too is our revenge. We will learn the ways of the humans and use this knowledge to bring them low.

WHAT THIS GAME IS ABOUT

This game is about the secret war waged by animals to sabotage the human hegemony.

WHAT THE CHARACTERS DO

Characters observe human ways in order to subvert them all the while maintaining their "cover" as domestic animals.

WHAT THE PLAYERS DO

Players set one another up for success by building on each others' actions while disrupting the lifestyle of the human oppressors.

WHAT THE GAEMASTER DOES

Decide what the humans do and how actions resolve. Be a fan of the Animal Players and challenge them so they can show off their ingenuity.

ITEMS NEEDED TO PLAY

3-6 Humans

Index cards and writing utensils

Several d6s, at least 8 of which are noticeably different (in color, size, designation, etc)

BEFORE PLAY

Before play, create the humans and the animal protagonists.

HUMAN CREATION

The first step is creating the humans that our animal protagonists will attempt to sabotage. As a group, answer these questions.

Where do the humans live?

- City
- Suburbs
- Country
- Other

What sort of dwelling do the humans have?

- Detached house
- Condominium

- Apartment
- Other

How many humans are there?

- Single adult
- Roommates
- Romantic couple
- Adult(s) and child/children
- Other

Name the humans. Their personalities will be fleshed out during Animal Creation.

ANIMAL CREATION

Each animal chooses a species, a relationship and a beef with the humans, a specialty, and a coat that reveals their personality. Then each animal will choose a piece of information they know about the humans.

SPECIES

Choose what species of the oppressed you belong to. Examples include dog, cat, bird, fish, chinchilla, ferret, or any other animal that might be in a human's house, intentionally or unintentionally. This includes animals that could sneak into the house like squirrels or rats.

RELATIONSHIP WITH HUMANS

Determine your relationship with the humans of the dwelling. Do you get along with any of them? Are you considered an uninvited nuisance? Do you harbor good will towards any humans? How do they treat you? Is there one human you think is most deserving of punishment?

BEEF WITH THE HUMANS

Whatever your relationship with the humans, they have, in some way, wronged you. Whether through ignorance or insolence, humans always manage to mistreat the animals around them. This could be serious, such as knocking down your nest or hunting down your friends. It could also be something others might not understand, stopping you from humping the dog-next-door or failing to serve tuna with sufficient frequency. Make sure your beef is something that truly cheeses off your character.

SPECIALTIES

Choose a specialty that you excel at. You can choose to pick one your species is good at (a tricky cat, for example), or you can subvert expectations (an empathetic snake). Specialties can be anything the group approves of. Examples:

- **Athletics:** Most animals are more athletic than pathetic humans, but you're a true marvel of athleticism.
- **Chaos:** The chair is in tatters, the pot roast is ruined, and you'd better believe someone piddled on the rug. All your handy work.
- **Distraction:** Whether by getting them to pet you or knocking their favorite vase off the mantle, you excel at getting humans to pay attention to only you.
- **Empathy:** You understand human emotions, helping you predict their normally baffling behavior.
- **Observation:** You wait and watch and it pays off. You notice more than other animals and can pick out details they might miss.

- Stealth: You are a master of being unheard, unseen, and even undetected by technology.
- Teamwork: You're especially good at cooperative activities with your fellow animals (opening doors, turning on lights, moving furniture, etc.).
- Tooth and Claw: When sabotage is not enough, you know how to make humans hurt in the most violent ways.
- Trickery: You are adept at fooling others, manipulating them against the evidence of their senses.

COAT

Your animal may have any colors or patterns, but every animal's coat has meaning. Describe your appearance and what it says about you to every other animal. Are you fierce? Thoughtful? Poetic? Sensual? Coldhearted? Insane? An animal's heart holds many secrets, but cannot hide what the coat reveals.

LEVEL

An animal's level is equal to their number of specialties. Starting animals are level 1.

Before the next step, share your character with the other players.

RECONAISSANCE

To undermine the humans, you must first understand their ways. Each animal starts with one piece of knowledge about the humans. Each player should write an item down on the Reconnaissance list. For example

1. Humans sleep very little
2. Humans poop inside the house
3. Humans regularly soak in water.

This list of facts indicates the animals' attack plan. These are the human ways that must be subverted and determine the goals of the animals. Each fact starts with a value of zero.

EXAMPLE CHARACTER

Eddie the Chipmunk lives in the walls of the house. The family doesn't know he's there, but if they did he's sure they would disapprove. After all, they already cut down the tree he was living in and forced him to take up his current abode. His Specialty is stealth – there's none better – and his coat is a bright chestnut red, reflecting the fact that this little guy has a temper. His beef is the aforementioned cutting down of the tree..

In his reconnaissance Eddie has noticed that every month the humans hurriedly stuff small pieces of paper into larger pieces of paper, lick the larger one and put a little picture on one corner. They stick this assemblage in a box outside their door. After doing so the humans are always relieved and relaxed and make jokes about not losing their house this month. Eddie knows where he must strike these humans.

Eddie the Chipmunk's character card would have the following information:

Species: Chipmunk

Relationship: Hidden in the walls, unknown

Specialty: Stealth

Coat: Bright chestnut red, temper

Beef: They cut down my tree
Level: 1

Eddie also adds "Humans put small pieces of paper stuffed in large pieces of paper in a box near the door and somehow this lets them avoid losing the house" to the Reconnaissance.

GAMEPLAY

The GM plays the humans and the world they have created. The Animal Players control their animals in an attempt to subvert the humans. The game is a series of scenes where the animals are trying to subvert the human lifestyle or gain revenge on the human overlords.

SCENES

The game is played in scenes set by either the GM or the Animal Players.

When setting a scene, the Animal Players may only say where they are and what they are doing.

When the GM sets a scene, they may describe any aspect of the world, include where the Animal Players are if they have been coerced to be in a certain place (if a dog has been put in a crate or if a cat has been lured by the sound of an opening tuna can). To begin play the GM will start the first scene, using the Animal Players' beefs as a springboard.

COVER DICE

The team of animals begins the game with eight Cover Dice representing the humans lack of suspicion. These dice act as a counter as well as an expendable resource.

Cover dice are earned primarily by spending experience. Losing cover dice means the humans are starting to pay more attention to the animals' strange behavior.

ACTION RESOLUTION

In general, players can achieve what their particular animal might obviously achieve without resorting to die-rolls. The GM might also declare some actions absolutely impossible.

In the event of dramatic uncertainty, the players must roll their dice pool and earn a number of success equal to or greater than the difficulty.

DIFFICULTY

The GM will set a difficulty number for the action. This number is how many successes the team must score collectively to succeed on the action. This number can be as little as 1 to as many as 6, 7, 8 or even beyond if there's a large team of animals involved.

Difficulty 1 represents something a single animal could do without too much difficulty, whereas 8 indicates a serious project for several animals to undertake together that might majorly blow their cover.

The GM may choose to use a higher than expected number for the difficulty, especially if there are existing complications or higher value reconnaissance facts in play.

DICE POOL

When undertaking their part of the action, an animal will assemble a die pool.

The animal takes 1d6 if it's something their species could feasibly do. Interpret this generously. Even if you've never seen a bunny jump around with a roll of toilet paper in its mouth, permit them to try.

The animal also gains 1d6 for each specialty they have that applies.

Finally the animal player may decide to add cover dice. Cover dice can be added to the dice pool but risk being lost.

The Animal Player rolls their dice. Each die that comes up 1-3 indicates a Complication and each that comes up 4-6 generates a Success.

ROLLING COVER DICE

Successes and Complications are the same for cover dice as regular dice. However, cover dice can be lost through use depending on the roll.

Cover dice that come up 1 are discarded. The animal has blown their cover, aroused human suspicion, and has not achieved any significant progress.

Cover dice that come up 2 or 3 are returned to the cover pool. The animal was unable to successfully pay off their gamble but they managed to avoid arousing extra suspicion.

Cover dice that come up 4 or 5 are permanently removed from the cover pool. The animal has succeeded but in doing so acted in a way that arouses human suspicion or seems odds to the humans.

Cover dice that come up 6 return to the cover pool. The animal risked successfully and as an added bonus managed to avoid detection by the humans.

ACHIEVING SUCCESS

The animals' actions build on each other to achieve success.

Each success an animal has achieved is counted against the target number the GM previously stated. If the first animal has not generated enough successes to trump the number, the next animal may build on the first's actions. There is no limit to how long this chain can go. Animals may continue to try to succeed until they give up or complications prevent them from continuing realistically.

COMPLICATIONS

A complications occur for any dice that roll a 1, 2, or 3. A single Complication is a petty inconvenience in terms of speed, quality, safety, noise, etc ... something you have to deal with, but nothing too bad. Two complications are enough to make a success painfully costly and a failure deeply embarrassing. Three complications may be enough to make you wish you hadn't succeeded at all. Four or more are better to not even talk about.

Record the complications with the scene as well as how many complications the complication is worth.

The Game Master determines the specific details of the complications but may choose to take input from the players. Players should feel free to suggest the negative outcomes for their actions but the GM is the ultimate decision maker.

Complications can accumulate the same way that successes accumulate, increasing the severity of a past complication. Complications can add to the difficulty of future actions unless resolved.

RESOLVING COMPLICATIONS

Some complications resolve naturally over time. A human who is suspicious of how his cat is acting might forget the next day. Other complications might require more direct action to deal with. A mouse caught in a mouse trap might be in serious danger unless the other characters overcome the complication.

The value of a complication should be a starting point for determining the difficulty of removing the complication. If a complication reaches a value of 6 or higher, the Game Master may decide to remove a die from the cover pool and resolve the complication.

ENDING SCENES

At the end of each scene, the animals add one thing to the Reconnaissance list. What did the humans do that would seem perplexing and important to the Animals? This has now been added as a target for their secret plans.

If the animals have successfully completed one of their goals according to the reconnaissance they earn a point of experience. Add 1 to the value of that reconnaissance item. Future attempts to mess with that issue will be more challenging.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

Eddie the Chipmunk has met up with Carmen the Rabbit and Jean the Dog. They have decided the best way to overthrow the human menace is to stuff entire rolls of toilet paper into the toilet bowl before flushing it. This fits their Reconnaissance fact of "Humans poop inside the house."

Our scene opens with the animals attempting to get the rolls into the toilet. They've already successfully acquired the rolls but the humans are suspicious and are thinking "Something sure is weird about the animals today."

The GM sets the difficulty at 5.

Carmen starts. She has a specialty in athletics (she's an excellent hopper), so she rolls 1d6 for doing something a rabbit could do and another 1d6 because of her Specialty. Because this is important she decides to roll two of the team's three remaining cover dice.

Carmen rolls and gets a 1 and a 6 on her regular dice and a 2 and a 5 on the Cover dice. Two Successes and an equal number of Complications.

Carmen gets the roll up (2 Successes), but it's come loose and started to unwind (Complication 1) and she bonked her nose on the lid, disorienting her a bit (Complication 1). The Cover die that came up a 2 returns to the pool and the Cover die came up 5 is removed. Only two Cover left for Eddie, Carmen and Jean and three more Successes needed to flood the bathroom!

Jean the Dog knows she needs to step up. She wants to take care of this herself and is planning to knock the roll into the bowl with her tail and flush the toilet with her teeth. Her Empathy Specialty helps her out here because she knows how to use those odd human contraptions and how they'll feel when it floods. This gives her 2d6 to roll. Jean also decides to roll the one of remaining 2 Cover dice. She rolls 4 and 5 on her regular dice and 6 on the Cover

die. Three successes with no complications! She knocks and flushes like a champ and Cover Pool is still at 2. That's four successes towards the five needed. Turns out a single roll of paper wasn't enough to unleash the torrent of toilet water. Will Eddie the Chipmunk be able to gain the final success before the humans get wise?

PROGRESSION OF PLAY

As play proceeds the animal will learn more about the humans bizarre lifestyle and how to disrupt it while also arousing their suspicion. Animal players that take more risks may find that their cover begins to erode quickly. It may be only a matter of time before the humans catch on.

RECONNAISSANCE REVISITED

Over time, the reconnaissance list will grow longer as new facts are added after each scene. The players may decide that based on the actions they have learned nothing new about the humans and opt not to add to the reconnaissance.

Over time, it will become easier to earn multiple experience in a single scene due to the number of items on the reconnaissance. More difficulty will be added due to the increased rating of reconnaissance items.

RUNNING OUT OF COVER DICE

Through reckless play or too many complications, the animals may run out of cover dice. If they have experience, they should immediately spend one experience to earn cover dice. Otherwise the humans aren't just suspicious, they have become openly hostile. All bets regarding what the humans believe are off and they may act insane, attack the animals, or even put them up for adoption or send them to a shelter. At this point the animals must either somehow escape or regain the trust of the humans, defeat the humans, or find a new home.

ROLLING THE COVER POOL

Whenever the Game-master needs to make a roll for the humans, roll the cover pool. Each success indicates how well the animals avoid the confrontation and suspicion of the humans. If there are no successes, the humans take action directly to confront the animals. Describe what the animals did to improve their cover and remove suspicion.

A NOTE ON RUNNING THE HUMANS

The humans often do not understand what they see the animals do. For example if they are suspicious of the cat, they may inaccurately think "is my cat sick or annoyed with me?" and fail to understand his true goals. They may instead of suspecting the rat in the attic is out for them, they may suspect the rat is eating their food. This still draws their attention and makes life harder for the animals. Humans, am I right? They think they know everything.

BLAME IT ON THE HUMANS

Most humans are very egocentric. One of the most effective ways to resolve a complication or add to the cover pool is to convince the humans that it is their fault. Humans believe they can fix anything so convincing them that they failed to do some effectively like paying the bills or keeping the toilet repaired or convincing one human that another human inconsiderately broke the toilet. After all, it's much more likely their stupid roommate did it instead of a cute kitten.

USING EXPERIENCE

Experience points are spent to improve the team of animal freedom fighters.

REGAINING COVER POOL

Spend a number of experience points equal to the current size of the Cover Pool to increase the Cover Pool by 1. If the animals have no Cover Dice, it still costs 1 experience to increase the Cover Pool.

GAINING NEW SPECIALTIES

Once per session, the team of animals may spend a number of experience equal to the total level of the team. Each animal gains a new specialty immediately.

Once per session, any animal that has a lower level than the highest level animal may spend a number of experience equal to their level to gain a new specialty immediately.

TEAM LEVEL

The level of the team is equal to the total number of levels that each animal has.

The highest level animal or animals are relevant for determining which other animals can level individually. Otherwise, the animals improve only as a group.