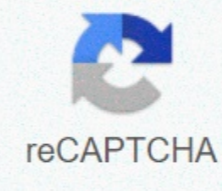




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## Dresden files rpg review

I have a confession to make: I'm a massive fanboy for the Dresden Files. A few years ago, I was having a hard summer: I had broken up with a long-term girlfriend, I was finding out that my grade was worth less than I thought it was worth, and I was preparing to move to Philadelphia, a city where I knew absolutely no one. And during that time, I finally had the chance to read a series of books that I heard fellow nerds go on about. So I visited a new city, with crammed houses together, a categorically different attitude, and a lot of history, it became fun to look for strawberries under train trestles, secret societies in Independence Hall, and ways to dig into a city where strange but wonderfully hidden things. So when I found out that there was an associated RPG that were released recently, I bit forward. And, to be honest, I rather liked it. In fact, I still consider the short story that was included in the GM guide (titled Our World) for being worth the price of admission. But even I, the fanboy that I was, had to admit that there were some major balance issues, and long-term games kept being derailed because of the format. The game was released after Spirit of the Century, but before the release of Fate Core 3E, and there were signs of being a beta before the full copy was released. It is, and I say this with love, absolutely unbalanced. In particular, the magic mechanics really sent things off the rail, and I found my first gamebreaking loophole system pretty easy. But I still have a passion for setting, so when I expressed an interest in my fellow Cannibal Halflings, it was brought that a new version was released based on fate-accelerated tricks from Evil Hat. So with the past in mind, I took a foray into updating the system. I'm happy to say that a lot of non-mechanical features made their way back in, Dresden Files Accelerated carries over a tradition of other books, in which he argues the fiction that the book of rules is a practical survival guide that is published in the Dresden Universe as an RPG Core book. It is a reference to the source material, in which they claim that Dracula was secretly published as a way to distribute the weaknesses of the vampires of the Black Court, and as a result, the entire book is filled with sticky notes from the editors (the Ivy and Kincaid characters) while preparing a disguised guide of their own. Their notes keep the tone in the other cards and help provide useful notes to players, as well as provide a few jokes. (A title is titled That's what Sidhe said) The artwork continues to be quite, retaining the style of Dresden Files graphic novels. It's well put-together, and fun to read. A though: it has massive spoilers for all the books up to Skin Game, the most recently published novel, so be careful if you don't want any surprises. Surprise. I love the change, because the story events have made the setting so different that it might be hard to play in. Now, in terms of mechanics: overall evaluation, I believe that Evil Hat succeeded in their goal of making the game more streamlined. One of the most difficult hangups of the previous version was the setting creation process, which required a lot of moving parts to be specified. For some game styles, that was fine but did plot depends on the initial GM and player planning before you start playing, in which you have to build areas and NPCs of importance. This has instead been replaced with Factions where GM and players discuss some kind of threats and other things of interest that will be displayed in your campaign. In Accelerated, choose a number of these (five are given as an example) and, if you want, connect your PCs to them. For each faction, players and GM will choose a face of the organization, and will give a rough outline of their goals, their obstacles, their resources, and their weaknesses. GMs can control exactly how much player influence they have, and can introduce secrets to these groups, handle some of the details on their own, or introduce one of their own without telling the players. In general, GM has a responsibility to keep track of what these groups are doing in the background. If the players don't get involved with them, they're supposed to succeed in what they're trying to do. I love this addition because it helps keep the player driven games going. They can really choose to go all against a faction, while letting another strengthen that power, but GM is given a lot of plot hooks to snatch when they do so. PCs can't be everywhere at once, so there should be a lot of plot simmering in the backburner without having to intentionally document every move. DFA simplifies gameplay as well. It continues the accelerated trend of replacing a multitude of skills with Approaches (as detailed in the articles, such as Do: Fate of the Flying Temple), where players prioritize how their characters would cope with a situation. Overall, I'm a fan of this as well. It might be nice to have a Drive skill for cool tracking scenes, but when you start rolling untrained to get through rush hour traffic, you're not really driving the plot. Simplified approaches can let players add a certain flavor to the way they go down. Using the Force approach could be moving through traffic by hitting Ramming Speed, but could cause additional landscape aspects, while Focus and Guile could pose less risk. Character creation has suffered a major, too. The first edition had players taking 7 Aspects (quick character descriptions) during character creation: standard high concept and problems found in most Fate settings, along with five others. In theory, you were to link them to stories about your character's history and their interactions with other characters, but most groups I've been finding this cumbersome. Instead, it has been simplified to three, which is much easier to generate, and causes fewer problems with players (and GM) forgetting Aspects. A more comprehensive change is in the way classes are handled. Previously, classes would have required skills that characters should take to the top, and you could build out there spending from refresh. Honestly, I like this method. You could, in theory, mix and match and build any combination you want, or easily splice on a talent or two for flavor. The game also provided notes about different levels of power you could set the game to, with smaller heads being brave, horror-based games closer to the early seasons of Supernatural and Buffy, to later seasons of both, to full wizards and wizards (and beyond) The downside is that, on the other hand, if you had a concept you really wanted to play, but the power level wasn't set high enough, you couldn't take it. There were also complications with balance, when Magic could become a dimension fits all the solution, as opposed to investing in skills or stunts. More on that later. In Accelerated, players choose Mantles instead. After describing the book, they are organized sets of stunts and related conditions that reflect how its owner harnesses his power in the world. Skills and stunts are listed for players, often with a check off, similar to the stress mechanic from Fate Core. Players complement them as they take effect, and there is often a description of how to delete them so that they can be used again. Included in these conditions that reduce damage, such as In Peril, or Doomed, which can be checked to prevent input stress (damage) in blocks 4 and 6 respectively to prevent character being knocked out, at the cost of potentially causing lethal damage later on. There are non-supernatural cloaks, such as Killer, Medic, or Monster Hunter, and they can be stacked in some cases with supernatural cloaks (Changeling, or Red Court Vampire Infected). Types can be sorted somewhat into four categories: Clued-In Mortal, a given man (or affected by) an external supernatural power (Fae, Angelic, Demonic, Vampiric), certain supernatural creatures (True Fae, White Court Vampire) and mortals with their magical gifts. In general, the classes are a little more balanced: There is a much more differentiation between the types of pure mortals with unique abilities. Focusing on a single variety of magic makes it a much more compelling option, also when previously made almost no sense to stay that way. My biggest concern are the occasions when players build off non-supernatural cloaks to get both, which raises the question: is there a mechanical reason to take a Manta, if you can get the benefits of both? I also miss the ability to take a greater variety of free talent between classes. In theory, you can still do this, but it seems a little less codified. In the end, though, what makes the system run smoother is worth that loss, even if it doesn't sting a bit. Now for Magic. Without going too deep, magic caused a series of balance problems in the original version. Evocation, in particular, could allow a magic unoptimized user to lower power levels hit with a weapon value closer to battlefield explosives with an appropriate effect on physical defense rollers. Any kind of magical action depended on the same abilities (Belief/Lore for intensity, and discipline for control), so you could pretty much dump skill points entirely into those. Now, with skills replacement approaches in accelerated fate, magic becomes more of a flavor in how they enhance these rolls. The magic of water could easily become a dense fog or a sheet of ice under the feet of an enemy for a cunning character as easily as a powerful character could drop an iceberg on a heavy target at terminal speed. There are special conditions to amplify the effect, and they don't potentially push explosions alone to incredible levels, but boy, don't pay for them if you don't time it out. Some of the boxes to check take several scenes to delete, some for the entire session. There are stunts that allow you to cast effectively from hit points, to get bonuses by filling in your In Danger and doomed boxes . . . and I'll let GMs think about what I can do with that. The balance between a focused practitioner and a complete Magical practitioner is much more balanced now: Magical Practitioners can do much more, and react to broader situations. Focused practitioners have a talent or a talent, but they are given the freedom to explore in a number of different ways. A kinetomant (kinetic energy magic) might be a standard evocative most of the time, but under pressure it could have an incredible talent for absorbing physical attacks and adding them to its own power. A seer could see the attacks seconds before they arrive. In many years of roleplaying, we've seen some players show their best creativity when they can have more tools while others are more creative when they have to do with what they have and come up with cool ways to use their skills in unconventional ways. I think the changes in the DFA give both types of player options. In conclusion, I think Dresden Files Accelerated is an upgrade over original DF RPG. Lose some of the incredibly detailed immersion, but it seems to me that changes to the gameplay make the game considerably easier to run, and the details that are mandatory in the original creation process can be built as the game goes on without quite a rigid structure. Now, you might be asking, Wow, this fun, if I had a character to play? To which I would answer Well, very convenient hypothetical person, should stop soon, where we bury in a new Meet the Party (And City)! I'll see you soon! Aki is willing to take suggestions for characters to build @WHalfling on Twitter, and would love to hear more Dresden Files play stories. Here's hoping for something that can fit up to mime a friend's Kinetomancer! Mime!