

## BY JOHN PARMALLEE

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Welcome to Skullduggery, a world of criminal deeds, life or death stakes, supernatural fears, and twisted intrigue. In this game, friends or fellow gamers can sit around a table or comfortably in a living room and take turns plotting and describing their nefarious actions, all while keep their crimes secret. Each player takes on a role with extraordinary abilities and uses those abilities to achieve their goal first.

Players: 4-6

Time: 30-60 minutes

Equipment: Scratch paper, a 6-sided die

### SETUP

First, the group should choose a city. It can be fictional, your hometown, or a famous city. Just as long as everyone knows it or feels comfortable faking it. Secondly, choose a Common Element this can be any building, person, or object. Thirdly, everyone should write a goal of ANY kind (the more complicated, the better) on a scrap of paper and secretly place it in a hat. Goals MUST have some relation to the common element (example: the Common Element is a bank, so goals could be to rob the bank or to become middle management).

### SETUP, PART 2

The goal must be accomplishable within the city. Each player receives a random goal (you might receive the one you created, this is fine).

Next, choose a reality level for this game. This is a number between 1 and 5. The lower the number, the lower the realism and the more you can "get away with" If this is your first game, we suggest a reality level of 3. When a conflict occurs or you try something with a significant chance of failure, you will need to make a Reality Check. To do so, just roll the die. If the result is equal to or above the Reality Check level, you succeed. Actions that affect another player directly are resolved by rolling a Reality Check as well.

One player should volunteer to play the role of Seer. The Seer is both a player and the arbiter of the game. It is a required role and so carries some responsibility. If no one volunteers, then randomly decide a player to be the Seer.

Other roles are listed on the back. Write each role (minus the "Seer") on a scrap of paper and put all of them into a hat or other hidden container. Each player will draw a role secretly. Play starts to the left of the Seer and proceeds clockwise.

### PLAYER TURN

On your turn, you must take an action to achieve your goal. You perform actions simply by describing them out loud. You are restricted to one movement and one task, in either order. You may move to any location in the city as long as you have access to it. (example: No military base visit without a military ID or visitor's badge.) A task is any one thing that can be done in context. Put otherwise, it can't be a complex series of actions. Some examples include, "I make a fire and burn the documents." OR "I set a trap so the door is barred after it closes." These are single tasks even though they are comprised of smaller parts. If your task can't be simplified to a single statement or would take many many hours to perform. It's probably not one task and may be subject to a Reality Check (see above).

Each Role has one or two "Special Actions" that you can perform instead of a task. You may do these secretly or publicly, although most will reveal your role instantly, whether

done publicly or privately.

As soon as you complete your goal, reveal it to the other players and claim victory!

### SECRET ACTIONS

Your move and/or task can be made publicly simply by stating it out loud. However, if you wish for your actions to remain secret, you must write them down secretly on a scratch piece of paper and hand them to the Seer. This means that it is up to the Seer to declare a reality check on secret actions.

### THE WORLD, AND PLAYER LIMITS

As you are a master of manipulation, you can coerce, manipulate and charm people into any task so long as it causes them no harm or risk (harm in any form: health, professional, financial etc.) You are considered to have enough money to complete any daily task. You are also considered to have a small car or similar vehicle. You have a cellphone. Trucks and vans must be acquired. All of these assumptions are subject to a Reality Check, if they seem out of place for the city.

If you perform a clearly illegal action in public. Then the police arrive on the scene and you are considered in conflict with them, and thus in danger.

If you ever find yourself in danger, you may make one Reality Check to escape the danger. If you fail then you are caught, or killed and you are out of the game.

### THE SEER

The Seer takes their turn just like the other players, the only differences being that the Seer knows all the secret actions the other players have taken and cannot take secret actions.

It is the Seer's job to keep track of all the secrets and make sure there are no contradictions. If a player would perform an action that would contradict or interact with another player's secret action, the Seer interjects and explains that such an action cannot be taken. If the reason for contradiction would be obvious in context, then the information is given in secret and the player must choose another action.



With your future sight, you can react to other players' actions before they happen. After a player declares an action, you declare and make an action immediately before his action occurs. If you use this power, you can't act on your next turn and can't use this power again until you take a normal turn. If your action prevents another's action, he may declare a new one.

You can see the immediate future of others you have met. You can dictate the next action of a non-player each turn. Name a person and a move and/or action that they take immediately after your turn.

## THE SEER

You have a terrifying pet that lives in your backpack. As an action, you can feed it anything that can fit inside the backpack's opening. The item is destroyed utterly and leaves no evidence.

You may let the pet out of its backpack in a closed space. The pet doesn't like outside, and can't be let out except inside a closed room. All other live creatures inside the room are immediately devoured by the pet. Other players automatically escape through any exit they wish. While the pet is loose, no one may enter the room, and you cannot leave.



## THE CREEP & PET

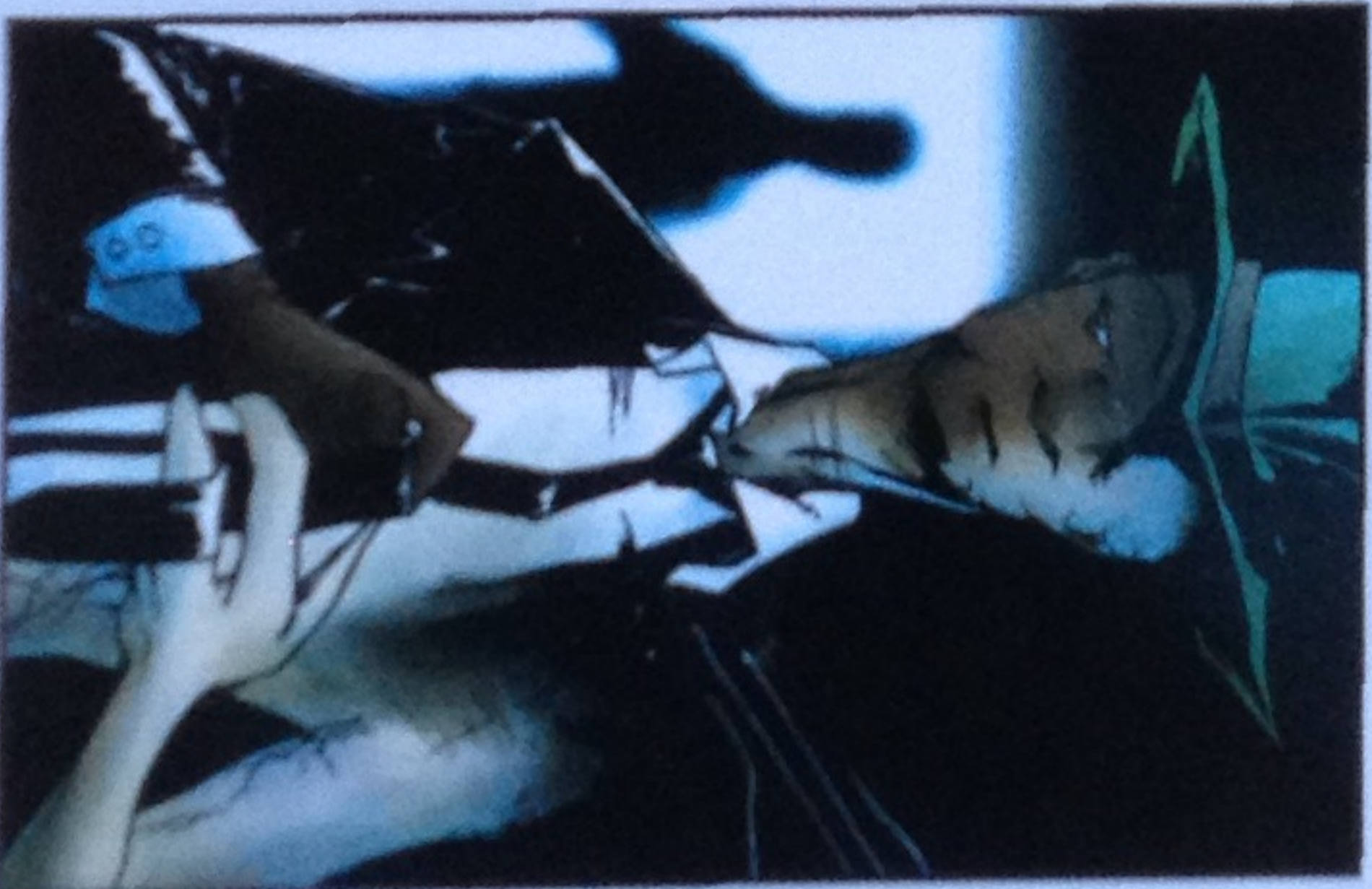


You can conjure up false evidence of anything. You simply make it appear, and everyone who sees it believes whatever it is meant to prove. You may conjure up a contract and offer it to anyone. A player can freely choose whether or not to sign it as a free action. A non player will always agree to the contract. You set the terms of the contract, which are enforced by divine beings. Any power, property, or status promised by the contract materializes on signing. Breaking the contract will result in death. You may not sign your own contract.

## THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

You may erase a person's memory simply by touching them. The memory to be erased must be specifically chosen (such as "he forgets he saw me" not just "he forgets everything").

As a doppelganger you can disguise and transform yourself as any living or deceased human. You acquire their clothes and replicas of any tools they may have on them (a policeman's gun looks real but doesn't fire bullets, for example). This lasts indefinitely, or until you change again.



## THE DOPPELGANGER



You can teleport yourself and one other person to any place that you or your passenger has been to before. All public areas like streets can be claimed to be on the visited list, but not other cities or countries. You may also teleport to any place you can clearly see.

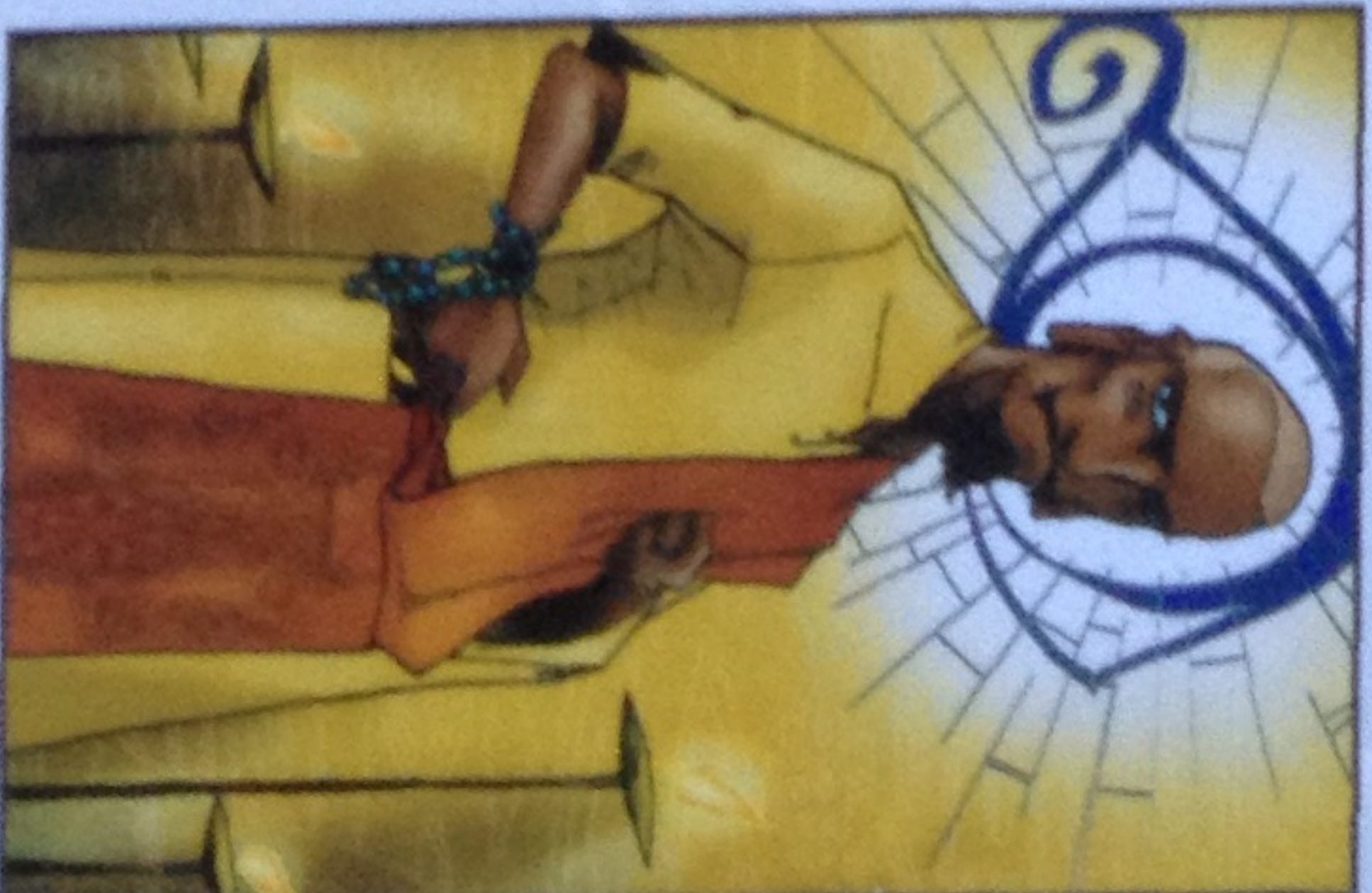
You can snatch any object that exists in the real world from anywhere if:

1. You can carry it in your hands.
2. It isn't currently held by anyone or anything. It must be resting freely, wherever it is.
3. No animals or other living creatures.

## THE GATECRASHER

The prophet may spend his action prophesying the future. You declare three actions of a person (or group) or an event that takes place. These actions occur just before your next turn and the two turns after that. You may not make another prophecy for three turns after you've made one. The prophecy may not include other players' actions. They control their own fates. The Seer cannot defy your prophecy with her power to control non-players.

The prophet is a miracle worker and may heal the sick, injured, and dead simply by touching them.



## THE PROPHET