

tempus denuo

Introduction

The home world of the time guardians has been destroyed, the great race itself being erased from the annals of the space-time continuum. To compensate for the sudden vacuum of power, the continuum has dispersed the collective knowledge and ability of its former guardians amongst the living beings of the cosmos throughout history.

Throughout history a select few have been able to summon forth this secret lore from the depths of their subconscious minds, harnessing it to manipulate the very fabric of existence. These individuals have been called heroes, tyrants, and even gods - and when the circle closes, they will once again be known as the Lords of Time.

In a game of Tempus Denuo, you become one of these gifted individuals, a person with the ability to manipulate the fabric of existence, impressing your own will upon the mighty space-time continuum. What you do with your power is entirely up to you, but remember - Time will heal all wounds.

Core Attributes

Every character is defined by three *core attributes* - Persistence, Expertise and Possibility. These core attributes are assigned a numerical *rating* between one and twelve. Players begin with 20 points to distribute between these three attributes, keeping in mind that each must have at least a rating of 1 and no rating greater than 12.

Persistence - Persistence is a measure of a character's capacity to endure physical and mental punishment, a measure of their will to survive in adverse conditions. When a character runs out of persistence, they don't simply die - they cease to exist, their collective expertise being dispersed amongst others of their kind.

Expertise - Expertise is an abstract measure of a character's aptitude in many different areas of skill, from swinging a sword to interpreting an ancient scroll. This knowledge encompasses the collective intellect of an entire race, a legacy imprinted upon the subconscious minds of a chosen few by the space-time continuum.

Possibility - Possibility is a measure of a character's ability to influence the world around them through minor acts of space-time manipulation. While characters don't possess the ability to travel through the space-time continuum (yet), they can subtly alter it in their immediate locale to better serve their goals and ambitions.

Unopposed Actions

Whenever a character wishes to perform an action or complete a task that is not directly opposed by another character, the Referee assigns a *static difficulty* to the action or task to which the character's most relevant attribute rating is compared. A difficulty is a numeric value ranging from between '3' and '20'. For example:

The player characters are attempting to weather a sudden desert sandstorm. The Referee assigns a difficulty of 7 to the task, and calls for an attribute comparison from all players whose characters are presently trying to wait out the sandstorm.

If a character's attribute rating meets or exceeds the assigned difficulty, they perform the task or action successfully. If the character's attribute rating is less than the assigned difficulty, they fail to perform the task or action at hand.

Opposed Actions

Whenever two characters directly oppose each other (most commonly in combat), rather than comparing the attribute ratings of the characters to a static difficulty, the attribute ratings of the characters are compared to one another. The character with the highest attribute rating prevails over their opponent.

In the case that opposing characters possess the same attribute rating, the Referee should resolve the conflict in favor of whatever character the environmental circumstances most benefit. For instance, if the characters are dueling by moonlight and one of them happens to be nocturnal by nature, the current environmental conditions would favor that character.

Manipulating Reality

In the event that a player would like to manipulate destiny or, more correctly - alter the flow of the space-time continuum so that it more accurately reflects their character's will - they may do so by spending points of Possibility. For each point of their character's Possibility that a player spends, they may do two things as follow:

1. If applicable, the player may temporarily increase either a character's Persistence or Expertise rating by one point for the purpose of successfully resolving a task immediately at hand. Multiple Possibility points may, of course, be spent to increase the rating of more than one attribute and/or increase a rating by multiple points.

2. Second, if they so wish, the player may make one minor alteration to the physical environment of the present scene (for instance, should their character be falling from a great height, they may declare that a truck full of mattresses just happens to park below them). The only limitation is that the alteration must be easily explained away by coincidence.

When Possibility points are spent in this manner, they are gone until the beginning of the next game session, at which point the character's pool of Possibility points is restored (any points spent during the last session are replenished).

Injury and Death

When a character successfully attacks an opponent, the target of their attack is dealt a set amount of damage based upon the type of weapon being used, as follows:

Unarmed Attack (Punch, Kick, Judo Chop) 1
Small Concussive Weapon (Rock, Sap, PR-24) 2
Large Concussive Weapon (Bat, Crowbar) 4
Very Large Concussive Weapon (Mack Truck) 8
Small Cutting Weapon (Arrow, Dagger, .22 Caliber Pistol) 4
Large Cutting Weapon (Sword, .44 Magnum Revolver, Laser) 8
Very Large Cutting Weapon (Focused Beam Plasma Cannon) 16
Small Explosive Weapon (Hand Grenade, Mail Bomb) 8
Large Explosive Weapon (Brick of C-4, Crate of TNT) 16
Very Large Explosive (Tanker Truck packed with C-4) 32
Doomsday Weapon (You Name It) - Total Destruction of World

Note that the weapon damage values listed above are merely suggestions, as games of Tempus Denuo don't necessarily take place on Earth (it's merely a place that the majority of our readers will be familiar with, and thus makes for a good example).

Additionally, a character who successfully attacks an opponent deals further damage equal to the difference between their attribute rating (including any temporary bonuses granted by spending Possibility points) and their opponent's attribute rating.

Finally, a character that is the target of a successful attack may reduce the damage dealt to them by wearing armor or using shields, as follows:

Small Shield (Buckler) 1
Medium Shield (Kite Shield) 2
Large Shield (Tower Shield, Personal Force Field) 3
Light Armor (Heavy Cloth, Leather Armor) 1
Moderate Armor (Chain Mail Armor, Kevlar Vest) 2
Heavy Armor (Plate Mail, Hardened Ceramic Armor) 4
Very Heavy Armor (Vehicular Plating, Krill Assault Armor) 6+

All damage sustained by characters is subtracted from their Persistence attribute rating. Characters fall unconscious when their Persistence attribute rating is reduced to zero, and die when it is reduced to negative five.

Healing and Regeneration

Healing damage that a character has sustained is largely dependent upon the setting of your Tempus Denuo campaign. For instance, in some campaign worlds it's entirely possible that a character only needs to drink a revitalizing potion to restore lost Persistence. Similarly, in other worlds, priests may be able to mutter an arcane chant that restores lost Persistence to an individual. One form of healing that works on *nearly* all worlds is good, old-fashioned medicine. In short, the healing of wounds and recovery of lost Persistence varies wildly from world to world and, as such, such be addressed by the Referee on a world by world basis.

Regeneration always adheres to the same set of rules, regardless of the world in which it occurs. Whenever a player character is killed, they have an option available to them besides death - in exchange for half of their current Expertise rating and all of their current Possibility points, a player character may regenerate their physical body. This regeneration process alters a player character's appearance and leaves them rather confused, but for the most part, allows them to continue their exploit intact.

Character Advancement

Characters gain one to three *experience points* after every adventure, as awarded by the Referee. Players may spend these points to increase their character's core attributes to a maximum rating of 12. Raising a core attribute rating by one costs an number of experience points equal to the attribute's current rating. For example, if Brother Sandoval (a meddling monk) has a current Persistence rating of 10, it will cost Sandoval's player 10 experience points to raise this rating to 11.

A Brief History Lesson

As some of our more astute readers have no doubt already decided, Tempus Denuo draws a large amount of inspiration from the history of the universe as presented by the BBC in the Doctor Who television series and novels. That said, it draws an even larger amount of inspiration from the possible future of this same universe.

The default assumption of Tempus Denuo is that player characters are some of those special individuals throughout space and time within whom the special qualities of the Time Lords have been instilled following the events of *The Ancestor Cell*.

The suggestion in Tempus Denuo is that the Time Lords foresaw their eminent destruction, and realized (or suspected, anyhow) that it would result in the beginning of another Temporal Cycle, seeing as how Time would somehow mend itself in their absence (per the theory of Temporal Destiny).

Tempus Denuo builds upon this suggested circumstance and portrays the universe as it might exist sans Gallifreyan presence, at the beginning of a new Temporal Cycle. All but a few Time Lords

have been removed from the space-time continuum entirely, their knowledge and abilities re-distributed throughout space and time, thus fulfilling Temporal Destiny while maintaining balance in creation.

The primary implication of Tempus Denuo is that the individuals imbued with the essence of the Time Lords *are* (or rather, will be) those same Time Lords in a very, very distant future. That is, it's implied that the entire continuity of Doctor Who takes place within one *very large* time loop.

What event is responsible for this time loop or just how long it has been in existence is left entirely up to you. In fact, whether you choose to run Tempus Denuo in this vein or simply use it as a generic game system is entirely up to you.

Final Word

Should you take the time to download and play Tempus Denuo and find that you enjoy it, I'd be very much in your debt if you took the time to write me and let me know that. Likewise, if you have any question or need something to be clarified, let me know and I'll do my best to see that your concerns are tended to. If Tempus Denuo generates enough positive interest (and the BBC doesn't sue me silly), I'll consider releasing more free material for it. At the present time, you may contact me here:

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